

3. Bridging the Gap Between Immigrant Students' Needs and Programme Delivery: A study of the relationship between family life and language learning **Pip Neville-Barton**

Abstract

When designing and teaching English language courses, it is desirable to fully understand and respond to the needs of students. Hence, as education providers we need to know why students enter our courses, what personal factors affect their learning, and how learning English impacts on their lives.

This paper reports on eight case studies in progress, which look at the relationship between the home lives of adult migrant students and their families and their English language learning in New Zealand. The student participants, from China, Korea and Japan, were studying English at an upper-intermediate level in a tertiary institution in Auckland, New Zealand. The research seeks to bridge the gap between the two worlds of language learner: the personal and the classroom.

The paper discusses: learners' expectations; motivational factors; first language maintenance; social identity and power; opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom; and attitudes of family members. Three significant findings have emerged: a motivation internal to family relationships; the strength of feelings about power and social identity; and the role of English classes in limiting outside language opportunities. The implications of these findings and possible responses by ESOL programme designers and practitioners are also discussed.

Introduction

The importance of learners' lives and experiences outside the classroom in determining how learners react to and view the learning process cannot be underestimated... students' home environment can affect their attitudes to learning - their interactions with native speakers can affect their approach. This implies that there is a need for teachers to deal with these issues in the classroom and to help learners to cope with them. (Gwynne, 1997:98)

Despite teaching English to adult immigrants for many years, I am reminded on a regular basis of the sacrifices and hardships our students endure in their attempts to make a better life for themselves and their families in a new country. I have noticed in students' anecdotal evidence and their diaries that while they are still at the stage of learning English, their dreams for a better life are a long way from being fulfilled. Often the student's whole family undergoes a high degree of stress. The investment of these families in their future is immense and students must be highly motivated to complete our courses successfully. To inform our analyses of students' needs and curriculum planning, we need to understand what motivates our students and the factors affecting their ability to study under different cultural conditions. It is only then that we will be able to bridge the gap between their needs and our programmes.

This paper draws on an ongoing study of eight adult English language students and their families from China, Korea and Japan. The study was designed to explore the relationship between the personal lives of some adult Asian immigrant students and current English language provision in a New Zealand tertiary institution, in order to better understand the impact that their learning has on their lives. Firstly, it gives a brief background of the New Zealand immigration context particularly for Asian migrants. Some of the research into expectations and motivational factors affecting language learning is discussed. The study is described and the results are used to explore issues related to motivation, first language maintenance, identity and power, opportunities to communicate in English outside the classroom, and the attitude of family members towards the student's language learning. Finally the paper discusses the implications of these issues for the planners and practitioners with particular emphasis on three significant findings that emerge from the case studies.

New Zealand Asian Immigration

It is useful to look briefly at some information about current Asian immigration to New Zealand in order to place the families in this study into a broader context. Statistics from the New Zealand Immigration Service (2002) show that in recent years the number of immigrants from Asian countries has increased significantly. The total Asian population is projected to rise from five percent of the total population in 1996 to nine percent in 2016 (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

In the year 2000 - 2001, 54 per cent of immigrants came to New Zealand under the

General Skills immigration category (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). To qualify in this category, potential immigrants need to gain a certain number of points which are allocated for education, qualifications, work experience, and age (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2002). Therefore it is not surprising that most of the English language students in the higher level programmes in my institution have had a tertiary education in their home countries. Furthermore, many have worked in their professional field for some years and are people with valuable skills and considerable experience.

However, these immigrants from Asia are a highly mobile population and many of them move on to other countries or return to their homeland because they find it difficult to become part of the New Zealand society and fail to find satisfying work (Ho and Leung 2000; Collins 2001). The New Zealand Immigration Service considers that 'English is a key to successful settlement' (1995: 10) and there is little doubt that well planned English language programmes can play an important role in helping these students settle in New Zealand and fulfil their potential. (Neville-Barton, 2002)

The immigration of skilled people to New Zealand is both needed, and is happening. English language education is a vital part of this process, but it will only be successful if it correlates with the social reality of those arriving.

Expectations

Recent research (White, Watts and Trlin, 2001) investigated immigrant and refugee experience of English language provision in New Zealand. One of the aims in this comprehensive study was to explore the expectations of immigrants concerning English language learning opportunities and their subsequent experiences. It also investigated the perceived role and responsibilities of immigrants and of other sectors of the community. It found that although English language competence was perceived as being of primary importance in settlement, the respondents had expected English classes to be more readily available and to cost less than was the case. They also had expected to have more opportunities to practise using English in the community than they subsequently experienced. Although there was recognition amongst the participants of the need to take individual responsibility for their language development they also felt that the New Zealand government and community needed to take more responsibility in the areas of English language

learning support, settlement and employment. There was a strong desire expressed for New Zealanders as the host society to encourage and create more opportunities to speak English with new settlers. (White, Watts, & Trlin, 2001)

Motivation

Successful language learning can only take place if the learner has goals, and an inner drive to achieve these goals (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). As a major factor in language learning, motivation has been well researched, (for example, Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985; Skehan, 1989; Brown, 1994; McGroarty, 1996; Tudor, 1996; Dornyei and Schmidt, 2001). Research has largely focused on the two models postulated by Gardner and Lambert (1972): instrumental and integrative motivation.

