

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

**PERSPECTIVES ON  
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS  
FOR ADULTS IN CALGARY**

By

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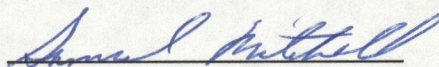
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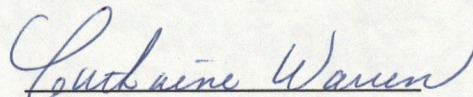
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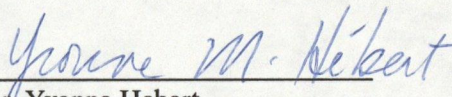
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Perspectives on English As a Second Language Programs For Adults in Calgary," submitted by Yasmin Aziz Hassam, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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## **ABSTRACT**

The need for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction has gained momentum in Canada during the past two decades, especially with the advent of the "boat people" in the 1970s and an increase in new immigrant arrivals from third world countries.

This thesis is a study of ESL programs in the Calgary setting. Its major objective is to present an overview of the programming scene, as currently practiced, from three major perspectives -- a policy perspective, a program delivery perspective and a program recipient perspective. Through these perspectives, insights are gained into the major issues, trends and developments in the ESL setting. The policy perspective highlights the existing policy and weaknesses within it, creating problems and difficulties for program deliverers as well as program participants. Program delivery perspectives highlight the thoughts, ideas and suggestions of program deliverers and delineate the major characteristics and workings of programs that have evolved as a result of the government's policy. The program recipient perspective offers the participants' perceptions of their quest for second language instruction. Through these perspectives, the areas of major problems and difficulties in ESL can be ascertained, paving the way towards a consideration of changes that can be incorporated to create a more effective programming base in Calgary.



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## DEFINITION

Within the context of this thesis, the term *TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE* refers to the "teaching of English ... to immigrants who are speakers of other languages" (Stern, 1983:16). The acquisition of English as an official language in Western Canada is needed by new immigrants "for full participation in the political and economic life of the nation" (Paulston, cited in Stern, 1983:16).

## ABBREVIATIONS

ATA	-	Alberta Teachers' Association
ATESL	-	Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language
AVC	-	Alberta Vocational Centre
AVT	-	Alberta Vocational Training
CAESL	-	Calgary Adult English As a Second Language
CCIS	-	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
CEIC	-	Canada Employment and Immigration Commission
CIAS	-	Calgary Immigrant Aid Society
CILT	-	Citizenship Instruction and Language Textbooks
CIWC	-	Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
ESP	-	English for Specific Purposes
EWP	-	English in the Workplace
IVLRC	-	Immigrant Vocational and Language Referral Centre
SAIT	-	Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
SFB	-	Student Finance Board
SLTP	-	Settlement Language Training Program
TESL	-	Teaching of English as a Second Language
TOEFL	-	Test of English as a Foreign Language



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Canada is a "nation of immigrants". A variety of language groups comprise the mosaic of Canada's demographic make-up. A dramatic shift since the 1960s in the Canadian immigration scene has seen an increasing number of new Canadians from third world countries, many of whom lack a knowledge of the official language. The presence of a large number of people whose language and culture is distinctly different from that of the host country presents a formidable challenge. The Canadian government is committed to multiculturalism, yet, this cannot come about unless the new Canadian is given an opportunity to integrate and become a productive member of his/her country of adoption. Increasingly, the acquisition of the official language is critical to the new Canadian's well being and degree of adaptation to his new environment.

Efforts have been made at the government level to assist the new immigrant with the settlement and adaptation process, a major component of which is the acquisition of English as an official language. Sources of funding have been made available to various institutions to offer English as a Second Language instruction, however, while great strides have been made within the last ten years in providing access to ESL instruction to as many New Canadians as possible, the entire process is at a developmental stage. There remains the need to assess and evaluate the current situation and explore new avenues that allow more effective planning and delivery of ESL programs.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study attempts to give an overview of the ESL situation in Calgary and considers the issues involved from three major perspectives, namely:

- a. A policy perspective which highlights the government's response to the second language education of new immigrants;
- b. A program delivery perspective which offers insights into the delivery of ESL programs under the two major delivery systems at the full-time as well as part-time levels;
- c. A program recipient or new immigrant perspective which focuses on the ESL students' quest for second language instruction.

Through the above perspectives, the ESL scene, as it exists today in the Calgary setting, is explored highlighting issues, trends and developments which are deemed important by major stakeholders in the ESL arena. Clearly, the effectiveness of ESL programs in Calgary is curbed by a second language instruction policy that has created problems for those engaged in program delivery as well as for program participants. (Canada. The Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988. The Abella Report, 1984). The perspectives offered by major stakeholders highlight problem areas which cause concern, and these can be used as springboards to effect meaningful change in areas that require it.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative approach has been used to enhance understanding and interpretation of the ESL setting that would offer insights, explanations, ideas and suggestions on the second language training of new immigrants. While quantitative materials were used to some extent to reinforce the concepts that were emerging, it was felt that a dependence on quantitative materials could not adequately highlight the perceptions, beliefs, feelings and ideas of the major stakeholders.

The organizing framework for the study is through "perspectives". Becker, Geer and Hughes (cited in Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox, 1975) conducted studies on aspects of college life from the students' viewpoint on the basis that "if we

do not see it as they do - as a dense network of social relationships, institutional demands and constraints, and temporarily connected contingencies - we will not be able to understand what they do" (p. viii). According to the authors, components of the "perspectives" framework incorporate stakeholders' actions as well as their stated ideas accompanying those actions and include:

- a. Definition of the situation - in terms of how the major stakeholders view their world and what degree of importance they give to various features of the area that they come across;
- b. The actual activities that stakeholders engage in within the context of their situation;
- c. The criteria by which they judge their situation.

Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox (1975) incorporated these concepts in their study of Urban ABE programs. They justified their use of "perspectives" as an important component of their study, stating:

It seemed particularly critical to see what was happening from the point of view of ABE students because efforts to improve the program depend on improving their performance. We wanted to know how students see the program, themselves in it, the teachers and other students; why they feel they are there; what they think is in it for them; what they feel they must or can do in it; and their perceptions of incentives and constraints.

(Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox, 1975:viii).

The above ideas and concepts were used to reach an understanding of the current ESL scene in Calgary. It was important to ascertain how the ESL question is viewed by policymakers and those who deliver the programs. It was particularly crucial to discern how the program recipients view the programs that are offered to them. Through these perspectives, a greater understanding of the ESL scene can be reached, leading to a pinpointing of major problem areas in the ESL area and the development of a knowledge base which can be utilized to effect changes necessary towards establishing a more effective programming base in ESL.



Chapter 2 looks at a policy perspective against a background of Canadian immigration management and attempts to ascertain the nature and format of the government's policy on the second language training of new immigrants. It also outlines the division of responsibility for program formulation and implementation and brings into focus the complexities inherent in the management of second language training, highlighting the problems and difficulties created by the existing policy for program deliverers and program recipients.

Chapter Three considers full-time program delivery by the Alberta Vocational Centre from the perspectives of those engaged in program formulation, planning and delivery, to gain an essence of how the program is organized and how it functions, what factors are deemed important by program deliverers, what problem areas are encountered, what yardsticks of student evaluation are used, what happens in the classroom setting, etc.

Chapter Four offers an insight into the part-time programming setting, through the perspectives of those engaged in its delivery. A major focus is on highlighting program characteristics, outlining program offerings and pinpointing gaps that exist in the present delivery system. A comparison of part-time program delivery with the full-time program, especially in the context of formal and non-formal program approaches is used to provide a vivid contrast that brings into focus the diverse nature of existing ESL program delivery. The dynamics that operate within the ESL program delivery setting bring to light the extent of co-operation and competition between delivery institutions.

Chapter Five offers a program recipient or new immigrant perspective, with a focus on where the students come from (in terms of their experiences), why they feel they are there, what they hope to get from participating in the program, what obstacles they face, what their program perceptions are, etc.

Chapter Six attempts to tie in the preceding chapters, with a consideration of concepts and ideas within which the ESL setting must be viewed if greater program effectiveness is to be attained. The dynamics that operate within a framework of divergent perspectives are highlighted and a greater merging of perspectives is seen to be a prerequisite to effective programming. A look at the ESL question within a framework of Canada's multicultural policy is also considered essential for the formulation of future policy initiatives in ESL, especially in view of the assimilatory nature of the current stance. A consideration of ESL as a marginality area gives emphasis to the peripheral position it occupies in the political as well as the educational context. The flaws in ESL programming are highlighted and recommendations made, incorporating as well as expanding upon TESL Canada's (1982) recommendations in the "Six Principles".

## **RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

The information obtained has been collected through a variety of sources:

1. Interviews with major stakeholders, including government representatives, program planners and practitioners at institutions involved in ESL program delivery, as well as settlement workers and voluntary agency counsellors who deal with new immigrants on a day to day basis.
2. Interviews with students, at times through first language interpreters.
3. Classroom observations at institutions involved with both full-time as well as part-time program delivery. Approximately 25 classes were visited at various levels at AVC, YWCA, the Arusha Centre, the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic Board.
4. Analysis of documents from stakeholders as well as public government documents.

5. Literature and research in articles and books to provide a base against which the happenings in the ESL setting could be viewed.

### **THE PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY**

This study does not purport to be a definitive treatment of the subject in question. The study has been confined to a consideration of ESL programs at a basic level, and second language education offered at more academically oriented institutions, such as Mount Royal College, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and the University of Calgary, has not been included. Also, the study has focused primarily on new immigrants who need to access ESL programs provided through the two major delivery systems, based on full-time delivery under the Canadian Jobs Strategy program and part-time delivery under the Citizenship Instruction and Language Textbook (CILT) Agreements through Further Education. Canada Employment and Immigration Commission's (CEIC) recent initiative under the Settlement Language Training Program has also been considered. However, new immigrants with independent resources who find their own way into more academic second language training programs have not been included. In addition, while an attempt has been made to give an overview of the ESL programming scene through perspectives of the major stakeholders, the study has been limited to those issues, trends and developments that were deemed important and emphasized by the stakeholders.

The above study is an exploratory one, encompassing a broad area. It can only serve as the first step in gaining tentative insights and ideas in an area that is beginning to attract greater attention. From an overall understanding of the forces that operate in the ESL area generally, further in-depth research into specific areas of interest can be conducted.

## CHAPTER 2

### A POLICY PERSPECTIVE

Language constitutes "one of the primary forces of cultural recognition" (Taplin, 1987:6) and is a vital means of relating to others in society. For new immigrants, acquisition of the host language is a critical factor in their ability to integrate successfully into mainstream society, a factor which has been acknowledged by linguists who recognize the interrelationship between host language acquisition and sociocultural adjustment (Kleinman, 1982). Referring to the refugee population, Kleinman states that this interrelationship takes the form of interdependence, which when properly managed can "impel the refugee expeditiously towards the goal of self sufficiency" (p 239). Poorly managed, it can lead to frustration and immobilization.

In Canada, while the importance of second language training is recognized, its management has been dependent upon the formulation of policy at the government level. The priority accorded this area, measured through funding provisions made at the federal and provincial levels of government, has influenced the structure and nature of the resultant second language delivery system.

This chapter attempts to look at second language training programs through a policy perspective which can best be understood against a background of immigration management in Canada. The scope of the problem in second language training is delineated through the presentation of statistical evidence for Canada as a whole as well as for Alberta. The government's response to the ESL question is outlined through a consideration of its policy which has led to a fragmentation of service. The difficulties that have resulted from the structure and nature of the

government's second language policy are highlighted, with a special focus on the cancellation of the CILT Agreements (announced with the Federal Budget of April, 1989).

## **IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION MANAGEMENT - BACKGROUND**

Immigration has always been a factor of Canadian life (Ferguson, 1974). "The facts of Canadian geography, her immense, undeveloped natural resources and increasing industrial strength suggest that immigration will continue to play a vital role in national development" (Hawkins, 1988:355). In 1981, Canada had a foreign born population that reached almost 4 million or 16 percent of the total population (Canada. CEIC, 1987b:5).

Population trends over the last two decades have caused concern to demographers who suggest that immigration will have an even more significant impact on the future of Canada. The combination of a declining birth-rate and the reality of low net immigration levels could lead to a decline in the Canadian population shortly after the turn of the century (Canada. CEIC, 1987a). A study of Canadian demography by Anatole Romaniuk (cited in Hawkins, 1988:383) portrays the importance of immigration to Canada's future population growth when he postulates:

The current regime of low fertility, and the consequent ageing and slowdown of growth in the Canadian population are creating an historically new situation which may affect immigration strategies. Indeed, if the fertility rate<sup>1</sup> does not increase substantially and if population growth is a national goal, then large-scale immigration is clearly the alternative.

(p. 383).

Another significant population trend on the Canadian scene is a dramatic shift in the source countries from which new immigrants arrive. During the earlier waves of immigration, "more than 6 in 10 came from Europe" (Warren, 1986). While a mere 7.9 percent of immigrants arrived from countries other than Europe

and U.S.A. in 1956-1962, this increased to 59.7 percent in 1977-1984. Conversely, the proportion of immigrants from Europe declined from 83.8 percent of the total to 31.18 percent of the total (Beaujot, 1988).

New immigrants from third world countries include a sizeable portion of refugees. Canada, for humanitarian reasons, has accepted more than 400,000 refugees since the Second World War. During the Indo-Chinese "boat crisis" (1980), 60,000 refugees were brought to Canada and in 1987, 22 percent of all immigrants to Canada were refugees (Alberta. Career Development and Employment, 1988b). Thus, the character of Canadian immigration has changed in the last two decades and has become, in a more significant way, a multiracial and multinational movement (Hawkins, 1988), looking increasingly to the third world countries as source countries for its new immigrants.

Given the importance of immigration, the degree to which New Canadians adapt themselves successfully to their country of adoption and become an integral part of the mainstream flow of society is an important consideration. Not only is this process important to the New Canadians themselves, but the extent to which they succeed in the resettlement process is also a reflection of the extent to which Canadian society provides opportunities for the newcomers. A journalist, concerned over the future of new immigrants who arrive on Canadian shores, urged that:

...it is useless letting them in and then dumping them, once we pat ourselves on the back for our humanitarian motives. The minister<sup>2</sup> should think more about the other end of the process--learning a language, getting a foothold, expectations and education. And solutions to a lot of these problems lie with other levels of government e.g. education with the province and social services shared with the City.

(Howse, 1985:A8)

The process of adaptation and settlement is far thornier to resolve than the initial act of letting new immigrants into the country. Especially, a lack of knowledge of the official language poses a stumbling block which is difficult to surmount. For some new immigrants, "...learning a new language is even more

difficult than escaping from Vietnam by boat" (Diep, 1982:65), but without a knowledge of English, their ability to participate fully in Western Canadian society is largely curtailed. Many new immigrants who have been in Canada even for a decade or so, are merely able to function in English at a survival level or less, and with increasing levels of immigration, the problem could become more acute. An appreciation of the extent of the problem, through a statistical profile, is essential before other issues can be addressed.

### **SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM**

An average of 43 percent of new immigrants who arrive in Canada in a given year during the past decade, have had no knowledge of English or French. Appendix A illustrates that refugees<sup>3</sup> are less likely to be able to speak one of Canada's official languages than Family Class or Independent Immigrants (Canada. Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988). In Alberta, as the intake of new immigrants to the province has increased, so has the proportion of new immigrants who do not speak English. According to the 1986 census for Alberta, 368,000 (15.7 percent) of the 2.3 million people in the Province were born outside Canada. In Calgary, the percentage of foreign born residents is 20 percent (Alberta. Career Development and Employment, 1988b). In 1987, 11,455 new immigrants were destined for Alberta, of whom a majority came from Asia and the Pacific Rim countries (Appendix B). The number of immigrants from Hong Kong almost tripled between 1986 and 1987. Appendix B also shows that while Canada as a whole received 37.6 percent of its immigrant population for 1987 from Asia, Alberta received a higher proportion (56.1 percent) of its new immigrants from that source. Consequently, while in Canada generally, the proportion of non-English speakers has remained constant, in Alberta it has increased steadily from 40 percent in 1982 to 53 percent in 1983 and 61.4 percent in 1984. Among refugees in recent years,

approximately 85 percent had no knowledge of English prior to arrival (Alberta. Career development and Employment, 1988b). Also, according to the above source, many immigrants who are listed in the statistics as having a knowledge of English, require further instruction before they are able to function in a workplace setting. The problem is further compounded by a backlog of new immigrants who arrived prior to 1987 and received little or no instruction in English as a Second Language. Their numbers contribute significantly to the sizeable portion of new immigrants with an inadequate knowledge of the official language. Appendix D gives an estimate of the backlog.

While the importance of second language training has been acknowledged by the government and the scope of the problem realized, the formulation of policy regarding language training, the availability of funding and the implementation of second language training for new immigrants at the government level has been influenced by a complex mechanism derived at through a process of negotiation and interaction at the various levels of government. Essentially, the second language training of new immigrants is one of twelve components of immigration management (Hawkins, 1988) which fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government. The government's perception of immigration management at the federal and provincial levels has had a direct impact on immigration resettlement. In Hawkins' view, Canada has no settled view of immigration which, as an area of public policy, has evoked conventional support but little enthusiasm. "The absence of firm conviction about immigration in Canada has led to great uncertainty in its management and considerable difficulty in its operation" (Hawkins, 1988:35).

Under the British North America Act of 1897, immigration has been designated as a shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments. In practice, right through to the 1950s and 1960s, "the management of immigration, in all its essential features, has been an exclusive federal concern" (Hawkins,



1988:197). Provincial disinterest in immigration was reflected in its willingness to accede to federal leadership, and although the federal government carried out a small degree of consultation with the provinces, it did so almost reluctantly. According to Hawkins, the consequences of exclusive federal management of immigration have led to:

- a. A lack of national interest in immigration;
- b. A weak service for new immigrants, with little agreement between the various levels of government on who should provide and pay for services. Basic services required by new immigrants, e.g. language and skills training, etc. fall very largely within provincial jurisdictions, therefore, the question as to who should pay for these services has not been adequately explored.
- c. A lack of knowledge and expertise in immigration management at the provincial level.

In Hawkins' view, despite its strong control over immigration, the federal government, through its Department of Manpower and Immigration created in the 1950s, "is still very unclear about its objectives and responsibilities in the management of immigration in Canada, therefore, the Department has thus far been unable to give the leadership and drive in immigration in Canada which it has undoubtedly given in the manpower field" (Hawkins, 1988:197). According to Hawkins, Canada does not have a strong history of cordial federal/provincial interaction. While there has been a certain degree of interaction on the second language training of new immigrants since the 1950s, as there has been in other areas of resettlement and adaptation of new immigrants (e.g. The Canadian Jobs Strategy initiative), this has mostly been necessitated by provincial jurisdiction over education and educational facilities. Hawkins states that the fundamental pattern of federal/ provincial relations remains unchanged.

This pattern of federal/provincial interaction, as well as the characteristics of immigration and immigration management, have influenced the second language training of new immigrants in Canada. The existing policies and funding mechanisms set up at the government level affect the delivery of second language programs for new immigrants in Calgary and profoundly affect the type of service that is available for the new immigrants who seek second language instruction.

### **GOVERNMENT POLICY ON ESL**

Canada does not have a national, articulated policy on the language training of adult new immigrants although a Federal government document acknowledges the second language education of new immigrants as "one of the key areas of basic needs in immigrant settlement and integration and an important aspect of Canadian citizenship" (Canada. CEIC and Secretary of State, 1983:3). Responsibility for such training at the federal level is shared between two departments, namely, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) and the Department of the Secretary of State (Figure 1 outlines the involvement of government departments at the federal and provincial levels). By a formal agreement made in 1966 by the two Departments:

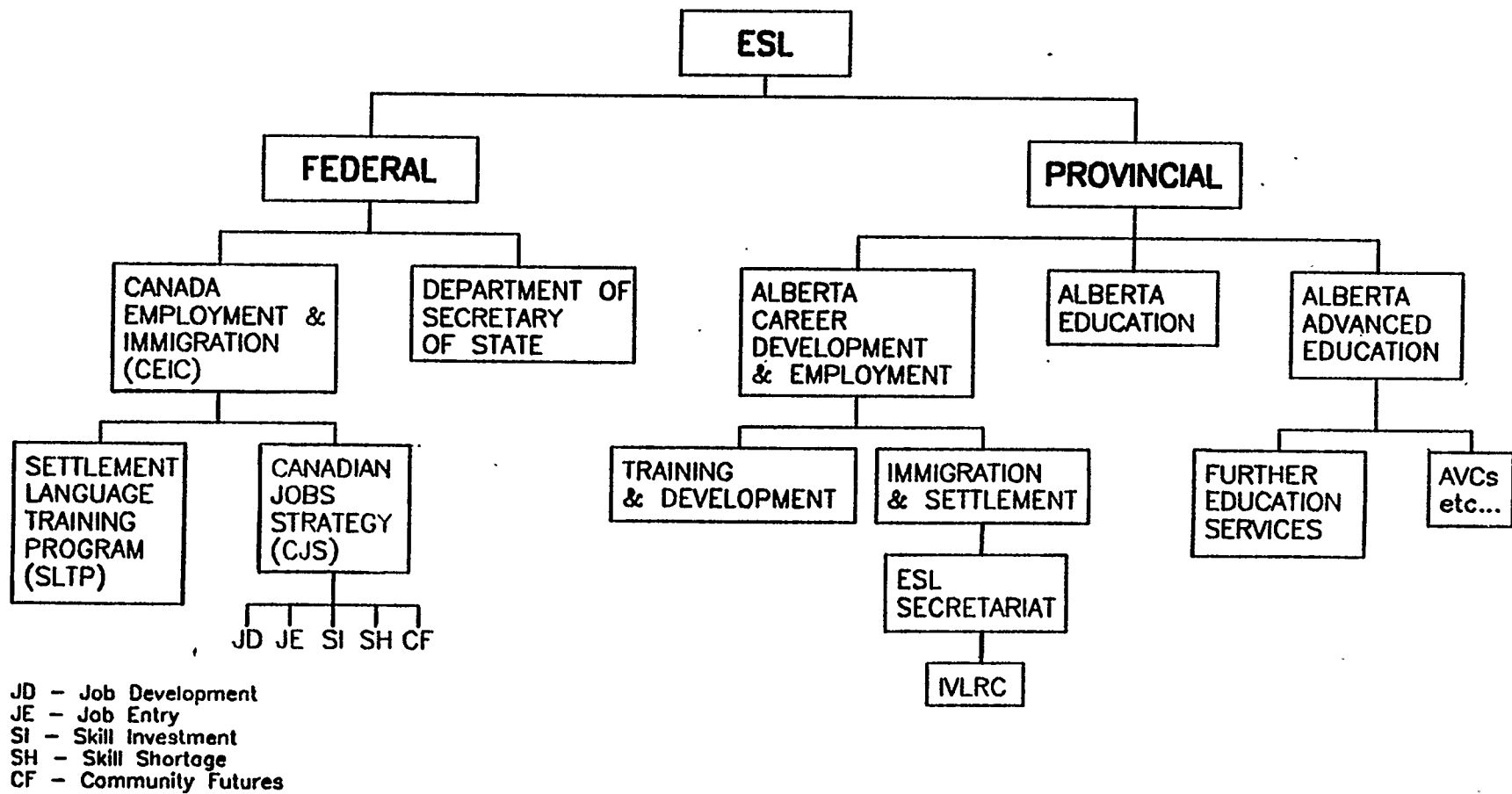
It was agreed that responsibility for all matters pertaining to the reception and the initial settlement of immigrants would rest with the CEIC, while the responsibility for the social, political and cultural integration of immigrants would rest with the Department of Secretary of State.

(Canada. CEIC and Secretary of State, 1983:1).

At the federal level, mandates for the shared responsibility for second language training are found in the Canadian Citizenship Acts of 1946 and 1976, the Multiculturalism Policy of 1971 and the National Training Act of 1982. According to the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, would be citizens were required to have "an adequate knowledge of either the English or the French language ...and of the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship" (Canada. CEIC and

FIGURE 1

## ESL – INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AT THE FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL LEVELS



Secretary of State, 1983:3). The multiculturalism policy adopted by the government in 1971 provides that "the government will continue to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of Canada's official languages in order to become full participants in Canadian society" (Canada. CEIC and Secretary of State, 1983:1). Under the National Training Program (now superseded by the Canadian Jobs Strategy Program), adult new immigrants can be enrolled into an appropriate occupational training course that will increase their chances of accessing suitable employment. In this context, language training is regarded as occupational training within the meaning of the National Training Act whereby a knowledge of English or French is essential for the purpose of employment.

Because education comes under provincial jurisdiction, federal responsibility for the second language training of new immigrants is discharged by the provinces, an arrangement which has necessitated an increasing level of interaction between the federal and provincial governments and created a situation whereby the effective delivery of second language instruction is dependent on provincial stance and cooperation.

At the provincial level, while there exists a language education policy for Alberta (announced in November, 1988) its provisions are mostly geared towards the K-12 setting and operationalized by Alberta Education. The question of second language training of adult new immigrants falls under Alberta Advanced Education and is looked at within the general context of continuing education provision for adult Albertans. A government document (effective April, 1988), states that its policy, guidelines and procedures "will facilitate involvement in further education by adult Albertans and encourage systematic inter-agency communication, co-operation and co-ordination in the provision of learning opportunities for adults" (Alberta. Advanced Education, 1988:1). Specific policy guidelines on ESL are not outlined in the document, except for references which define ESL as "...courses

intended to provide basic proficiency in English ...as a second working language" and that such classes are "...expected to have New Canadians as students", ensuring that students are taught "by persons with qualifications such as a valid teaching certificate issued by the Alberta Education or other qualifications acceptable to Alberta Advanced Education" (p. 8).

Thus, at the federal as well as provincial levels, policy guidelines on the second language training of adult new immigrants are not clearly articulated. In their absence, the management and operationalization of ESL programs are activated and shaped by two major agreements between the federal and provincial levels of government. The first of these is the:

**The Canada-Alberta Training Agreement.** This is administered federally by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) and provincially by Alberta Career Development and Employment. The language training program of CEIC is presently a part of the Job Entry component of the Canadian Jobs Strategy program and is the largest of the programs under which second language training is offered. The major intent of the program is to provide language training to new immigrants who are unable to obtain employment because of a lack of knowledge of the official language, thus CEIC's philosophy views language as a skill which contributes to an individual's value in the labor market (Seward and McDade, 1988). CEIC's objectives have been summarized in its training manual:

.... language courses are specifically designed to remove the employment barrier which stifles the job search efforts of two categories of clients, namely:

- (i) skilled workers who cannot secure suitable employment in their trade or profession or in a suitable related occupation because of a lack of fluency in a second language, and
- (ii) unskilled workers who cannot be placed in suitable employment because of a lack of fluency in second language.

(Cited in Seward and McDade, 1988:23).

