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**Living and learning in New Zealand: Perceptions of Bhutanese  
students, parents and teachers of their learning progress**

Geraldine Anne McCarthy

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates twelve Bhutanese second language students' perceptions of their learning. The research locale is a Year 7-13 New Zealand school. Qualitative grounded theory research methods are used. Methodology consists of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with students, their parents' and teachers'. Questions sought details of the students' aspirations and expectations, barriers and facilitating experiences affecting their learning, with parents and teachers perceptions of the same.

Relevant findings reveal that the students have a very strong first-culture family and community web of support, to supports their personal investment in the maintenance of a multicultural identity, and upholds their involvement in L2 education. Student L2 learning progress is marked with time challenges, cognitive and articulation issues, decision-making about friendship, and concerns to establish a sense of legitimacy within the school population. Though supportive and affirming of their children's learning, parents' efficacy with student education is limited by second-language literacy and inexperience with New Zealand educational systems and practices. The study also shows wide differences of perception between English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) staff and mainstream staff about second-language background and learning needs. Mainstream staff show a lack of opportunity, and sometimes will, to engage in professional development about Bhutanese second language needs, in spite of some personal appreciation for the participants. Government funding is provided to support second-language learning, professional development, guidelines and research in schools, but there are no effective structures to monitor their use. The study concludes with implications for participants, their families, ESOL and mainstream staff, for further diversity in the New Zealand educational system.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis describes participants' journeys during a year of their adolescent school-learning life. It incorporates earlier journeys of their families from Bhutan to Nepal, to New Zealand. These journeys parallel the researcher's journey towards greater understanding of second language learning and the local systems and practices which delineate them.

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**“A nation is bound together not by the past, but by the stories of the past  
that we tell one another in the present.” Earnest Renan**

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1. A Personal Perspective

My interest in Bhutanese refugee-migrant-background students (RMB) developed when our paths converged at the same religion-based New Zealand school site. I had arrived there earlier from the South Island to continue my teaching career. I experienced some alienation from a close-knit community unwilling to accommodate cosmopolitan homogeneity. When the RMB students arrived, I became curious about their Bhutanese-Hindu allegiances, and life transitions into the local society and culture. In my struggle, I perceived their much more complex struggle. As their second language teacher, I was also interested in how RMB students managed to learn English in a cultural environment so very different from their own.

Of background significance was the fact that I had completed a post-graduate Diploma in Second Language Teaching in 2006, and was intent on rounding off my teaching career by delving into more intensive research on second language culture, and what strategies could be used to encourage second-language (L2) learning. At the time, contemporary practices in secondary schools emphasised literacy strategies and styles. However, I suspected that there might be much greater social and community forces at play which could be utilised to inform teaching practice and policy. The encouragement and generosity of the Bhutanese participants and community, and the relative paucity of material about adolescent RMB students learning in New Zealand from students' perspectives, finally convinced me to undertake this study (B. N. Abdi et al., 2002; Corner, 2012; Haworth, McGee, & Kupu, 2015; Sobrun-Maharaj, Tse, Hoque, & Rossen, 2008; van den Bergh, 2007; Warsame, Mortenson, & Janif, 2014).

## 1.2. An Historical Perspective of Participants

The student participants' parents moved from Bhutan to Nepal<sup>1</sup> from 1991 as part of a

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<sup>1</sup> *In this study, participants will be called Bhutanese, not Nepali, as is their wish.*

mass exodus. Their first home, Bhutan, is a small, mountainous, landlocked Asian country of 47,000 square kilometres, heavily influenced by its neighbours China and India. Before the seventeenth century, Bhutan was described as an isolated, barely-populated Dragon Country (Giri, 2004); later it was exoticised by Western journalists and filmmakers into a heavenly Shangrila (Hutt, 2003); more recently it has been politically positioned as “a yam between two boulders” (Mitra, 2013, p. 185) of India and China.

The diaspora of Bhutanese Lhotshampa people to Nepal in late 1980s was the result of an emergent power annexation by the ruling ethnic group, the Drukpas, fully explained in other texts (Banki, 2008; Evans, 2010; Giri, 2004; Hutt, 2003; Rizal, 2004). Drukpa origins lie in the Tibetan Buddhist culture. Lhotshampa people are Hindus originally from Nepal. However, from 1865-1930, they were encouraged by the British to settle on the southern Bhutan-India border, an underpopulated, malarial, treed “borderland” (Evans, 2010, p. 26). They were initially unresisted. However, in the 1980s, Gorkoland political activity in India, Nepal and Sikkim, to create a “Greater Nepal,” persuaded the hereditary monarchist Wangchuk Drukpa king that Bhutan was under threat of Nepali expansionism (Rizal, 2004). Consequently, from 1985, using a policy of “One nation, one people”, the Bhutanese government systematically suppressed the Lhotshampas by stripping them of their religion, language and schools, dress, marriage rights and culture, and finally citizenship rights. A bilingual tutor in this study, Mr. Prem<sup>2</sup> explained:

the army . . . used to come to the village in each house and used to grab whoever was there, father, son, or daughter, or mother, and were arrested and beaten and tortured and kept in jail for several months or years, and that went for several months and at last the king said: ‘Whoever wants to leave peacefully or whoever is in fear of their life, who wants to save their life, you can go back to Nepal. Nepal is your country, so Bhutan is not your country,’ so people chose to come back to Nepal, and as soon as we came to Nepal, different countries including UNHCR helped us settle camps. (BA 13).

The southern Bhutanese landscape became depleted of Lhotshampas. “By 2005, over

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<sup>2</sup> *Pseudonyms will be used throughout. See 3.2.2.*

106,000 refugees had fled Bhutan” (Department of Labour, 2010, p. 1). For approximately seventeen years, the Lhotshampa people displayed considerable resilience in sustaining life in five refugee camps in south eastern Nepal, named Beldangi, Goldhap, Khudunabari, Sanischare and Timai. From 2006, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) gave them the opportunity to settle in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Banki, 2008).

Across the globe lie the small, sea-locked islands of New Zealand. This country has regulated the acceptance of refugees since the end of World War Two (Immigration NZ, 2013). New Zealand is one of twenty countries that are signatories to the 1951 United Nations Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (Marner, 2012; Mugadza, 2012). The government commits to accepting three categories of refugee: up to 750 Quota Refugees per year in six intakes, 200-300 Asylum Seekers, and Family Support Refugees, “under a family reunification policy” (Ward & Liu, 2012, p. 51). Widows, women at risk, and those with disabilities or needing medical attention are accepted first, along with those who have family already here.

More than two years after their initial submission, the participant Himal and Ramesh families were some of the first of Bhutanese families to resettle in New Zealand in 2008. From then on, from being Quota and Family Support Refugees, they became New Zealand permanent residents, RMB Kiwis. As part of the process, they completed a six-week settlement programme at the Mangere Refugee Centre before moving to Palmerston North, and enrolling their children in mainstream schools.

### **1.3. The Research Problem and Purpose**

For Bhutanese RMB students, the task of improving their camp-learned English skills within the largely monolingual New Zealand culture while maintaining their first culture was a particularly complex process (Hamilton & Moore, 2004; Humpage, 2001; Marete, 2011a; Warsame et al., 2014). In their review of the 1998-2000 second language funding procedures in New Zealand, Franken and McCormish (2003) indicate that “the educational burden is perhaps the greatest for refugee children” (p. 29). Loss of first culture community, isolation and L2 integration within the L2 language learning

environment were all major issues for the adolescent participants in this study, who were faced with being a minority within the minority cultures in the ESOL Department at the site school. Statistics New Zealand Tatauranga Aotearoa (2013) indicated that there were 1590 Bhutanese New Zealanders living in New Zealand, and there was a 143% increase of Bhutanese in New Zealand from 2006-2013. The central North Island region of New Zealand, the site school location, had the lowest density of second language learners in New Zealand in 2013, though it is now designated as a refugee resettlement area, so this is expected to grow (Haworth, 2011). Mr Himal, the Bhutanese community leader and parent participant in the current study, noted that at the time of data collection, there were 434 Bhutanese people living in the province. However, a number of other characteristics of the New Zealand population also added to the potential reduction of RMB students' learning progress.

New Zealand has become one of a group of English-speaking countries where the population is now extremely diverse (Barnard, Torrez-Guzman, & Fanselow, 2009). Based on the 2013 census figures, Statistics New Zealand (2013) specifies that 74% of New Zealanders are of European descent, with a 14% increase in actual numbers since 2006, compared with 12% of Asian descent, with a 33% increase since 2006 (a faster growth than Maori and Pasifika numbers). While there is now much more support for RMB students than in the past, the need for more acceptance of diversity in New Zealand schools is obvious and increasing (Haworth, 2011; Ward & Liu, 2012). Diversity is reflected in the second language funding allocations. In 2013, the Ministry of Education indicated that the Period 1 funding allocation was for 31,378 students in 1,289 schools, representing 156 ethnic groups from 157 countries of birth, speaking 116 languages (Ministry of Education, 2013). To date, however, there has been very little research into the issues faced by adolescent RMB students in secondary schools from their perspectives. This gap has meant a lack of support in the classroom in practical terms as well as a lack of holistic appreciation of their situation.

New Zealand itself is a relatively peaceful place, once given the heavenly name-tags of 'God's Own Country' and 'Half-Gallon, Quarter-Acre Pavlova Paradise' Mitchell (2002, pp. 7, 11). King (2003) described New Zealanders as being largely "good-hearted,

practical, commonsensical and tolerant” (p. 520). However, research shows that monolingual vested interests in New Zealand maintain a practice of Asian and refugee discrimination. Ward (2010) identified that Asian immigrants are “perceived less favourably than immigrants from Australia, Great Britain, and South Africa” (p. 7). The Human Rights Commission (2012) identified Asians as the second most discriminated against group in New Zealand, with refugees as the fourth most discriminated against group. A Human Rights Commission (2013) survey stated that “Asian New Zealanders demonstrated ongoing resilience despite being perceived as the group most likely to experience racial discrimination and harassment – a perception which has endured in each of the annual reviews of race relations over the last ten years.” (p. 13). The Bhutanese RMB student participants in the current study form part of these unfavoured cohorts.

A further problem for the RMB adolescents is time-bound: students are under pressure to accelerate both Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and the more difficult Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to achieve as much as possible before they turn 20 (Te Kete Purangi, 2015). A New Zealand education practice is to automatically promote students each year in their academic, pastoral and administrative groups, though there is more flexibility in Years 11-13. However, RMB students are often working at a different level from local students of the same age. This has the potential to isolate students socially, put them under critical pressure academically (Gearon, Miller, & Kostogriz, 2009), and contribute to them abandoning their studies (Humpage, 2000; O'Rourke, 2011; van den Bergh, 2007). Long-term, even able RMB students are then very vulnerable to the prevalent low RMB employment outcomes and income levels which may result once they leave school (Mugadza, 2012; Ward & Liu, 2012).

The Ministry of Education takes responsibility for RMB students as part of its ESOL programme, active since 1998. Schools obtain funding for RMB students for up to four years, for educational support services, such as ESOL classes, teacher-aides, bilingual tutors, computers and other material resources. The Ministry of Education has a significant role in supporting RMB students' learning opportunities. The Ministry has delivered professional guidelines for funding, and teaching and learning practices (see Appendix 18), but individual schools decide how much funding RMB students are to



obtain, and how it is to be used. This implementation can be widely divergent across schools. Ibrahim (2012), similar to Barnard (2003), described the relationship between the Ministry and schools as “this ‘hands-off’ approach, because it sees schools as self-governing and its role as a statutory one” (p. 220). If there is little encouragement from further up the power hierarchy, the expectation for all secondary teachers to personally promote “collaborative relations of power within classrooms” (Cummins, 2003, p. 43) to allow for RMB legitimacy, is unrealistic. Without the full implementation of Ministry procedures, there is limited opportunity for equitable cross-cultural interaction.

The Ministry could implement its procedures through the use of a national language policy, but it continues to side-line calls to enact one (Barnard, 2003; East, Chung, & Arkinstall, 2012; Haworth, 2008; Ibrahim, 2012; Peddie, 2005; White, Watts, & Trim, 2002). East et al. (2012) called the 20-year call for a language policy in New Zealand, a “crisis” (p. 7). The consequences are that, in reality, RMB students are still very vulnerable to being left to their own learning devices in mainstream school settings. The aim of the current study is to understand and make their needs known, in ways that can inform better teaching practices and policies.

#### **1.4. Research Design and Overview of Chapters**

In consideration of the issues previously discussed, three research questions have been proposed to frame the study:

1. *What are the aspirations and expectations of second language Bhutanese students at a selected secondary school community in New Zealand?*
2. *What barriers and facilitating factors do students perceive as affecting their learning?*
3. *How did parents and teachers perceive students’ progress?*

The following chapters will present an account of the study.

Chapter Two situates the study in existing literature on L2 learning, highlighting theories that are most relevant to the current investigation. Heralded by individual cognitive

theory, the literature moves to socio-cultural community practices, then more recent post-structural studies of learner identity negotiation within the bilingual learning context. Chapter Three provides a detailed description of the data collection and analysis procedures and writing up. Chapters Four and Five contain the highlights of learners' views of the impact of their past and family patterns on their present learning, as well as barriers and facilitations during their process. Chapter Seven provides discussion on insights that have emerged from the findings. The closing chapter reviews the study's conclusions in relation to the research questions, and then centres on implications of the study for L2 students, parents and teachers.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This research examines a group of adolescent RMB students' perceptions of their learning, followed by their parents' and teachers' perceptions. Within this investigation, socio-cultural theories are crucial to the discussion of the participants' experiences. Socio-cultural theory makes for a richer and deeper understanding of L2 learning; it includes the dialectic between macro agencies of language, culture and social frameworks, with micro levels of learners' responses in practice (Barab & Duffy, 2012; J. Miller, 2003a; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Ortaçtepe, 2013; Swain & Deters, 2007a). Two influential theories, whose approaches underpin recent socio-cultural research, are the Mind Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and the Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998, 2010). A brief account of these approaches given here centres on relevant aspects for this study. These accounts will be followed by selected post-structural theories, then New Zealand RMB research literature.

### **2.2. Vygotsky's Perspectives on Learning**

The significant aspect of Vygotsky's Mind Theory for second language learning is that it laid the foundations for learning as socially-constructed (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). He ascertains that interaction or mediation with an expert is the way learning moves from a less abstract to a more abstract plane (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). The channels of mediation are culturally constructed artefacts including tools, symbols, and sign systems (Vygotsky, 1978), of which language is the most intricate. During mediation, internalisation takes place, where learners embed "behaviours required for participation" (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 410). In doing so, the learner moves from dependency to greater autonomy or "independent developmental achievement" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90). The gap between what learners can achieve unaided, and what they can achieve collaboratively with an educator who can scaffold learning, is called the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90). The role of the expert in helping

the learner is crucial. This element of the theory is particularly relevant for the current study, as students worked out ways of interacting with the new kinds of teachers they found in the New Zealand site school.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasises the importance of schools and teachers as experts, especially in the scaffolding for ZPD. However, more recent research identifies the need for more collaborative aspects of the expert role. Kinginger (2002) (cited in Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) states that in classrooms “students are invited to participate . . . but they are not authorized to question what they are accomplishing or why” (p. 274). Besides the teacher, other figures can be of help to the learner, in or out of the classroom. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) include collective engagement to “parent-child interaction, teacher-student interaction . . . peer-interaction” environments (p. 264) in which L2 students can use their first language. Swain, Kinnear, and Steinman (2010) also show how “not only teacher-student, but also student-student scaffolding can be powerful” (p. 26) in a mini-drama. The student participants in this study were in a network of relationships, all of which could potentially contribute to their learning.

Vygotsky (1978) also perceives learning as being culturally and historically situated. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) explain: “Culture infuses social relationships and the historically developed uses of artifacts in concrete activity” (p. 1). When learners appropriate language of a certain society, they also absorb the social concepts and historically-generated beliefs from the society, which Vygotsky (1978) calls “verbalised perception” (p. 29). If learners’ ontogenesis, or life history (Swain et al., 2010), differ from their social groups, it can be expected that they have “different conceptual categories” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014, p. 10) which complicate the learning process. Billet (1996) observed that sometimes L2 students’ prior learning experiences can deter them from learning in their new environments, “thereby inhibiting the construction of transferable knowledge” (p. 267). In this study, RMB students’ refugee background and L1 literacy can be expected to be major factors in their ability to cognitively absorb another language.

### 2.3. Communities of Practice

Lave and Wenger's theory of Communities of Practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) sources a more practical, embedded approach as to how learners become members of a complex community. The Communities of Practice model displays "dense relationships of mutual engagement organised around what they are there to do" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74), operating over a time span sufficient to allow participants to develop "shared histories of learning" (p.86). The learner adapts "the jargon, behaviour, and norms of a new social group as well as adopting the group's belief systems to become a member of the culture" (Iddings, 2005, p. 166). Members of a CoP do not have to be in the same setting, be completely "uniform" or "self-contained" (Wenger, 1998, p. 79). Small informal familial, social and cultural groups are examples of CoP settings, as well as formalised educational institutions; they are all potential sites for learners to appropriate explicit and implicit learning practices (Haneda, 2006).

Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that obtaining legitimacy has the greatest priority in learning. Learners are given crucial access to community practices (Swain & Deters, 2007b), including language, and are led "to competence through a process of 'Legitimate Peripheral Participation'" or (LPP) (Wenger, 1998, p. 100). This guided support allows newcomers "to participate in attenuated ways in the practices of a particular community" (Iddings, 2005, p. 167). Aspirational "novices" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 99) or "apprentices" (p. 57) are usually taught by "old-timers" (p. 29). All learning does not just have to radiate from the most knowledgeable; those at a similar stage, other "journeyfolk" (p. 57) can also assist; assistance may also be obtained from imagined future memberships which "can recast the present and show it as holding unsuspected possibilities" (Wenger, 1998, p. 178). As legitimacy increases, the newcomers and their communities become "transformed" (Iddings, 2005, p. 166) to become "mutually constitutive" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 117).

Different levels of learner participation lead to different trajectories, levels of empowerment and access to resources (Iddings, 2005). Wenger (1998) describes "brokers," whose skilled links to different communities facilitate greater understandings or solutions, as long as they carefully co-exist with both insiders and outsiders (p. 109) .

This may trigger affiliation with different learners at different stages of access. Conflict may also be triggered. Lave and Wenger (1991) highlight the position of “old timers,” who have had privilege and power conferred on them by their community’s historical social structures (p. 36), but who do not want to share their resources. Some learners can be prevented from obtaining social legitimacy through blocked relationships, lack of access to resources, the setting of unreasonable expectations, or prevention of learning opportunities (p. 92, 123). Some learners may limit their participation to a minimal role in the community (Wenger, 1998), become “marginal” (p. 166) or just choose to become complete non-participants. However, even non-participants are still engaged in, and are shaped by learning. They are still community members; even an isolated, autonomous learner carries the “historical consequences of other mediation” (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001, p. 149). Barab and Duffy (2012) warn L2 learners that too much marginalisation from social systems weakens “both individuals and the community” (p. 45).

For the L2 formative and vulnerable student, adolescent school years are a transformative period for being introduced into CoP, as Lave and Wenger (1991) point out that attempts to find a place, or to forge new relationships in “the cultural and political life of the community” (p. 100) may or may not be successful. As Morita (2004) concluded, a L2 newcomer’s position was “far more complex” than a native learner, and “likely to involve struggles over access to resources, conflicts and negotiations between differing viewpoints” (p. 577). These L2 struggles have been described elsewhere (Giroir, 2014; Haneda, 2006; Morita, 2004; Ortega, 2009; Swain et al., 2010; Toohey, 2000).

## **2.4. Post-Structural Socio-cultural Theories**

### **2.4.1. Positioning**

As Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003) put it, citing the Positioning theory of Davis and Harre (1990), the negotiation of identity amounts to “the interplay between reflective positioning i.e. self-representation, and interactive positioning, whereby others attempt to position or reposition particular individuals or groups” (p. 20). The concept is explored also in other studies (Anderson, 2009; Davies & Harre, 1990; Harre & Moghaddam, 2003). Anderson (2009) emphasised that classroom positioning is “mediated” (p. 308) and inter-contextualised between “the moment of interaction” (p. 292) and wider macro

contexts found elsewhere. Some of these contexts can be in the choice of dominant culture curriculum texts (Canagarajah, 2007; Kubota & Lin, 2006), or what Sears (2012) called “institutional practices and local social narratives” (p. 11), like those found in schools, familial or social sites.

One way L2 Asian students have typically been positioned is what Pon, Goldstein, and Schecter (2003) describe as the ‘silent L2 Asian learner.’ Ellwood and Nakane (2009) noted that Australian teachers’ expectations of L2 speech, and their inability to “read” L2 students’ needs from their silences, commonly resulted in a conclusion of incompetence (p. 213). Sometimes L2 Asian learners chose to silence themselves as a response to fear of being shamed, as Mrs Yee explained, “silence is a signal for lack of trust . . . I may use it wrong and people may laugh at me. I am not going to show you something that I am not good at” (Pon et al., 2003, p. 125). Nakane (2007) noted that if the teacher did not allow a two-second “wait time” for verbal translation of classroom questions, students avoided answering, and learnt instead by speaking to their friends or small support groups (p. 17).

Further studies show that in class discourse interactions L2 learners were also positioned (Giroir, 2014; Menard-Warwick, 2007; Stroud & Wee, 2011). Anderson (2009) examined the positioning of students in a fifth-grade Mathematics classroom in America, where Nate was positioned as a particular “kind” of student, that is, not competent, as he repeatedly showed lack of attention, even though his understanding of the topic was not diminished (p. 308). In the classroom, conscious or subconscious discrimination can underpin positioning. This is clearly an issue of relevance in this investigation.

#### **2.4.2. Investment**

The concept of investment in relation to L2 learning was developed in Norton (2000), and then, building on a number of studies undertaken since (Norton, 2000; Norton & Kanno, 2003; Norton & McKinney, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011) was redefined in Norton (2013a). The term comes from economics (Ricento, 2005). (Norton, 2013a) describes investment as “the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language” (p. 50). Learning a second language is viewed as a means of trading for L2 resources: “If learners invest in the target language, they do so with the understanding

that they will acquire a range of symbolic and material resources which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power” (p. 6).

However, as learners advance their identities might be contested. They not only negotiate for positions within macro levels, namely economic, historic and socio-political structures in which they live, but also within micro levels “everyday encounters between people with differential access to symbolic and material resources” (Norton, 2000, p. 7) . Borrowing from Bourdieu, Norton (2000) signified the method of negotiation as speech interaction, whereby learners “not only exchange information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organising and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (p. 11). As they negotiate, social hierarchies confer “the right to speak” as well as “the power to impose reception” (p. 8). Norton also incorporated Weedon’s theory of subjectivity (p. 8) into investment theory to allow for the recognition of struggles, power conflicts and counter-discourses that are parts of this exchange, (also affirmed in Menard-Warwick, 2005a; Morita, 2013; Ortaçtepe, 2013). The investment theory therefore pulls together multiple contextual strands of thought to encapsulate the complexity of learner choice in L2 language learning (Flowerdew & Miller, 2008).

Complications can ensue from the investment construct. Learners may be highly motivated to learn the target language, but have what Norton (2013b) called “often ambivalent desire” (p. 6) to practise it in a learning environment, which might be “racist, sexist, elitist or homophobic” (p. 6). The learner might not like a teacher’s methods of teaching, or resist the expected classroom patterns of behaviour; low grades and teacher perception of the learner’s ability, may result. Duff and Talmy (2011) also catalogue learners’ identity-juggling:

They may want to retain an identity that is distinct from a particular community or for practical reasons they may be unwilling to straddle both (and perhaps other) community expectations and learning/performance demands simultaneously. Furthermore, they may feel conflicted about becoming fuller members in certain new L2-mediated social worlds” (p. 98).



They may find the juggling of identities beneficial at some times, with increased freedoms and communication, and exhausting at others, with fluency imbalance and two personas (Hemmi, 2014).

Norton's investment theory is illustrated in her well-known Canadian research on five immigrant women who responded to contrary challenges by manoeuvring their personal experiences, and negotiating different identities to exploit access to learning (Norton, 2000, 2013b). The women's learning choices impacted on their life stories. Eva invested in social networks to improve her L2 learning so that her choices were similar to Anglophone Canadians. Mai's learning threatened the power structures at home and the work place. Katarina's and Martina's L2 investment in L2 learning affected their roles as mothers, while Felicia resisted being classed as a poor immigrant instead of a wealthy Peruvian.

Further studies concur with Norton's investment theory, particularly with the negotiation of identities shown through student-teacher interactions in the classroom (Kinging, 2003; Norton & Gao, 2008; Shuck, 2006). Duff (2002) explored limited access to language investment because of hostilities in a multilingual secondary school in Canada. L2 learners learnt to invest in silence to deflect criticism by classmates who were well aware that they were afraid of being laughed at or shunned (p. 311). Unhelpful teachers also provided "awkward" speaking opportunities for them, so "silence protected them from humiliation" (p. 312). However, this did not protect them from negative positioning, as locals saw them as lacking the desire to learn and share material. M. Cook (2006) researched four asylum-seeker ESOL students in England whose ability to invest in their learning was limited by others' stereotyped "tribalising" if their individual background was not appreciated (p. 70). Access to speaking situations was only partly assuaged by supportive ESOL teaching. Windle (2009) described the way French and Australian working-class secondary schools ignored the identity transformations necessary for L2 learners to become successful academic writers. Instead, they were often identified as poor performers with academic writing because, apart from technical errors, they could not recognise the distance "between everyday communication and academic

performance” (p. 105). L2 investment choices need to be sanctioned by their communities for L2 learning to be fully successful.

The accent a L2 learner uses can indicate their level of L2 investment, and be a means of denying social access if not acceptable to the target language culture, even though Ricento (2005) noted that English as the lingua franca of commerce and international communication has loosened emphasis on “native like proficiency” (p. 903). Potowski (2007) followed multi-ethnic fifth graders in Chicago where “power relations amongst peers enabled or constrained the students’ different investment in Spanish” where English had more status. (p. 101). Too perfect an accent can symbolise disloyalty to L1 culture (Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid, 2005) and show an affinity for ‘subjective bilingualism’ explained later in this section. Golombeck and Jordan (2005), stated that students were ostracised by their L2 friends if they spoke too much like native L1 speakers. They became “black lambs” not “parrots” in class as “the more learners sound like the speakers of their target language, the less they are perceived by their peers to be loyal to their home group” (p. 504). Social threats were thereby exposed. L2 learners needed to organise their language learning “to the highest level attainable but nevertheless retain ways of manipulating their pronunciation to clearly signal where their loyalties lie” (p. 505). These examples show that for L2 learners, accent use is a contested site for identity allegiance.

Investment is also affected by the difference of gender roles between first and second language cultures. Women’s L1 gender, marriageability, maternal status and housekeeping roles have been identified as significantly hindering their L2 learning (Ek, 2009; Pavlenko & Pillar, 2001). Often, at school, L2 females may be “guided to low-paying jobs” (Warriner, 2007, p. 355) and obtain significantly less interaction time than males (Jule, 2004; Pavlenko & Pillar, 2001). Pavlenko (2001) contended that with gender issues, the investment process was particularly complex, especially when L2 learners wished to maintain their first culture gender values, so they paid the price of not becoming “fully fluent and proficient” (p. 147). She continued that “some gendered speech acts were impossible to read through the lenses of the first” culture (p. 152), such as negative gender jokes. Female L2 learners’ role-juggling may cause quite different

behaviours in class to how they behave at home. In Skapoulli (2004), adolescent Nadia's native Egyptian cultural practices conflicted with L2 Westernised Cypriot cultural practices "pertinent to adolescence," so her solution was to resist, using "quiet, reserved and modest" behaviour at home, and becoming more extroverted at school (p. 251). This exemplifies the cost of the "multiple, contradictory nature of learner identity" (Norton, 2000, p. 127).

The struggle for parents to retain their family leadership and L1 language, while encouraging their children to invest in L2, is analysed in various studies (Giampapa, 2004; Luykx, 2003; Pease-Alvarez, 2003; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002). Pavlenko (2001) describes how lack of parent knowledge of L2 school requirements can block them from understanding or helping with children's educational needs. The parent-child relationship, crucial to the process of language socialization" (Pavlenko, 2001, p. 158) might even fail, particularly in the practices of "mothering and fathering" because of L2 investment (p. 158). Menard-Warwick (2005b) revealed mixed results with intergenerational family L2 support. Both Brenda's and Serafina's families encouraged language study. Serafina was able to "draw on her father's example of investing in literacy as an adult" and Brenda was advantaged by her college-educated mother's investments (p. 177). However, a variety of socio-political factors "circumscribed the return on those investments" (p. 180); their L2 learning resulted in real-life compromises they had not envisaged.

Finally, Investment theory also encompasses Lambert's (1975) more extreme situation of subtractive bilingualism and its effect on families and L2 learning. (Cummins, 1989; Kouhpaenejad & Gholaminejad, 2014). Norton (2013a) defined this state as "where "language learners give up their lifestyle and values in favour of those of the target language group" (p.155). Spoken language use is at the heart of this process, as the L2 user has to have enough English to become part of the target group, and the student must want to be 'relocating' time with the target culture more than his own. Norton's analysis of Mai's Vietnamese family recognised the role of racism in Mai's brothers' choices to forget their L1, so that "the social fabric of the family was destroyed, together with any hope of bilingual language development (p. 156). All of these issues are very pertinent in this study.