Instrumental motivation refers to the need to acquire a language as a means for attaining goals such as career advancement or successful further study. Integrative motivation refers to the desire to learn a language in order to become closer to the culture and society of the target language group (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). An illustration of these models is presented in Horwitz and Young's (1990) study which found that instrumental motivation was more predictive than integrative motivation for language learning success in the Philippines where people wanted English for career advancement. However, integrative motivation was a better predictor of success for English speaking Canadians who were learning French to become closer to the French speaking Canadian population (Scarcella and Oxford, 1992).

Graham (1984) makes the further distinction between integrative and assimilative motivation. He maintains that assimilative motivation "is the drive to become an indistinguishable member of a speech community" (cited in Brown 1994:155). This requires many years of contact with the target language culture.

Yet another dimension of the motivation construct is the degree to which learners are extrinsically or intrinsically motivated. Deci (1975) describes extrinsically motivated behaviour, as operating in the anticipation of an outside reward (in a similar way to the instrumental model), while intrinsic motivation stems from the satisfaction of the activity itself, that is, there are no obvious rewards. Noels (2001:45) states that "intrinsic orientations refer to reasons for L2 learning that are derived from

one's inherent pleasure and interest in the activity". According to Brown (1994), research on motivation strongly favours intrinsic orientations especially for long-term retention. This is supported by Noels (2001:50) who suggests that "people who have an intrinsic or self-determined orientation are likely to feel positively about the activity and put in more effort over a longer period of time". This extrinsic/intrinsic dimension does not exactly match the postulated instrumental/integrative dimension. Each model focuses on a particular aspect of motivation. Later work creates even more complicated models which cross these dimensions.

McGroarty (1996:8) refers to a study by Gardner (1985), who suggests that motivation may be an indirect rather than direct influence on achievement and operates in combination with other factors to affect language learning. Clearly motivation for second language learning is a "complex of constructs" (Noels, 2001:44). In recent years a number of different frameworks have been proposed, to describe this complexity. Current thinking seems to be summed up in Dornyei and Clement (2001) who suggest a synthesis of the constituents of these different constructs into seven dimensions:

1. Affective/integrative dimension, referring to a general affective "core" of the L2 motivation complex related to attitudes, beliefs and values associated with the process, the target and the outcome of learning, including variables such as "interactiveness," "affective motive," "language attitudes," "intrinsic motivation," "attitudes toward L2 learning," "enjoyment" and "interest";
2. Instrumental/pragmatic dimension, referring to extrinsic, largely utilitarian factors such as financial benefits;
3. Macro-context-related dimension, referring to broad, societal and sociocultural factors such as multicultural, intergroup and ethnolinguistic relations;
4. Self-concept-related dimension, referring to learner-specific variables such as self-confidence, self-esteem, anxiety and need for achievement;
5. Goal-related dimension, involving various goal characteristics;
6. Educational context-related dimension, referring to the characteristics and appraisal of the immediate learning environment (i.e., classroom) and the school context; and

7. Significant others-related dimension, referring to the motivational influence of parents, family, and friends.

Dornyei and Clement (2001:400)

There is little doubt that motivation is recognized as an important factor in the language learning process and that different kinds of motivations, as illustrated above, are important to language learning success, depending on the circumstances. Programme planners need to discover what major motivating factors drive their students, and to utilise this knowledge in programme design.

So what motivates the participants in this study? What relevance does this have in the quest to bridge the gap between students' needs and our programmes?

The Case Study

This case study of eight adult students and their families is being carried out in two phases. Data for the first phase was gathered in 2001, using questionnaires and audio-recorded interviews of approximately 45 minutes with the students, and in some cases, family members. Phase Two will take place a year after the students have completed their English language course and will comprise a recorded interview. The students were studying for a Diploma in English which caters for international and immigrant learners at an upper-intermediate to advanced English language proficiency level. All students were informed of the project and immigrant students were invited to volunteer for the study. This paper is based on data gathered from the first phase of the research.

The minimum entrance requirement for the Diploma in English is a score of Band 5.0 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or 525 in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). At the time of data gathering, there were 130 students in the programme of whom 70 percent were immigrants. The others were international, fee-paying students.