Under the Canadian Jobs Strategy Program, CEIC purchases a certain number of full-time training seats for ESL from the province. The province has the responsibility for the delivery, consistency and administration of language programs through various provincial institutions. Language training is usually full-time, and new immigrants who are eligible for this program also receive a basic living allowance or unemployment insurance benefits (Canada. Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988:25). New immigrants belonging to the Family Class or Assisted Relatives category, while eligible for the training, cannot receive the basic training allowance although they are eligible to receive supplementary allowances such as dependent care allowance, a commuting allowance, a living away from home allowance, travel assistance, etc. (Seward and McDade, 1988:23). Nationally, CEIC's program under the Canadian Jobs Strategy initiative has served between 9,000 to 13,000 participants annually. The current annual budget for the program is in excess of \$60 million (Jones and Neuwirth, 1989). Table 1 shows the number of immigrants receiving CEIC sponsorship, and the amount spent on ESL in the years 1985/86 to 1988/89 in Alberta and in Calgary.

Some projects for new immigrants which are funded under Job Development, Job Entry and Job Re-entry components of CEIC's programs also offer a second language training component, although these cannot be considered as an alternative to the full-time program. This type of language training is primarily for new immigrants who require a higher level of fluency in English and who need to acquire occupation-specific terminology. For new immigrants who wish to enter the workforce but are not eligible for CEIC funding, Alberta Career Development and Employment offers funding under its Vocational Training Program (AVT program) to meet the costs of approved short-term language training for new immigrants (Alberta. Career Development and Employment, 1988a).

## FULL TIME (FEDERAL) ESL Purchase Trends

## ALBERTA

	1985/1986	1986/1987	1987/1988	Planned 1988/1989
ESL Trainees	2,500	2,700	2,500	2,500
ESL Training Days	272,000	*323,000	282,000	254,000
ESL Expenditure	\$6,300,000	\$6,500,000	\$4,400,000	\$3,900,000
Negotiated PER DIEM	23.00	19.82	15.58	15.58

## CALGARY

		1986/1987	1987/1988	Planned 1988/1989
ESL Trainees		1,998	1,897	1,685
ESL Training Days		165,780	136,266	107,868
ESL Expenditure		\$3,271,000	\$2,092,000	\$1,579,000

N.B.: – \*Reflects courses of longer duration purchased for a trial period.

– Trainees, days and dollars have been rounded.

Source: Canada Employment and Immigration, 1988.

### **CEIC's Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP)**

In addition to the funding provided under the Jobs Strategy program, the Immigration section of CEIC initiated a pilot project towards which it allocated \$1 million. The program objective was:

To meet the language needs of adult immigrants not expected to join the labour force (not eligible for language training provided by Job Entry) by providing language training instruction through immigrant serving agencies. The priority target group is immigrant women at home.

(Canada. CEIC, 1986:2).

The maximum dollar value for each contract awarded to community agencies who offer the program is \$50,000 for a maximum of 300 hours of instruction. Allowable expenses include direct costs, such as the salaries of instructors and UIC benefits, as well as indirect costs, such as course materials, facility overheads, transport costs, supervision of children, etc. According to Burnaby (1988:27-28), this program is a departure from normal federal government practice because the government has not, until now, been involved in community based ESL delivery, except indirectly through the provinces. An evaluation of the SLTP program conducted nationally partly attributes the success of this program to "...daycare and transportation support in the non-threatening environment of community agencies" (Burnaby, 1988:32). Calgary has been a part of the SLTP program for the past two years.

### **The Citizenship Instruction and Language Training Agreements (CILT)**

The second major funding mechanism for second language training comes under the provision of the above agreements negotiated by the federal and the provincial governments. Under CILT, the Department of Secretary of State and Alberta Advanced Education share equally the cost of providing language instruction as well as citizenship instruction for new immigrants. The Secretary of State also pays for the cost of textbooks and supplies for the program. Generally,



classes are part-time and allowances are not provided. The CILT agreements have been interpreted fairly loosely to allow for flexibility in targeting the real needs of the new immigrants (Seward and McDade, 1988). All immigrants who are not yet Canadian citizens are eligible for training, however, those who have already attained citizenship are not considered eligible for the program (The Abella Report, 1984:153).

For funding under the CILT Agreements, no upper limit is set and what the province spends is matched by the Secretary of State. Programs under CILT are mostly delivered through AVCs and colleges and funds are also directed to the Further Education Councils which support such institutions as the local school boards and community agencies. The CILT Agreements only provide grants for instruction and textbooks, therefore the provinces have to bear the cost of administration and other indirect costs. As a result, there has been a reluctance on the part of some provinces (e.g. New Brunswick) to set up language classes under this agreement. The cost to the federal government for the total program is in the neighborhood of \$9 million annually (Jones and Neuwirth, 1989). Table 2 shows the amount of funding under the CILT program in Calgary for the years 1985 to 1988.

### **PROBLEMS OVER ESL POLICY AND FUNDING**

The absence of a clearly articulated national policy encompassing the government's goals and objectives on the second language training of new immigrants gives credence to Hawkins' perception of the lack of commitment and uncertainty over the management of immigration matters in Canada, a stance that has created considerable difficulty in the operationalization of second language education. This perception is further reinforced by a government spokesperson's comments when he states:

TABLE 2

Part-time Programs under the  
CILT Agreement – Calgary  
\$ Allocation

	1987	1986	1985
Calgary Board of Education	205,000	199,648	200,320
Calgary Catholic Board	60,365	60,365	60,356
YWCA	49,440	49,216	50,400
U of C	5,600	4,000	4,800
Calgary Immigrant Aid Society	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total	330,405	323,229	325,876

Source: Alberta Advanced Education Office,  
Edmonton, May 9, 1989.

...what we have in second language training is not so much a policy as it is a funding mechanism...

and

...the government does not always have a clear purpose. The CILT agreement can be traced back to a major refugee crisis in Canada.....our policy is crisis oriented and developed incrementally....

(Interview, Calgary. May 26, 1989).

Lacking a central focus, the provision of second language training for adult new immigrants has been embedded in a series of pragmatic, short-term solutions to what have come to be enduring, long-term problems. Such management by crisis and incremental program development in a reactive mode has led to a fragmentation of service. In addition, the involvement of several government departments at the federal and provincial levels of government has created difficulties over negotiation and interaction between different levels of government, reinforcing Hawkins' perception of the traditional pattern of federal/provincial interaction. The above factors have led to complexity over funding and caused disparity in the services provided for the students as well as for programs and programming agencies (Alberta. Advanced Education, 1983). Some of the major problems over policy and funding in ESL can be highlighted at the levels of the major stakeholders in ESL.

### **At the Policy Level**

From a policy point of view, the shared mandate between CEIC and the Secretary of State has caused some concern. In the words of a federal government spokesperson, this shared mandate is "arbitrary and time-driven". The government had two options for the division of the federal mandate on the second language training of new immigrants: a) in terms of the subject matter in ESL or b) in terms of time. The government selected the easier option (b) whereby the immediate survival needs of the new immigrants as well as their needs during the first year or

two in the country, could be provided by CEIC and the longer-term needs could be met with by the services provided by the Secretary of State. The issue of addressing the settlement and adaptation needs of the new immigrants from a holistic point of view was thus sidestepped by the creation of an arbitrary, time-driven mandate which could not function as intended because some new immigrants came to Canada with a very good command of English and others did not. As such, the separation of ESL mandate based on the time element was unrealistic.

Problems over policy and funding have also been experienced under both the major ESL funding mechanisms. From the federal point of view, since education falls under provincial jurisdiction, the province is happy to utilize the funds provided under the CILT Agreements as long as there is little accountability or interference from the federal government. This restricts federal input into the operationalization of second language training in local settings. The federal government has no direct say on how the money is spent and can only impact on the second language education of new immigrants to a small extent through activities which are tangential to second language learning, namely, support conferences such as ATESL (Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language) and conduct workshops for teachers, especially if these relate to increasing cultural sensitivity and making instruction more culturally palatable. From the federal viewpoint, "Alberta is sensitive about its jurisdiction and it is difficult for the federal government to get the province to do something" (Interview, April 26, 1989). This lack of co-ordination and interaction between the federal/provincial governments highlights once again, Hawkins' (1988) perception of the situation on Canadian immigration management as a whole and is not conducive to effective program management.

Moreover, there is no specified enforcement and accountability mechanism on the part of the Secretary of State or Alberta Advanced Education with regard to the CILT Agreements. Neither level of government appears to have specific

responsibility for enforcing and monitoring the Agreements, nor do they appear to have a mechanism to evaluate the ESL programs. The province is not required, for instance, to provide information on the classes and numbers of new immigrants served by the program annually (Seward and McDade, 1988:21). Despite these difficulties, a federal government representative expressed optimism, stating "...it may be an imperfect system..., but it has direction and it works, and when we sit with the province, a lot of things happen at the individual and interpersonal level" (Interview April 26, 1989).

The funding mechanism under CEIC's Jobs Strategy program has also presented some difficulties. The essence of the Canada/Alberta Agreement governing second language training has not changed greatly, however, the ratio of money spent by the two levels of government (CEIC and Alberta Career Development and Employment) on second language training has changed. From the provincial point of view, CEIC has drastically cut its funding in recent years. Whereas formerly, costs were fully recoverable from the federal government, Alberta now has to pay for half the cost of language training under CEIC. "An anomaly has been created whereby immigration to the province has increased since 1985/86, but we have only 45 percent of the federal funding to deal with it" (provincial government spokesperson, May 8, 1989). Table 1 indicates the reduction in expenditures for ESL by CEIC in the last Canada-Alberta agreement. Such cutbacks have evoked strong statements from concerned teachers, as expressed in the ATESL brief (1987):

ATESL does not believe that it is a responsible policy to increase immigration of limited English speakers to the Province by 8 percent while decreasing, at the same time, funds which provide access to language training by 45 percent. These cutbacks do, however, serve to underline the problem of the lack of continuity and consistent funding for language training in Alberta and in Canada, in general.

(ATESL Brief, May, 1987. Unpaged mimeo).

The federal government's action passes the onus to the province to decide which program has priority. If provincial priority is to protect the apprenticeship program (Table 3 indicates the priority given to the apprenticeship program over ESL), as has been negotiated in the last Canada-Alberta Training Agreement, then this means lower levels of funding for ESL (federal government spokesperson, January 26, 1989). From the provincial viewpoint, the federal government response restricts the province by stipulating that increasing levels of language training funding can only be obtained at the expense of other training, such as apprenticeship, adult basic education, etc. Thus, federal/provincial interaction and negotiation are mired in a complexity of issues.

#### **At the Program Delivery Level**

Problems over funding have also impacted on the delivery of ESL programs. Programmers have to juggle to meet the perceived needs of the new immigrants on the one hand, and cope with strictures imposed by funding on the other. The creation of two different funding mechanisms has created two disparate ESL delivery systems. Under the Canadian Jobs Strategy program, funding is allocated on "a cost per program basis" which may include both the direct cost of instruction as well as certain indirect costs (Alberta. Advanced Education, 1983). On the other hand, under the CILT agreements, funding pays only for the direct instructional cost and teachers are paid on the basis of number of hours of instruction. No consideration is given to time spent on preparation or for professional development. The per hour instructional grant, which until recently, has been \$16.00/hour, cannot cover the cost of administration, program development or other indirect costs and highlights the differences in wages received by teachers at different institutions. The additional costs of running the programs has been passed on to the student, through tuition fees.

TABLE 3

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## CEIC Program Expenditures

Effective April 1, 1988

	DAYS	\$ ALLOCATION
ACADEMIC UPGRADING	139,600	2,174,968
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE	254,200	3,960,436
SKILL	165,800	4,095,260
APPRENTICESHIP	468,000	16,637,400
NON-APPRENTICE ADMINISTRATION		230,190
TOTAL PUBLIC PURCHASE		27,098,254
PRIVATE PURCHASE	61,200	1,369,044
TOTAL PURCHASE		28,467,298
EXIGENCIES		8,702
		\$28,476,000

Source: Canada Employment and Immigration, 1988

Problems in the area of program implementation are further compounded by the nature of funding. For both, the CEIC program as well as the CILT programs for second language education, funding is largely ad hoc (Alberta. Advanced Education, 1983). Under CEIC's Jobs Strategy program, language training in Alberta is purchased for 20 weeks each time while funding for the CILT programs is provided annually. Because of the uncertainty over funding, it is difficult for programming agencies to plan, develop and co-ordinate programs on a consistent basis. For example, programming agencies funded by Further Education receive notification after April concerning the amount of yearly funding for programs that started the previous January (Alberta. Advanced Education, 1983). The ad hoc nature of funding also makes it difficult to make advanced decisions on the recruitment of staff with the result that many teachers are hired on short-term contracts with minimum benefits and minimal job security.

In addition, the lack of clarity over the terms of the CILT Agreements has led to ambiguity. The term "textbook" for example is not clearly defined and this has resulted in a variety of interpretations as to what type of instructional material is covered. A major shortcoming of the Agreements lies in the fact that audio-visual instructional materials are not covered (Seward and McDade, 1988).

#### **At the Program Recipient Level**

From the new immigrants' viewpoint, the ad hoc purchase of seats has, in the past, made access to programs difficult for potential students who have had to wait several months for admission into the full-time training program. For example, during the recession years in 1984-85, a high level of unemployment due to the economic downturn as well as a backlog of new immigrants created a greater demand for full-time ESL programs, with a resultant waiting list. Because of pressing need, additional funding was made available to the province in 1985 for the



purchase of 120 seats for 20 weeks of full-time ESL training at the Alberta Vocational Centre, at a cost of \$143,000. The move was initiated by Calgary Millican MLA, Gordon Shrake. This source of funding, however, appears to have been a one-time effort, reacting to an untenable situation, but it serves to highlight the crisis oriented, reactive nature of funding availability for second language training in Calgary.

As stated earlier, the full time program under CEIC funding gives preference to new immigrants who are ready to enter the workforce. This means that the language needs of special groups such as immigrant women, youths and seniors are not well served. CEIC's eligibility criteria does not entitle some new immigrants to a basic training allowance, especially if they are not government sponsored refugees and are not destined for the workforce. This creates difficulties for women and other groups who must work to earn an income, and curbs their participation in the full-time program. (Seward and McDade, 1988). Also, would be participants in the full-time program must show that their lack of fluency in English prevents them from accessing the employment market. In the case of immigrant women with limited skills and qualifications, this is often seen to mean low-wage jobs in the service sector, or industrial occupations in the textile and garment factories where a knowledge of English is not seen to be essential. Moreover, while women are eligible for the Secretary of State (CILT) programs, many do not receive living and travel allowances, therefore, low-income women with family responsibilities may be excluded from accessing even part-time second language training.

Because of limited access to both the full-time and the part-time programs for special groups such as women and seniors, intense lobbying efforts by program planners, women's groups, etc. led to the initiation of CEIC's Settlement Language Training Programs (SLTP) which sought to redress some of the above inequities.

However, the size of the program curbs its effectiveness as it provides "a small amount of money towards the alleviation of a large problem" (Burnaby, 1988:35).

Problems over funding have further been compounded by recent events in the second language programming setting which have brought to the forefront Hawkins' observations on the paucity of interaction between the federal and provincial levels of government. The volatile nature of ESL funding and the resultant uncertainty has resurfaced with the federal government's decision to cancel the CILT Agreements<sup>4</sup>. If the level and consistency of funding is one way of gauging the degree of commitment to a program, then this unfolding of events further indicates that second language training is not a priority issue at the government level. Program shuffling from one department to another (government spokesperson, interview. Calgary, May 26, 1989) demonstrates an unwillingness on the part of various government departments to take responsibility for the part-time ESL program.

The provincial government's perception of the cancellation of the CILT Agreements by the federal government is illuminating. According to a provincial government spokesperson, "the Federal government has abandoned its responsibility in this area and left it to the province to debate over the fate of the part-time ESL programs that were offered under CILT." (Interview, Edmonton. May 9, 1989). Once again, this reinforces Hawkins' (1988) perception of the lack of agreement between various levels of government on who should provide for new immigrant services. Whether the province will be able to sustain current levels of programming, or whether the size of its programs will be considerably reduced is subject to conjecture at this point. From the provincial viewpoint, the federal government failed to consult the province over the fate of a program that had served approximately 20,000 new immigrants during the past year. This has led to the belief that real authority on second language training issues rests with Ottawa, and

that the provinces have little control over funding amounts or the number of people who receive training. There is also the perception that decisions made in Ottawa are primarily based on events in Toronto and Quebec, and the rest of the provinces do not have significant consultation with Ottawa. (Interview, May 9, 1989). The only positive benefit of the cancellation of the CILT Agreements is that it gives the federal government a window through which to restructure the current framework of current ESL programming, so that it meets more effectively, the varying second language education needs of new immigrants.

### Summary

This chapter has offered a policy perspective on the second language training of new immigrants against a background of immigration management in Canada. Demographic trends in the Canadian setting show that immigration is a vital, long term and on-going phenomenon which is essential to the future development of the country. A major shift in the immigration pattern has seen increasing numbers of new immigrants from non-traditional, third world countries, but the extent to which the new Canadians successfully undergo the resettlement process hinges on their ability to speak English. Statistical evidence points to the fact that many new immigrants lack mastery over a language that is critical to their survival.

At the policy level, government efforts to assist new immigrants with the acquisition of a second language have lacked a central focus. In the absence of a national, articulated policy on the second language training of new immigrants, provision for such training is dependent upon ongoing negotiation and interaction at the federal and provincial levels of government, which is not conducive to effective immigration management (Hawkins, 1988). Government response to the second language training of new immigrants has basically been reactive, crisis-oriented and incremental and resulted in the fragmentation of service through the creation of two

disparate program delivery systems under the Canada/Alberta Training Agreement and the CILT Agreements. Such fragmentation of service as well as a history of poor interaction between the various levels of government has led to weaknesses in the structural base of ESL programming and created difficulties for program planners as well as program recipients. Programmers must work with strictures imposed by volatile, sparse and inconsistent funding, while difficulties are created for potential students because of eligibility criteria which exclude certain groups of new immigrants from program participation. These aspects are explored in greater depth in the next three chapters of this study.

A discussion of the cancellation of the CILT Agreements at the federal level further reinforces Hawkins' perception of the uncertainty over immigration management, the paucity of interaction between the federal and provincial levels of government and the lack of agreement on who should provide services for new immigrants. However, the event also provides a window through which policy on the second language training of new immigrants can be restructured. A possible format for the restructuring process is delineated in Chapter 6.

## ADULT ESL PROGRAMS IN CALGARY FUNDING SOURCES

FUNDER	PROGRAMMER	STUDENT
<b>FULL-TIME PROGRAMS</b>		
1. Canada (CEIC) Sponsored Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seats purchased from Alberta by CEIC under Canada/ Alberta Training Agreements (CJS initiative).</li> <li>- ESL student income support from CEIC (UIC benefits, training allowances).</li> <li>- CEIC selects all students according to their criteria.</li> </ul>	AVC	Labour Force Destined
2. Alberta Career Development and Employment - Alberta Vocational Training (AVT) Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AVT selects students not eligible under CEIC criteria.</li> <li>- Students receive tuition and training allowances.</li> </ul>	AVC	
<b>PART-TIME PROGRAMS</b>		
1. Citizenship Instruction and Language Textbook Agreements (CILT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Part-time ESL for "newcomers" who are landed, i.e. not citizens or refugee claimants.</li> <li>- Cost of instruction shared 50/50 between Alberta Advanced Education and Canada Secretary of State.</li> <li>- Textbooks funded 100% by Secretary of state.</li> </ul>	AVC YWCA CBE U of C CCB	Landed Newcomers
2. Settlement Language Training (SLTP) Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEIC project, not labour-market driven, to be delivered by non-mainstream, non-institutional programmers.</li> </ul>	YWCA CIWC CCIS	Those who don't or can't access mainstream programs, e.g. home-bound women and seniors
3. English in the Workplace (EWP) Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost covered by CEIC.</li> <li>- Companies expected to pay for materials, training space and at least half of employee's training time.</li> </ul>	Workplace	Employees

AVC - Alberta Vocational Centre

CBE - Calgary Board of Education

CCB - Calgary Catholic Board

CCIS - Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

CIAS - Calgary Immigrant Aid Society

CIWC - Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre

Source: Alberta Career Development &amp; Employment. Edmonton, 1989.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **PROGRAM DELIVERY - A FULL-TIME PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE**

During the past decade, ESL programs in Calgary have mushroomed under the two major delivery systems mentioned in the last chapter. A majority of these programs are offered by conventional educational institutions, such as the Alberta Vocational Centre, the school boards, community colleges and the University of Calgary, as well as by community institutions such as the Y.W.C.A. and the Arusha Centre. More recently, with the emergence of the federal government's Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP), community agencies such as the Calgary Immigrant Aid Society (CIAS), the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) and the Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre (CIWC) have also initiated second language training programs. There is therefore a wide range of programs and an equally wide range of approaches, methodologies and curricula in ESL instruction.

This chapter focuses on the operationalization of ESL programming in Calgary under CEIC's Jobs Strategy program. Under CEIC's provision, AVC (the Alberta Vocational Centre) has been relegated sole responsibility for the delivery of the full-time program. Major characteristics of the full-time program are portrayed through the perspectives of those who are engaged in program delivery at the institutional level. A consideration of major factors which influence program delivery, such as CEIC's policy which governs the program's mandate and forms the basis for its objectives, are highlighted. The uncertainty created over the ad hoc nature of funding is reiterated in relation to the difficulty it creates for program design and development as well as for staffing. Operational aspects of the full-time program are considered, with a description of the program offerings and a consideration of factors that govern the screening and placement of students. Teacher issues, such as accreditation, lack of job security, etc. are also emphasized.

The second part of the chapter concentrates on the operationalization of the program at the classroom level and highlights the dynamics that operate within the context of the ESL classroom setting. The focus here is on the classroom climate created, the mode of instruction, curriculum content, methodological approaches, yardsticks of evaluation, etc. The multicultural ethos of the ESL classroom and its influence on the dynamics that operate in the classroom is also highlighted. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the appropriateness of the formal, institutional type of ESL delivery for all new immigrants who access the program.

### **FULL-TIME PROGRAM DELIVERY**

AVC is a Provincially Administered Institute (PAI) under the Field Services Division of Alberta Advanced Education. Its mandate emphasizes the need to provide:

....educational and training opportunities for persons with special needs, including those adults who are educationally, culturally, physically or economically disadvantaged.

(Alberta Vocational Centre, 1985. Mimeo).

From small beginnings, the ESL Department in Calgary has grown into the second largest department at AVC in terms of funding per student basis. In 1985, the ESL full-time Department provided instruction for approximately 1600 students through the year. The Department has almost 40 full-time staff members.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The full-time program mandate reflects the philosophy and objectives of its funding source. Under CEIC's Canadian Jobs Strategy program, funding is provided for language training "to all employment destined adults whose lack of fluency in English constitutes a barrier to maximizing their employment potential" (Findlay

and Wilks, 1987). From a program delivery point of view, implementation must be geared to meet with CEIC's requirements and operate within the bounds of this narrow mandate:

Accordingly, our emphasis is on employment as opposed to education and on training as opposed to learning. This can almost be a contradiction, as the government's mandate for the program does not always match with the students' objectives in taking the program. Many students do not enter the program as a means of obtaining employment and do not think of English as a means of facilitating an occupation.

(ESL practitioner, Interview.  
Calgary, October 25, 1988).

The mechanism through which the federal government provides for the second language training of new immigrants is through training seats. As stated in Chapter 2, CEIC purchases seats for second language training from AVC through Alberta Career Development and Employment on an ad hoc basis. The selection of students is done through CEIC and students who qualify are provided with tuition and training allowances. CEIC may sponsor students for up to a maximum of 40 weeks, but generally, the course lasts for 20 weeks. Full-time program seats may also be purchased by Alberta Career Development and Employment under AVT (Alberta Vocational Training) funding for new immigrants who may be ineligible under the CEIC criteria.

From a program administration point of view, heavy dependence on CEIC's ad hoc funding and a mode of operation which is governed by the demand for seats and the number of seats actually purchased means that programmers must work within the framework of a climate of uncertainty. AVC has little input into CEIC's decisions on the purchase of seats or the screening of students. Its programs operate on the basis of continuous student intake, however, at times, programmers are not informed until a month ahead how many students the ESL department must prepare itself for from intake to intake. This means that program planning is contingent upon enrollment, which necessitates a high degree of flexibility and limited time span in which a new program can be set up and implemented. In



addition, the ad hoc nature of funding and the uncertainty created over enrollment numbers limits effective program development, which is very necessary in meeting the changing needs of AVC's new immigrant population. It also makes advanced decisions over staff recruitment difficult. Because of ten-weekly intake periods, ESL staff can only be offered 10 week contracts at a time. Also, CEIC's decision to cut the full-time program from 30 weeks to 20 weeks resulted in a reduction of one-third of the staff at AVC, attesting to the volatility of the funding base. Thus, from a program design point of view, while programmers must make assumptions that things will remain stable while planning a program, this process is dependent upon decisions made by the federal government, and program planners must therefore continually demonstrate their ability to adapt to changing government decisions.

## **STUDENT POPULATION**

In keeping with CEIC's objectives, a majority of students in the full-time program are government sponsored refugees destined for the workforce. A wide variety of source countries are represented by the student population, reflecting a shift in immigration emphasis towards third world countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. According to a 1986 census data for AVC (Findlay and Wilkes, 1987), 50 percent of ESL students had resided in Canada for more than one year and 50 percent of all ESL students had received some previous ESL training. Census data also showed that male and female students were equally represented in the program (Findlay and Wilkes, 1987). Because the program takes in "anybody and everybody", a wide range of individual goals and aspirations may be reflected within the student population.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Because of a wide range of student backgrounds, needs and learning styles, there are several levels of instruction and students are able to enter the program at any level of instruction according to their educational background and degree of competency in English. The program comprises two ten-week sessions, and students are tested on entry into the program to decide the level at which they must be placed. The full-time program has three major components:

- The Pre-Basic Program
- The Core Program
- The Advanced Program.

**The Pre-Basic Program** - is designed and implemented for students with special learning needs, namely, those who lack literacy in their own language or in English, or who have learning disabilities or appear to be slow learners. The program is offered at the Pre-beginner level and classes are kept small, with a pupil-teacher ratio of 1:10. The program has an open classroom concept, is heavily individualized and requires that the pre-basic teachers work closely together. Teachers emphasize TPR (Total Physical Response) methodology and hands-on, concrete work which is very contextual and veers away from the abstract. For example, student activities may include cooking in a kitchen or shopping at a store and academic skills may not receive a great deal of emphasis. "Twenty weeks of ESL instruction in a program of this nature for the student who is not literate is totally inadequate", commented an ESL practitioner. "....it may take a non-literate, pre-basic student two years of full-time training to read a 'Dick and Jane' reader -- all things done in a school with elementary children are done here" (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, February 17, 1989). In every 10 week intake of 200 students, approximately 15 (7.5 percent) students are at this very basic level of literacy. To orient a pre-basic group such as

this to the workplace setting, according to the program's mandate, offers a challenge to which there are no easy solutions.

