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**ACCULTURATION AND NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITY: THE
CASE OF FIVE ADULT FILIPINA MIGRANTS IN NEW
ZEALAND**

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for the Degree of Master of Philosophy
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Abstract

This investigation is based on a qualitative study of five Filipina¹ migrants in New Zealand. Using open-ended interviews as the primary source of data, the study examines the women's personal experiences and subjective understandings of migration and acculturation. Its focus is on the ways in which Filipina migrants negotiate the social constraints they encounter during settlement, and how they construct social identities within these constraints.

The questions that this study seeks to answer concern the understanding of the participants' motivations and personal investment in migrating to New Zealand; the stages that they go through while adjusting to a new environment; the factors that influence their negotiation of identity and competence; and the relationships between power relations and language socialization.

The investigation reveals that the positive factors in New Zealand, such as better standard of living and better educational system, and the negative factors in the Philippines, such as unstable economic, political, and social conditions, were stronger than the positive pull factors in their home country, such as strong family ties, thus influencing the participants' decision to leave the comforts of a familiar culture, and migrate to New Zealand. The participants reported that the difference between Philippines and New Zealand in terms of food, weather, language, beliefs, values, and general standard of living have affected their adaptation processes in different ways and in varying degrees. They also claimed that their positive and

¹ For the purposes of clarity and simplicity, the following terms are used in this study:

Filipino (sing.)/*Filipinos* (pl.) - somebody who comes from the Philippines, either masculine or neutral form

Filipino - the official language of the Philippines

Filipina (sing.)/*Filipinas* (pl.) - feminine form of *Filipino/Filipinos*

negative experiences, especially with the issues of legitimacy and acceptance have influenced their perceptions of New Zealand, as well as the degree of their frustration and contentment, hence, affecting their personal “investment” in their host country. Their stories also indicated that negotiating roles and identities was an important factor in their adaptation process, and that their identities and membership in New Zealand society determined and were determined by power struggles and by their participation in their new environment.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Migration plays a very important role in New Zealand society. The immigration policy adopted in 1986, “which was strictly based on personal criteria such as skills, English language ability, qualifications, adaptability to life in a multicultural society, and capacity to settle” (Zodgekar, 1997, p. 12), attracted a large number of skilled people and people with money to invest. Since then, there has been a very high demand for permanent entry to New Zealand, especially for business people and the highly skilled and educated. This era saw the influx of people from different parts of the world, especially Asia. In the case of Filipinos in New Zealand, family reunification, marriage to New Zealand citizens, and employment were the main immigration categories. Foreigners are motivated to live in this country permanently for several reasons: clean and green environment, investment opportunities, financial security, better standard of living, and better education. For most Filipinos, living and working abroad seem to be the answer to the Philippines’ low standard of living, unstable economic and political conditions. The women in the present study are typical of tens of thousands of Filipinas between the ages of 20-40 who are poised to attain the Filipino dream - a life not in their native country, but rather some thousands of miles away overseas. According to Butalid-Echaves (1999), there were around 5.4 million Filipinos scattered in more than 70 countries in 1999. Of these, about 3.2 million were overseas Filipino workers and 2 million were permanent residents in their host countries. Although Filipinos rank as the fourth largest Asian ethnic group in New Zealand (according to the 2006 Census), there has been hardly any study conducted on their acculturation in their new home. The only known published research study conducted on Filipino migrants in New Zealand is Baral’s (1995) investigation of the cultural adaptation of Filipinos in Auckland. The present investigation aims to fill the gap in the literature on Filipinas in New Zealand.

Migration to a new country affects migrants in many different ways. The process of migration causes a drastic change in the social environment of the migrants and their families. For the participants in this study, settling in a foreign country has caused them significant economic and social transformations, as well as emotional and psychological stress. I was partly drawn to this project by a personal interest in recognizing the challenges that my fellow Filipinas encounter in our adoptive country. I am specifically interested in recounting their personal stories about their failures and successes while going through the different stages of adaptation in a country that is culturally and linguistically different from what they have been accustomed to.

The present study focuses on two main topics: acculturation and social identity. The first part of the report analyses the different stages that each participant has gone through from the moment they left their home country up to the present stage. The discussion of their acculturation is based on Selvarajah's Four-Stage Expatriate Acculturation Process Model (EAP) (1996). The second part of the report examines the five women's relationships with the social world. This part is inspired by Norton Peirce's (1995) study of women immigrants in Canada, which drew in particular on Weedon's (1987) conception of social identity and subjectivity.

I hope that their stories would serve as an inspiration and guidance to other women migrants in New Zealand. I also hope that their stories would give this study's New Zealand readers a better understanding of these women's cultural backgrounds, values and belief systems, attitudes toward themselves and toward their host society. I believe that the more their host country understands what they go through while adapting to a foreign environment, the better chance they get to be accepted as legitimate members of their host society.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Acculturation

When the women in this study left the Philippines to migrate to New Zealand, they all went through acculturation in varying degrees while adapting to their new environment. *Acculturation*, according to Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, “refers to changes that occur as a result of continuous first-hand contact between individuals of differing cultural origins” (as cited in Ward, 2001). The concept of acculturation was first applied by anthropologists and sociologists to group-level occurrences, and more recently to individual level by psychologists. In this study, focus is made on acculturation at the individual level, otherwise referred to as *psychological acculturation*. Graves (1967) refers to it as “the changes that an individual experiences as a result of being in contact with other cultures.”

2.1.1 Three Broad Theoretical Approaches to Acculturation in the Field of Psychology

2.1.1.1 The Social Identification Approach focuses on how individuals see themselves and others, as well as how they perceive their own group and other groups. Social Identification research on immigrants, sojourners, and refugees involves the recognition and categorization of oneself as a member of an ethno cultural group.

Berry’s (1980) work on acculturation is one of the well-known examples of this approach. Berry has pointed out that during the process of acculturation, individuals

and groups are confronted with these basic issues: cultural maintenance, which involves the decision to maintain one's cultural identity; contact and participation, where the individual engages in positive intergroup contact; and alienation, which is characterized by losing the essential features of the original culture, but not having replaced them as a result of entering the dominant society. With these issues, four forms of adaptation emerge: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization.

2.1.1.2 The Stress and Coping Approach regards cross-cultural contact as a major life event that is essentially stressful and entails coping strategies in order to deal with such significant changes. Berry's Stress and Coping Framework for Acculturation Research (1997) "highlights the significance of life changes during cross-cultural transitions, the appraisal of these changes, and the selection and implementation of coping strategies to deal with them" (Ward, 2001, p. 427). These life changes are influenced by societal factors such as the host society's salient attitudes toward the immigrant's ethnic group, and the migrant's individual personality and personal experiences.

Studies of acculturation based on the Stress and Coping Models have been mainly concerned with the individual's psychological adjustment. Factors such as life changes, individual perception of stress, specific coping strategies, personality, and social support are normally investigated. One known quantitative study conducted by Marsella and colleagues in 1988 (as cited in Butalid-Echaves, 1999) on Filipinos' coping strategies measured the subjects' life philosophies, crisis behaviors, and social supports. The investigation found that the participants tended to rely on four categories of coping beliefs namely: projection, religion, optimistic fatalism, and self-responsibility. The present study's qualitative methodology has allowed me to draw on the participants' coping strategies in a more subjective manner. It has enabled me to examine the changes in the participants' lives as influenced by the host society's attitudes toward them as well as their own

personalities and individual experiences, through the eyes of the participants themselves.

2.1.1.3 The Culture Learning Approach highlights the social psychology of the intercultural encounter and the process involved in learning the culture-specific skills required to thrive and survive in a new milieu. According to Ward (2001, p. 413):

This approach is based on the assumption that cross-cultural problems arise because sojourners, immigrants, or refugees have difficulties managing everyday social encounters. Adaptation, therefore, comes in the form of learning the culture-specific skills that are required to negotiate the new cultural environment.

The Culture Learning Approach has made a significant impact on the study of intercultural communication and socio-cultural adaptation. This approach argues that socio-cultural adaptation is influenced by the amount of difficulty that individuals encounter in their everyday activities as predicted by variables such as cultural distance and amount of contact with and exposure to host nationals. Ward (2001) lists a number of studies based on this approach, including Hofstede's (1980) discussions of individualism-collectivism and power distance; Kim's (1991) research on intercultural communication competence, where she highlighted the significant cultural differences in terms of communication between individuals; and Gudykunst's (1993) approach to effective communication, which emphasized the individual's ability to gather and use appropriate information and the ability to be adaptable in intercultural communication. Other studies include Taft's Multi-Facet Framework for Analyzing Long-Term Adaptation to New Cultures and Societies (1977), which treats the process of coping with an unfamiliar cultural situation in relation to four major aspects of the adaptation process: cultural adjustment, identification, cultural competence, and role acculturation; and Selvarajah's (1996) analysis of stages of cross-cultural adjustments among expatriates and immigrants.

The data gathered in the present study partly corresponds with what Selvarajah (1996, p. 1) refers to as the “Four-Stage Expatriate Acculturation Process Model” (EAP), where he assumes that an immigrant and an expatriate go through the following stages of cross-cultural adjustments in adapting to the foreign environment: pre-departure preparation, initial experience, gestation, and adjustments. With these four stages, significant cultural differences between the original and the host societies are considered, and the individual’s perspectives and attitudes are emphasized. The participants’ narratives in the present study revealed some migration issues that are personally significant for them, such as coping with the similarities and differences between the Filipino and New Zealand cultures; and dealing with culture-specific variables during the adaptation process, including difficulties in cross-cultural communication. The reconstruction of their past and its link to their present and future validates the utilization of Selvarajah’s Four-Stage Expatriate Acculturation Model (EAP) (1996) as the basis of discussion of their acculturation experiences.

Pre-departure Stage, the first stage in the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model, is the period that precedes the actual relocation. At this stage, migration, as in the case of this investigation’s subjects, is the result of a conscious decision to change one’s life, unlike refugees who are forced to do so. Oftentimes, the decision to migrate involves a conscious element of risk-taking. Prior to departure, a number of push and pull factors of the home country and the host country influences the migrants’ initial experiences in the host environment (Selvarajah, 1996). The push factors include forces that influence the migrants’ decision to leave their country, such as poor economic conditions, and social and political problems. Pull factors are those things that attract the migrants toward the country of relocation, such as better job opportunities, better standard of living, and better education. These push and pull factors can be perceived by individual migrants differently, based on their personality, beliefs, cultural values, and past experiences.

During this stage, the potential migrants assess the risks, make plans, and prepare to relocate. They also go through a state of mixed emotions regarding the possibility of going to a different country. They may feel a certain amount of excitement, keenness, and anxiety about the prospect of going to a new environment.

Selvarajah's model also suggests that the amount of information that the expatriates/immigrants have regarding the future host country prior to their departure has some bearing on their initial adaptation experiences. This may include information gathered from families and friends who are or have been in the future host country, or information taken from other sources such as travel agencies, embassies, and the internet.

The second stage in the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model, which is referred to as the Initial Experience, concludes the sense of excitement and adventure that the migrants experienced during the pre-departure stage. Selvarajah (1996) posits that the newcomers do not make any permanent decisions or attitude formations to cope with the current situation, however, this stage will have a strong impact on the individuals' adaptation process over a longer term.

The second stage also corresponds with the migrants' initial efforts to establish a new life. This may include finding a job and finding their way around the new environment. This procedure gives the migrants the chance to compare their previous life in the home country and their new life in the new environment. Selvarajah's Expatriate Acculturation Process Model (1996) looks at this stage as a combination of both a honeymoon phase and a culture shock phase.

Winkelman (1994) compares a honeymoon phase with the *tourist stage*, which involves intense excitement and euphoria associated with being somewhere different and unusual. The pressures associated with the dissimilarities between the

two cultures are often bearable and may even seem fun and humorous.

As time progresses, fun and excitement gives way to frustration and real stress. This is when culture shock sets in:

Anthropologist Kalervo Oberg was the first to apply the term 'culture shock' to the effects associated with the tension and anxiety of entering into a new culture combined with the sensations of loss, confusion, and powerlessness resulting from the forfeiture of cultural norms and social rituals. He points out that culture shock stems from the challenges associated with new cultural surroundings in addition to the loss of a familiar cultural environment. (Neuliep, 2000, p. 358)

One factor that shapes culture shock is the degree of similarity and difference between the culture of origin and the new culture. The Expatriate Acculturation Process Model speculates that the greater the disparity between the familiar and the unfamiliar culture, the more difficult it is for the migrants to adjust. When migrants come to a new country, an encounter between hosts and guests occurs. All such encounters involve negotiation of strangeness. With culture shock, events and behaviors may be interpreted in different ways and can lead to friction. Gradually, as the migrants become more familiar with the new society, they become more aware of the permanence of the change. This process exposes them to the dominant culture and paves the road for comparisons between the previous life and the new life. The second stage, Initial Experience, thus sees the migrants moving through a range of emotions from excitement to frustration.

The third stage in the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model is gestation, where the migrants start to experience the long term realities of the host environment:

Those who have similar prior experiences or who are from similar cultural backgrounds may find the host environment more adoptable, familiar, and pleasant. However, those who may not have prior overseas experiences or

who are from a very different cultural background may find the host environment in conflict with their expectations. (Selvarajah, 1996, p. 6)

The huge cultural difference between New Zealand and Philippines has generated mixed feelings for the five women and has affected their adaptation processes in different ways. Ronald Taft (1977) offered this underlying principle:

Whether or not an abrupt change from one culture to another is debilitating to a person's functioning will depend partly on the degree to which the change is salient to his behavior. The definition of salience is not easy, but it involves the concept that some areas of activity are more central to the ego than are others; they are more closely associated with the person's self-esteem. (p. 125)

During the last stage in the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model, the migrants' overall experiences will determine the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction the migrants will feel in the host country. According to Selvarajah (1996, p.6), there are three major categories of adjustment:

1. Leave the host country;
2. Seek the comforts of one's own culture by seeking to socialize mainly and sometimes exclusively with expatriates from similar culture; and
3. Persevere in seeking to understand and cope with the new culture.

Confronted with severe frustration, the migrants may decide to leave the host country permanently. As they prepare to leave, their level of interest in the host country is reduced, thus, influencing their adaptation and participation in the host environment in a negative way. However, if the migrants feel contented and have a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in the host country, they are very likely to become more cooperative and participative in the host environment:

For those who are in between the extremes of frustration and contentment,

the contributing factors such as personal factors and family factors would determine the degree of frustration or contentment. They may either seek the comforts of people from a similar culture, or persevere in seeking to understand the local culture and hoping to cope better with the people in the new culture. (Selvarajah, 1996, p. 7)

For most migrants, successful adaptation means being able to move relatively freely between cultures while employing their multiple identities in different contexts. “Like the bi-lingual, a true bi-cultural has the skills to perform competently the roles required by each cultural context and he is able to avoid gaffes that could result from inappropriate switching between cultures” (Taft, 1977, p.143).

2.2 Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts

This section focuses primarily on how interpersonal interactions mould the participants’ sense of self, as influenced by various issues, such as, gender, race/ethnicity, class, and self-direction. In the present study, the examination of the five women’s experiences as language learners in relation to their social world is inspired by Norton Peirce’s (1995) study of women immigrants in Canada, which drew in particular on the poststructuralist approach. For the purposes of clarity and simplicity, this section starts with the discussion of Norton Peirce’s conception of language acquisition in its social, cultural, and political contexts, followed by the discussion of poststructuralism as opposed to the other theoretical approaches to second language learning and use. Pavlenko and Blackledge’s (2003) conception of negotiation of identities is also discussed in relation to Norton Peirce’s notion of power struggle.

2.2.1 Relations of Power, Legitimacy, and Investment

Norton Peirce's (1995) study of second language investment of migrant women in Canada includes the discussion of Martina's case, which illustrates some of the multiple sites of a person's identity formation. Martina came to Canada with her family in search for a better life for her children. Neither she nor her husband knew any English before they came to Canada. Martina's various roles as an immigrant, a mother, a language learner, a worker, and a wife influenced the way she dealt with Anglophone Canadians while claiming the right to speak. Norton and Toohey (2002) posit that:

Language learning engages the identities of learners because language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols; it is also a complex social practice in which the value and meaning to an utterance are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks. (p. 115)

Thus, it is not only the new linguistic system that the learner has to be familiar with, but the host country's sociocultural system as well, which is often influenced by the relations of power between the newcomer and the host society. Norton Peirce's (1995) conception of relations of power draws on Weedon's (1987) theory of subjectivity, which is defined as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relations to the world" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p.15). In this regard, three defining characteristics of subjectivity are central: multiple nature of the subject; subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time.

Subjectivity is produced in a variety of social situations, all of which are influenced by relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions. Norton (2000) suggests that natural language learning often involves unequal relations of power in which language learners strive for access to social networks

that will give them the chance to practice the host country's dominant language in a supportive environment. As Bourdieu posits, when individuals speak, they do not only aim to be understood, but to be believed and valued as well (as cited in Norton, 2000). However, the individuals' ability to impose reception is influenced by their identity as either "legitimate or non-legitimate" speakers (Norton, 2000, p. 113). Yet, different individuals may be granted different degrees of legitimacy depending on the social relations of power between the newcomer and the members of the host society, which are often determined by gender, race, and class of the learner. In some cases, legitimacy is assessed through the person's competence in the second language. In social encounters, all interlocutors involved work towards mutual understanding. However, more often than not, in a cross-cultural encounter, the burden to guarantee understanding is mostly on the learner. As outsiders, they are expected to learn the language and the culture of their host society, which, in some cases, may not be willing to give them the space needed to develop such competence.

Bourdieu (as cited in Norton, 2000) describes a "legitimate discourse" as utterances that are uttered by an appropriate speaker, to a legitimate receiver, in a legitimate situation, and in legitimate phonological and syntactic forms. Legitimacy and power relations are also synonymous to censorship. According to Bourdieu (1991), censorship consists of excluding certain individuals from communication by excluding them from the groups which speak or the places which allow one to speak with authority. A major challenge for most migrants is negotiating competence, identities, and power relations so that they could be recognized and accepted as legitimate members of their host society. For them, legitimacy is necessary to make their actual participation as newcomers possible. However, participation and involvement demand access; and access requires legitimacy. Yet, "instead of social cohesion, many migrants experience social exclusion and discrimination" (Butcher and Hall, 2007, p.4). The ways in which the women in the current investigation handled negotiations toward legitimacy varied according to their individual goals,

backgrounds, and personalities.

The participants' narratives in the present study also show the significance of investment in their adaptation process. Advancing from the current conceptions of "motivation" in the field of language learning, the concept of investment indicates the relationship between the learners and the target language as well their varying motives to learn and practice it. The analysis of this topic is based on Norton Peirce's (1995) conception of investment. This concept was inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's model of symbolic domination, which viewed "linguistic practices as a form of symbolic capital, convertible into economic and social capital, and distributed unequally within any given speech community" (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003, p. 10). In this view, the value of a particular linguistic variety is influenced by the way it is legitimized by the dominant group, and its ability to put the speaker in a more valuable position. Discourse, in this case, is not just all about language, but also about legitimacy, power relations, and identity.

According to Bourdieu, those who are not speakers of the official language are subject to symbolic domination, if they believe in the legitimacy of that language. More often than not, as a consequence, those who are speakers of the official language may be regarded as having greater moral and intellectual worth than the speakers of the unofficial language. This view suggests that, newcomers who are not native speakers of the host society's dominant language, are likely to find themselves in a marginalized position. Bourdieu (1991) believes in the notion of capital gain - that individuals learn new things so as to gain something from it:

There are different forms of capital: economic capital in the strict sense (e.g., material wealth in the form of money, etc.), but also cultural capital (e.g., knowledge of skills and other cultural acquisitions, as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications), and symbolic capital (e.g., accumulated prestige or honor). (p. 14)

Norton Peirce (1995) takes the position that:

If learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. (p.17)

Norton also suggests that:

Learners have different investments in particular members of the target language community and that the people in whom learners have the greatest investment may be the very people who represent or provide access to the imagined community of a given learner. (Norton and Toohey, 2002, p. 120)

For most migrants, their membership in the host community, as dictated by being accepted as legitimate members, has some bearing on their investment and future goals in their new environment.