#### 2.4.2.1. Imagined Communities

This theory has been explored by Norton and her associates in post structural socio-cultural contexts (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton & Gao, 2008; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007), adding to work from earlier theorists, Benedict Anderson (1991, as cited in Scott, 2014) in Sociology, and Wenger (1998) in Education. Norton asserted that learners' imagined communities, often far removed from their accessible, tangible situations, could be as powerful as their real ones, and have a marked impact on their learning and identity. Imagined communities allow L2 learners to align themselves to their L1 community and values, encouraging them to obtain new educational opportunities they might not otherwise seek, to combat the toil of L2 learning through dreams which they own and control. Imagined communities can also explain “non-participation and resistance in the language classroom” (Atkinson, 2003, p. 76) as L2 learners create a favourable alternative bond with another social group, which may be different in race, ethnicity, gender or class.

Further studies show the impact of imagined communities on identity. Norton's (2000) analysis of Polish immigrant Katarina in Canada showed her use of imagined communities to position herself amongst “well-educated professionals” (Ortega, 2009, p. 244), to maintain her target community professional status. In the same study, Felicia's L2 teacher neglected to mention her L1 country and imagined community Peru in a class sharing summary, so she abandoned the class. Her imagined community was as a wealthy Peruvian, not a recent immigrant (Norton, 2001, p. 165). Both Katarina and Felicia showed that their L1 imagined communities were more essential to their identities than their real-life L2 learning. Kendrick and Jones (2008) analysed how Ugandan primary and secondary students drew, and took photographs, to make their imagined communities observable. This exposed the “barriers that have historically marginalized them” (p. 371) so they could overcome them to access learning.

#### 2.4.3. Agency

Lantolf (2012), building on Ahearn (2001) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006), defined agency as “the human ability to act through mediation, with awareness of one's actions,

and to understand their significance and relevance” (p. 19). The dynamic, socially-interactive, situated nature of agency, has been highlighted by other theorists such as Sears (2012) and (Mercer, 2012). Duff and Doherty (2014) link the analysis of agency to investment theory, in the way it is “constantly in flux and interconnected” (p. 69) in students’ lives, and how agency in one area of a student’s life can increase it in another, thus strengthening the choice of how much to invest in L2 and retain in L1, “allowing learners to surpass, break out of or otherwise remove themselves from contexts in which they would likely be unable to exert full control over some aspect of their lives or learning paths” (p. 70).

Various studies show how student empowerment results from learner agency application (Mercer, 2012; E. R. Miller, 2010; Morita, 2004; Stroud & Wee, 2011). Flowerdew and Miller (2008) describe how agency in discursive situations in or out of class, extra reading, or attendance in a vocational training institute, enabled three Hong-Kong males to achieve in English. Student Edgar traded Mathematics knowledge to “barter for assistance with English” (p. 218), while George asserted that his supportive English teacher gave him hope and access to speaking situations. A Hmong refugee immigrant student in a study by De Costa (2010), showed agency in discussion of the word “immunisation” because of his own experience of immunisation for arrival in America. Enrique, a Mexican adolescent immigrant in Pinnow (2011) used agency with body and voice - “raised arm and pointed index finger ‘I’ve got an idea!’” to gain attention from a dominant teacher. The ability of L2 RMB students to exercise agency in their new world is an area of interest in this study.

#### **2.4.4. Audibility and Visibility**

Audibility theory (J. Miller, 2003a, 2003b; Ortaçtepe, 2013; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2003) focuses on speaking, like investment, but uses a wider purview. It moves from speaking as a learner’s tool, to speaking as co-constructive: a “critical tool of representation, a way of representing the self and others” by what we say, how we speak, who we speak to and are heard by (J. Miller, 2003a). Miller, like Norton (2013a) extended Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic capital to explain items of contestation in legitimising one’s place in a society. School and home sites offer the opportunity for authentic

membership to be accessed or denied through speech.

Speaking and being heard confers “the power to impose reception” (p. 47) over those who are listening or silent; speaking to someone confers power on them over someone who is ignored; speaking and being ignored reduces power. More holistically, speaking a language understood by the majority in a society confers power to those speakers in that society. Conversely, it puts pressure on those who do not speak that language fluently, to conform. A voice can give hearers “an index to class, gender, age, ethnicity, social status, education and countries of origin” (p. 47). Lippi-Green (1997) explained that learners need to work hard to “foster mutual intelligibility,” especially if the teacher is disinclined “to carry any responsibility for the communicative act,” so the learner is overlooked by “language ideology filters,” in the drive to obtain social networks, structures and finances which dominant language speakers enjoy (cited in J. Miller, 2003a, pp. 47-48).

Closely affiliated to speaking legitimately is looking legitimate. Race and ethnic visibility play a major role in audibility (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2003) where “some speakers are more easily imaginable than others as authoritative, competent and legitimate” (p. 24). In a teaching situation, problems might occur if the powerbrokers do not hear the L2 student objectively, (J. Miller, 2003a) “showing that racial and ethnic cues may be more critical than accentedness” (p. 48). At school, potential friendship groups could be inclusive or blocking for similar reasons.

Jennifer Miller’s (2003a) research focused on five international students in a federally-funded English reception centre for migrants and refugees (Newham High School) in Australia, after completing an on-arrival course, and before they dispersed into other Australian mainstream schools. Her one “white skin, blond hairs” (p. 179) European student Milena, positioning herself in what she saw as ‘normal’ not L2, did not have difficulties with social integration. “Black hairs” (p. 179) Asians Norah, Alice, Tina and John limited their vital times of interaction with others because of both language limitations and wishing to keep close attachments to their L1 group. They suffered a sense of marginalisation because of visibility, L2 language limitations and the “unequal power relations” accorded to them (p. 179) which in turn had serious effects on their English

language learning and audibility.

Other studies of L2 students have concurred with Miller's student relational aspects of audibility (Willoughby, 2009). Uptin, Wright, and Harwood (2013) analysed refugee students' efforts to become legitimate in an Australian setting. Though Jai was not afforded the right to speak because of his L2 accent, there were other avenues to access. Sport was effective as a gate-opener for boys, "if they showed talent gave social capital and access to friendships across class and ethnicity" (p. 132), but not girls. Matilda was able to use music to become authenticated. Gabriella, being a refugee, was "delegated to the bottom class" but she spoke up and changed to an advanced class and thus "transform[ed] her access, " becoming involved in Rotary and Youth Parliament" (p. 133-4). Hannah "the weird black girl" gained legitimacy by moving to a private school that was more accepting of multinationals, then by speaking up in her drama class (p. 131). Keddie (2011a) also explored "spaces of empowerment" provided to three Afgan Muslim girls in a single sex school, to widen traditional gender roles for greater L2 access, through school camps, music and swimming, and discussions on marriage.

Further, J. Miller (2003a) highlighted the way high school structures reduced audibility options for L2 learners, with insufficient in-school resources, and pressure to reach a level of spoken assimilation before they are ready. Miller's (2011) overview of a lower-socio economic school, Midway, in Melbourne in which refugees were situated, repeated this latter issue. Another issue was the devaluation of their multilingual resources, with lip service being given to other European and Asian languages. Miller identified the need to move beyond demoralising labels for multilingual speakers; the term L2 defines what students are not, instead of what extra they have. Courcy (2007) supported this, in order that "competencies" could be emphasised (p. 199). Matthews (2008) accentuated that schools need to be "safe havens" (p.31) and need increased funding and "whole-school approaches" (p. 40) so minority students in Australian schools have "a fair go" (p. 187). Ellis (2013); Hattam and Every (2010); McBrien (2005) and Uptin et al. (2013) all reinforced Miller's views about the need for greater acceptance of diversity in ESOL in Australia, a view that is reinforced with this study, particularly with the role of classroom interaction and school provisions as formative factors for L2 audibility.



## **2.5. New Zealand Studies on Refugees in Secondary Schools**

Adolescent RMB research in New Zealand has ranged from highlighting intense barriers to educational progress, to identifying compensatory facilitations, to showing a small window of diversity acceptance. The following section will explore this shift, followed by New Zealand studies about their teachers and parents.

### **2.5.1. New Zealand Adolescent Refugee Migrant background (RMB) Learners**

After World War II, war-ravaged zones in Europe, Kosovo, and S.E. Asia created refugees which New Zealand increasingly accepted. The early 2000s saw a large increase in African refugees also devastated from war (Love, 2002). Much of the New Zealand RMB literature comes from their experiences, along with government-sponsored research.

Humpage (2000) comprehensively identified substantial issues with adolescent RMB Somalis in Christchurch. She found that their academic adaptation was hampered by low literacy based on a non-written first culture, an absence of any academic language, and disrupted schooling in refugee camps. Somali students were used to very different methods of learning, assessment, and time management in school. Some “school friends, but not best friends” (p. 61) were made with local students. However, religious differences indicated by “Why are you kissing the carpet?” (p. 62), adolescent social practices like dating and drinking, differences in gender roles and respect for parental authority, all combined to pressure many Somalis to leave school without qualifications. B. N. Abdi et al. (2002) concurred with these findings. Humpage (2009) also found that well-meaning efforts to provide neutral spaces of “equality” (p. 74) failed to decrease minority Somali exclusion in secondary schools. Difficulties with “present-past” RMB experiences and student-centred learning, continued to make Somali educational progress very difficult. Perhaps most of all, continuing L1 gender roles and early sexual maturation expectations made secondary education very difficult. In Somalia, while girls prepared for early marriage and child bearing, “boys from 12 years were recruited into the army” (p. 64). Role modelling from the military and Muslim clergy, which gave strong, supportive leadership patterns in their first culture, were diluted or absent in New Zealand.



Frater-Mathieson (2004) examined the dynamic significance of loss and “cultural bereavement” (McBrien, 2005) on adolescent RMB literacy, and how these factors can disrupt family patterns, inhibit short term memory, affect attendance and silence the student (p. 22-23). He found that student learning can be further disrupted on resettlement by gulfs between home and school, L2 learning practices and socio-cultural marginalisation through lowered RMB status (p. 31). H. Smith (1997) also suggested that in Wellington, New Zealand, learners that came from Lao lost some ability to integrate with their first cultures, as they furthered their second-language learning (p. 40).

Two New Zealand Department of Immigration Service publications (2001) and (2004), covering eleven refugee nationalities, identify RMB adolescents as being very vulnerable, a trend also noted in Frater-Mathieson (2004). The (2001) report explained issues such as local gender freedoms, different educational approaches in schools and expectations from parents to maintain L1 culture but achieve with L2 language. Older children dislocated traditional family roles by becoming “cultural brokers as well as interpreters” (p. 42). The (2004) report however, showed much more awareness of the evolutionary and upward nature of adolescent resettlement progress: “More than half of the children received extra help with English through ESOL classes, individual teaching assistance or after-school classes” (p. 14). Only a small number of refugee teenagers disliked their peers’ lack of respect for adults, the co-educational system, and some New Zealand teenagers’ behaviour (p. 14). The teenagers and young people interviewed showed enthusiasm for their role in New Zealand society, as well as maintaining their home culture (p. 20). Many refugees overall thought that New Zealanders respected individual rights, and it was “a peaceful and safe country” (p. 16). These results, though pleasing, may be skewed because of their governmental backing, as further research shows.

van den Bergh (2007) analysed a worrying trend of a decline in expectations of adolescent refugee students after their arrival in New Zealand schools. Greater open cross-communication between refugee families and schools pre- and post-arrival was recommended, along with emphasis on academic education, and ‘buddy’ use, language support and multicultural training for their teachers. A significant final question was whether secondary school was the best place to educate adolescent refugees, considering

their lack of success. These findings reflect RMB difficulties in O'Rourke (2011), who highlighted the lack of academic training for RMB students wishing to enter Victoria University in Wellington. Ministry of Education figures showed that “for RMB students who had five or fewer years in New Zealand schools, only 34.4% achieved National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) qualification at level 2 or above”, (p. 27) when university entry is at level 3. She stated that it was well-known that “proficiency in New Zealand English is a key problem for refugees” especially “weakness in academic English” (p. 28). She argued for a more comprehensive socio-cultural approach, available for Maori and Pasifika already at all learning levels (Corner, 2012), to deal with their concerns, exposing similar needs found in earlier adolescent L2 educational research, as with this study.

Sobrun-Maharaj et al. (2008) updated research on barriers to and facilitators of settlement and social inclusion in New Zealand for migrant and refugee youth. The primary refugee personal barrier was the same as migrants: 75% of the cohort identified language difficulties with accent and jargon, exacerbated by the host community treating non-English speakers as unintelligent. The trauma of migration, culture shock and host youth freedoms were other significant barriers (p. 55). Youth family pressures with changing expectations and roles can create conflict (p. 57). Sobrun-Maharaj et al. (2008) also identified initiatives that were working well to help refugee youth education were ESOL tutors programmes, boys' sport programmes, and careers programmes (p. 85). Homework centres and the buddy system, common in primary schools, were suggested for secondary schools. Teachers uninterested in refugee youth were cited as unhelpful (p. 87). Overall, the study promoted “acceptance rather than tolerance” (p. vii) as a government strategy and reflected that “schools must embrace/celebrate cultural difference” (p. 66). This study showed that government initiatives to improve refugee education in secondary schools were visible and partially successful, but that much more work was needed.

Johnstone and Kimanu (2010) examined refugee barriers to secondary learning success in Wellington, which centred on language, resourcing, lack of understanding and knowledge, age displacement and discrimination. Added to these barriers were limited future education plans, and lack of funding. Local sources of help were identified, such as

schools, two Wellington Somali homework support groups, the Ministry of Education, the Hutt Valley Learning Centre for RMB families, and existing research.

Warsame et al. (2014) evaluated a very successful school catch-up programme in Auckland, which has been run for refugee adolescents by the New Zealand Ethnic Employment, Education and Youth Development Trust, since 2005. This had been earlier called for by A. Abdi (2003). Students reflected that when teachers tailored learning to their individual needs, their understanding improved (p. 35). They appreciated that the bilingual tutor helped compensate for their silence in mainstream classrooms. Sixty-five percent of the students said that the catch-up classes had improved their marks (p. 36). Most senior secondary school students who attended were happy with the study support with academic skills needed for NCEA standards (p. 40). Well-run homework and catch-up programmes seem to be effective practical answer to many of the problems faced by adolescent RMB learners.

### **2.5.2. New Zealand Teacher Studies**

Studies in New Zealand show that teachers have a marked effect on RMB adolescents' L2 learning progress. Frater-Mathieson (2004) and Ibrahim (2012) note the enormous task teachers often experience in helping RMB students deal with their needs. These included "language difficulties, differences in learning styles and educational experiences, cultural differences and lack of resources amongst many refugee families" (Frater-Mathieson, p. 30). Hamilton (2004) noted that there was a danger that teachers could harbour "misconceptions" about refugees, and have low expectations for their academic progress (p. 93); Ibrahim (2012) stated that "some teachers generalise about refugees, feeling that they cannot achieve any qualification" (p. 214), though it has been proven that bilingual learners have "significant cognitive advantages over monolingual learners" (Haworth, 2011, p. 144). She surmised that in the school site region, where ethnic diversity "tends to be less stable and homogenous" than in other provinces of New Zealand, it was harder for teachers to build "long-term in-depth knowledge" about relevant ethnolinguistic groups (p. 142). In spite of these difficulties for teachers, it is the RMB students that can suffer the most.

Humpage (2000) identified the deleterious effects of lack of teacher care or RMB training about adolescent Somalians. Staff had very limited awareness of Somali learning needs and had little prior cultural information from the Mangere centre to help them (p. 59), so they were affronted by Somali frustrations into “rude, aggressive and violent” behaviour (p. 64). They failed to recognise refugee special needs issues like deafness (p. 60). Staff often made significant mistakes about premature and inappropriate mainstreaming. (p. 50). Some effort was made to include Somalian culture in the school, but staff depended on the students to help them. B. N. Abdi et al. (2002) concurred with Humpage’s findings in their research, showing that teachers’ lack of knowledge about Somalian student backgrounds was seen to affect their achievement at school.

Watts, White, and Trlin (2001) highlighted the need for professional training for diversity amongst secondary teachers, plus bi-lingual tutors and qualified ESOL staff (p. 33). Frater-Mathieson (2004) and Hurburun (2008) identified the need for teacher good practice to provide a safe, validating environment and sensitive cognitive support. With classroom differentiation, caring and appropriately-trained staff supported by senior management, and good use of RMB funding, teachers can encourage RMB students to succeed in L2 education.

### **2.5.3. New Zealand Studies of RMB Parents**

In a wide range of New Zealand studies, it is accepted that the value of forging links between parents and school staff cannot be underestimated (A. Abdi, 2003; Boske & Benavente-McEnery, 2012; Frater-Mathieson, 2004; Hamilton, 2004; Humpage, 2000; Ibrahim, 2012; Ibrahim, Small, & Grimley, 2009; Sobrun-Maharaj et al., 2008; Warsame et al., 2014). Humpage (2000) found that with little parental involvement in school routines, an important problem-solving source for student needs was lost. Frater-Mathieson (2004) noted: “Without parental involvement or a supportive guardian, these children are at risk of failing and becoming further isolated within the school and wider community culture” (p. 34).

There were issues on both sides. Franken and McCormish (2003, p. 119) identified that schools found it challenging to encourage parents. Lee (1993) identified “federal

education policy and entrenched interests of those managing the school” (cited in Hamilton & Moore, 2004, p. 86) as reasons. Teachers could be hampered by workload as well (Franken & McCormish, 2003; Ibrahim, 2012; Ibrahim et al., 2009). Parents may find the language barrier an embarrassment, or have time and financial pressures (Sobrun-Maharaj et al., 2008, p. 25), or mothers may feel “disempowered in their interactions ... with schools” (Conway & De Souza, 2010). Ibrahim et al. (2009) also observed that family transience in state housing caused problems. (Warsame et al., 2014) found that only a small proportion of parents “are in a position to help . . . with school work or homework” (p. 37).

Sometimes relationship conflicts between parents and their adolescent children reduced parent-school involvement, especially with helping with subject choices (B. N. Abdi et al., 2002). Sobrun-Maharaj et al. (2008) described parental anxiety for students to achieve well while maintaining their traditional culture, while students were “more eager to integrate into the local culture at the expense of intergenerational conflict” (p. 28). Ibrahim et al. (2009) found that an increasing English proficiency gap between Somali parents and their children caused family tension, exacerbated by parental “limited interactions with the host community” (p. 26). Parents were disadvantaged by less government funding than their children for second language learning. Further, expecting an adolescent to give correct translations for the parent was also seen as ill-judged, especially when teachers disclosed negative aspects of student school progress. These factors resulted in parental confusion with school systems. However, parental visibility within the school provided significant encouragement for their adolescent children.

Hamilton (2004) noted that parents have a role in creating a quiet place for homework, monitoring homework, and visiting classrooms and regularly meeting teachers (p. 86). He suggested the use of a mediator, from either the parent or teacher group, to facilitate the student transition. (p. 89) or help develop resources (p. 92).

There has been some recent government response to RMB parent-child educational needs. In Auckland, the Ministry of Social Development has instigated a successful programme for Sudanese families, to help minimise RMB parent-child inter-cultural conflicts (Deng

& Pienaar, 2013). The Ministry of Education set up a web-site in 2015 for RMB parents (See Appendix 18.8). Ministry funding for after-school workshops are now common in all main centres. There are calls for alternative support. Ibrahim et al. (2009) suggested that the Ministry of Education “establish mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of the extent and effectiveness of parent-school practices” so that schools are more accountable for their success. Further improvements recommended by Ibrahim (2012) called for reciprocal local school policies on parent-school collaboration backed by a Ministry of Education national policy (p. 264), plus the implementation of “the empowerment model of parent - school collaboration which is multi-dimensional and broad-based with a prime focus of building mutual collaboration and responding to schools’ and parents’ needs” (p. 265).

#### **2.5.4. New Zealand Government Documents**

The New Zealand government, through the Ministry of Education, provides public documentation for RMB students, parents and teachers. Their website contains comprehensive accounts of criteria and funding allocations, RMB handbooks for teachers, ESOL department guidance for curriculum and professional development, links to parents, and research. For this study, the Ministry websites (Appendix 18) show the extent of guidance available L2 help in New Zealand schools, which when taken, can considerably improve chances of L2 learning success.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

The focus of this study is to analyse Bhutanese RMB students' perceptions of their learning progress. To understand the situation more fully, it also seems valuable to seek out the perceptions of other stakeholders, parents and teachers, as they can lead to other insights about student participants' learning. This chapter provides an account of all the participants and their setting, as well as methods of data collection and analysis.

### **3.1. The Research Approach**

The decision to adopt a qualitative approach was made early because of the “social, cultural and situational factors” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 36) which make up the nature of second language learning, on which this research is based. A qualitative framework means that there is not one single predictive truth depending on set power structures or linguistic frameworks, but rather, truths which represent the multiple but firmly held interpretations that people hold of their lived experience. Crotty (1998) asserts that truth or meaning comes into existence “in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world” (p. 8). The qualitative approach also gives weight to individual responses or as Dornyei (2007) states, gives “insider meaning” (p. 38) a priority, placing the individual's subjective, dynamic identity at the centre of the investigation, and in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007; Gergen & Gergen, 2000).

The research approach includes the use of constructivist grounded theory “to generate or discover a theory for a process” (Creswell, 2007, p. 83). With this approach, participants' knowledge in their natural setting is acknowledged as verifiable, especially when triangulated with information from individual and group responses. Flexible and interpretative methods are utilized with wide reading around theory, memoing, an evolving data collection, evolving and open data coding using themes then evolving topics, sampling and member-checking (Harvey, 2014), and retrospective confirmation. From these, data becomes saturated, and theories “from extant literature” (Creswell, 2007, p. 106) become prioritised, to form the focus of the research.

Consideration was also given to the ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ mix in the research sequence. Participants would express their own emic perspective (Swain et al., 2010) which, during the filtering process, would link their perspective to research literature, then become merged into the researcher’s etic perspective (Creswell, 2007) to produce a holistic “cultural portrait” (p. 96). The more practical aspects of methodology follow.

## **3.2. The Research Environment**

### **3.2.1. The Setting**

Once the school principal and Board gave permission (Ruane, 2005), this research was able to take place. It was sited in an integrated, co-educational college, located in the centre of the North Island of New Zealand, with a decile ranking of seven. The site school encompassed a junior school of Years 7-8, and a secondary school of Years 9-13. In 2013, approximately 580 students attended the school. At the time of data collection, the ESOL Department contained approximately 60 students from a wide variety of Pasifika and Asian cultures.

There were several research advantages in selecting a group of adolescent second language RMB students at the same school sharing the same ethnic background. Their close cultural ties would enable them to easily discuss contemporary experiences and trajectories with learning English. Their parallel refugee experiences would provide an additional dimension to their learning experiences, in comparison to other L2 learners. Attrition was less likely because of their status as resident school students. Adult perspectives could be used to contrast. Bhutanese adults and parents linked to the students’ schooling could explain their backgrounds, cultural practices and family experiences. ESOL staff and mainstream teachers in the site school, who had close exposure to the Bhutanese students, would be able to contribute to an understanding of the students’ learning journeys. These combined perceptions would serve to highlight the Bhutanese students’ perceptions of their own learning.

### **3.2.2. Participants**

The study involved three participant groups: the students; adult Bhutanese participants: the bilingual tutor and parents; teachers, both ESOL and mainstream.



### 3.2.2.1. Student Participants

11 selected Bhutanese students at the site school, and one who had recently left, were selected; seven females and five males, aged between twelve and twenty, from Year 7 to university Stage One. There was a high degree of kinship among the students. Most of the participants came from two families: three were from one family with two cousins. Four students were from the other family. Most of the students lived near each other and were in neighbourly contact.

**TABLE 1**  
**STUDENT PARTICIPANT DETAILS**

PSEUDONYM	GENDER	AGE	MONTHS IN NZ	CLASS	DATA CODE
Kali	F	18	17	Yr. 12	1
Karicha	M	14	17	Yr. 10	2
Sunu	F	16	17	Yr. 11	3
Kamba	F	13	21	Yr. 7	4
Khusi	F	20	47	-	5
Narayan	M	13	47	Yr. 8	6
Unia	F	16	31	R 11	7
Kare	F	12	31	Yr. 9	8
Kaudani	M	19	31	Yr. 13	9
Nilu	F	13	45	Yr. 9	10
Parveesh	M	17	45	Yr. 12	11
Asis	M	13	47	Yr. 7	12

\*The months in NZ and age for each child are at the time of commencement of the research.

### 3.2.2.2. Adult Bhutanese Participants

Two interviews were planned with adults of the Bhutanese community. First, a focus interview with the site school bilingual tutor and the community leader was arranged, then a larger focus interview with all of the participant students' parents.

**TABLE 2**  
**ADULT BHUTANESE PARTICIPANT DETAILS**

<b>PSEUDONYM</b>	<b>ROLE</b>	<b>FAMILY LINK</b>	<b>DATA CODE</b>
<b>Mr. Prem</b>	<b>Bi-lingual tutor</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Mr. Himal</b>	<b>Community leader</b>	<b>Father of Mr. Nam, Khusi, Narayam</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Mr. Ramesh</b>	<b>Bi-lingual tutor</b>	<b>Father of Parvesh, Nilu</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Mr. Nam</b>	<b>Brother</b>	<b>Brother to Khusi, Narayam</b>	<b>16</b>

### 3.2.2.3. Teacher Participants

A focus group was planned with two ESOL staff, one a teacher and one a teacher-aide. Planning was also made for a mainstream teacher focus group, volunteered from those who taught the participants.

**TABLE 3**  
**ADULT PARTICIPANT DETAILS**

<b>PSEUDONYM</b>	<b>TEACHING ROLE</b>	<b>BHUTANESE STUDENTS TAUGHT</b>	<b>DATA CODE</b>
<b>Mrs. Lightfoot</b>	<b>Sport, Projects</b>	<b>Asis, Narayan</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Mr. Barrett</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Sunu, Unia, Kaudani</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Mrs. Cable</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>All student participants</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Mrs. Richardson</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Sunu, Unia</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Mr. Curtis</b>	<b>Commerce</b>	<b>Khusi, Sunu, Unia</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Mrs. Goldeye</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>All student participants</b>	<b>19</b>

## 3.3. Instruments

I chose to collect data using a variety of instruments, to allow for triangulation which would “enhance interpretability” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 25) and to obtain “thick” data (Heigham & Sakui, 2009, p. 99). I decided to use observations, questionnaires, focus groups, and individual interviews, and planned to collect informal data for verification from emails and verbal checks with the Nepali interpreter, the New Zealand Ministry of Education and ESOL staff and students, as the study developed.

### 3.3.1.1. Initial Recruitment

I chose to write an invitation and explanatory letter in Nepali and English, then considered that an evening meal was appropriate to gather respondents together to welcome them, followed by a research presentation. I thought the evening would also be useful to gather a personal profile from each student so parents and their children could check the data together.

The next data collection, a written “attitudinal” questionnaire (Dornyei, 2007, p. 102) for the students to complete, would be held during an after-school Bhutanese homework time. This method would introduce the analytical process for students as individuals, the first of a sequence about their thoughts on their learning progress. It would be a useful triangulation tool, to check with the more in-depth interviews. It was written in neutral, easy language, to cater for the ages and abilities of the student participants, with a mix of short, positive, one-idea written questions and elicited graphic responses (Brown, 2009b; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Ruane, 2005). The questionnaire included complementary closed and open-ended questions, the former to encourage involvement with ease of application, the latter to allow for personal elaboration. Some questions offered the option to finish sentences prefigured by a sample, intended for quick, first-thought filling. An always/never Lickert Scale was another method used, with space for explanation. For additional help, a mood chart was prepared for display on the whiteboard, to be filled with feelings named by myself or the students.

Next, I organised a round of classroom observations. I considered that these would help me find valuable insights into the way participants coped with classroom relationships (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011), particularly with the degree to which students changed their relationships in different classes. Although these could be “time-consuming and sometimes obtrusive” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 29), they could also “yield more valid and authentic data than would otherwise be available with mediated or inferential methods” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 396). I focused on student classroom roles as individuals, in small groups, larger groups, and with their teachers. I planned to use written notes for data, to obtain “multi-layered triangulation, to support student subjective accounts, or decipher inconsistencies from them” (Ruane, 2005, p. 168), to embed and

etic perspective to complement student accounts.

### 3.3.1.2. Focus Groups and Semi-structured Interviews

‘Active’ focus groups (Talmy, 2010, p. 131) and individual semi-structured interviews formed the two main blocks of my planned data collection, allowing participants to speak without too many restrictions. Researchers agree (Dornyei, 2007; Fontana & Frey, 2000; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Madriz, 2003; Morgan, 2008) that the two methods work well together complementing each other, in that the former elicits data to introduce and end investigation, and to emphasise social interaction, (Cohen et al., 2007; Ruane, 2005), while the other can probe individual depth of thought. Using both was a way to maximise data collection, develop emergent theory, member-check validity (Harvey, 2014) and to triangulate.

#### 3.3.1.2.1. *Focus Groups:*

Focus groups were an efficient way to foster discussion to contextualise and validate data (Appendix 12). In particular, there was “no requirement to reach consensus or produce a decision” (Morgan, 2008, p. 353). The use of a number of questions with wide-ranging suggestions in focus groups has been seen as particularly useful for analysing minority cultures, because of its increased comfort-level, and inclusiveness (Madriz, 2003). Further, by “segmenting” with different focus groups Morgan (2008, pp. 253-354), participants could compare “experiences shared” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 71) like a prism (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011) which could generate high levels of interest and enthusiasm in each group, rather than attempt complex abstract detail. Further, as the interviewer, I could limit “vertical interaction” and observe “horizontal interaction” where participants constructed their “own power relations” (Madriz, 2003, pp. 371-372) giving greater opportunity for more valid socially-constructed, subjective meaning. If there was an issue, I could use “gentle nudging without bias” (Rapley, 2006, p. 20) to refocus and deepen answers.