**The Core Program** - forms the bulk of the full-time ESL program and according to AVC's Curriculum Guide, consists of nine levels of instruction under the following categories: Beginner, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate and Advanced (Figure 3). In keeping with its mandate, the major purpose of the Core Program is to orient new immigrants to their new environment and to prepare them for employment. At the beginning levels, listening and speaking activities are emphasized and "Survival English" and practical language skills receive priority. At the upper levels, reading and writing are given greater emphasis. Students from the Core Program take elective classes for about 30 hours every 10 weeks that enable them to receive instruction in a profession or trade area of interest to them and they may also select two different electives over a 20 week period. Those with a common occupational interest, such as seamstresses, daycare workers, homemakers, etc. may have an entire course in their specific area of interest.

**The Advanced Program** - consists of two components:

- Bridge to Academic Upgrading
- College Preparation.

The Bridge program enables a student in the Upper Intermediate or Advanced Levels of the Core Program to "bridge" or get entry into academic upgrading types of programs either at AVC or other institutions such as SAIT, Mount Royal College, etc. It is basically designed for students who have clearly defined future goals. Of the 400 students who enter the many levels of programs at AVC, only 15 (approximately 4 percent) may be chosen for the Bridge program.

FIGURE 3

**ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) : Full-Time Program**

PRE-BASIC PROGRAM		CORE PROGRAM										ADVANCED PROGRAM		
PRE-BEGINNER	PRE-BEGINNER	LEVELS		LEVELS		LEVELS		LEVELS		LEVEL IX	BRIDGE I TO ACADEMIC UPGRADING	BRIDGE II TO ACADEMIC UPGRADING	COLLEGE PREPARATION	
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII					
		BEGINNER	BEGINNER	UPPER BEGINNER	UPPER BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	INTERMEDIATE	UPPER INTERMEDIATE	UPPER INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED				

Source: Alberta Vocational Centre

The College preparation course prepares the students for TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and enables them to enter the academic program at SAIT, Mount Royal College, etc. or to re-enter their own professional areas such as engineering. At this level, most students have a minimum of grade 12 education and some have university degrees.

Within the main framework of the Core Program, programs for sub-groups may also be initiated if a specific area of needs is identified. On finding that the Vietnamese youth were experiencing special difficulties in coping with the rigors of everyday life in an alien culture and society, AVC designed a program to meet their special needs. These classes focus on self-management using self-management techniques -- for instance, staff is contracted from cooking programs to teach the students cooking skills. In the classroom setting, a work environment is emulated and emphasis is placed on coming to work on time, calling in sick, etc. There is also a job training component whereby students are placed in different factories for two to three days a week to gain familiarity with the work setting. Thus, life-skills as well as job-search skills are simultaneously incorporated into the program.

### **SCREENING AND PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS**

Because of varying student backgrounds and needs, placement of students at an appropriate program level is done through testing. During pre-registration, students are asked to complete personal information forms requesting their name, age, address, etc. The extent to which the form is completed, together with information on the students' educational background, helps to determine whether the student will receive a Literacy Screening Test which is designed to ascertain whether the student has literacy skills in his/her native language. A literacy test is also administered in English. Lastly, through placement testing, the student's

proficiency in English is determined by means of an oral interview test as well as a battery of cloze reading tests. Results from the above tests combined with a consideration of the students' background decide the students' placement level in the program.

Generally, teachers state that student placement based on the above criteria works fairly well. However, once the student is placed at a particular level, teachers meet at the end of the week to discuss how appropriate the placements have been, and if needed, students are shuffled around from one level to another that is considered more appropriate. According to a former ESL teacher at AVC (interview, Calgary, October 18, 1985), the screening procedure is a reflection of an internal debate among teachers on what should form the basis of ESL instructional practice. There are two schools of thought -- on the one hand, is the ESL teacher who takes pride in the perfection of the English language and who places great emphasis on grammar, pronunciation, etc. On the other hand is the teacher who sees language as a means of communication and therefore, does not insist on technical perfection in the language as a measure of student proficiency.

Progress tests are periodically conducted on students to determine whether they have mastered the competencies outlined for their level. Promotion to the next level is contingent upon success at the present level and a final evaluation is also made of the students' overall performance. Throughout, CEIC is kept informed of the individual students' progress by means of a progress report. If there are any problems, CEIC is informed immediately.

## **TEACHER RELATED ISSUES**

There appears to be a wide range of teacher backgrounds, from those who are recent arrivals on the ESL scene or who have little ESL training, to professional teachers with specialized training and experience. The issue of teacher

accreditation received considerable attention at the ATESL Conference held in Edmonton in October, 1988. Articulated, province-wide standards which could be applied by institutions for hiring teachers are currently lacking and this question has become of increasing concern to many practitioners. What is also causing some concern is the fact that the TESL Diploma program for ESL is currently geared towards the K-12 setting rather than the adult education setting, and a practicum component in the Diploma program is missing. In addition, teacher training programs do not emphasize a multicultural component, nor is there a special emphasis on training instructors to teach marginally literate new immigrants. The key role of the ESL teacher necessitates the establishment of minimum standards to ensure that quality instruction takes place in the classrooms. In this regard, TESL Canada has stated that "...those who establish policy and supply funding have the responsibility to ensure that those who provide language training to newcomers have suitable training for the demands of the task" (TESL Canada, 1982:11). However, the widely varying backgrounds that teachers bring to the ESL setting make it difficult to impose a common standard, especially in view of the fact that some institutions, such as the YWCA, are largely dependent on volunteer teachers who may not have any ESL qualifications other than the brief orientation training they receive before commencing instruction.

The full-time program at AVC stresses the hiring of qualified instructors, and teachers are encouraged to participate in in-service training sessions and workshops which are held on a regular basis. In addition, two professional development days are set aside every year and outside speakers are invited to address the teachers. Full-time teachers are paid to attend the ATESL Conference held once a year, the cost of which is covered by the institution. In terms of teacher evaluation, AVC conducts ongoing evaluation of teachers, although some teachers feel that a more

informal system of supervision whereby the teacher can ask for assistance in bettering his/her skills would be more positive.

One of the biggest problems confronting teachers in the full-time program is a lack of job security. Generally, outside the School boards, less than 10 percent of ESL teachers in Calgary have any real guarantee of a position beyond a 10 week period (ESL practitioner interview, Calgary, October 25, 1988). Out of a staff of 40 instructors at AVC, only one teacher has a permanent position. Currently, most teaching positions at AVC are term-certain positions, whereby teachers get some benefits such as a pension plan, etc., but tenure is not offered.

Why then, do many teachers gravitate towards ESL? In response to the question "Why have you chosen the field of ESL?" asked in a survey conducted by an ESL teacher and administrator, the answers were encouraging. By far, a majority of teachers felt that it was:

...a challenging and rewarding field. They mentioned the motivation of students and the feeling that they were helping them as being important factors. Over 40 percent of the teachers also mentioned that learning in the ESL classroom was reciprocal. They felt that learning about other cultures was an added advantage of the field.  
(Purvis, 1983:64).

Personal discussions with teachers evoked such answers as:

...able to work in smaller groups....infinitely better than the K-12 situation;

...value the respect and trust teachers receive from students;

...I was a new immigrant...I feel some commitment in this area;

...ESL students are motivated....

The above comments are in keeping with Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox's (1975) perceptions of why teachers remain in the ESL area. Although few ESL teachers can be said to be "career adult educators" with status comparable to that of teachers employed in the elementary and secondary schools and few can enter the field because of prestige and security, there are spin-offs which compensate for the



situation in terms of high social value in assisting those new to the country, fewer disciplinary and motivational problems and the greater interest, reward and challenge which are perceived as part of the teaching of adult learners. One factor that characterizes many ESL teachers, and this has been reiterated by ESL administrators, counsellors and students, is that by and large, they are hardworking and dedicated and often feel genuine concern for the students. Some become personally involved with the issues facing the new immigrants, and attempt to assist them whenever possible.

### **CLASSROOM DYNAMICS**

Personal observations in the full-time program were made in several classrooms at different levels, from Pre-basic to the Bridge program. While each class had its own distinctive "atmosphere" and there were differences in teaching styles, instructional interaction and control maintenance, some characteristics common to most classes became readily apparent.

One of the most outstanding characteristics of adult ESL classes is the great diversity of students in terms of ethnic background as well as age range. There is a potpourri of students from S.E. Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, North Africa and the Middle East, etc. The age range of students varies from 18 to 65 plus, with a majority in their 20s and 30s. The students' educational backgrounds are just as diverse, from those who lack literacy in their own language to those with university education.

By and large, class sizes were not very large, ranging from 12-18 students per class, thereby facilitating teacher/student contact and interaction. According to Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox (1975), a distinguishing aspect of adult instruction is a "...relaxation of customary rules and conventions governing classroom conduct and management" (page 15); that students can come and go according to their own

personal requirements; that the atmosphere is relaxed; that no grades are given to students who may or may not do the assigned home-work; that in some classes, students may sleep, chat, read or wander around with minimum interference from the teacher.

Classroom observations in the full-time program do not conform to this pattern. On the contrary, learning English in this setting is serious business. Classrooms were, by and large, handled in a formal, businesslike manner. The students were appropriately attired, were punctual for the most part, and were seated at their own desks, with the teacher facing the class. This serious pursuit of ESL instruction can be attributed to the fact that many full-time students are under CEIC's language training program, therefore seats at AVC are purchased by the government and they are also paid a training allowance to attend. For many of them, this is their only chance to gain some knowledge of a language which is their passport to survival and they feel a commitment to do their best to maximize what is offered. Continuing evaluations are made of their progress and these are relayed to the students' counsellor at AVC or to the CEIC counsellor. Attendance is carefully monitored, and it is expected that students will keep up with their home-work assignments. A students' handbook compiled by AVC lays out some of these program expectations when it states that according to CEIC's policy, students are only allowed 1 1/4 days of absence per month, and that in the event of sickness, a note must be brought from a doctor. Students who are more than 10 minutes late in class are marked absent and those who are habitually late could be asked to leave the course (English as a Second Language Student Handbook, AVC, not dated).

In most of the classes observed, the mode of instruction was structured and formal. Fordham, Poulton and Randle (1979) describe Simkins' analysis of formal versus non-formal education. According to Simkins (cited in Fordham, Poulton and Randle, 1979:213), formal education is, among other criteria, credential-based,

institution-based, isolated (from the socioeconomic environment and from social action), rigidly structured, teacher centered, its clientele determined by entry requirements, and with external control. Non-formal education is seen by Simkins as non credential based and part-time; its content is out-put centered and individualized; its entry requirements are determined by the clientele and the delivery system is environment based and community related; its structuring is flexible, instruction is learner centered and control is self governing.

In the full-time program, the instructional mode is traditional and leans more towards the formal than non-formal according to Simkins' definition. The emphasis quite often is on drill, recitation, blackboard work, work-book oriented classwork and homework, reminiscent of the traditional K-12 situation. A great deal of classroom interaction involves the teacher questioning and pupils answering, or the use of guided questioning (teacher asks a student to ask another student a specific question). Classroom observations revealed that by and large, 80 percent of communicating is done by the teacher, reinforcing the notion of a teacher-centred approach in a structured setting. Student responses are given in a framework laid out and expected by the teacher, therefore individual input in terms of communication by each student, is low.

Although the traditional approach may be commonly utilized, within the bounds of this approach, effort is made by individual teachers to incorporate more innovative and informal approaches, such as pair-work, problem-solving group work, field trips, the use of language laboratories and computer facilities. The use of audio-visual aids is strong, however, the utilization of many of these devices remains an extension of the traditional approach and peripheral to it, rather than as the basis for a non-formal, non-structured instructional approach. The use of language laboratories (4) and computer facilities (2) are restricted to classroom time and students are not encouraged to use these individually, although they are encouraged

to use tape recorders and headphones to practice on workbook related and class related tapes at home.

A variety of methodological approaches may be used by teachers, depending on their teaching styles and learner characteristics. In the ESL arena generally, different methodologies have been in vogue at different times, such as: Grammar Translation, based on a view of language as consisting of grammatical rules and vocabulary; the Audio-Lingual or Aural-Oral where students learn different sentence structures through pattern drills; the Communicative Approach, with its emphasis on interpersonal communication skills, etc. However, as Chamot (1985) points out, "no one instructional approach is likely to be a panacea for all ESL students". The current bandwagon constitutes a combination of different methodological approaches. According to an ESL practitioner "...by the time we have taken into account adult characteristics, principles of adult learning, language acquisition and learning styles, we end up with an eclectic approach" (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, October 25, 1988). However, this approach requires that teachers supplement the existing materials with creatively designed materials of their own. While this ensures that materials provided to the students are relevant and appropriate for their level, it also adds to the pressures that the teachers are already under.

As far as curriculum content is concerned, teachers follow a curriculum outline for the program at each level. The full-time program mandate, as stipulated by CEIC, has clearly influenced the curriculum content:

Employment, ..... identified as the content area which meets both sponsor and the majority of student's needs, defined the theme and became the organizing principle of the core curriculum.

(Findlay and Wilks, 1987: not paged).

The curriculum takes a modular approach -- for example, the broad theme of employment is broken down into three-week instructional modules whose sub-titles

reflect the skills that the students must master linguistically in order to find employment, sustain employment and set and realize career goals and objectives (Findlay and Wilks, 1987). Topics such as Getting Job Information, Acting on Job Information, Interviewing for a Job, Re-evaluating Goals, Starting a New Job, etc. reflect the employment orientation of the full-time program (Appendix G). While the curriculum outline is prescribed, it is also "negotiable" in the sense that students can express their preferences for studying certain skills. For instance, "...if East European students want more practice in grammar, then the lesson can be based on this" (ESL practitioner, interview. October 25, 1988). The choice of materials and methods to be used in the classroom rests with the teachers, affording them some degree of flexibility in terms of their perception of the students' needs and wants. However, by and large, the curriculum is prescribed and competency based. For each level, a list of competencies that students must acquire is laid out, and the student is expected to master these before proceeding to the next level.

Management of classes and the problems encountered in ESL classrooms may be different from those encountered elsewhere. Discipline problems do not surface very often, however, tensions may initially exist in the classroom, especially at the Basic level where students of vastly different cultural and political backgrounds are brought together in a single group. For instance, the presence of Vietnamese, Chinese, Cambodian and Laotians may create political tensions; cultures which uphold the macho male image e.g. Latin American, may look down on the presence of women in the classroom. Students of European background, with greater facility in learning the language, may look down on students of South Asian origins who may experience greater difficulty in learning a language so different from their own. As a result, some students may not have feelings of warmth and friendliness towards each other, or remain isolated, or cluster in groups according to a common language or culture. Here, the role of the ESL teacher

assumes great importance. With skillful classroom management, he/she can induce an atmosphere of multicultural tolerance, understanding and acceptance, and create a more harmonious classroom climate that is conducive to learning.

The role of ESL teachers assumes a different significance from the role of the conventional teachers for they are not only instructors but are often the new immigrants' first real contact with someone from the mainstream culture. Because of their direct contact with the students, ESL teachers sometimes find themselves in situations where they take on the added roles of counsellor, confidant and helper. Often, ESL instructors are the first to become aware of the stresses that students are undergoing (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, February 17, 1989). Even simple things such as obtaining a bus pass, finding day care, etc. may prove to be big stressors for some students. Culture shock, combined with a myriad of other pressures sometimes lead to classroom behaviors which suggest that the student is in crisis. Some students may react by expressing emotions such as tearful outbursts, mood swings, withdrawal, denial or anger, or say that they are lonely or sad, or confide to the teacher about a particular problem (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, February 17, 1989). Thus, the pressures of a formal, institutional setting with its rigorous expectations, combined with the pressures students are already under (i.e unemployment, heavy family responsibilities, lack of mobility, culture shock, etc.), are liable to affect the students' ability to function in the classroom setting and also affect their ability to acquire a second language (Kleinman, 1982).

The presence of a professional counsellor on ESL staff in the full-time program helps to take the pressure off from teachers who are, by and large, not qualified to engage in effective cross-cultural counselling, and who may not have the extra reserves of time necessary to engage in helping students with their problems.

Teachers are, however, encouraged to lend a sympathetic ear and to watch for signs that suggest that a student is in crisis, and such students can then be referred to the counsellor.

As far as the evaluation of students within the classroom context is concerned, the yardsticks of evaluation used in normal education settings in Canada do not always apply in multicultural ESL classes. Generally, in most of the classes observed, students appeared to fall into one of three groups:

- a. Those who were more extrovert and came forth strongly during discussions;
- b. Those who were quieter, but responded at intervals;
- c. Those who were more subdued and seemed to offer limited input.

However, these generalizations on student input and ability can be misleading at times since different cultural norms and backgrounds govern the extent of student participation and response in class. For instance, in some oriental cultures, a woman's role is to be more subdued and polite rather than extrovert and forward and modesty is emphasized. Outward modesty and quietude may make some students less responsive in class, though they may have good control of reading and writing skills.

Student input and ability in class may also be affected by his/her level of confidence which may lead to acute shyness and lack of participation. In one teacher's estimate, 85 percent of students in her class lacked confidence initially. For many students, AVC is their first venture into mainstream Canadian society. Responses to the question "...how did you feel on your first day in class?" evoked such answers as "...I was embarrassed", "I felt shy...I didn't know anybody", "I felt lost". The teacher's role here, again, is to bolster greater confidence in the students with skillful class management. Encouragingly, most teachers interviewed felt that

their students had gained a great deal more confidence than what they had when they first arrived.

Because of the multicultural nature of ESL classes, it is also increasingly apparent that the cultural sensitivity of teachers involved in teaching ESL is an important issue. Government efforts are aimed at multiculturalism, yet the extent to which this is reflected in the reality of the ESL classroom, at the level of teacher/student interaction remains questionable. A survey conducted by an ESL teacher and administrator in Calgary (Purvis, 1983) received responses from ESL teachers at AVC, the YWCA, Mount Royal College as well as high school teachers from the school boards. In answer to the question "What familiarity do you have with the different cultures of your students?", most respondents were familiar with aspects of the European culture, but least knowledgeable about the Vietnamese culture, with the Chinese culture following close behind -- yet, a large proportion of students in ESL classes come from those cultural backgrounds!

The answers to the question "How has this knowledge helped you with your ESL experience?" were encouraging. Many teachers felt that a knowledge of a different culture helped with their teaching task. Some teachers felt that "the more the teacher knew about the students' culture, the more sensitive he would be in ascertaining how the students were perceiving and interpreting the information" (Purvis, 1983:68). Some responses, however, were discouragingly negative. One stated that "the students are there to learn English and Canadian culture...", therefore, "...any knowledge of the student's culture is useless" (Purvis, 1983:68).

Purvis' survey emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity displayed by the teacher, stating that this relates directly to their effectiveness in the ESL classroom. Differences in cultural norms and backgrounds have a bearing on the learning situation. For instance, in terms of body language, a Vietnamese student considers it disrespectful to look at someone, especially a teacher, straight in the eye



-- lowered eyes are a mark of respect. This lack of eye contact may be misunderstood by the ESL teacher who may feel that the student is being rude or lacking interest. The sense of competition which is often a characteristic of the western classroom, is in conflict with the cultural norms of social groups which value co-operation and sharing (d'Anglejan, 1984). The pressure placed on students to demonstrate their knowledge or their ignorance before the instructor and fellow students may well be unacceptable in certain cultures. Such cultural norms can significantly influence classroom learning. To complicate the issue, students who come from varied cultural backgrounds have different expectations of what they expect in the ESL classroom. Some students believe that effective ESL instruction must be textbook oriented and transmitted by the teacher; others are equally convinced that little can be achieved by spending five or six hours a day in an ESL classroom. "We are only beginning to grasp the impact of these cultural norms and expectations on the adult immigrants' ability to benefit from language-teaching programs" (d'Anglejan, 1984:22).

By and large, many teachers in Purvis' survey felt that a great asset in the ESL field was that "learning was reciprocal" (Purvis, 1983:68); that the ESL classroom was a place where the students "could share their culture and feel pride in the contributions it makes to Canadian society" (p.69). However, the survey also concluded that:

....some teachers do not give adequate recognition to the important role that the students' native culture plays in the learning situation. Therefore, misunderstandings and misconceptions can result from both the students' and teachers' perspectives.  
(Purvis, 1983:76).

While teachers may value a knowledge of the students' cultural background, classroom observations did not reveal any significant utilization of the students' previous knowledge and experience which could provide a rich resource for the teacher to tap into within the context of the teaching/learning experience. The

thrust appears to be towards helping the student acquire the language as well as the culture of the host society. Few textbooks and materials reflect a multicultural content. Increasingly, in the past few years, ESL materials geared towards the adult learner are beginning to appear on the scene, however, many of these come from American and British publishers. The publication of ESL materials in Canada is limited, therefore the multicultural ethos of Canadian society is often missing from the pages of textbooks and workbooks used in the ESL classrooms.

The degree of socialization between students and the teacher may depend on the individual teacher, however, while there may exist some degree of rapport and interaction between teachers and students within the classroom setting, this is limited outside the classroom. Nor does there appear to be a great deal of socialization between the students themselves, except within their own clusters which provide common bonds through language and culture. The location of the ESL department a block away from the main AVC building has isolated ESL students from active participation with the main student body and created an ESL "ghetto". In fact, according to observations made by some teachers, even the limited contact that ESL students have with students within the main AVC building may not always be very positive because of cultural and linguistic differences. This limits opportunities for students to interact with the mainstream culture, or practice what they learn in ESL classes.

The above consideration of CEIC's full-time program within the context of a formal, institutional setting, raises certain doubts and questions which are common to the delivery of ESL programs generally. D'Anglejan has stated:

Over the years, teachers and administrators involved in immigrant language programmes have come to recognize that there are enormous individual differences in the ability of these adults to benefit from classroom language instruction. Methods and approaches which have proven relatively successful for some learners appear to

be of little benefit to others.....Regular second-language programmes may not be able to provide the environment conducive to learning which is so desperately needed by many of these newcomers.

(d'Anglejan, 1984:21).

Burnaby (1988) has similarly expressed the view that the traditional, "generic"<sup>5</sup> programs cannot be universally applied, that there are many new immigrants whose needs, interests and aspirations are not being served by such programs. Particularly, for new immigrants who are employed and require flexible scheduling of classes, homebound immigrant women and seniors as well as new immigrants with low levels of literacy in their own language, the value of generic programs is questionable. Some new immigrants come from rural backgrounds and have not been in an educational setting for many years, if ever. For them, the climate generated by the formal institutional setting and the rigors of the formal, structured program, the pressures of testing and work expectations, the tyranny of attendance..... all band together to create a threatening environment which is not conducive towards effective learning. Many students who complete the full-time ESL program, gain minimal competence in English.

D'Anglejan (1984) conducted a study on new immigrants learning French as a second language in Quebec to ascertain why they were unable to communicate in French after receiving 900 hours of language instruction in French. The findings of the study revealed that:

- a. New immigrants with low levels of schooling who were illiterate or semi-literate, and who experienced anxiety in the classroom were less likely to succeed;
- b. New immigrants who were less successful had limited contact with French speakers. For such students, the language classroom was their major contact with the French language;
- c. Paradoxically, while students with low levels of literacy were highly dependent on the classroom, most classrooms constituted a poor learning

environment for this type of student. Methodology which emphasized drills or the teaching of grammar, did not "appear to set in motion the mental processes necessary for second-language acquisition" (d'Anglejan, 1984). On the contrary, such emphasis placed the student in a stressful situation.

d. Language is not used in a way that is authentic and meaningful, dealing with issues of concern to the learners.

The above results could be applied to the teaching of ESL in the formal, structured setting of the full-time program. Burnaby (1988) perceived that some students who had tried such programs in similar settings across Canada, had left them because "...classes were too difficult, that they did not understand what the teacher said, and that people at the school did not understand them" (Burnaby, 1988:31). A settlement worker in Calgary stated that new immigrants such as seniors who find their way into these programs do not benefit greatly from them. It would therefore appear that full-time programs are better suited to students who have had previous familiarity with the western educational setting, or who have acquired higher level of education and/or some previous exposure to the language and who would like to take ESL to achieve higher academic goals. Many new immigrants who are currently enrolled in the full-time program do not fit these criteria, and are therefore precluded from engaging in a learning experience that is meaningful to them.

Although the full-time program offers many levels of programming to cater to a diversity of student needs, there remains a major programming gap. Most students who exit from the full-time ESL program reach a grade 2-4 equivalent level (ESL practitioner, interview. February 17, 1989). To enter an upgrading program at AVC requires a Grade 4-6 level of competence in English. The ESL full-time program therefore does not act as a feeder program for upgrading courses at AVC. The Bridge program fills this gap, but access to it is limited as it is mostly

designed for people who have a grade 12 or less education and who have clear goals in terms of the training they want in the future. Professionals and students with skills who have more than a grade 12 education do not have access to this program and are encouraged to go to Mount Royal College or SAIT, but the low level of competency they have in English inhibits many of them from doing so. According to an ESL practitioner, a mere 4 percent of ESL students manage to get into the Bridge program leading to an upgrading program at AVC. Only 5-10 percent of full-time students find their way into any academic upgrading programs, while more than 90 percent join the workforce (Interview, February 17, 1989). Very few, if any students from the full-time program have subsequently become ESL or vocational teachers at AVC, to provide role models for aspiring new immigrants, similar to the role models Kozol (1985) alludes to in "Illiterate America".

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented a full-time program perspective on the second language training of new immigrants. The program mandate reflects CEIC's philosophy which is principally geared towards the provision of second language training for new immigrants who are bound for the workforce. The ad hoc nature of funding creates difficulties for program planners who must design and develop programs within a climate of uncertainty.

At the level of program operationalization, the full-time program has three major components, namely, the Pre-basic program, the Core program and the Advanced program, and the characteristics of each component have been described. Student screening and placement into the appropriate level is carried out through a series of tests, however, after an initial placement, teachers decide whether students have been placed at an appropriate level. Teacher issues in the ESL setting have caused concern mainly because of accreditation and the lack of job security yet,

many teachers gravitate towards ESL because of other spin-offs which compensate for their otherwise disadvantaged position.

In the classroom setting, there is a diversity of students of different ages, many of whom come from third world countries, giving a multicultural ethos to the ESL classroom. A comparison with Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox's (1975) notion of an adult education setting revealed a serious pursuit of ESL instruction in contrast to the relaxation of customary rules found in Mezirow's setting. The full-time program also veers towards the formal rather than non-formal approach towards education under Simkins' definition, with its structured, prescribed curriculum and teacher centered instruction.

Classroom management in a multicultural setting has its own distinct characteristics, and problems encountered in ESL classrooms are different from those encountered elsewhere. The role of the ESL teachers becomes different as they take on the additional role of friend, confidant and advisor. The normal yardsticks of student evaluation no longer apply as cultural norms and expectations exercise a strong impact in the teaching/learning situation. Purvis' (1983) survey relates the cross-cultural awareness of the ESL teachers to their effectiveness in the classroom, however, while most teachers value a knowledge of the students' background, not many utilize the rich resource provided by the knowledge and experience the students bring into the classroom.