Such investment may compel them to exercise their personal agency in demanding reception. Stephen Price (1996) gives an illustration of Norton Peirce's notion of human agency:

Pierce's argument does seem to point toward a subject-agent that is capable of circumventing the constitutive role of discourse and resisting the power relations, through an act of will, an act of courage, of determination. (p. 334)

Morita (2004: p.590) cites Lantolf and Pavlenko's (2001) description of agency which, "is never a 'property' of a particular individual, but rather, a relationship that is constantly co-constructed and renegotiated with those around the individual and with the society at large." Furthermore, with agency, individuals are able to "resist being positioned marginally in dominant discourses and to fashion alternative subject positions that fulfill their goals and purposes" (Morita, 2004, p.590).

2.2.2 The Poststructuralist Approach to the Study of Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts

“The last decade brought in several new developments in which scholars drew on contemporary poststructuralist theory to understand social influences on L2 learning” (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 277). As opposed to the Sociopsychological Approach, which highlights the “one-to-one correlation between language and identity” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003, p. 5); and the Interactional Sociolinguistic Approach, where most of the studies are focused on negotiation of identities in code-switching and language choice, the Poststructuralist Approach recognizes the multiplicity of an individual’s identity, and focuses on speech situations that influence the learner’s identity options, instead of simply opting for a particular language. Poststructuralists acknowledge that all individuals are users of multiple linguistic resources and some may be members of multiple ethnic, social, and cultural communities, which directly rejects the sociopsychological assumption that the learners abandon their first language or culture in order to acculturate. Poststructuralists allow the learners to be recognized as legitimate speakers in their own right, rather than failed native-speakers as judged through monolingual and monocultural criteria.

“Three poststructuralist theorists whose work has been influential in recent research on identity and language learning are Mikhail Bakhtin, Pierre Bourdieu, and Gunther Kress” (Norton and Toohey, 2002, p. 117). Their works recognize that language cannot be examined separately from the speaker, the interlocutor, and the whole context itself. Language is not just about words and phrases, it also reflects the speakers’ value systems based on their past, present, and future. They also recognize that during the process of learning, it is possible for the second language user to seek membership in a multicultural community instead of simply making a

singular transition and acculturation to the dominant culture.

Norton Peirce (1995) also acknowledges that language learning is more than just the motivation to learn. It involves issues such as power relations between the majority and minority groups, legitimacy and authority, the speaker's right to speak the language, and the learner's investment in learning the target language and culture.

2.2.3 Types of Identities in Multilingual Contexts

According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003), the process of negotiation of identities can be viewed in two ways: the ongoing construction and performance of identities in multilingual contexts, and the negotiation of identities which takes place only when certain identities are contested. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003, p. 21) propose a framework that differentiates between three types of identities:

- “Imposed identities are non-negotiable. These are the identities that individuals cannot resist or contest at a particular point in time.” For example, Chinese migrants in New Zealand during the 1800's were perceived as outsiders, and as a result, had to bear the imposition of poll tax by the New Zealand government. Such identity was something that the early Chinese could not contest at that time, and therefore they were unable to refuse its consequences .
- “Assumed identities are those that many - albeit not all - individuals are comfortable with and are not interested in contesting. Oftentimes, these identities are the ones most valued and legitimized by the dominant discourses of identity.” For example, New Zealand is predominantly a Christian society. The majority of Filipinos in New Zealand come from Christian families, and are quite comfortable with this identity.
- “Negotiable identities are those identity options, which can be contested

and resisted by particular individuals or groups.” For example, most Asians in New Zealand are perceived as incompetent English speakers. However, as shown by the women in the present study, most of them contested and negotiated such identity by claiming their right to speak and to be heard.

The discussion of negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts in the present study focuses on the construction of certain identities that are imposed, unrecognized, misunderstood, or just simply unavailable. The analysis of the participants’ changing identities is based on power struggles between them and their interlocutors, how they resist, negotiate, change, and transform themselves as dictated by certain circumstances.

The present study’s qualitative approach has allowed me to explore the participants’ experiences by drawing on Davies and Harre’s (1990) “positioning theory”. The concept of positioning theory makes it possible for researchers to investigate identities as located in verbal interactions and narratives of the participants themselves. Negotiation of identities can be viewed as a combination of reflective positioning, which focuses on how individuals perceive or position themselves; and interactive positioning, which is based on how others try to position an individual. The five women’s immigration experiences in New Zealand, which often led to tension between their shifting identities and their desire to find meaning and coherence, were revealed through the utilization of both views of positioning.

2.3 Historical and Statistical Data

2.3.1 The History of New Zealand Immigration

Fifty years after Captain James Cook arrived in 1769, New Zealand was still

seen by Europeans as the most remote country on earth; a strange and lonely land reached after one hundred days on dangerous seas; its coasts were thought treacherous, its inhabitants bloodthirsty; only exceptional reasons led people to set off for such a distant corner of the globe. (Philips, 2006, page unavailable)

This is in direct contrast with how travelers see New Zealand today, especially Filipinos. People from the Philippines see New Zealand as a country of opportunities. "Most Filipinos come here to seek financial security and to have a better standard of living" (Baral, 1995, p. 157).

Among the earliest visitors to New Zealand were sealers and whalers from England, America, Scotland, Ireland, Scandinavia, Spain, India, and China.

The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 marked some significant beginnings in the immigration history of New Zealand. The Treaty recognized British authority in New Zealand; it gave British immigrants legal rights as citizens; and it ensured that, for the years to come, most immigrants to New Zealand would come from the United Kingdom. Over the next century, the British were the most favored immigrants to this country. New Zealand also sought immigrants (who could be easily assimilated with its Anglo-Saxon culture) from other European countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Germany, who were encouraged to seek new economic opportunities in the colony. The search for gold and later market gardening gave notable exceptions to one non-European group, a small number of Chinese workers who eventually became settlers themselves.

A downturn in New Zealand's economy in the 1880's made the locals less tolerant of newcomers who were not Anglo-Saxons. Asians, especially, were seen as a threat to the employment prospects of New Zealanders. Such attitudes were apparent on the imposition of the poll tax on Chinese immigrants in 1881, followed in 1888 and 1896 by further measures increasing the tax and limiting the number of Chinese

immigrants per ship's tonnage.

With restrictions against Asians, New Zealand was becoming more English:

At a time of large-scale immigration, the number of New Zealand residents who were not born in the British Empire rose by a mere 63 persons between 1901 and 1916. The Chinese stayed on under public sufferance at a time of rising racism, but their numbers were not replenished. (Philips, 2006, page unavailable)

The Great War of 1914-1918 had a significant effect on the immigration system of New Zealand. The government passed the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act, a "white New Zealand" policy, making the country "98% British" (Philips, 2006), requiring an entry permit for people not of British or Irish descent. This Act strengthened the relationship between Britain and its empire, paving the way for the restoration of assisted emigration to Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

The Second World War compelled the New Zealand government to make special considerations in allowing Jews, Polish, Yugoslavs, Greeks, and Asians entry to New Zealand. However, these small compromises did not change the fact that New Zealand still remained over "85% British" (Philips, 2006, page unavailable).

The world's changing attitudes towards racism made it hard for New Zealand to impose and preserve its "white New Zealand" policy. By the early 1970's, a large number of Asians, including Filipinos, were granted short-term entry to New Zealand through a Commonwealth scholarship scheme for students called the Colombo Plan. A few married New Zealanders and settled. From 1977, the arrival of South-East Asians was also dominated by refugees from Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

New Zealand's "immigrant policy was reviewed in 1986 to accommodate new economic and political considerations. Preferential source countries, specifically Britain, were dropped and new selections were introduced" (Spoonley, 2005, p. 19). The new policy was designed to attract highly educated, skilled professionals, and relatively wealthy entrepreneurs. The Immigration Act 1987 under the Labour government was inspired by the growing geo-political significance of Asia to the New Zealand economy as well as an answer to the ageing workforce. It gave emphasis to the prospective immigrants' skills and personal traits rather than national or ethnic origin. The Act highlighted the immigrants' potential contributions to the New Zealand economy, family reunification, and the country's commitment to accept refugees.

The introduction of the point system in 1991 by the National government, which put emphasis on age, skills, education, and capital, paved the way to a multi-cultural New Zealand:

A point system, however, was not used as the only criterion by which all applicants for residence were assessed. The existing social and humanitarian streams with their categories of family reunion, marriage, humanitarian grounds and refugee status were retained (Zodgekar, 1997, p. 12).

There followed a considerable influx of people from China, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, and Philippines. This era was especially significant for Filipinos, including the women in the present study, who all came to New Zealand after the introduction of the point system. Many well-educated and skilled Filipinos took advantage of the system's emphasis on skills and education. The Philippines' unstable social, economic, and political system made New Zealand a very attractive immigration destination. Family reunification, employment, and inter-racial marriages were the three main reasons for Filipino immigration to New Zealand at that time. The latter caused a major representation of Filipino women who were often referred to as "mail-order brides" by the New Zealand media. Such perception was resented and was seen as misleading by most Filipinas in this country. The point system made it a

lot easier for many Filipinos to be granted permanent residency in New Zealand, especially for the highly-educated and highly-skilled:

A scale of 1-10 points was allocated to two out of four subsections for the category of employability, namely education/qualification; business/work experience; special skills, including entrepreneurial; and offers of skilled employment. A candidate could score a maximum of 20 points for employability. (Walker, 1995, p. 294)

However, the point system did not live up to the expectations of most immigrants, especially in terms of employment. Migrant job-seekers discovered the following as some of the major factors that contributed to their unsuccessful employment: no local referees to vouch for their skills and competence; lack of a local network of contacts; unrecognized overseas institution that awarded the qualification; not having the required license to practice a trade; and in some cases, xenophobic New Zealand employers (McKinnon, 1996). They found that they had to retrain, upskill, and acquire multi-skills to increase their employment prospects in the new country. According to Statistics New Zealand (2004), immigrants with university qualifications who were unemployed or working in low-skilled occupations were most likely to be recent immigrants and from non-English speaking countries, predominantly in the Asian region. They were also more likely to be women and to be relatively young.

The 1990's was dominated by mixed feelings among New Zealanders about Asian immigrants. Winston Peters' (leader of the New Zealand First Party) blunt comments about the National government's radical decision to open up immigration to wealthy East Asians received some support as well as criticisms from New Zealanders. Since the Asian influx landed in a period of major social change and mixed economic performance, negative attitudes about Asian immigrants were mostly directed toward the well-off ones who became more conspicuous (especially in the urban areas) because of the businesses that they ran, the luxurious properties that they occupied, and the expensive vehicles that they drove. This issue

was not so much the case with the Filipino immigrants, the majority of whom came under the family reunification and general skills categories. However, those who were opposing Asian immigration saw the Asians' presence as a possible takeover of jobs from New Zealanders, especially when 1993 Immigration Minister Roger Maxwell claimed that:

There would be a severe skills shortage in New Zealand if immigrants were refused entry... While there are more New Zealanders unemployed than we would like, many of these people do not have the skills employers are seeking. On the other hand, most migrants are highly skilled.
(“Immigration/Employment Debate”, n.d.)

In 1994, Winston Peters called for a radical reduction in immigration (“Immigrants Taking our Jobs”, 1994). He criticized the government for letting foreigners in when there were not enough jobs for New Zealanders. He also claimed that New Zealanders were being forced to take their skills overseas because immigrants were getting jobs ahead of them.

Based on the summary of surveys conducted by the National Business Review, “respondents thought there were too many immigrants from Asia... the current levels of immigration we have are ruining the country” (McKinnon, 1996, p.57). However, Ward and Masgoret’s (2004) pilot survey on New Zealanders’ attitudes toward immigrants and immigration revealed that New Zealanders’ negative attitudes toward Asians have subsided. New Zealanders are now largely accepting of a multicultural ideology, and that they have moderately positive attitudes toward immigrants, in spite of their relatively infrequent contact with them. More positive attitudes and endorsement of immigration policies tend to be found in those who are younger, female, non-Maori, have higher levels of education and income, are overseas born, and speak languages other than English and Maori.

More than two hundred years after the arrival of Captain James Cook, New Zealand is no longer seen by travelers as an unappealing destination. Most people from every

part of the world, including Philippines, now see New Zealand as an attractive prospect - clean and green, as well as socially, economically, and politically stable. New Zealanders of Asian origin today enjoy essentially unrestricted freedom and opportunities as opposed to how they were regarded during the 1800's. This is evident in 2003, when the New Zealand government issued a formal apology for the wrongs caused by the upholding of the imposition of poll tax on Chinese immigrants over the course of several decades, and has committed to entering discussions with the descendants of those who paid the poll tax on an appropriate form of reconciliation. Today, many of the Asian immigrants have not considered it necessary to acquire New Zealand citizenship, since their Permanent Residency status gives them almost all the rights of citizenship, including the right to vote, and an entitlement to a wide variety of benefits and services being made available by the New Zealand welfare state. These days, deep-seated racism is not a major issue for Asians in this country. However, the impression of ethnocentrism, which McKinnon (1996, p. 60) describes as "soft racism", is still apparent. It is that sense of "otherness", where it is assumed that Asians have little in common with New Zealanders in terms of thoughts, opinions, and life experiences. Winston Peters' outspoken remarks regarding the country's immigration policy concerning wealthy East Asians is an example of this:

We have now reached the point where you can wander down Queen Street in Auckland and wonder if you are still in New Zealand or some other country. (Manning, 2005, page unavailable)

The government's lax immigration laws are changing the face of our country forever. At this rate, it won't take long for New Zealand to be unrecognizable. ("New Zealand - The Last Asian Colony," 2003, page unavailable)

We are being dragged into the status of an Asian colony and it is time that New Zealanders were placed first in their own country. ("Winston Peters' Memorable Quotes," 2005, page unavailable)

The 2001 and 2006 Censuses show that the ethnic make-up of the New Zealand society has significantly changed. Figure 1 shows a considerable increase in the number of Asians in this country. For the first time, “New Zealander” was a separate category. Of those who identified themselves as New Zealanders, 12.9% also identified with at least one other ethnic group, as shown in Figure 2 (“QuickStats“, 2006).

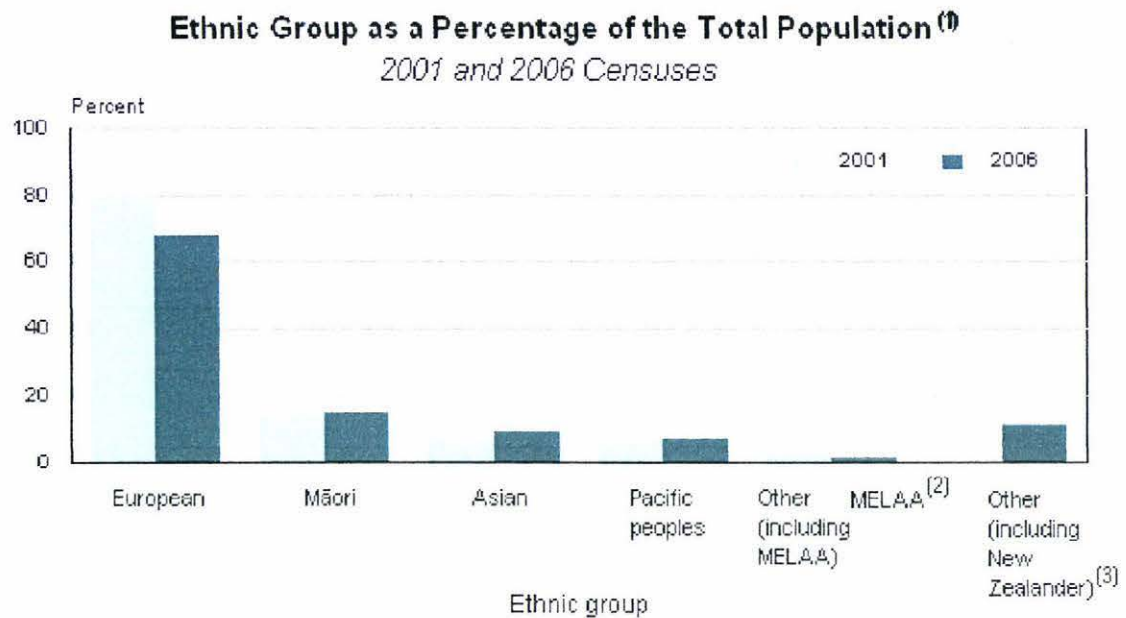
[Figure 1]

Seven Largest Asian Ethnic Groups in NZ
2001-2006 Censuses

Ethnic Group	2001 Count	2006 Count	Percentage Change
Chinese	105,057	147,570	40.5
Indian	62,190	104,583	68.2
Korean	19,026	30,792	61.8
Filipino	11,091	16,938	52.7
Japanese	10,023	11,910	18.8
Sri Lankan	7,011	8,310	18.5
Cambodian	5,268	6,918	31.3

Source: QuickStats About Culture and Identity, Census 2006, Statistics NZ

[Figure 2]



(1) People were able to identify with more than one ethnic group, therefore percentages do not add up to 100.

(2) MELAA, or Middle Eastern and Latin American and African, was introduced as a new category for the 2006 Census. Previously, 'MELAA' responses were allocated to the 'Other ethnicity' category.

(3) 'New Zealander' was introduced as a new response option for the 2006 Census. 'New Zealander' responses form part of the 'Other ethnicity' category. For 2006, 'New Zealander' responses had the largest contribution towards the 'Other ethnicity' category. For 2001, and previous censuses, 'New Zealander' was counted with the 'European' category.

Source: QuickStats About New Zealand's Population and Dwellings, Census 2006, Statistics NZ

Modern methods of mass transportation have made migration a world-wide phenomenon. Today, no one nation comprises only of one ethnic group, with one language, one religion, and one culture. Over the years, the face, color, and language of New Zealand society has dramatically changed - from a "white New Zealand" to a multi-cultural nation.

2.3.2 Studies on Asian and Women Migrants in New Zealand

Several studies have been conducted on the migration experiences of Asians and women in New Zealand. These studies focused on major issues such as acculturation and identity.

Works on acculturation include Baral's (1995) investigation of Filipino migrants in Auckland, where she concluded that economic and political instability in the Philippines, as well as "colonial mentality" (p. 151) were the main reasons for Filipino migration to New Zealand. Her study revealed that language (different type of English from what they are used to), job opportunities, transportation, slow pace of life in New Zealand, and weather are the major problems that her participants encountered in their host country. However,

it is not surprising that all the participants would rather overcome these problems than to go back to the Philippines permanently. The hardships they had to overcome in coming here are little compared to the realization of their dream. The chance to live and work overseas is a dream for most Filipinos. (p.186)

Beal and Sos' (1999) analysis of Taiwanese immigration to Australia and New Zealand suggests that acculturation and assimilation do not come easily:

Having to substitute unfamiliar practices for sacred traditional habits, adopting a new language, altering one's ethics and morals, eating different food, coping with racism, marginalization and anomie, making new friends and leaving family behind are just some of the tests that migrants are faced with. (p. 59)

Ho, Bedford, and Bedford (2000) focused on the coping strategies of "astronaut families" and "parachute kids" of immigrants from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and

Korea, with the former referring to “families which contain members who return to their country of origin to work, often leaving their spouses and children in the country of destination” (p.10), and the latter referring to “the children being left with one or no parents in the country of destination” (p.10). Such split family arrangements were the results of the migrants’ inability to find appropriate employment in New Zealand due to non-recognition of overseas qualifications and experiences, and were considered a better alternative than being forced to live in welfare benefits.

Yee (2003) focused on the adaptation problems of Asians in New Zealand. Such problems were associated with language, employment, disruption of family and social support networks, acculturation attitudes, lack of friendly reception by surrounding host population, and drop in personal socio-economic status following migration.

Selvarajah and Petzall (2003) examined the adjustment process and adaptability of the Chinese migrant spouses in Auckland. The results suggested that the adjustment process experienced by the participants was based on a number of factors such as the amount of information and knowledge they had about New Zealand prior to their migration; the background of the spouses; and their ability to cope in the new environment.

The following studies dealt with the issue of identity: Vasil and Yoon (1996) explored “the experience of New Zealanders of Asian origins, especially how that experience is different now from earlier times” (p.1). The authors showed how early Asians in New Zealand were perceived negatively by the dominant society because of their race. They also showed how Asia’s growing economic and political significance in New Zealand has influenced the way Asians are perceived in this country in recent years.

Lidgard's (1996) study on East Asian migration to New Zealand shows that:

Despite their minority status, Asian people are likely to have a great impact on their new countries. The importance of these groups of migrants lies more in their characteristics than in their numbers. (p.1)

Many of the Asians who are moving to New Zealand are highly educated and skilled people, and some are very wealthy. Lidgard's respondents revealed that New Zealand's physical environment was a major contributing factor for making the move to New Zealand.