#### 3.3.1.2.2. *Individual Interviews:*

I estimated that as long as individual interviews could minimise personal issues of trust (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Cohen et al., 2007; Rapley, 2006), they would be seen by the

students as “a pleasant social encounter” (Ruane, 2005, p. 147) collaborating and talking about themselves (Appendix 13). I estimated that the confidential situation would allow them to express deeper individual perceptions, and to think conceptually, unfettered by wider peer group bias or adolescents vying for position (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Dornyei, 2007). My main response as the interviewer was to remain “neutral” (Rapley, 2006, p. 16) but obtain rapport. My aim with content was to follow up generalised views with particular data, and to obtain both explicit and implicit meanings expressed in the social context of the interview (Talmy, 2011).

### **3.4. Ethical Considerations**

The methodology for this research followed requirements from Massey University’s Human Ethics Committee. Because the study was deemed to be unlikely to cause harm, it was classified as low-risk, with the proviso that the site school take ultimate responsibility for any issues that might arise. In effect, the school Board allowed me to “enter the field” (Ruane, 2005, p. 265).

Approvals and consents were obtained from students, parents, teachers and government officials. Two features of the consents process were the need for some parents to sign for students under 15 years as well as themselves, and a need for some written and spoken Nepali to communicate with parents. The interpreter was invaluable in this respect. Anonymity and confidentiality, key features of ethics approval, were achieved through the use of pseudonyms. All spoken, visual and written data was collated, processed and transcribed by myself, and kept in a private location.

Ruane (2005) explained that the risk of possible psychological harm to participants could be a concern, in that reliving past difficult experiences is sometimes troublesome. I had little personal knowledge of the extent of individual or family difficulties in the camps, or the effort it took to move to New Zealand. Reliving the past might open wounds. However, my knowledge of participants from previously teaching them, their trust in me, as well as their care for each other, were important factors in mitigating this risk. The Bhutanese parent community were fully supportive of the research process. As well, a right of withdrawal at any stage prefaced each interview, which minimised any sense of

coercion. Finally, the site school counsellors of both genders agreed to be available if issues arose.

Respect and reciprocity were other key features of ethics approval, which I marked with shared meals, vouchers or other food. I considered that parents saw the interviews as an opportunity to express their views on their children's educational progress. For them and the site school, some reciprocity will hopefully be obtained with the results of this study. The research experience has only strengthened my respect for the Bhutanese community and their generosity in allowing me to see into their world.

### 3.5. Implementation

#### 3.5.1. Research Schedule

My schedule was planned to pace the data collection in line with grounded theory principles (Charmaz, 2014) which allowed me to 'generate or discover a theory' from "rich data" collecting methods (Creswell, 2007, pp. 63-65).

**TABLE 4**  
**DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE**

<b>TIME 2013</b>	<b>PLANNED ACTION</b>	<b>CODING</b>
<b>TERM TWO:</b> <b>6<sup>th</sup> May-12<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>May 19<sup>th</sup>: invitations given out</b> <b>May 29<sup>th</sup>: shared meal</b> <b>June 12<sup>th</sup>: student questionnaire</b> <b>July 3<sup>rd</sup>: Bhutanese pair interview</b> <b>July 1<sup>st</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>: Observations</b>	<b>Q</b> <b>BA</b> <b>OB</b>
<b>TERM THREE</b> <b>July-27<sup>th</sup> -</b> <b>29<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>August 14<sup>th</sup>: Student focus group meeting</b> <b>August 28<sup>th</sup>: ESOL teacher focus meeting</b> <b>Each Wednesday: one student individual interview</b>	<b>SFG1, SFG2</b> <b>TG1</b> <b>SI 1-12</b>
<b>TERM FOUR</b> <b>14<sup>th</sup> October -</b> <b>11<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Each Wednesday: one student individual interview (contd)</b> <b>September 25<sup>th</sup>: Parent focus group</b> <b>November 6<sup>th</sup>: Retrospective student meeting</b> <b>November 20<sup>th</sup>: Mainstream teacher interviews</b>	<b>SI 1-12</b> <b>PFG2</b> <b>SFG3</b> <b>TG2</b>

### **3.5.2. Recruitment**

After ethical approval was granted (Appendix 1), the invitation and information letter in Nepali (Appendix 2), were taken to their participant family homes by the community leader and interpreter, who explained the research process further to them. Following this, a Nepali meal was enjoyed at the site school, with food prepared by the student participants. At least one parent of each student participant, and all 12 students, attended. When all were present, I explained the research, distributed consent forms (Appendix 5) and the personal profile (Appendix 8), which were all returned at the meal, with parents and students filling them in together.

### **3.5.3. Questionnaire**

The questionnaire (Appendix 9) was completed during the Bhutanese homework time in the site school ESOL room; it took just over an hour, with some students finishing quickly, others needing explanatory help from the ESOL teacher or community leader present, or myself. Questions centred on the helps and hindrances to their learning (Q 1-4), future goals (Q 5-7), classroom moods and pressures (Q 8), and influences on learning (Q 9). The questionnaire slightly overestimated student ability to answer fully in the time given, and while most obligingly answered in full, some gave intermittent or repeated responses. All questionnaires were returned, ten at the meeting and two the next day.

### **3.5.4. Observations**

An intensive two weeks of observation, covering four lessons for each student participant, gave me contextualised data (Appendix 10). Links to relevant staff were ensured with personalised notes in pigeon holes then verbal confirmation, before teacher consent forms were offered for signing during observation. The observations each took up to 50 minutes each. In the classroom, I attempted to sit in a quiet place near the participant, but often this was difficult because of their seating position. Sometimes the teacher directed me to a seat. I took rough notes about the student participant's response to work, small groups, large groups, and teacher, but also any seemingly relevant phenomenon, in line with emergent "grounded theory" (Dornyei, 2007, pp. 257-262). As well, I used interval and lunchtimes, up to 35 minutes, to observe Bhutanese social interactions in the ESOL room or outside nearby.

The observation method was an additional support “giving important insights into the external aspects of language learning” (Cowie, 2009, p. 168) but it contained limitations, which gave it second-tier data collection status. These were centred on skewing of participant responses because of adolescence and classroom peer pressure, as with “the Hawthorne effect” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 53; Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 186). Also, although my research purpose was known at the school, I was conscious of the “fronts” (Richards, 2003, p. 127) or reservations which created distance between myself and staff (Cowie, 2009), as well as myself and other non-participant students, as I entered their domain. This in turn impacted on the response of the participants in the classroom context, as their body language and verbal responses showed. I planned to be a “complete observer” (Ruane, 2005, p. 165), but at times I became a more involved participant (Cowie, 2009; Dornyei, 2007). Sometimes I misinterpreted what I was watching, as with intangible motivations for behaviour, and needed to “verify interpretations with participants” later on (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 30). It was also impossible to capture every layer of the participants’ interaction, (Cohen et al., 2007), so effectiveness was relative.

### **3.5.5. Semi-Structured Focus Group Interviews**

The focus groups (Appendix 12, 15, 16, 17) were all conducted in the site school, for ease of access and comfort, except for the ESOL staff interview, which was held in a private home. Each group took between 40 and 90 minutes each. Meeting times varied for pragmatic reasons: the student groups used Wednesday homework hours, the parent group met in the ESOL room in the early evening after work, the ESOL staff used the holiday break because of other commitments. The mainstream staff slot was chosen to during a Professional Development day to avoid timetable issues. Student focus group questions centred on advice to a new student (Q 1), aids or difficulties in learning in a new context (Q 2-6), and their future goals (Q 7), whereas the ESOL and mainstream staff interviews concentrated more on their perspectives on what the Bhutanese students bring to their classes (Q 1-2), some good and difficult experiences (Q 3-5), enculturation (Q 6-7), and how school institutions could be of greater help (Q 8-9). Using the same questions for the two staff groups allowed for comparison of perspectives. The Bhutanese parent focus group concentrated on their expectations for their children (Q 1), helps and hindrances (Q



2-3,6), cultural and educational changes from Nepal (Q 4), and future options (Q 7). The Bhutanese pair focus interview (Appendix 11) took place in the Refugee Centre. Questions for each group were geared to obtain responses which involved “understanding the lived world” (Richards, 2009, p. 187), allowing space for participant expansion. Questions focused on their named identity as Bhutanese or Nepali (Q 1), their past and its effect on their attitude to learning (Q 2-3), family and learning (Q 4) helpful experiences and advice for RM second-language learners (Q 5-8).

Practical difficulties resulted in slight adjustments to the original dates and sequence. The bilingual tutor with the Bhutanese pair group was unavailable for a joint meeting, so individual interviews resulted with both. With the mainstream staff group response, only two staff were free to speak together, the two other volunteers gave individual interviews. Some teachers declined. With student interviews, I was prepared for spontaneous behaviour and attempted to follow the advice of Turkel (1995) “stay loose, stay flexible” (cited in Plummer, 2001, p. 140). Krueger and Casey (2009) warned that “focus groups with teens are fun because the unexpected regularly happens” (p. 160). Potential adolescent opportunities to “goof off” (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 160) were assuaged by careful planning and introductory interview comments to guide participants towards appropriate behaviour. Finch, Lewis, and Turley (2014) encouraged “topical steering” of the questions, to ensure equality of distribution (p. 223). This was managed with prompts and in-depth probes with pausing and open-ended questions to varying degrees. The retrospective student focus group interview (Appendix 15) was a compromise: nine of the 12 students participated, as three seniors had left the school. It took place two months after the last individual interview, and gave students the chance to “retrieve their relevant thoughts” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 148), through the lens of hindsight using material I had collated from other data that linked to two emergent themes. However, responses were favourable, with some additional variations provided by more interactive personalities; retrospective discussion helped satisfy the need for iteration.

### **3.5.6. Semi-Structured Individual Student Interviews**

Individual interviews are considered to be “the gold standard of qualitative research” (Richards, 2009, p. 183). However, I was aware that, with adolescents, my greatest

challenge would be to manage the interaction skilfully. One individual student interview weekly was conducted in a quiet space in the ESOL room, during Bhutanese homework times. I was aware that often the richest data comes towards the end of an interview, so I estimated them to be approximately just over an hour. Proximity to other students during interviews, and patterning of student sequence, avoided some possible anxiety, as each Bhutanese student in the school agreed to be interviewed, and the same questions were to be used. The student sequence was based on age, from the oldest to the youngest, except when someone was absent. This followed the Bhutanese pattern of putting elders first, and helped encourage some less interested younger students to participate, as well as allowing for senior absences with NCEA exams.

My approach and questions, which Burgess (1984) called “conversation with a purpose” (cited in Richards, 2009, p. 183) were inductive, “bottom up” rather than the “top down” (Appendix 13). This made the participant the “expert” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1988, p. 4) permitting variation of response to allow for individual experience (Richards, 2009). It allowed me to respond with “neutrality, rapport” and “complementary reciprocity” (Rapley, 2006, p. 19) and “active listening” (Yeo, Legard, & Keegan, 2014, p. 184). Initial “grand-tour” questions (Dornyei, 2007, p. 136) were about positive and negative learning experiences (Q 1-2), followed by a diagram for students to jot a historical timeline (Q 3), then mood boxes for the last three terms (Q 4). The last questions covered changes and future possibilities (Q 5-6). Efforts to engage the students were managed by using “enabling techniques” (Arthur, Mitchell, Lewis, & Nicholls, 2014, p. 160) of tactile and visual stimuli. I used a picture of students of mixed ethnicity, then, more successfully, produced five carded scenarios of imaginary Bhutanese students in New Zealand (Appendix 14), who had typical school issues. I asked the students to comment on the ones they engaged with the most. Finally, I requested that the last five junior students to share favourite photos on their cell phones, what Prosser (2011) calls “visual elicitation” (p. 484), which very successfully linked me to their world immediately, and set the tone for a more relaxed interview.

### **3.5.7. Interviewer’s Role**

My role changed markedly in the criss-cross of focus groups and individual interviews.

The student response was tempered with a cultural respect for the researcher being an elder and ex-teacher, and their close community bonding also helped gain positive responses, with older students monitoring the younger ones. I was aware of their Bhutanese family patterns of hierarchy and gender expectations; these could create a tendency for some students to allow others to speak for them. Additional, improvised prompts or past mutual incidents were used to help explain a question more fully, “gently nudge without bias” (Rapley, 2006, p. 20) or remember a pertinent experience. Nepali, which I could not understand, was used also in each of the student focus groups, but it did not seem to compromise the interviews, and may well have helped communication.

Focus groups were “not without problems” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 73). Sometimes I used my own experience to parallel an offer of theirs in “complementary reciprocity” (Rapley, 2006, p. 23). Enthusiasm for the moment sometimes clouded awareness that my interviewer role was becoming too dominant or over-familiar; my skill in this was a moving target. Sometimes I slipped into my previous role as ESOL teacher. Occasionally I responded as an authoritarian to refocus the students on the topic, so moved from an expressive to an instrumental role (Ruane, 2005). This came close to crossing ethical boundaries between free choice and coercion, “the tension between ethical principles and quality” (Webster, Lewis, & Brown, 2014, p. 92), as noted in 7.3.

Sometimes, students could unite to block me from discussing topics distasteful to them, or stayed silent with topics which they deemed culturally inappropriate. Some adolescents used distraction tactics when the atmosphere became too intense for them. These included jokes, mocking and ambiguities. Though often witty and entertaining, they needed to be skilfully managed so the interview questions could regain priority.

My supervisor, who was the other interviewer in the first, younger student focus group, had the advantage of being able to ask questions without any ‘baggage.’ She encouraged students to speak freely about teenage topics without being seen as linked with the school system. However, because the supervisor was not known by the participants, they sometimes distanced themselves by distractions and game-playing. Krueger and Casey (2009) commented that “if the second moderator is a person with local prominence or in a

respected position, the participants may be reluctant to provide candid feedback” (p. 193). The supervisor’s role highlighted the value of having background participant knowledge before the interviewing process.

The inherent structure of the individual interview is hierarchical (Creswell, 2007) but my role, though less taxing than in focus groups, required careful ongoing management to maintain good relations. Responses were more supportive from students I had known previously. As the year progressed, interviewer methods such as “saying little, handling emotional outbursts, using ice-breakers” (Creswell, 2007, p. 140), and thoughtful silences (Ruane, 2005) were improved. Sensitive issues needed skill to elicit communication particularly with younger students. Reluctant responses from one student were countered by a quiet, clear recount of the interview purpose. Apart from attitude, the age and language level of the students coloured their responses.

### **3.6. Issues of Validity, Generalisation and Reliability**

There is little consensus amongst qualitative researchers about the best criteria for judging studies (Charmaz, 2014; Cohen et al., 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Freeman, 2009; Seale, 2003; J. K. Smith & Deemer, 2003). Lewis, Ritchie, Ormston, and Morrell (2014) define validity as an ability to portray “a phenomenon in rich and authentic detail” (p. 357) captured from participant meaning and language. Triangulation used in this research has a role to play in verification, through gathering data using different methods (questionnaires, observations, interviews, documentation) from different sources (learners, parents, teachers) and from different theoretical perspectives, (see Chapter Two). The use of member-checking (Harvey, 2014; Rallis & Rossman, 2009) during individual interviews, focus and retrospective groups reinforced data validity.

In qualitative research, there is a strong connection between the validity of findings and whether they have generalizability or “transferability” (Brown, 2009a, p. 282), in theory development, place or person context. This notion is limited for my research, because it is centred on particular perceptions from and about a small cohort of RMB students in a New Zealand context. Arksey and Knight (1999) argue that responsibility for generalizability is dependent on whether other researchers, using a similar research design

and literature, can determine relevance for themselves. Smaling (2003) identified the claim for “analogical reasoning” by the original researcher, stakeholders or the reader, to determine generalizability, once a level of congruence has been identified (cited in Lewis et al., 2014, p. 352).

In applying reliability criteria, Lewis et al. (2014) note that the first requirement is to have a clear understanding of what features of the data are “consistent, dependable or replicable” (p. 354) in another context or by another researcher. This study achieved by “thick description” (Brown, 2009a, p. 283), a transparent discussion of data collection, and constant, rigorous analysis of it, so that findings were seen to be the most likely outcome.

### **3.7. Writing Up**

#### **3.7.1. Journaling**

The research process involved different kinds of journaling and note-taking. These have been called “think pieces” (Saldana, 2011, p. 98). Initially, I concentrated on surface logistics of time and place, library material and relevant articles, supervisors’ meetings, of comments on discussions. Although this journal continued, other journals became more focused on different aspects of the research. These included research methods, theory reflection and finally an individual journal for each student. This unstructured but productive journaling allowed for invaluable insights at each stage of the research, which could later be incorporated into the writing.

#### **3.7.2. Coding**

Researchers have agreed that it is best to find commonality early in the data gathering process (Cohen et al., 2007; Richards, 2003). Manual transcription of all interviews, staggered as they occurred, though laborious, allowed me to become very involved with the data, and process ways to help categorise material with topics. Data sections were highlighted, coloured, then cut and pasted under topic headings, and added to as the data collection grew. Eventually I became more focused on main themes, while other “folk categories” (Morita, 2004, p. 581) were subsumed under them or deleted for lack of evidence. The next stage of analysis involved organising data on chosen topics into two

themes, then analysing them line-by-line, Although this stage involved the risk of losing holistic sight of the research, the analysis clarified the final choice of theories. I also used the constant comparative method for analysis of student journeys within and without the group (Charmaz, 2014). Drawing the final conclusions was a delicate balancing act between trying to say something of overarching significance, while at the same time preserving the “intricacy of situated multiple meanings” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 257). These will be explored in the following chapters.

## Chapter Four: First Culture Blueprint

### 4.1. Introduction

The next two chapters contain the study's findings. They are organised into two theme-based units which have emerged from the data. Both themes are grounded in student participants' life history or ontogenesis, and how it has affected their L2 learning of English and learning in English. The first unit analyses factors in the participants' L1 contexts that influence learning; the second unit analyses their path towards L2 legitimacy in New Zealand. The illustration below sets the framework for the first of these two chapters.

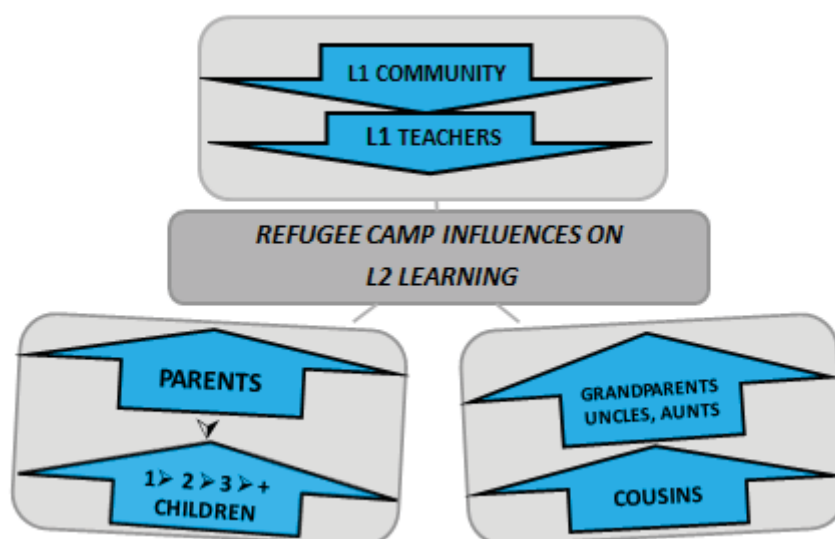


FIGURE 1: REFUGEE CAMP INFLUENCES ON L2 LEARNING

### 4.2. Refugee Camp Memories

All the participants were born in refugee camps in South East Nepal, which became the setting for their childhoods. For the participants, camp life was filled with risks. The physical terrain was one source of danger. The forest, used as a playground, contained poisonous snakes. As Asis remarked: "If you weren't too quick to look out for the snakes, then you get bitten" (SI: 12). The local river became dangerous for swimmers when it flooded. Provisions at the camp were not always enough to sustain life. Though food was provided by UNESCO, it was not plentiful, and lack of funds to buy more could make life



desperate. Medical aid was limited. Karicha's family were able to obtain tuberculosis drugs to save her, but a friend of Khusi was not so fortunate. She was unable to be helped by the camp hospital, but could not afford funds to pay for the Nepalese hospital outside the camp. Khusi recalled: "Her mum doesn't have money . . . and her dad was died" (SI: 5). Human threats were the ultimate danger. Physical abuse and theft were common, alcohol use generated violence, and females without family support could be vulnerable to marauders. Camp zealots wanting to return to Bhutan would assault teachers and their families for wanting resettlement instead of repatriation. Survival skills were essential for physical and emotional health.



**FIGURE 2: A TYPICAL REFUGEE CAMP IN SOUTH-EAST NEPAL**

In spite of this, all participant memories of living in the camps were largely positive. Parveesh affirmed: "Nepal life it was a happy life" (SI: 11), while Nilu described it as "so much fun" (SI: 10). The tight-knit, enclosed camp life provided the participants with the security of living amongst a monolingual ethnic group with shared exodus experiences from Bhutan, nuclear and extended family living in very close proximity, and routine community patterns of behaviour. Family restrictions provided security for the children, as Sunu explained: "My mum and dad, friends around our house . . . they shut the gate when they go out . . . we are not allowed to go outside" (SI: 3). Khusi recalled that



childhood friends provided a comfortable environment for play: “Lots and lots of friends; everyone are together” (SI: 5) so they could enjoy carefree times. Kare reinforced this: “Just really fun, hanging out with them” (SI: 8). Nilu explained that the community would look after each other: “Someone will back you up when you have rough times” (SI: 10). Even if someone had a personal dislike of their neighbours, they would help each other because of community values. She continued: “No matter how like much they hate each other, they don’t show it outside . . . it is a friendly community” (SI: 10). So in spite of limited material comforts, participants felt emotionally nurtured.

Participants’ detailed knowledge of their location as a known world enhanced their sense of security. Outside influences were limited, and travel outside the camps was restricted. With no electricity or cars, external activity was gleaned indirectly through Nepali movies, stories from the fathers working as teachers outside the camps, or directly through students visiting outside themselves. Narayam obtained a special window to an external world when a neighbour offered to transport him to a computer viewing. It was possible only because of the neighbour’s generosity with his own resources. Narayam recalled: “We take our torch I mean our lantern . . . and he is so good at riding his bicycle too . . . he has a . . . like powering up a lamp too . . . so they can use it for night” (SI: 6). Limited material resources encouraged settled routines in the camp, and fostered the sense of confidence in the student participants, because they knew their own location well; the rest of Nepal and further afield was of limited relevance to them.

Another factor enhancing positive memories for student participants lay in their status as children. They accepted their status; they did not have responsibility for any tensions experienced by the adults. Kaudani noted: “We just enjoy what we have” (SI: 9), playing after school in the forest and river, studying under the trees, or helping process food. Thanks to their families and communities, student participants spoke of being protected from many potential survival anxieties such as food provision. Nilu observed: “So many houses didn’t have good food to eat” (SI: 10). Khusi recalled supporting family duties, such as helping sell yoghurt with her sister, and turning the routine of collecting water three times a day into a game.

Recollections from older students showed additional depth. Only the eldest student Khusi recognised the link between refugee camp material poverty and relationship strength, and, suggested that the first caused the second. She explained: “Maybe that’s why we were really close there, cos we don’t have any other thing to do there . . . we need the friends there look after each other” (SI: 5). Senior student participants, Khusi and Kaudani, expressed most wrenching sadness from what McBrien (2005) called ‘emotional and cultural bereavement’ (p. 340) after their resettlement in New Zealand. ). Khusi stated: “We still feel so happy there, cos we haven’t seen the other world, and everyone are together” (SI: 5). She felt naïve and stupid about her previous positive attitude towards camp life, but still wanted to return to her life there: “I still wish I can be with them . . . I still wish” (SI: 5). Kaudani too reflected in longing for a lost world: “I just love to just go back to the camp . . . cos I had my little childhood friends . . . like we are just fighting we are just playing” (SI: 9). Their positive perceptions of enclosed camp care contributed to the difficulty of entry into NZ schools, as they experienced the trauma of the immigration process.

Of course, student participants’ view of their camp life might be naïve and partly ignorant of the tensions experienced by adults. Nevertheless, their memories are not less valid because subjective; they own them, and within the participant group they were strengthened by being collaborative. Plummer (2001) stated that memory “is no simple ‘psychological faculty’ from within – it is shaped through and through by setting, society, culture” (p. 236). While their motivation to enter a new community was high, positive memories of their camp life coloured their perspective of their new environment, giving them a point of comparison, and possibly contributing to reducing the desire for complete acculturation (V. Cook, 2002). In New Zealand, in spite of better material resources, it was perceived as less welcoming. The local Bhutanese community here is smaller, and parental support is partly compromised by their own learning and language needs.

#### **4.2.1. Refugee Camp Schools**

In the refugee camp schools, while the Bhutanese students had very clear symbolic and material reasons to learn English, the principal focus was, of necessity, learning through their first language. The following describes the students’ attitudes to camp education, in

particular towards the classroom, teachers and learning English.



**FIGURE 3: A TYPICAL REFUGEE CAMP SCHOOL IN SOUTH-EAST NEPAL**

#### 4.2.1.1. Refugee Camp Education Facilities

Mr. Himal explained that, from September 1990, camp schools had been established in Nepal by UNHCR and Caritas. School buildings were similar to other camp buildings, made of bamboo from local forests, and situated near them, without integrated electricity or plumbing. Asis described the facilities: “We didn’t have windows. The classroom was pretty dark inside” (SI: 12), and the school room was vulnerable to bad weather. Lack of windows also meant that ventilation was limited. Unia complained: “It’s really a hot place and the peoples . . . smells” (SI: 7). Khusi called the classroom a “cave” (SI: 5). As well, Asis explained that there were no latrines: “When you do a toilet, you have to go to the forest” (SI: 12).

For parent participants, school in Bhutan had not been compulsory, but it was for all student participants in the camps. School ensured daily order for six hours or eight periods 40 minutes each, beginning daily with communal prayers. Participants reported consistently large classes of 50-54 students. Class size was affected by a variety of factors, such as the backlogging system of keeping students at the same level until they passed. In spite of UNHCR regulations, class configuration was affected by female absences because of traditional Bhutanese values of leaving girls uneducated. Male

student class percentages were higher than girls, even though women like Khushi's mother spent time encouraging camp girls to attend school. Conversely, male truancy could be treated harshly with corporal punishment, which Kaudani endured: "If I wasn't in there, they will hit me by the stick, so I get lotta pressure by the teacher to come to school" (SI: 9). Karicha reported that, in some cases, children were absent after succumbing to narcotic or alcohol addiction, which caused depression or even suicide. However, for the majority of children, strict school routines provided a form of social order and a positive focus in their lives.

The classroom environment was sparse and regulated as Khushi remembered: "Nothing was there . . . no computers, no phones . . . nothing" (SI: 5). Students were given a pencil and exercise book by Caritas. Mr Prem recollected that in the higher grades families had to buy resource books. Students sat in rows on bamboo mats or pews above the earth, separated by gender. Seating patterns did not change as only one teaching style was used, with the teacher at the front at the blackboard. The teacher, not students, moved to different places for different subjects. However at lunchtime, movement was compulsory, as students had to return home to eat, which could involve a long walk. Khushi had the family duty to collect younger brother Narayam:

my brother, I have to drop him cos we can't leave him alone . . . come home, have to feed him cos he can't feed . . . by himself . . . I have to walk 15 minutes from my home; there was like nothing surprising in like that. I used to take him first . . . and then I used to go to his school, then from his school I have to walk half an hour to get my school (SI: 15)

In the absence of busy parents, the students often accepted responsibility for their younger siblings, to ensure they could keep to the school routines.

After school, students were required to complete homework, usually consisting of Mathematics and Sciences, but rarely English reading, partly because of lack of resources. There was real pressure to complete homework in time, otherwise a class beating could ensue the next day. Family members would help each other to achieve.

Younger siblings like Narayam had the advantage: “My brother used to help me so . . . when he went to Calcutta you know it was very bad for me” (SI: 6). Alternatively, Mr. Prem remembered joining small groups of collaborative friends with study after school, under the trees. For the participants, success at school was considered a useful gateway for a life outside the camp, improved lifestyles, and more status within the community.

#### 4.2.1.2. Teachers

It is significant that teachers in the camp schools had almost the quasi-religious authority of a parent or elder. Mr Ramesh explained: “In our culture, our . . . students talking in front of the teacher or the elder . . . they do not show any action . . . they do not eye contact . . . our students well respect the elder or the teacher (PFG: 15).

Traditionally, students would show respect for their teachers through contained body language. In practice, when a student wanted help from the teacher, they would put their hand up, but keep their head bowed, and wait for the teacher to respond. Sunu stated: “We have to do like this, bend our head down, just listen. We are not allowed to look at them. If we’ll did that one, they will . . . so mad and breaking the rules” (SI: 3). Physical signs of obeisance gave an outward sign that the student conformed to classroom expectations; the teachers responded harshly to bodily signs of disobedience. Karicha recalled why: “Cos teachers might think . . . students trying to challenge them” (SI: 2). Students showed respect verbally by using the terminology of ‘sir’ or ‘miss’ with teachers, as it was considered disrespectful to use their personal names. Teacher authority was well entrenched.