The full-time program cannot be "all things to all people". While the full-time program has many merits in terms of range of program offerings, qualified staff, access to resources such as computer and language laboratories, etc. its structure and mode of operation is better geared to serve new immigrants who have had previous familiarity with the western education setting. Its appropriateness for certain groups of people, such as new immigrant women, seniors and youths of non-

European cultural backgrounds, as well as new immigrants with low levels of literacy, is questionable.

The full-time program also reveals a major programming gap as it does not act as a feeder program for upgrading courses at AVC and many students who wish to upgrade must go to other institutions and access the part-time program circuit.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PROGRAM DELIVERY - A PART-TIME PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE**

Part-time programs constitute the second major system of ESL program delivery in Calgary and are offered not only by traditional educational institutions such as AVC, the school boards, etc, but also by community agencies such as the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), the Calgary Immigrant Aid Society (CIAS), the Calgary Immigrant Womens' Centre (CIWC), YWCA and Arusha Centre. Part-time ESL programs also include EWP (English in the Workplace) programs which are held in the workplace setting for immigrant workers.

This Chapter offers a part-time program perspective on the second language training of new immigrants. Major program characteristics are highlighted through a consideration of various factors which comprise ESL programming, including program size and mandate as well as program funding and the difficulties this creates for program development and implementation. Aspects such as lack of uniformity and standardization are delved into and program strengths such as flexibility and adaptability are highlighted. The chapter also focuses on the delineation and description of major program offerings which reflect program diversity, and pinpoints major gaps which exist in the part-time programming scene. Program approaches in the part-time ESL setting are equally varied, ranging from the formal and traditional to non-formal. Using Simkins' (cited in Fordham, Poulton and Randle, 1979:212-213) definition of formal and non-formal approaches in adult education, two non-formal programs are looked at to provide a contrast with the formalized approach of AVC's full-time program. The latter part of the chapter focuses on the co-operation and competition that exist in the ESL delivery system.



Competition has been recently fostered by falling student enrollments, yet, cooperation between program delivery institutions exists, especially in areas of common program concerns.

## **PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS**

To some extent, the problems and characteristics highlighted in the full-time program are also applicable to the part-time program and the dynamics operating in the part-time classrooms share many common features with the full-time program, however, some of these aspects acquire a different emphasis when applied within the context of the part-time program setting.

## **PROGRAM SIZE, DURATION AND MANDATE**

The size of the part-time programs fluctuates widely, from outreach programs which favour individualized tutoring, to the extensive program at AVC which provides instruction to 4,500 to 4700 students annually and has 27-35 instructors teaching 42 classrooms at a given time. Most part-time programs are of short duration and last from six to twelve weeks. They also have a broader mandate than the narrow, pre-employment focus of the full-time program and serve a broader spectrum of needs, ranging from the regular ESL programs at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels, to upgrading and trade/profession oriented programs as well as special needs programs for young adults, seniors and homebound immigrant women.

## **PROGRAM FUNDING**

As with the full-time ESL program, funding is a major issue with many of the part-time programs and difficulties over funding are a major source of frustration for many programs. Funding sources vary considerably from program to program.

AVC's part-time program, for instance, is funded through the institute's base budget and this imparts a certain degree of stability to the program, however, programs offered by other institutions often suffer from a highly volatile and sparse funding base which makes program existence tenuous at times. A major source of funding, as stated in Chapter 1, is provided by the federal and provincial government arrangement under the CILT Agreements. Institutions such as the school boards and the YWCA receive the bulk of their part-time, adult ESL funding from this source, however, recently, under CEIC's Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP), funding has been made available for community agencies such as CIAS and CCIS to initiate special needs second language training programs. Some program delivery agencies are also able to tap into alternative sources - the YWCA, for instance, accesses supplemental funding from the United Way.

The funding that is made available for part-time programs under the CILT Agreements offers an interesting comparison with CEIC's full-time program funding and highlights how two disparate funding mechanisms have become operationalized at the level of program implementation. As stated in Chapter 1, while CEIC's program funding is provided on a cost-per-program basis, part-time programs receive only the instructional cost of the program, which, until recently, has been \$16.00 per instructional hour. The bulk of this amount goes towards covering the instructors' wages. The grant amount has recently been increased to \$30.00 per instructional hour by Alberta Advanced Education, however, there is skepticism among practitioners as to whether the increased grant will be utilized towards raising teachers' wages, or whether, in effect, it will go towards meeting indirect programming costs.

From the program coordinator's perspective, running a program on a "shoestring" budget, which many part-time programs are forced to do, presents problems. The scarcity of funding means that their "hands are tied", -- that there is

little opportunity for expansion and development or for the initiation of special projects. The only options in developing a new program is either to drop an existing one, or to work at getting alternate sources of funding. In the interim, ESL programming becomes a question of "juggling priorities" (Program Coordinator, interview. Calgary, February 16, 1989).

School boards in certain instances, (e.g. the Catholic Board) provide spacing for ESL instruction at no cost and textbooks are provided for under the CILT Agreement. However, items such as audio-visual materials, the use of stationery, xerox facilities, etc. often come out of the fees charged to the student. A practitioner with a part-time program stated "we even charge students \$0.20 for a piece of construction paper" (Program Coordinator interview, Calgary, February 16, 1988). Sophisticated technical resources, such as language laboratories and computers utilized by the full-time program under CEIC's funding, are out of range for nearly all part-time programs -- even the part-time program at AVC does not have access to these facilities which are mostly used to supplement the full-time program's instructional needs.

From the program coordinator's viewpoint, lack of funding can also be detrimental to new program initiative:

I would like the flexibility to change and add programs needed without having to wait to get the necessary funding. When we realize a need and wish to implement a program, the wait is detrimental. The established need may no longer exist when funding finally becomes available, for the prospective student probably enrolled in other programs or changed direction.

(Program Coordinator, interview.  
Calgary, February 16, 1988).

Similar problems were expressed over the federal government's funding provision for the Settlement Language Training Programs (SLTP). A part-time Coordinator involved with this project-based program stated that every year, after the application for funding has been sent in, the institution must wait for months to see if the application has been successful. Finally, when approval is granted,

programmers are left with a limited time-span in which to conduct outreach which creates difficulties since homebound immigrant women must be contacted through social service agencies, health clinics, etc. and by word of mouth. The program must also be designed and developed in the short time-span available and administrative arrangements must be set in motion -- such as the location and rental of appropriate facilities for running the program, confirmation of arrangements for transportation and day-care, the hiring of teachers on a contractual basis, etc. The wait is detrimental for the prospective student:

If someone is referred to us in July, by the following December things could have drastically changed. Some women are so overcome by their inability to adjust to a new society that they became emotionally unstable, even suicidal, and this affects their families, especially their school-aged children. A lady in one of our programs is presently undergoing psychiatric care. She needed help a long time ago.

(Coordinator, interview. Calgary,  
February 16, 1989).

When a project based program nears completion, the whole process must start again and programmers do not know when or where the next program will be offered. This creates great uncertainty for the students, who must either wait for a long period to enrol into a program that may not even materialize, or enrol into an alternative program which may or may not meet their special needs.

From the part-time teacher's point of view, lack of funding means that they do not enjoy tenure and are hired on a contractual basis. The rate of hourly pay, which ranges from \$14 to \$16 per hour (AVC offers a better rate, at \$21-\$25/hour), is below the ATA rate. They are not eligible for many benefits and feel little incentive to undertake ESL training courses when there is limited assurance of a teaching position. Some programs, such as YWCA's, utilize volunteer teachers and while this has some value, there is little consistency in the program from the students' point of view when teacher turnover is high and a large number of teachers are recruited and trained every year. Professional development is not a major

strength of the part-time programs, in contrast to the support and encouragement this receives in the full-time program. A part-time programmer stated:

Our teachers need more professional, in-service development and paid time. If we hold a staff meeting, or if teachers are planning a program, it is in their own time rather than paid time. They are not even paid to attend conferences.

(Program Coordinator, interview. Calgary, March 13, 1989).

The annual ATESL conference, held in Edmonton in November, 1988, was attended by many full-time ESL teachers who were paid to attend, but was poorly attended by part-time teachers.

Because of funding constraints, many part-time students are charged a fee to cover the partial cost of running the programs and the amount of fees charged varies from one institution to another. A part-time program which had been able to offer a program to women at a nominal rate of \$5.00, was forced to increase its fees to \$45.00 because of funding cutbacks. Unable to afford the increased fees, some students dropped out of the classes. Programs which need to charge higher fees to cover their costs often lose their students to programs which have a lower fee structure. Thus, AVC's part-time program which charges a nominal fee of \$10.00 to students, attracts a large number of students to the program.

## **PROGRAM UNIFORMITY AND STANDARDIZATION**

There is, generally, a lack of uniformity and standardization in part-time programs. Each program is initiated and developed according to the philosophy of the individual institution, without any overall policy or guidelines from the government or any other institution to co-ordinate the effort. From the students' point of view, this creates confusion as it is difficult for them to map out and relate to the divergent standards upheld by different institutions and also creates difficulties when they need to transfer across programs since advanced ESL at the

Alberta Vocational Centre does not mean the same thing as advanced ESL at the Calgary Board of Education.

A move towards some degree of standardization is being considered at the provincial government level through the institution of an ESL Secretariat whose objective is to develop a position and identify options for a standardized, province-wide system of measuring language competency. The Secretariat also intends to keep records on the numbers of students entering and leaving the programs at different levels and plans to systematize ESL curriculum throughout the province (Provincial government spokesperson, interview. Edmonton, October 27, 1988).

Such a move towards standardization, however, would not be positively received by all part-time coordinators, some of whom expressed a contrary point of view:

.....the strength of Continuing Education programs lies in their flexibility in giving students the kind of programs they want, therefore, an imposition of province-wide programs will take away their flexibility and adaptability. The needs of the students in Calgary are not the same as student needs in smaller centers such as Drumheller.

(Part-time Coordinator, interview. Calgary, October 12, 1988).

A stronger viewpoint was expressed by another Coordinator:

I would personally resist standardization..it restricts creativity and spontaneity and leads to inhibitions. The program becomes more important than the student. There is some movement afoot at the government level to standardize programs and have them run by AVC, but this does not acknowledge the diversity of student population in terms of their goals, learning styles and values.

(Program Coordinator, interview. Calgary, February 10, 1989).

## **PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY**

Program coordinators point to the flexibility and adaptability of programs and state that these constitute a major strength of part-time programming in Calgary. Partly, the lack of centralized control at the government level enables part-time programmers to exercise their own creativity and makes it possible for them to

initiate programs that meet a wide range of student needs. In practice, the range of new programs that can actually be developed is governed by funding constraints.

## **PROGRAM OFFERINGS**

While a wide range of programs are offered by several institutions and agencies, a perusal of program calendars distributed by institutions offering ESL reveals that many programs still cater to the needs of a middle-of-the-road student population. These "bread-and-butter" programs, at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels form the core programming base of many institutions, and were set up quickly to meet the challenge posed by the Vietnamese boat crisis when institutions were bombarded with large numbers of students seeking enrollment. To some extent, certain institutions did lean towards a particular type of program -- the YWCA, for instance, became well known for its basic level program in small groups. What was missing, however, was program specialization by different institutions into specific areas according to their programming strengths, which could increase program diversity and reduce program overlapping and duplication. A recent decline in student enrollment (provincial government spokesperson, interview. Edmonton, May 9, 1989) has created a trend towards tailoring programs to meet varied student needs and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) types of programs are increasingly appearing on the scene. Most of these programs are designed to incorporate the skills and vocabulary that are specific to a trade, profession or academic pursuit.

The increase in ESP programs has created a shift in the programming base of some institutions. In one part-time institution, for example, there was a shift in programming base towards more academic ESL programs which combine English with specific subject areas, such as mathematics and science. A variety of other ESP programs have also appeared on the scene, some of which include:

- English for Foreign Nannies;
- Community Interpreter Skills Training;
- Pronunciation for Professionals;
- English for Academic Purposes;
- TOEFL preparation;
- ESL and literacy
- English for Women, etc.

In addition to the above ESP programs, EWP (English in the Workplace) programs have been offered to some extent in workplace settings. These programs are funded by CEIC under the Skills Investment component of the Canadian Jobs Strategies programs and are offered by the part-time ESL department at AVC. They are "designed to improve the general communication between employers/managers and immigrant workers in specific workplace situations, thereby improving efficiency, productivity and workplace environment" (Alberta. Career Development and Employment, 1988a:2). The course has to be conducted for a minimum of 80 hours and for each workplace project that is undertaken, AVC conducts a needs analysis and designs a custom made curriculum which emphasizes vocabulary and language skills for that particular work setting. The cost of the program is largely borne by CEIC or AVT, but the company involved in the program pays for at least half the employee's training time. English in the Workplace programming on a wide scale would enable a greater use of English and increase the degree of fluency attained by immigrant workers, however, currently, EWP program application is very limited. A number of ESL practitioners who were interviewed attributed this to the lack of full-time personnel to initiate and implement the program and to market the concept to employers who hire immigrant workers. An employer involved with the program expressed the desperate need for



programs of this type in Calgary and outlined the situation from an employer's point of view:

...new immigrants at work become isolated because they cannot communicate. We had some workers here who kept to themselves for six years. The EWP program took their isolation away. Before, there was a great deal of insecurity, mistrust, fear and isolation because of a lack of communication. There are not many EWP programs in Calgary and there are many workplaces where people with low vocabulary and language skills are barely getting by. For them, it is a painful experience.....they experience a negative range of emotions -- like anxiety, depression and a low self-image, and stay in a world of their own. Many get fired because they are not effective with English.

(Employer, garment industry, interview. Calgary, March 1, 1989).

Another special needs program that has appeared on the scene recently (since 1986) is the Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP) whose major objective is to meet the language needs of special groups such as women and seniors who have had difficulty accessing the full-time and part-time programs provided by "mainstream" institutions. The program delivery is mostly project based and is done through community agencies such as CIAS and CCIS. This program will be discussed in greater depth within the context of non-formal approaches in ESL programming later in the chapter.

Many ESL practitioners and settlement workers favour this growing trend towards program specialization. A settlement worker stated:

Recent research within the ESL community supports the position that for some second language learners, fluency is best attained when the language is acquired through ESP type programs, rather than learned in the traditional classroom setting.

(Settlement worker, interview. Calgary, February 24, 1989).

A similar viewpoint was expressed by an ESL Coordinator who stated that:

People in EWP (English in the Workplace) or ESP (English for Specific Purposes) programs are two or three times more effective in the program. When specific course content and ESL are juxtaposed side by side, greater learning takes place. There are enough agencies giving ESL instruction, therefore, the move towards ESP programs would be positive.

(Program Coordinator, interview. Calgary, February 9, 1988).

However, while there have been a number of ESP and EWP program initiatives, such programs have not been diverse and expansive enough to bridge the major gaps that exist in the ESL programming scene and part-time programs have an important role to play in bridging some of these major gaps:

### **GAPS IN PART-TIME PROGRAMMING**

a. **Programs for Non-Academic Students.** These students have different learning goals, educational backgrounds and learning styles. Many of them have a poor self-image and need the type of setting in which they are not competing with other students with higher academic competence. For instance, Spanish women who were placed in classes where other students were learning at a faster pace began to lose self-confidence, saw themselves as poor learners, became defensive and at times, dropped out of regular class settings. The Settlement Language Training programs partially fill this need, however, this program is currently offered on a small scale relative to a huge need, therefore, further programming is needed in this area.

b. **Programs for Students Illiterate in the First Language.** While the full-time program offers a pre-basic component, there is need for more pre-basic programming at the part-time level. Instructors who have some training in teaching pre-literate students are needed to combine instructional approaches, methodology and materials appropriate for pre-literate programming as these needs are not adequately addressed at present. An instructor at the University of Calgary stated:

A low level of literacy in the first language is a huge problem. There's little chance that they'll be able to teach illiterate students English using present methods....there is a great need for special education techniques in a special education program.

(Instructor interview, Calgary, February, 1986).

The presence of teachers with first language capability could be beneficial, not only in conducting student evaluation and testing in the first language, but also

in establishing a comfort level for students in the classroom setting. Small student groups with bilingual teachers using special techniques could facilitate the learning process for the students, until they are ready to be merged into the normal classroom setting.

c. **Literacy Skills Programs for students.** Many new immigrants with a reasonable educational background (six to nine years) do not have literacy skills in English, even after taking English for 3 to 5 years. Many traditional programs at the full-time as well as part-time program levels emphasize communicative competence over literacy skills, therefore, programs that centre on literacy skills are critically needed.

d. **Programs Which Utilize Bilingual Teachers.** A majority of programs in Calgary do not utilize bilingual teachers, with the notable exception of some Women's programs and outreach programs. Student feedback has indicated that at the pre-literate and basic levels, many students appear to have little comprehension of what is going on in class, and feel that the presence of a teacher with versatility in two languages would enhance comprehension.

e. **Programs Which Combine ESL and Vocational Training.** Calgary does not have a program similar to that at Fairview College, which runs for 28 weeks and combines ESL and Vocational/Trades training. From the students' point of view, upgrading to mainstream program demands a heavy commitment on time and many students feel that they do not have the next ten years at their disposal to invest into upgrading courses. Many students have expressed a preference for bridging programs that lead to short-term skill training courses that afford better opportunities for placement in the job market.

f. **Ethno-specific Courses.** Such programs could utilize bilingual instructors in ethnic community settings for new immigrants who feel threatened by mainstream programs in traditional educational institutions. Some new immigrant

groups experience special linguistic difficulties, and for them, heterogeneous classes with multiple language groups do not provide the answer. Ethnospecific courses, possibly offered by ethnic communities and organizations, could focus on those aspects of language learning that pose special problems to specific ethnic groups.

**g. Programs Incorporating Lifeskills and Academic Upgrading For Immigrant Youth.** Such programs are critically needed for immigrant youth from 18-25 years old who have had a limited, interrupted education. This group appears to belong neither in the high school setting nor in the adult educational setting, therefore, transitional ESL programs are required to meet the special needs of this group.

**h. English in the Workplace (EWP) Programs.** Many new immigrants currently in the workplace setting experience difficulty communicating with employers and fellow workers. EWP programs, tailored to meet the needs of individual workplace settings where work-specific language can allow immigrant workers to be more effective, are needed to bridge the existing gap.

**i. Outreach Programs.** The SLTP programs are engaged in outreach to some extent and individual agencies, such as the YWCA also conducts some outreach programs. Targeted groups such as homebound immigrant women or seniors, receive home tutors to teach them English in familiar surroundings. The intent of such programs is to increase the students' comfort level with the language, and to raise their level of confidence so that they are able to access mainstream language programs. Such programming, however, is still limited, and greater program expansion is needed.

**j. Radio and Television Programs.** The need for these programs, again, is to facilitate access to target groups such as homebound seniors and women, as well as to enable students in other programs to acquire more practice. A comment made by a Calgary ESL student was "I try to learn English on Sesame Street - it helps with

the work we do in class! (student interview. Calgary, March 15, 1989). Language programs on ethnic channels could offer instruction and practice in a familiar setting, utilizing bilingual instructors.

k. Neighbourhood English Classes. Most programs require that students go to centralized locations to attend classes. This creates difficulties for many students who cannot access such classes on account of transportation difficulties and/or lack of day care facilities. The concept of neighbourhood English classes in various geographical locations throughout the City, would make language training easily accessible and available for new immigrants who need such training. The SLTP initiative in this direction needs to be greatly expanded upon by other ESL programs.

Overall, greater program diversification in some of the above areas would create a healthier programming base, which would enable institutions to specialize in programs best suited to their particular strengths and resources, as well as allow students greater program selection in keeping with their special needs. The initiation of such a diversified programming base would also reduce program duplication and overlapping. The current situation, which has seen the inception of programs by institutions at random, without a centralized focus and direction on what constitutes overall ESL program goals and objectives, has created fragmentation of programming effort. Concern was expressed by an ESL practitioner over current ESL programming when she stated that "...programs are springing up everywhere. Now there are more groups identifying needs and trying to address them, leading to program conflicts and overlapping." (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, February 23, 1989). Other programmers, however, have expressed the viewpoint that program duplication is not necessarily detrimental. "Why go to AVC downtown when the school board offers a similar course in the student's neighbourhood?" (Part-time Coordinator, interview, Calgary, February 16,

1989) While the availability of programs at different geographical locations for student convenience has justification, the existence of identical program offerings in the downtown area by AVC, the school boards, YWCA, etc., within short distance of each other, has questionable value.

The above issues highlight some major characteristics of the part-time ESL programs in Calgary at a policy and administration level. Valuable insights into part-time programming can also be gained at the level of program implementation, in the context of the classroom setting. Several classroom observations were conducted in a variety of ESL classrooms offering part-time ESL programs at such institutions as the YWCA, the Arusha Centre, the Calgary school board, the Calgary Catholic board, AVC, etc. While each classroom setting contained features that made it unique, many classrooms shared certain characteristics which were, by and large, common to most programs, and these can be highlighted.

#### **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION - THE CLASSROOM SETTING**

As is the case with the full-time program, there is a potpourri of students of varying ethnic backgrounds and ages -- from those illiterate in their own language to professionals; from students of lower socioeconomic class to those from middle socioeconomic classes; from young adult immigrants, to seniors. Because of such diversity, students do not, at times (especially in larger classes) form true, homogeneous groups in class, or share experiences unless they come from the same ethnic background or country of origin. In larger classes, students tend to cluster in groups, depending on ethnicity or country of origin and converse in their mother tongue unless the teacher makes a special effort to mingle the groups in the class. In smaller groups, such as at the YWCA, the group is more likely to be homogeneous.

Class sizes vary, from small groups of 3 to 12 students at the YWCA, to larger classes at AVC where there may be 20 to 25 students in the class. From the teachers' as well as the students' point of view, small groups (no more than 12-14) allow greater student interaction and enable the teacher to give more individualized attention to the students. Some students feel that the size of the ESL class affects their ability to learn the language. A Vietnamese student stated "...if a class is crowded, the teacher can't help the individual students, and sometimes, the students get completely lost" (Student, interview. Calgary, March 15, 1989). Part-time classes are based on the voluntary participation of students and the atmosphere is not one of high pressure, in contrast to AVC's full-time program. Classroom rules and conventions are also more relaxed and in tune with the perceptions made by Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox (1975) who state that in most adult education classes, there are no rules other than "... general social expectations governing deportment, dress, grooming, interpersonal manners, classroom posture and so on" (page 15). Students can arrive more casually or late, and move around the classroom. In some classes, coffee is provided.

The classroom arrangements of some part-time programs also provide a contrast with the full-time program. The teacher does not necessarily always stand in front of the class, as is the tendency in many full-time classes, but mingles far more with the students. In some classes, a "U" shaped classroom arrangement is used. At Arusha Centre, the pupils were seated in a circle of which the teacher formed an integral part, setting a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. For literacy classes, Kozol (1985) favours the small-group "circle of learners" and states:

I have come to be convinced that groups of six or seven learners and one literacy worker represents an ideal unit of instruction. The presence of a circle of half a dozen friends or neighbours helps to generate a sense of optimistic ferment that is seldom present in one-to-one encounter. It may also cut down on the learner's fear that he or she is different or deficient or unique.

(Kozol, 1985:108).

By and large, there is not as great an urgency placed on homework and teachers are more attuned to student circumstances such as fatigue, family responsibilities, etc. During a visit to an SLTP program, the instructor explained the futility of relying on students to keep up with their homework assignments and stated ".....if you give homework, you can't expect that it will be done, therefore, you can't rely on homework to form a part of your lesson plan". In this particular program, every lesson is a contained unit within itself, to allow for inconsistent attendance and student inability to keep up with any work that might be assigned. This approach contrasts strongly with the full-time program where some teachers feel that students are up against time and should, as a result, maximize the opportunity they have been given to attend the full-time program, ensuring that they produce a certain amount of homework when it is assigned to them.

Part-time programs are also characterized by flexibility in curricula design and methodology. There are no specified guidelines to follow within the broad mandate assigned to the programs by their funding sources, therefore each program is formulated and implemented by the objectives and perceptions of the individual institutions. As with the full-time program, methodology is also wide ranging and may encompass many different approaches such as grammar translation, audio-lingual etc. as well as the more recent communicative and eclectic approaches favoured by many ESL practitioners.

Similar to the full-time program, the teacher in the part-time program is often the student's first contact with the mainstream Canadian population. However, while the full-time program has a professional counsellor on staff to whom students in need of assistance are directed, part-time programs, by and large, cannot afford such professional assistance on site. Because part-time programs comprise a smaller educational setting, teachers are expected to be generalists rather than specialists, and their role is considerably expanded. In the absence of a



professional counsellor, part-time ESL teachers assist new immigrants with their problems and become their friend, confidant and advisor in a real sense. In the full-time program, the student must arrange a formal appointment ahead of time to see the counsellor, but in the part-time program setting, much of the advice and assistance can be carried out on an informal basis between the teacher and the student, relying on the rapport, interaction and trust that have been built into the teacher/student relationship. At times, student/teacher interaction can go beyond the classroom and into the social setting -- for instance, during a part-time class, Vietnamese students extended an invitation to the teacher to a forthcoming New Year's festival which the teacher gladly accepted. Such interaction between the teacher and students is less likely to occur in a larger institution such as AVC, where teacher/student interactions are kept at a more formal level.

While part-time programs on the whole display a less formal approach to the implementation of ESL programs, there is a great deal of variation in the extent to which programs are "formal" or "non-formal." Fordham, Poulton and Randle (1979) argue that adult education suffers from constraints imposed by registration requirements, fees, pre-determined curriculum and a formal organizational structure, which may be intimidating for those unaccustomed to such a setting. Thompson (cited in Fordham, Randle, Poulton, 1979) suggests a change from this formal mode of operation and states:

We have to change our style of operation. We have to meet people on their own terms in settings where they feel comfortable and discussing issues about which they feel a need to know. Initially this means that university buildings, lecture rooms, teaching, long reading lists, academic terminology and the whole hidden curriculum of our way of operation, are out.

(p. 214).

The use of non-formal approaches provides a viable alternative to ESL instruction in the formal, institutional setting, especially for students unaccustomed to the formal educational system. Simkins (cited in Fordham, Poulton and Randle,

1979) views a non-formal approach to program delivery as both more autonomous and environment based. Two part-time programs in the Calgary setting stand out as programs which fit more closely, Simkins' concept of non-formal adult education. The first of these is the Stepping Out program for women, which was initiated jointly by the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre under the federal government's Settlement Language Training Program. Targeted to reach isolated women who were unable to attend regular ESL programs because of child care and other home responsibilities, the program is often the women's first contact outside the home setting and provides a vivid contrast to the formal, structured, full-time program offered at AVC. A major program objective is to reduce or remove the barriers to participation that homebound immigrant women face, consequently, the program goes to where the students are and offers ESL classes in a neighbourhood setting which can be easily accessed by the women. Currently, three different geographical settings within the city are used to make the program more accessible and church basements often serve as meeting places where child-care facilities are provided on site. Provision is also made for transportation through the distribution of bus passes and the use of car pools. No fees are charged for the program, therefore program cost does not constitute a barrier.