O'Reilly, Fenwick, and Kuiper's (1979) study of sixty-two women immigrants in Christchurch reveals that the major areas of difficulty and common concern of the participants were related to the questions of status, identity, culture, social acceptance for both themselves and their children, and the establishing of relationships with New Zealanders.

Jansen (1995) and Ip (1990) tell the stories of immigrant women in New Zealand. Jansen (1995) gives an account of the experiences of ten immigrant women from India, Czechoslovakia, Tokelau Islands, Chile, Vietnam, Tonga, Laos, Poland, Philippines, and Iran. The author describes how life used to be in these women's home countries, and how life is now in their host country, New Zealand. Although they came from different cultures, their experiences revolve around the following common themes: men and women have their own roles to fulfill in the family as well as in the society; religion is an important aspect of their lives; education opens the door for better opportunities; New Zealand is seen as a land of opportunities; adapting to a new environment and a different culture is hard work; discrimination, prejudice, and indifference are major issues; living in New Zealand has its advantages and disadvantages; and being in New Zealand does not change the way they are. Ip (1990) documents in oral history form the stories of eight Chinese women, "reflecting on both the Chinese society from which they emigrated and the New Zealand life into which they tried to fit" (p. 9). Through their stories, the

author illustrates the changing Chinese community in New Zealand society. The book starts with the story of Kathleen Pih-Chang, who arrived in 1908, “when China was still under the Qing Dynasty and New Zealand had just become a Dominion.” It concludes with the story of Law-Wong Ying, who arrived in 1970, “while New Zealand was starting to feel the economic chill of the world oil crisis and the adverse effects of Britain’s entry into the European Common Market.” Just like the women in Jansen’s book, the stories of these remarkable women revolve around some common themes: number one rule - family loyalty above all else; emigration was a road to life; and New Zealand is home away from home.

Pio’s (2005) qualitative investigation of the working lives of Indian women migrants in New Zealand focused on the issues of acculturation and identity, showing how these women faced the difficulties encountered in entering the workforce and in sustaining work, creating complexities in their lives as minority ethnic women.

Pishief’s (1999) study looks at the language learning experience of one New Zealand community in Whangarei, and identifies some of the formal and informal sources of English 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. Analysis of the study’s data show that lack of relevant information, coupled with unhelpful government policies; high cost of formal English and other courses; lack of bridges to help professionals re-enter their fields of expertise; and difficulty of interacting with native speakers on a more than superficial level, are some of the major factors that these immigrants experience in their new environment.

All these investigations, including the present study, have one thing in common - people from Asia migrate to New Zealand hoping for an opportunity, whether it is

the opportunity to live in a cleaner environment; more stable economic, political, and social situation; or better education. With migration comes acceptance of change. However, for some people, change and progress are resisted when it comes to the values and beliefs that they grew up with, especially those ones that are deeply ingrained in them. In this modern day and age, where people are becoming more aware of human rights issues and multiculturalism, most of the participants in the studies mentioned are still experiencing prejudice and discrimination because of their race, or just simply being seen as the “other”.

Studies mentioned above that dealt with the issue of identity failed to look at some other significant issues that go beyond the changes of identities - issues that acknowledge the subjects’ personal agency in the midst of power struggles and issues of legitimacy. The new framework on the study of identity that the present investigation utilized, has filled the gap in the literature regarding the identity issues of one of the under-studied groups in New Zealand, the Filipina migrants.

2.3.3 The Philippine Culture

The Philippine archipelago (7,107 islands), which lies in the West Pacific Ocean, is a country with a rich cultural background. “The Filipinos are of Malay origin with some Chinese, American, and Spanish admixtures” (Powell, 1998, p. 594). Its cultural diversity is easily reflected in its language, which comprises about 100 different dialects. Filipinos are at least bilingual, knowing their native regional dialect, and Filipino (the National Language of the Philippines) and/or English as their second or third language. English is widely used in areas such as education, media, government, and commerce, and is used as a lingua franca throughout the archipelago. While the Tagalog dialect was made the basis for the official national language, the question of the “Filipino language” evokes a lot of debates and controversy among the Filipino population, especially for the non-native-Tagalog-speaking Filipinos who may show negative bias against and resistance to the choice

of Tagalog as the foundation of the national language. This is also true for food. According to Butalid-Echaves (1999), what one Filipino considers a typical Filipino food would be totally foreign to another Filipino coming from another region. And the list can go on, often involving variable issues such as regionalism, and sentiments about history and ethnic relations.

Colonial rule in the Philippines is clearly reflected in its religion and language. According to Baltazar (n.d.), in the 16th century, the Spanish successfully introduced Christianity (1521-1898), and to this day, 90% of the population claim to follow Christian faiths. The American's rule over the Philippines (1898-1945) gave the Filipinos the opportunity to learn English. According to Gonzales (1980), there was an evident desire on the part of the Filipinos to learn English as quickly as possible because of the incentives given to them by the Americans in terms of career opportunities, government service, and politics. To this day, English is almost on a par with Filipino in importance for it has been made not only an official language along with Filipino, but also the medium of instruction in all schools. In fact, English is more widely spoken in the Philippines than is Filipino. According to Baltazar (n.d.):

Because of the many Philippine dialects used in many parts of the islands, it is a common phenomenon to find communities of Filipinos coming from different regions using English because it is the only language they can communicate in efficiently and profitably (p.3).

Filipinos are bound together by common values and traits. Among these are:

- *Respect for authority* - Their respect for authority is based on the special honor paid to elder members of the family and, by extension, to anyone in a position of power. This characteristic is generally conducive to the smooth running of society, although, when taken to extreme, it can develop into an authoritarianism that discourages independent judgment and individual responsibility and initiative ("Philippines", 1991). This value is reflected in the

importance that Filipinos give to titles that signify seniority or authority. It is considered inappropriate for Filipinos to address elder members of the family by their first names alone. The word “kuya” (koo-ya) is used before an older brother’s name, and “ate” (a-t-e) before an elder sister’s name. These titles are also extended to older non-members of the family to signify closeness and respect. Given that, it can be imagined that Filipinos in New Zealand, especially the new arrivals, find it very uncomfortable to address people in authority by their first names. Filipino parents in New Zealand initially find it awkward to address their children’s teachers by their first names. Titles such as Mrs. or Mr. are deemed more appropriate.

- *High regard for personal and family reputation* - Most Filipinos value their reputation highly, as it is an extension of their conservative upbringing, especially when it comes to moral issues such as women’s virginity and marriage. In spite of the influences of some Western societies, which are often seen through mass media, most Filipinos still adhere to these values very strongly. Those who deviate from the conventional are often seen as morally wrong. Andres and Andres (1987) offered this rationale:

One norm of morality in the Philippines is based on ‘group-centeredness’ or ‘group-thinking’. One’s in-group determines for the individual what is right or wrong. ‘What other people will say’ usually determines Filipino moral behavior. His conscience is influenced from the outside - ‘What his family, his relatives, and friends, or his peer group think or say’ is what counts. (p. 34)

In some cases, for those liberal-minded Filipinos who are bound to be discredited through their unconventional beliefs, Western countries such as New Zealand are viewed as a sanctuary.

- *Familial piety* - Another important aspect of the Filipino values and culture is the strong family system. The Filipino family consists not just of parents and children, as in the case of the present-day Western family, but is an extended family with mutual kinship. A Filipino’s loyalty goes first to the family. Identity

is deeply embedded in the web of kinship. According to Butalid-Echaves (1999), the Filipino finds his identity in his family connections rather than as an individual in his own rights. In addition, the individual is likely to receive almost complete support from his/her family should he/she become involved in difficulties of any sort. On the other hand, one is expected to offer unsolicited support and help to other family members in need.

It is normative that one owes support, loyalty, and trust to one's close kin. Children who have come of age feel a strong obligation to help and support their younger siblings as well as their ageing parents both morally and financially. It is not very unusual to find an elderly parent in a young family's home, together with the husband's and the wife's younger siblings. It is also a common practice for adults to live with their parents and only decide to leave when they start their own family, or in other circumstances, when they pursue further education or find employment elsewhere:

If a Filipino young man or young woman announces that he was through living with his parents and is going to live on his own, this would be taken as a sign of rebellion against parental authority. (Andres and Andres, 1987, p. 9)

Family ties are not broken by marriage, distance of residence, or by a change in the social status of a family member. This kind of obligation is reflected in the overseas Filipinos' economic links with their families in the Philippines. The migrants are often obliged to send money back home to support their ageing parents, to finance their siblings' education, or to pay for any miscellaneous expenses that their families may incur:

By Western standards, the Filipino parents can be considered overprotective and intrusive. However, if one understands this seemingly unreasonable control in the context of the Philippine culture wherein exists the belief in the primacy of the extended family over that of the individual and that the only source of emotional, economic, and moral support is the family, one

will be more tolerant of such actuations. (Andres and Andres, 1987, p. 6)

- *Smooth social interaction* - Most Filipinos, if not all, are collectivists by nature. Triandis describes collectivism as putting importance on group interdependence, harmony in interpersonal relations, and conformity to group norms (Phinney, Ong, and Madden, 2000). Claudio-Perez (1998) offered this description of a Filipino:

He will go along with the consensus of the group, even act pleasantly, when he feels hostile. He rarely raises his voice and is careful about criticizing others. On the job, he often uses euphemisms in order to preserve a working relationship, for example, no public reprimand of a subordinate. (p.24)

This is also an extension of the Filipinos' more restrained attitude as opposed to Westerners' outspokenness. Filipinos are more inhibited when it comes to expressing their personal opinions:

Strobel describes the Filipinos' indirect communication pattern as the evocative ways of expressing the need or want of something... it is grounded in the value of keen sensitivity to a complex of verbal and non-verbal cues in a given communication context. (Cordova, 2000, p. 345)

For them, "frankness is a breach of courtesy, righteousness, and eccentricity" (Andres and Andres, 1987, p.11). Harmony is very important to Filipinos, to the extent of sacrificing one's own opinion for the sake of collective agreement. This is something that most Filipinos find difficult to adjust to in New Zealand. Some Filipinos find New Zealanders' straightforwardness as being less respectful and lacking in manners.

2.3.4 Filipino Immigration to New Zealand

Early Filipino migrants to New Zealand can be traced back as far as seven decades ago, where six people indicated the Philippines Islands as their country of birth in the 1936 Census. Under the Colombo Plan in 1962, the Philippines became one of the first Asian countries to have visa fees waived (Walrond, 2006). Their number

gradually increased in the 1970's. Different circumstances motivated them to relocate to New Zealand. According to Baral (1995, p. 151):

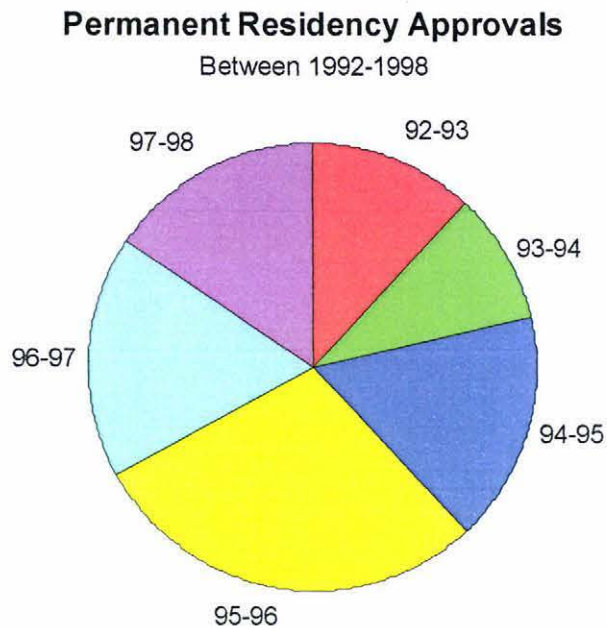
Aside from the economic and political reasons, there are other factors that cause Filipinos to go overseas. A strong factor is the existence of 'colonial mentality', or the belief that anything from and about overseas or the West is good and desirable.

The Americans' 37-year presence in the Philippines has also influenced the Filipinos' concept of Western culture and how they are perceived by their neighboring countries:

The typical Filipino would consider his pattern of thinking and behavior Asian, yet he is perceived by his South-East Asian neighbors as more American than Asian. The typical Filipino has a predilection for things American: for American-made goods, for American-free enterprise, American-type democracy and modernity. (Baltazar, 2005, p.2)

Filipino migrants to New Zealand were a combination of individuals being reunited with their families; professionals looking for better job opportunities; and women entering inter-racial marriages. During the late 1980's, there were around 2,000 Filipinos in this country. The immigration policy adopting the point system in 1991 as well as favoring skilled migrants, opened the doors for a large number of Filipinos, mostly well-educated, who were granted permanent residency in New Zealand (as shown in Figures 3 and 4).

[Figure 3]



Source: Thomson, B. (1999)

[Figure 4]

Categories for Permanent Residency Approvals Among Filipinos
1992-1998

Category	Percentage
Business Investors	0%
General Skills	61%
Family Reunification	33%
Humanitarian	2%
Refugee	0%
Other	4%

Source: Thomson, B. (1999)

The 1990's also saw the arrival of many Filipina migrants through marriage to New

Zealand men. Such marriages were often initiated by introductions through friends or by answering personal advertisements. Leckie (1995) illustrates how some Filipinas were portrayed in New Zealand:

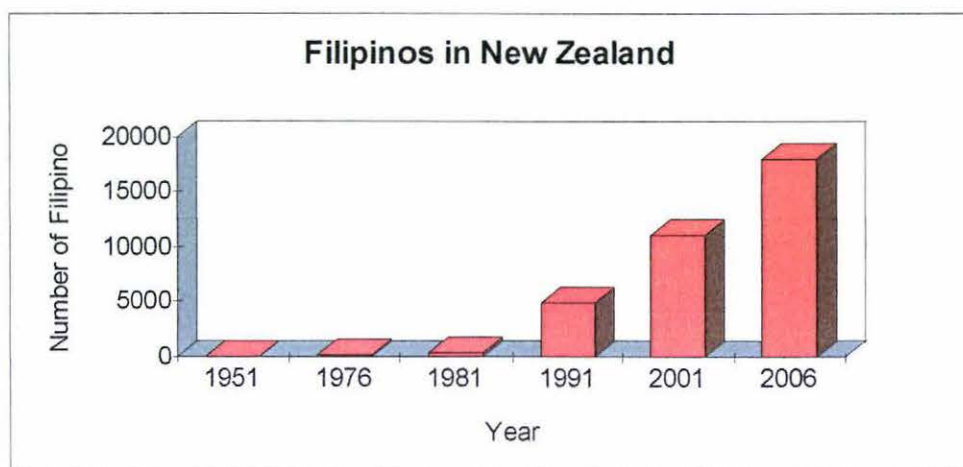
A striking example which the media stirred up in the 1980's was the misrepresentation of Filipina "mail order" brides. Several Filipino women regard this representation as being more exploitative than their marriage to New Zealanders. (p.52)

Some Filipinas deemed this representation as insulting and offensive. For these women, the decision to migrate and be estranged from their families and society in the Philippines was a complex decision. In spite of the large number of inter-racial marriages among Filipinos, marriage to a foreigner is still seen as something out of the ordinary in the Philippines. Huge dissimilarities in terms of beliefs, customs, and language are some of the major factors why some parents feel adamant about their children entering inter-racial marriages. Some Filipinas who are married to New Zealanders feel that there is a need to move away from a superficial representation of women's experiences and affirm women's agency in migration and settlement in an environment that is culturally and linguistically different from what they have been accustomed to. Dahlia, a Filipina who came to New Zealand in the 1980's (Jansen, 1995), describes her experiences as a wife to a New Zealander as an assertion of her strong points as an individual. Life in a foreign country changed her life, a change that entailed a lot of tolerance, positive thinking, goodwill and giving, and open-mindedness to all the complexities of living in a foreign country.

Based on the 2001 Census, there was a marked gender imbalance in the New Zealand Filipino population, with women making up to 64% of the group. Though some inter-racial marriages have been successful, some did not last. According to Walrond (2006), issues such as sending money to relatives in the Philippines, and differences in parents' approach to child-rearing in terms of how much Filipino culture and language they retained could cause tension.

According to the 1991 Census, there were 4,917 Filipinos in New Zealand. This number dramatically increased to 11,091 in 2001. In 2006, there were officially 17,928 Filipinos in New Zealand (as shown in Figure 5), accounting for 5% of the Asian population in this country - reason enough to undertake a study on Filipino migrants in New Zealand.

[Figure 5]



Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter outlines the research questions explored in this study. It also describes the study's research approach and design, the procedures involved in the recruitment and selections of subjects, and the methods of data collection and analysis.

3.1 The Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in the present study:

- What stages do the participants go through while adjusting to New Zealand life?
What are the factors that influence their culture learning/adaptation process?
- What new identities and competencies are negotiated during this process?
- How do power relations and agency influence these negotiations?

3.2 The Research Approach

This research study utilized the qualitative approach in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' migration experiences in New Zealand. My aim was to explore the experiences of five Filipinas in New Zealand by talking to them about their time in this country. I hope they will serve as an inspiration and guidance to other women migrants in New Zealand. The present study is also closely related to Bogdan and Biklen's (1992, pp. 29-32), concept of qualitative research:

- *"Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected are in the forms of words or pictures rather than numbers."*

The aim of the present study is to describe and illustrate the subjects' personal unique experiences as migrant women in New Zealand through the analysis of open-ended interviews. The qualitative approach was used as a means for describing and attempting to understand observed regularities, patterns, commonalities, and/or themes in what the subjects do, say, and report as their experience. By its nature, qualitative research enables the achievement of a level of understanding and interpretation which is not possible through conventional experimental or survey design (the quantitative approach).

- *"It is anecdotal. It is because they often contain quotations and try to describe what a particular situation or view of the world is like in narrative form."*

I conducted open-ended interviews with each subject for the purpose of collecting a first person narrative. Their stories were used as a vehicle in understanding certain aspects of human behavior, with each case narrative portrayed with its unique features and contexts. Following Shkedi's (2005, p. 164) description of collective case narrative, the present study contains five individual narratives, which are presented as separate sections. In addition, the report contains chapters covering the cross-case analysis and the results.

- *"It demands that the world be approached with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied."*

I looked at the collected data very closely by using line-by-line analysis, where every statement was treated as significant in creating a bigger picture of the subjects' migration experiences in New Zealand.

- *"The researcher tends to analyze the data inductively."*

Although I began with a general notion about some aspects of migration, I attempted to make sense of the subjects' shared experiences without imposing pre-existing understandings on the research setting. I gathered data through in-depth

interviews to learn more about the events under study, bearing in mind that there was always a possibility for growth and discovery of unanticipated directions. Theories were formed based on the data gathered.

- *“It is concerned with what are called participant perspectives.”*

“Qualitative researchers appreciate the uniqueness of individual cases and contexts and their role in constructing the reality of experience” (Shkedi, 2005, p. 3). The present study documents each participant’s personal understanding and interpretation of her own experiences, and how she herself sees and structures the social world in which she lives. I examined how the person who goes through a particular experience perceives and interprets it, and makes sense of it. Since the perception and interpretation of events is influenced by the context in which they happen, this approach supports what Berger (2004, p. 30) refers to as “contextualized knowledge - how particular individuals within particular sociopolitical circumstances and at a particular time and place view themselves and their experiences and what meaning they attribute to these experiences.”

3.3 Recruitment and Selection of Subjects

The selection of the participants in the study took place with the help of a third party, who was known to both the participants and me. I felt that it was necessary for the participants to be approached by someone whom they were familiar with if they were to share their personal experiences. The following criteria were used in the selection of participants:

- First-generation migrant to New Zealand whose minimum length of stay is three months
- Adult Filipina
- Born and spent most of her childhood and adult life in the Philippines before coming to New Zealand

Five women (as shown in Figure 6) from Wellington were chosen to participate in

the study. My decision to utilize in-depth, resource-consuming interviews for data collection limited the possibility of collecting data from a large number of participants. The choice of Wellington as the point of recruitment was simply due to practical limitations, with the recruiter and me as residents of the city. The participants' occupation and marital status were not considered in the recruitment process.

These five women were given copies of the Information About the Research Project (see Appendix 1) and Consent Form (see Appendix 2). Questionnaire (see Appendix 3) were posted within a week, and appointments for interviews were set. Each participant was asked to choose her own pseudonym to protect her privacy.