The stern classroom atmosphere was widely described by student participants. Parveesh said: “Teachers just beat you up, so you’re just scared that teachers come and hit you, so that’s why you have to be quiet” (SI: 11). Rigid, “beandrop” silence was expected (SG1). Corporal punishment was meted out also for failing a test, or absence. Sunu remembered being beaten for absence through illness. Punishment was embellished by the use of a rubber snake to inspire coercion, as Asis explained: If you be real bad . . . there is . . . rubber snake looks real, then the snake tries to bite you. That’s how they threaten the kids” (SI: 12). Some teachers however, were remembered with respect for their teaching

talents and care. Khusi recalled one teacher who carried a poisoned pupil on foot for half an hour to reach the hospital (SI: 5). These examples showed a crucial and sobering need for students to maintain respectful obeisance to their teachers, even more because teacher professional autonomy was high.

When participants first entered New Zealand classrooms, they brought their fear of teachers with them. Teachers' behaviour in New Zealand was an object of surprise. Sunu exclaimed: "They are like really polite and ask you what is wrong with you and why are you crying . . . but in Nepal not that" (SI: 3). Two younger student participants took some time to realise that teachers here were different. Narayam said: "In here, I was scared that if I did something, they'll hit us too" (SI: 6). More settled students noted that in New Zealand, teacher behaviour was an important factor for a new migrant, and new RMB students should not "be scared. Ask whatever you want like not worry" (SG2). Overall, camp classroom memories produced strong apprehension about relating to New Zealand staff.

#### 4.2.1.3. Learning English

In the camp schools, Nepali, English and Dzhonga (the Bhutanese national language) were taught, with English being the language of instruction in seven subjects. The students however, spoke Nepali except in English class. English class writing consisted of comprehension and grammar exercises, as Kali explained: "Fill in the blanks, and true or false that's all" (SI: 1). Academic or creative essays and research were not required, possibly because of lack of resources. Formal spoken English classwork consisted of extempore speeches and scripture reading, but it was the informal English that students found very difficult when relating with each other, and they had little time to build linguistic confidence. Students learnt their English articulation from camp teachers who usually spoke English with Indian accents, which the community could understand easily. Parveesh described Indian and Nepali accents as similar. Though incentives were formalised for students to speak English in English class, with small fines if they used Nepali, in reality there was limited motivation to speak English well, and limited resources or opportunities for practice.



As a result, when student participants arrived in New Zealand, the act of speaking created major anxieties. Parveesh found the New Zealand accent “very, very, very different” (SI: 11), Karicha recalled initial accent difficulties: “I couldn’t pronounce it properly as you guys” (SI: 2). Kali emphasised a huge fear of ridicule with pronouncing words wrongly: “I can understand but I thought like maybe I would be wrong like that and I never talk” (SI: 1), while Sunu feared being bullied for accent difference: “Maybe they are teasing me or say something ‘oh your English is too bad’ ” (SI: 3). Even an adult Mr. Himal commented: “I was an English teacher but it takes time for me to get in touch with the English accent in New Zealand” (PFG 14). Accent, along with other less obvious issues of speed, articulation, local ellipsis or word choice, made adjustment to New Zealand English a very complex process.

### **4.3. Crossing Over to New Zealand**

Camp memories of a happy childhood and the benefits of compulsory camp education were relevant influences on participants as they settled into New Zealand schools. These factors contributed to their ambivalent level of investment in New Zealand English, similar to Norton’s (2013b) participants. While participants had high agency to settle, they did not want to leave behind their old identities and cultural values, as will be explained in the next section.

### **4.4. The Family Hierarchy: Complex Ladder Formations**

Participant Bhutanese families heavily support cultural cohesion. At the site school, ESOL staff noted: “They’re very like the Pasifika and Maori with that extended family cohesion” (TG1 19). Family cohesion was further emphasised by the family groupings noted above. They lived near each other, with easy access to each other’s’ homes, paralleling to an extent, their camp closeness. The following sections describe family hierarchy structures to ensure Nepali language and culture retention.

#### **4.4.1. Parents Top-Down**

Mr. Himal described direct behavioural patterns of child management to keep L1 culture. Parents needed to observe their children’s behaviour in their role as good parents: “If the

parents can observe . . . the children what they are doing . . . where they are going or who is their friends . . . it makes good progress for the students . . . for the children's future . . . keeping eye on them" (BA 14). Clearly 'good progress' meant monitoring their children's social contacts to maintain parental values. Families were aware that "language and cultural maintenance go together" (Roberts, 2005, p. 248) and parents required their family members to speak Nepali at home and English at school. By using Nepali at home, the language was kept alive, taught to the children and reinforced bonds with other family members who did not speak English easily. Mr Himal continued: We ask everyone to speak Nepali in the home because . . . they will forgot . . . cos English is everywhere and everyone will talk English and the children can learn very easily . . . high chance of forgetting the language" (PFG 14).

Another parental monitoring method was to organize participant attendance at Nepali lessons in the community hall on Saturdays, where they learnt Nepali speech and writing; Kali taught here for a time. Sunu's father gave her informal lessons in Nepali at home, and Nepali books were used for reading sessions in Khusi's house. Overall, parental drive for Nepali language support was very evident.

Indirect methods were also used. There was strong parental encouragement for all family members to attend Bhutanese ceremonies and social events, and maintain bonds amongst different Nepali family members. This was reinforced by the policy of inviting all local Nepali families when there was an event in the community hall. Overall, parental success in keeping Nepali alive in the participant families was a tribute to their pride in first culture and families, as well as an outcome of their real understanding of psychological processes at work during second language learning.

Parents were also strong advocates for English learning at school, because it led to ownership of symbolic and material resources (Norton, 2013b). Kaudani explained that parents "want their children to study hard and being a doctor, engineer . . . for a better life. They want their children . . . sitting in the chair, and just getting a job . . . having a good future" (SI: 9). Parents emphasised that they had little knowledge of New Zealand curricula or school systems, and their English understanding varied, so their children were



much more dependent on the teacher than local students were, although even pre-literate parents helped their children with homework where they could, through a process of translation into and out of Nepali. With students whose parents had limited English, female students particularly were given time away from household duties if homework demanded, and parents encouraged their children to extend their homework holistically. Kali remembered being told: “Don’t watch the Nepali movies and the other movies . . . read and then practise more what we had learned” (SI: 1). Parental anxiety about their children failing was noted by Narayan:

I talked to my dad and he is so happy that I actually made my decision to go . . . and chose to study, because . . . he was really scared . . . that I was gonna drop out of school and just work or maybe go somewhere (SI: 6).

Participant academic success was a reinforcement that the exodus to New Zealand was worth Bhutanese parents’ endeavours; it modelled success for other Bhutanese students, supported family and ethnic status, and increased L2 social legitimacy.

Parents saw their children’s learning of English as essential to their school success, and, in spite of concerns for L1 maintenance, were mindful of the need to foster it at home. Occasionally English was used with younger sibling conversations to help each other’s English word choice, or when Nilu helped her father with his accent. Encouragement was especially practised by those Bhutanese parents who had also been teachers in Nepal. They extended their children’s English knowledge with grammar or sophisticated words, or provided extra books from a local institution to extend student reading. Both fathers and mothers were also responsive when invited into the host school to observe their children, showing pride in their progress. The ESOL teacher noted how students’ affective filters, as well as their concentration and English learning skills, were all quietly enhanced with parental presence.

Parental guidance of English learning was extended to decisions about how student participants spent their time after school. Nilu commented: “I think mainly every Nepali parents are really concerned about their child’s study . . . they will probably over-strict

their children . . . they won't be allowed to go out, they will just have to stay in and work" (SI: 10). For girls and younger students particularly, after-school sport was not encouraged because it was time away from homework. Sport did not provide access to later employment. Kare noted: "If you have English, it's like good, you can go all over the world and get job, but if you can play soccer . . . you don't get job and stuff" (SI: 8). After-school time at home also kept student participants safe, and reinforced parental authority. Overall, most parents maintained strong hierarchical ties to their offspring, which fostered bilingualism, while maintaining prioritised first loyalty to Nepali language and culture. The following vignette shows the benefits of watchful parenting.

### **VIGNETTE 1: NILU LISTENS TO HER PARENTS**

Nilu experienced a slide into local peer pressure influence during Year Nine, but because her family showed awareness of the consequences, she was able to refocus on her L1 cultural identity before it was too late, and rebalance her L2 investment. She explained how the lack of other Bhutanese people in her early New Zealand environment initially drove her to concentrate on English: "When we first came here, there was no one to teach us Nepali . . . and my focus wasn't really in the Nepali . . . because you know I was really busy . . . with school work" (SI: 10). She learnt very good English verbal social skills, so by Year Nine, it was easy for her to mingle with other local extroverts in her form class. The enjoyment of jockeying for a top place in the classroom social hierarchy lured her into becoming friends with more risk-taking local girls. She explained:

"the naughty girl . . . you know she is really . . . popular in the school . . . she came into our group, and she got along with me the best out of everyone . . . and we . . . used to hang out outside the class . . . and having friends really helped you know; it's just the first year and I already made like friends with 50% of the Year Nines" (SI: 10).

She was well aware what Nepali parents wanted: "They just tell me not to forget Nepali and just . . . you know keep the Nepali culture going as well as Kiwi" (SI: 10). She noted that Nepali parents "will be worried if they will communicate with friends so much that

they will not focus in studies” (SI: 10) but considered some parents were over-strict. Nilu presumed she could juggle both Nepali friends and local students, but positioned herself as outside the shy Nepali group with less English proficiency than her. She then clarified how her local peer friendships began to reduce her classroom concentration and learning: “When your friends are really near you, you just want to keep on talking to them. I just used to talk to everyone and I’ve kinda not used to listen to the teachers” (SI: 10).

A perceptive ESOL teacher-aide noticed her change: “She never does her homework; she would rather do an imposition than homework” (TG1 19). She was “making an appeal to the social crowd she’s wanting to mix with. That’s quite dangerous for her. She will get in with the wrong crowd and then she won’t be able to then lift herself out of that” (TG1 19). The teacher-aide followed Nilu’s parents’ views. Thanks to negotiation between Nilu, her parents and her teacher, her behaviour modified:

“My dad . . . was just asking me why I was going down so much, but then I did explain to him that . . . it was kinda like my friends as well, I wasn’t blaming on my friends . . . but . . . I was talking so much that I was losing focus . . . and I just promised him that I would be back where I was, and . . . I am, even higher” (SI: 10).

Another consequence of Nilu’s cultural rebalance was that her ‘popular’ friend whose work was also failing, paralleled Nilu’s improvement, so that both were trusted to work together sometimes again. Nilu adroitly improved her marks, and partially salvaged her local friendships while restabilising her Nepali ones: “Me, Khusi, Kare, Kamba and are best friends” (SI: 10), which Kare at least, reinforced: “We are like besties” (SI: 8).

Nilu’s perception of her experience showed that after parental and teacher advice, she had enough psychological insight to understand the risks she was taking. She then showed some humility to accept parental strictures, and her re-energised relationships with her L1 family and community gave her enough of a nurturing social alternative to help restore the balance of her bilingual identity. Nilu showed shrewd intelligence in her

rebalance; the question remains if she has enough agency to focus on a future that is worth her ability. Perhaps her parents will be needed again.

#### **4.4.2. The Children's Perspective**

In this study, students concurred with parental expectations. Khusi gave gratitude to parents for their lives: "Cos what I am here is all about my family . . . it's because of all them . . . they make me like this" (SI: 5). Karicha identified that parents were his "best friends" (SI: 2) for listening and giving advice, necessary to assist students with the hurdles of school achievement. Sunu concurred: "I need to work really hard . . . I need my family support" (SI: 3). Younger students showed cell-phone photos of Nepali families relaxing together, as samples of their most favourite shots. Disrespecting parents was seen as contemptible. Sunu stated: "I don't wanna be like Kiwi girls yelling out to mum and dad; that is so bad I think. We need to respect" (SG1 3). At the time of data collection, Mr Himal observed: "I found that only two of Nepali students are not co-operating with their parents locally" (BA 14).

Students supported parents by co-operating with their bilingual language values. Sunu explained: "Some parents don't even care, 'Oh my daughter wanna be Kiwi,' that's great, but I think we have to think about our culture too" (SI: 3). Mr Himal explained parents' vulnerability: "The children are so young, the parents are using their own children to communicate" (PFG 14). In practice, students frequently became parental mouthpieces in L2 situations, like the supermarket and hospital. Kali explained her role as letter reader while she and Nilu shared supermarket trips. Asis explained about his mother: "I don't think she can write like . . . the English words . . . so she tells me what to write and I write it down" (SI: 12). These essential roles gave students an opportunity to exhibit family responsibility as well as enhance their L2 linguistic experience.

#### **VIGNETTE 2: KAUDANI'S JOURNEY**

Kaudani, the oldest boy in his family, did not take on the role of pseudo-parent and, in practice, he avoided some family obligations. Kaudani used tactics in the camps to

distance himself from parents: ‘I went to the forest with my mates for playing cards because if I play cards in front of my mum . . . and dad . . . I just have to go away . . . just hide it . . . and play’ (SI: 9). He tried to avoid camp school: “Back in Nepal, teacher just hit me by the stick so I have to come but in here, teacher wouldn’t do anything ah just ring the parent” (SI: 9). In New Zealand, he did not have family duties. His mother “provide like everything . . . for our family” (SI: 9). He avoided schoolwork incentives in New Zealand. The ESOL teacher-aide noted that he “was not at school more than he was at school for a while there” (TG1 19). Mr Liam also noted: “He comes and he goes. He seems to lack confidence. I think probably that’s why he doesn’t contribute so much” (TG2 18). He wondered about the reasons for Kaudani’s level of academic progress: “You know three years still struggling with Level 1 . . . I don’t know what it does to his self-esteem or what it would do to a to a Kiwi in there being like that” (TG2 18), indirectly identifying a stereotype of ethnic-minority boys (Windle, 2009). Kaudani himself blamed his lack of Mathematics progress on his English levels, considered that he was shy, and repeatedly expressed his homesickness in leaving Nepal.

In New Zealand, Kaudani’s presence in the school site gave him some focus. He contributed enthusiastically to school international concerts; he displayed some social confidence and humour when he felt safe, as in Mathematics classes and ESOL classes. He enjoyed bonding with male ESOL friends and supportive male teachers. However, the life and literacy patterns in Kaudani’s camp environment made his transition to L2 culture very difficult, and this was directly reflected in his ability to learn English (Cummins, 1989).

#### **4.4.3. Family Gender Training**

Participant responses showed well-honed harmony between Bhutanese parent and community gender expectations and their children’s acceptance of them. Gender attitudes affected English learning opportunities, as in Norton’s (2000) research which found: “Opportunities to practise English were influenced by . . . gendered identities . . . the disjuncture between the symbolic resources that they had acquired in their home countries . . . and ethnocentric social practices in their new country” (p. 88).

Parent Mr Himal explained that expectations about female education were changing in Bhutanese culture:

In Bhutan I was a . . . student at primary school, I have one experience that among 237 students, only 13 were girls; it was in 1978 . . . so that time, the girls were not given a high education in the community, they were not allowed to go to school; if I look in my own family the two of my elder sister are completely illiterate, but the younger ones, I have other four sisters, they are more highly qualified than me, so slowly it goes and changing to the Western culture (PFG 14).

In Nepal, the camp schools were compulsory for every child, and all participants were encouraged to aim high with their schooling, particularly with those whose relatives were well educated. The senior female participants had particularly strong agency to achieve, and were aware of stereotypes of Asian and L2 students as being conscientious in class, which applied some pressure: “They think they have to learn more” (SG1 3).

Data indicated that in social relationships, L1 gender modelling governed language investment opportunities for both genders. Male participants were encouraged, more than females, to invest in L2. The Bhutanese community leader explained:

the boys have got . . . interaction with other wider communities . . . definitely they will . . . increase the language . . . and then they can also influence other Kiwi culture . . . so it is very much easier for them to integrate with the wider communities in future . . . rather than girls (BA 14).

It was a male participant Kaudani who spoke readily about Bhutanese female behaviours: “In my culture like the . . . females . . . are like pretty shy to talk with the other like foreigners” (SI: 9) while another male Karicha, highlighted the L2 issue it caused: “Cos like girls are shy, they don’t talk, and if they don’t talk, they won’t learn anything” (SI: 2). Some female participants identified being shy with being female: “Boys can make friends easily, [girls] feel shy” (SG1 3). Sunu, like Narayam, saw shyness as inherited not culturally positioned. Senior Khusi was more ambiguous, reflecting: “I think we are

developed like that” (SG1 5). However, she was guided by Bhutanese values, and was very hesitant and careful about associating with locals: “I didn’t mix with them” (SG1 5).

Bhutanese females were also encouraged to cover the legs and body modestly with dress, visible signs of keeping to their Nepali identity “boundary maintenance” (Roberts, 2005, p. 259). There was some loss of gender strictness with female clothing in New Zealand, as jeans and “paint” or cosmetics became accepted (PFG 14), but behaviour patterns were more sustained. Participant girls were encouraged to use the voice discreetly in public. Khusi did not think it was appropriate to call out demands in public to strangers in university class, but she was happy to support her local friend who voiced annoyance at noisy tertiary students in lectures. Appropriate first culture behaviour for female identity, family acceptance, community status and marriageability was of higher priority for female participants than extra opportunities to invest in L2 dialogue.

Another setting that could be used for expanding opportunities for investment was with local team sports, but participant females had very limited involvement with these. Kare enjoyed playing tag, hide and seek, skipping and soccer when younger. Nilu explained her love of running with her father. But adolescence required different parental decisions, and Kare acquiesced with her parents’ decision to limit her sport. Senior female participants emphatically reinforced together: “Most of the girls in our culture . . . they don’t like sport” (SG1).

Alternatively, through parental guidance and personal choice, participant females engaged in dance. Group Nepali dancing gave them bonding, status and confidence in a same gender, first culture group. Unia expressed her enjoyment of dance, feeling “proud and confident” (SI: 7) while Kare described her love of dancing with friends. Better dancers were given respect within the L1 community. Kamba was identified by Khusi as being particularly talented: “She go by dancing, and she come by dancing” (SG1 5). Group dance opportunities outside traditional Nepali ones, however, were not encouraged by parents. Kare’s school Stage Challenge production involvement was monitored. She said: “My dad and mum are not that happy cos they say if I start to dance I just forget about the studying part” (SI: 8). Local culture dance and team sports event had lower priority for

female participants, in favour of homework and first culture activities to maintain traditional L1 gender roles. This meant that their L2 engagement and opportunities for legitimate verbal participation were confined.

In contrast, sport involvement was enjoyed by three secondary male participants, Karicha, Parveesh and Kaudani, who joined school soccer teams, access to supportive coaches and male camaraderie. Junior Asis realised that his skill in physical education increased his status in the L2 class social hierarchy, and he was able to make more friends. He noted:

people weren't that like friends in class towards me . . . and we did PE and then at sprinting I was like the second fastest boy in class, and everyone thought that I was good at it . . . and so people started liking me . . . respecting me at sports" (SI: 12).

All junior male participants played sport during the school day; during lunchtime, the game of 'Aussies' was popular with local Intermediate students in the back court. Status gained from archetypal New Zealand sporting values helped make friendships for male RMB participants.

Another opportunity for male L2 legitimacy was the involvement of two junior participant males in Robotics. Narayam proudly identified with computer use, and relished the perception of becoming rivals with his older brother. After joining the Robotics team, he explained: "I design chess pieces, and then with the 3D printing, we made a chess board and chess piece . . . me and Karicha" (SI: 6). He used the experience to make good friends with a local boy. Computers allowed him to extend an interest and widen his social group, focusing on a hobby with international status, which could also provide later study and work opportunities.

The following example showed how fragile the balance of language investment leverage could be with L1 gender roles.

A simmering gender issue, confined to the school, seemed to be based on adolescent



ESOL male attempts to subjugate senior participant females. Two participant males, perceived by a female participant as wanting to “be cool” in their male peer group, had taught a Thai international student some Nepali sexual words. These words were used to taunt the Nepali girls who were initially very embarrassed. Khusi said: “We bend our heads” (SG1 5). When the girls tried to negotiate a ceasefire, she said that the boys “lip-ride us back” (SG1 5) and the concerned ESOL teacher Mrs Goldeye had to eventually intervene to prevent further harassment. Senior participant females bonded in a cohesive group were achieving academically. The girls may have become a target for more wayward adolescent male resentment, as both Bhutanese and Thai males adjusted to wider local gender freedoms. The experience highlighted the more restrained role expected of participant females in their first culture, how it overlaid even their academic agency, and how it could be used to attempt to manipulate their L2 legitimacy as successful school students, if they threatened RMB student male L1 perceptions of superiority.

#### **4.4.4. Extensions to the Family Ladder**

Parent-child hierarchies were paralleled and echoed by further family hierarchies, from grandparent to grandchildren, and older sibling to younger sibling. Khusi explained: “In our culture, older people always help us . . . they haven’t ask for the younger people to get help” (SG1 5). Younger children were obligated to accept older family members’ directives as affirming. This wider network of L1 cultural maintenance gave reinforcement to parents, and gave guidelines and agency for student L2 learning.

Grandparents played an important role in maintaining traditional hierarchies, keeping their status as they did in the camps. Khusi’s grandfather led the family in their refugee camp line-ups. Khusi related: “He was older, but he also still used to lead” (SI: 5). In refugee camp ceremonies he was borne aloft, and he gave out irrefutable family orders. Parveesh described living with his grandmother after his home was burnt in a refugee camp fire. Later, she was brought to New Zealand with them. In New Zealand, Nilu noted wryly: “When we have ceremonies . . . the oldest gets blessed first and then it will just go in the youngest” (SI: 10). Sunu recalled her grandmother telling her: “Respect older people” (SG1 3). Grandmothers reinforced parental guidelines about female modesty,

highlighting the indignity of exposing the lower legs, and encouraging bright coloured clothing such as yellow instead of the ubiquitous New Zealand black. ESOL staff remarked that Kali did not think that it was her right to encourage her grandparents to learn English, if they chose not to do so. Grandparents were considered to be more traditional than parents, but both reinforced each other to stabilise L1 traditions during family times.

Older children also were required to help younger siblings, and younger siblings were required to accept help from them. Prem explained: “They are very important in each other’s life because if the older one . . . does well in her study, the younger one automatically follow him . . . so it is very important that . . . the older one guide” (BA 13).

Older sibling guidance was expected for educational needs. Narayam was blessed with two very helpful older siblings who helped Narayam establish himself in his second Kiwi school. His older brother Mr. Nam helped him frequently with his English learning as Narayam happily recounted: “My brother . . . he makes me read everything” (SI: 6). He helped with Speech Board topics, encouraged his computer knowledge and generously gave Narayam “play station, Xbox . . . telescope” (SI: 5). Khusi noted that he was not always grateful about this. She laughed: “I used to remember him about my childhood . . . especially my brother’s childhood . . . we had play the stone” (SI: 5). It seemed that Narayam was particularly favoured in being last child so he could appropriate support from all his older siblings. He was happy to gain sibling leverage from this, saying: “Being younger . . . whatever you are, they feel sorry for you and just give it to you” (SI: 6). This was some consolation for being playfully teased for being the youngest. Mr. Nam was pivotal too in helping Khusi in her senior secondary years, and she was grateful for his support: “We get so many helps cos my brother always there for me” (SI: 5), such as with helping her use strategies to reduce senior exam anxiety.

In another participant family, sibling hierarchies were also carefully maintained. Sunu described he older sister Kali as a “second parent, like mom and dad can’t speak English” (SI: 3). Eldest Kali spoke first in the Retrospective focus interview. Both Karicha and Sunu appreciated the support from her with English curriculum work and Nepali. The bi-

lingual tutor Mr. Prem reflected that his older sister's rigorous discipline was a formative influence on his successful education in the camps. The youngest participant Asis was already being moulded into his leadership role as he explained: "Just look after my sisters" (SI: 12). Older children assumed complex roles carrying considerable weight, to guide younger siblings through what Duff and Uchida (1997) called "border-crossings" (p. 454).

One consequence of the eldest children's personae was the need to adapt their personality to behave with gravitas as the on-call family representative. The ESOL teachers noted that Khusi was leading easily after three years. One noted: "Khusi started to mentor because she was . . . starting to be academically . . . self-sufficient" (TG1 19), while Kali and Unia were still adopting the role. Kali felt the pressure of obligation, stating: "Yeah I have to, if there is no parents in the home . . . I have to be responsible" (SI: 1). Youngest child Karicha noted the isolation caused by this hierarchy leadership role: "If my sister got some problems with like school, the person only she can talk to is like parents, but if I got any problems in school, I can talk to all of them" (SI: 2). Nilu remarked on the family emphasis of helping the younger members, observing: "Our brothers and sisters are mainly focused on the youngest to achieve more, in life, because you know, the youngest would have seen more of life, and has got more advantages and privileges" (SI: 10). So older children representing their family had less support, and, in becoming leaders, had to leave part of their childhood behind earlier, to become responsible. Younger participants reaped the benefits of elders' attention by learning more quickly and developing social confidence more easily. However, elders placed pressure on the younger children to be more successful than their older siblings, in later life.

Mr. Himat noted three times that he was prepared to share his parenting role with his older son Mr. Nam, because he was closer in age to younger siblings, and could understand their needs more, as well as having better English. Mr Himat remarked: "Siblings of Narayam are more helpful for him than the parents, because he [Mr. Nam] . . . knows better than me . . . and then Narayam is happy to share with him rather than the parents" (PFG 14). Frater-Mathieson (2004) noted that, with adaptation, older family members sometimes find their place in the ethnic community "conflicts with the

acculturation of younger family members” (p. 28). In this study, because Nam learnt the expected hierarchy behaviours from his father, he carried on the line of precedence, rather than rearranging it. Mr. Ramesh noted: “Whatever experience he gained, he try to bring his brother also, push it in the same way . . . wants to be a good man in the future” (PFG). This pattern also allowed younger children to minimise patriarchal resentment, and it gave Mr. Himal space for time-rich public roles in the Nepali community because he could trust his oldest son to look after siblings when needed, when they were learning faster than their parents. Narayam was very appreciative of the benefits of having a close elder brother, both as a role model and mentor. On the other hand, Parveesh bemoaned the fact that he did not have one: “I wish I had one big brother . . . you can bond” (SI: 11). In the Himal family, a tapestry of strongly responsible intergenerational roles from grandfather to father to older to younger males, stabilised, contextualised and strengthened L1 gender and identity values.

#### **4.4.5. Further Extensions**

Bhutanese family links ranged beyond the ladder of grandparent, parent, child. They also included the families of parents’ siblings. Ties to these family members were essential to refugee camp life welfare, to resettlement choices, and also to life patterns of learning in the New Zealand environment.

In the refugee camp, Khushi’s extended family’s houses were placed near hers, with easy access for communication and support if needed. She explained:

In my community . . . my one was Sector F; and three lines of my house . . . one line was me, another line was my uncle’s one . . . it was really good; all are educated people there. Some guy over the backside of the people were like . . . drunkards . . . but that actually does not affect us . . . cos they were scared of my dad . . . and my grandparents also, cos they are a bit strict” (SI: 5).

Asis recalls a nurturing aunty who fed him a favourite chapati bread to supplement his diet and make him feel appreciated. The quality of camp life definitely improved for student participants when extended participant families united.

For Khushi's family, the reason for choosing New Zealand instead of America for resettlement was decided by far-sighted redoubtable grandparents, because other family were here. She recalled their discussion: "My grandparents they said . . . if we are going, like we only have one sister here, then we'll stay together, if we are not then we are not" (SI: 5). Their family fought an extended paper-war to finally arrive to be together. Mr. Himal explained that when some families split to settle in different countries, trouble could ensue:

Some of the family members has gone to some other places of the world . . . then only half of families come over NZ. Those families are having some trouble . . . but if all the siblings are here, I think it doesn't affect" (BA 14).

Karicha and Kali agreed, so there were more family members to cope with language problems. Networks with extended family opened more doors for comfortable settlement.

Once participant families arrived, they had persuaded other relatives from the refugee camps to settle here also. Khushi explained: "Unia's dad was not interested in coming . . . we send some money there . . . and we talk on the phone like every day, and say that this is the beautiful country, and this is the place to live and he allow" (SI: 5). Mr. Ramesh was also instrumental in bringing Kali's family to New Zealand. Another uncle who initially resisted resettlement because he wanted to return to Bhutan, then settled in New Zealand, and was welcomed as family. Khushi used humour to remind him of his change of heart: "I used to tease him sometime. 'You shouldn't be here. You should be in Bhutan you know' and he say, 'Shush shush'" (SI: 5). The value of including relatives, whatever their propensity, shows formidable commitment to family for survival strength.

In the New Zealand environment, extended family cohesion was visible in the use of a shared community hall for large cultural events. Participants enjoyed socialising with relatives during festivals, appreciated by Nilu: "Probably all our friends were there, Nepali friends . . . and it was just so fun so much fun" (SI: 10), or more casual outings such as going to the beach. Extended family members were called on to help drive and

shop for others such as Kali's uncle, or female cousins united for to help with the same. Two siblings in Mr. Himal's family became the site school's bi-lingual tutors for the whole Nepali group, and Unia partly lived with her Himal cousins to help with homework. She noted: "Its help me . . . two family help me to do everythings" (SI: 7). Khusi mentored female members of other participant families in their school work, and Unia was beginning to reciprocate with that role also. Extended family presence moderated the shock of change to a more complex life, by providing cultural, social, educational and practical support.

## **4.5. Managing The Future**

In the turmoil of adapting to New Zealand culture, potential decline of adolescent investment in both English and Nepali was partly assuaged through participant focus on their futures.