The mode of delivery and curriculum design display flexibility and an attempt to meet the women's "real" needs. The first phase of the Stepping Out program consists of outreach, whereby paid tutors go into the homes of homebound students and offer instruction on a one to one basis. In a secure and familiar setting, learning can take place at the student's own pace and level of capability and the student can also have input into the lesson content thus providing her with a language learning experience over which she has some control. At the end of Phase I (lasting six weeks), it is hoped that the student will have acquired some knowledge of English

and will also have gained a level of confidence that will enable her to engage in the second phase of the program.

The Learning Circle phase of the program consists of neighbourhood English classes comprising small groups of students (numbering 8-12) and an attempt is made to set an informal classroom climate that is conducive to participation. Opportunities for socialization are built into the methodology, as exemplified by a lesson built around cooking samosas and sharing them, thus, language learning and socialization are woven together into a single learning experience. Learning tasks are kept at a simple level to ensure successful outcomes. The use of bilingual instructors who constitute a major drawing card for the program, is considered critical to the success of this program. Their presence establishes a comfort level for the students who are able to express themselves in the first language when need arises, in order to comprehend what is happening in the classroom. The use of first language dictionaries without fear of repercussion is another factor that adds to the students' comfort level and provides a contrast with the full-time program where the use of first language dictionaries is discouraged.

The structuring of curriculum and curriculum content also contrasts with the traditionally structured full-time program where lesson content may often be taken from books based on abstract language learning theories. Goodlad's (1983) findings on the K-12 learning situation could easily be applied to the traditional adult ESL setting when he states:

1. Teacher-talk is by far the dominant classroom activity. Teachers rarely encourage student-to-student dialog or provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively in small groups, to plan and set goals, or to determine alternative ways of achieving these goals.
  2. The emphasis of the curricular process is on recall, not on problem-solving inquiry. Again, students work primarily alone or in large-group settings, rarely collaborating on tasks requiring division of labour, integration of effort and shared rewards for accomplishment.
- (p.552).

Sauve (1984) similarly pinpoints the problems inherent with the traditional curriculum when she states:

We have felt that the prevailing notions of curriculum have not served well those learners who did not "fit the mould", who failed to achieve the objectives set for them by the educators. It follows that if the curriculum is failing these people, it may also be doing only partial justice to those who are able to fit themselves within its structures. We believe that curriculum is dynamic rather than prescribed, that relevance and personhood are the operative characteristics of a good curriculum.  
(abstract).

Literature on adult education supports the notion of allowing students some degree of involvement with planning their own educational experience (Rosenblum and Darkenwald, 1983; Knowles, 1980). The participant centered approach, according to Sauve (1984), draws upon the students' life experiences and encourages creative self-expression which becomes the material for the learning activity rather than peripheral to it. For example, conversation, a bonus in the traditional approach, becomes the basis for a number of learning activities, and may be shared orally, in writing or in art form when knowledge of the language is limited. The curriculum of the Stepping Out program is loosely structured and participant centered, based on themes and skills that learners express an interest in, such as "Your child's school", "Family recreation", "Tenancy", "Community and social services", etc. Thus the aim of such participant-centered lesson development is to draw the focus away from the teacher and allow the students to take a greater degree of responsibility for the type of learning experience they wish to engage in.

Arusha Center's "Making Changes Program" for women is also unique in its approach towards a participant centered approach. Formulated for immigrant women, the major goal of this pre-employment program is "to empower women to take control of their lives by validating their life experiences so they can begin to build for the future" (Program Coordinator, interview. Calgary, February 3, 1989). The program includes, among other components, planned phasing of activities such

as life skills, academic, vocational and English upgrading, assertiveness training, job search skills, employment search and follow-up to meet individual needs. The program is based on the concepts expounded by Paulo Freire who equated the traditional instructional approach to the "banking model" (Busnardo and Braga, 1987) of education in which the teacher is viewed as the repositor of all information, while the student is the passive recipient for whom "the scope of action allowed.....extends only as far as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits" (Freire,1972). Freire would rather

.....create, through.....group experience, a situation where the individual stops being a passive object crammed with information by his teacher. Instead, he begins to look critically at his environment and the influence it has on him, to make his own decisions.

(p.58-60).

A visit to Arusha's ESL class revealed a small group of immigrant women learning English in a totally non-formal setting. Seated in a circle (reminiscent of Kozol's "circle of learners") of which the teacher was a part (therefore non-threatening), the participants were encouraged to talk of their own life experiences, using group discussion to build awareness. Participants' strengths were elicited and built upon, imparting a sense of self-worth, self confidence and a feeling of control over things. The approach approximated Freire's "problem-posing model" which "encourages students to develop a **critical** view of their lives and the ways to act to enhance their self esteem, and improve their lives" (Wallerstein, 1982:3). Students were encouraged to gain a greater awareness of their environment, to look at the barriers in their lives and to overcome barriers over which they have control. Using an experiential approach, the contents of the lesson were drawn from the real life situations of the students, emphasizing issues that were meaningful to them. In one class, for example, a student who was experiencing problems with her apartment building manager, related her experiences. This problem provided the content for the lesson, and at the end of the class, armed with appropriate phrases, vocabulary

and other language skills, she felt better able to handle the situation with the building manager. The teacher's role throughout the class was that of a facilitator and both the teachers and students shared experiences and helped each other, generating a classroom climate that was relaxed, friendly and supportive.

In the non-formal setting at Arusha, I, as an observer was invited to participate and was encouraged to become an integral part of the sharing and exchange that characterized the circle of learners. The teacher used my external input and turned it into a language learning experience, emphasizing a certain turn of phrase, point of grammar and other language learning concepts. This contrasted greatly with my role in the traditional classroom settings, where I was merely an observer who sought to be as unobtrusive as possible, and where the teacher tried to conduct the class normally, ignoring the presence of an "outsider" as far as possible.

According to Goodlad (1983), educators in developing countries are taking a second look at the ramifications of the traditional mode of instruction on both the young as well as the older population in their countries. There is mounting interest in non-formal education as a means of providing an educational experience that has greater relevancy and immediacy of application in such areas as literacy, health education, etc. In light of the growing literature which casts doubts upon the efficacy of traditional modes of learning for certain groups of people, (Goodlad, 1983; Burnaby, 1988), nonformal approaches offer a viable and attractive alternative that have not, to-date, been sufficiently explored in the second language education of new immigrants in Calgary. Besides having the advantages described above, a non-formal approach would also allow the adult ESL learners to engage in self-directed learning, as demonstrated at the Arusha Centre, so that their learning efforts can be centered on language use which is most meaningful to them. Rather than practicing on tapes which contain workbook oriented material which have little meaning for them, students can, with the help of the teacher, create individualized

tapes that build upon vocabulary and language skills needed to act out situations that the student is most likely to encounter. Such self-directed learning efforts can then be put to test in real life situations such as communicating with a landlord, shopping in the supermarket, meeting a child's teacher, etc. giving the student a greater degree of control over his/her language learning experience.

Between the more structured, traditional mode of instruction of the full-time program and the non formal, learner-centered mode of the community based programs, are many part-time programs which veer towards one or the other, or favour some aspects of both modes of instruction, however, even in the part-time setting by and large, most programs in Calgary are based on the traditional, generic approach to teaching ESL.

#### **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION - TEACHERS' VIEWPOINT**

Some teachers (part-time teachers, interview. Calgary, February 16, 1989) expressed concern over the fact that many students, particularly S. Asian students, often come to class with preconceived notions of what an ESL class should be. Accustomed to the traditional, authoritarian mode of instruction, they feel that they are not learning anything unless the lesson is grammar and workbook oriented. They question the value of spending class time on field trips such as visits to the zoo, the Performing Arts Centre, etc.

This expectation on the part of the students poses a problem for coordinators and teachers and makes informal and innovative approaches difficult. However, as one teacher viewed the situation:

You have to try a new approach, such as learning through discussion and conversation, or a field trip, and at the end of the session, point out and explain to the students what new skills they acquired as a result of the activity -- what new words and phrases they learnt, what points of grammar emerged, and gradually, they will begin to realize the value of these approaches.

(ESL practitioner, interview.  
Calgary, October 27, 1988).

Some teachers try to "give the students what they want", and accede to the students' request for more grammar, however, a teacher expressed caution about emphasis on the grammar-based approach. In her class, two students had been tested on grammar skills and they scored 98 and 100 marks respectively on their written tests. The teacher initially thought that they should be upgraded to an advanced class, yet when she asked the question "What is your name?", the students could not respond.

Teachers' perception of students' difficulties varied from class to class and from one teacher to another, but by and large, teachers felt that students lacked the opportunity to speak English outside the classroom setting, that they were afraid to speak out, in case "they made fools of themselves", and that students with low levels of literacy in their own language e.g. the Cambodians, had great difficulty in the class setting. The seeming lack of progress by some students can be frustrating for teachers who feel ineffectual in their attempts to remedy the situation because of limited funding and resources, and in some cases, because of a lack of knowledge and skill in handling pre-literate students.

The above discussions offer a part-time program perspective on the second language training of new immigrants. One factor that emerges clearly is the existence of a great diversity of programs offered by a variety of institutions, each engaging in the process of program planning and development according to its own philosophy and mandate. In the absence of a central coordinating mechanism at the government level to give the programs direction and to co-ordinate the disparate elements, there is duplication of effort. Given the existence of this reality, the ESL programming scene is characterized by competition between various institutions for scarce funding and falling student enrollment. It is interesting to observe the extent to which various institutions and professionals co-operate in the delivery of adult ESL. McDougall (1981) has stated:



Co-operation has benefits providing a more balanced overview of topics, enhances shared learning of skills, increases communication regarding the nature and objectives of particular programs and can increase the breadth and depth within programming.  
(p. 72).

Some program coordinators have expressed the view that the development of ESL programs is not as fragmented as would appear because there exists a great deal of professional integrity among program coordinators who are supportive of each other. That some degree of effective co-operation is present is evidenced by the existence of the CAESL (Calgary Adult English as a Second Language) Committee which acts as the main liaison between all major ESL delivery institutions in the City, including AVC, the school boards, YWCA and Mount Royal College, etc. Within CAESL, issues of common concern are discussed and plans of action formulated when necessary. For instance, Arusha's "Making Changes Program" is co-facilitated by the Calgary Board of Education which handles the ESL component. The Stepping Out program is co-facilitated by Arusha, CIWC (Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre) and the Calgary Board of Education. However, by and large, the degree of co-ordination does not extend to decisions over selection of program offerings based on the programming strengths of different institutions. Rather, co-operation is mostly found to exist when programmers need to express a joint opinion on issues that are of common concern to them, or when they are trying to pressure the government over funding policies. The competitive nature of programming makes some degree of rivalry between different institutions inevitable as institutions try to compete with each other for a common funding pie. A program Coordinator stated that a program initiated by her institution which experienced a great deal of success was started by other institutions as well. Taylor (1981) comments on the difficulty of avoiding program duplication:

....It is impossible to completely rationalize a system of continuing professional education in which each organization would offer only those programs assigned to it, without overlapping into another organization's territory.  
(p. 70).

Within the area of part-time programming, there is also a perception by some practitioners that the centralization of the full-time program at AVC creates a monopolistic situation which makes it impossible for other institutions to gain entry into full-time ESL programming. Calgary is the only city in which CEIC's funding for the full-time ESL program is channelled into a single institution. Two points of view have emerged on this controversial issue of program decentralization. On the one hand is the view expressed at the provincial government level which states that AVC has the capacity and resources to deal with all the students forwarded by the government and that from the administrative point of view, dealing with a single institution reduces complexity and creates efficiency of operation.

On the other hand, part-time programmers argue that the existing monopolistic approach negates creativity and healthy program development; that decentralization in terms of types of programs, funding as well as geographical location, would acknowledge that there are other longstanding, high quality programs available; that a better solution would be to adopt the process operating in other centres such as Toronto, where CEIC solicits offers from several institutions to whom contracts can be awarded to run certain programs, depending on need. The resulting competition would create greater program diversity, which would allow the ESL students greater freedom in the selection of appropriate programs so that they could, for example, opt for a full-time program closer to home, pick a program that offered day care or one that utilized bilingual teachers or bilingual teacher aides.

At present, AVC's monopoly of the full-time program has decimated some part-time programs and has created, from the viewpoint of an ESL practitioner, "mass produced, assembly line education." For students, the freedom to select an appropriate program from a diversified full-time program base is curtailed as they

are forced to conform to the only available full-time program, whether they fit the mould or not.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has offered a part-time program perspective on the second language training of new immigrants in Calgary. There is a wide range of program offerings by different institutions, each with its own mandate and program objectives, however, while programs display their own unique characteristics, they also share some common characteristics. For many programs, survival is tenuous because of their dependence on a sparse and volatile funding base which does not only create difficulties for program initiation, development and expansion, but also proves problematic for teachers who are often hired on a contract basis with minimum benefits and at rates lower than ATA rates.

The lack of uniformity and standardization in part-time programs causes confusion for students. While there is some move towards standardization at the provincial government level, such a move, from some program planners' viewpoint, would be detrimental to the flexibility and adaptability of part-time programs which constitute its major strengths. The part-time program setting offers a wide range of programs, although most programs adhere to the "core" ESL courses at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels. Falling student enrollment in recent years, however, has witnessed a trend towards greater program specialization by ESL institutions. While a range of ESP programs are now available, including academic ESL programs, literacy programs, EWP program, etc., major gaps in part-time programming still exist and need to be bridged to create a more healthy programming base.

In the context of instructional setting, there is a wide range in the quality of program offerings and an equally wide range of curricula and methodological

approaches. Some programs offer a marked contrast to the formal, structured approach of AVC's full-time program and Simkins' definition of formal and non-formal adult education is used to compare two non-formal programs which are community based and participant-centered, with AVC's institution based, teacher-centred program. Part-time teacher viewpoints highlight their concerns over student expectations which create difficulties in the implementation of non-formal and innovative program approaches. Teacher concerns also extend to lack of opportunity for students to practice English and to the limited progress made by some students because of low levels of literacy in the first language.

The dynamics that operate in the ESL setting in terms of co-ordination and competition between different institutions reveal strong co-operation over common program concerns, such as funding, but weak interaction over program selection and offerings. The initiation of programs by different institutions at random, without an overall plan or direction creates fragmentation of programming effort that results in program duplication and overlap and fosters competition because of scarcity of resources and falling student enrollments. AVC's monopoly of the full-time program has denied part-time programs access to CEIC's funding base.

Overall, part-time programs make an important contribution to the ESL programming scene, especially for new immigrants who are unable to access the full-time program, as well as for students who wish to go beyond the 20 week program offered at AVC. The range of part-time programs, their flexibility, as well as the community orientation of some programs offer students choices on the type of ESL learning experience they wish to engage in.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PROGRAM RECIPIENT - THE NEW IMMIGRANT PERSPECTIVE**

Second language training programs initiated under the two major delivery systems described in the previous chapters have an important bearing on the life chances of new immigrants in their attempt to adapt to the Canadian way of life. In any consideration of the second language education of new immigrants, it is important to gain some understanding of their experiences, for the experiences they bring with them and the subsequent experiences they undergo as new arrivals color their perceptions of second language education in Canada.

This chapter looks at second language training issues from the perspective of the new immigrants. "Culture shock" and its effects on new immigrants who find themselves disoriented in an alien culture are discussed, highlighted by the settlement experiences of one of the Vietnamese "boat people". The new immigrants' search for second language training brings to light the major difficulties they encounter in accessing and participating in such training and the roles of voluntary agencies such as Calgary Immigrant Aid Society (CIAS), Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre (CIWC) and the Immigrant Vocational and Language Referral Centre (IVLRC) are outlined in terms of the assistance they offer. Barriers to participation in adult second language programs are examined, with special reference to two groups of new immigrants - Vietnamese men and Spanish women. The plight of new immigrants without a knowledge of English is described and the price they pay in terms of human cost is delineated. The chapter concludes with the new immigrants' perception of their second language learning experiences.

## CULTURE SHOCK AND THE NEW IMMIGRANT

Most new immigrants, especially refugees who have had to flee from political oppression in their homelands, are eager to begin a new life in their country of adoption. They come with expectations and hope for a better life than the one they left behind. Taft (1973) has described the new immigrants' adjustment to a new society as a process of resocialization whereby new immigrants have to learn and develop new coping mechanisms. Some of the social skills, knowledge and values that were critical for them to function in their home cultures, are no longer considered appropriate in the new society (Nguyen, 1987). According to Eisenstadt (1954), new immigrants must undergo a certain degree of desocialization before they can be resocialized. This process of adjustment is demanding and stressful and may, almost invariably, lead to emotional disturbance which Oberg (1960) calls "culture shock".

Adler (1975) defines culture shock as "a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences" (p. 13). The negative manifestations of culture shock have been well documented. Oberg (1960) refers to consequences such as strain, a sense of loss and rejection, confusion, anxiety and even disgust and indignation. Furnham and Bochner (1986) highlight feelings of alienation and anxiety, lack of confidence and distrust of others, while Adler (1975) refers to more severe manifestations such as feelings of panic resulting from trauma and crisis situations. While acknowledging the negative impact of culture shock, Adler however, also views it as a transitional experience which can lead to the adoption of new values and attitudes, leading to self-development and personal growth.

Oberg describes four major stages of culture shock. During the first few weeks, most individuals demonstrate fascination with the new and may comment on

the height of buildings and the cleanliness of the streets, etc. This honeymoon stage, lasting a few days to six months, is ended when the individual is confronted with reality which he often has serious difficulty coping with. A settlement worker in Calgary offered her perception of the effects of culture shock during this stage in new immigrants she comes in contact with:

When a new immigrant arrives, he's unaware of what is going on, he seems lost. A host of questions and decisions confront him -- who's going to help me? How do I get a job? How can I learn the language? Will I ever get used to this country?

(Settlement worker, interview. Calgary, January 30, 1989).

This second stage, for some, may be characterized by resistance or rejection of the host society, leading to feelings of hostility which grows out of the genuine difficulties and frustrations which the new arrival experiences in the process of adjustment -- language problems, accommodation problems, transportation problems and a myriad of other problems band together to challenge him at every turn. Gradually, as the individual begins to acquire some knowledge of the language and begins to get around, the process of adjustment to the new cultural environment takes place. According to Oberg (1960), the individual takes a "this is my cross and I have to bear it" (p. 179) attitude and begins to become interested in the people of the host country and their culture and the adaptation process begins. This stage of resignation is followed by the final stage which brings about resolution of the problem whereby the individual reaches a degree of adaptation which allows him/her to feel comfortable with the new way of life.

For many, the adaptation process cannot go very far because of the new immigrants' continuing inability to communicate in English. Many "boat people" from Vietnam, for example, who arrived in the late 70s and early 80s, still do not speak English very effectively and appear to be locked into a cycle that is difficult to break out of. They never make it to the stage of resolution.

One new immigrant who was able to adapt himself successfully is Hung (not his real name), who was one of the Vietnamese boat people. To escape an oppressive communist regime in Vietnam, Hung escaped by boat to Malaysia where he underwent the rigors of living in a refugee camp for three months before he was sponsored by the Canadian government and arrived as a refugee on Canadian shores. Hung reflected on his settlement experiences in Canada:

I came to Canada in September, 1980, with 176 people. Most of them didn't speak or write English--everything was very new and very different in Canada. The government found me an apartment to live in, but at that time, there was no language training, so I stayed with an English speaking family. I looked for a job, but couldn't find one as I couldn't speak English. I walked and went into apartment buildings and asked for a job. I got a job as a caretaker. But I couldn't understand anything--I couldn't even talk on the phone. After six months as a caretaker, I found work as an assembler with the help of a friend. I was too tired to go to school in the evenings to learn English. I had no information on English courses. There was no full-time course until 1982-1983 and I went to apply for it, but the CEIC counsellor told me "You have come to work here, not to learn English." I never got into full-time ESL, but I began to upgrade myself with part-time English courses. I can now qualify for full-time ESL, but I don't need it any more. When I needed it, I didn't know about bursaries or any financial assistance for the courses, so I paid for the course out of my pocket. I asked friends to bring their laundry to me - I washed and ironed shirts to make enough money to take an English course.

(Interview. Calgary, October 18, 1985).

There are many stories like Hung's. Hung was one of the fortunate few who was finally able to communicate in English and was able to upgrade himself, but his thoughts dwell on the many friends and relatives whose efforts at settlement have not always been successful.

#### **TYPES OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS**

Hung came to Canada during the earlier wave of immigration from S.E. Asia, when government and community assistance for New Canadians was in its earlier stages - language programs for adults at that time had not been a strong feature of their education in Canada. Immigrant men learnt English on the job while the women, confined at home, had little exposure to learning English (McLeod, 1984). Since the early eighties, however, ESL and other programs for



New Canadians have proliferated. While most immigrants are sponsored by their families already living in Canada (designated family class), or can be classified as independents who are self-supporting, about 22 percent of newcomers to Alberta (Alberta Career Development and Employment, 1988b) are government sponsored refugees like Hung, fleeing political oppression in their homelands. Many of the government and community programs are aimed at assisting this group of people.

A new immigrant seeking assistance is likely to come in contact with voluntary organizations which perform valuable services in helping many immigrants get accustomed to the Canadian way of life by giving direct assistance in various ways (Hawkins, 1988). The organizations that new immigrants are most likely to come in contact with in Calgary are agencies such as CIAS (Calgary Immigrant Aid Society) and CCIS (Calgary Catholic Immigration Society). These provide settlement/integrations services for New Canadians including orientation, assistance with settlement problems through counselling, provision of translators in several languages, referral to mainstream or specialized services, etc. Employment programs for new immigrants are also offered, including counselling, placement, job search skills, etc. The main target group for CCIS is the government sponsored refugee. Approximately 82 percent of its clientele of 6,500 new immigrants belong to this group, whereas CIAS serves more Independent and Family Class immigrants who constitute about 55 percent of its clients. CIWC (Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre) provides support and information for immigrant women.

From the new immigrants' perspective, the establishment of contact and receipt of assistance from the above organizations can make a significant difference in their process of adaptation, especially in the case of the government sponsored refugees whose entry into Canada may not have been a voluntary one. On arrival into the city, government sponsored refugees are met at the airport by CCIS representatives and taken to the Margaret Chisholm reception house which provides

temporary accommodation during the first week of stay in Canada before their eventual settlement into an apartment. Next day, new immigrants are interviewed and advised by CEIC counsellors and provision is made to meet their living expenses and other needs. CEIC, assisted by CCIS, provides for the new immigrants' basic needs for a year and also provides for their language training in the full-time, 20 week program at AVC, if they are eligible.

### **PROBLEMS INHERENT IN PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE**

While government assistance for language training is appreciated by the new immigrants, problems arise over the nature of assistance. From the new immigrant perspective, access to language training is a sore point (Buchignani, 1982; Seward and McDade, 1988). Restrictive eligibility criteria of the full-time language training program deny program access to special groups such as immigrant women and seniors since they are not workforce bound and therefore not eligible to receive basic training allowances (explained in Chapter 1). In 1986, 87 percent of immigrant men but only 47 percent of immigrant women were identified as labour force bound and therefore eligible for the full-time training allowance (Canada. Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988). Also, new immigrants belonging to the Family Class and Assisted Relatives class are not eligible for the language training allowance as it is expected that sponsoring relatives will provide language training for them.

From the new immigrants' perspective, eligibility criteria for language training decided by CEIC can be subjective and based on personal views more than on language needs and realistic assessment of the social needs of the individuals and their families. While accessing financial assistance for the prospective ESL student from sources such as CEIC, SFB (Student Finance Board), part-time bursary, social

assistance fee subsidy and AVT funding, a settlement worker felt there were inconsistencies in the criteria applied for accessing funding assistance and stated:

We have discovered discrepancies in the implementation of eligibility criteria, the amount of financial assistance granted and the availability of first language assistance for potential students....the present system, as it stands, is cumbersome and inconsistent, with an overall negative effect on the clients.

(Senior Settlement Worker, Interview.  
Calgary, October 18, 1985).

To exemplify, two clients in similar financial circumstances apply for a part-time bursary for a \$35.00 course fee - one client receives \$300.00, the other receives no bursary. Again, two government sponsored refugees apply for CEIC's training allowance. One is eligible, the other is not, although they both appear equally eligible to the settlement worker.

Also, as pointed out by the Canadian Task Force on Mental Health (1988), the new immigrants' "personal backgrounds, learning goals and settlement needs are frequently overlooked during assessment" (p. 26). During the boat crisis, the economic climate was buoyant and CEIC put a premium on job acquisition while language training was given secondary importance. "Imbued with the notion that securing employment was the highest priority for all refugees, government sponsored refugees were often pulled out of such language programs whenever any kind of work was available to them" (Indra, 1987:153). In this sense, the short-term, employment oriented policy of the government has had a negative impact on the new immigrants' chances of success in terms of long-term adaptation because language acquisition, the critical tool for adaptation, was relegated a secondary role to employment orientation.

A government sponsored refugee who arrived in Canada in 1979, Lee (not his real name), was given financial support while he attended English classes. In his fourth week of training, he was told by a CEIC counsellor to "find a job and get out of the government's pocket." Lee argued that he needed support to continue his

ESL training, so that he could have a better chance at acquiring a job, but he was not allowed to continue (interview, Calgary. October 21, 1985).

The government's response to such incidents is expressed by CEIC official dealing with new immigrants:

While it is the Federal Government's responsibility to help new immigrants settle into the Canadian way of life as soon as possible, CEIC never made the commitment that when immigrants come to Canada, we'll put them to school. We only help if we have money to help. We know that language is a major problem for new immigrants, therefore, we offer some assistance here. However, we can't serve all clients, therefore, we have a first come, first serve system.

(CEIC official, interview. Calgary,  
December 11, 1985).

From the new immigrants' perspective, government ambivalence and lack of commitment to language training has far-reaching consequences. As stated in Chapter 1, in 1984-85, there existed a long list of 400-600 new immigrants waiting to access ESL, biding their time with frustration until this essential component of the adaptation process could begin for them. Such incidences underscore the perception that the government's policy is reactive, responding to crisis situations. Commenting on the situation, a government spokesperson stated:

The government waits before it acts....It is a band aid approach. Nothing happens on an ongoing basis....

(Government counsellor, interview. Calgary,  
December 11, 1985).

The situation, since 1985, has improved. There is not the pressure for English instruction that existed during the boat crisis and eligibility criteria have not been as stringently applied. Nonetheless, the government's policy perspective remains the same -- full-time ESL training is still offered because the lack of English constitutes a barrier to employment. It is not seen as an integral part of the settlement process, nor does it give a great deal of priority to the personal-psychological or cultural and socially-integrative needs of the new immigrants (Stinson, cited in Indra, 1987:5).