Participants

In the study thirteen people representing eight families answered the questionnaires and were interviewed. The New Zealand wife of the Korean student completed a questionnaire but was not interviewed.

<i>Ethnicity and gender of student interviewed and interviewed</i>	<i>Age group</i>	<i>Previous occupation</i>	<i>Length of time in NZ</i>	<i>Family members also interviewed and interviewed</i>
Chinese (M)	40 - 49	Engineering Professor	3 years	Wife
Chinese (F)	40 - 49	Electronics Engineer	5 years	
Chinese (F)	30 - 39	Doctor	3yrs 10mths	Husband
Korean (F)	50 - 59	Lecturer communications	1yr 9mths	Son
Korean (F)	30 - 39	Florist	5yrs 6mths	Husband
Korean (F)	30 - 39	Teacher English Lit.	6 years	
Korean (M)	30 - 39	Writer & Film director	5yrs 6mths	Wife (N.Z.)
Japanese (F)	30 - 39	Sports Administrator	3 years	Husband (N.Z.)

Table 1. Details of Participants

The participants were accustomed to working for goals. Seven of the eight students interviewed had successfully completed university studies in their country of origin. Five held bachelor degrees, one was a medical doctor and one, with a wide publication record, was a professor of engineering holding a PhD. With one exception, all partners of the students and the one son interviewed held degrees.

Prior to emigration, all participants had been working in their chosen profession. Although these students were not recent arrivals, at the time of interview, none had been working in their professional field. In a story typical of many of our immigrants, a husband of one student, unable to find work in New Zealand, had returned to China to work, leaving his family here. Thus he was leading a life separated from his family for the majority of the year.

The participants gave similar reasons for immigrating. They came to New Zealand to improve the quality of their lives in a healthier environment, they wanted a challenge, and they wanted a better education system for their children. They had heard from friends and contacts that "New Zealand was a so good country to live

and grow children" (female Korean student). Four of the interviews revealed that other members of the students' families had emigrated to Western countries.

All of the students had studied English for varying periods of time in their home countries. However, despite the considerable time each family had lived in New Zealand, only two of the students had previously attended formal English language classes. When asked about this, most students said that they had been too busy with their families and trying to adjust to their new lives.

Results and Discussion

Motivational Factors

There is no doubt that instrumental motivation and goal-related motivations (dimensions two and five in Dornyei and Clement's 2001 model above), played a large part in the language learning attitudes of these students. All of the student participants talked of their career goals and said they recognised the need to improve their English if they want to pursue them.

One student wanted to become a translator of Korean books for the New Zealand market and needed a high IELTS score to enter the translation course. Another wanted to help her husband with his furniture making business and to become an interior designer. The Korean film director wanted to write and direct movies in New Zealand and fully realised how important his English proficiency would be to achieve this goal.

The professor who came to New Zealand as a university research fellow, wanted to continue his academic career. His experience of working in the academic world in New Zealand had highlighted the necessity to take English language classes. In his job at Auckland University he had unlimited opportunities to speak English in social and professional contexts. However, although he could read and write English, he had seldom spoken it before coming here so when he ventured into the staff room he was not confident enough to speak with anyone and would take his tea back to his office. He said that he felt isolated. He was unable to present his own research and had to rely on his colleagues to do this for him. When his fellowship expired, other departments at the university did not want to employ him because of his lack of English language skills but they told him they would have a lot of work for him to do if he had better English.

Some students recognized that they would not be able to resume their previous careers and were studying English in order to access courses leading to New Zealand qualifications. A doctor from China was willing to work as a nurse aid in the short term and eventually to train as an occupational therapist. The student whose husband still worked in China, was a qualified electrical engineer but said that she would like to study for a New Zealand qualification in business or accounting with the goal of eventually setting up a business here with her husband. Another student, an older Korean woman who had taught communications in Korea, wanted to improve her English so that she could work as a volunteer. The Japanese woman married to a New Zealand architect did not want to rely on her husband to teach her English. She initially came to New Zealand to learn English because as a manager for a women's professional soccer team she was often frustrated when she could not communicate with members of the international teams. She wanted to speak fluently to her husband and would like to work as a professional in the New Zealand sports world.

It is clear that the career goals of these learners were a strong motivating factor. However, the interviews also produced evidence of the affective/integrative dimension (dimension one in Dornyei and Clement's 2001 model). The participants indicated that their desire to communicate comfortably with New Zealanders, to make friends within their host society and to understand the culture of New Zealand were also powerful factors driving their language learning. Despite their length of time in New Zealand, these goals were proving elusive and social participation had been largely restricted to the family domain. Research suggests that institutional support in the early stages of settlement is essential to help new settlers move into jobs, and society; otherwise migrants stay in the family domain indefinitely (Henderson, Watts, & Trlin, 2000). With the exception of the two students married to New Zealanders, this appeared to be the case with these students. They perceived this as a language problem. The Chinese professor wanted to "move a big block" in his communication, "to let my open my mouth, expand my range of touching people and feel so intense my confidence." Throughout his interview he commented on his lack of ability to converse and that "culture, confidence, relationship, friendship with Kiwis – are all related to English." Six of the students commented that they wanted to become "real" New Zealanders. A Korean student said "I want to live New Zealand forever until I die" and that it was "important to make friends" but her lack of English was a "barrier". Several of the students commented that "the

problem will be solved after my English improve”.