### **4.5.1. The Role of Imagination**

Imagining future possibilities to reinforce agency (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009; Norton, 2000) was a common topic of conversation with female participants at school. Sunu stated: "Sometimes we talk about our subject, what we are gonna be in future, and what job do you like to do" (SI: 3). Students readily discussed future job goals, and most of the juniors wanted to be doctors, to aim high, and also because it seemed to be the most life-giving occupation in their L1 Nepali childhoods. Nilu clarified: "They don't have proper hospitals and so many people die over a year, so I really wanna go there" (SI: 10). Khusi's siblings dreamed of sharing a hospital in Nepal. She expanded: "I said I would open one hospital and Karicha said, 'I will be the doctor' . . . and Kali said, 'I will be the manager' . . . and I said 'OK, OK'" (SI: 3). Dreams of future success softened learning struggles and freed students from L2 realities, so they could be transported into a Nepali status position where they could promote others' welfare and be honoured for it.

Students showed some realisation that their dreams were only that, because skills and requirements might block them. Kare was unsure what exams were required to be a doctor and Narayam wondered aloud if being a doctor was attainable. Changing their dreams came with age. Karicha commented that Narayam wavered with his choices as

time went by. Khusi was planning to complete a Commerce degree; Kali and Sunu chose Accounting. There was an agreed disappointment that ethnic bias in the educational system sometimes did not help them attain their goals, as Karicha proffered: “Teachers think like all people came from different country can’t do it . . . so they won’t give like even one chance . . . even like . . . they can do it” (SG3 2). Further, participants were well aware of the realities with local employment, where older siblings experienced a disparity between their qualifications and job occupations, serving to reinforce stereotypes about immigrants. However, without imagining their futures, RMB student participant drive for educational success could be even more compromised.

#### **4.5.2. The Role of Marriage Expectations**

Present and future L2 learning opportunities were also framed by selective L1 partner and marriage values, in contrast to local notions of individual choice or romance. Senior participants’ gendered relationships were circumscribed by time. Nilu stated: “You aren’t really allowed boyfriends until you are like probably more than 18” (SG3 10), and reinforced the cultural practice of endogamy: “Since we were little our parents have always probably wanted us to marry a Nepali guy” (SG3 10). This was echoed by the parent group and Narayam. Roberts (2005) observed the role of endogamy in maintaining cultural boundaries with minority languages in New Zealand. Its price was the loss of potential involvement in adolescent relationships with English natives, who could enhance L2 language and cultural interaction.

The students perceived the benefits of endogamy as culturally sound and practical. Karicha stressed the need for partners to stay together for life: “They got like divorce here . . . we can’t do that” (SG3 2). Sunu explored the consequences for future children: “If we teach them Nepalese culture in home . . . they will be ok” (SG3 3). If a family member chose a partner from another culture, there may be family and community conflict, with the couple’s movement away from parents, disrupting care for aging elders. Sunu illustrated this:

Nepalese boy here, he trying to marry a Kiwi girl and they fight in their family . . .  
he moved in Auckland now . . . is really bad . . . in Nepalese culture . . . for Kiwi

they go and live in rest home but Nepalese are not (SG3 3).

Student respect for parental marriage values was consolidated by the strictness of parents' views. Sunu remarked: "Older people they think and we *have* to do that one . . . they never gonna change their mind" (SG3 3); Khusi explained that loyalty was an important factor: "I will not marry the guy who is not good for my family too" (SI: 5). Only Kaudani expressed the right to make an individual choice for a marriage partner: "Cos it's my life. I have to choose a right girl for me" (SI: 9), perhaps because he had less ties to family. In spite of Kiwi language and culture inroads, it looks likely that participant families who retain their traditional hierarchies will maintain their first culture as first priority.



## Chapter Five: Second-Culture Legitimacy

### 5.1. Introduction

The last chapter explored first culture influences on English learning. This chapter analyses how participants negotiated the process of becoming legitimate speakers in their New Zealand locale.

For the participants, this path was not linear. Students were in a constant state of flux, moving across “languages, sites and social memberships, mixing languages, learning languages, resisting languages, testing them out, and then reverting to more familiar linguistic and social territory” (J. Miller, 2003a, p. 142). Different ages, needs, agency, personalities and previous locations, determined that participants learnt at different stages, at different rates. The diagram below highlights significant interrelationships of their unfinished journey, which shall now be explored.

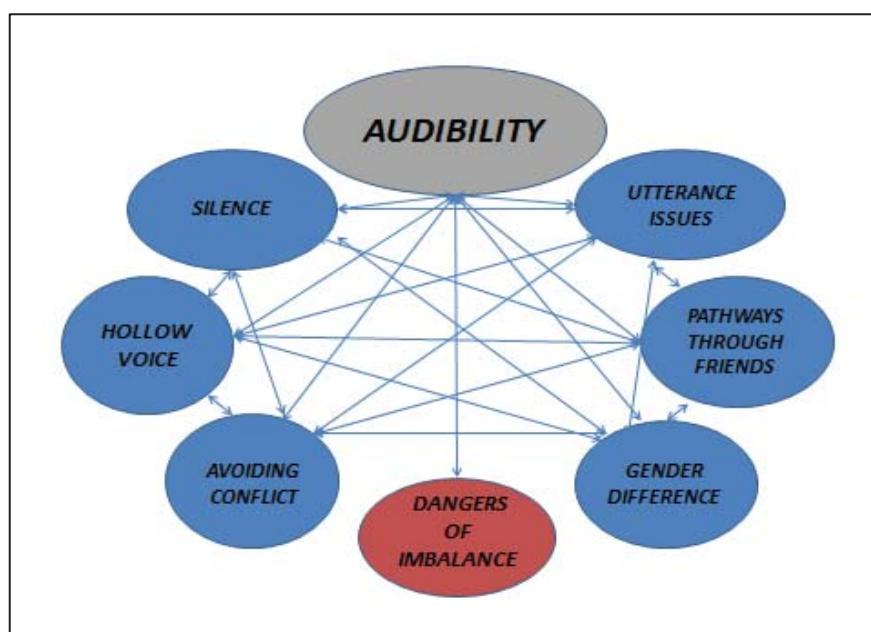


FIGURE 4: INTERACTIVE AUDIBILITY PATTERNS

## 5.2. Silence, the Ordeal

The initial placement of participants' physical New Zealand sites was accompanied by intense psychological distress for approximately up to two months. Their former identities had been assaulted. Sunu, for example, changed from being an unruly, boisterous extrovert into a portrayal of tongue-tied shock:

I lost it, I was like almost lost. I don't know any street name and different houses and no friends, and don't know the neighbours . . . so we feel like difference. Here is so . . . different, and missing our old country and friends, climate (SI: 3).

Others described similar phenomena. Kali was "really lost" (SI: 1) and Khusi was "gone" (SI: 5). Kamba said: "I don't know about anything" (SI: 4). Narayam stated: "I was nothing, to be honest" (SI: 6). Kare called this time "weird" (SI: 8). Students would often sit alone, or in a corner, with eyes down, afraid to look at others, listening to words around them that they did not fully understand. Unia thought that others avoided her because she was perceived as sick. Narayam described the sounds he heard as "muted" (SI: 6) as if in a daze, till he could begin to decipher sound differences.

Feelings of shock were overlaid with other negative emotions, related to their entry into the school site. Frater-Mathieson (2004) depicts "shame and isolation" and fear of sharing feelings as common features of adolescent RMB grief (p. 19). ESOL staff recall observing participants' embarrassment with fulsome class welcomes. RMB students experienced fear and confusion over the school buildings and finding the correct room. Kamba stated:

Oh I was like confused, which way do I go, like it's like too many doors . . . which one do I go . . . and one time I was confused which one and this bell ring and like I'm so scared like I don't know where I'm go (SI: 4).

Kare responded similarly. With Kaudani, Kare also felt physically intimidated by "bigger people" (SI: 8) who were taller and stronger, which made the newcomers feel vulnerable to physical attack, a possible throwback to camp dangers. More ongoing fears connected

to relationships with people in the school environment, like hostile teachers noted earlier. Participants feared being duped by other students into adopting dangerous behaviour so they would be in trouble and ruin their family's reputations, as Karicha explained:

first time when you come here and it will give a bad influence . . . bad influence . . . some other students . . . other New Zealanders might teach you like bad stuff and stuff . . . if you don't know anything, then you don't know what they are talking about (SG2 2)

Other fears were linked to appropriate communication. Narayam was bewildered about the change of wording for greetings. He stated: "They said 'How are you?' I said, 'I am fine thank you', but . . . here they say 'I am good,' and I kind of get confused of that first" (SI: 6). As family representative, Kali expressed intense fear of loss of face with her speaking: "I thought like maybe I would be wrong" (SG1: 1) and thought she needed to hide herself from the local society in case they found out her mistakes. Kali also expressed an intense fear of being snubbed: "I thought like in the beginning . . . they might . . . if I say them 'hi' they might not say like 'hi' or they might not reply me . . . that's why I did not talk with them" (SI: 1). Sunu agreed, saying: "When I first came here I feel shy cos maybe they are teasing me or say something 'oh your English is too bad' or something like that" (SG1 3). They couldn't decipher whether the communication signals locals expressed were supportive or not, and couldn't reply with clarity or confidence.

Although Duff (2002), identified: "Silence protected them from humiliation (p. 312), all the students felt alienated and different. Khusi explained: "Going home, I used to cry on the way and . . . nearly two months, I was like that" (SI: 5). This exhausting and stressful psychological displacement, shown in 'stoic silence' (Pon et al., 2003) was thankfully only temporary, and perhaps provided motivation for learning English quickly.

Some students were induced into speaking English more quickly because of other social needs. As individuals, Karicha and Parveesh both really disliked silence, and were used to being companionable extroverts with L1 male friends, so they learnt quickly to avoid silence by introducing discussion in class. When asked about his favourite learning style,

Karicha explained: “Quiet learning’s not really good for me, cos I talk too much . . . and if I like just sit down quietly I think like something’s wrong there, or something like that, and I start talking and everyone starts” (SI: 2). Conversely, for Kali speaking was a chore. Forgetting the exact word made her spiral into intense irritation, shown by when she repeated: “I forgot the name!” (SI: 1) three times when referring to her Commerce marketing topic. She showed an acutely anxious sensitivity about how to present as family leader with dignity.

Gradually students moved to more ‘attentive silence’ (Pon et al., 2003) when they began to decipher known words to understand. Narayam stated: “I think I needed that time to concentrate on them and what they do so I can then follow” (SI: 6). Asis realised that he had to persist to deal with discomfort, saying: “[I] just knew I had to keep doing and doing . . . more” (SI: 12). Karicha and Sunu both explained that at this stage they understood what was said but couldn’t speak so others could understand them. ESOL staff recognised that they just needed time to transition. Understanding what was said was an important first step; speaking came next.

### **5.3. Difficulties with Utterances**

Student participants found that there were two particular aspects of spoken English that inhibited their discourse competence; word use and accent.

#### **5.3.1. Word Use**

First attempts at speaking English usually involved using very simple words and sentence fragments developed from the refugee camps and L2 playground interactions. Kare explained that she used to talk “in a real easy way” (SI: 8). Kali also remembered: “One time instead of ‘speak’ I said ‘talk’. First they laugh, and then like they said ‘No you can’t say like ‘talk’, you have to say like ‘speak’” (SI: 1). Sunu picked up specific spoken phrases like “How do I say?” (SI: 3), to ask for help in the classroom. Nilu voiced that learning slang early was her gateway into adolescent friendships: “Kiwi people use that so often” (SI: 10).

Pressure from teachers or classmates could affect participant expression of spoken

curriculum English. Mrs. Richardson recognised Sunu's pride in finally, after a year, reading part of 'The Red Sari' aloud in class. However, she was disappointed that Sunu lacked the confidence in her word range to speak freely about her own red sari in front of the class, for Mrs. Richardson a teachable moment lost. Unia noted that in Commerce, even though she knew the answers, by the time she had constructed a verbal response, someone else had replied, so she was left out of the interaction. Even success though, brought new complications. Though Asis admitted: "[I] feel good about myself" (SI: 12) for giving correct verbal answers in the class quiz, later he kept quiet to avoid any local hostility about his success.

Written vocabulary, developed from classwork and reading, proved to be more difficult to accumulate than spoken word banks. Karicha and Kare felt pressured by the need to learn many difficult words quickly. Narayam found that reading and writing English was "very, very hard for me" (SI: 6), perhaps because a lack of book resources in the camps meant the custom and status of reading long texts was unfamiliar. Unia highlighted the difficulty of unfamiliar Religious Studies language. Parent Mr Ramesh noted that the real stumbling block to their NCEA learning was the lack of academic vocabulary accumulated from extensive reading. Kusi, like Karicha, explained how she dealt with difficult words: "Ask the teacher or see the dictionary or just watch in internet" (SI: 1). Written vocabulary issues were increased when RMB students moved from the relatively custom-built ESOL classes into competitive mainstream ones. ESOL staff explained:

they are following the curriculum and they don't understand, so you explain it to them in a more simplified version; they get that, but they still have to achieve at a much higher level; it is just too high-level for them (TG1 19).

Assessment practices and grades made the problem starkly obvious. Students' expectations were that they would pass with better grades, much quicker and easier than they actually did. Parveesh contrasted prescriptive camp tests which paralleled what he had learnt in class, with New Zealand assessments: "The study . . . here seems really easy in the class . . . but when it when it comes to exam time . . . it's really, really, really hard" (SI: 11). Participants struggled to understand what was required with question wording,

before framing answers effectively. Some industrious senior participants had taken at least two years to pass internal credits which locals were expected to achieve easily.

What remained for the student participants was their own considerable agency to succeed. Karicha's comment was representative:

You will definitely feel like to winning than like . . . you can't be behind them; just cos you're from a different country, and just cos you can't speak English, you can't expect to lose . . . you have to go for it (SG3 2).

Sunu sang: "Still learning; wanna learn more" (SG1 3). Her words were reinforced by Narayam and Nilu. In this study, though both parents and teachers encouraged extra reading, academic vocabulary growth was a continuing challenge for the students.

### **5.3.2. Accent, Speed and Volume**

Accent was an embarrassing problem for student participants. Difficulties from a mix of Indian or American accents learnt in the camps rendered them "a communicative burden" (J. Miller, 2003a, p. 48) to local listeners, and lowered participant legitimacy status. Some sounds in English could not be easily pronounced because of Nepali mouth muscle movement habits. Vowel length differences created tension and sometimes humour, as with Narayam's 'pees for peace' and 'police for please' (SG1 6). Khusi laughed that she now felt shame about the way refugee camp teachers spoke English. Participants struggled to reframe their habitual articulation patterns to attain local legitimacy.

All participant levels were afraid of being teased by class members about their accent. Two siblings had the acumen to concentrate early on losing their Indian accent and learning the New Zealand one. Parveesh explained: "Me and my sister really worked hard" (SI: 11) because of early taunting. Narayam also experienced accent bullying in his first school, and in spite of improvements, his accent was still difficult for some locals to follow. ESOL staff recounted that he hung his head in response to one of his teachers at the site school belittling his accent in front of the class. He joked that he was in the habit of using his Indian-Kiwi friend to speak for him. Participants felt correctly that they could

become a target for difference with non-Kiwi accents.

Particular school sites were identified as useful for concentrating on learning the Kiwi accent. Karicha, reinforced by Parveesh, considered that ESOL was the best place, as others would understand the difficulties involved. Karicha explained: “They know how it feels when you first came here, and when you can’t speak English” (SI: 2). Karicha noticed that it required some effort to improve accent, and some ESOL students had much better accents than others who had been here longer. He observed that there was some variation in the desire to become part of the school environment: “People when they used to get here, they don’t really care about what’s going on, but the new people come and they worried about . . . if I didn’t do it, gonna get into trouble” (SI: 2). Highly motivated to integrate himself, he used his opportunities as Junior Leader to learn from smaller children, disclosing: “I mean like they didn’t tell me how to do it, but when I talk to them, it’s like trying to get their accent” (SI: 2). However, Karicha was able to rise above the tension to generalise about English accents and the differences even within the school community, which slightly reduced the anxiety for participants to become uniform in this regard.

Participants also suffered with other audibility issues. Asis believed that he mumbled in his attempt to go unnoticed. Mr Liam found that he had difficulty understanding Kaudani’s’s mumbling. Narayam attributed his early speaking problems to speed because of previous camp teaching, noting: “Indian people speak loud and fast” (SI: 6). He, like Karicha, was often accused by his teachers of speaking loudly, and lamented that he was often blamed when everyone else was also speaking. He developed humour as a strategy to deflect, and attributed his loud voice on his ear problem, the flu or his voice breaking. The females, even Nilu, did not seem to have that problem.

### **5.3.3. Lip-Service: The Hollow Voice**

Early in their consolidation into New Zealand classroom life, participants used positive lip-service responses; there was a disjoint between what they really wanted to say, and how they wanted to appear in the classroom. Participants suppressed their real needs because they were too embarrassed to respond negatively to a teacher who had authority.

Sometimes they could sense teacher resentment at participant difference, or the extra workload they represented. ESOL staff noticed the espoused mantra: “Let’s have it equal for everyone” (ESOL Gp p. 17) didn’t describe RMB realities. Sometimes the student did not have the words to express what they wanted. The result was that student participants said that they understood their schoolwork sometimes when they didn’t. Sunu explained that this happened at the beginning: “I don’t understand what teacher is explaining when they say, ‘Do you get it?’ ‘Yeah yeah’ but actually I did not get it.” (SI: 3). Kaudani and Kare concurred.

As well as highlighting language issues, lip-service displayed an underlying issue of interpretation of cultural discourse norms (Carbaugh, 2007). The students were using first culture norms that were considered to be respectful. Parent Mr. Ramesh explained: “That is a part of our culture, our discipline . . . showing a positive respect to the teachers” (PFG 15). However, in the New Zealand culture, teachers might find this attitude obsequious, dishonest, or an avoidance tactic. Local teacher exasperation was highlighted well by Mrs. Richardson: “What with the nodding and smiling . . . it’s quite difficult to actually get beyond that. I sometimes have a sense that they don’t really understand what they want” (TG2 18). Unfortunately, the students were unlikely to be helped by a local teacher who had little time or even inclination to deal with trying to unravel their complex cultural needs in a busy classroom.

#### **5.4. Pathways Through Friendship**

At first, participants found it difficult to develop school friendships. It was not a matter of looking too different, as they were not excessively marked out from other groups. J. Miller (2003a) noted that visibility did make a difference to being accepted, but “being visibly different is sometimes less important than being audibly similar” (p. 45). The local school student community was what Sunu described as “white people” (SG1 3). Kaudani noticed the size difference with Bhutanese RMB students: “big people and we are small people” (SI: 9), but in uniform, the Bhutanese participants looked similar visually to Pasifika students. Local students who were not ‘colourblind’ (Harklau, 2003) thought Karicha might be ‘acceptably’ Tongan but there was some disquiet about him being Indian: “Oh you Indian . . . you pray cow and stuff” (SI: 2). Overall, participant



appearance was not different enough to necessarily preclude them from making friends.

However, under the surface, there were more significant issues. Senior students who had lived in the refugee camps longer, expressed intense suffering at loss of camp friendships, described in 4.2. Melancholy for the past needed to decline before new friendships could be accommodated.

#### **5.4.1. Bhutanese Friendships**

Friendship between Bhutanese students, if available, was an invaluable first step towards making school connections. Nilu explained:

More than half of the people have very little English, and um they are really shy, and they can really be like silent in front of local students . . . because you know they won't really . . . know English as much . . . some people really find it hard to understand their accent, how they are saying it, and so, and I guess for Nepali people it's just easier to communicate with Nepali people . . . when they meet Nepali friends, they will you know just talk. (SI: 10)

In her first school, Khushi's silent day was broken only with one Bhutanese girl approaching her at break: "At interval, one Nepali girl who used to come there, and she just ask me, 'How are you sister?' and I said, 'Yeah I am fine.' That's the only thing I used to talk in school." (SI: 5). With the later influx of Bhutanese, Unia described support from a group of four Bhutanese girls, who "really helped me to hang out with peoples and how to talk with teachers and students" (SI: 7) and refocused her after a difficult sickness, to face school again. Kaudani found eight Nepali boys to relate to at his first school, and Parveesh stated: "Every Nepali boy hangs with Nepali boy" (SI: 11). Besides giving emotional support, they could help each other bilingually to communicate. The ESOL room was a significant hub for this as the students noted: "We usually come to the ESOL room" (SG2 10).

Where subjects or options were chosen, participants tended to take similar subjects. Seniors combined with Commerce or Computers as well as the regulation Mathematics

classes. Junior participants chose the same Project options. Kare explained: “Me, Nilu and Kamba are . . . making the same thing . . . a magazines rack” (SI: 8). In this way, classroom and curriculum requirements could be explained fully amongst themselves, or one student could ask the teacher for the group if the teacher-aide was unavailable to “ask the dumb questions!” (TG1 19).

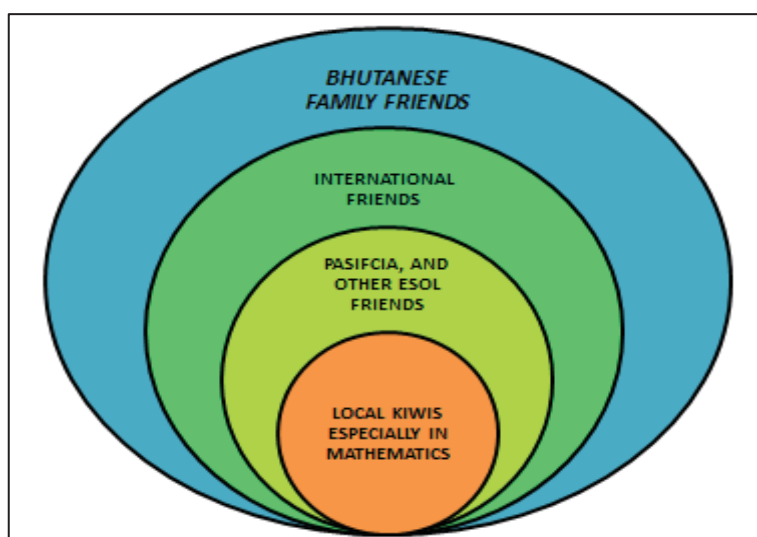
Bhutanese helping Bhutanese however, was not without problems. ESOL staff noted:

A lot of the time I think they miss out because they are trying to listen but there is too much background noise. They miss the important thing. Teachers say it too fast to start with, and then say, ‘I’ve explained it; now you get on with it.’ (TG1 19)

They could then make mistakes helping each other “reinforcing what is wrong” (TG1 19), which Karicha also noticed. Further, their small group presence could also isolate them from the larger class. Groups of Bhutanese and ESOL students could provide a sense of threatening ‘otherness’ in the class, as Mr. Liam inferred:

I’ve got . . . eight ESOL students in my class, and they tend to group together . . . I think it’s not sort of *ghettoization* or anything like that, I think it’s just because in the ESOL room they just know each other so well (TG2 18).

Sometimes students felt a muted hostility from local classmates. Sunu noted that three Bhutanese girls worked together in Commerce more intently because they sensed ill-will from the class: “Cos I think they are they are teasing us or something” (SI: 3). Nevertheless, Bhutanese friendships and supportive class grouping was invaluable for their learning.



**FIGURE 5: FRIENDSHIP PATTERNS**

#### **5.4.2. International Fee-Payers' Student Friendships**

ESOL classes provided the opportunity for participants to bond with other non-Bhutanese ESOL students. International fee-payers were a common friendship source. Both groups were using and learning L2 English, so both understood if mistakes were made. Both had to navigate scholastic achievement in a new L2 environment. Some fee-payers had very ambitious future plans, and were prepared to work hard. It was these students that senior female participants aligned with for mutual advantage, particularly Khusi, as noted by her ESOL teachers. Khusi stated: "It's always helpful if the friends are quite interested in learning" (SI: 5). Together they shared their class workloads and this practice allowed her to help others, Bhutanese and otherwise. The same student also used fee-payer friends to engineer her seating to gain optimum concentration in class:

If I don't have friends then I choose to sit in the front, but if I have friend I just used to sit in the middle . . . if we don't understand then we can just do the question and ask our friends (SG1 5).

After three years in the site school, the highly-motivated Khusi had managed to obtain University Entrance, had improved her spoken English to NCEA Level 3 standard; her access to legitimacy as a class member had built steadily. She eventually advanced so much that she became the mouthpiece for fee-payer students in an 'international'

Commerce class. New to the country, they had less English and a less comprehensible accent than Khusi, so they depended on her for communication with the teacher. She noted: “They can’t say it clearly . . . ok so you say it, that’s why they used to tell to me ok right and I will say it” (SG1 5). Khusi entered university supported by her international ESOL friends to help her bridge the new locale, using the similar tactics of “always at the front . . . and get early always” (SG1 5). Ryan (2000) demonstrates that “students with high-achieving friends showed greater increases in achievement over time compared to students with lower achieving friends” (p. 104). Khusi’s friendship strategies were a testament to this.

Other senior participants repeated this pattern. Kaudani recalled how his friendship with a Thai fee-payer improved both their NCEA Mathematics’ understanding, stating: “The Thailand guy . . . he’s pretty good at Maths as well . . . if I don’t know . . . I can ask him, if he don’t know, he ask me, if we both don’t know, we just ask the teacher.” (SI: 9). Sunu and Kamba recalled the life-jacket of initial friendships with fee-payers in their painful first experiences of L2 mainstream classes. Mutual friendships between fee-payer and RMB students became a significant method to invest in English for academic success.

#### **5.4.3. Pasifika Friendships**

Pasifika students in ESOL also developed friendships with participants. Both shared another language and culture at home. RMB students noticed that Pasifika students had a similar L1 view of respect for teacher authority and classroom quietness. Senior Kali referred to one Pasifika girl who shared three subjects, who was “really friendly . . . explain me what to do and then how to do it” (SI: 1). Two Pasifika friends helped Kali complete a Level 2 NCEA Shakespeare presentation, where Kali played Macbeth. ESOL staff reflected on the way Kali gradually asserted herself: “It was just wonderful to see that growth in her where she was being told what to do how to do it at the beginning, and by the end of it, she was doing it *her way*” (TG1 19). Sunu’s Pasifika friends also helped her with classwork.

#### 5.4.4. Local Friendships

The ultimate step for participants in learning English was to speak with locals, so they could learn English while developing more understanding of their values. Khusi explained: “We can know the other culture, if we have the other culture’s friends . . . it’s easy for us to react with the other people also” (SG1 5). Asis, Unia and Mr. Himal agreed. However, participants mixed less with local than ESOL students. Senior female participants did not use the senior common room; they spent their free time in the ESOL room supporting other ESOL students and completing schoolwork. Friendships with locals tended to be a class-room based, the “field habitus” (J. Miller, 2003a, p. 46) where there were clear relationship boundaries for both sides. Interaction was usually only sanctioned through helpful L2 teachers or coaches, or trading favours in Mathematics.

A helpful teacher or coach could engineer a cultural boundary bridge, using a higher authority to reduce underlying social tensions in a temporarily shared focus. In Sunu and Unia’s English class, their mixed-culture, teacher-organised group united to obtain teacher attention by waving arms and singing, mixing humour and collegiality to become a visible power base for mutual benefit. ESOL staff noted how some mainstream staff were particularly helpful in advocating for participant needs, such as a senior Mathematics teacher. Commerce teacher Mr. Curtis appreciated their respect: “They put you on a bit of a pedestal; that’s very nice. It’s a lot of reward for teachers, cos you, whatever effort you put in comes back manifold in terms of their appreciation and their development” (TG2 20). Kaudani remarked about his soccer coach: “He been in Nepal like once, and he liked the food in Nepal” (SI: 9). The coach really welcomed Kaudani into the team by asking questions about his homeland, and shared a fondly-remembered Nepali meal with Kaudani’s family.

Although local student help was sometimes proffered to RMB students, such as to Kali and Sunu in Religion Studies, Mathematics was the subject where participant-local interaction was more frequent. Bhutanese cultural capital, in the form of advanced Mathematics knowledge, could be used in exchange for increased L2 legitimacy. Khusi recalls giving teacher-directed help to Mathematics students at her first New Zealand school, which began her route out of isolation:

cos I was good at Maths . . . one boy he came to ask me the questions cos teacher was busy, and teacher told that go and ask with Khusi . . . he came to me, then after that he bring his friend to me, to get help (SI: 5).

She obtained help with English from a local student in senior Mathematics later, and also recalled the enjoyment of competing with a Maori boy student to obtain Mathematics answers first. Other participants had similar contact through Mathematics. Sunu also recalled the disarming sensation of trading Mathematics expertise with group inclusion: “They are like ‘Oh come and sit with me’ and I think ‘Oh they are . . . wanna be a friend with me’ . . . and I helped some of them . . . if I know” (SI: 3). Kali had similar experiences.

Participants accepted the equity in this Mathematics exchange, but were still not always able to understand or trust local reasons for friendship otherwise. Khusi reflected: “Sometimes they become quite nice, and sometimes they don’t. I can’t work out why; I still can’t work out why” (SG1 5). Speaking with locals was a risk. Local student responses suggested that they chose to maintain their social boundaries, protect their vested interests in the social hierarchy. Participants too, as explained earlier, kept boundaries to maintain their Bhutanese culture. Careful negotiation was essential.

### **VIGNETTE 3: KARICHA’S INVESTMENT**

Data shows Karicha’s trajectory to creditable English investment that took place in under two years. His success was facilitated by his role in L1 family and culture, positive attitudes, confidence and social flexibility.