Settlement agencies offer their own perceptions of the problems that new immigrants encounter. A senior settlement worker questions the Federal government's assumption that Family Class and Independent Refugees do not need settlement services. While the Independent Refugees may have their own resources, the Family Class immigrants present a different problem. The government assumes that if a landed immigrant wishes to sponsor his family, he signs an agreement whereby he assumes all responsibility for that individual for ten years and on arrival, will help the new immigrant adjust to Canada in terms of language, currency system, mode of dress, etc. That assumption is being tested because a large number of new immigrants who access the services offered by CIAS (almost 40 percent), are family sponsored, which suggests that the sponsoring families were unable to fulfill the needs of those they sponsored. CIAS carried out a survey of the unmet needs of Vietnamese new immigrants belonging to Family Class (Trinh, 1986). The findings revealed that 80 respondents out of 100 (80 percent) felt that their needs had not been adequately met by their sponsors. The survey pinpointed three areas of basic unmet needs among this group -- 94 percent of the respondents experienced needs in education, namely English as a Second Language; 76 percent experienced financial needs and 77 percent experienced needs in employment (Trinh, 1986).

A first language counsellor with a settlement agency in Calgary, stated the plight of the family sponsored new immigrants:

Their main problem is a lack of money. A family sponsor may have five to six people in the family, all needing English. To pay for the bus pass (\$38 per person) for all of them, as well as to pay for the course fee where no bursaries are available, is beyond a lot of them, so they end up not taking any ESL.

(Settlement worker, interview. Calgary, January 20, 1989).

For the newly arrived government sponsored refugees, their access to the 20 week ESL course at AVC is a straight-forward process. They are guided by CEIC

counsellors or counsellors from the settlement agencies and receive an orientation workshop before entering the program. However, for the government sponsored refugees who arrived in the early 1980s, the situation is more desperate. They were encouraged by government officials to move quickly into jobs which were more plentiful during the "boom" years. With the recession, many of them lost their jobs and also found that they were no longer eligible for the full-time ESL program since they had been resident in Canada for more than a year.

A senior official from a settlement agency stated the problem:

The Federal philosophy is that immigrants should adjust here within three years and we're finding we have difficulty getting funding to help immigrants who have been here more than three years....But the fact is they strongly encouraged the Vietnamese to take jobs that were plentiful here then, without taking time for language training. Their motives were probably good, but the consequences have been disastrous.  
(cited in Smith, 1985c:A6).

The only recourse for many new immigrants who found themselves without jobs as well as language training, was to enrol in a part-time program, either by obtaining a bursary if they were eligible, or by paying for it themselves. Some opted out of language training as they could not afford to enrol. For those who wished to enrol in a part-time program, accessing the appropriate program to suit their needs and capabilities proved to be a difficult task. Some went to the first ESL institution they heard of and could be tossed around from one institution to another to access a course that suited his/her needs and capabilities" (Settlement worker, October, 1985).

At times, course placements were made by government officials who could not communicate with the new immigrants, yet the complexity of training options (different entrance requirements, non-standardized criteria for transfer between courses, etc.) made it difficult for new immigrants to plan their education themselves (Canada. Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988). From the new immigrants' perspective, lack of control over planning his own educational future

increased his sense of powerlessness and dependence on others who may or may not view his future options from his own perspective. Realizing the urgency, the CAESL Committee (composed of representatives of major ESL programs in Calgary), recommended and received funding for a centre which would assist the new immigrants in their search for an appropriate language program. The Immigrant Vocational and Language Referral Centre (IVLRC) was started in June, 1985 to provide a counselling centre where sensitive assessments and consistent, fully informed referrals to appropriate ESL programs could be made.

### **THE ROLE OF IVLRC**

The centre provides English language assessment, educational planning, job search preparation, information, referral and follow-up services to adults with limited English capabilities (Maguire and Lewis, 1988). First language counselling is offered in several languages. The Center's mandate was expanded to include vocational aspects of training since many new immigrants accessing the Center's services were unemployed or underemployed. Those with professional or technical qualifications needed help with occupational goal-setting. In addition, the Centre also played a role in the ESL field as a catalyst for special projects. A number of special projects were initiated, including an ESL program in co-operation with VRRI (Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute) for mentally handicapped adults, matching of individuals with private tutors, setting up two Chinese senior classes in Chinatown in co-operation with YWCA, a course for home-bound immigrant women, an ESP type of course for foreign-trained nurses, etc.

However, problems were encountered in the development of these programs because of time-lag. Potential students were interested in an ESP course at a particular time, but by the time the complexities of starting an ESP class had been ironed out i.e. matching a specific ESL institution with a particular ESP program,

collecting a significant number of students to warrant a class, allowing the institution sufficient time to collect its resources etc., the client was no longer interested in the program due to changed circumstances, since the entire process took six months to a year. Also, because of budgetary constraints, ESL institutions did not have the flexibility to respond to requests for programs on short notice.

From the new immigrants' perspective, the Centre offers valuable assistance. A Spanish senior, for example, goes to the centre and after some form of assessment and evaluation of English and first language capability, is advised by a first language counsellor who recommends the language course(s) best suited to his needs. After three weeks on a course, the counsellor conducts a follow-up to assess if the course was appropriate. On completion, further counselling and assessment take place to channel the client into a different course, depending on need.

Despite assistance from the above mentioned agencies to help the student chart his/her course through the maze of program offerings available in ESL, and despite the full-time program and the range of part-time programs available, learning English has not been a very effective or fruitful exercise for some new immigrants. A Vietnamese community leader (cited in Smith, 1985b:A1) estimated that nearly 80 percent of his community still needed language training. The problem is compounded by other factors which affect the new immigrant's ability to learn a language.

## **BARRIERS TO LEARNING ENGLISH**

Adult education literature acknowledges barriers which exert a powerful influence on the adult's ability to participate in an educational program (Boshier and Collins, 1985; Darkenwald and Valentine, 1985). Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox (1975) identify barriers such as unstable jobs, fatigue, family responsibility, lack of mobility, etc. Tollefson (1985) highlights similar factors, but identifies the



greater vulnerability of certain groups such as the elderly, women and non-literates. An Alberta Advanced Education Report (1983) considers more closely the ESL situation in Alberta and cites such factors as the increasing cost of tuition, lack of access to full-time programs, lack of appropriate counselling regarding educational and vocational opportunities, as well as cultural values that discourage enrollment, especially among women. The report also pinpoints dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction and/or with program content that does not meet the needs of the ESL students, as factors important in non-participation.

Surveys conducted at IVLRC, Calgary, by first language counsellors highlight some of these problems from the new immigrants' perception of the difficulties they encounter in accessing and attending ESL courses. Two target groups selected for the study were:

a) **Vietnamese Men** - The ESL Access Vietnamese Research Project Survey (Phan, 1986) was conducted because an increasing number of Vietnamese men were requesting interpreter services even after residing in Canada for three years or more. The sample included 63 men whose age range varied from 18-55, and who were mostly Family Class immigrants. Financial insecurity was found to be a powerful deterrent in ESL program enrollment (58 percent). Many of the men were unemployed and did not qualify for full-time ESL and could not afford part-time programs. Another major barrier was the frustration and difficulty experienced by the men because of their inability to communicate when interacting with Canadians. The men (41.6 percent) shield away from taking courses as they felt insecure and threatened by encounters with the mainstream institutions. Other barriers included a low level of education (39.1 percent had less than Grade 6 education), and resultant difficulty in learning English, transportation difficulties, family responsibilities, etc.

b) **Spanish Speaking Women** A similar survey by a research worker (Carcamo, 1986) was conducted with Spanish speaking women because it was observed that a number of Spanish speaking women were requesting interpreter services from the settlement agencies despite residence in Canada for over a year. A sample of 50 women, ranging in age from 18-60 was taken. A major barrier which precluded the women from taking ESL classes was the need to work to supplement the family income (43.6 percent). Several women were holding two jobs. 38.5 percent of the women were not taking English because of the lack of child-care facilities with ESL classes and felt they could not afford day-care. 30.8 percent of the women stated financial problems for not taking English. Only 9 out of 50 women knew about the Student Finance Board for possible bursaries, and most of them had no idea how to obtain financial assistance. Other barriers included home responsibilities, poor health and work exhaustion.

### **THE PLIGHT OF THE NEW IMMIGRANTS AND THE PRICE THEY PAY**

For many new immigrants, mastery of the official language constitutes the "sine qua non condition of a successful adaptation" (Dorais, 1987:52). Without a knowledge of English, the plight of the new immigrant to Canada, can be equated, in many ways, to the plight of the illiterate or semi-literate that Kozol (1975) refers to in "Illiterate America". Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox (1975) paint a similar picture when they state that the adult basic education student finds himself "desperately hobbled" (p.37) in handling different aspects of everyday life and is "found disproportionately at the 'dirty end of every index of social well-being" (p. 38).

Personal experiences of many new immigrants endorse the above observations. Most cite their lack of English as an acute problem which is also at the crux of their inability to access or keep a good job. "I realize that English is the key

to success in Canada", said a Vietnamese immigrant, "but I can't go to classes because of financial problems" (interview, Calgary. March 5, 1989). A Vietnamese carpenter, laid off during the economic downturn, sought a carpentry position for which he felt he was well qualified. He was turned down on account of his inability to communicate, and told to reapply when he could speak English. A cutter in a garment factory failed to understand instructions in English and cut some fabric wrongly, resulting in waste and financial loss to the company.

Lack of English often means lack of employment, which creates dependence on financial assistance from the government. Among the Vietnamese community, for instance, unemployment ran at 50 percent during the years 1984-85 (cited in Smith, 1985b). Those who are able to find employment get locked into low-paid, menial positions which make them ineligible for financial assistance for ESL classes. In their home countries, many new immigrants were gainfully employed or self-employed. Many worked as medical doctors, engineers, economists, machinists, etc. In contrast, the type of work they are currently engaged in is outlined in Figure 4. The change in work circumstance is a source of acute stress for the new immigrant and a cause of concern for the settlement worker. A senior settlement worker commented "we are concerned when an architect is washing dishes or when an accountant is cleaning buildings" (interview, Calgary. October 7, 1985).

Immigrant men without work experience a lack of confidence and a low self-image because of their inability to provide for their families in a new country with its strange customs and difficult language. Homebound immigrant women experience acute isolation and sense of alienation, especially since in their home countries, they relied on a network of relationships for support and social interaction. Young immigrants, from 15-25 years old, probably need help the most because the existing Canadian high school system is not geared towards serving their special needs. Teachers with the Calgary Board of Education's core ESL program aimed at new

## OCCUPATIONS OF NEW IMMIGRANTS

IN HOME COUNTRY	IN CANADA
Accountant	Assembler
Administrative Manager	Babysitter
Auto Mechanic	Baker
Aviation Mechanic	Bookkeeper
Baker	Butcher
Bank Teller	Carpet Layer
Beautician	Cashier
Bookkeeper	Childcare Worker
Carpenter's Helper	Clothes Washer
Cashier	Daycare Worker
Clerk	Dishwasher
Customs Officer	Embroiderer
Daycare Worker	Factory Worker
Draftsman/Architect	Farm Labourer
Electronics Technician	Food Services Person
Embroiderer	Goldsmith
Entrepreneur/Proprietor	Greenhouse Worker
Factory Worker	Janitor
Farmer/Supervisor/Manager	Kitchen Helper
Fisherman	Mechanic's Helper
Goldsmith	Nanny
Hairdresser	Salad Person
Knitter	Sales Person
Labourer	Seamstress
Manager	Secretary
Nanny	Security Guard
News Reporter	Sewing Machine Operator
Nurse	Waiter/Waitress
Nursing Assistant	Warehouse Manager
Pharmacist	
Photographer	
Psychologist	
Receptionist	
Sales Executive	
Sales Person	
Seamstress/Tailor	
Sewing Machine Operator	
Shipping Clerk	
Textile Worker	
TV Repair Person	
Welder	

Source: IVLRC, Calgary

Based on clients who sought  
assistance, January - March, 1988

immigrants between 18-21 have observed that many of them face deep personal problems which are alarming:

How can we expect these refugee kids to make the transition from a camp on Thursday to being in the middle of one of the most affluent nations on earth on Friday? Maybe it's not our job, and maybe we can never fully understand the Asian mentality, but somebody had better become personally involved - and fast, before this growing segment of society cracks under the pressure.

(Cited in Smith, 1985b:A12)

A sense of helplessness and lack of control prevails as their attempts to enter the labour market are rejected. A settlement worker dealing with young immigrants stated:

To have to take a menial job and know they have no future--, that hurts them. To take a menial job and know things will be better in the future, that would be bearable, but to have no future, that is very hard.

(Cited in Smith, 1985a:A16).

A spokesperson for the Calgary Vietnamese Canadian Association emphasized that their people experience "everything from the very subtle discrimination of being ignored or snubbed, to straightforward exploitation in the workplace" (Smith, 1985d:A6). Discrimination of ethnic minorities nationally has been documented in the Abella Report (1984) while studies by Buchignani (1982) and De Pass (1988) highlight the reality of the problem in the Calgary setting.

The negative manifestations of culture shock described earlier are greatly exacerbated by the new immigrants' inability to communicate in the language of the host culture. According to a settlement agency worker, many new immigrants display such symptoms of culture shock as loneliness, depression, isolation and paranoia. Pent-up frustrations can lead to violence and abuse in the family and cases of wife and child battery are continually being brought to the agency. Family conflicts and inter-generational conflicts ensue as a result of role reversal, when wives are able to secure jobs while their husbands are unemployed, or when dependency is created on children who are able to communicate in English and

manage to adapt themselves to the Canadian way of life to a far greater extent than their parents. Family breakdowns can lead to mental and emotional problems, psychosomatic problems and medical problems (Chan, 1977; Nguyen, 1979; Tyhurst, 1981). The Canadian Task Force on Mental Health (1988) found a correlation between the inability to speak English and the mental health of the new immigrants, stating that the inability to speak the language of the host country presents a severe handicap as it leads to alienation and emotional disorder. A settlement worker expressed the feelings experienced by some new immigrants:

...underneath it all, there's a great deal of anger -- they (the new immigrants) came here with hopes of a better future than the one they left behind, only to realize that their future here is bleak and hinges on their ability to master a totally new and hard to learn language."

(New immigrant counsellor, interview.  
Calgary, January 30, 1985).

### **THE NEW IMMIGRANTS' PERCEPTION OF ESL COURSES**

While most new immigrants are appreciative of the ESL programs available and the financial assistance provided, and while some have, indeed, reached a level of proficiency in English that enables them to adapt to Canada with greater ease, many feel that the ESL programs do not meet their needs. Interviews conducted with students, teachers, settlement workers, etc. highlighted the students' perception of ESL programs.

Students were often confused by the numerous program offerings and found it difficult to map out where they were in terms of their language education and where they were heading, especially in view of a lack of standardization of programs. Assistance is given to them by settlement agency workers, IVLRC, teachers, etc., but "sometimes, they just do what they are told to do without any conviction of where it is leading them" (new immigrant counsellor, interview. Calgary, February 17, 1989).

Many felt that the full-time ESL program (20 weeks), is of very short duration and does not allow most of them the opportunity to gain a reasonable level of proficiency which will significantly improve their life chances in Canada. Similar views have been expressed by new immigrants elsewhere. A study conducted in Ottawa (Nguyen, Cooke and Phung, 1983), revealed that 83 of 285 students were not satisfied with their language training programs. Of the 83 students, 80 percent felt that the language course was too short. "The consensus was that a six month ESL program is not sufficient for most refugees even to acquire basic, conversational English" (Nguyen, Cooke and Phung, 1983:16). Some students found the formal, institutional setting of the full-time program threatening. Because of their lack of confidence and poor English, they felt embarrassed and fearful when they were asked questions in class, especially when the class was composed of mixed ability groups with other immigrants who had familiarity with the western educational system and languages. Some students also shied away from classes where they felt they were treated like children. In the words of one student "...our problem was we couldn't speak English, but we were treated like we didn't know anything -- like we were children" (student interview. Calgary, March 15, 1989).

As far as part-time programs are concerned, while these were perceived to be valuable, many students felt that their progress was very slow and that programs demanded a very heavy time commitment on an on-going basis which they often found difficult to sustain because of the pressures of full-time work and family responsibilities.

By and large, new immigrants whose mother tongue is totally different from Western European languages have greater difficulty learning English (ESL teacher interview). Chan (1976), for example, takes the perspective of the Chinese students learning English and states that their difficulties in learning English are compounded by the fact that they have to learn under difficult circumstances --

difficult because a high level of achievement is expected of them in a relatively short time; because their achievement is often underrated by the fact that they have first to catch up with the native speakers; because they are taught by Canadians, many of whom cannot understand the peculiar problems that Chinese students experience in trying to learn English; and because the learning materials used in ESL classes are often foreign to the students as far as the cultural context is concerned. Similarly, a Vietnamese mental health worker stated that "learning English is 'something horrendous' for the Vietnamese because many English sounds are absent in Vietnamese and are very hard to master" (Smith, 1985:A1).

In particular, students from non-European cultures with a low level of literacy in their own language were often totally at a loss in programs with a "submersion" approach. Surveys conducted by first language counsellors at IVLRC (Carcamo, 1986; Phan, 1986) showed students' preference for bilingual teachers, especially at the beginner or basic levels.

While many new immigrants, driven by the prospect of successful economic integration into Canadian society, are highly motivated to learn English, the emphasis of many ESL programs on cultural assimilation into Canadian society is likely to reduce that motivation. Chan (1976) states that if assimilation is the expectation, then Chinese students suffer a handicap because while the Chinese tradition respects and even admires the West, the philosophy that guides many of them is "learn from the West, but do not be like them. You must always remember that you are Chinese" (Chan, 1976:9).

By and large, students also felt that a practice component was missing from many programs, and that opportunities for practicing English should be built into the program. Also, because of barriers such as transportation, time, inclement weather, etc. students expressed a preference for ESL classes in different geographical locations for ease of access. Those who worked shifts found it difficult



to fit into any existing ESL programs and therefore wanted more flexible hours when courses could be offered to accommodate their special needs.

Many students felt that learning English was a long, drawn-out process and that quite often, they could not see any tangible results of the hard work they were putting into ESL training. Some expressed a sense of disenchantment and futility at the basic structuring of programs such as the employment oriented full-time program which does not take the personal goals of the students into account. A Latin American student who had been a fourth year medical student in his home country strongly voiced his perception of the intent of full-time language training:

The full-time ESL program provides enough English for you to get by and do menial jobs. Many other students feel the same way. When I tried to explain my goals to the teacher and said that I wanted to study more, I was told to go and find a job.

(Student interview, Calgary, March 15, 1989).

An ESL teacher empathized with the situation many new immigrants find themselves in:

If we only have 20 weeks of ESL, there is no choice but to take a communicative approach. The students cannot acquire literacy skills in that time. But people have future goals -- they are not likely to integrate into the Canadian culture after 20 weeks of ESL. Once the students see how the ESL programs are structured, they say they have been brought here to be cleaners, to do menial work. If things remain the way they are, the new immigrants will ghettoize, with resultant consequences in terms of racial discrimination and tensions and inequality in work and every facet of Canadian life.

(Full-time ESL teacher, interview.

Calgary, February 23, 1989).

It would appear that not a great deal happens to students on completion of the full-time ESL program. Most students who are offered the course because they are labour destined, end up in marginal occupations which offer little opportunity for security or self-actualization. Those who have future goals, may work as well as take part-time courses. Those who are unable to find work may also take up part-time courses, followed by more part-time courses. Some give up, sensing a degree of futility in that exercise:

Clients are disillusioned. They see a long tunnel of ESL leading nowhere. We need to help clients set goals and develop a plan for the client to help him reach his goal.  
(Maguire and Lewis, 1988).

This disillusionment is echoed by a Vietnamese student:

You have to be really motivated to take up English for a long period of time. You have to make sacrifices and give up everything to learn English. But what are the spin-offs? When we see what is happening to friend X who has been taking ESL for five years and has not improved his English significantly and is not much better off--or Mr. Y who has been stuck at the same level for the last two part-time classes, it seems pointless. A friend who was a certified welder in Vietnam is working as a cleaner because he still hasn't been able to get his qualifications certified here...it is frustrating. In the meantime, we have to work, to feed our families.  
(Interview, Calgary. March 30, 1989).

It is clear that while the existence of ESL programs have had positive benefits for many new immigrants and helped them with the settlement process, for many more, the road to ESL training is a rocky and lengthy one, and the rewards at the end of it, meagre.

### **Summary**

This chapter has highlighted the new immigrants' perspective in the area of second language training. Second language training cannot be isolated from new immigrants' experiences both prior to their arrival in Canada as well as their subsequent resettlement experience, therefore, a consideration of culture shock, particularly its negative manifestations which leads to disorientation and emotional trauma, is important as it constitutes part of the "external baggage" that new immigrants bring with them to the ESL classroom.

In their search for second language training, new immigrants access a range of services provided by voluntary agencies such as CIAS, CCIS and CIWC which facilitate the resettlement process. However, problems exist in the provision of assistance, stemming from the government's policy. Lack of access to programs for certain segments of the new immigrant population such as women and seniors as well as subjective eligibility criteria by CEIC counsellors has engendered feelings that access to ESL programs is based on unequal treatment. Also, the tendency to

channel new immigrants into the workforce without adequate language preparation shows a lack of sensitivity to the personal goals and aspirations of new immigrants who wish for better life chances in their country of adoption.

Difficulties experienced by new immigrants in the selection of appropriate ESL institutions and programs led to the creation of IVLRC (Immigrant Vocational and Language Referral Centre). One of the major functions of the Centre is to refer new immigrants to appropriate programs, based on their financial needs, work history, educational background, etc. and to conduct follow-ups with their clients periodically to gauge the outcome of the referrals.

Despite assistance from various sources, the search for second language education has not been an effective or fruitful exercise for many new immigrants who cannot participate in programs because of barriers. Transportation difficulties, cost of tuition, family responsibilities as well as dissatisfaction with the type of instruction are factors that keep new immigrants away from ESL classes. Surveys conducted on two special groups of new immigrants, namely, Vietnamese men and Spanish women, highlighted their own perceptions of barriers to participation in ESL programs.

The plight of new immigrants without a knowledge of English underscores the critical need for second language training. For many, the lack of English is at the crux of their inability to find and keep a job and to function as part of the mainstream society. Many remain marginalized in low-paid, menial occupations. The cycle of despair generated by culture shock and the lack of English extends into the social structure of family relationships. Pent up frustrations lead to conflict and abuse in the family and set the stage for severe mental health problems among many new immigrants.

A consideration of the new immigrants' perception of ESL courses revealed that while many of them were appreciative of the assistance they were given, many

felt that the full-time program was of too short a duration to be effective and that its employment orientation did not take their personal goals and aspirations into account. Some felt threatened by the formal, institutional setting of the full-time program. Many felt that the part-time programs, while valuable, were difficult to sustain on an on-going basis as they demanded a heavy investment in time. Also, the existence of numerous programs caused confusion over program selection. Students with low levels of literacy experienced great difficulty in the "submersion" programs in formal settings and the assimilatory nature of many programs was considered to be a negative factor by some students. The tendency to emulate the K-12 school setting in many traditionally structured ESL classrooms did not always take the adulthood of the learner into account, a factor that did little to bolster the students' self-concept.

Overall, the structure and nature of program delivery in ESL has led some new immigrants to question the government's intent over the initiation of second language program provision. Some students have felt that the programs are merely designed to provide enough English to qualify them for the "menial job market", that the effort and sacrifice they go through amount to no more than a dead end. However, while there is cynicism and disillusionment, there is also the hope that somehow their persistence in seeking ESL instruction will be fruitful. It is a gamble that they must take, however meagre the payoff.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

Discussion in the previous chapters has centered on the ESL question from three major perspectives, namely, the government and policy perspective, the program delivery perspective and the new immigrant perspective. Through these divergent perspectives, patterns of ESL program formulation, operationalization and interaction became more clearly delineated, giving some indication of the trends and developments in the ESL program setting. The ESL area is complex and multifaceted and the issues that emerge are embedded not only within an educational context, but in a political and social context as well. While this complexity makes it difficult for the major stakeholders to reach consensus on their approach towards the second language training of new immigrants, a greater merging of perspectives is essential for the successful formulation and implementation of ESL policy. To realize this, it is important to have an understanding of the dynamics that operate between the major stakeholders' perspectives.

#### **THE DYNAMICS OF PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES**

CEIC's role, as a major stakeholder, has been the most significant in refugee resettlement and its perspective on second language training has exercised a most powerful influence on the direction of ESL programming in Canada. However, while government funding has made it possible to offer a wide range of ESL programs, CEIC has not proved to be very flexible in adjusting its assistance to concrete and variable refugee needs (Indra, 1987). This has made it difficult for new immigrants to influence the way in which the second language learning situation was defined or the services that they would receive. For example, the

government's rigid emphasis on the employment orientation of second language training programs has made it difficult for it to view the need for language training as a critical tool in terms of the overall, long-term settlement needs of new immigrants, and therefore, has failed to provide a policy to reflect that need.

The new immigrants' perspective has reflected best of all the reality of their plight and the acuteness of their need for second language training, but it has also underscored their inability to influence the government's perspective. Their situation can be compared to that of functional illiterates referred to in the Southam Literacy Report (Calamai, 1987) as "an army in numbers only. They have no leaders, no power, little support, few weapons and no idea where they are headed" (p.7). They are, however, increasingly gaining external support from institutions and agencies that come in contact with them and provide assistance to them on a regular basis.

From the program delivery perspective, institutions are caught in a difficult situation. On the one hand, their mandate requires that they fulfill the government's broad stipulations on ESL programming delivery; on the other hand, they must also fulfill what they perceive to be the new immigrants' "real" needs. An ESL practitioner asked "Whose interests do we really serve? Must we do what the government wants us to do? We get our funding from them -- or do we do what we think the new immigrants need?" (ESL practitioner, interview. Calgary, February 7, 1989). Some institutions, do, however, have greater flexibility in charting their own courses according to their perceptions of new immigrants' needs than others.

Because of their direct contact with new immigrants, voluntary agencies have had a far more "multifaceted understanding of their clients' settlement problems and successes than anyone in government" (Indra, 1987:155). Such understanding, however, has caused some frustration and led to a certain degree of friction between the government officials and the voluntary agency workers because of their

divergent viewpoints. According to Indra, the voluntary agencies have had a more holistic view of the settlement needs of new immigrants, while the government perspective has reflected "bureaucra-centrism" or the tendency on the part of government officials to "interpret wide-ranging refugee needs in terms of narrow program charters. Refugee needs were or were not given significance largely in relationship to whether they were covered by pre-defined programs" (Indra, 1987:156). Such bureaucratic entrenchment has distanced the government from awareness of how its policy affects new immigrants in terms of their very real human needs as new arrivals in an alien country.

Upholding divergent viewpoints, the government and the voluntary agencies have thus been locked in their respective paradigms, which did not ease the process of co-operation and understanding between them. According to Indra (1987), the government was reluctant to provide adequate resources to the voluntary community sector to do its job well. Without such resources, the community agencies could not effectively influence the government. Despite this, voluntary agencies provided valuable input to the government about complex new immigrant concerns and needs on second language learning and settlement issues which the new immigrants themselves were unable to do. Paradoxically, they also legitimized particular government perspectives to new immigrants because their funding and operating mandates were derived from the government, to whom they were accountable.