[Figure 6]

Participants' Profile			
NAME	AGE GROUP	LENGTH OF STAY IN NZ	IMMIGRATION STATUS
Gloria	45-50	17 years	NZ Citizen
Anna	45-50	7 years	Permanent Resident
Marilyn	35-40	11 years	NZ Citizen
Maria	35-40	6 years	Permanent Resident
Lucy	20-25	5 years	Permanent Resident

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The initial plan for data collection involved demographic questionnaires, followed by open-ended interviews a week later.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part One (Q1-Q3) asked for some

demographic information, Part Two (Q4-Q7) asked for information regarding their pre-departure experiences (pre-contact phase), Part Three (Q8-Q15) asked for some information during the contact phase in New Zealand. The questions were written in two versions, English and Filipino. In writing the Filipino version of the questionnaire, the procedure of back-translation was used. According to Brislin (1986, cited in Butalid-Echaves, 1999), in back-translation, one bilingual translates from the source to the target language, and another blindly translates back to the source. In the present study, the source language was English. Being fluent in both English and Filipino, I wrote the first translation from English (source language) to Filipino (target language) myself. A native Filipino speaker, who is also fluent in English, was asked to translate the Filipino version back to English. Both English versions, the original and the back-translation, were compared. Each participant was asked to choose from the two versions, and all participants chose English.

Another Filipina migrant, who was not a part of the study, was asked to complete both versions of the questionnaire for comments and suggestions. It was suggested that Q10 be revised.

Original Question

10. Are you

- Single?
- Married? What is your husband's nationality?
- In a de facto relationship? What is your partner's nationality?
- Divorced? What is your ex-husband's nationality?
- Widow? What was your husband's nationality?

Revised Question

10. Are you

- Single?
- Married/in a de facto relationship/divorced/widow?
- What is/was your husband's/partner's nationality?

It was thought that some of the participants might find the original question offensive especially the question regarding de facto relationships, since living together outside marriage is still viewed as something inappropriate by most traditional Filipinos.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather some basic information about the subjects in order to prepare me, the interviewer, for the interviews to follow. Since my familiarity with the subjects varied - one I knew very well, one I had briefly met, and three I had never met before - I felt that it was important for me to have prior background knowledge of the interviewees so as to assist me in the exploration of concepts which may be relevant to my study as well as to the participants themselves. Three of the participants completed and returned the questionnaires before the interviews. However, the other two had not completed and returned the questionnaires before the interviews due to very tight schedules, and suggested that the questions be asked during the interviews instead. Nonetheless, while the interviews with the participants who did not complete and return the questionnaires prior to the interviews were somewhat longer than the others, they were not different in quality. It so happened that I was not personally familiar with the two women who had not completed and returned the questionnaires, therefore interviews with them had to start with the "getting to know each other stage", which was left out in the interviews with those who completed and returned the questionnaires. On the other hand, the "getting to know each other stage" at the beginning of the interviews turned out to be an advantage for the two women without the completed questionnaires, since it helped establish a rapport before moving on to the more serious matters. The interviews with those who managed to complete and return the questionnaires were a lot shorter and straight to the point, which worked out quite well for them because of their very busy schedules.

The Interviews

I originally planned to conduct individual face-to-face unstructured interviews. Open-ended interviews bear more resemblance to conversations than to formal, structured ones. This would give me the chance to explore some concepts that may be significant to the interviewees themselves. I explored a few general topics to help reveal the interviewees' views on migration, while respecting the way in which the subject framed and structured her responses. A pilot interview with another Filipina was conducted in order to assess the effectiveness of the interview techniques. Due to accessibility and time restrictions, two of the five women suggested telephone interviews instead of face-to-face interviews. For those who opted for a face-to-face interview, interviews were conducted in the participants' homes where they felt more relaxed and at ease.

The open-ended interview did not work very well in the case of one of the telephone interviews, as the subject was quite hesitant to explore some subjects. I assumed that this could be attributed to two important factors - first, the interviewee and I did not know each other personally, and second, the use of telephone interview probably affected the kind of connection I was hoping to establish. I found myself switching to the structured interview to accommodate the interviewee's reluctance to open up.

Looking back through the transcripts, the voice-to-voice only (telephone) interviews did affect the flow of the whole interview process, and the way the interviewees responded. Because telephones have lower potential information-carrying capacities for conveying messages than face-to-face communication, the interviewer and the interviewee's need to be competent as senders and receivers can even be more critical; therefore, it can be assumed that the person on the other line may have had difficulty in coordinating her non-verbal cues. Although it is impossible to transmit facial expressions for communicating emotional mood in this audio-only medium, the transcripts show that a shift in pitch at the end of a clause, a drawl on the final

syllable, and a drop in loudness - are all reflections of the speaker's emotions.

Apart from my inability to capture the non-verbal expressions of the participants who opted for the telephone interview, the data collected were found to be sufficient for initial analysis. However, in comparison, the face-to-face interview was the more effective way of collecting data, especially if the Filipinos' general attitudes toward communication are to be considered. Filipinos are generally more inhibited than New Zealanders when it comes to expressing their personal thoughts, and are more likely to use indirect communication patterns, which are mostly conveyed through non-verbal expressions - expressions that are impossible to capture in a telephone interview. Andres and Andres (1987, pp. 68-69) give a vivid description of the Filipinos' communication pattern:

The Filipino prefers to use body language rather than words to express himself... The silences for Filipinos together with the pauses between silences are very meaningful. They do convey messages. There is meaning often in the context of Filipinos' silences and pauses.

Each participant was initially informed that they had the choice to speak in English and/or Filipino during the interview. Four of the five women spoke mainly in English and only reverted to Filipino for some expressions that they found difficult to translate in English.

Each interview was audio-taped and transcribed for analysis. Although it can be assumed that some people may find it difficult to speak naturally when they know they are being recorded, which can lead to non-fluency, stammering, over-formality, or excessive informality, every effort was made to make the interviewees feel relaxed and comfortable.

3.5 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data in the present study was guided by Shkedi's (2005, p. 174) description of narrative-based theory which, according to the author, "is a document using the informants' language side by side with conceptual-theoretical language." Data collected from the interviews were transcribed and tabulated. A line-by-line analysis was utilized by writing down the researcher's initial impressions next to each significant line. These lines (quotations) were then grouped into two categories (as shown in Figure 7): pre-contact phase and contact phase. Further themes were generated and tabulated with each significant quotation.

[Figure 7]

Categories Generated from the Line-by-Line Analysis

Pre-contact Phase	Contact Phase
Life in the Philippines	Excitement and euphoria
Pre-departure information about NZ	Adjustments The weather The language Social life Customs, traditions, and values Homesickness Career
Reasons for coming to NZ	Immigration status
	Economic links with the Philippines
	Discrimination
	Self-identity
	Where is home?

Theoretical categories were then identified from these themes and relevant literature. I then attempted to explain the subjects' narratives in relation to the theoretical frameworks that developed during the research itself.

The initial analysis revealed the need for some issues to be explored further through follow-up interviews. All five women were telephoned six months after the initial interviews, and were asked if it was possible to clarify some issues. All of them agreed to answer further questions over the telephone. The follow-up interviews were structured to shed light on some specific topics arising from the original analysis. The conversations were more relaxed since the ice had already been broken during the first interviews. All follow-up interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis.

Chapter Four

The Women and Their Stories

4.1 Gloria

I met Gloria in 1996. My son had just started school, and we were both anxious to meet new friends. It was one of those busy mornings in school when I spotted this petite woman walking alongside a boy who was much taller than her. They were both fondly greeted by almost everyone as they made their way to the school building. She saw me and we both smiled at each other, acknowledging the fact that we had something in common. "*Pinay?*" (slang for Filipina), I fondly asked. "*Oo!*" (Yes), she replied. That was the start of a very long friendship.

Gloria was born and raised in Angeles City, Pampanga, one of the main cities in the Philippines, north of Manila. She grew up using Pampango (the dialect in Pampanga) as her first language, Tagalog (which the Filipino language is based on) as her second language, and English as her third language. Pampango was the language in her home, while Tagalog and English were used at school and at work. She also used Tagalog as a lingua franca when speaking to a Filipino whose first language was not Pampango. She used English as a lingua franca with those Filipinos who spoke neither Tagalog nor Pampango. She came from a middle-class family, and her father's remittances from working overseas provided Gloria and her family a very comfortable life in the Philippines. She and her brothers and sister were raised with traditional Filipino values. Their parents' words were considered law in their household. They maintained very close family ties and were responsible for each other, both emotionally and financially. Education was one of the important things that their parents instilled in them. Gloria and her siblings all have university degrees. She completed a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and worked as

an office administrator.

She came to New Zealand in 1990. A Filipina friend in Australia introduced her to a Yugoslav gentleman who was living in New Zealand. Unlike the misrepresented “mail-order bride”, Gloria and her then future husband went through a period of lengthy long distance courtship before their marriage. This is a reflection of an identity that Gloria was determined to retain, a manifestation of the Filipinos’ conservative attitude towards marriage.

The amount of information that Gloria had about New Zealand prior to her departure proved to be insignificant to her adaptation process. She did not know much about her future host country. Most of the information that she had was based on the correspondence between her and her future husband. She does not think that being informed about New Zealand before she left the Philippines would have helped in her adjustment:

Everything would still be the same when it comes to language and weather, but it would be nice to have family or Filipino friends from day one, that would help. You get homesick, you see. It’s good to talk to someone in your own language.

She had never been to any other country before, and coming to New Zealand was a total culture shock for her: “I knew a little bit about the Western culture, we hear about it, we see it on TV. But when you get here, it’s really different; it’s more than what you think it is.”

She found the weather extremely cold even in summer. The strange accent, the food, and the general standard of living, were all new to her. English was the language spoken in her home. Meals consisted mainly of New Zealand foods because of the scarcity of shops in her local area that were selling Filipino ingredients. However, substituting potatoes with rice was half the battle.

She did not know anyone else in New Zealand, and making friends was a struggle for her. Initially, her circle of friends only consisted of her husband's own friends. She was very thankful for her husband, who had been very supportive of her needs. She became dependent on him in every way, which influenced the way she viewed her personal "investment" in her host country. She did not find any reason to learn how to drive in spite of her husband's encouragements. Any dealings with the outside world were done by her husband: "He used to do all the talking. If he's not happy, he'd ring and argue on the phone." She was quite content with her role as a wife and a mother, an identity that could largely be based on an ideal identity that she had grown up with. She also viewed her identity as a migrant as more of a liability. She felt that the dissimilarities between the two cultures were quite daunting for her. Even though she was quite fluent in the English language, she still felt conversing with native English speakers very intimidating: "It's because I can't understand what they're talking about!"

After a few months, she started to form her own circle of friends, mostly Filipinos, whom she felt more comfortable with. At this stage, Gloria was still finding it comforting to adhere to her Filipino identity. Her anxiety of not being able to communicate with native speakers successfully led her to retreat into a known territory, with people who were similar to her.

Life turned upside down for Gloria when her husband suddenly passed away after five years of marriage, leaving behind an autistic child. With the blink of an eye, Gloria was left on her own with huge responsibilities, in a country that still seemed so strange after five years of residency. For the first time, she found the need to learn how to drive, the need to have the confidence to deal with native English speakers, and most importantly, the need to have the courage to deal with different types of people outside her comfort zone. Surrounding herself with her own kind was no longer sufficient. This time, she was forced to deal with the dominant majority. Suddenly, she found herself in a position where she had to re-assess her

personal “investment” in her host country, as well as re-evaluate her existing identities, thus finding the need to learn to negotiate new identities that would allow her to claim reception in more complex encounters.

The new roles that she has taken on have also changed the way she sees New Zealand and its people. Gloria has learnt that, most New Zealanders are outspoken, and that in New Zealand, one has to speak her mind in order to be heard - the exact opposite of what most Filipinos are used to. Filipinos are more restrained when it comes to their personal opinions, which is an extension of the importance they give to smooth social interaction. Harmony is very important to the Filipinos, to the extent of sacrificing one’s own opinions for the sake of collective agreement. Gloria’s changing identities are now influenced by her new realizations about her host country, thus giving her the opportunity to maximize her potential as well as to discover an inner self that was not apparent before. She has been in situations where she felt she was being ignored and treated unfairly because she is an Asian, thus positioning her own Asian identity in a negative way:

They think because you’re an Asian, you’re silly... I had to tell them straight. Before, I was too scared to say something. But now, I have even mastered how to argue in English! I had to tell my son’s teacher that she was rude to me on the phone, and that I was offended. There was also a time when I had a go at someone from the power company because I was billed too much. If I don’t say anything, no one else will do it for me.

Situations such as these show the power of human agency, where an individual can be capable of resisting and contesting contextual imposed identities. When asked how she learned to do this, she replied: “I don’t know, I just had to, I think it’s just a matter of having to.” As Gloria sees it, to tell a stranger, especially someone in authority, that she does not agree with him/her, or that she feels that her son deserves a better treatment than what he is given, are all intimidating to her. However, the need to speak for her child gave her courage. This was partly

influenced by how her husband used to handle these things as well as not having much choice on her part but to speak up. The conception of social identity as subject to change helps explain the way she handles such complex encounters - moving from previously identifying herself as an incompetent newcomer to claiming a new identity as a multicultural citizen with the power to impose reception.

Gloria has also learnt to ask for help if she needs to. This is very common in the Philippines, however, she is not comfortable with it here in New Zealand. Back home, one can ask a next door neighbor to keep an eye on her child while she runs some errands, or even ask for some spare sugar or salt - all of which will be repaid by reciprocating the favor in the future. However, Gloria feels that most New Zealanders have a different attitude. She used to be wary of asking New Zealanders for help or favors. She had a pre-conception that, like most Western societies, New Zealanders are very independent and that they expect everyone else to be the same:

They don't depend too much on their family, when they're eighteen, they live on their own, when they get old, they live on their own too, maybe that's just the way they are, but we're different, we always stick together.

Nevertheless, she has also encountered New Zealanders who are extremely helpful. They are mostly the ones who used to know her late husband who continued to keep in touch with her, or those ones who have connections with her Filipino friends. Gloria's pre-conceptions about New Zealanders, the stereotyped individualistic people, had influenced the way she dealt with them. However, her new roles have given her the opportunity to recognize the "real" differences between her own group and the "other" group, thus facilitating a more effective communication.

Gloria and her son have been living on their own for twelve years. Because of her son's medical condition, she has chosen not to enter the workforce. However, this does not limit her from interacting with New Zealanders. Her various roles have also given her the opportunity to deal with different types of people from different

ethnicities. Her multiple identities, which have been constructed out of necessity, affirm her self-esteem. Successful interactions in English have become a source of her confidence. She is now more confident in communicating with native English speakers.

Although she feels comfortable speaking to her fellow Filipinos in English either as a *lingua franca* or out of courtesy in the presence of non-Filipinos, she is still cautious of making the impression as being showy: "In the Philippines, when you speak in English, especially with the nice accent, people think you're stuck-up. Because you know, trying to be someone else that you're not." She is bothered neither by her Northern Philippine accent nor by her occasional grammatical slips-up when she speaks in English. She is now more familiar with the slang and other idiomatic expressions that used to be so incomprehensible during her first few months in New Zealand. She confidently uses New Zealand expressions in conversations, and can certainly discuss relevant New Zealand issues.

Even though Gloria has adapted to New Zealand life quite well, there are still a lot of Filipino ways that she has continued to practice. Since the passing away of her husband, meals have been mainly Filipino foods. Although her son is unable to speak, she communicates with him in Filipino, Pampango, and English:

He's not silly, he understands, I know. When I say, 'show me your hands' in Pampango, he'll show me his hands. When my mother is here, she only speaks Pampango, she speaks to him in Pampango. It's only in short sentences, mostly directions. But I have to speak to him in English most of the time because his other caregivers and teachers in school talk to him in English.

She still sends regular remittances to her parents in the Philippines, and pays for their occasional trips to New Zealand. She still observes important Filipino festivities and practices the traditional values that she grew up with, such as respect

for elders, and customary beliefs regarding male-female relationships: “I may not be young anymore, and have been married before, but I still believe that if I ever go into another relationship again, I’ll still go through the same thing as when I first got married, long courtship.”

Her multiple roles and identities have given her the opportunity to enjoy life in both sides of the fence. Outside her comfort zone, Gloria continuously negotiates her identity in response to the complexities of cross-cultural encounters. Within her inner self, she still manages to retain the ideals of her original culture.

Gloria feels privileged to be in New Zealand. Although she still misses the Philippines and the people that she left behind, she believes that she is lucky to be here, enjoying a high standard of living. New Zealand’s policies on social welfare, such as free education and subsidized medical care, are some of the major pull factors for Gloria’s decision to stay in this country permanently. Although family support is something that she can count on from her family in the Philippines, Gloria sees the excellent medical care and support that her son receives from the New Zealand government as more practical. Gloria’s idea of home is now largely influenced by her current personal investment in New Zealand, as well as an imagined identity as an old person in the comfort of the Philippine culture. When asked where home is, Gloria replied:

New Zealand is my home now. The government is good to my son. I don’t have to worry about money, doctors, his education. If we’re living in the Philippines, he will get nothing. Here, I don’t have to work, even though I really do want to work. I can look after my son 24 hours a day. If I need a break, his caregiver can come over and take him for walks. Maybe if I’m by myself, I would probably go back to the Philippines when I get old, it will be good to be surrounded with family when you’re old.

4.2 Anna

Anna was a little bit hesitant when asked by the recruiter if she was interested in participating in a study about Filipina migrants in New Zealand. She was not quite sure what to expect until she read the Information Sheet. Because of a very tight schedule, it was decided that telephone interview would be more convenient than a face-to-face interview.

This telephone conversation was the initial verbal contact between Anna and me. I had an image of a petite woman (as she was described by the recruiter) in my mind while speaking with her. In order to establish a rapport, I began with a question that is typically asked when meeting a fellow Filipino for the first time: "Which part of the Philippines did you come from?" This question can start a special bond between two Filipinos in a foreign country, most especially if they both came from the same town. The language plays a very important role. Almost every region in the Philippines has its own dialect, and it so happened that Anna and I came from the same region. As the interview progressed, we were able to establish a connection, sharing memories of our hometown, Manila. She was quite comfortable sharing her experiences in English and only switched to Tagalog occasionally.

Anna was 19 and in her third year when she decided to leave university and started working in the sales industry in Manila. Just like the majority of the Filipinos, she had thoughts of going to other countries for better opportunities. When she was in her 30's, she saw corresponding with several pen friends from other parts of the world as a vehicle for realizing her dream. It took a gentleman from New Zealand for her to consider coming to this country.

She did not have any previous knowledge or information about New Zealand before her arrival here. Her initial experiences in her new environment was a complete culture shock. The huge dissimilarities between New Zealand and the Philippines proved to be a very challenging starting point of her adaptation process. The first

few months were very difficult. She felt isolated not knowing any Filipinos in the area, and not being able to use her native language. Although she had a good grasp of the English language, she found interacting with New Zealanders quite difficult because of the different accent and unfamiliar idiomatic expressions. Most newcomers who are involved in cross-cultural encounters find that the burden of comprehension is largely dependent on them, and that as “outsiders”, they are expected to learn the language and the culture of their host country. To be accepted as “insiders”, they have to say and do the “right” thing, as well as sound and be like the majority. Anna’s lack of knowledge of the new culture, especially the conventions of colloquial language usage was one of the major stumbling blocks to her initial adaptation process. She felt very uncomfortable speaking with native English speakers, especially those with authority: “I felt really uncomfortable with people like doctors, people in higher positions.” She avoided situations where she was likely to engage in English conversations: “I even used to hide in the car. I never answered the phone in my first few months.” She depended on her husband when it came to dealing with other people.

Anna thinks that it would probably have been a lot easier for her if she knew more about modern technology before she came to New Zealand, which would have helped her secure a better job and eventually meet a lot of people: “We didn’t use computers when I was in college. I don’t know anything about computers. Here in New Zealand, it’s all about computers, that’s why I don’t think I will be any good when it comes to office work.” The huge disparity between the Philippines and New Zealand in terms of the level of technology was a relevant factor in Anna’s difficulty in creating an imagined identity as a career person and a member of the wider society.

However, things got better after a few months. She knew she had responsibilities, and had to deal with certain things herself when her husband was not around. She realized that she had to overcome her anxiety if she was to become more

independent. She knew that she had to speak up to be understood. The only way that she could adapt to her new environment was to socialize, to interact, and be known. Her discontentment with her present role led her to realize that learning and adaptation cannot proceed without exposure and practice. As she started to re-assess her investment, she became more motivated to understand the New Zealand way of life, thus, forming new identities and taking on new roles that would allow her to participate in more complex inter-cultural encounters. When she started helping out in her husband's lawn mowing business, she gradually came out of her shell and found it to be the most accessible place to interact and learn the language. She was able to practice her English while dealing with clients of different nationalities - New Zealanders, Japanese, Indians, and Chinese. She found it very satisfying, and even made good friends with some of them:

It's not that we see them every time we do their lawns, but when we do see them, we talk about a lot of things - the weather, our families. Yes, we do talk about the gardens quite a lot. It's that sort of thing, it's part of good PR too, talking to them, keep the clients happy. Most of them are very friendly, especially the pensioners, they're quite happy to stop for a chat.