Karicha was born into a family with three children and two parents in a secure camp environment. Even though there were “snakes in the water” and “rocks in the rice” (SI: 2), he recalled: “I was happy there; I mean like I am happy here too . . . but I was happier there cos we all had one community like a family; in Nepal, if our neighbours got in trouble, you help them and they help you” (SI: 2). He established a deep love

for family: “I think my family is the best family . . . if you don’t have . . . anyone to lead, you might get in wrong way” (SI: 2). He also showed intense love for his L1 homeland: “Nepalese, my country” (SI: 2). He often explained to others about his L1 culture and strongly asserted his right to his own culture: “We not really interested in their culture” (SG3 2).

He saw his role as third and youngest child as a particular advantage, with a ready-made family caring for him. He was not obligated to represent the family like his older sister, and being the youngest allowed him to socialise more with others. His two older sisters learnt English words from him, and this harbinger role in his family was an expanding one.

Karicha’s gender also positioned him with unique speaking rights as the only male child. He was aware that he looked strong, like a Tongan. He was very clear about his male gender role, and cheekily saw females as less fortunate: “Good girls don’t talk” (SG3 2).

Karicha was also favoured by personal ebullience. He avoided any negative thoughts about his life experience coming to New Zealand stating: “I was really excited” (SI: 2) perhaps because of his age. He asserted positively about being at the site school: “I have found that the people in [the school] are really friendly and helpful” (SG2 2). He showed a strong value system to be morally upright and use what he had been gifted, observing: “God give us . . . to live and do good things” (SI: 2). His inner confidence expressed itself in a very positive attitude to life.

The benefits above gave Karicha enough assurance to become flexible and experiment socially, testing the boundaries of being a disobedient adolescent with desk-drumming, or teasing locals who obtained a lower mark than him in an English speech: “Oh I’m better.” (SI: 2). He curried disfavour with a sloppier dress code and grew his hair longer to be more accepted, expressing that he should “dress like a Kiwi” (SI: 2). He enjoyed bringing local students and visitors to ESOL, becoming a liaison between cultures: “I bought them . . . in ESOL there were other Kiwi people; they like ‘Ah no, it’s ESOL; let’s go,’ and I say like ‘What the Hell’! It’s just ESOL! They won’t eat you!” (SI: 2). He enjoyed speaking confidently about a wide range of personal topics like differences in Kiwi and Nepali cultures and was in the process of becoming a skilled conversationalist.

Karicha's levels of confidence were shown best with his relationships with males in his site school. He befriended two ESOL students first, and then branched out to local friendships. He continually asserted that he had many friends, and that this gave him further opportunities, noting: "I made like good relationship with other friends too" (SI: 2). He also enjoyed the male bonding in his soccer team. Eventually he was favoured with the role of Junior Leader. Karicha explained that his friendship with the Junior Head Boy led to his name being put forward. This established Karicha at the top of the Year Ten social hierarchy, gave him acceptance with both girls and boys within the school, and earned him some admiration from other junior participants who praised him for being smart in a way they were not.

Ultimately, Karicha was also favoured by his school year and age. As a Year Ten student, he was not encumbered with national exams, and this meant he had more time to network socially. As a fourteen-year-old, he was just breaking out of the chrysalis of a secure childhood, and his stalwart ego was as yet unencumbered with any negative experiences that could permanently scar him.

Karicha's successful investment in English depended on his stable L1 identity, forged from strong family and cultural allegiance. It is hoped that as Karicha's educational pressures increase, he will use careful discretion to choose beneficial role models to maintain his "brokering" position in both cultures (Wenger, 1998).

#### **5.4.5. Conflict Avoidance**

All participants were very careful to avoid confrontation. Compromise was well-honed. ESOL staff noted that RMB students were very tolerant of others. Passive-assertive practices were utilised to deal with hostility such as by distancing themselves physically. Khusi learnt to "just to walk away from that" (SG1 5). Kaudani suggested staying uninvolved emotionally: "I just feel like let it go" (SI: 9). This was reinforced by Kamba. Karicha avoided the manipulations of classmates, noting: "If you talk to them and they keeps talking to you, even after teachers get mad, or when teachers talking, you get in trouble; that happened to me many times (SI: 2). Parveesh managed another tactic, using humour:



My accent wasn't good and my friend used to say 'Oh you're funny man this accen't . . . ver got bullied from my mates, but they just used to say 'Funny' and just laugh and sometimes they used to not mock but repeat the words I say, just make funnier" (SI: 11).

By laughing with, not against, his friends, he may have been able to become more legitimised with local male friendship groups, but his laughter also meant that he had to actually subjugate his Nepali identity temporarily and become the 'group clown', in a way other Bhutanese were not prepared to do.

A double quandary was the fact that without knowing English, participants could not always effectively avoid conflict. Karicha explained that it was much easier to obtain acceptance "when you . . . can speak English fluently . . . and know everything about culture . . . they might ask you about your culture too" (SG3 2).

One issue for Narayam was gender discrimination with his pink Bhutanese socks, which had high male status in Bhutan, but low male status and gay associations in New Zealand: "I got teased by my socks because . . . I had a barbie socks . . . I didn't know what that meant . . . so I got teased . . . then I find out why people were laughing . . . then I stopped wearing good socks" (SG1 6).

Narayam also endured teasing about his accent, then, like Kamba, eventually "learn to tell the teacher" (SI: 6). Narayam was happy to move to his present school because of the existing community of supportive Bhutanese students.

Participants were also concerned about disclosing their ex-refugee status, and avoided telling locals about it, for fear of feeling debased or bullied as needy 'losers'. Prem stated that the pejorative connotations of the 'refugee' word were well-known in the Bhutanese community. Kali explained: "When we say we are refugee . . . they start to tease us, it . . . affects our study . . . we feel depression . . . we might lose a lot" (SG3 1). Her comments were acknowledged by Narayam, and Karicha. Parveesh wryly explained that he now accepted being called a refugee, but only now that he wasn't one:

the only part really sad was . . . just saying we are refugees . . . but now since we came to NZ . . . if people say I can like debate with them since we got the permanent residence . . . in NZ and in couple of months I will get a citizen as well, but . . . it's good to be a refugee I guess . . . that's how I was born (SI: 11).

Parveesh, straddling immediate life changes with his departure from school, showed some poignancy for the fleeting nature of time past. Actually, participants legally lost their refugee status on arrival in New Zealand, as they gained permanent residence as part of the quota intake. Unfortunately the word *refugee* was officially used for documentation for Ministry Funding in schools, and was in common use amongst staff in site communities. It identified the Bhutanese as separate from the more affluent international fee payers. Until more local residents realise that refugees do not choose their status, deserve the same rights as any other resident, and understand that they might have been very respected and wealthy in their first countries and may be so again, the name will retain its negative connotations.

There was some limited jockeying by locals of participants when their teacher-aide or tutor help arrived in class. An ESOL helper noted: "The other students say, 'Oh here comes your teacher-aide' so it's used as a wee bit of a put down in fact, or game" (TG1 19). Fortunately this was avoided by the teacher-aide mixing with the locals, and asking participants to explain work to them "just to make it sound like you're showing a Kiwi kid how to do it" (TG1 18).

Participants realised that to position themselves to become accepted, they needed to understand that few New Zealanders knew anything about Bhutan or Nepal, and often showed minimal interest. Karicha realised: "People don't really care about our culture . . . people don't ask" (SG2 2). Although student participants were prepared to speak about their pasts, they were not often invited to. However, Karicha asserted proudly that the Bhutanese have their own culture and do not need another, before generalising less aggressively, and perhaps naively, that difference was acceptable "because like you don't have to get accepted . . . by like everyone in the school . . . people have different

perspectives than others” (SG3 2).

Whatever cultural skirmishes were experienced, participant ebullience was a major factor in developing local friendships, to compensate for any apathy or antipathy. Sometimes the desire to become part of the peer group became too strong, jeopardizing future learning and L1 relationships.

#### **5.4.6. The Dangers of Imbalance**

Keeping first culture and language priority while learning English and learning in English, was sometimes a tight-rope act. (Taylor, 2013), states: “Many adolescents feel that adults cannot understand them ... therefore friends of a similar age can provide the emotional support and the mutual understanding necessary in honing teenager’s socio-integrative skill” even though “youth will pay undesirable prices in order to gain acceptance” (p. 14). Withdrawal from L1 family links and reduced academic achievement, are outward indicators of ‘subtractive bilingualism,’ a state where “language learners give up their lifestyle and values in favour of those of the target language group” (Norton, 2013a, p. 154). Mr. Prem linked academic success and stable first culture identity when he noted possible student dangers in over-investment in English: “I think they ... are not spending time at home ... like reading and learning ... when I was in camp school I used to spend more time at in home ... learning ... by doing that I found bit easier ... so they need to spend time” (BA 13). Khusi observed: “It’s good to make friends, like Kiwi friends ... it’s good to make cos they help ... they help me lot ... *but not too much* in other way (SG1 5). The search to secure legitimate authenticity in the school L2 social framework led the following student into the subjective bilingualism described above.

#### **VIGNETTE 4: PARVEESH’S DEPARTURE**

At the start of my data collection, Parveesh had officially just left the site school. He explained a former trajectory of gradual withdrawal from academic success, which seemed possible four years earlier. At first he had showed encouraging signs of progress, stating: “I got this big book . . . for being first in the class” (SI: 11) but

reflected that from Year Ten onwards “it’s came down and down down . . . I don’t know why” (SI: 11).

He suggested tentative external causes. In his camp school, he had obeyed the teacher’s discipline regarding speaking in class. In New Zealand, he considered that his arrival before many other Bhutanese had put him under pressure to speak English quickly to find male friends. He also thought local laissez-faire teaching styles did not help his study. In New Zealand he was expected to discipline himself more to limit talking. He found this quite difficult, when opportunities to speak were so easy, and were relatively unpunished compared to camp school.

However, he did recognise that individually he had a particular orientation towards speaking, which satisfied his emotional and social needs. Parveesh disliked being alone, saying: “When you are just sitting by yourself you just feel bad” (SI: 11). He had always found it essential to talk with his male peer group to bond with them (SI: 11). In addition, he did not enjoy reading, and thought that his peer group was more important to him than the teacher in class. He rejected teachers’ efforts to push him to work in class, not because he thought they wanted to help him, but because teacher interactions might diminish him in his peer group. When reprimanded for not working he felt “embarrassed shameful . . . cos other people will think you are dumb when you not try to do work . . . NO! Not everyone’s dumb because you are not trying well enough” (SI: 11).

Parveesh believed that speaking was the most important skill in English. He stated: “You need to have one ambition . . . my first was to speak like Kiwi and prove myself like my cousin” (SI: 11). He thought that if he put much effort into speaking well with a New Zealand accent, he would succeed with his classwork. He understood also that written and spoken skills overlapped: “If you write, it will I think I guess you can talk” (SI: 11). He did not see that written English required very different skills. Finally however, he noted that written English was as important as speaking: “Maybe I just talk too much just to improve my English” (SI: 11) and thought that he had placed too much emphasis on verbal skills. He then took responsibility to try harder in future:

It’s my bad day I didn’t really try hard . . . I did try but I just didn’t didn’t come . . . cos the system in NZ’s really what . . . since I came to New Zealand, I

haven't really . . . maybe I just didn't try last year, so I need to do well in this coming days (SI: 11).

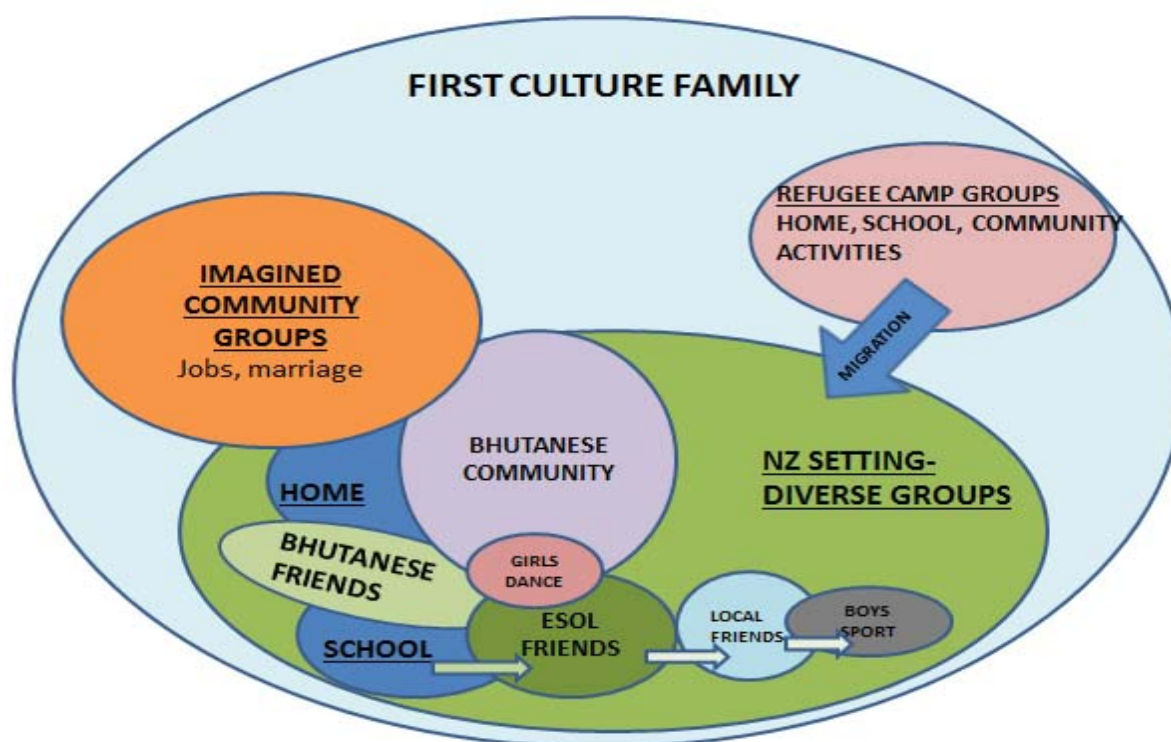
Parveesh was very pleased to be making a new start and prove to himself and his family that he could be successful, and move away from a peer group that could compromise his future. His loyalty to Nepali language remained intense, and he repeated three times "I'm not gonna forget" (SI: 11). However, Parveesh's bonding with his L1 family became less important for him than bonding with his classroom male peers, using spoken English. In consequence, his school work and L1 identity suffered. Parveesh's struggle is inherent for all adolescents, but showed particular significance for L2 RMB adolescents as they wrestle with peer pressure and second language learning.

## **Chapter Six: Discussion**

This chapter takes a further step in interpreting the learning experiences of RMB student participants during the year of data collection. It discloses the rich, wide interweave of L1 family and cultural traditions on their L2 learning, then moves to students' perceptions of present barriers and facilitations within the L2 learning process. The final section contains parents' and teachers' perceptions of participant progress.

### **6.1. Membership of Diverse Groups**

Overwhelmingly, findings show that student L2 learning was governed by primary allegiance to L1 Bhutanese culture maintained in the refugee camps, and upheld here through well-developed networks of L1 family and community. The diagram below displays how in their New Zealand school, RMB students' commitments to local memberships depended on the extent to which they were supported by their L1 groups (Griffin, 2012; Mugadza, 2012). Where students overlapped in their group memberships, they could use one group allegiance to increase membership in other groups. L1 Bhutanese friendships overlapped home and school, and formed the basis of L2 ESOL friends. Imagined community groups were very much nurtured within L1 groups. RMB students were less committed to smaller L2 groups; their membership was for a set purpose or a set time, such as with local friends and boy's sport. The girls' dance group shows how they were guided close to first culture home and community; boys' sport led out into second culture links.



**FIGURE 6: MEMBERSHIP OF DIVERSE GROUPS**

## 6.2. Using the Old to Frame the New

In the enclosed Nepali refugee camps, participant individual identities were dependent on the identities they assumed within their family and community groups. Their attitude to learning was an extension of other well-integrated community values; they expected learning to be a communal exercise, even if they knew its compromises. Refugee school classroom resources were basic. Teachers were honoured but feared; attendance, classroom obedience and work levels were enforced with corporal punishment. English word use and comprehension were taught, with limited forays into speaking with an Indian accent. Learning from supportive friends, and family members after school helped reinforced teacher in-class ‘scaffolding’ (Vygotsky, 1978) for learning progress.

The resettlement journey began the identity adjustment required of L2 learners, from being fully legitimate members of a collectivist and insular Asian culture, to situate themselves within a largely secular, individualistic, Western culture. Families reinforced their survival strength by regrouping into L1 life patterns they knew. Strict adherence to communal values was not just a habit, however, it was deeply grounded in tough,

stamina-draining experiences, and provided the agency and resilience to hope for a better future for families they loved and fought to protect.

Once living in New Zealand, RMB student participants' English learning continued to be closely aligned with Bhutanese cultural practices. Bhutanese families and community generated guidelines in language and cultural use to avoid L1 language loss. Hurburun (2008) states that:

Language maintenance is relevant not only to the survival of minority languages, but also facilitates the psychological adjustments of immigrants and their families. Language is a representation of one's country and one's native tongue, and is often viewed as a symbol of cultural pride, as a means of maintaining continued contact with the country of birth and with oneself, and as a means of enhancing family cohesion (p. 39).

Bhutanese family patterns resisted cultural and language decline (Wong-Fillmore, 2000). Learning English was a threat as well as an advantage; if allowed to dominate, it could destroy L1 language and culture. By *investing* in English, RMB learners could manage protect their L1 language and cultural boundaries, but also “acquire a wider range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and material resources (capital goods, real estate, money), which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and symbolic power” (Norton, 2013b, p. 6).

L2 learning expectations for participants were complicated by obligations to be bilingual. Roberts (2005) observed: “For those who do not intend to participate in the process of assimilation, boundary maintenance becomes an all-important exercise” through a different language to the local culture (p. 262). Some participants like Karicha and Parveesh sometimes spoke English to one another at home, but they usually followed parental expectations to use Nepali, not least because non-English speaking Bhutanese relatives could also be included. So, practice in speaking English was, in reality, restricted by investment in Nepali.



Families expected and encouraged their children to be successful with English at school, and they provided homework time and amenities to help with this. In return, students helped their parents communicate in English in local activities. Older students were expected to help younger or extended family members with their studies in turn, which, in this study, skewed “mothering and fathering” patterns (Pavlenko, 2001, p. 158), but did not destroy them because of their close-knit, hierarchical patterns of family obligation. At the same time, families expected participants to respect cultural traditions of male-female adolescent relationships and endogamy, so that the next generation could maintain L1 language and culture, supported by intergenerational links, as Nilu explained:

Since we were little, our parents have always probably wanted us to like marry a Nepali guy . . . I do think there will be like a lot of consequences because . . . if we do marry a local guy we can't . . . keep the Nepali culture going as well as [if] we can marry a Nepali guy (SG3 10)

Participant families were well aware of the price of being bilingual and were prepared to pay it. Kali fiercely expressed the groups' views: “We need to think about that, whether we are going to lose our tradition or culture or not. And we need to make balance, both of them” (SG3 1). Their families had showed tenacious commitment to their culture when they first left Bhutan, having been forbidden the practice of their Hindu religion, Nepali language and culture. They had given up their possessions to the state or other family, to live a refugee camp life for up to 17 years. It took at least two years to complete the paperwork before arrival in New Zealand, a place where they could freely practise their culture, language and religion. Why would they give their culture up after all this struggle? Some local social marginalisation seemed less of an issue compared to what they had earlier experienced to ensure their cultural survival.

Within the 12 participants, subtractive bilingualism caused some slippage in loyalty to family expectations. Kaudani, Nilu and Parveesh, have been previously discussed. Younger participants also experienced some first culture easing, as they integrated into the New Zealand educational system and its technologies. ESOL staff noticed that the younger participants showed less anxiety about educational achievement, even although

they had more support at home than the older participants. Karicha estimated that as time goes on, “our parents will like lose their strictness” (SG3 2). Parents too were wary of the negative sides of increased acculturation, but they agreed that some acquiescence was almost inevitable: “Sometimes yeah parents can’t control their children. We can’t see all the times you know” (PFG 15) as participants continued to learn English and show more flexibility towards the L2 culture than their parents.

### **6.3. School Group Barriers to Learning**

Initially, RMB student visibility difference from mainstream students was a possible barrier. J. Miller (2003a) noted: “In everyday life it is still common to experience dissonant perceptions about the way a person looks” (p. 7), and that in the classroom teachers may discriminate from “racial and ethnic cues” (p.48). However, in school uniform Bhutanese students looked generally similar to Pasifika students, and friendships with them developed Bhutanese legitimacy in the process of their social positioning. New Zealand studies on Sudanese and Somalian ex-refugees showed that they were not so advantaged visibly (B. N. Abdi et al., 2002; Humpage, 2000, 2009; Marete, 2011b; Sobrun-Maharaj et al., 2008).

Other barriers were more significant. Student participants had experienced significant affective trauma in their first stages of learning in New Zealand, as they strove to adjust to completely different local school group membership customs. On arrival, students were already suffering from dislocated personal identities and cultural bereavement, due to suddenly losing friends and a lifestyle they knew (Hurburun, 2008), but students needed to become familiar and relaxed with complex school buildings, facilities and resources. Students showed respect to local teachers using first culture customs of eye and body deference and well-mannered silence, but were confused when teachers found this bewildering. Students in turn found it disquieting that they couldn’t read local classmates’ faces or behaviour. Sometimes their heightened adolescent sensitivities made them feel like outsiders, even if there was no actual hostility towards them. They were anxious about being publically targeted or shamed by their ignorance, with what they might say or do, or how others treated them. It took months of deep-seated effort to sustain daily attendance until they felt even slightly legitimised.

The RMB student journey from silence to speaking English, so they became audible to local hearers required considerable cognitive and affective effort. J. Miller (2003a) observed: “This is an extremely complex process, entailing control over the mechanics of production, a knowledge of how discourses work and of social relations in particular contexts” (p. 175). There were issues with speed, articulation, word use and local ellipsis, but accent markers were the most crucial in making or breaking legitimacy. Students needed to listen to English sounds until they could be recognised as words they could learn. Once defined, as Parveesh explained, words needed practice, by speaking more slowly and with a different accent from Nepali English, until local Kiwis could understand. Formulaic phrases were helpful at the start.

Academic writing (CALPS) has been identified by other researchers as a major hurdle difficulty with RMB L2 learning (Gearon et al., 2009; O'Rourke, 2011; van den Bergh, 2007). Windle (2009) commented: “The strains of formal or scholastic language are greatest when students move from speech to the written word” (p. 97). She continues that L2 students “must compete with native speakers of the dominant language, who are constantly improving their language efficiency in mainstream classes, often with minimal or no intensive language support” (p. 8). This was certainly an issue with the Bhutanese students. Academic writing success was crucial to them, not only for passing assessments, but also because, as Gearon et al. (2009) noted: “Successful social integration, inclusion and cohesion depend largely on academic success” (p. 7). Students had to learn the language of each curriculum subject. Though the seven subjects in their camp school largely overlapped with the local curriculum, there were difficulties in learning specialised polysyllabic words used only in specific contexts. Religion and Science classes were good examples of this, and satisfactory grades were very difficult to achieve in these subjects. For the senior students particularly, concentrated individual will and support from friends and family were ballasts against academic challenges. Sometimes it was not enough, as Vignette 4 shows. A future intercultural threat looming in the future was ESOL staff concern that younger students were changing to a more relaxed ‘Kiwi way’ as they became more confident with their surroundings, when they needed to learn much harder than L1 students, to succeed.

Time limits for practising English created barriers for RMB student participant English learning. They suffered from expectations that they would catch up their English expertise within a much shorter time frame than was actually needed. This need conflicted with their first culture priorities. Duff and Talmy (2011) explain that despite L2 learners' "desire to be apprenticed into the practices of new L2 communities ... they may want to retain an identity that is distinct" (p. 98). Time decisions exposed this. Time spent speaking English was reserved mainly for school hours. Speaking Nepali with other RMB students in free school time was a compromise; it cut off opportunities to speak English, but it could be supportive if Nepali was used to discuss and practice English.

Developing relationships with other ESOL students in class and lunch time proved to be a helpful method to extend English, as they had similar English needs and first culture imperatives. International fee-payers befriended by Khushi were of particular help because they were intent on academic success. As Ryan (2000) detected: "Students with high-achieving friends showed greater increases in achievement over time compared to students with lower achieving friends" (p. 104). Overall, ESOL students could assist each other's learning in ESOL and mainstream classes, while positioning themselves as a legitimate subgroup in the mainstream class community.

Allegiances with local students were tentative and limited. Most locals did not frequent the ESOL room and their peer allegiances usually prevented association. Some helpful individual links were made but these were exceptions. Friendship with locals generally was 'unsafe territory.' Local students were prepared to trade temporary social legitimacy of participants for example to obtain help with Mathematics. RMB students enjoyed temporary interrelationships but did not want to lose their primary allegiance to first culture. This socio-cultural 'stand-off' behaviour on both sides was a significant barrier to learning English for RMB participants, because they missed out on wider opportunities for access to linguistic resources that the dominant groups had already possessed.

There were further cultural barriers for participants. Even if the language or class material was known, students needed to adjust to local students jostling for teacher-attention, their

loud spoken discharges, and their remonstrations with teachers. Sometimes RMB students could not gather their thoughts quickly enough before another classmate had edged them out of an exchange. Traditionally, participant girls were taught that calling out was indecorous. It was much more acceptable for them to discuss matters quietly in small groups, or choose what Simpson (2008) called a “go-between” (p. 388) to save face, then see the teacher quietly later. These factors meant that the road to English competency was lined with complications; when school membership competed with first culture requirements, it often lost out, and another method of access had to be negotiated, or the opportunity was lost.

Local institutional structures, by their very nature, formed barriers to participant school membership and learning. There was a dominant expectation on staff and mainstream students that newcomers should speak English with an easily-understood accent. The integrated school primarily catered for local Christian families, and all the school structures were set up in English with an emphasis on religious values. Participants were a Bhutanese minority group, invited into the school as Quota Refugees (Immigration, 2015) through the auspices of the New Zealand government, local religious authorities and school management. However, differences in their background, ethnicity, culture and religion meant that student participants were granted access, but were not fully accepted.

The New Zealand Curriculum document emphasises the need for teachers to follow principles of cultural diversity and inclusion, and have values of diversity and equity (Ministry of Education, 2015d) but in reality, social acceptance of Bhutanese RMB students applied to very specific areas only. Gearon et al. (2009) emphasised the increasing need for L2 students to obtain academic language to achieve success, within an educational assessment framework that was increasingly galvanised towards “neglect of difference and diversity” (p. 8). Karicha noticed: “People don’t really care about our culture; people don’t ask” (SG1 2). There was very little knowledge of, or interest in, Nepal and Bhutan, by staff or students. Participant students approached first culture explanations very cautiously stating: “When I first came here I didn’t used to talk about my culture so much, cos it’s really different” (SI: 2). They were wary of the stereotyping the word *refugee* had experienced elsewhere. They felt proud when invited to speak about

their first culture, The opportunity to dress in their first culture clothes, dance and speak Nepali, allowed them to freely express L1 membership while placing them centre stage in L2 school group contexts, such as in Speech Board assessments, some class projects or school concerts. However, it is significant that a wider mainstream knowledge of the RMB students' journey, and greater acceptance of the diversity they bring, would enable the students to have a firmer footing in school membership. Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001) explain: "If learner bids for participation are positively viewed by the members of the target community, L2 learners and users may become full participants in their second language community" (p. 152).

#### **6.4. Facilitating School Group Factors**

Personal and Bhutanese group cohesion was the most powerful facilitating factor for the students' progress in English. They expressed gratitude at the opportunity the country and school had given them to settle and learn in a safe and comfortable environment. Their agency and flexibility to adjust to a new culture could be attributed to the stereotype of Bhutanese ebullience, but their stable, agentive L1 identity within a strongly-supported Bhutanese community was the real reason for their undeniably forward-thinking attitude to life. A positive attitude bred opportunities.

Bhutanese family members provided both cognitive and emotional support for participants' learning where they could, in the drive to extend their bilingualism. Bhutanese siblings provided friendship and social contact to each other within the school community. The data abounds with student accounts of early anxiety being diminished by supportive comments from other Bhutanese students. They gave help that local staff and students could not or did not manage to give them. The girls in particular arranged their subject choices to include and help each other. The boys provided camaraderie for each other while playing sport at lunchtimes, and family members usually drove the students to and from school, and provided help with their homework where they could. Helpful Bhutanese family members became bridges for participants to enter and successfully invest in the local school community.

Another facilitating factor was the ESOL room as a resource. Although one New Zealand

study has noted that the specialised home-room care for L2 learners possibly “ghettoises” them (May, 2002, p. 20), student participants in this research unequivocally voiced ESOL homeroom and practices as valuable to their progress towards fuller legitimacy as also supported by Franken and McCormish (2003); Hamilton and Moore (2004); Loewen (2004); Sobrun-Maharaj et al. (2008); White et al. (2002). The ESOL room provided security for the students, and became a relaxing and safe place where they spoke Nepali without embarrassment, and ate Nepali meals. The room gave participants the choice to reinforce first language membership groups until they were confident enough to extend further socially. The ESOL room also provided easy access to invest in English with other ESOL students, by speaking English, helping with homework and classroom learning, and developing friendships.