While the efforts of the voluntary agencies on the new immigrants' behalf created a greater awareness of the new immigrants' language needs and concerns at the government level, it is questionable whether the perception of new immigrants' needs by the voluntary agencies always coincided with the new immigrants' own perception of needs. A survey done by the Immigrant Vocational and Language Referral Centre (Maguire and Lewis, 1988), stated that community agencies

emphasized the need for acculturation into Canadian society and social support systems more so than did their clients. Also, the service agencies' focus on career planning, basically a North American concept, was not seen as relevant by many new immigrants.

The new immigrants' perspective on their second language training needs could best be reflected by ethnic organizations, however, ethnic communities in Calgary have not developed sufficient political means to influence government policy and do not have the resource base necessary to play a more significant role in the settlement and adaptation process (Indra, 1987). Ethnic institutions could provide "an effective, culturally appropriate vehicle for short-term programming aimed at immigrant settlement and adaptation, complementing the contribution of voluntary organizations" (p.167). Currently, this runs counter to the Federal government's perspective which places emphasis on the role of the government and non-ethnic voluntary organizations for meeting the short-term needs of new immigrants. Greater ethnic community involvement would enable them to clearly define and meet the specific needs of their own communities (Indra, 1987).

Thus, the major stakeholders in the ESL programming scene are all strategically placed with respect to the issues of second language training of new immigrants, but those who are better placed, namely the government, have the means and the power base to reach solutions to these issues in light of their own perceptions and definition of the situation, which may or may not reflect the real needs of the target population for whom the programs are designed and developed. A greater merging of perspectives, so that major stakeholders work towards the common goal of providing ESL programming that considers the complex and pressing needs of new immigrants, is essential for the effective management and implementation of ESL programs at the national as well as local levels.



## **ESL PROGRAMMING AND MULTICULTURALISM POLICY**

In addition to giving due consideration to the divergent perspectives discussed above, the formulation of an ESL policy must also consider the operationalization of ESL programs within the context of Canada's policy on multiculturalism. Announcing the Federal policy in 1971, the then Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau stated that "....a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians" (McLeod, 1984:31). He also emphasized the concept of "cultural pluralism" and the right of ethnic groups to develop and practice their own culture and values within the context of the Canadian society as a whole. A major objective of the government's multiculturalism policy is to:

....promote and encourage equality of opportunity for full and equal participation in the social, political and economic life of Canada for all cultural and racial groups; and to ...facilitate the integration of immigrants in Canadian society, including assistance in the acquisition of one official language.

(Canada. House of Commons. 1984a:2).

In reality, the government's objectives under its multicultural policy have not been met by existing provisions for second language training. Many new immigrants exit from the full-time ESL program at levels of proficiency in English that barely enable them to function in society at a survival level. Without equality of opportunity, many new immigrants become locked in low-paid, menial occupations. Porter (1965) has argued that the Canadian ethnic mosaic is a vertical one and that there is a close relationship between social status and ethnicity. According to Porter, the visible minority groups comprising Canadian Asians and blacks and native Canadians are relegated bottom position on the totempole of social status. Thus Canada is still far from being an "egalitarian mosaic" and the government's structuring of its second language training policy, which results in minimal competency in the official language for many new immigrants, is likely to foster rather than change the pattern of the vertical mosaic.

At the program delivery level, while the policy of multiculturalism advocates the concept of "cultural pluralism", many ESL programs lay emphasis on the "assimilation" of new immigrants into Canadian society (McLeod, 1975; Taplin, 1987). This negates the wealth of knowledge, experience and culture that new immigrants bring with them. Commenting on the operationalization of ESL classes in the school (K-12) setting, McLeod observed that:

.....in classroom after classroom...immigrant children ...are being subjected at this very moment to continued programs of Canadianization based on the concept of and belief in assimilation. There is an irony to these programs, for the teachers of them often think that by teaching them they are doing something for multiculturalism.  
(McLeod, 1975:29).

Literature on bilingual education reflects a similar viewpoint (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Cummins, 1986; Churchill, 1986). ESL programs in the school setting can be equated with Skutnabb-Kangas' Type 2 typology of bilingual education which aims at monolingualism in the language of the majority group for minority children through "direct, brutal assimilation" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981:126-127). In order to be accepted into the mainstream culture, the minority groups have to be like the majority group as much as possible and give up their own cultural heritage. As Skutnabb-Kangas points out, this "submersion" model of second language education which is commonly used in Canada and Australia, has had negative consequences in countries where it is practiced (e.g. Sweden), and has resulted in the failure of minority groups in educational settings (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Cummins, 1986). Churchill (1986) similarly outlines government responses to educational problems experienced by minority groups in industrial countries in a model which comprises 6 stages (p. 52-53). The first four stages view the students as the cause of the educational problem because of a deficit in their background (e.g. scholastic deficiency, unfavorable socioeconomic status, etc.) and solutions to mend the deficit focus on assimilation in varying degrees, from harsh assimilation in Stage 1 and 2 to soft assimilation in Stage 4. Language maintenance and language equality, as

opposed to assimilation, are only proposed as solutions in Stages 5 and 6 where the problem is seen as "something other than a deficit" (Hebert, 1989:3). In Alberta, the government's response to second language training can be equated to the Stage 1 solution in Churchill's model, based on harsh assimilation and this concurs with Skutnabb-Kangas' Type 2 typology of bilingual education.

Bain and Yu (1985), view forced assimilation as the root of many of the educational and social problems of minority groups and their children. Hebert (1989) emphasizes the "devastating psychological and social consequences of rapid mainstreaming" of minority children and states that "the problem lies with the question of equality..or the extent to which the special educational needs of minority groups are recognized" (p.1). Failure to succeed in the educational setting has caused frustrations for many immigrant youths who have received "submersion" type of second language programs which "educate future assembly line workers and future unemployed, future losers" (Skutnabb-kangas, 1981:128). In terms of parameters which measure social injustice, such as suicide rates, crime, alcoholism, psychiatric difficulty and unemployment, immigrant youths score high in all these categories (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981). Immigrant youth frustration is becoming increasingly apparent in the Calgary setting as small groups of youths, unable to adjust to the pressures of settlement and assimilation, drop out of ESL courses and find solace in becoming a part of the street culture.

In the adult ESL setting, Skutnabb-Kangas' Type 2 typology (direct, brutal assimilation) still applies, although the approach is softer because adult new immigrants are voluntary participants. Nonetheless, the submersion approach is evidenced in teacher frustration when students identify with their ethnocultural heritage or speak their language. In some classrooms, the use of a dictionary in the students' mother tongue is discouraged. The use of bilingual teachers or a bilingual aide is very limited, despite repeated requests from students for this type of

assistance in the classrooms, particularly at the basic level. Ultimately, in many ESL classes, English is used as a vehicle for the students' assimilation into the host culture and a suppression of their own culture. An adult ESL teacher commented:

New immigrants have to learn things that are Canadian. In ESL classes, we have to teach them to think and live in Canada, therefore, their own culture has to be suppressed to enable them to learn the target language and the social and economic way of survival.

(ESL Practitioner, interview. Calgary,  
March 7, 1989).

On the other hand, a settlement worker felt that the "immersion" approach "degraded" the new immigrants' interest in learning, especially in classes at the early basic level. She further stated that:

Some seniors who had been through the 20 week, full-time program didn't learn anything...For them, it would be more comfortable to have a bilingual instructor. Two new immigrants recently quit after the second class, as they didn't understand a single word. They felt dumb.

(Settlement worker, interview. Calgary,  
January 30, 1989).

Cummins (1986) suggests that a major reason for the failure of attempts to redress the problems lies in the interaction and power relationships between the majority and minority groups -- in the classroom interactions between teachers and students, in the relationship of the educational institution with the minority community and in the intergroup power relations within the society as a whole. According to Cummins, power relationships between groups are an important part of the failure of minority groups in educational settings. He states that students from "dominated" groups are either "empowered" or "disabled" as a result of their interaction with educators in the educational setting. The extent to which the minority groups' culture and language are incorporated into the educational institution setting will predict academic success. By inference, in the context of the adult ESL setting, the submersion approach which negates the students' own language and culture puts the student in a "disabling" position. Cohen and Swain (cited in Cummins, 1986) ask the question "Is the failure of many minority students

in English-only immersion programs a failure of cognitive/academic difficulties or of students' ambivalence about the value of their cultural identity?" (p.23).

In the political setting, ethnic organizations can be "empowered" to play an active role in providing assistance in the settlement and adaptation of their groups in Canada. Cultural organizations, through recognition from the government and with a resource base provided by the government, could become mainstream institutions with a meaningful role to play (Indra, 1987). In the classroom setting, students can be "empowered" through programs that foster "consciousness raising" (Orem, 1987) and that allow active student participation in program design and development, thus allowing them some degree of control over their language learning experience.

The second language training of new immigrants is thus mired in a complexity of social, political and economic issues and the degree to which an effective structural base and policy for ESL programming can be formulated depends on the government's perception of the importance of such training for new immigrants. Funding is a major issue in ESL programming because the government has not deemed it necessary to give greater priority to ESL programming. To-date, the ESL field has been relegated a fringe position relative to the basic education system and this marginal position has manifested itself at different levels.

### **ESL AS A MARGINALITY AREA**

In the political sense, new immigrants who take part in ESL courses are a part of a minority group in a society dominated by a majority group. Consequently, they have a weak power base with little say in the decision making process that decides their lifetime chances. Vital decisions, such as access to programs, eligibility criteria, purpose of second language programs, etc. are out of their hands and decided upon by policymakers from their own perception of the situation. The lack

of language competence sees many new immigrants locked into marginal occupations which foster ghettoization and shut them out of mainstream Canadian society, subject to exploitation in the workplace and other social settings, and the target of racial discrimination.

The marginality of ESL at the political level is also brought home by the unwillingness of government departments to take onus for second language training. ESL is a shared mandate and the fragmentation of the program between different levels of government has meant that responsibility for ESL training can be shuffled around by different departments who hesitate to take ownership of the problem, a situation that was described by an ESL practitioner as "buck passing."

At the educational level, adult education occupies a fringe position relative to basic education (Mitchell, 1985), but within the adult education setting, ESL programs hold a fringe position relative to other adult education programs. As already stated, ESL programs are marked by scarce, inconsistent and volatile funding which is crisis-oriented and geared to meet short-term programming needs. Funding amounts are dependent upon the economics of enrollment, and because of scarcity of funding, access to programs is denied to many new immigrants through restrictive eligibility criteria.

ESL teachers and administrators also occupy a marginal position relative to other ESL teachers in the public, basic education setting. There is little interchange at the professional level between ESL teachers in the basic education system and the adult ESL teacher. Teachers in the basic education system do not have a professional affiliation with ATESL, and the adult ESL teachers are not affiliated with ATA. The salaries of adult ESL teachers do not reach the school board levels and very few teachers have tenure. For part-time teachers, the situation is even more marginal; most are hired on a contract basis, with few benefits and at rates lower than the ATA (Alberta Teachers' Association) rates. Also, many do not have

necessary credentials. In a survey conducted by ATESL (1988), approximately 25 percent of the teachers who responded to the survey held a TESL diploma. Teacher accreditation is currently a major issue with TESL Canada and ATESL, and is indicative of their efforts to decrease their marginality through recognized credentials. While the above organizations attempt to inject professionalism into the ESL setting, many teachers, notably part-time teachers, are unable to attend conferences and workshops that entail expenses as they are not paid to attend. Also, the use of volunteers as teachers and aides means that a wide range of qualifications exist, causing inconsistency in the level of proficiency with which instruction is given.

Adult education generally appears to "be in limbo ideologically" (Mitchell, 1985) compared to basic education and ESL, as a newly emerging field, has not been remarkable for the generation of new ideas and radical thinking of the stature of Freire or Kozol to invigorate and invoke a significant change in the second language learning situation for new immigrants, although the ideas of these radical thinkers could fruitfully be incorporated into the ESL setting e.g. Freire's problem posing approach to ESL teaching and his notion of "empowerment" of the new immigrant; Kozol's idea of a grassroot approach to literacy teaching, taking the program to where the people are, in small group settings.

On a positive note, by virtue of its marginal position, the second language training of new immigrants is not under constant scrutiny, and this imparts a certain degree of flexibility to teachers and programmers who can be creative and innovative in their programming efforts within the constraints of inconsistent and volatile funding. It also enables programmers to respond more quickly when a need is perceived as they are not shackled by the demands and directives of a centralized administrative structure.

Overall, through previous discussions, it is clear that the ESL arena is still in the process of evolving and reflects experimentation and adjustment to address the varied needs of new immigrants. In the past decade, many positive developments have occurred in the ESL area as government funding has paved the way for a host of programs that were previously non-existent. At the programming level, there are many dedicated teachers and administrators who go beyond the parameters of their professional responsibilities to assist new immigrants in their quest for second language education. However, as TESL Canada has acknowledged, there are also "severe problems with Canada's current policy of English language training for immigrants". Discussions in previous chapters have highlighted some of the major problems and some of these can be briefly summarized.

#### **MAJOR FLAWS IN ESL PROGRAMMING**

The second language training of new immigrants reflects the federal government's uncertainty in the provision of settlement services for new immigrants, based on its perception of immigration as a temporary, short-term problem. The lack of an articulated policy on ESL at the national level and the involvement of several government departments at the federal and provincial levels has led to complexity and fragmentation of ESL programming services, resulting in two disparate second language delivery systems, which does not encourage co-ordination and co-operation between the various levels of government. The employment orientation of the full-time program denies some new immigrant groups, notably women and seniors, entry into the program. Assessment for program eligibility conducted by CEIC counsellors are often subjective and inconsistent and do not take into account the students' personal goals, backgrounds and settlement needs. From the students' point of view, the amount of time allocated to ESL training (20



weeks) is inadequate, even for entry into the job market, and is barely sufficient to allow them to function at a survival level or less.

At the program delivery level, the current provision for ESL in terms of funding has led to a scarce, inconsistent and volatile funding base which has led to instability in ESL programming. The lack of co-ordination in planning has meant that the operationalization of program delivery is dependent on the philosophies and objectives of individual delivery institutions. The lack of central directive has led to program overlap and duplication, with most institutions offering "middle-of-the-road" programs at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels. While there has been a recent trend towards ESP programs, many of these are of short duration and there is insufficient emphasis in areas of critical need such as a combination of English with major vocational and professional areas to enable new immigrants who have come here with valuable skills to "unlock" these skills by acquiring equivalency accreditation in their chosen occupations.

The lack of consistency in funding has also resulted in inconsistency in program offerings, especially for project-based programs. This, together with lack of uniformity and standardization in ESL programs has caused confusion for students as they attempt to map out the direction of their second language education. In the classroom setting, the wide range of teacher expertise has led to wide fluctuations in the quality of ESL programs. Most formal instruction on ESL is still based on methods better suited to new immigrants from Europe or other parts of the world who come from educational systems similar to that in Canada. For new immigrants unaccustomed to this system, the struggle to learn English is exacerbated by the formal, structured environment, basic approach (submersion) and instructional methodology. The problem is greatly compounded for new immigrants who have low levels of literacy in the first language for whom such approaches are not very

effective. Kleinman (1985) cautions the use of current methodologies for teaching new immigrants such as the Indo-Chinese and states:

Resettlement of adult Indo-Chinese refugees has taught us that few of the customary assumptions hold, especially in the case of the undereducated refugees. This has been a source of frustration and has spawned a growing uneasiness among refugee ESL educators who question the applicability of ESL research findings, teaching methods and techniques.

(Kleinman, 1985:13).

The flaws in ESL programming policy and implementation have created a situation in which the effectiveness of ESL programming overall is under question. The Abella Report (1984) has recognized that many problems exist in the area of second language education of new immigrants. Similarly, the Southam Report on Literacy (Calamai, 1987) has expressed concern over the large number of new immigrants who make up Canada's illiterate population, stating that:

.....the findings .....cast renewed doubt on the effectiveness of immigrant language courses given to an estimated 100,000 immigrants this year. Functional illiteracy runs at 50 percent among foreign-born multilinguals...whether they took some sort of language course or not.

(p. 22-23).

The situation is worse for new immigrants from South Asian countries. After four years of settlement in Canada, only about 20 percent are able to use English for everyday transactions (Calamai, 1987). ESL teachers have expressed frustration at the short duration of language programs and have stated that literacy cannot be produced within that time frame - nor can oral proficiency be achieved by new immigrants - after 20 weeks of ESL. This can be contrasted with the twelve months federal public servants spend on courses in bilingualism (Calamai, 1987). Yet, at the government level, warnings of a literacy crisis are largely ignored. "The government's record on literacy is a series of opportunities wasted, warnings ignored and political pettiness displayed by both the Liberal and Conservative administrators" (Calamai, 1987:44).

The Canadian Task Force Report on Mental Health (1988) has indicated that fragmentation of service is endemic to the way in which settlement services for new immigrants are generally organized, and that structural weaknesses lie at the root of many of the problems and difficulties experienced in settlement services, stating that "...the way in which services are organized is dictated too much by political and professional fiefdoms rather than by patterns of need" (p.52). Bearing this in mind, it would appear that a mere adding on of specific programs at random, or the remedying of one or two areas of difficulty in ESL programming under the existing framework, will merely serve as a band-aid approach which fails to address the root of the problem. Any recommendations on ESL programming would therefore need to look at the setting up of a new structural base to meet the changing language needs of new immigrants.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for a centralized ministry or government department at the national level to look after the settlement needs of new immigrants wholistically. Since settlement needs are interrelated and overlapping, such a ministry should incorporate varying settlement needs of new immigrants including language training, social services, employment training, social benefits, health, etc. (Canada. Canadian Task Force on Mental Health, 1988). Under the existing setting, new immigrants need to access services from several departments and agencies, leading to an "exhausting and demoralizing trail of referrals from one office to another in search for more specialized help, for reasons which they cannot understand and which they may interpret as rejection" (p.51).

Within the framework of a centralized ministry, there should also be more specific provision for the second language training needs of new immigrants. A national policy on ESL should delineate broad policy parameters within which

localized modifications can be allowed to fit specific local needs. Such a policy should encompass the perspectives of the major stakeholders in the ESL arena, with special emphasis on meeting the "real" needs of the new immigrants. Such a policy should also consider the Federal government's multicultural policy, with its emphasis on cultural pluralism, and seek ways to ensure that there are built-in mechanisms that ensure that ESL policy provisions can be effected at the provincial level. Thus, a centralized policy can provide a clear goal and focus, and act as a unifying force that can bring closer together the divergent perspectives that mark the ESL arena.

TESL has suggested the implementation of a national policy on ESL and has embodied its suggestions in "The Six Principles" (1982). Its recommendations have been very comprehensive and suggest an ESL programming base that integrates the social as well as the employment needs of the new immigrants. These recommendations can be incorporated into the centralized structure suggested above. TESL's major recommendations are as follows:

1. That access to English as a Second Language programs should be a basic right of all new immigrants, irrespective of immigration status, sex, age or labour force orientation; that new immigrants should have the opportunity to take language training for both employment needs as well as social needs and that the two should not be mutually exclusive; that adequate living allowances must be provided for all new immigrants; that special attention must be given to groups currently seriously disadvantaged by the lack of specialized programming, such as immigrant women, seniors and youths; if required, special facilities, such as day care, etc. should be provided to enable special programs, such as immigrant women, to attend classes.

2. That programs should be more flexible and sufficient to meet the diverse needs of new immigrants, from those illiterate in their mother tongue to professionals who aspire towards higher goals. Equally, the range of programs

should vary from a basic "core" ESL program, to special needs programs for pre-literates, immigrant housewives, seniors and immigrant youth, together with academic ESL programs, professional and vocational ESL programs, EWP (English in the Workplace) programs, etc. For the latter programs, commitment from the private and industrial sectors should be harnessed to bring second language training into the workplace setting.

In terms of sufficiency, TESL Canada argues that current provision under CEIC results in a very marginal level of competence in English which is barely enough to access low-skill occupations. New immigrants require access to programs which answer their needs in terms of the extent of competence they require in English and this will depend on their educational background and objectives in taking English. Some may merely need English at a survival level while others may need a high level of proficiency to compete equally in a competitive professional job market. Program approaches should also be more varied -- from more formal, structured, academic type of programs to non-formal approaches which can be supplemented by correspondence courses, outreach programs, radio and television programs, home tutor volunteer programs, etc.

3. That there should be national, provincial and local co-ordination. TESL Canada's recommendation advocating collaboration and co-operation on ESL training issues at the government and service delivery levels on an ongoing basis is a vital one. TESL Canada has also recommended that it should, as an ESL professional organization, be consulted during any efforts towards the formulation as well as evaluation of ESL policy and that it should provide a "national focal point" for ESL programming activities in Canada.

4. That community agencies which provide settlement services to new immigrants should receive greater financial support to enable them to perform their tasks more effectively.

5. That ESL materials used for teaching English should include information which increases the new immigrants' awareness of Canadian society. TESL Canada holds that a national program on ESL would also attract Canadian publishers to publish ESL materials with Canadian content and therefore, offer an alternative to the preponderance of British and American published materials;

6. That the importance of the ESL teacher and the ESL profession should be recognized and that in order to provide an acceptable standard of language training which would be comparable across Canada, teachers should acquire suitable professional training.

TESL Canada also suggests a two-stage ESL training approach, incorporating the principles stated above:

STAGE I - this would consist of a three-month (300 hours) ESL program called "Welcome to Canada which would incorporate the teaching of ESL as well as orientation to Canada in the new immigrants' mother tongue;

STAGE II - would involve referral of new immigrants to specific programs best suited to their individual needs e.g. English in the Workplace, etc. once STAGE I is completed.

Most of TESL Canada's recommendations are important and long overdue, however, there are some areas which have not received sufficient attention under TESL's recommendations. TESL calls for a mobilization of different government departments, settlement agencies and the private sector for assistance in the provision of second language training, but the role of ethnic communities has been overlooked. No policy framework on the second language training of new immigrants can be complete without incorporating an active role for communities for whom the programs are designed. Churchill's (1986) findings on this issue reveal that:

a. There is a high degree of correlation between "higher levels of minority participation in the governance process and higher levels of 'success' by the minority in the educational system" (p.115).

b. Participation of ethnic minorities in educational decision making ensures "...a better match between educational provision and minority aspirations" (p.115).

The above findings are significant. If indeed, ethnic community involvement can contribute towards the outcome of ESL programs in terms of their success or failure, then the role of such communities in second language education is crucial. At a National Conference on the Resettlement and Adaptation of Vietnamese Refugees in Canada, a Vietnamese spokesperson expressed a need for "ethnic communities to play a vital role in the design of language training programs for new immigrants" (Diep, 1982:67). Especially, ethnic community involvement at a grassroots level can be invaluable, and a recognition of such involvement by the government would reflect a greater consideration of the new immigrants' perspective on second language training, and would also "empower" rather than "disable" their efforts to learn English.

There is also no mention, in TESL's "Six Principles," of any awareness or move towards a consideration of the negative consequences of "submersion" approaches in the second language training of new immigrants. As long as such programs continue to be assimilatory and "disable" rather than "empower" new immigrants in the sense stated by Cummins, the effectiveness of a new framework for ESL training will be curtailed and the negative consequences of such programming will continue to escalate. A government spokesperson commented that "...a social conscience has to develop to allow the individual to function in this society without relinquishing his identity. None of these issues are resolved. We

know that these issues are there...but we don't necessarily deal with fundamental issues" (Interview, April 25, 1989).

The thrust of ESL programs should also be towards an acquisition of literacy in English rather than communicative competence alone, which appears to be the main emphasis of the full-time as well as many part-time programs. As stated earlier, concern over literacy is growing in Canada. Auerbach (1989) proposes a literacy approach that goes beyond the school setting, and places it within the context of the family. She contends that illiteracy breeds illiteracy, that "in an 'intergenerational cycle of illiteracy', the 'plague' passes from one generation to the next, creating a permanent, self-perpetuating 'underclass' " (Auerbach, 1989:167). Research indicates that (Chall and Snow, 1982; Heath, 1983) children whose attempts at literacy in school are backed up by similar efforts at home, experience more success at school. Studies also show (Chall and Snow, 1982; Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Goldenberg, 1984) that marginalized immigrant families perceive literacy and education as the passport to mobility and that it is important to place literacy within a social context (Diaz et al, 1986).

Accordingly, an approach to literacy patterned after Auerbach's (1989) Family Literacy Model could be implemented in the Calgary setting, placing literacy within a social context that encourages the literacy effort of the whole family in an atmosphere of mutual support. Auerbach's model encompasses, first of all, interaction between parents and children focusing on reading with and listening to children and helping them with their homework, as well as involvement with other activities for children, such as writing notes, recipes, etc. Secondly, it incorporates role reversal whereby children who have made greater progress in learning English can help their parents acquire better literacy skills. Thirdly, individual efforts by parents can be directed towards the use of literacy in addressing settlement problems such as employment, housing, transportation, etc. as well as family



concerns such as child rearing, discipline problems and drug hazards. Such an approach, in Auerbach's view, is far more meaningful than individualized literacy efforts in formal educational settings.

Culture shock and the emotional reaction to it have been discussed in the preceding chapter. While many new immigrants undergo this phenomenon and experience a range of emotions which vary from mild irritability to panic or trauma, little has been done at the ESL policy or implementation level to minimize its effects. Second language education cannot be divorced from the circumstances that bring new immigrants into the ESL classrooms or their plight as they go through the adaptation process in a new country. The interrelationship between sociocultural adjustment and host language acquisition has been mentioned earlier. According to Kleinman (1982), the absence of a strategy to address this issue leaves the ESL program wanting, even if the program design is flawless. "Since many of these external influences imply social service needs of second language learners, a systematic procedure for integrating them with the language program is essential for smooth program operation" (Kleinman, 1982:240).

The type of approach that is followed to alleviate the more negative effects of culture shock is governed by a perception of what needs to be corrected (Furnham and Bochner, 1986). The pseudo-medical model focuses on the negative aspects of culture shock and suggests remedies using a clinical approach. Furnham and Bochner (1986) have been critical of this approach on the grounds that the well-being of the individual is assumed to depend on a healthy psyche, which implies that migrants experiencing difficulties with their cross-cultural experiences have contracted a mental illness which must be treated by means of counselling and psychotherapy. Similarly, Damen (1987) argues that to regard culture shock as a disease or a disorder is a "...denial of the naturalness of the occurrence. Fear of the new is universal among human beings and probably most animals" (p. 226).

Furnham and Bochner (1986) also question the emphasis placed on the notion of "adjustment" which to them, contains ethnocentric overtones as it expects migrants to adopt the values and beliefs of the host culture, at the cost of their own. "The real issue, which is how to improve relations between culturally diverse persons, is not tackled" (p. 235).

Instead, Furnham and Bochner propose intervention through the culture-learning approach, which takes the stance that a major task facing the individual who comes from a different culture, is not to adjust to the new culture, but to learn its pertinent characteristics. Therefore, instead of subjecting the migrant or traveller to therapeutic intervention, they propose programs of preparation, orientation and the acquisition of culturally appropriate skills. Klineberg (1979) has similarly suggested such a form of intervention for students who reside in foreign countries, emphasizing that the students' pre-departure experiences and the degree to which they receive preparation for their sojourn in a new culture will influence their ability to function in the new environment and reduce the trauma of culture shock.