She is now very confident with her use of the English language and describes herself as a "very talkative person." Anna's initial experiences show that her social identity is not fixed, and that it changes dramatically overtime.

The New Zealand weather was another major issue in Anna's adaptation process. She found the heat of the New Zealand summer very much different from what she was used to in the Philippines:

During my first time, when it was summer, the heat was so intense, but you don't sweat. Unlike in the Philippines, when it's hot, you sweat, and after you perspired, you feel much better. But then, here, it's too hot, it's like burning your skin, very intense.

Each season brought discomfort for Anna. However, if she was to live here, she

thought it was to her advantage to learn how to deal with it:

It was really very funny, because even in summer, the heat is different, everyone was chasing the sun, and I was staying away from it. In the Philippines, it's very common to see people carrying umbrellas in summer. Sometimes summer here is still cold. They just kept telling me, 'You'll get used to it.' And I did. I love it now. Maybe because during my first time, I didn't know what to expect. Now that I've experienced all the different seasons, I know now how it feels. It doesn't surprise me anymore.

Anna also had experiences of being treated differently because she looks and sounds different, although she is not comfortable referring to these incidents as racial discrimination:

I was at the supermarket, and I knew that I was speaking very clearly, but they pretended that they could not understand me. Maybe they were looking at me from the outside, and I don't look like them, because I'm Asian, and I don't speak their language.

Just like Gloria and many other newcomers, Anna feels that her Asian identity can sometimes put her in a marginalized position.

Anna's personal investments and memberships in her host country have framed her new and multiple identities. Anna identifies herself as a Filipino-New Zealander. She is a Filipino because she still keeps the Filipino values that she grew up with, she still observes important Philippine celebrations like the Philippine Independence Day, and occasionally participates in Filipino social gatherings. She regularly keeps in touch with her Filipino friends here, and has maintained economic links with her family in the Philippines by sending them money regularly.

She is also a New Zealander because she has adjusted very well to the New Zealand way of life. She has learnt to love the New Zealand food and has accepted it as a typical meal in her home. The cold weather does not bother her anymore. She has

learnt how to drive (which is only possible for the privileged few in the Philippines). She has learnt to tolerate some New Zealand practices that she does not agree with:

Like pre-marital sex, de facto relationships, teenagers living on their own. I'm not saying that it's wrong, for me personally, I wouldn't do it... I don't really care. If they have something like that, I just go with the flow because I'm here.

Having a family member in a de facto relationship is something that she has tolerated in New Zealand, and probably would not in the Philippines. Her shifting attitudes on these sensitive issues are context-related and are influenced by the attitudes of people around her. New Zealanders' attitudes have some bearing on her tolerance for open-mindedness and liberal way of thinking. Her reluctance is shaped by the Filipinos' conservative outlook.

In spite of some isolated experiences where she felt that she was being judged and not being accepted as a legitimate speaker of the English language, she still finds New Zealanders very friendly:

Some of our clients, they're quite good. They always say hello when they see us. I have lots of Indian friends. Some Japanese people. I have made good, close friends with my husband's friends, and those that we met together.

Although she is not satisfied with her present lawn mowing job, she still thinks that life in New Zealand is much better than what she had in the Philippines. Even though there are many things that she misses about Manila, she is quite content with her life in New Zealand, which she has embraced as her new home:

Life here is so wonderful, because in the Philippines, I came from a poor family, and when I came here, I was so thankful. It's not all about money. Money does not guarantee happiness, although we all need it... I'm happy here... this is my home now.

4.3 Marilyn

“Just call me Marilyn Monroe,” she replied with laughter when asked what she wanted to be called in the study. The Marilyn that I am looking at now is very much different from the woman that I first met behind the counter in an Asian grocery store in 1997. I remember her telling me that she had just arrived in New Zealand, and how she was still finding her way around Wellington. When I met up with her again after ten years, she seemed to be more confident and more contented.

Marilyn spoke in English and Tagalog with her distinct Northern Philippine and American accent. She shared her experiences in the Philippines and in New Zealand both with nostalgia and enthusiasm.

She grew up in a town close to an American Naval Base in Western Luzon, Zambales, where Americans were a part of the locals’ daily lives. Marilyn recalls the influence of religion in her family’s way of life:

We’re sort of like friends between offspring and parents, there’s no holding back, there’s no formality, we’re happy. But when it comes to religion, you know how majority of us belong to the Catholic Church, which is very very strict already compared to the Western way of life, I belong to a religion which is much stricter than Catholic itself... no smoking, no partying, no pre-marital sex, no living in together without getting married, and when the man wants to court you, you know, he declares his undying love for you, he has to go to your father first, application, if can declare his undying love for you, he can get in the house formally in the presence of the mother and the father, watching and listening to what he’s saying, and of course, with the chaperone when you go out.

She has fond memories of her extended family members who were all living close to each other and the flamboyant Philippine festivities that her family used to observe: “When we celebrate New Year, the Philippine festivities, it’s really very flamboyant, New Zealand is like, quite boring.” She keeps in touch with her family

in the Philippines on a regular basis. She sends money on special occasions and contributes to miscellaneous expenses incurred by her family. She still keeps her property in her hometown under the supervision of a family member and hopes to use it as her base every time she goes home.

Marilyn spoke of her education and employment experiences with pride. She completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Management through a scholarship from one of the prestigious universities in Manila. She worked as a hotel manager and as an administrator in an American Naval Base in the Philippines. Her employment gave her the privilege of traveling to America. However, having her friends in New Zealand and meeting a Middle Eastern gentleman (who eventually became her husband) at work, influenced her decision to come to this country in December 1996, instead of America:

My husband thinks New Zealand is paradise. He used to be a Marine Engineer. He worked on the ship. New Zealand is his 23rd country; he's been all over the world. And he thinks this is number one compared to the other 22 countries. He wanted to be here. It's his choice to be here.

When asked if it would have made any difference if she had the chance to choose the country she was immigrating to, Marilyn replied: "I don't think so. I love it here, more peaceful than the other countries. My husband was right about New Zealand." She did not know much about New Zealand when she came here, except for the odd **Anchor Butter and Milk Powder** advertisements on Philippine televisions, and stories of friends who were already here. All she knew was that New Zealand was a very clean country, "almost like a virgin island."

Marilyn's first two years in New Zealand had its ups and downs. New Zealand's Western culture did not pose any problems for her:

It's nothing new to me because I've been exposed to Western way of living, because half of my province, you know, where the Americans were, I

worked with them, I lived in an area where they lived. So, we, Filipinos, have been exposed to Western culture, especially the language. So there are not much big surprises there.

Unlike the other women in the study, Marilyn claimed not to have major difficulty with the language, which she attributed to having more direct experiences with native-English speakers. However, she found the weather extremely cold even in summer. She craved Philippine food and claimed her local Asian grocery store as her life-saver. The magnitude of her coping task was influenced by the “salience of the changes to her behavioral functioning, and the degree to which the new environment encompasses that functioning” (Taft, 1977, p. 124).

She also felt frustrated about not being able to find a job that would match her qualifications:

I'll tell you the truth, first two years, I felt so violated in this country. First, I had a very good job in the Philippines, then I came here with all the degree and all that, and then all of a sudden, I can't find a job, or a job where I could use my knowledge and my credentials.

She thinks that it would have been better if she had had more information about the employment situation here in New Zealand before she left the Philippines. She was not emotionally prepared for that. She suffered a loss of status, both professionally and socially. She had thought that she would have a better chance of getting a job in New Zealand since she got fairly good points under the employment category in the points system. For most immigrants, personal satisfaction is one of the major factors that determines the difficulty of culture coping. An individual who has a high need for recognition, such as Marilyn, will find it more difficult to appreciate a culture which denies her that acknowledgment.

Marilyn's frustrations with the job search were followed by a marriage break-up because of huge differences in beliefs:

I thought the first time he was more like ahh, what do you call that, ahh,

Westernized. Or maybe something like, been developed, in culture, in these things... but he was an extremist fanatic Muslim sort of thing. I thought he wasn't. I thought he's different, but then, we lived together, I noticed some things that, maybe just like myself, some values that are still embedded in him. Like he wouldn't want me to be, you know, he'd choose friends for me, he wouldn't want me to be out there in sexy outfits, you know, quite controlling.

After her separation, Marilyn was able to pick up the pieces on her own and moved on. She met a Kiwi gentleman that she now lives with. She is a full-time Nursing student and works as a caregiver in an old people's home.

Marilyn has adjusted to the New Zealand way of life quite well. She now comfortably identifies herself as a Filipino-New Zealander. She can easily straddle between the two cultures. In spite of all the frustrations and the challenges that she faced during the first two years, she now feels very much a part of the New Zealand society. She remembers how she had to cut her vacation in America short because she missed New Zealand so much. She recalls how she always dreamed of going to America, and when she finally had the chance last year, a supposedly twelve-week vacation became six weeks: "I missed New Zealand. I was in the middle of downtown L.A., you know, Hollywood, Disneyland, and I was bloody missing New Zealand!" Her typical meals now consist of Filipino and Kiwi dishes. Her circle of friends consists of Asians, Africans, Europeans, and New Zealanders. Her shifting values are shaped by the attitudes of those that surround her. She has adopted some New Zealand ways that she thinks would not be possible if she was in the Philippines, such as drinking socially and smoking occasionally:

I think it's just a matter of being sensible, and adopting values to some extent. I was an extreme conservative before, you know, traditional way of living, like no smoking, no drinking, whatsoever. But now, I do drink socially, mingle with people, I accepted them comfortably, confident with

yourself, and things like that. But I don't go to the extreme side of partying where, you know, where drugs and binge drinking. My family knows about it. They don't mind. I'm an adult now, I can make my own choices. This is New Zealand, not the Philippines.

Marilyn's migration experiences have led her to a transformation of self-image and values. Some old values were shed, and new ones were adopted in response to a new and different social situation. She has also adopted multiple group membership which includes familial, professional, gender, and other identities. Social identity in this case, is not fixed but depends on the particular intergroup setting in which Marilyn finds herself.

Marilyn's migration experiences also show how she contests certain identities that are imposed on her, sometimes by positioning her interlocutor as sharing her identity as part of a migrant community. Racial discrimination is nothing new to Marilyn. She recalls how a Maori co-worker told her to

“get out of her country.” And then I said, ‘How could you be so sure it’s your country.’ She said, ‘Because I’m originally from here, my ancestor’s from here.’ And then I said, ‘Since 1840, it’s not your country any more, and it’s not my fault that you exchanged your country for two fish hooks!’ She was just starting a fight. She decided to use racial discrimination in attacking me. So I threw it back on her face, in a more sarcastic way.

She was never bothered again afterwards. An “outsider’s” ability to claim the right to speak as well as to impose reception can put her in a powerful rather than marginalized subject position.

She also remembers a number of instances where New Zealand men saw her as a naïve and vulnerable Asian woman:

When we go to the pub, of course, there will be men who’ll try to pick you up, because they probably think, oh Asian babe, this is gonna be an easy lay, you know. They think just because you’re an Asian, and looking quite hot,

they tend to go straight under your sheets straight away. I think it's because some Filipinas paint a bad picture for people like us. They are the ones who are desperate to get out of the Philippines and would marry men half their age just to get here.

Marilyn's identity as a Filipina migrant occupies a particular location in the community of New Zealand men, and her experience of migration in this case is a gendered one.

When asked if being in a relationship with a Kiwi man has helped her adjust to New Zealand life, her answer is no: "Because with or without, I'm gonna make it on my own." For Marilyn, successful acculturation means independence and integration. Even though she is quite "liberated" now with her "ways of life and thinking" as compared to how she was brought up, she still keeps the important family values that she grew up with, especially the concept of close family ties. Even though they are miles apart, she keeps in touch with them regularly, and is always involved in any major family decisions. She also believes that elderly parents should never be put in an old people's home while there are members of the extended family who can look after them. Parents' sacrifices in bringing up their children should be reciprocated. Although independence is an important value, she believes that young people need the security of being around their family and should never be encouraged to live on their own:

Like my partner's kid, he's 18, and I encourage my partner to let him stay here with us a bit longer, he's in the crucial age for teenagers to be out there, live on their own, especially if they got some peer pressures of growing up, then I'm more adaptable. I encourage my partner to let him stay for four more years until he graduates. Being a Nursing student, I told my partner that we should never put his mother into a rest home in the future, because I know how it feels there. I'm willing to take care of her provided his sisters would help me. To contribute something to the family, I feel good about that.

Marilyn is still fluent with all the three languages that she grew up with. She conversed with her grandmother in Spanish; she spoke with her other grandmother in Ilocano (the dialect of Zambales); she used Tagalog with her parents; and spoke English at school. She also speaks a little bit of Arabic, a language that she learned from her husband: "First language is Tagalog, second language is English, because he speaks Tagalog, you see. And then, when we want to swear at each other, we used Arabic."

She is quite confident with her English and feels comfortable interacting with native English speakers in New Zealand, although she is well aware that sometimes people cannot understand her because of her heavy Northern Philippine and American accent. She feels uncomfortable talking to her fellow Filipinos in English:

I don't like to speak in English in front of my co-Filipinos. Because I feel like I lose the sense of belonging or, I wanna be as close as I could to them, if we use Tagalog. And then I know, they are more critical and judgmental compared to the Kiwis. They watch how you speak, if you speak in, you know, funny way, say wrong grammar, because most Filipinos that come here are well-educated ones. And they know if you're talking funny. I prefer talking to them in Tagalog.

Although in situations where the other Filipino speaks a different dialect, she feels comfortable using English as a lingua franca. For most migrants, language maintenance is an important factor in maintaining their original identity.

Coming and living in New Zealand has broadened Marilyn's view of life. She now sees the Philippines from the other side of the fence. She has learnt to appreciate that life in the Philippines is not all about hardship. It is also about family and friends, familiar things to see, and familiar places to go to. The whole experience has also put her in vulnerable situations while responding to changes in her life. These events have pushed her to greater strengths, and she is proud to say that she

has come out a lot wiser and stronger: "It's very rewarding for me."

She does not have any regrets about coming to New Zealand. She still gets very emotional when she thinks of the fact that she is away from her family. The only thing that she is frustrated about is not being able to bring them over because of strict immigration policies. The absence of her family in New Zealand and her inability to have children have affected the way she views her imagined identity in old age:

There were good things, and I faced the bad things, what happened to me here. So at least now, I can look forward to, you know, old age, knowing I can support myself, I can be more open, I can adjust myself more to that notion that having no kids, I'm gonna be in the rest home in the future; and because I've been exposed to that kind of life here, I don't mind.

The Filipinos' emphasis on children reciprocating their parents' sacrifices in rearing them is something insignificant in Marilyn's case: "But in my situation, not being able to have a kid, if I were in the Philippines, I'd probably be crying for days knowing no one's gonna take care of me." Integration into the New Zealand society brings with it the desire for security and the sentiment that this is now her home, and while the Philippines is never forgotten, it has less significance in her plans for the future: "New Zealand is home now. But in my heart, Philippines will never go away." Marilyn's migration experiences have led her to a successful re-socialization as a result of legitimization of her new identity, and the presence of new "significant others" that replaced those of her childhood.

4.4 Maria

"We were apart again for the second time," Maria recalls as she talked about the time when her Filipino husband left Manila to work in New Zealand as a Mechanical Engineer. "He went to an agency in Manila after he came back from Saudi Arabia, and paid big money to get a job in New Zealand. After two years, he was offered a full-time permanent job. He applied for permanent residency, and

then he sponsored us, me and my two kids.”

Maria was born and grew up in a modest suburb in Manila. Her parents were working people, and led a very simple life. She was the youngest of the three children. Her parents managed to finance her oldest brother’s university education. When he graduated and found full-time employment, it became his responsibility to finance his younger siblings’ university education. Since Maria’s second brother was not interested in pursuing further study, she was given the opportunity to study for a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration. It was at the university where she met her future husband. They got married after their graduation. He left for Saudi Arabia to work as an Engineer, while she stayed behind. Her husband’s job paid well and she was quite content to stay home to look after the children. She received plenty of support from her and her husband’s extended families.

Maria and her two children, then aged four and ten, were granted immigrant visas in 2001. She knew quite a lot about New Zealand before she came here. The regular correspondence between her and her husband gave her the opportunity to find out as much as she could about her future host country. She knew that the cold weather would be the biggest problem for her and her two children, and that New Zealanders talk “funny” and that “their English is hard to understand.” She also knew that she would not crave for Filipino food, because of the presence of Asian shops that stock Asian food ingredients. She was also aware that New Zealanders are generally friendly people.

However, pre-departure preparations for some immigrants can be irrelevant especially when the issue of cultural gap is involved: “No matter how much information you know about a foreign country, it’s all nothing when you get there.” Maria found that all the letters and telephone conversations with her husband about New Zealand did not help much with her first hand experience. She knew all about the weather and thought she was prepared for it. However, she found it extremely

cold and uncomfortable, even in summer. Maria recalls in amusement: “Kiwis were all dressed in shorts and T-shirts, and here I was, all covered up, jogging pants and sweater, and all!” She also found it a little bit frustrating not being able to find fresh ingredients for some of her cooking: “It’s all artificial, you know, they come in packets, instead of fresh. But it’s still okay.” The accessibility of imported ingredients in Asian specialty shops made life more tolerable for Maria in contrast with other Filipinos who came before her, when shops selling Asian food ingredients were scarce. She also found talking to New Zealanders extremely difficult. She thought that their accent was quite hard to understand, and that the words that they used, even though they were in English, seemed to be so incomprehensible.

For all the women in the present study, especially for Maria, language use and maintenance is an important factor in maintaining their original identity and membership in the original society. All of them stress the importance of using their own language with their fellow Filipinos, which gives them a sense of belongingness. For fully Filipino families, language maintenance is a major aspect of maintaining their Filipino identity. However, this can be a major issue with the children, who sometimes tend to show preference towards the language of the dominant culture. During the first few months, Filipino was the only language spoken at Maria’s home. She and her husband made the children aware of the importance of keeping their native language alive. They wanted the children to be able to communicate with their family and friends back home when they go back for a visit. However, the younger child, who had just started school, preferred to speak to them in English even though he was being spoken to in Filipino. Maria and her husband did not mind, as long as the children could understand the language.

Participation in the mainstream community is an important factor in learning the language and culture of the host society. Initially, Maria found it impossible to

practice her English. All her friends were Filipinos. Contacts with New Zealanders were limited to a quick hello with her neighbor, some short conversations with shop assistants, and a few meetings with her children's teachers. Her decision to find a part-time job was prompted by both financial need and the desire to meet other New Zealanders and practice her English. She remembered how she never had to work back home because the remittances from her husband were more than enough to live on in the Philippines. However, working in New Zealand and having to spend the money here were all a different ball game: "New Zealand's standard of living is very high, especially the rent. One wage is not enough." She found a part-time job working at the local supermarket, serving customers over the delicatessen counter. Maria found the experience liberating. She is quite happy with her job, and not too bothered about not being able to use her qualifications: "I never worked in the Philippines, and I don't think I'll be good working in the office here, it's all computers here, and I don't know much about computers." She enjoys interacting with people and being able to practice her English: "There was this old lady, she asked me what country I came from, I said Philippines, she loves my accent!" Maria's investment in learning and practicing the second language is influenced by the returns she receives. She takes the position that if she invests in the host country's dominant language, she does so with the understanding that she will "acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p.17) in the form of material gains, friendship, and public affirmation.

There are also times when she feels that she is being treated differently because she looks and sounds different:

Some people can be very insulting when they pretend not to understand what I'm saying. I know I'm speaking very clearly, my English is not too bad, but they look at each other with funny looks... I went to the department store, there was this saleslady, she kept on talking to this other lady, she would not serve me. I don't know, maybe because I did not look like them, or I don't speak their language... I just walked away. I was really offended.