At the time of data collection, ESOL department systems and staff facilitated participant learning by showing high levels of care, and supporting students much further than legally required. The department obtained two sources of funding from the government for RMB students: one for resources and teacher-aides for students for up to five years of New Zealand study, the other for homework, bilingual tutors and workplace support. This specialist funding was used with other migrant funding to completely resource the department system. ESOL student numbers were split into Year 7-8, Year 9-10 and two senior classes, with class sizes ranging from 12-21 students each. These ESOL students became peer friends with RMB participants, by helping them access sub-group memberships in mainstream classes for learning. Other ESOL students also largely constrained pressure of the mainstream peer group on RMB participants. The ESOL curriculum, accredited by New Zealand Qualifications Authority, focused on skills of speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and thinking (ESOLonline, 2012). Alongside in-school curriculum units, ESOL Unit Standards and internal NCEA assessments were provided for students, enabling credits for national qualifications. New Zealand Speech Board exams promoted speaking and listening skills to a new level; the eventual external assessment provided a performance occasion which accessed further speaking NCEA credits, as well as bonding students together. The ESOL room’s 10 computers, obtained by ESOL staff from lottery subsidies, provided academic support for independent e-learning.



RMB funding provided adequate services for participant learning, as long as school management used funds as intended by Ministry of Education (2015b) guidelines. However, to date, funding use is dependent on the discretion of the school Principal. There is no Ministry penalty for using these funds for non-ESOL related resources, so they can be deflected away from RMB student needs to other school needs. Using L2 funding for other school purposes reinforces “coercive relations of power” (Cummins, 2003, p. 51). In practical terms, it means that RMB students, already disadvantaged by relocation and language issues, can lose a significant amount of government support through negligence or indifference of the school management to their plight.

Participants identified the passing of tests and assessments as a snowballing facilitating factor. NCEA and Unit Standard credits were landmarks for their further educational progress, gaining them legitimacy in school culture with students and staff, and reinforcing family optimism. Students sat mainly internal assessments so they could take time to access learning, and they needed to work much harder than locals to re-sit to achieve. Three students noted that they had been near the top of their classes in the refugee camps or junior school, and now they had to accept that obtaining an Achieved was a victory, and a Merit was outstanding. Mathematics was the easiest subject for the participants, as they had learnt material equivalent to the New Zealand curriculum content as juniors in the camps. Mathematics results gave them stimulus to work hard on other subjects, earn respect from local classmates, and made them laugh about the superiority of their camp lessons: “Maths is the easiest, cos in here the teachers teach easiest thing in Year 10 and 9” (SG1 3). Khusi’s path to university entrance was a model for other RMB participants, as she followed in her siblings’ footsteps. It showed that RMB students could undoubtedly achieve in the New Zealand educational system. They just needed extra time, the will to achieve, and support.

When mainstream individuals helped student participants, they were very appreciative of the valuable knowledge obtained. These L1 individuals provided openings through “explanations” (Wenger, 1998) or “actual practice” where participants could experience less risk without feeling any need to reciprocate (p. 100). In fact, participant students



made a point of emphasising these local supporters, instead of bemoaning negative experiences. They were particularly thankful for individual ESOL staff for their expectations and support, and identified helpful mainstream teachers in various Commerce, English, Mathematics and Foundation Studies classes. They also enjoyed relating where they made classroom contact with local students, and were grateful for their help, in senior Religion, Mathematics, English, sport or dance. Affirming incidents with friendly local individuals went a long way to reducing tensions created by forces more indifferent to them.

### **6.5. Idealised Future Group Allegiances**

Data shows that half the participants, mainly juniors, adapted their family aspirations for their future, and expressed the desire to become doctors. The reasons for this choice lay in their pasts. They had witnessed the medical inadequacies of Nepal, and imagined ways to improve conditions there. This strong sense of obligation to Nepal was represented by Karicha: “I always wanted ... to help people and help them make it better” (SI: 2). However, in the present New Zealand setting, the road to achieving these aspirations was fraught. While not demeaning student ability or agency, academic English requirements for such as career choice rendered it a less-than-realistic option for most. Unlike their Maori and Pasifika peers, RMB students were unable to access preferential medical scholarships. Karicha also noticed that even if Bhutanese students achieved a local medical degree, the cultural and practical skills they learnt here would need to be adjusted to requirements in Nepal if they returned there. Perhaps the real underlying benefit in medical aspirations lay in a more holistic desire to maintain high standards of educational effort.

Senior students had already reimagined their futures by deciding to focus on careers that linked more realistically with their school results. Mathematics and Commerce subjects, not Sciences, were targeted by senior girls, as they felt that their language components were more manageable. They imagined opportunities in banking and private business. Senior boys’ assessment results sometimes obstructed earlier dreams, and they thought that their future possibilities lay in mechanical expertise and building opportunities.

## 6.6. Parent and Teacher Perceptions

In reality, parents could set guidelines for their children's learning success, but were limited in how they could help them achieve it, like many other ex-refugee parents in New Zealand (See 2.5.3). Some Bhutanese parents were pre-literate in English. Those that spoke English had strong accents. For all participant parents, the New Zealand school system was new, so they had limited understanding of the full details of their children's progress at school. Parents were unable to give useful advice to their children on how to gain opportunities to achieve. They did not have access to a range of local social networks, and had little ability to understand and manipulate local cultural and social norms that could mentor their child's progress, aspects freely available to local children. Although four participants' parents had been trained as teachers, and taught in Nepal, they were hesitant to become involved in school matters unless invited. At the time of data collection, no Nepali parent was involved in the PPTA or Board. Parents had great sympathy for the difficulties their children faced in the education system. They recognised, with some concern, that their children were learning English much faster than them, and they were reduced to depending on variable and tenuous networks for support, like individual teachers' good will and professionalism.

Overall, the mainstream teachers interviewed perceived RMB students as pleasant and appreciative, and more able to relax with teachers as the year developed. Mrs. Lightfoot and Mr. Curtis enjoyed their greetings and joke responses. The latter also appreciated their conscientious work ethic, and the way they put teachers on a pedestal, reflecting: "Whatever effort you put into them it comes back manifold in terms of their appreciation and development" (TG2 20). In Commerce, the girls were considered role-models because of the way they persevered to pass; Khushi in particular was considered "magnificent" in this subject (TG2 20). In Junior Projects and Sport, the boys' teamwork and talents were much appreciated by Mrs. Lightfoot.

Mainstream teachers perceived that RMB students created socio-cultural variety in classes but that in senior subjects generally, they struggled to achieve, thus creating more difficulty for the teachers. At the beginning, there was the problem of lack of communication: their silences, lack of eye contact, closed body language and lip-service

sometimes made it difficult for teachers to realise if the students understood class material or not. Only Mrs. Richardson noticed that RMB students often used other students for help, instead of the teacher. She found marking their written work laborious because of their low levels of literacy. Three teachers arranged supportive class seating arrangements for participants, and this enabled occasional spoken and written support. Teachers freely acknowledged that often participant needs were much greater than they could supply, particularly with the senior boys, who seemed to value school success less than the girls. Teacher aides or the bilingual tutor were employed to satisfy student, not staff, needs. They partly helped fill instructional gaps, but there was a mixed appreciation of auxiliary help being in the classroom for the limited times funding allowed. In practice, if not in theory, difference was a deficit (Cummins, 2003).

Mainstream teachers' attitudes towards participants were clouded by their ex-refugee and L2 status. They perceived the 12 RMB students in the school as a small minority of another minority group, the ESOL students; within this group, international students had higher status because they contributed financially to the school. Mainstream teachers were mostly monolingual, although those interviewed had some awareness of the complexities of bilingualism. As well, mainstream teachers had limited opportunities for knowing about RMB students' backgrounds or empathising with their L2 learning needs; their work and time priorities were geared to whole-class needs, not minorities. Within busy classes, they had little opportunity to discover the RMB students' loyalty towards their first culture community, their camp life and education, or their attitude towards investment in English. One teacher commented: "With refugees . . . you are not sure how much what to uncover and how much to leave there, and I don't know them, don't know their background well enough to know what sort of refugee experiences they've had" (TG2 18).

Equivocation about whether to ask participants about their past may show empathy for adolescent sensibilities, but also risks exposure to the possible loss of vested power by entering into relationships with a minority group. Too close a relationship with refugee students may shift the balance of teacher allegiance to the local culture, and cause further complications with other students within the class and other staff. The mainstream

teachers interviewed expressed goodwill towards, and concern for participants, but practical learning help in class would have been greatly enhanced if teachers had knowledge and appreciation of the learners' real situation.

Unfortunately, in spite of the extended time spent by RMB students in mainstream classes generally, mainstream teachers in the site school had no formal training in L2 teaching and the issues involved in teaching L2 learners, apart from an annual ESOL professional development session. Data showed that government facilities for L2 training were available. They took the form of extensive Ministry of Education website material and scholarships (Ministry of Education, 2015g). Although some staff were immigrants themselves or were bilingual, at the time of data collection, only one staff member had accessed Ministry-funded scholarships. This meant that, in spite of general literacy training, mainstream teachers had few specific second language skills to use in mainstream classes. Youngs and Youngs (2001) noted: "Few mainstream teachers have been prepared to address the linguistic challenges and cultural differences present in diverse classrooms" (p. 101). Significantly, those that did were more confident about teaching culturally diverse classes. They concluded that the more pre-service and in-service courses teachers are exposed to, the more confident they will be. This research also exposes a well-lit gap in training for teaching L2 learners.

Simpson (2008) highlights that inter-cultural frustrations arise from lack of understanding about each other's culture "expecting complete accommodation from the other party" (p. 385). He explains that understanding L2 cultural needs can alleviate frustrations and lead to teachers applying a range of methods that incorporate cultural diversity into classrooms. Hurburun (2008) also indicated: "When schools encourage communication in only the second language ... the school is restricting second- language acquisition ... and the student performs below their cognitive level". In this study, well-meaning mainstream teachers sometimes chose inadequate solutions to deal with RMB students' educational needs, in what Haworth (2011) called "trial and error" (p. 143) such as whether to separate RMB students in mainstream classes or not. When Mr. Barrett stated that three RMB students and five other ESOL students "wasn't quite ghettoisation" (Mainstream Gp p. 3), his word use implied a sense of threat. Humpage (2000) found that this similar

experience of threat in Christchurch schools with RMB Somalis which caused some teachers to “actively separate Somali students from each other” (p. 65). In my study, staff may have been more concerned about the effect of RMB student grouping on class peer positioning, rather than see grouping as a practical response to their learning needs.

Similarly, RMB accents became an issue in a Year seven class, where there was a need for staff to remind participants patiently and respectfully to speak more slowly. In one case, a junior school participant had been taken to the school office to repeat vowel sounds from a text list, in an effort to improve her accent. Cummins (2003) described the practice of rote-learning words out of context as “anaemic” (p. 56). This top-down method reduced both the non-teacher instructor and the student to being production tools, punishing the student by isolating her from a community of learning, and ignoring opportunity for L1 and L2 socio-cultural challenges and opportunities. Mainstream staff second-language professional development would help avoid misguided efforts.

At the time of collection, data showed that ESOL staff were much more pastoral with student participants than mainstream teachers. An ESOL presence in the school enabled participants to feel more accepted within school memberships. ESOL staff were often used as “brokers” (Wenger, 1998, p. 110) to assist entry. ESOL staff training, expertise and time with participant students, allowed them to perceive and attend to their needs much more fully. ESOL staff had more exposure to participant “whanau style family cohesion” (TG1 19), their behaviour in ESOL, mainstream classes and during free times. As a result, they were more aware of the way that their past linked to their present learning, and what helped them to learn. When students first arrived, ESOL staff perceived that they needed to be “stretched and reinforced sideways” (TG1 19) with extra ESOL, and receive patience and time from staff until they are ready to begin to talk in English. ESOL staff watched the students’ progress with care, worried about Nilu and Kaudani going through adolescent changes, or juniors Nilu and Kare reducing their agency. They took particular pleasure in supporting participants’ speech successes, and later encouraged students to merge into wider school contexts. Within mainstream classes, ESOL staff were well aware of participants’ reticence with mainstream teachers, the need for more student feedback and subject material going “over their heads” (TG1

19). ESOL staff tried to compensate by “asking the dumb questions” (TG1 19) themselves, but realised it was a learning journey for everyone. Overall, they saw that the mainstream management and staff lacked training, understanding of or interest in L2 learning. This was reflected in ESOL matters often being considered to be of low relevance and little clout, so they were side-lined as not relevant to mainstream teachers’ professional needs or concerns. ESOL staff observed that there should be more acceptance of the subtleties of diversity, and if this was improved, L2 students would have more learning opportunities. Overall, data highlighted a complicated gulf between RMB student participant learning needs, and mainstream teachers perceptions of their needs.

## Chapter Seven: Conclusions

From the outset, this enquiry has been moulded by the use of three research questions. These will be reviewed in this chapter, followed by the implications of this study for RMB students, their families and their educational providers. Finally, I will explain the limitations of the study and its contribution to second language research.

### 7.1. Research Questions Revisited

#### 7.1.1. Research Question One

*What are the aspirations and expectations of L2 Bhutanese students at a selected secondary school community in NZ?*

Data shows that participants have developed a remarkable degree of agency towards their English learning, which has enabled them to maintain a positive stance, even while experiencing the rigours of cultural adjustment and some inevitable disappointments, particularly in the early stages.

Their optimistic attitude has been bolstered by a clearly-defined commitment to first language and culture, as well as exactly appreciating the terms of their English involvement. Compulsory refugee camp school English and encouragement from their extended families provided support structures. The various social and educational ESOL services within the school allowed their aspirations to develop once on site.

There were some differences in the expectations among the twelve L2 participants. As younger ones experienced more of New Zealand, they developed greater confidence and ease than their older counterparts, but showed less drive to succeed academically. Senior female participants had much greater agency to achieve than senior males. Some more fluent participant speakers socialised well, but lost impetus, even if temporarily, with their academic progress. One participant was hampered from the first with L1 literacy.

### **7.1.2. Research Question Two**

*What barriers and facilitating factors do students perceive as affecting their learning?*

Some barriers to learning modified with time. Participants identified their initial barriers of emotional trauma through bereavement resulting from merging “present-past spaces” (Humpage, 2009, p. 75), learning new school curriculum and administrative systems and social patterns, while experiencing initial uncomprehending silence with New Zealand English. The difficulty of squeezing L2 learning into L1 learning timeframes was a further barrier. Issues such as speaking English with an understandable accent, and mastering spoken and academic vocabulary for each subject and level, were ongoing concerns. The need to maintain socio-cultural stability was a factor for younger students as they moved through adolescence and developed more facility with the local culture.

By far the greatest impact on participant learning came from their childhood influences, and L1 culture-related domains, which they continued to maintain in their new locale. The study has substantially identified participant learning as being rooted in their L1 socio-cultural identity, family values and behavioural patterns. These have given agency and imagined communities from which to uphold learning progress. New Zealand government-supported policies and practices have also enabled them to access learning through helpful ESOL friends, ESOL teachers, and individual mainstream teacher support.

### **7.1.3. Research Question Three**

*How did parents and teachers perceive students’ progress?*

Parents and mainstream teachers viewed participant student progress from opposite ends of a spectrum. Parents knew their backgrounds and aptitudes, but knew little about the New Zealand education system, and had little engagement with it. Parents expressed gratitude that the school had accepted the participants, and wanted staff to know that though they could provide conditions for homework and learning generally, they felt quite hampered by their lack of English. However, data showed that parents encouraged and



closely observed their children's academic success.

Mainstream teachers perceived participants as adding cultural diversity to classrooms, and being personally convivial but academically challenging. However, they had little time or training, or even inclination, to engage in professional development to help participants, or appreciate their personal journeys. Data showed that participants gravitated to staff and subjects where there was greater inclusiveness.

ESOL staff made both professional and some personal affiliations with participants, and saw and monitored their learning often. Staff were experienced in differentiation in classroom and tutoring to cater for different levels of learning, and juggle pastoral and academic care.

## **7.2. Implications of the Study**

This study has a number of implications for Bhutanese RMB students and their families, ESOL and mainstream teaching staff in secondary schools.

### **7.2.1. For RMB Students**

Students' implications largely centre on awareness of consequences of personal choices. A key factor is their understanding of the undeniable link between their socio-cultural identity and educational progress. L2 learning depends on a solid L1 sense of belonging on which to anchor the necessary changes and developments of identity. Participants need to maintain the web of diverse relationships at school, but prioritise first culture home-based support and L1 friendships first. Participants also need to understand that the limited adolescent years are an optimum time for formal educational achievement, that adult social legitimacy depends largely on academic success (Gearon et al., 2009, p. 7), and that "being literate is regarded as a means of access to empowerment and autonomy" (Myhill, 2009, p. 129), with socio-economic advantage and greater social cohesion (Ward & Liu, 2012). Educational success can also provide participants with a wider sense of imagined futures, expanded horizons, and greater confidence to participate in their various social contexts. While participants have a cognitive advantage of bilingualism over monolingual students (Cummins, 1989; Haworth, 2011), local peer pressure

persuasions, shown in the Vignettes, are perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of adolescent language investment, and can have problematic, far-reaching consequences for RMB learning.

Students also need to be fully aware of the language price of boundary maintenance with L1 gender values in the New Zealand setting. Female students can compensate for this with more emphasis on reading and friendships with other ESOL students to improve spoken English. Male students are encouraged to obtain wider local social inclusion and develop male friendship models with their sporting links, but they also need to compensate for the consequences of less time spent on written schoolwork.

RMB students can experience the benefits of supportive government refugee policies, but understand that there is mixed commitment for their realisation. RMB students are encouraged to retain agency and resilience in the competitive desire for school learning success, where they are already disadvantaged in comparison to monolingual classmates, for access to capital and resources. Alongside access to mainstream student academic, pastoral and peer structures, the benefits of any ESOL, bilingual or teacher-aide support can play a large part in participants' ability to diminish disparity to succeed, if they choose to take advantage of it.

Students can have a part to play in creating acceptance of multiculturalism. By taking careful advantage of opportunities to communicate about Bhutanese culture and use, RMB students can promote understanding and goodwill for wider future appreciation of diversity. With a willingness to share their first culture, RMB students can help enable local students and adults to develop knowledge and appreciation of the journey they have taken.

### **7.2.2. For RMB Parents**

RMB participant parents have a crucial role to play to support their children's learning. "Parental involvement is essential for the academic success of refugee children" (Frater-Mathieson, 2004, p. 34). Biddulph, Biddulph, and Biddulph (2003) noted: "Families with high levels of educational expectations have the most positive effects on their children's

achievement at senior school level” (p. iv). Apart from nurturing their children’s home life and providing homework support, some integration into the school culture is a distinct asset, in spite of possible language difficulties. As well, parental investment in both maintaining L1 and taking advantage of L2 government training initiatives (Ward & Liu, 2012) can enhance their children’s learning habits, and model bilingual skill management.

A number of practical steps can augment parent-staff links to help students gain confidence and a sense of legitimacy, through increased parental presence on the school site, such as with attendance at parent evenings, classroom observations or individual discussion about student progress with teachers. Parents may be employed at school as bilingual tutors. Cell-phone contact with ESOL staff and the absentee officer can provide daily access to monitor students’ attendance. Further careful parental integration into the school community by volunteering to join administrative or voluntary groups can encourage collaboration and share expertise. Parental support with school enterprises can open gateways for easier communication and trust with school communities.

### **7.2.3. For ESOL Staff**

One significant implication for ESOL staff is that they make full use of government RMB supports (see Appendix 18) to develop efficient teaching departments, with professional and educationally-sound initial testing, classroom programmes and assessments. Widespread use of teacher-aides and bilingual tutors is essential. Sobrun-Maharaj et al. (2008) named ESOL tutors as the “best response to the settlement of migrant refugee youth” (p. 85). Ministry of Education funding, advice, and website guidance is of significant professional benefit, particularly for initial documentation and testing. If there are enough RMB students using the same L2, bilingual information packs, web-based material or short films about the school, can be utilised for explanation and later reference. Meetings with ESOL staff, new RMB students and their parents, and relevant bilingual speakers can be used to assess, clarify good subject placements, and explain school systems. The Peer Support system and Duke of Edinburgh Award, common in New Zealand schools, can also be expanded to give RMB students supportive school buddies, whether bilingual or not, as Franken and McCormish (2003, p. 64) and van den Bergh (2007) suggest. Networking with other local ESOL teachers and with national

groups such as the Ministry of Education Refugee leaders, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority members, Ministry-funded cluster groups, and TESOLANZ organisations, can keep ESOL staff abreast of recent initiatives. Scholarships are provided annually for teachers to upgrade their tertiary academic L2 knowledge, while four ESOL advisors are available nationally for specialist school help (Ministry of Education, 2015f). Without a professional, proficient ESOL department, RMB students will likely be short-changed in their path to learning success, particularly in their early stages.

Another important implication for ESOL staff is that they should maintain a high degree of pastoral care for RMB students. The ESOL room is the pivot for this time-consuming but essential role, which can easily overlap into any non-contact time available. Support with administrative matters, classwork, extra tutoring and friendships helps create trust, open up student opportunities, and allow ESOL staff to implement relationships with RMB parents.

A more difficult role for ESOL staff is to become a liaison or “broker” (Wenger, 1998, p. 108) between RMB families and the mainstream staff, modelling trust and respect for diversity (Wilcox, 2012). Boske and Benavente-McEnery (2012) state that “building bridges between home and school is a critical step to educating racially, linguistically, economically, and culturally diverse students” (p. 80). This role is founded on visible support for refugees and ESOL staff by the school Principal, the “gatekeeper and facilitator for the use and integration of community” (Hamilton, 2004, p. 85), from which the mainstream staff take their lead. The ESOL staff broker can implement parent-staff gatherings, whole-staff RMB student workshops, bi-annual meetings of ESOL staff with grouped Heads of Department, and regular attendance in different subject areas’ department meetings. The use of resources on the refugee culture and individual families can enhance verbal explanations, while school procedures and documentation can be clarified to parents for easier communication. While these proposals require extra time and funds, they can help alleviate intercultural difficulties. In this way, diversity can be encouraged in fact, not just in government guidelines.

#### **7.2.4. For Mainstream Staff**

Mainstream teacher attitudes to RMB students in this study reflect, in part, the wider picture of New Zealand society's attitude to RMB individuals (See 1.3). My study shows that although mainstream teachers interviewed cheerfully accepted my participants in principle in their classes, lack of time and training and socio-cultural positioning attitudes are the main factors in actual accommodation of government policies for greater appreciation of diversity within the notion of "equity" (Ministry of Education, 2015d).

The key implication from the above is for wider professional development of mainstream staff, so that they can increase their professional aptitude with the growing number of multicultural students they will teach in future. Government support of professional development has been available as an opportunity, but with minimal uptake of scholarships. A better option would be for schools with a certain percentage of refugee students to have a quota requirement for more professional development on diverse cultures (Hamilton & Moore, 2004; Newton, Yates, Shearn, & Nowitzki, 2010). Both whole-staff education and individualised scholarships could be increased to help accommodate greater shift in the "legacy of subtractive bilingualism" (May, 2002, p. 7).

It would also benefit mainstream teachers if more time and funds were prioritised for increasing the links between them and the ESOL department. In this way, the opportunities suggested earlier to allow communication time between refugee parents, ESOL staff and mainstream teachers, would be activated more easily. These priorities could be integrated into existing school systems, such as within whole staff meetings, pastoral care initiatives, curriculum training and department meetings.

A further implication is for individual mainstream staff. Researcher observations and participant reflections both perceived that some mainstream staff were more supportive to them than others, and this affected RMB students' subject choice in the senior school. Hamilton (2004) has identified research that shows that teacher expectations influence their behaviours and relationships with students in classrooms. The minority ethnic group of participants in this study have had very different backgrounds from local students, so the capacity for teacher-led negativity toward them was heightened. Developing positive

relationships with RMB students and their parents can encourage greater acceptance. One student participant described a successful interaction between parent and teacher: “He said ‘Namaste’ and ‘How are you?’ to my dad in Nepali. Imagine how my dad felt, how good my dad felt” (Retro Gp P10).

Finally, as educators, both ESOL and mainstream staff are encouraged to create animated learning spaces that “actively challenge coercive relations of power in the wider society” (Cummins, 2003, p. 58) to lead all students into giving New Zealand a multicultural identity of which all of its inhabitants can be proud.

### **7.3. Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

It is important to acknowledge the cohort limitations of 12 Bhutanese students, aged from 12-20 years, which represent only one section of ESOL and ex-refugee students. They all came from one secondary school site in a provincial area of New Zealand, which distanced them from choices obtainable in schools of a different type, and in more populated centres. The cohort also included nine students from two main families, whether siblings or cousins, therefore this close cohort may have shown greater cultural cohesion than choice of other participants. These factors produced a very specific cameo of refugee resettlement, even though their accounts of resettlement patterns, family life and bilingual educational experiences do resonate with other ex-refugee research world-wide.

Further possible limitations centre on the age of the student participants and times of data collection. As adolescents, it might be assumed that they may have less openness and consistency in their accounts, due to variable daily mood changes or peer pressure. In fact, as a whole the students showed remarkable trust in the researcher, and were increasingly prepared to explore topics which highlighted their cultural attitudes. The timeframe of data collection over a full year, also allowed for participant clarification, realignment and pursuit of emergent material. Triangulation of data gave plentiful depth and scope to answer the questions established for this study.

The research locale created numerous complications. In the years previous to my

research, I had taught in the site school and managed the ESOL department, so I had the advantage of knowing the site, teachers, students and their families. I was privileged in that the Bhutanese community leader knew me and encouraged the Bhutanese parents and students to participate. Nevertheless there were limitations. My researcher presence as an observer of participants in class created a somewhat artificial atmosphere, and mainstream teachers responded watchfully. The number and voluntary selection process for mainstream teachers provided some limitation, as four mainstream staff who had enjoyed RMB students in their classes were available for interviewing. Other staff chose to be absent. In the participant parent interviews, seven fathers were present, and one silent mother; this cohort slanted responses. In the student interviews, there was inevitable researcher subjectivity in the need to “promote rapport” (Yeo et al., 2014, p. 202) with occasional personal comments. I had the dual role of students partially seeing me still as their teacher, as well as being the researcher; I also still had access to their authority figures of parents and present teachers. This created an age, “power and status differential” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 117) which was sometimes unevenly manifested. Finally, the transcription and coding of data was also dependent on my subjective choices, seen in the selection of highlighted material, topics, themes and eventual theories, though triangulation somewhat regulated this.

Methodological limitations included the use of time-heavy emergent theory design, with heavy emphasis on spoken data. Despite this, the interviews unearthed participants’ rich personal views of their history and cultural values.

#### **7.4. Future Directions**

This study adds to the very small collection of RMB adolescent research in New Zealand. On a personal level, perhaps the generosity of parent and participants might be rewarded by this analysis of their position, and even unearth some aspects they may not have been aware of. Institutionally, this study has highlighted the divergence between the well-researched policies and guidelines of the Ministry of Education, and the difficulties of local schools to implement them, either because of lack of time and funds, or the socio-cultural issue of competition for cultural capital, or indifference to RMB student needs. It is hoped that the research may discount any view of RMB students as being problematic

to New Zealand schools and awaken further interest and understandings of their journeys. These may in turn encourage ESOL and mainstream teachers, who have the often multifaceted responsibility for RMB students in New Zealand, to continue their vital support.



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**CoP:** Community of Practice

**BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

**CALP:** Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

**ELLP:** English Language Learner Progressions

**ESOL:** English for Speakers of Other Languages

**L1:** First Language

**L2:** Second Language

**LEAP:** Language Enhancing the Achievement of Pasifika

**LPP:** Legitimate Peripheral Participation

**L2T:** second language teaching

**MoE:** Ministry of Education

**NZ:** New Zealand

**NCEA:** National Certificate of Educational Achievement

**RMB:** refugee migrant background

**TESOL:** Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

**UNHCR:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: LOW-RISK ETHICS APPROVAL NOTIFICATION



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

18 April 2013

Geraldine McCarthy  
22 Ake Ake Avenue  
Palmerston North

Dear Geraldine

**Re: The Aspirations and Expectations of Second Language Nepali Students in a Selected New Zealand Community**

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 16 April 2013.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

**A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:**

*"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(s) named above are 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(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)."*

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)  
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and  
Director (Research Ethics)

cc Dr Gillian Skyrme  
School of Humanities  
PN 242

Dr Arianna Berardi-Wiltshire  
School of Humanities  
PN 242

Dr Kerry Taylor, HoS  
School of Humanities  
PN 242

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Massey University Human Ethics Committee  
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office

Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T +64 6 350 5573 +64 6 350 5575 F +64 6 350 5622  
E [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz) [animalethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:animalethics@massey.ac.nz) [gtc@massey.ac.nz](mailto:gtc@massey.ac.nz) [www.massey.ac.nz](http://www.massey.ac.nz)

## APPENDIX 2: NEPALI INVITATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANT PARENTS



Palmerston North

.....2013

विधार्थी: .....

अभिभावक: .....

सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेजमा हने नेपाली विधार्थीको अनुसन्धानमा भाग लिन निमन्त्रणा  
मेरो नाम Anee McCarthy (एनी मेकाथी) हो | सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेजमा ESOL (इसोल) विधार्थीसंग  
काम गर्दा देखीनै म नानीहरु किन सिक्छन् भन्ने जन्न उत्सुक थिए | म नेपाली विधार्थीहरुका  
चाहना र अपेक्षा जान्न चाहन्छु | विधार्थीहरुका धेरै स्कूले अनूभव बुझ्न चाहन्छु जुन कारण  
हामीले हाम्रा नानीहरुको पढाइको परिस्थिति बुझ्न हामी सबैलाई सजिलो हने थियो |  
म नेपाली विधार्थी र अभिभावकलाई यो अनुसन्धानमा भाग लिएर मलाई सहयोग गर्नु हुन विनम्र  
आग्रह गर्दछु | म यो पत्रबाट सबै नेपाली नानीहरु र अभिभावकहरुलाई सभा अनि तेस्पच्छी हने  
भोजमा भाग लीनहुन विनम्र आग्रह गर्दछु |  
कहाँ: सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेज कोठा C4  
कहिले : मे २९ २०१६  
समय : ५ बजे देखी ७ बजे सम्म  
आर्कोपाना मा सबै सूचना बिस्तृत रुपमा लेखिएको छ |

हजुरहरु सबै जना आइदिनु भएको खण्डमा म धेरै आभारी हने थिए | साथै सभामा आइदिनु भएको  
इन्धन खर्चरुपमा इन्धन भाउचार (Petrol Vouchers) पनि वितरण गरिने छ |  
यदी हजुर आउन चाहनु हुन्छ भने तलको इमेल ठेगानामा लेखनु होला | म सबैलाई सभामा देखन

चाहन्छु ।

भवदिया

श्रीमती Anee McCarthy

jerryanne@inspire.net.nz

नमस्कार,

मेरो नाम Geraldine Anne McCarthy हो र म तपाइलाई मेरो हालैमा हुदै गरेको MA लाई चाहिने अनुसन्धानमा सहयोग गर्न बिन्ती गर्दै छु । मेरो निवृत्त हुनु भन्दा पहिले म सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेजमा सन् २००६ देखी सन् २०१२ सम्म ESOL को शिक्षक थिए । परिणाम स्वरुप मलाई दोस्रो भाषा बोल्ने विधार्थीहरुका बारेमा जान्न धेरै इच्छा जाग्यो । यो साल म नेपाली विधार्थीको चाहना र अपेक्षालाई बिषय बनाएर पढाइ गर्दै छु । मलाई लाग्छ मेरो पढाइ र अनुसन्धानले विधार्थी र शिक्षकलाई पढाइ संबन्धमा थप मदत मिल्ने छ । म तपाइहरुलाई यो अनुसन्धान कार्यमा भाग लिन निमन्त्रण गर्दछु ।

म आहिले भएका सबै नेपाली विधार्थीहरु अनि एकजना स्कूल छोडी सकेका विधार्थीसंग अन्तर्वार्ता गर्ने छु । मैले लगभग १२ जना विधार्थीसंग वार्ता गर्ने सोच बनाएकी छु ।

मेरो पढाइलाई मेरो विश्वविद्यालयका दुइ जना वक्ता डा. Gillian Skyrme र डा. Arianna Bernardi-Wiltshire ले निरीक्षण गर्नु हुन्छ । तपाइहरु चाहनु हुन्छ भने वहा हरुलाई ०६-३५६९०९९ मा फोन गरी मेरो पढाइका बारेमा जान्न सक्नु हुन्छ ।

म, तपाई अनी तपाईका नानीहरुलाई सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेजमा आयोजना गरीएको स्वागत सभा र खानामा भाग लिन विनम्र बिन्ती गर्छु अनि तपाईलाई यो सालको अन्तरिक केन्द्रीय समूहमा पनि भाग लिनुको लागि विनम्र बिन्ती गर्दछु । यो दुई घण्टा जति लामो कार्यक्रम रहने छ । म तपाईका नानीहरुलाई यो साल भरिमा केही प्रश्नको उत्तर लेख्नन लगाउछु, सामूहिक प्रश्न सोध्छु अनि एक एक गरेर पनि प्रश्न सोध्छु । यो सबै काम सक्न जमा छ (६) घण्टा जति लग्ने छ अनि सबै काम सेन्ट पिटर्सको C4 कक्षा कोठामा हनेछ । मैले स्कूल परिवेस अनि कक्षा कोठामा पनि

नानीहरुको नरीक्षण गर्ने योजना बनाएकी छु । यसै क्रममा म केही शिक्षकहरु संग पनि अन्तर्वार्ता गर्नेछु ।

मलाई लाग्छ तपाईं यो योजनामा भाग लिएर आनन्द पाउनु हुन्छ अनी म सकेसम्म यो योजना रोचकिलो र मनोरन्जनात्मक बनाउछु । म तपाईं र नानीहरुलाई सेन्ट पिटर्स कलेजमा आउनु भन्दा आगाडीका अनुभवहरु अनि यहाँको पढाइ विषयमा सोध्छु । यदी तपाईंलाई कुनै प्रश्नको उत्तर दिन मन लागेन भने उत्तर नदिन पनि सक्नुहुन्छ । मैले श्रीमान दुलाल सम्पर्क ब्यक्ति र स्कूल सल्हाकार श्रीमती Zoving-Molloy र श्रीमान Dever-Tod लाई यो योजनामा सहयोग गर्ने भनेकी छु । यदी तपाईं वहाहरुसंग कुनै प्रश्न सोध्न चाहनु हुन्छ भने सोध्न सक्नु हुन्छ ।

जब म यो अध्यानलाई लेख्छु, म तपाईं र नानीहरुको सहि नाम लगाउदिन अनि तपाईंहरुको सूचना पनि गोपनीय रहने छ । म सबै अन्तर्वार्ताहरु रेकोर्ड गर्छु अनि प्रत्येकको प्रतिलिपि बनाउछु । तपाईंले चाहेमा जुनसुकै बेलामा पनि यो रेकोर्ड रोक भन्न अनि मैले बनाएको प्रतिलिपि संशोधन गर्न सक्नु हुन्छ । मेरो पढाइ समाप्त भैसके पछी तपाईंहरुलाई अनि शरणार्थी केन्द्रमा रहनु हने श्रीमान दुलाल ज्युलाई यो अनुसन्धको प्रमुख प्रतिलिपी पठाउन सक्छु । यदी यस विषयमा केही भन्न चाहनु हुन्छ भने मसंग खुलस्त भन्न सक्नु हुन्छ ।

यदी तपाईं लगायत नानीहरु सहित मेरो यस अनुसन्धानमा आउन मन्जुर हुनुहुन्छ भने मलाई अनुमति पत्रबाट अनुमति दिनुहोला । तपाईंसंग अरु कुनै प्रश्न भएमा मलाई सोध्न गाह्रो नमान्नु होला

यो योजनालाई कानूनी तवरबाट कम जोखिम भएको योजना का रुपमा मानिएको छ । फलस्वरूप यो योजनालाई विश्वविद्यालयको मानवीय आचार संहिता समिति योजनाले समिक्षा गरेको छैन । माथि उल्लेखित अनुसन्धानकारी यस अनुसन्धान योजनाको आचार संहिताको पूर्ण जिम्मेवार हुन् ।

तपाईंलाई यो योजना सम्बन्धी केही लागेमा र यस्मा . . . अरु कसै संग सोध्न आथवा बुझ्न चनाहू

भएमा तपाईंले प्राध्यापक John O'Neill, निरीक्षकलाई पनि सोध्न सक्नु हुन्छ | वहाको फोन नः  
063505249 र इमेल: [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)

भवदीय

Mrs. Anne McCarthy

### APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS



22 Ake Ake Avenue  
Palmerston North  
6.3.2013.

To the student(s).....  
and parents.....

#### AN INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH ABOUT NEPALI STUDENTS AT ST PETER'S COLLEGE

My name is Mrs. Anne McCarthy. Since working with ESOL students at St Peter's College, I have become interested in looking at why students learn. This year, I am studying the aspirations and expectations of Nepali students. I am hoping to learn more about your experiences at school because I think it will be an advantage for everybody if we better understand the learning situation for all our students.

I am inviting Nepali students and parents to become part of this enquiry into helping me understand your learning. I am sending this letter to invite all the Nepali students and their parents to a Nepali meal and meeting.

Where: in Room C4 at St Peters College

When: May 29th, Term 2, 2013.

What time: 5pm onwards

Length of Time: 1-2 hours

Details of the study are shown in the information letter attached.

I would very much appreciate it if you all could attend. Petrol vouchers will be provided at the meeting to cover the cost of your travel to the meeting.

Please email me if you are able to attend. I am looking forward to seeing you.

Regards,

Mrs. Anne McCarthy



## **APPENDIX 4: REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENT PARTICIPANTS**

To.....

Greetings. My name is Mrs Geraldine Anne McCarthy and I am writing to ask you to help me with research I am doing for my MA. I taught ESOL at St Peter's College from 2006 till last year, when I retired. As a result, I have become very interested in how second language students learn. This year I am studying the aspirations and expectations of Nepali students. I hope my study will help students and teachers understand more about the ways they learn. I am inviting you to become part of this research.

I want to interview all current Nepali students in 2013, and one retrospective student, no longer at the school. I hope to talk to about twelve students.

My study is supervised by two Massey university lecturers, Dr. Gillian Skyrme and Dr. Arianna Bernardi-Wiltshire, who can be contacted about this study if you wish, at 3569099.

I will ask you and your child (children) to come to a 'welcome' meal at St Peters College, then ask you to be part of a focus group of parents later on in the year. It will take about two hours. I will ask your child (children) to complete written questionnaires, group interviews and an individual interview during the year. This will take about six hours over the year, mostly during the homework times in the C4 classroom at St Peters College. I will also make observations around the school grounds and in some classes. I also hope to talk to some teachers as part of the study.

I hope you will enjoy taking part and I will try to make the process interesting and enjoyable. I will ask you and your child (children) about experiences before coming to St Peters' College, as well as about studying here. You will not have to answer my questions if you do not want to, and I have asked Mr. Dulal the liaison person, and school counsellors Mrs Loving-Molloy and Mr Dever-Tod, to help me with this project, so if you want to discuss any questions with them, you will be able to.

When I write about this study, I will not use your real name or your child's (children's) real name, so that both lots of information will be confidential. I will record all the interviews and write a transcription of each one. You can ask me to turn off the tape recorder at any time, and you can read the transcriptions that I write if you wish and make changes. I can also send you, and Mr. Dulal at the Refugee Centre, a summary of the results of the study when I have completed it. You are very welcome to discuss any ideas about this further with me, if you are concerned with anything above.

If you agree to join and join for your child (children), I will need your permission through a consent form.. Please do not hesitate to ask me any other questions, if you have them.

"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 John O'Neill, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 063505249, email: [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)".

Regards,  
Mrs. Anne McCarthy

## APPENDIX 5: REPRESENTATIVE CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS



### A. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

If I agree to participate, I have a right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer particular questions at any stage.

I agree/disagree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission. (The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).

I agree/disagree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to see and edit the transcripts or material from the questionnaires, interviews and observations.

I agree/do not agree to being observed in the school setting up to six times

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information sheet.

Signed.....Date.....

Full Name - printed.....

..

## APPENDIX 6: REPRESENTATIVE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

### STUDENT AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

**Please note:** If there is no response to this request within two weeks of you seeing it, it will be assumed that you agree to my use of the transcripts.

Signature: ..... Date: .....  
.....

## APPENDIX 7: CONSENT FORMS FOR MR HIMAL



### A. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR TRANSLATED WRITTEN MATERIAL

I.....

\*I agree to interpret written material provided to me by Mrs. Anne McCarthy

\*I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me

\*I will not make any copies of the interpreted material, or keep any record of them, except what is required for the project

### B. INDIVIDUAL LIAISON AND INTERPRETER CONSENT FORM

\*I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time

\*I agree/disagree to act as interpreter and liaison with the Nepali families concerned, at the meetings for this research

\*I agree/disagree to keep confidential all information concerning the project on the aspirations and expectations of Nepalese students at St Peters College, Palmerston North

\*I will not copy any information concerning the project.

### C. INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR MR DULAL

\*I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time

\*If I agree to participate, I have a right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer particular questions at any stage

\*I agree/disagree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission. (The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project)

\*I agree/disagree to the interview being sound recorded

\*I wish/do not wish to see and edit the transcripts of the parent interview or focus group material

\*I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information sheet.

### D. NEPALI PAIR FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

\*I have read the information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time

\*I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the focus group

\*I do/do not wish to see and edit the transcript or material from the focus group

\*I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information sheet

### NEPALI PAIR FOCUS GROUP AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

\*I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me

\*I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research

**Please note:** If there is no response to this request within two weeks of you seeing it, it will be assumed that you agree to my use of the transcripts.

Signature:.....Date:.....

## APPENDIX 8: PERSONAL PROFILE SHEET FOR STUDENTS



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

### PERSONAL DETAILS OF NEPALI STUDENTS

**Please note that answering this questionnaire shows consent and that you have the right to refuse. You also have the right to refuse to answer any specific items on this sheet.**

- What is your full name? .....
- Please circle whether you are male or female: M/F
- What was the date of your birth? .....
- What languages have you learnt so far, in your life? .....
- Please name the country where you were born: .....
- What date did you arrive in New Zealand? .....
- What is the full name of your parents? .....
- What date did your parents arrive in New Zealand? .....
- How many years have you been studying English? .....
- What class are you in at St Peter's College this year? .....
- May I have permission to copy your class timetable on Kamar? .....
- What is your contact phone number (home or cell)? .....

## APPENDIX 9: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANT STUDENTS



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHURŌA

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANT STUDENTS

Name:.....

1. What are the 6 most important things to have in a classroom that will help you learn best? You could choose things to do with: your moods and attitudes, other people in the classroom, the classroom materials, the weather, time of day, or other things. Draw the 6 most important things below:

2. What are the 6 worst things that stop you learning in the classroom? Draw the situation below:

3.Explain ONE really good experience that helped you to learn in the classroom that you remember from your past. Then explain WHY it was so good.


4. Explain ONE really bad experience that stopped you learning in the class room that you remember from the past. Then explain WHY it stopped you learning.


5. What are your plans for the future?


6. What things will help you achieve your plans?


7. What things do you think could stop you achieving your plans?


8. Complete the sentences below, and add other thoughts if you can. Here is an example:

I like to listen to the radio..... whenever I can, especially when I have free time walking home after school during the week. My favourite is a music programme for teenagers. My parents want me to listen to the radio less and talk to them, more.

a. Sometimes I get really..... in class when .....
b. I find it really .....to understand my teachers when.....
c. When I think of my school results, I think my chances are ..... because .....
d. When the teacher wants me to answer questions in class, I.....
e. I feel ..... if I ..... because my family expects me to do well as .....
f. In class, I avoid ..... because.....
g. Compare to the other students, I.....



h. In some classes I feel really ..... when.....
i. When I think about my old life and school in Nepal, I feel .....because.....
j. If I .....with my school work, it is/is not my responsibility because.....
k. I ..... to speak English/Nepali because.....

9. Respond to the sentences below by circling the best option, then making a comment, for example:

Qu. I listen to the radio each day - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never Ans. Hardly ever. I only listen to the radio when I have time after tea sometimes, because I am usually too busy.
---

a. I work in class every day - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
b. I need to achieve because I am new to this country - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
c. My parents want me to do well at school, so I try for them - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
d. I do extra school work when I have time, so that I can improve - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
e. I try to work well in class because this will help me achieve - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never

f.	The teacher makes a big difference to my learning - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
g.	If I like the students in my class, I learn better - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
h.	My Nepali school has helped me achieve here in NZ - true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never
i.	Sometimes I don't like speaking English in class – true, mostly true, usually true, hardly ever, never

Whiteboard Support:

<b>FEELINGS or WORDS YOU COULD USE</b>					
<b>Unhappy</b>	<b>satisfied</b>	<b>easy</b>	<b>difficult</b>	<b>Sad</b>	<b>happy</b>
<b>despairing</b>		<b>annoyed</b>	<b>Alone</b>	<b>cheerful</b>	<b>regretful</b>
<b>ashamed</b>	<b>proud</b>	<b>positive</b>	<b>negative</b>	<b>neutral</b>	
<b>OTHERS?</b>					
<b>For example: Sometimes I get really annoyed in class when the teacher ignores me because he/she don't make the effort to listen to my accent.</b>					

## APPENDIX 10: RESEARCHER OBSERVATION SHEET



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TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

**OBSERVATION SHEET FOR.....DATED:.....**

Student work response:
Student small group response:
Student whole class response:
Student teacher response:
Other:

## APPENDIX 11: INTERVIEW WITH BHUTANESE MALE ADULTS



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

### PAIR INTERVIEW WITH MR. HIMAL AND MR. PREM

Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. The contents of this interview and your identities are completely confidential to this research.

1. First, do you like to be called Bhutanese, Nepali or New Zealanders?

2. Please can you tell me about the story that led to refugees leaving Bhutan?

- your family leaving?
- Changes to their aspirations and expectations with school life
- about the Bhutanese schools
- about the refugee camp schools
- about NZ schools when you arrived here

Date	Event

3. How has the environment affected the Nepali students' desire to learn?

- In the past – culture, religion, moving
- Today
- Particular aspects good or bad

4. Can you tell me about the importance of parents in the Nepali students' attitude to learning?

- Responsibility of the student to the family and vice versa
- Wider family
- Siblings impact
- Practical help
- Affect of other NZ students

5. What do you think Nepali students need to learn in New Zealand schools?
  - Impact of language
  - socialisation
  - academic
  - sport
6. What aspects of STPC been really helpful for the Nepali families and their education?
  - ESOL
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Syllabus
  - Materials
7. Are there any changes that the school could make that would support Nepali students?
  - defining moments for your family that you learnt from
  - ongoing trends for Nepali students eg. wanting to earn, gender issues,
  - Ongoing barriers to learning eg fossilisation, health, employment issues
  - contrast with other NZ students and in future
8. Can you please give some advice to teachers who have Nepali students in their classes?
  - Bilingual
  - Socialisation
  - Other comments generally?

## **APPENDIX 12: PARTICIPANT STUDENT INITIAL FOCUS GROUPS**

### **INTERVIEW**



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

### **STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

- a. Student warm up:
  - a. Exercises
  - b. Running in a circle
  - c. Fruit Salad
- b. Focus Groups: 4 students in each group, and 3 groups, 3 tapes, using different rooms with an adult in each.
- c. Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. The contents of this interview and your identities are completely confidential to this research.
- d. Questions
  1. What advice would you give to a new Nepali student if they arrived next week?
    - Non-academic – cultural, social, uniform, town environment, sport, food
    - Academic- language, classroom, homework, teachers
    - Other?
  2. What do each of you want to get out of school? What is important to you?
  3. What are some important things that you have already learnt at St Peter's College?
  4. Please comment about the sorts of things that are very helpful to your learning?
    - Family
    - Teachers
    - Resources
    - Other?
  5. Please describe some things that make it difficult for you to learn.
    - language issues socially
    - classroom environment
    - Other?
  6. Would you like to comment about any other things about learning at school here that you haven't said yet?
  7. What do each of you want to get out of school? What is important to you? What future goals do you have and are you on track for those?

Thanks very much. The next meeting with you will be as individuals during the homework time during the rest of Term 3

## APPENDIX 13: STUDENT PARTICIPANT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUKOA

### STUDENT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. I need to say first that whatever you say in this interview and your name is completely confidential to this research.

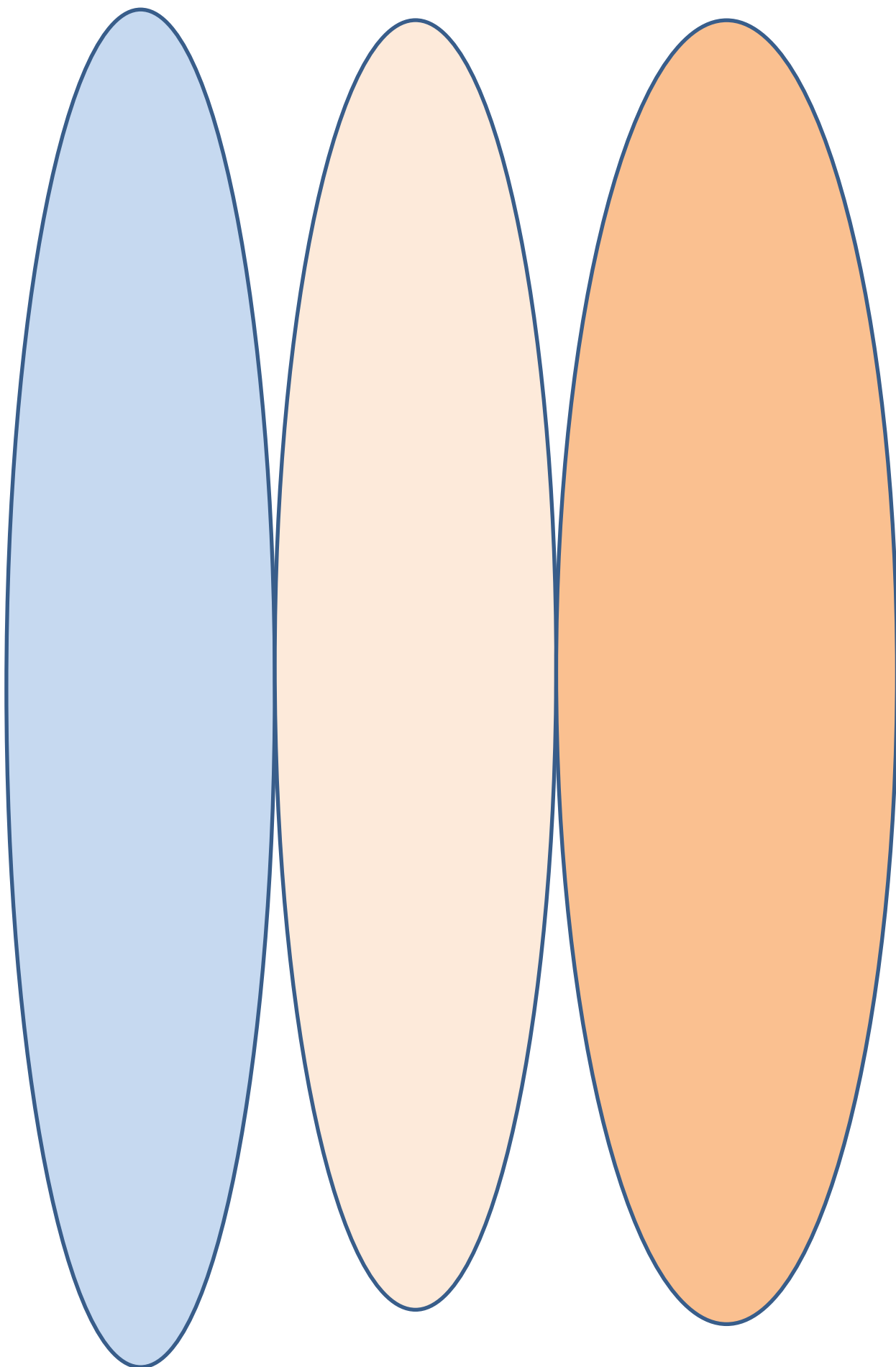
1. I read and listened to your focus group comments about what you think helped you to learn at school. Are there any RECENT situations when you felt really good about school? Eg.

- classwork
- friends
- teachers
- class environment
- other?

2. Is there anything that RECENTLY hasn't been very good for you at school?

- Language issues
- Distractions
- Missing out?
- Classmates
- Classroom
- other?

3. Now I would like us to make a diagram of your life so far – before St Peters, at St Peters, future. Would you talk about each of these stages and write down some key words as you do?





TERM ONE										
☺	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☹										
☹										
☹										
TERM TWO										
☺	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☹										
☹										
☹										

TERM THREE										
😊	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
😊										
😊										
😞										

4. Are there any ways that you could change these things that are not so good for you?
- Role of family members
5. Looking at the sheets, what are the biggest changes you have made with what you want out of school and your life, since coming to St Peters?

**EXTRA QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW**  
25.9.2013

**Main question:** What advice would you give a new Nepali student coming to STPC?

**Additional Sections to Questions:**

**For 1 on friends:**

- a. What are the benefits/disadvantages of having Nepali friends? What do they do to help you?
- b. What are the benefits/disadvantages of having kiwi friends? What do they do to help you?
- c. Can sport be used to make friends – boys and girls?
- d. How much do you want to belong to kiwi culture?

**For Qu 2 negative influences:**

Issue of time at school lost with sickness in camps and here; distractions; trajectory; hollow voice stages?

**For Qu 4 camp life:**

How much was your camp life an encouragement for you to do well in NZ? In what areas especially eg medicine, schooling, opportunities.

**For Qu 4 life in family:**

3. Do you see modelling in families as an important part of your choices, now and in the future?

**For No 5 changes**

What do you see as areas of success/conflict with the next generation of Nepali living in NZ? – following parents or community, living outside community for jobs, travel, mixed marriage, children?

**New 6.** What do you think when you see this picture of a teenage couple holding hands?

## APPENDIX 14: STUDENT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCENARIOS



1. Raju is in Year 7, and has just arrived in New Zealand. He has very little English, so is silent in front of local students. At home he speaks Nepali. However, he is very good at maths. Some local students have asked him to sit with them in class, but he is afraid he will be teased or his Maths work copied, because he has realised these local students are not good at Maths.
2. Ashmi is in Yr 10, and she has been in New Zealand for six months. She has repeatedly caught the flu since arrival in New Zealand, and also has had painful stomach pains. She is concerned about losing out at school because of her absences.
3. Amita is a Yr 11 Nepali girl who has been in New Zealand for two years. She is outgoing and talkative, and has made friends with other Nepali as well as local students. Recently a New Zealand boy has been talking to her, and asked her to go to MacDonald's with him.
4. Manu is a shy Nepali Yr 8 student who has been in New Zealand for 6 months. He is afraid of looking at New Zealand teachers or asking them for help. Recently he has asked other Nepali students to ask for him. When his teacher asks about his work, he always says he is fine.
5. Tarana is a Yr 8 Nepali student in a New Zealand school. She was good at running and soccer in the camps, and has joined the girls' soccer team at her New Zealand school. However, she is spending a lot of time with her soccer friends and her school work is not as good as her family expects.

## **APPENDIX 15: RETROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW**



### **RETROSPECTIVE MEETING WITH NEPALESE STUDENTS**

Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. The contents of this interview and your identities are completely confidential to this research. I hope you have had a lovely break over the holidays and you are positive about this year.

a. Focus Groups: 2 groups, 2 tapes, same groups as before.

#### **Questions**

1. I have been looking at your speaking journeys, and also the areas which affect your identity, family friends and community, which indirectly affect your learning. As a teacher I had very little awareness of this, so it has been a really good learning experience for me.

What do you think of these thoughts – feel free to make any comment.

2. Do you think you have gone through any changes in the way you learn, or your attitude to learning, in the last year? Please explain.

- Grades
- Changes of subject or teacher
- Different attitude to locals
- More focus on what you want in the future

3. Now that you can look over 2013, has anything become better at all with what you want to learn from school? Has there been any experiences that have caused this?

4. Have there been any increase of any difficulties that are outside your control?

5. Please explain how your experiences of talking with your parents about school have affected you.

6. Have your attitudes to, and relationships with your teachers, changed over the year, so that your learning in that subject is changed? eg. subject choices

7. Please describe your plans for next year and further.

8. Thanks very much. You have been a great audience throughout the year. Best wishes for the future in anything you have chosen to do.

## APPENDIX 16: PARENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW



### FOCUS GROUP MEETING WITH PARENTS

Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. Everything in this interview and your names are completely confidential to this research.

1. What would you like your children to learn from being at St Peters?
2. Have there been any special experiences, so far, that you think has been very helpful?  
Please take the time to explain.
  - In class
  - Homework
  - At home
  - Free time
  - With sport
2. Would you like to explain any difficulties to do with language, culture, being a teenager, or any other
  - Solutions or still there
3. Do you have any thoughts about the ways schooling is different here from Nepal ?
  - Culture
  - speaking
  - Teenage behaviours and friendships
  - Gender changes
  - Westernisation with IT
  - Sport
4. What improvements would you like to see at the school to help your children more?
5. What are some ways that you use to encourage your children with their schoolwork and achievement?
  - Parent's advice
  - Influence of other family members
  - Siblings helping each other
  - Similarities/ differences between children and parents
  - Speaking
  - Becoming like a kiwi teenager
7. Have the younger family members adapted more easily? Please give examples.
8. What future would you like to have for your children individually?

## APPENDIX 17: REPRESENTATIVE TEACHER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW



### TEACHER FOCUS GROUP MEETING

Thank you for agreeing to have this interview. The contents of this interview and your identities are completely confidential to this research. Your names will be coded.

1. Please name the Nepali students that you teach or have taught.
2. Do you have any general comments about having Nepali students in your classes?
3. Are there any experiences this year where the students have achieved/not achieved?
4. What are the difficulties about having Nepali students in the classroom?
  - solutions
5. Are there any situations where you can engage them in using their past experiences to share with the class?
6. Are there any particular methods that you use with them to help them with their work?
  - links with classmates
7. Have their expectations changed during the year in your view, and can you account for this?
8. How can the school system or the ESOL department become more helpful to them, in your view?
9. How can individual teachers be more helpful to the Nepali students when they are in their class?

## **APPENDIX 18: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WEBSITES**

The New Zealand government, through the Ministry of Education, (Ministry of Education, 2015e) provides documents for RMB students and teachers. Their website information is summarised

below:

1. An overview of New Zealand education (Ministry of Education, 2015d).
2. ESOL Department structures (Ministry of Education, 2003b) and administration.
3. The Refugee and Migrant team for any RMB referral (Ministry of Education, 2015).
4. Refugee Handbook for Schools (Ministry of Education, 2003b, 2015f).
5. RMB funding (Ministry of Education, 2013, 2015b).
6. Curriculum needs (Ministry of Education, 2015d), the English Language Learner Progressions (ELLP) with supporting documentation (Ministry of Education, 2015a), curriculum updates (Ministry of Education, 2015c), also material at <https://www.tki.org.nz/>.
7. ESOL teacher professional development and scholarships (Ministry of Education, 2015f, 2015g), plus a very practical and successful emailing service for ESOL communication ([esolonline.org.nz](http://esolonline.org.nz)).
8. Parent-school initiatives: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/parents.aspx>.
9. Research: at “Education Counts” (<http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/home>).