By and large, new immigrants have very little knowledge or awareness of the realities of life in Canada. Many of them lack the degree of sophistication necessary for survival in a technologically advanced country. Accordingly, skills learning can focus on specific areas of difficulty experienced by individuals, and Furnham and Bochner (1986) have suggested several strategies to operationalize the culture learning approach. A major component consists of information giving in areas such as climate, food, religion, customs, etc. to heighten peoples' awareness of the new culture in which they find themselves. In addition, cultural sensitization can be brought about by making people more aware of the cultural bias of their own behavior, through a comparison with the new culture. Measures can also be taken to make the new immigrant aware of the social and economic complexities that

he/she might encounter--such as unethical business practices and exploitation, the problems and conflicts that ensue as a result of settlement, the possibility of encountering racism and discrimination, the norms and expectations of Canadian society in terms of its value structures, etc. A government spokesperson commented that "we should be more forthright about what we are and then there won't be too many surprises for the newcomers -- maybe then there will be a greater level of trust. But we deal with them through the courts and not up front" (interview, Calgary. April 25, 1989).

In the ESL classroom setting, the negative effects of culture shock can be alleviated through efforts to make changes in the learning environment. In most classrooms, minority students are taught by teachers from the majority culture, leading at times to problematic situations. By viewing the cultures of students in the class more positively (Damen, 1986) and applying some of the above suggestions in the teaching/learning context, cultural stresses can be moderated. The ESL curriculum can be structured to impart information on aspects of the Canadian culture and a knowledge of cultural differences between the host culture and the students' cultures can foster smoother interaction between participants who hold very different values and beliefs. Also, according to Damen (1986), it would be useful to reassure students that culture shock is a natural process, a transitional experience that will pass, given time. It would also be useful to ascertain what factors cause the greatest sources of stress for the students and help with providing solutions for them.

Presently, by and large, not only is the new immigrant not eased into the transitional phase of culture shock and its aftermath, but Canadians who deal with new immigrants, such as government officials, social service agency workers, second language administrators and practitioners at times display a certain degree of ethnocentrism and a lack of adequate knowledge of the different cultures which they

encounter (Indra, 1987). This leads to a misinterpretation of new immigrants' intentions. For instance, in the past, government bureaucrats often took silence to imply approval and thought that a lack of protest meant that the new immigrants had no problems. The fact that considerations of personal honor often stopped new immigrants from asking for assistance was a factor which was often missed by officials dealing with new immigrants (Indra, 1987). Only lately have many government officials recognized that they "lacked the specificity required by these refugees to cope with the 'culture shock' encountered in such areas as language, customs, food, climate, distance from homeland, disrupted family units, physical/mental health problems, etc." (Canada. CEIC, 1981:16).

The resolution of some of the issues raised in this chapter are crucial to the development of a multicultural/multiracial society in Canada. The future course of Canadian society can be determined from the actions taken to address the different areas of concern to-day. Failure to remedy the inequities of the existing situation can lead to consequences which have to be faced later - consequences such as the increasing levels of illiteracy among new immigrants; the frustrations experienced by immigrant youth, who, marginalized by their lack of competence in English, turn to the street culture and violence; the continuing isolation of many immigrant women and seniors; the increasing need for mental health, welfare and other services that the persistent marginality of new immigrants necessitates, etc. The intimate relationship of language to the new immigrants' ability to function in Canadian society requires that some action be taken now, before the complexity of issues escalates beyond repair. Ashworth (1978) has stated that a cultural mosaic is a "fragile thing, held together by balance and harmony and easily shattered" (p.192) and that the quality of education that new immigrants receive will influence the future of this fragile mosaic.

Yet, many nations of the industrialized world, including Canada, are failing to meet the educational needs of cultural minorities "even when measured against the limited criterion of education to the minimum necessary to have equitable chances to obtain employment" (Churchill, 1986:8). Hawkins similarly states that:

..... there exists in Canada today a legacy of unattended immigration, and it is most important that this legacy should now be reduced. The legacy consists of a large number of post-war immigrants who do not yet speak English or French or speak these languages poorly. It consists of many immigrant children who have passed through or are still in the educational system, seriously handicapped by language and cultural problems and who later form some of those elements in the labor force which need rather expensive training and upgrading, to enable them to meet the employment requirements of an advanced industrial society. It consists also of many post-war immigrants whose knowledge of Canadian history, society, and political system is minimal.

(Hawkins, 1988:359).

There has been a tendency on the part of policy makers to treat immigration as a temporary problem that would solve itself over a period of time - but evidence points to the contrary. Discussions on Canadian demography in chapter 1 clearly indicate that immigration is likely to be a long-term, ongoing phenomenon. Churchill (1986) comments on the recent, growing awareness among policymakers that minority groups represent "an enduring rather than a temporary problem" and that they may not be readily "assimilable" into their countries of residence. Therefore policies on minority education must look at meeting long-term needs in terms of new immigrant resettlement and second language education, in a context that allows them a sense of their own identity, veering away from the short-term, incremental, crisis-oriented, assimilatory approach to policy formulation. Government officials often cite the lack of financial resources as an inhibiting factor in effective policy planning (Smith, 1985c), but as Peston (cited in Churchill, 1986) states, in failing to invest in the education of cultural minorities, "what we are foregoing...is the greater educational achievement of the less educable people. In other words, the cost does not disappear because resources are not committed for a

particular purpose, they merely emerge in another form, and are borne by one lot of people rather than another" (p.121).

According to Naisbitt (cited in Orem, 1987), although we live in an industrial society, we have changed to an economy that is based on the creation and distribution of information. Given the increasing number of people without literacy on the one hand and the growing dependence on information on the other, we are creating "another case of the "have's" and "have-nots", of those who have the power to make decisions and of those who must simply submit to the imposition of those decisions" (cited in Orem, 1987:12). Language is at the crux of the issue of who controls information, therefore the second language education of minority groups assumes great importance and requires appropriate action from the government to safeguard the interests of a growing segment of Canada's population.

#### **FURTHER RESEARCH**

Research information on the second language training of new immigrants is widely scattered among many sources and across many subject disciplines, such as linguistics, adult education, anthropology, sociology, psychology, etc. Much of the literature is highly linguistically oriented and focused on the technical aspects of second language teaching/learning, in isolation from the human, cultural and social factors which influence the new immigrants' ability to learn a second language. The advent of the boat people and increased levels of immigration from non-European source countries necessitates research in areas which have hitherto not been adequately explored, and the thrust of future research should be in these new directions and include the following:

1. A comprehensive, statistical analysis of new immigrants who require second language training in Alberta and in Calgary, including the backlog of new

immigrants who arrived earlier but were unable to access instruction in the second language, to obtain a realistic assessment of the scope of the problem.

2. A series of needs analyses to ascertain the "real" needs of new immigrants in terms of language training. These studies must focus on new immigrants' needs by age, gender and group affiliation, as all these variables have a bearing on ascertaining immigrant needs; for example, the needs of the Vietnamese Youth at Risk, are different from the needs of homebound Spanish women. Research must also attempt to discover the educational goals of new immigrants, their preferred instructional methodologies, etc. In designing a needs analysis, the principle of triangulation (Burnaby, 1988) can be applied, so that a multitude of perspectives can be incorporated, from agencies dealing with new immigrants and institutions offering programs, to ethnic communities as well as employers who can offer their perceptions of what new immigrants face in real-life situations.

3. Studies which analyze barriers to adult new immigrant participation in ESL programs can be carried out in terms of specific group, age and gender. Studies can also be conducted of the drop-out rates of new immigrants who enroll in various ESL courses, to ascertain reasons which impede them from engaging in second language training. These may include personal and social factors as well as factors pertaining to the instructional scene.

4. Related to (3), research is required on ESL methodology and approaches better suited to new immigrants who come from backgrounds which are unfamiliar with the western educational setting. The methodologies which are currently in use stem from research conducted either on children in the K-12 setting or on studies of university enrolled ESL students in environments which are carefully controlled (Kleinman, 1982).

Research can also focus on other difficulties students have in the classroom setting, such as the use of formal approaches in a structured environment. Such

studies can consider the effectiveness of formal versus non-formal approaches to ESL instruction, in the sense espoused by Fordham, Poulton and Randle (1979). Groups for whom formal approaches are shown not to work can be placed in instructional settings more appropriate to their needs. The reality of a substantial number of non-literate students in regular ESL classrooms has not received the attention it merits.

The appropriateness of materials used in ESL instruction should also receive research attention. An ESL teacher commented "We have been using materials geared towards people who have learning disabilities. Many of our ESL students do not have this problem, but we do not have suitable materials for teaching people who are illiterate in their own language" (ESL teacher, interview. Calgary, March 13, 1989).

Meaningful research into currently unanswered questions on ESL instruction can also be carried out. Questions teachers commonly ask are "how do I teach students who have no literacy in their own language?" or "how do I teach job-specific language"? Results of the research findings can be relayed back to the programs on which the research was based.

5. On-going evaluations of existing programs which pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of programs can provide a valuable pool of information for policy makers and program coordinators. Such information can be utilized towards effecting improvement in the overall standard of ESL programming.

6. Research on the characteristics of different ethnic groups is needed, so that policy makers and educators can make informed decisions that stem from a greater cross-cultural awareness of the people on whose behalf major decisions are made.

7. It is important to go beyond the type of research that centers on program description, or analysis of pedagogical problems and focus on the social context of



language use (Dorais, in Indra, 1987). A few researchers have tried to establish the relationship between social and linguistic adaptation. For example, Starr and Roberts (1982) have found a positive correlation between monthly income and language skills. Kleinman and Daniel (1981) have insisted on "the dependence of the resettlement upon the development of English language competence". However, these studies have been limited and systematic inquiries into these questions would offer valuable insights. Some of these studies could also focus on the relationship between social maladjustment and a lack of competence in English and ascertain any significant relationships between the lack of English and the incidence of violence among immigrant youth, the increase in child abuse and family violence, the higher incidence of mental health problems, etc.

8. Access to language training is a critical issue for many new immigrants. The effects of unequal access on people's life chances is still not very well known, (Indra, 1987) and research could focus on this aspect of second language education.

Research into the areas outlined above would offer valuable insights into the second language training of new immigrants and provide a knowledge base from which policy makers and educators can make informed decisions in an area which is vital to the settlement and adaptation of new immigrants in Canada. Effective immigration management, based on such a knowledge base, can lead new immigrants towards greater self sufficiency and alleviate the cycle of frustration, immobilization and alienation experienced by many new immigrants.

## ENDNOTES

1. The Canadian fertility rate has been below the replacement level of 2.1 for some years.
2. Refers to Flora MacDonald, the Immigration Minister who promised to make it easier for refugees to enter Canada and acknowledged that more should be done to help them.
3. An Immigration Act, passed in 1978, defines major classes of new immigrants. The Family Class comprises close relatives of permanent residents of Canada. Relatives who sponsor them are responsible for their care and accommodation for up to a period of 10 years. Refugees or persons who fear persecution if they return to their homelands, are often government sponsored and their settlement needs are looked after by the government. The Independent and Other Immigrants category come to Canada on their own merit, and their entry is governed by their ability to acquire enough points under the government's point system, to meet the criteria for admission. Within this category are Assisted Relatives or people who have relatives in Canada who are willing to support them for a period of up to five years. They receive points because of this (Source: Statistics Canada, 1984).
4. The cancellation of the CILT Agreements came about with the announcement of the Federal Budget in April, 1989.
5. Burnaby makes a distinction between "generic ESL" and ESL training which is targeted to meet the needs of "special" ESL learners. According to her, generic ESL means ESL training provided by the usual institutional deliverers of adult education, such as school boards, community colleges, etc., involving standard class sizes, a normative curriculum, limited learner support services, etc. In contrast, "special needs" programs attempt to overcome barriers to access to generic ESL programs, such as the need for childcare, geographic isolation and low levels of formal education.

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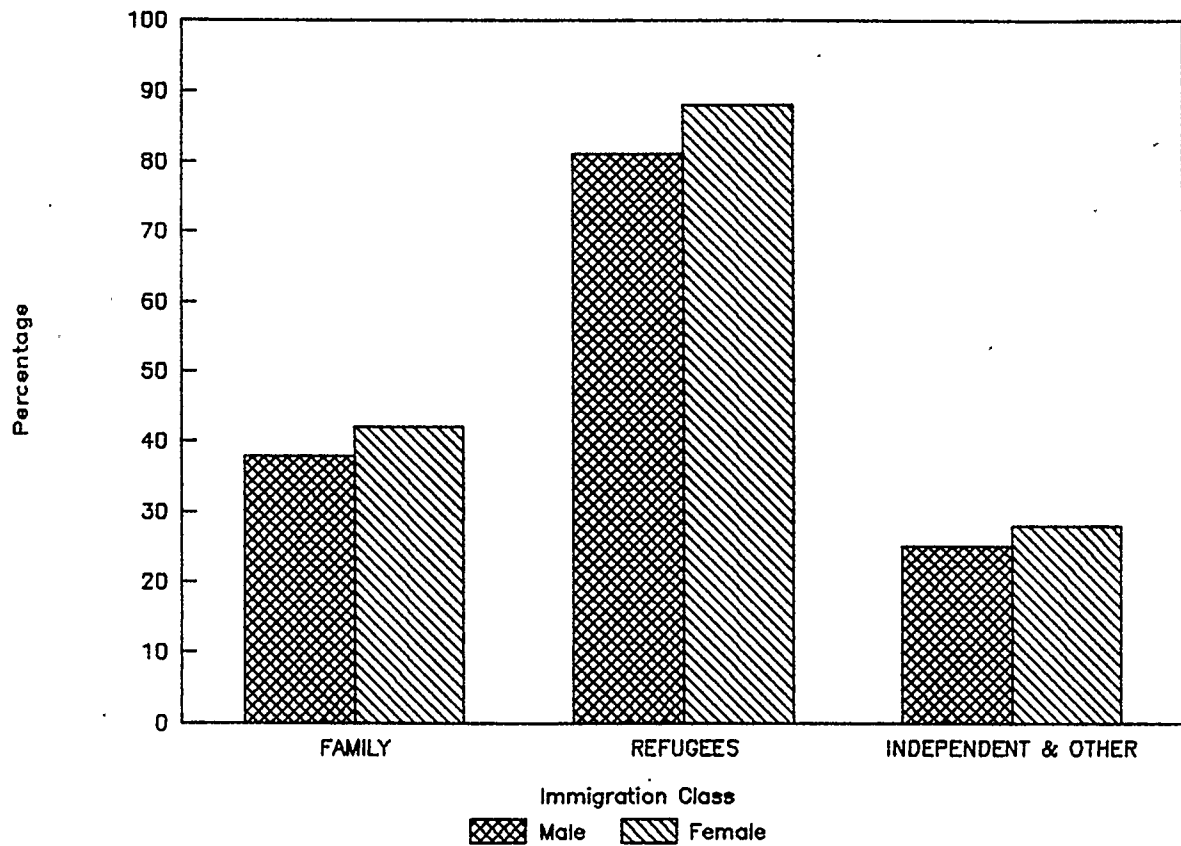
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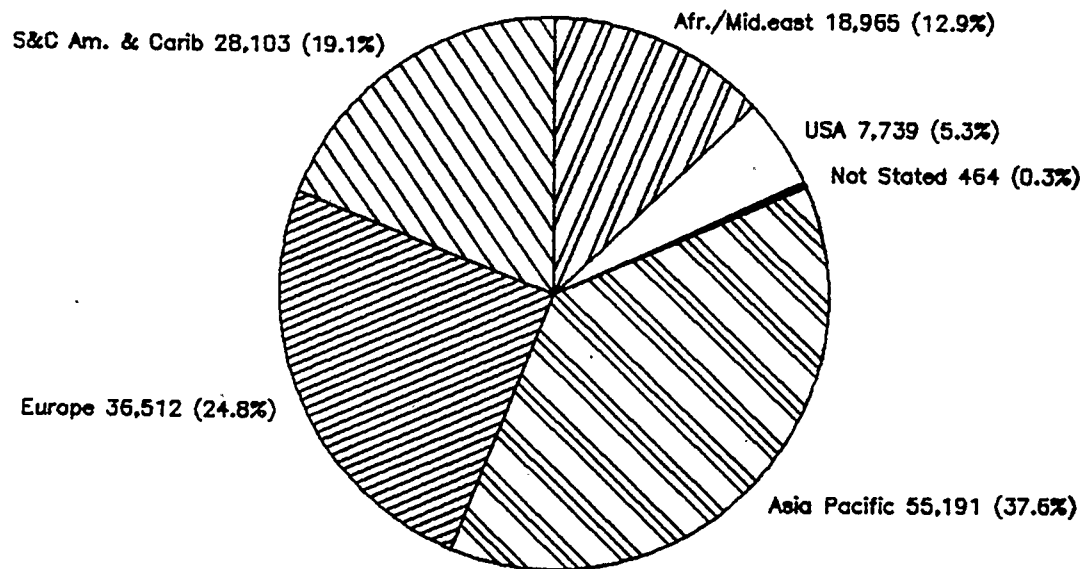
**IMMIGRANTS IN EACH IMMIGRATION CLASS  
WHO SPEAK NEITHER OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
CANADA 1978 - 1987**



**Source: Report of the Canadian Task Force on Mental Health  
Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees, 1988:24.**

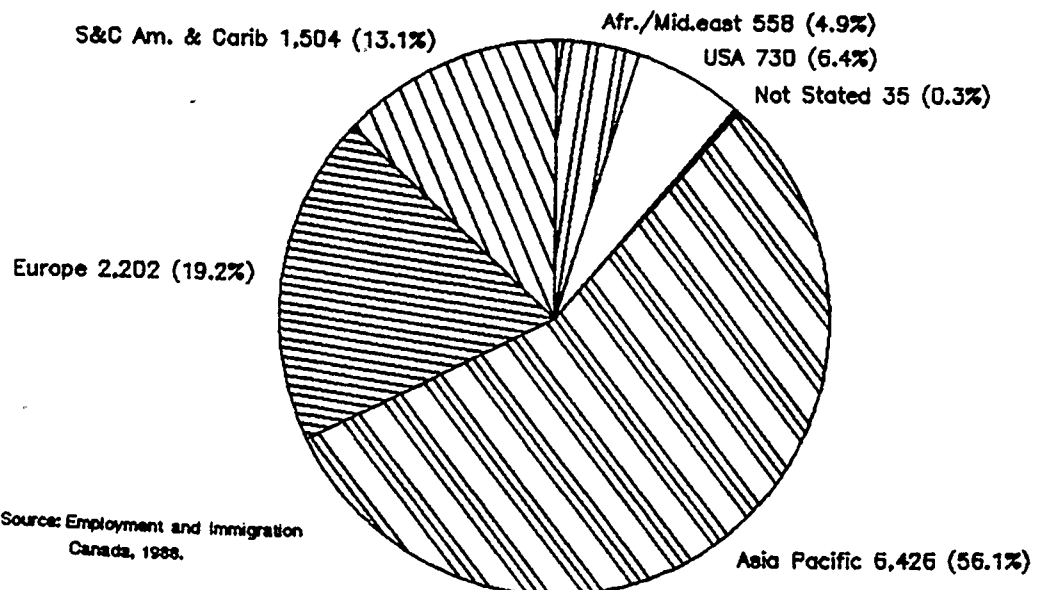
## IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

BY WORLD AREAS, 1987



## IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA

BY WORLD AREA, 1987



Source: Employment and Immigration  
Canada, 1988.

**TOP TEN SOURCE COUNTRIES OF IMMIGRANTS  
TO CANADA AND ALBERTA, 1986 - 1987**

**TO CANADA**

Country	1986	%	1987	%	1986 - 1987 Change	%Change
Hong Kong	5,893	5.9%	15,306	10.4%	9,413	159.7%
India	6,940	7.0%	9,262	6.3%	2,322	33.5%
Great Britain	5,088	5.1%	8,295	5.6%	3,207	63.0%
U.S.A.	7,275	7.3%	7,739	5.3%	464	6.4%
Phillipines	4,102	4.1%	7,110	4.8%	3,008	73.3%
Poland	5,231	5.3%	6,801	4.6%	1,570	30.0%
Guyana	3,905	3.9%	5,944	4.0%	2,039	52.2%
Portugal	1,970	2.0%	5,841	4.0%	3,871	196.5%
Vietnam	6,622	6.7%	5,449	3.7%	(1,173)	-17.7%
Jamaica	4,652	4.7%	5,266	3.6%	614	13.2%
Sub total	51,678	52.1%	77,013	52.4%	25,335	49.0%
Others	47,541	47.9%	69,981	47.6%	22,440	47.2%
Total	99,219	100.0%	146,994	100.0%	47,775	48.2%

**TO ALBERTA**

Country	1986	%	1987	%	1986 - 1987 Change	%Change
Hong Kong	632	6.5%	1,740	15.2%	1,108	175.3%
Vietnam	1,385	14.3%	1,077	9.4%	(308)	-22.2%
India	775	8.0%	856	7.5%	81	10.5%
U.S.A.	795	8.2%	730	6.4%	(65)	-8.2%
Phillipines	492	5.1%	725	6.3%	233	47.4%
Great Britain	580	6.0%	667	5.8%	87	15.0%
Poland	568	5.9%	587	5.1%	19	3.3%
El Salvador	546	5.6%	462	4.0%	(84)	-15.4%
China	217	2.2%	269	2.3%	52	24.0%
Kampuchea	325	3.4%	180	1.6%	(145)	-44.6%
Sub total	6,315	65.3%	7,293	63.7%	978	15.5%
Others	3,358	34.7%	4,162	36.3%	804	23.9%
Total	9,673	100.0%	11,455	100.0%	1,782	18.4%

Source : Employment & Immigration Canada, 1988.

**NEW IMMIGRANTS LACKING KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH  
ESTIMATE OF BACKLOG**

Total immigration to Alberta (1984 figures)	10,673
Newcomers aged 0 to 14 (English instruction provided through the public school system)	1,934
Newcomers age 65 and over (few seek ESL instruction)	681
	-----
Total under age 15 and over 65	2,615
	-----
Total immigrants aged 15 to 64	8,058
Newcomers (age 15 to 64)	
Arrived without English	4,628
Listed as speaking English	3,970
Arrived with inadequate English	2,000
	-----
Total arrivals (15 to 64) with inadequate English or none	6,628
	-----
1984 enrollment in formal ESL courses*	2,856
	-----
Gap **	3,772
	-----
Summary	
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Total ESL needs (potential clients in 1985)	
New 1985 arrivals with inadequate English	7,000
Gap in ESL instruction in 1984	4,000
Backlog from 1979 to 1983	24,000
Backlog from previous years	?
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Total potential ESL clients	35,000 +
N.B. *	Does not include part-time instruction.
**	Completion of an ESL course is not synonymous with knowing English. The actual gap would be much higher.

Source: Alberta Manpower, Settlement Services, 1986.

**ESL FUNDING SUMMARY**  
**(1985/86 FISCAL YEAR)**

**1) PROVINCE OF ALBERTA EXPENDITURES**

<b>(a) <u>Advanced Education</u></b>	
Adult Full-Time ESL (Canada-Alberta Training Agreement). Actual cost of ESL for 1985/86 not yet available. Assuming a per diem cost of \$27.50.	
\$27.50 x 300,000 (estimated expenditure)	\$ 8,250,000
Claim for Citizenship instruction (under the CILT Agreements (mostly part-time ESL)	\$ 2,222,000
Text Books (CILT Agreement)	\$ <u>133,000</u>
<b>TOTAL ADVANCED EDUCATION</b>	<b>\$ 10,605,000 *</b>
<b>(b) <u>Alberta Career Development and Employment</u></b>	
Tuition	\$ 450,000
Allowances	\$ <u>500,000</u>
	\$ 950,000
ESL Assessment & Referral Centres	\$ <u>321,000</u>
	\$ 1,271,000
<b>(c) <u>Alberta Social Services</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>18,000</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA EXPENDITURES FOR ADULT ESL</b>	<b>\$ 11,894,000</b>
<b>ALBERTA EXPENDITURES FOR CHILDREN</b>	<b>\$ <u>2,258,000</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED ALBERTA EXPENDITURES FOR ESL</b>	<b>\$ <u>14,152,000</u></b>

\* includes estimated figures.

Source: Alberta Career Development and Employment, 1989.



**ESL FUNDING SUMMARY**  
**(1985/86 FISCAL YEAR)**

**2) FEDERAL EXPENDITURES**

(a) Seat purchase for full-time ESL under Canada-Alberta Training Agreement	
300,000 days x 23.00/diem	\$ 6,900,000
(b) Citizenship Instruction and Language Textbooks Agreement (C.I.L.T.)	
Instruction - 50% x \$2,222,400 =	\$ 1,111,000
Textbooks - 100% x \$ 133,000 =	\$ 133,000
	<u>\$ 1,244,000</u>
TOTAL PAID TO ALBERTA UNDER CANADA-ALBERTA TRAINING AGREEMENT AND C.I.L.T.	\$ 8,144,000
INCOME SUPPORT PAID TO FULL-TIME ESL STUDENTS	\$ 4,140,000
TOTAL FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FOR ESL	<u>\$ 12,284,000</u>

**3) ALBERTA ESL COSTS (i.e. expenditures minus Federal Contributions)**

Alberta expenditures	\$ 14,152,000
Minus Federal contributions	<u>\$ 8,144,000</u>
ESTIMATED TOTAL ALBERTA ESL COSTS FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN	\$ 6,008,000
MINUS ESL COST FOR CHILDREN	<u>\$ 2,258,000</u>
ESTIMATED ALBERTA COST OF ESL FOR ADULTS	\$ 3,750,000

Source: Alberta Career Development and Employment, 1989.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE : Full-Time Program

## CORE CURRICULUM DESIGN

<b>BEGINNER</b> I II	<b>MODULE 1</b> THE NEW CANADIAN AS A STUDENT	<b>MODULE 2</b> AS A COMMUNITY MEMBER	<b>MODULE 3</b> AS A CONSUMER
	<b>MODULE 3</b> THE NEW CANADIAN	<b>MODULE 4</b> GETTING/ACTING ON JOB INFORMATION	<b>MODULE 5</b> INTERVIEWING FOR A JOB
	<b>MODULE 5</b> INTERVIEWING FOR A JOB	<b>MODULE 6</b> RE-EVALUATING GOALS	<b>MODULE 7</b> STARTING A NEW JOB
<b>UPPER BEGINNER</b> III IV	<b>MODULE 7</b> STARTING A NEW JOB	<b>MODULE 8</b> PARTICIPATING IN A CROSS- CULTURAL SOCIETY	<b>MODULE 9</b> PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
	<b>MODULE 9</b> PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE	<b>MODULE 10</b> MAKING CAREER DECISIONS	<b>MODULE 11</b> TAKING ACTION
	<b>MODULE 11</b> TAKING ACTION		
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b> V VI			
<b>UPPER INTERMEDIATE</b> VII VIII			
<b>ADVANCED</b> IX			