Communication difficulties in this case, are not caused by Maria's lack of proficiency, but by the other group's assumptions about her competence. Not speaking in English in a way that is acknowledged by New Zealanders placed Maria in a vulnerable and powerless position. Maria is one of the many immigrants from Asia who has taken on

a realistic view of their powerlessness, who consider it to be in their best interest to avoid any open confrontation and conflict with the host society and not to attempt to take on the host society on every issue, even if insignificant, of discrimination or unfairness. (Vasil and Yoon, 1996, p. 57)

In spite of these negative experiences, she still finds interacting with native speakers generally rewarding. Her circle of friends and acquaintances is no longer limited to Filipinos. She has met a few New Zealanders at work, however most of them have remained mere acquaintances. For most immigrants, the company of people from a similar background eases the difficulties of coping in a new environment. Such company includes individuals from the country of origin and individuals of the same race:

I have a lot of friends from different countries. I talk to them in English... Some of my best friends are Indians and Chinese. My Chinese friend, even if she can't talk English very well, we're very close, maybe because we have something in common, we're both immigrants, we both know how it feels, we understand each other.

Like most Filipinos in New Zealand, using her original language is an important factor in maintaining her membership with the original culture:

I don't like talking to other Filipinos in English. I think it's unnatural and hypocritical... Why speak in a foreign language when both of you can understand Filipino? But if the person speaks another dialect, English is acceptable... or if we're talking in front of other Kiwis, English is okay.

Maria still maintains the traditional Filipino practices that she grew up with: "I cook

Filipino food everyday. We have fried rice for breakfast. If I don't eat rice, I still feel hungry."

Maria's personal investment in her host country reveals some conflicting multiple identities. While she and her family came to New Zealand to heighten the quality of their life, Maria appears to be in continuous conflict concerning child-rearing practices in her host country. Although she is quite content with her life in New Zealand, she worries about raising her children with Asian values in a Western country. She feels that the conflict between the two cultures is bound to create problems in the future. She and her husband do not agree with the way New Zealand children are brought up: "They have too much freedom." She feels that New Zealand parents do not have the kind of authority that Filipino parents have over their children. Filipinos' emphasis on respect for authority starts from home. Filipino children speak only when they are spoken to (a reflection of the Filipinos' restrained and inhibited attitude towards expressing their personal opinions); "palo" (smack) is a term that most parents use to stamp their authority over their children and is an issue that most Filipinos are not opposed to; they use the words "po" and "opo" when speaking with elder members of the family, as a sign of respect; they do not address their elders by their first names; they reciprocate their parents' sacrifices in raising them by helping with or taking over the financial responsibilities as soon as they are able to; and they see it as their obligation to look after their parents in their old age (an indication of importance given to familial piety). Maria's challenge is to establish her imagined future identity as an old person, surrounded and supported by her children, not in the Philippines, but in a foreign country:

I always tell my kids, when we get old, they will not take us to the old people's home. It's Filipino tradition, your parents look after you when you're young, now that they are old, it's your turn to look after them... I just keep on telling them, we are Filipinos, this is what we are, and this is how we do it. It's okay now, because they are still young. It's when they get older that we're worried about. All we can do is guide them, but in the end, they

have to make their own decisions. We cannot stop them. I'll be really disappointed and hurt, if say for example, my daughter lost her virginity before she gets married!

Maria's concerns about the effects of bringing up her children under different mores are starting to become more apparent in her youngest child's refusal to use the Filipino language. She still misses the Philippines - her parents, her friends, the big busy malls, and the public transport (practically no one uses the bus stop!). She still sends money to her mother in Manila on a regular basis, and hopes to sponsor her to come to New Zealand and live with her and her family permanently.

Maria identifies herself as a Filipino: "I prefer our culture, more conservative. I teach my children the Filipino values. I don't want them to grow up with Kiwi values, too liberated." When asked what drives her and her husband to stay in a Western country in spite of their concerns about clashes in terms of moral values, Maria replied:

I don't like to call it as being materialistic, I'd say, it's being practical. Western countries like New Zealand, the standard of living is excellent; their education is one of the best in the world. If we can give that kind of life to our children, and their children, why not. But then again, there's always a price to pay.

When asked where home is, Maria replied: "I'm not sure. We like it here. Better than the Philippines. But we want to go to the States too, or Australia, or Canada. I don't know. Aah, maybe New Zealand at this stage." For some migrants, the relevance of the cultural difference to their adaptation process is influenced by their attitudes toward change itself. Maria's fully Filipino family as well as the belief that continuity of tradition is a virtue, allow her to maintain her traditional way of life, while adapting to different circumstances, but retaining the core values of her culture.

4.5 Lucy

I had never met Lucy before. She kindly agreed to participate in the study through the recruiter. I contacted her by telephone, and she agreed to take part in the interview the following week by phone.

Her tone gave me the impression of a young, vibrant woman with a very strong personality. It also gave me the feeling that she was a little bit uncomfortable with the conversation, perhaps because we did not know each other personally and maybe because she was mindful of the generation gap between us. This was evident with her constant use of “po” and “opo” in her Filipino sentences, which are traditionally used as signs of respect toward the elders. She comfortably switched between English and Tagalog throughout the entire interview.

Lucy is in her early twenties. She was in her first year at the university, studying for a degree in Information Technology, when she left for New Zealand. She did not have much work experience except for the odd singing engagements during political campaigns: “I sang, like in campaigns. You know, how they’ve got guests and they pay them to sing. Yes, I’m always there, that’s all I know, that’s the only job I know.” She describes her family as being untraditional while following Filipino values. They were not devoted Catholics like most traditional Filipino families, and the parent-child relationship was more laid-back. Nevertheless, they practiced Filipino values such as respect for elders, close family ties, and reciprocating parents’ sacrifices in raising their children by looking after them in their old age. Just like most Filipinos, going overseas was a dream for her: “Coming to New Zealand, it was a dream, like I felt lucky, so lucky that I got to come here.” She came to New Zealand five years ago, not knowing much about her host country, except that it was a “green country”. However, she thinks it would not have made much difference whether she knew much about New Zealand or not. She had a fairly good idea of the kind of life in the Western world, and she was quite excited about it. She did not have much choice about the country that she was migrating to.

Her mother, who married a New Zealander, sponsored her. Not having a say about her country of migration did not bother her at all, she was just thankful that she was given the chance to experience a better standard of living.

Lucy did not encounter much difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand life when she came here in February 2002 as a full-time Nursing student. She was young, ambitious, and eager to start a new and exciting life in a country that she believed had so much to offer. Having her mother around and being surrounded by Filipinos who eventually became her friends were quite comforting for her. The cultural changes in Lucy's case were less abrupt compared to the other women in the study, since she was able to fall back into a familiar and accepting group within the new society. She was able to get a part-time job as a caregiver, and was able to form her own circle of friends in school and at work. Unlike the other women in the study, the weather did not bother her: "I don't really like it there (Philippines) because it's too hot, I quite like it cold, even if it's too cold."

She is generally comfortable using English in public. However, being in an English-speaking country has affected her confidence in using the language:

I think I was a better English speaker then than I am now. Because in the Philippines, I could speak better English, like when I came here, people just don't understand what I'm talking about, like because I'm using the American accent, they just, they just don't care, and I'm, you know, what are you talking about? And I lost my confidence, I don't know if they just don't understand or they just don't like the way I speak... Here, I'm more mindful of my grammar, it's their language, they know straight away if you make any mistakes. They also use English words that I've never heard before. Sometimes I feel self-conscious. I feel like I'm being judged all the time.

Not speaking in English in a way that is acknowledged by New Zealanders, puts Lucy in a vulnerable and powerless position. Lucy's negative experiences with some

of her English-speaking interlocutors have influenced the way she positions herself. In some circumstances, she sees herself as an incompetent illegitimate speaker of English, thus affecting her confidence. In spite of this, she does not find herself avoiding situations where she is more likely to engage in conversations with English speakers. She constantly looks for opportunities to practice her English. She is an active member of a performance group and has played a major role in a recent production. She loves the experience and she believes that interacting with English speakers is beneficial.

In spite of her enthusiasm, she sometimes gets the impression that people avoid talking to her. Lucy feels that she is not fully accepted in the New Zealand society. She has been in situations where she felt she was discriminated because of being an Asian. Most of these situations involved Maori people:

Out of ten Maori people I've met, eight of them are racist. Yeah, I'm not saying that because I'm judging them, but that's speaking from my experience. They are not that friendly. Sometimes people talk down on you, some of them are not very warm and accommodating... they look at you in a funny sort of way, maybe they think that they are the first to come here, and why are you here, just go back to your own country... even at work, the interaction with other New Zealand nurses is beneficial, I'm the only Asian there, but they wouldn't talk to me... oh yeah, we talk about work, but apart from that, it's very superficial.

Experiences like these have, in one way or another, colored her whole attitude towards the new society to the extent of making her anxious and self-deprecating. For Lucy, to be seen and to be heard is not enough. It is the recognition and acceptance as a legitimate member of the society that makes her immigration experience a satisfying one. Not being spoken to, not being understood or acknowledged as an "insider" influenced the way she negotiated her identity. In other words, the construction of her identity was largely influenced by how she thought others saw her. Migration also represents a classical situation where a

newcomer is required to cope with an unfamiliar culture and needs to be concerned with her relationship to the new society: "I do try to fit in though, I try to be nice, you know. If I would choose the attitude that I just won't care, it wouldn't be good for me." Lucy finds New Zealanders' straightforwardness a little bit uncomfortable, and sometimes sees it as lacking in manners:

We, Filipinos, we always think of how the person would feel if we say things this way or that way. Kiwis are different, most of them are very outspoken, which is good in some ways, but can be very offensive if you're not used to that sort of thing.

She feels that non-whites and non-Maoris are more accepting of migrants like her, which is why most of her friends belong to the ethnic minority groups like Cambodians and Tongans. She has never had any unpleasant experiences dealing with them, and she finds talking to them very comforting: "Maybe because we share something in common, we're both foreigners in this country." She appreciates the multi-cultural nature of the New Zealand society, as well as New Zealanders' open-mindedness on issues that are generally taboo in the Philippines, such as *de facto* relationships, abortion, and euthanasia (although some of these subjects remain a concern for other New Zealanders). Her exposure to a more individual way of life in New Zealand where people are less concerned with other people's behaviors is a liberating experience:

I'm in a *de facto* relationship... maybe you know we talk about euthanasia, we talk about abortions in Nursing School, maybe in the Philippines, I don't believe in those, but when I came to New Zealand, I realized that abortion here is legal, in the Philippines, they will criticize you there, because it's a Christian country. I realized that it's okay, maybe here, to have an abortion, or to practice euthanasia, but in the Philippines, I wouldn't, I wouldn't think, I wouldn't agree to something like that. In the Philippines, most people are dead by sixty, but in here, people can live longer than ninety, so it might be a reasonable option.

Lucy's attitudes toward these sensitive issues are context-related and are influenced by the attitudes of those around her. Her fear of being criticized in her own country by her own people has affected the way she represents herself. New Zealanders' liberal attitudes have given her the opportunity to explore other logical alternatives. Such affective factors are frequently socially constructed and are changing over time and space. She constantly organizes and re-organizes a sense of who she is and how she relates to the social world. Lucy feels that in a multicultural society like New Zealand, it is important for everybody to be familiar not just with the Pakeha, Maori, or Pacific Islanders' cultures, but also with the other existing ethnic minority cultures, like the Chinese, Indians, and Filipinos: "Everybody needs to learn how to respect each other's cultures."

She uses both Tagalog and English with her fellow Filipinos here in New Zealand, depending on how her conversation partner initiates the dialogue. She feels that she has become a little bit incompetent in her native language. She tends to forget some of the Tagalog words, and makes mistakes with grammar, especially tenses. Nonetheless, she feels very uncomfortable engaging in English conversations with a fellow Filipino and still prefers to use Tagalog: "It's a hypocrite thing, why speak English if you know you wanna speak Tagalog?"

Lucy is proud of who she is. She identifies herself as one hundred per cent Filipino. She uses Tagalog at home, and main meals always involve Filipino foods. She still practices the same values and traditions that she grew up with, although living in New Zealand has also broadened and changed her perception of life: "Some of the things that are considered unacceptable in the Philippines, like de facto relationships, it's okay." She occasionally sends money and presents to her grandmother in the Philippines. She misses her hometown, the hustle and bustle of city life, the endless number of places to go to, and most especially, her extended family and friends. She plans to go back for a holiday soon. In spite of this, she cannot see herself going back home permanently. She thinks that opportunities and

life in general in New Zealand are far better than what the Philippines has to offer.

She does not have any regrets in coming to New Zealand. She feels privileged and blessed to be given the opportunity to enjoy a better standard of living. However, she advises those Filipinos who are planning to come to New Zealand that this country is a good place to raise a family, though for young fun-loving people, New Zealand is not the place to be: "It's good for those who like nature, outdoor activities, but for those who prefer the hustle and bustle of the city, New Zealand can be a bit boring... it's the limited options, it's the limited places to go to... I feel isolated."

When asked where home is, Lucy replied:

I still miss the Philippines. But I don't think I can live there anymore. Because it's so dangerous over there, and life is not that easy. I'm not sure where I'm gonna end up in the future. I might go overseas, I don't know... I'm pretty okay being a permanent resident, I don't really care if I become a New Zealand citizen, because after I finish my Nursing degree, I can just go abroad. Get citizenship somewhere else.

Lucy's conflicting experiences in New Zealand have influenced the way she views her imagined identity. Being positioned in a limbo affects the level of adaptation that Lucy is prepared to enter into.

Chapter Five

Discussion

5.1 Migration

During the interviews, the subjects talked about their lives in the Philippines, what inspired them to come and settle in New Zealand, the level of information that they had about their future host country before their migration, their initial experiences upon their arrival, and the different stages of adjustment that they went through while trying to adapt to their new environment.

5.1.1 Push and Pull Factors

All the participants in the present study were born, raised, and spent most of their adult lives in the Philippines. They all grew up in a family and a society that give emphasis to collectivism, a characteristic not only typical of Filipinos, but also a practice in response to each individual family's need for social, personal, and economic support from families and close friends.

Selvarajah's Expatriate Acculturation Process model (1996) suggests that a number of push and pull factors from both the original and host countries will influence the migrant's initial experiences in the new environment. Although they utilized different avenues in coming to New Zealand, the push factors that compelled the five women in the present study to leave the Philippines were mainly economic, personal, and social. In spite of the commonality of these reasons, each woman's decision to migrate was dictated by their individual circumstances. For Gloria, Anna, and Marilyn, seeking and meeting their future husbands were pull factors that attracted them to migrate to New Zealand, involving a great deal of risk-taking associated with marriage to an individual from an entirely different culture - a

decision which was made more uncertain by being away from families and friends. For Lucy and Maria, to be reunited with a family member was the main pull factor in immigrating to New Zealand.

For all the five women, the pull factors (better standard of living, better education, better employment opportunities) in New Zealand and push factors (unstable economic, social, and political conditions) in the Philippines are stronger than the positive pull factors (being surrounded by family and friends, being in a familiar environment) in the Philippines.

5.1.2 The Expatriate Acculturation Process (EAP) Model

The participants' acculturation process was examined through the lens of Selvarajah's Expatriate Acculturation Process Model and will be discussed in these terms. Selvarajah (1996) posits that immigrants and expatriates both go through a similar process in acculturating to their host country - a process that involves four significant stages:

5.1.2.1 Stage One: Pre-departure

The first stage in the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model concerns the degree of the immigrants' preparedness for departure, and is partly influenced by the immigrants' individual personalities and the motivating forces behind their actions in migrating. Like most Filipinos, the women in the present study had some idea about Western lifestyles. Information about the Western world is easily accessible through schools and the mass media. Marilyn, in particular, lived and worked with Americans in the Philippines before she left for New Zealand. However, Gloria, Lucy, Anna, and Marilyn claim that they did not know much about New Zealand as a country before their immigration. Much of the information that they had about their future host country was only based on what their friends and families in New

Zealand had told them, as well as the occasional advertisements on Philippine televisions about New Zealand dairy products. On the other hand, Maria claims that she thought she was quite prepared for her new life in New Zealand. Her regular contact with her husband in New Zealand for over two years gave her enough information about New Zealand culture. Nonetheless, the variation in the amount of information that all five women had about New Zealand prior to their departure did not make much difference to their adaptation process, thus conflicting with Selvarajah's (1996) assumption that, "the initial experiences in the adjustment to a foreign environment is related to the amount of information of the host country the immigrant has prior to departure" (p. 5). All women initially went through a very stressful stage in adjusting to New Zealand's way of life, though the level of stress eventually abated, as they began to settle.

5.1.2.2 Stage Two: Initial Experience

The second stage in Selvarajah's Expatriate Acculturation Process Model relates to the initial experience of the migrant in the new environment. This stage brought a sense of excitement about being in a foreign country to all the participants. For most newcomers, being absorbed in the all-consuming novelty of the new environment deprives them of the opportunity to reflect on the emotional meaning of their move and mourn their losses. As time progresses, fun and excitement gives way to frustration and real stress. This is when culture shock sets in.

Based on the women's experiences, the unexpected differences between the two cultures, especially in terms of language, made their initial experience in the host country more difficult. Gloria, Anna, Maria, and Lucy expressed their frustrations at not being able to use and comprehend the second language which they felt they had known since childhood. This issue is further explored in this section. The adjustment problems of these women also include changing from one cultural background, membership in one community with certain rules of behavior, to

another cultural background, another community with other rules of behavior. Their initial experiences in New Zealand revolved around the following issues:

5.1.2.2.1 Social Life

Unfamiliarity with the new environment and its culture influenced the way Gloria, Anna, Maria, and Lucy established their initial social networks in New Zealand. Especially for Gloria and Anna, such unfamiliarity sometimes compelled them to avoid contacts with New Zealanders, for fear of not being understood, as well as not being able to understand their interlocutors.

As part of their initial experience, all the women found the need to be with their fellow Filipinos. As most immigrants do, as long as they surround themselves with people who share the same background as they do, they operate more comfortably in that environment. It is the predictability and familiarity that makes communication so easy that they do not have to make things explicit as compared to cross-cultural communication, which takes a great deal of energy just to get the simplest tasks accomplished.

Gloria and Anna did not know any Filipinos when they first arrived in New Zealand. However, this did not bother them initially. During the honeymoon phase, they were too occupied with excitement while getting used to the idea of being married and being in a strange environment. Nonetheless, the feeling of isolation and the desire to meet other Filipinos started to set in. The novelty of speaking in English with foreign acquaintances had worn off and culture shock began. The feeling of homesickness was partly influenced by a strong desire to be in a situation where they would be able to use their native language with other Filipinos. Their decision to leave all dealings with the outside world to their husbands influenced the way they perceived their speaking new social circle. Developing connections beyond this circle which met their immediate need for emotional support was irrelevant. Such networks were initially limited to their husband's English speaking friends as well

as to their fellow Filipinos, who filled the gap in their lives caused by homesickness.

Homesickness was not an initial issue for Lucy and Maria, who came to New Zealand to be reunited with their families, and Marilyn, who arrived here with her husband. Their families and their families' existing friends gave them a sense of reassurance and belongingness in the new environment. They never felt the kind of isolation that Anna and Gloria went through. Homesickness for them was missing the other relatives and friends that they left behind in the Philippines. Lucy's initial negative experiences with some New Zealanders compelled her to limit her social circle to her own ethnic group and fellow immigrants, most of whom belonged to the Asian and the Pacific Island communities. Lucy felt that those individuals who share the same background and experiences as her, are more understanding and accommodating of people like herself. In Maria's case, the need to socialize was not a primary issue. Her family was initially her social circle, though it eventually included her fellow Filipinos.

As part of their initial experience, the women's individual circumstances eventually compelled them to seek opportunities to understand, learn, and practice the new language. For Gloria and Anna, new roles influenced their decision to mingle with the members of the host society, even on a superficial basis. Their satisfaction with their own family lives did not call for a deeper relationship with New Zealanders. For them, the need to learn how to interact in different social situations, necessary for the day to day running of their households, was the main reason behind the necessity to establish social relationships with New Zealanders. In Maria's case, the desire to mingle with New Zealanders was one of the reasons that led to a new role of being a worker. On the other hand, Lucy's youthful aspirations and indecisions about the future influenced her need to socialize with native English speakers as prompted by her desire to be recognized and accepted as a member of the New Zealand society. Marilyn's determination to secure her future and her desire for recognition and acceptance led her to the strategy of extending her circle.

5.1.2.2.2 The Weather

The New Zealand climate is one of the significant issues that Filipino immigrants, especially newcomers, have to deal with. All five women found the New Zealand weather a challenge. There were quite a few times when the subjects, who were used to the Philippines' tropical weather, felt they were quite conspicuous with their way of dressing while coping with the strange weather, especially in summer, thus enhancing their status as non-members of the new society. Nonetheless, the difference in weather did not have much effect on the way that they carried on with their daily lives in their new environment, apart from familiarizing themselves with things that were not commonly used in their home country, such as heaters, hot water taps and electric blankets. For those Filipinos who have gotten used to it, the weather is considered to be one of the pull factors in New Zealand, most of them claiming that they will never be able to handle the hot, humid weather in the Philippines again.

5.1.2.2.3 The Language

Immigration means emotional silence, at least for some time. Even for those who fluently speak the language of the country of relocation, much of the meaning they want to convey is lost in translation. It was the language that played a major role in the subjects' initial adaptation process. All five women claimed to have a good knowledge of the English language. However, they found it quite frustrating not being able to understand the language that they had started learning when they were five years old; the language that they comfortably used in school, and sometimes at work; the same language that they heard on radios and televisions on a daily basis; and the same language that they read in books, magazines, and daily newspapers. They found it exasperating not knowing the language they thought they knew. Most Filipinos do not have difficulty in understanding the English language. English is the other official language in the Philippines. It is widely used in schools, commerce, and the mass media. The Americans' long presence in the Philippines is

reflected in the kind of English that they are used to. Spelling and pronunciation lessons in schools are based on American English. English language movies, TV programs, and music are mostly American. All these explain the fact that Filipinos speak with a distinctive American accent. These also explain the fact that most new Filipino migrants in New Zealand identify language as a major issue in their adaptation process. They can speak and understand English, yet they find it difficult to engage in everyday conversations. This is reflected in the subjects' frustrations over not being able to engage confidently in conversations with New Zealanders due to the fact that Filipinos are used to a totally different accent, and that New Zealanders use different words and phrases that Filipinos are not accustomed to. In addition, most Philippine schools still give more attention to their students' grammatical competence rather than communicative competence. This explains Marilyn's concerns about speaking in English with her fellow Filipinos, being criticized at looked at in a "funny way" (see section 4.3).

In spite of the status that English holds in Philippine society, English is seldom used in everyday conversations. It is used as a lingua franca between Filipinos who speak different dialects and in cases where the other Filipino does not speak the National Language. Another important factor is the fact that most Filipinos do not have any direct contacts with native English speakers. Among the five women, Marilyn was the only one who had regular direct dealings with native English speakers in the Philippines, and was the only one who claimed not to have too much difficulty in adjusting to the New Zealand language, in spite of its difference from the type of English that she was accustomed to. The only concern that she had was about New Zealanders not being able to understand her because of the mixture of her heavy Northern Philippine and American accents. Marilyn's unproblematic adaptation to the language could probably be attributed to her strong sense of self-confidence when interacting with native speakers. For the rest of the women, they did not have much experience in dealing with native English speakers, and therefore, found it difficult to engage in conversations with New Zealanders.

Some of the women's uncertainty with the language did affect the way they spent their first few months in New Zealand. Gloria and Anna did not only hesitate in dealing with native English speakers, but when circumstances compelled them to, they avoided them as well. They were worried at not being able to make a proper conversation because of their difficulties in understanding the New Zealand accent, as well as some of its words and phrases. Anna was especially worried about other people's negative reactions toward her due to her inability to carry out conversations without any difficulties. Anna had many reservations about her first few months in New Zealand. However, her desire to keep New Zealand as her permanent place of residence has made a lot of difference in how she handled these uncertainties. She took the courage to handle situations on her own in her husband's absence, starting with making and answering telephone calls.

Language difficulties were never an initial issue in Maria's day to day running of her household. The presence of her fully-Filipino family provided a bridge during the initial phase. On the other hand, Lucy's determination to fit into the new society, as required by her roles both as a student and as an employee, compelled her to learn, understand, and practice the new language, in spite of the negative treatment that she received from other New Zealanders.

5.1.2.2.4 The Food

Most Filipinos in New Zealand do not find food a major issue, since Filipino food ingredients are generally quite accessible around the country. Although fresh ingredients are not always available, there is always an alternative that comes in packets and bottles, found in supermarkets, Asian specialty shops, and markets. For Gloria and Anna who both married New Zealanders, main meals have always been Kiwi dishes. Filipino dishes are only served occasionally. In Gloria's case, this was initially attributed to the lack of shops selling Filipino food ingredients when she first arrived here. Eventually, it was a combination of scarcity, and a form of being a

subject to her desire to stress her role as wife to a New Zealander. However, since the passing away of her husband, main meals have been reversed - Filipino dishes regularly, and Kiwi dishes occasionally. In Anna's case, the meals at home were also a reflection of her subject position as a wife to a New Zealander: "Because I am under my husband's rule, although he's very good." Marilyn, Lucy, and Maria have always continued to cook the kind of food that they grew up with. For them, it is about satisfaction - like an old habit that is hard to break, especially for Maria: "I cook Filipino food everyday. We have fried rice for breakfast. If I don't eat rice, I still feel hungry."

5.1.2.2.5 Employment

For most Filipinos in New Zealand, finding employment that matches their qualifications and experiences is a struggle. Under the points system, many educated and qualified Filipinos assume that receiving high points under the employability category guarantees them a job in New Zealand that matches their qualifications. Not being able to find a job that they are hoping for can be very frustrating, especially for those who did not have much information about the employment situation in New Zealand prior to their immigration. Most qualifications that were gained from the Philippines are not fully recognized in New Zealand. Most Filipinos are forced either to retrain or to change their career path, or even accept jobs that do not match their skill level and qualifications. It is not unusual to see well-qualified Filipinos working in menial positions, such as educators working as check-out operators, engineers as painters, and managers as factory workers. Oftentimes, these are the ones whose qualifications are only recognized upon registration with their respective organizations. These jobs include teachers, doctors, engineers, and nurses. Registration may require further training. On the other hand, there are of course Filipinos in New Zealand who do find employment that matches their skills, such as Maria's husband.

Anna and Maria were among those Filipinos in New Zealand who found themselves

doing jobs that they were not trained for. Anna, who was only a year away from completing a university degree in the Philippines, and Maria, who completed a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, both found New Zealand's modern technology and overall business approach quite daunting for them to secure a job that would match their skills. When these women attended university in the Philippines in the 1980's, modern technology such as the use of computers was not part of most curricula. In Anna's case, the technical complexity of her work experience in the Philippines was on a lower level compared to a more advanced technology in New Zealand. Nonetheless, before their immigration, both women were aware that modern technology was something ordinary in any Western society, such as New Zealand. They knew then that they had limited skills to enter the workforce in an industry that would match their qualifications. For Maria, age and children are the main factors in disregarding the idea of re-training: "It's hard with kids, it's been a long time since I last attended school, I don't think I can do it again." She is quite happy to take on other jobs that do not require much specialized skills to get into: "Working in the supermarket is okay. It's a job. I'm happy with that." For both women, especially Anna, immigration is not about advancing their personal life goals. It is mainly about a change to a better standard of living that their home country cannot offer.

Marilyn, who had a degree in Business Administration, and who had managerial skills found it very frustrating not being able to find a job to match her skills. When she applied for permanent residency, she was quite confident of her employment prospects because of the scores that she received under the employability category under the points system. However, when she failed to find the job that she was looking for, Marilyn felt "violated" having to work as a shop assistant in a local Asian grocery store. She felt cheated when financial needs pushed her into accepting a job that was far below the status that she had in the Philippines. Migration often means a career change, frequently stepping down in the professional ladder, accepting non-professional jobs or remaining unemployed.

Migrants lose recognition of previous achievements, and must struggle to regain them.

Such experiences did not compel the participants to make any permanent assessments about their new lives at this stage. However, these experiences (positive and negative) did influence the women's adaptation process over a longer term. Such influences are discussed in Stage Four: Adjustments.

5.1.2.3 Stage Three: Gestation

During the third stage, which Selvarajah (1996) refers to as the gestation stage, the immigrant starts to become more aware of the long term realities of the host environment. The Expatriate Acculturation Process Model suggests that the more similar the cultural backgrounds are between the home country and the host country, the easier it is for the immigrant to adapt. In general, New Zealand and Philippines have completely different cultures. However, the ease and/or difficulty of the participants' adaptation process extended beyond this perception. The difference between the two cultures depended to some extent on the scale to which such difference is personally relevant to the individual. For Marilyn and Lucy, fitting into the new society was a source of self-confidence, thus an essential feature of their adaptation process. For Gloria and Anna, acculturation meant effective participation in different social contexts in order to perform their new roles.

Selvarajah's model also posits that those who have prior overseas experience may find the encounter less complicated. Out of the five women in the present study, only Anna had previous overseas experience. However, her short trip to Japan was an entirely different encounter from her New Zealand experience. She was in the company of other Filipinos when she went to Japan; she was by herself when she came to New Zealand. Her sojourn to Japan was only temporary; she came to New Zealand to live here permanently. Nonetheless, her trip to Japan has given her an idea and enough experiences of how it is to be in another country - an environment

away from her family, a place that speaks a different language, and a country that seems so familiar, yet different. According to Anna, in spite of the many similarities between Japan and the Philippines as Asian countries, she found Japan's rigid culture quite strange compared to the Philippines, which is more westernized. This previous experience of strangeness helped her cope better with her adaptation process in New Zealand. On the other hand, Marilyn had previous experiences in dealing with native English speaking people directly, but in the Philippine context. Nonetheless, the experience had given her enough confidence in interacting with native English speakers, which had made it a lot easier for her to adapt in New Zealand, thus establishing that cross cultural dealings at home can ease the process as much as overseas experience.

The participants' adjustment process was largely determined by their overall initial experiences and the degree of their contentment or discontentment in New Zealand. In some cases, when a major life event intervenes, the gradual adjustment is overridden by the need to re-adjust, as shown in Gloria's situation. Gloria was quite content with the way she was adapting to her new life in New Zealand. However, the sudden loss of her husband changed the way she saw life in her host country and did alter her adaptation process. She was once satisfied with just being in the background, with limited contact with the outside world. She now has to deal with people that she once avoided in a language that still seems so strange for her. She is now more aware of the cultural differences between New Zealand and the Philippines, most of which did not use to bother or affect her at all.

The consequences of how Anna handled the uncertainties during the initial stage made her re-evaluate herself and her social life. The need to be independent compelled her to try to learn and understand the new culture, hence, she regained her self-esteem. She persevered to look for opportunities to learn the language she thought she knew. She found her workplace the ideal starting point. Although she only got to talk to her clients on an irregular and superficial basis, these encounters

were a valuable learning experience for her. These experiences had given her the confidence to transfer the skills that she learned from her clients to other situations where she was bound to engage in an English conversation.

Maria's situation is somewhat similar to Anna's. The search for material gains in the form of stable employment, as well as personal satisfaction in the form of friendship, required her to seek opportunities to familiarize herself with the culture. Just like Anna, her workplace became the perfect foundation for educating herself. Maria's job at the supermarket gave her the opportunity to meet different types of people on a regular basis. Conversing with her co-workers and customers has been a very satisfying experience for her. Maria's experiences in New Zealand involved a great deal of reflection over the push and pull factors in New Zealand. Her disapproval of some New Zealand practices, particularly the issue of child-rearing, has been overshadowed by the attraction of the excellent standard of living in her host country.

The same thing goes with Anna and Marilyn. The pull factors in New Zealand are stronger than the negative experiences that they have gone through in their host country. The good standard of living, excellent educational system, stable political and economic conditions, clean and green environment are greater than the push factors in New Zealand such as cold weather, language problems, and racial prejudice. These women persisted in order to understand and learn the new culture. They came to recognize the long term gains a deeper understanding of the host community had to offer. Anna and Maria persevered to look for opportunities to learn the language. Anna values the support of her husband, and her occasional encounters with her clients in the lawn mowing business.

Marilyn's initial frustrations with her inability to find a satisfying job as well as the break-up of her marriage did not discourage her from making New Zealand as her permanent home. Just like Anna and Maria, she persevered to understand the

culture of her host country: “As time passed by, I realized and understood the economic situation in New Zealand. How could they give me a proper job when they don’t have it themselves?” Her deepening understanding of the host culture led to a re-appraisal of its attitude to her. Marilyn decided to change her career path and focused her attention to a profession that is in demand in New Zealand. The shortage of qualified nurses in New Zealand has given her the motivation to study for a Nursing degree. She has integrated very well into the New Zealand way of life, and has adopted some practices that are entirely contradictory to those she grew up with, such as de facto relationships, smoking, and drinking socially. She has also successfully managed to maintain her other identity as a Filipina and kept most of the values that she feels important.

Lucy’s experiences in New Zealand have put her between the extremes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. She feels blessed to be given the opportunity to enjoy a better standard of living in New Zealand. She appreciates New Zealanders’ non-judgmental attitude towards sensitive issues such as de facto relationships and abortion. However, her unpleasant experiences with some New Zealanders have affected the way she views her life in her host country. She is frustrated because she feels that she is not totally accepted in New Zealand society. As a young and adventurous woman, who seeks the hustle and bustle of city life, Lucy sees New Zealand’s laid-back lifestyle unexciting. Lucy is caught between seeking the comforts of people from a similar culture, by restricting her social circle to the ethnic minority group, and hoping to cope better with the people in the new culture, by means of tolerance. The unstable economic, social, and political conditions in the Philippines, her negative experiences in New Zealand, as well as age have made the idea of “home” uncertain.

5.1.2.4 Stage Four: Adjustment Stage

During the final stage of the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model, which Selvarajah refers to as the adjustment stage, a wide variety of ways to reduce the

conflict develops. Immigrants learn the language of the new culture, including its colloquialism and norms. They come to grasp the permanence of the change in their lives. They also struggle to rehabilitate a sense of worth and mastery of life, to develop ways of functioning in the new reality, to re-create familiarity with their environment within the context of the host country, and to reinvent themselves and develop a new sense of identity.

All five women's immigration experiences in New Zealand involved different psychological reactions to an unfamiliar environment. In spite of the difficulties that they faced, none of them is prepared to leave New Zealand. Even Maria and Lucy, who both expressed their dissatisfactions with certain issues, feel that it is still worth staying at this stage. Regardless of their degree of difficulty of adaptation, all participants employed the same strategies in adjusting to the new environment. They all persevered in seeking to understand and cope with the New Zealand culture. Some of them even went through the culture shock adjustment process a number of times. As a result of their perseverance, three outcomes have become apparent: one, seek to socialize with individuals from similar cultures; two, adjust to the local culture and environment; three, straddle between the two cultures. Such adjustment strategies were mainly shaped by the participants' individual circumstances. Gloria, Anna, and Marilyn's determination to learn to live with both cultures was largely influenced by their commitment to making New Zealand their permanent home. On the other hand, Maria and Lucy's uncertainties about their future in New Zealand compelled them to seek the companionship and friendship of people mainly from similar background.

In summing up, all participants went through the four different stages of acculturation in varying degrees. Their various pre-departure preparations did not make much difference upon their arrival in New Zealand. The amount of preparation they had prior to migrating to New Zealand did not change the fact that New Zealand and Philippines are two entirely different cultures, which makes

culture shock a relevant issue. All five women chose to leave the Philippines and came to New Zealand because the pull factors (positive elements) in the host country and push factors (negative elements) in the home country are stronger than the positive pull factors in the Philippines.

The participants' initial experiences, which were characterized by dissatisfaction because of the need to find their place in a new society, did have a strong impact on their adaptation process over the longer term. The conditions which would lead to contentment were imposed by the new socio-cultural system. They had to learn and to abide by the patterns of interpersonal behaviors of the host society. Their fulfillment depended on their willingness and ability to learn and to abide by these patterns of interpersonal behaviors; on the incentives and rewards the host society offered to them in return for the strain the re-learning forced on them; and the host society's readiness to accept them as legitimate members of the dominant community.

The initial problems associated with the language compelled them to re-assess their social life, which was primarily limited to their own circle of Filipino friends. The need to familiarize themselves with the new language pushed them to persevere in learning and practicing the dominant language by stepping out of their comfort zone and socializing with the mainstream population. In Maria and Lucy's case, in spite of their preference for the ethnic minority group, they still persevered in learning the language by establishing contacts with the majority even on a very superficial basis. Their initial frustrations with the issue of employment influenced the way they planned their future, especially for Marilyn, who had to re-evaluate her career prospects in her new environment.

In spite of the negative experiences that they encountered in New Zealand, the attraction of a better standard of living has convinced them to stay in New Zealand either permanently, or in the cases of Maria and Lucy, for the time being.

5.2 Negotiation of Identities

Acculturation is more complex than identifying/categorizing oneself with the original culture or the host culture. Analysis of the data suggests that a major challenge for the women in this study was negotiating identities in relation to language competence, personal agency, investment, and power relations so that they could be recognized and accepted as legitimate members of the New Zealand society.

5.2.1 Identity and Language Competence

All the women in the present study claimed to be fluent in English. However, language issues remained one of the major difficulties that they had to deal with while adjusting to their new lives in New Zealand. Gloria, Anna, and Maria found their host country's language quite difficult to understand because of the unfamiliar accent and jargon. On the other hand, Lucy and Marilyn argued did not have any problems understanding the language. Their major concern had something to do with the members of the host country not being able to understand them.

Gloria and Anna were initially dependent on their husbands in performing the public tasks while they were settling into a new country. To begin with, their language issue was a major contributing factor to their lack of self-confidence when interacting with New Zealanders, to the point of avoiding situations where they were likely to interact in English in public. Their challenge in this case, was language problems in social contexts, accompanied by psychological issues such as anxiety and insecurity. Everyday linguistic encounters (no matter how personal they are) are socially structured. The speaker's practical communication competence does not only involve her ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, but also her ability to make herself worthy of being heard and acknowledged.

Different circumstances compelled some of the women to re-assess their language issues. The loss of Gloria's husband put her in a very vulnerable position. Her role as a mother was no longer confined within the four corners of her home. She has now taken on a role that her husband used to perform. It was out of necessity that she had to learn how to deal with the outside world, starting with the language. Language competence for her meant that she had to learn new jargon in different settings - situations which typically involved social welfare, education, and health issues. Such issues normally required contextual knowledge in order for her to impose reception and achieve her goals. She also had to learn and understand the nature of New Zealanders as individuals from an entirely different culture.

In Anna's case, her desire for independence compelled her to learn the new language. Like Gloria, language competence for Anna outside the comforts of her home meant being able to learn the new language in different settings, giving her the confidence to participate in various public situations even on a very superficial basis.

Maria's difficulties with the language were never an initial issue for her. Unlike Gloria and Anna, the strange language did not compel her to avoid situations where she was likely to converse in English. Her fully Filipino family situation and her role as a stay-at-home parent limited her chances of learning the new language. Financial circumstances and the need to meet new friends required her to look for opportunities to practice her host country's language. At this point, language competence for Maria meant being able to learn the language practices associated with her job as well as build new friendships.

The issue of speaking in another accent affected Lucy and Marilyn in different ways. This concern did not influence the way Marilyn interacted in English and associated with New Zealanders. Although she had contemplated changing her accent, she felt that she was competent enough to relate to New Zealanders on a

much deeper level. On the other hand, Lucy felt that speaking another kind of English made her a less competent English speaker in New Zealand, because of the negative reception that she got from other native speakers, thus affecting her self-confidence. However, her desire to fit into the new society did not compel her to avoid situations where she was likely to interact in English.

For all five women, language competence and language choice also play a vital role in maintaining their ties and membership with the Filipino community in New Zealand. All of them expressed their discomfort at speaking with their fellow Filipinos in English. For most Filipinos, speaking in a foreign language with a fellow Filipino (unless it is used as a lingua franca, or in the presence of non-native Filipino speakers), especially in a non-Filipino accent, is a sign of boastfulness and hypocrisy. The participants feel that using their native language with a fellow Filipino creates a sense of belongingness and solidarity.

5.2.2 Identity and Personal/Social Support

For some of the women, their very sense of identity - who they are, and the rightness of what they value - is challenged by their decision to immigrate. Oftentimes, their ability to uphold such values is influenced by the presence of other people who are willing to support and reinforce the correctness of these values. Maria's identity as a Filipino parent and her attitude towards parenting is reinforced by the presence of her Filipino husband, as opposed to Gloria, Anna, and Marilyn, who, at some stage, came to doubt the soundness of some of their previously held values and attitudes as influenced by their marriage to individuals from a different culture. Such changes in attitudes, values, and identities are also shaped by the acceptance and tolerance of these attitudes by the dominant society. Gloria's outspokenness; Marilyn's outlook on smoking, drinking, de facto relationships, and old age; and Lucy's position on abortion, euthanasia, and de facto relationships are reinforced by their host society's liberal way of thinking.

For some of the women, the competition between survival and tradition can be a very uneven one, and resistance to change can be initially expected. But if pressures are persistent and strong enough, changes will occur, often leading to multiplicity of social identities, which are sometimes fused together, sometimes including more and sometimes excluding more than on other occasions. The fluidity of identity is an important factor in such situations, because it allows group continuity in the midst of change, thus allowing the migrant to straddle between cultures. Nevertheless, for the women in the present study, their identity as members of their original culture is an important feature of their individuality, which is unlikely to change substantially. For those who have developed a hyphenated identity (Filipino-New Zealander), the extent to which they have begun to feel like a "New Zealander" may be associated, in part, with developing social networks beyond their own group, and the degree of intimacy in the relationships developed with members of the host society.

5.2.3 Multiple and Conflicting Identities

The women's multiple and sometimes contradictory and conflicting social identities were mainly influenced by the different roles they took on. Their immigration experiences compelled them to create new identities - wife and partner of a foreigner, primary caregiver to and spokesperson for a child with special needs, a student, an employee, a social welfare beneficiary, a friend and an acquaintance to a foreigner. At times, such new identities were in conflict with some of their existing identities. Marilyn's conflicting identities were influenced by her need to be accepted as a member of both her own culture and her host society. To her families and friends in the Philippines, she is a Filipina who appreciates the value of conservatism; to her host country, she is a New Zealander who welcomes the society's liberal way of thinking. For Lucy, her contrasting identities are influenced by her appreciation of having a choice to suit her personal needs without being criticized. This is evident from her claim to be one hundred percent Filipino while practicing and believing ideals that are non-Filipino.

5.2.4 Personal Agency, Imposed Identities and Power Relations

For most newcomers, being accepted as a legitimate member of the host society is an important factor in their adaptation process. However, with legitimacy comes access and inclusion, which are often determined by the members of the larger society, thus the issue of power struggles.

By exercising their personal agency, some of the women in the present study experienced significant personal transformations as they continued to face up to their challenges in their new environment. Such agency enabled them to resist being positioned marginally, thus allowing them to seek other subject positions that fulfilled their objectives. In spite of the high level of anxiety, which was shown by their lack of self-confidence, Gloria and Anna were able to discover new aspects of themselves while actively negotiating their different roles and positions in the social world.

Gloria refused to be silenced - contrary to what she used to be - passive and insecure. Her determination to speak up and to be heard was influenced by her social identity as a mother and as a primary caregiver. Her personal transformation also occurred around her identity as a non-native English speaker. She perceived this particular identity as something negative, which limited her from being accepted as a legitimate member of her host country. By exercising her personal agency, Gloria was able to resist such identity, by successfully taking on a new role and challenging the power relations between her and the types of people that she used to feel inferior to. Her commitment to her new role allowed her to employ different strategies, such as persevering in learning the new culture and resisting certain imposed identities, thus making her personal transformations a satisfying experience.

In Anna's case, her need to be able to function effectively in the absence of her husband required her to gain enough self-confidence in positioning herself in situations that she used to avoid. However, the construction of her social identity in New Zealand as a migrant who looks and sounds different has positioned her marginally in specific public situations. Anna perceives these situations as race-related and a form of stereotyping, where she felt that she was seen as someone with limited content knowledge, an outsider, and someone who was incompetent. Her social identity in this case is understood in terms of her relationship and subject position within the larger New Zealand society, in which immigrant language learners sometimes struggle for recognition. Regardless of their economic status, education, or national origin, most Asians in New Zealand experience something in common - there is a special stigma attached to their presence. It is that sense of otherness, where it is assumed that Asians' ways, opinions, and life experiences have very little in common with New Zealanders; and that as "outsiders", they have the obligation to learn from their host society, and not the other way around. Anna's refusal to refer to this as racial discrimination because of its negative connotation is a reflection of her sensitivity not to offend her host country, which is an extension of the Filipinos' attitude towards social harmony. Such attitude is also reflected in how Anna claimed to be "under her husband's rule", showing that she is quite comfortable with her subject position as a wife.

Marilyn's unpleasant experiences in terms of marriage and career made her a stronger individual. She discovered that she was capable of making it on her own, contrary to her collectivist upbringing. The encounter that she had with a Maori co-worker, who told her to go back home, and that New Zealand was not her country, proves that an individual can be perceived as both subject of and subject to relations of power within a particular situation. In this specific case, Marilyn was put in a subject position; however, she resisted that position by setting up a counter discourse, which put her in a powerful rather than marginalized subject position. She used her knowledge of New Zealand history, by emphasizing that the Maori

people are historically immigrants themselves, thus positioning her interlocutor in the same identity that she was positioned into. Marilyn's knowledge of New Zealand's political issues, laws, history, culture, traditions, and idiomatic expressions makes her aware of her right to speak and of her power to impose reception. It has also shaped her ability to exercise influence over others and the ability to prevent influence from being exercised over her by claiming personal agency - all of which are structured by her motivation to integrate - an important factor in her long-term investment, which is to live and stay permanently in New Zealand.

Lucy's perception of herself as an Asian immigrant whose English is not acknowledged by the dominant society has put her in a vulnerable and powerless position. Her feeling of not being recognized and accepted as a legitimate member of the wider community has affected the way she created her own social circle. Unlike Gloria and Marilyn, who have opted to resist some of their ascribed identities by challenging the power relations between them and their interlocutors, Lucy has chosen to be silent and retreat to a more familiar community where her identity is protected from being challenged. Such decisions are partly influenced by their long-term plans in their host country.

For Anna, total recognition and acceptance in the wider society is not a vital issue. This is reflected on how she handles the subject positions that are imposed upon her. For her, membership means being able to perform public tasks effectively. Being self-sufficient as well as being able to interact even in superficial social contexts is quite adequate. It is perhaps that stage in her life where family is sufficient to satisfy her feeling of acceptance, unlike Lucy, who is young and full of aspirations, whose satisfaction depends on being fully accepted in the larger society.

5.2.5 Imagined Future Identities and Personal Investment

Those who are married or have a relationship with New Zealand men have a

different experience of New Zealand and a different perspective of the future and the future of their children from those who are with their fellow Filipinos. These women have different challenges and difficulties to meet that they could not always discuss with members of their own community.

The women's motivations to learn new things in their new environment are influenced by what Bourdieu (1991) refers to as "cultural capital" and "symbolic capital". Their desire to gain new knowledge is dictated by the potential gains that this knowledge will bring them. All the participants in the present study are highly motivated to learn the New Zealand way of speaking. The participants' choices about becoming competent speakers of New Zealand English have some bearing on its worth in terms of education, employment opportunities, social status, and most importantly, survival in the new environment. The women's present adaptation processes in New Zealand require them to participate in the dominant society using the dominant language, thus influencing their perception of their own imagined future identities. They all took the opportunity to mingle and interact with native English speakers in a variety of situations. While some were granted access to these situations, some were denied participation. The women's motivation to speak and understand New Zealand English was mediated by their various strong personal investments in the host society. As part of their learning experience, it was necessary that they were able to determine the value of their utterances. It was important for Gloria to learn New Zealand English so that she could perform her role as a mother and as a primary caregiver to her child. Anna felt that it was necessary for her independence to learn the language so that she could integrate into the society, which she has accepted as her new home. Most immigrants feel that the more linguistic capital they possess, the more they are able to secure a profit of acceptance. Marilyn's motivation to learn and understand the New Zealand culture was prompted by her investment to settle in this country permanently. She appreciates New Zealand's open-mindedness about independence in old age, and feels that it is something that she will never find in her own culture. Maria and

Lucy's reluctance in taking on the identity of New Zealander was influenced by Maria's apprehensions about New Zealand's perceptions of child-rearing, and Lucy's reservations about some Maoris and white New Zealanders. However, in spite of these, both women feel that it is necessary for them to learn the new language and the new culture as a means of survival in their daily lives in their host country. Although they do not see New Zealand as their permanent home, the good standard of living that it provides is enough motivation for them to stay put for now. In Lucy's case, in spite of her desire to be fully accepted in her host country, the unpleasant experiences that she had with some New Zealanders have influenced her decision to remain at the periphery, hence making her cautious as to whom she would accept into her inner circle.

Unforeseen personal circumstances have also influenced the way they viewed their imagined future. The absence of children who are to look after Marilyn in the future, and Gloria's child with special needs, have shaped their decision to identify New Zealand as home.

5.2.6 Local Heroines

Changes in the women's identities are also influenced by their connections with their home country. Living and working in New Zealand seems to enhance their personal status in the Philippines. All five women claimed to have economic links with the Philippines. Back home, they are seen as heroines, who have made a lot of sacrifices by being separated from their families and friends in exchange for the material benefits to the people they have left behind, thus giving them strength in dealing with the difficulties associated with loss and separation.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

In this study, I have explored the immigration experiences of five Filipinas in New Zealand, by providing a comprehensive examination of their inner voices about their time in this country. All five women have gone through stages of acculturation where their previous experiences, personal backgrounds, personality, and general attitudes to life, played a very important part.

Prior to their departure, a number of push and pull factors in the Philippines and in New Zealand influenced their motivation to immigrate. In the five women's cases, the pull factors in New Zealand, such as better standard of living and better educational system, and the push factors in the Philippines, such as unstable economic, political, and social conditions, were stronger than the positive pull factors in their home country, such as strong family ties. For them, emigration was a road to life. The women in the study talked about the sacrifices that they had to endure by leaving their families behind in exchange for a better life. In some cases, some of them were even willing to pay large amounts of money to employment agencies in the Philippines to assist them in finding jobs in New Zealand.

The women's initial experiences in New Zealand were characterized by excitement, sense of adventure, and high expectations. Most of them were quite oblivious of the huge cultural differences between the Philippines and New Zealand.

However, after the stage of excitement and novelty of being in a new environment, all women started to experience the stresses of the long term realities of cultural differences. Apart from the weather, food, and general standard of living, employment issues and language competence in social contexts were two of the major obstacles that they had to face in their new environment. For some of them,

especially the highly-skilled, finding suitable employment was a critical indicator of successful integration. In terms of language, two major issues emerged - the problem of understanding, and the problem of being understood. While some migrants take the opportunity to enroll in ESOL courses, the women in the present study favored the informal learning of English, preferably through participation in the wider community, which, in some cases could be inaccessible.

The women's adjustment strategies were mainly characterized by two of the Expatriate Acculturation Process Model's three major categories of adjustment. First was their perseverance in seeking to understand and cope with the new culture, which involved going through the stage of culture shock (some went through it more than once). This strategy was characterized by their determination to learn to adapt to their new culture while maintaining their original culture. Second was their preference to seek the comforts of being surrounded by people from a similar background, either by their fellow Filipinos, or other immigrants from Asia and the Pacific Islands. The third category of adjustment - leave the host country - was not considered by any of the participants, in spite of the negative experiences that they had had in their host country. For them, the pull factors in New Zealand, such as better standard of living and better political and economic conditions, were much stronger than the push factors in the new country, such as the issues of acceptance and power struggles.

The women's stories have indicated that negotiating roles and identities was an important factor in their adaptation process. Their identities and membership in the New Zealand society determined and were determined by their participation in their host country. For them, membership meant inclusion, recognition, and equal opportunities of access. Some were resisted while some were granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members of the New Zealand society. Issues with legitimacy involved visibility and audibility. To look different and to sound different from the majority made the right to speak and the power to impose

reception critical for some of the subjects. Being involved in successful interactions in English was a source of self-confidence for some of them. Being different has affected the way some of the subjects perceive themselves, which extended to how they thought other people perceived them, sometimes assuming the worst or interpreting body language in a negative way. Their experiences showed their profound struggle to reconstruct their identities within the new environment. These identities were multiple and sometimes contradictory, often involving some inconsistencies with their own values and attitudes. Changes in their beliefs and ways of thinking were mainly influenced by the kind of personal and social support that these women received from their families, friends, as well as the wider New Zealand society.

A commonly held stereotype that Asians are cultural outsiders and are incompetent English speakers was one of the major challenges that the subjects had to deal with. This labeling had put them in a variety of subject positions that were constructed in different contexts, often involving a web of power relations. Such power relations often determined whether they were given or denied access to the periphery. As they started to settle in New Zealand, the women eventually developed and used different strategies to position themselves positively. However, there were some instances where limitations of human agency were apparent. There were times when they found it difficult to challenge their imposed identities, which, in most cases, had put them in marginalized positions. Regardless of how long they have been living in New Zealand, the women feel that they will always be seen as different, as the “other“, as immigrants, as opposed to the “white” immigrants such as the Australians and the British. In some cases, the subjects’ different viewpoints and perceptions also influenced the way they looked for opportunities to gain access into the periphery. In spite of Anna’s disagreement with some of New Zealand’s values and practices, she has learnt to tolerate them. This attitude has never limited her in looking for opportunities to gain access to the New Zealand society. Lucy, on the other hand, feels differently about some New Zealanders, and has chosen to limit

her own social circle within a particular group of people, thus, reducing her access to the wider community.

Faced with various challenges, the women's determination to improve their oral and cultural competence was influenced by their personal investment in their host country, which also often involved maintaining economic links with their families in the Philippines. The fact that they were able to financially support their families that they left behind, made up for the pain of loss and separation from their home country. As they continued to face these challenges, they also experienced significant personal transformations by exercising their personal agency. Such transformations included discovery of their inner selves that were not apparent before, and changes in the way they perceived the world.

In summing up, it can be seen that all five women have gone through a pattern of acculturation experience. The huge cultural differences between Philippines and New Zealand have posed problems to their adaptation process. The issues of visibility and audibility have put them in vulnerable and sometimes powerless positions, thus affecting their chances of being accepted as legitimate members of the New Zealand society. The issue of power struggle has also affected the way they formed their social identities which were oftentimes multiple and sometimes contradictory. Their experiences as well as their personal investment have also affected the way they see their future in their host society.

The findings of the present study reveal that successful acculturation means migrant satisfaction in terms of employment, ability to participate in the wider community successfully, and being accepted as a legitimate member of the new society. Based on the women's experiences, successful acculturation is not only limited to the migrant's outlook towards change, but it also goes hand in hand with the dominant society's attitudes, beliefs, and habitual responses toward change itself.

The implications of the study apply both to the migrants and to the members of the wider New Zealand community.

Migrants need to equip themselves with relevant information about their host country prior to their departure in order to avoid high expectations and frustrations. They need to take opportunities to learn about the new environment in order to make their migration experience a satisfying one. However, such measures are deemed impossible without support from the members of the host society. Schools, local communities, and the government have a responsibility to promote cultural awareness and respect for cultural and individual differences. Because it is through understanding each other's values and ways of thinking, and acknowledging that every person is her own unique individual, rather than judging based on race and ethnicity; as well as focusing on the human qualities that we share, rather than on the dissimilarities that separate us, that we get to communicate effectively.

Based on the findings of the study, it is therefore recommended that the central government develop and implement policies that aim to provide prospective migrants with relevant information about New Zealand prior to their migration. New arrivals should be given support in terms of cultural awareness as well as assistance in acquiring relevant skills to help them re-enter their field of expertise and secure appropriate employment. It is also recommended that the government promote public awareness and appreciation for living in a multicultural society.

Finally, it is proposed that further study on Filipinas in New Zealand, a group that occupies a high percentage of women migrants in this country, but receives less attention among researchers, be conducted. It is recommended that further investigation be conducted on matters of legitimacy and power relations - issues that open the doors to many other issues on successful settlement and acculturation in a new country. The choice to conduct in-depth, resource-consuming interviews limited the possibility of collecting data from a large number of participants, hence

limited diversity. It is therefore proposed that future similar studies utilize other research methodology to fill this gap.

Appendix 1

Information About the Research Project



***Intercultural Communication Competence: The Case of Five Adult Filipino Women
Immigrants in New Zealand***

Information About the Research Project

Dear

My name is Judith Corby. I am a Filipina immigrant in New Zealand. I would like to invite you to participate in the research project that I am currently undertaking. This project has arisen out of personal interest in recognising the challenges that my fellow Filipinas encounter in our adoptive country. It also fulfils the requirements of a Masters degree in Second Language Teaching. This project is supervised by Ms. Gillian Skyrme and Associate Professor Cynthia White at the School of Language Studies at Massey University in Palmerston North (06 356 9099).

The purpose of the study

My aim is to explore the experiences of Filipino women in New Zealand by talking to five adult Filipino women about their time in this country. I am hoping that their stories would serve as an inspiration and guidance to other women immigrants in New Zealand.

The participants

I am interested in talking to adult Filipina immigrants who have been living in New Zealand for a minimum of three months. As volunteer participants, you will be informed of your rights and of the purpose and procedure of the study both verbally and in writing.

The project procedures

You will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about some basic information about yourself. You will also be asked to participate in an individual interview. It will be carried out either in English or Filipino, or combination of both, depending on your choice. You will be asked to share your immigration experiences in New Zealand. This should take about one hour to complete. If you like, you can also participate in another interview, which will be conducted approximately one week after the first interview. All interviews will be tape-recorded, written out, analysed, and will be written up in my thesis.

If you agree to take part, I hope you will find the experience enjoyable and interesting!

Confidentiality

In order to protect your privacy, all data, information, and other materials collected during the course of the study will be kept confidential. In the final report, aliases will be used in place of your real names to assure anonymity.

Participants' rights:

As participants, you are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- ◆ refuse to answer any particular question;
- ◆ withdraw from the study at any time prior to the submission of the first draft to the School of Language Studies at Massey University;
- ◆ ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- ◆ provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission for me to do so;
- ◆ ask for the tape recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- ◆ check and make changes to my written copy of our interview if you want to; and
- ◆ be given access to the summary of the project findings when it is finished.

If you agree to take part, I will be contacting you in a few weeks to arrange the first interview at a time and place that is convenient for you.

If you were unable to take part, it would be appreciated if you could pass this letter to someone else who is able to.

If you have any questions and/or comments, you can contact me here:

90 Cuba Street
Petone, Lower Hutt
Wellington
027 3307 232
jcorby@xtra.co.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics and Equity), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you very much! I look forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely

Judith Corby

Appendix 2

Consent Form



***Intercultural Communication Competence: The Case of Five Adult Filipino Women
Immigrants in New Zealand***

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years.

- ◆ I have read the Information Sheet and the details of the study were explained to me. I understand that I can ask further questions at any time.
- ◆ I agree to give information to the researcher but my name will not be used without my permission.
- ◆ I agree to fill out the questionnaire. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I agree to participate in the interview. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I agree to the interview being audio taped. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I wish to have the tapes returned to me. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I would like to check the transcript of my interview. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I would like to receive a summary of the results of the project when it is finished. Yes ☐ No ☐
- ◆ I agree to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name (Printed): _____

Address: _____

Appendix 3

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

All information entered in this questionnaire will only be used for the purposes of this research project, and an alias will be used in place of your real name to protect your privacy.

PART ONE: A little bit about yourself

1. Name: _____
2. Pseudonym/Alias (What name do you want to be identified by in this research project?): _____
3. Age group:
 - ☐ 18-23 years
 - ☐ 24-29 years
 - ☐ 30-35 years
 - ☐ 36-41 years
 - ☐ 42-47 years
 - ☐ 48-53 years
 - ☐ 54-59 years
 - ☐ 60-over

PART TWO: Before you came to New Zealand

4. What was your highest educational attainment in the Philippines?

5. What was your occupation in the Philippines?

6. Which part of the Philippines did you come from?

7. Was New Zealand your first choice of destination?

☐ Yes

☐ No



What country was your first choice?

Next page please...


PART THREE: *In New Zealand*

8. When did you arrive in New Zealand?

9. Are you

- ☐ a permanent resident?
- ☐ awaiting permanent residency?
- ☐ a New Zealand citizen?
- ☐ a dual citizen (both a Filipino citizen and a New Zealand citizen)?

10. Are you

- ☐ single?
 -  ☐ married/in a de facto relationship/separated/divorced/widow?
What is/was your husband's/partner's nationality?
-

11. Do you have any children?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. What is your present occupation?

13. How often do you estimate you keep in contact with your fellow Filipinos in New Zealand?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Yearly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

Next page please... 

14. How often do you estimate you interact in English with people in these situations?

At work



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

At school



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

While shopping



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

With my neighbours



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

With my friends



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

Next page please...



In government departments



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

Others

Please specify: _____



☐ Daily

☐ Weekly

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ Yearly

☐ Never

15. How do you identify yourself?

☐ A Filipino

☐ A New Zealander

☐ A Filipino/New Zealander

☐ Not sure

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much!



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