The need to feel part of the New Zealand society was a driving motivation for these students. This is a significant factor for teachers and planners to take into account.

In this study, however, a further motivation emerged. A motivation *internal to family relationships* was established as a reason for starting and persisting with English language study. Four of the five couples who each had young, bilingual children said that they wanted to learn English, or wanted their partner to learn English, in order to maintain good communication between the generations. It was established from the interviews, that as their children had become more integrated with their New Zealand peers, and their English language proficiency had improved, they had become less willing to converse with anyone in their native language. This perceived language barrier was not only a negative aspect of immigration but also an unexpected one.

These parents were concerned that their children's growing preference for speaking English was going to hinder communication within the family unless their own English became more proficient. "I have improved my English since I started English classes. I can understand more when my children speak to me in English. It help me, our close relationships. I supported for my husband sometimes... I can share my children's life better..." Both the Korean student who said this, and her husband recognized the need for at least one parent to speak English well enough to keep the lines of communication open with their children. The husband commented that as he was working in his own business, there was no opportunity for him to improve his English in a formal way so improvement in his wife's English was important for them all.

A similar motivating factor was apparent in the language goals of the two couples in cross-cultural marriages. The Japanese woman married to the New Zealander said, "the major reason for learning English now is to understand what my husband's saying – talk fluently to my husband."

These students were motivated in their English language learning by the need to improve and preserve family relationships. This dimension of motivation emerging

from the dynamics of family relationships does not appear to be described in the literature. It is distinguishable from Dornyei and Clement's (2001) dimension seven which refers to family members' encouragement of the student, not a motivation arising from family dynamics. This new dimension deserves further research on a wider scale to uncover its characteristics and relationship to successful language learning, and to explore how it may be used in language programmes.

Children and First Language Maintenance

Despite the recognition of the value of learning English themselves in order to communicate well with their increasingly bilingual children, all couples with young children were making efforts to maintain and improve their children's first language. Three couples were taking their children to first language maintenance classes. They recognised that the longer children are in New Zealand the harder it is for them to keep developing their mother tongue. This can cause problems as the example of the Chinese professor illustrates. He came to New Zealand in 1996 as a research fellow at Auckland University and was joined by his wife and son in 1997. When his contract expired, in 1999, they all returned to China with the intention of staying there. However, because their son's Mandarin development was behind that of his peers, the son found it impossible to fit back into the Chinese education system and his parents felt compelled to return to New Zealand.

Social Identity, Power and Culture Shock

Related to these motivating factors was a desire amongst the students to regain a sense of social identity and control over their lives. This need was articulated strongly by two of the students interviewed. However, a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context is yet to be developed. Furthermore, according to Pierce (1995), second language acquisition theorists have not questioned how relations of power in the social world affect social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers.

It is probable that the issue of identity and feelings of powerlessness, is related to the effects of culture shock in the lives of new immigrants. Culture shock is commonly experienced by people who are learning to live in a new culture. Brick (1991:9) talks about the "serious erosion of the individual's feelings of self-worth" as the newcomers undergo a "sudden psychological transition from

competent adult to ineffective child". Culture shock manifests itself in feelings of loss, loneliness, anger, unhappiness, frustration, anxiety and loss of confidence. Brown (1994) suggests that culture shock is one of four successive stages of acculturation. The first stage of experiencing a new culture is one of excitement and interest in the new society. The second stage, however is that of culture shock with its associated negative feelings. This gradually gives way to the third stage of slow recovery overshadowed by a sense of cultural displacement. The fourth stage is one of acceptance and adjustment resulting in an appreciation of the new culture and a confidence about maintaining their own culture. In this study, we can see how the learning of two students at different stages of the acculturation process was affected.

The older Korean woman student, who had firstly been a television anchor woman and later a successful communications consultant in Korea, talked about her loss of social identity and power in terms of culture shock. At the time of the interview she was feeling depressed, unconfident and frustrated at her lack of ability to communicate well in English. Communication, after all, had been her profession. "After I arrived New Zealand I was shocked by my poor English. I thought my English was at everyday level but it was not. I was depressed by culture shock, emptiness, feeling of losing... I taught communication in my country but now I have big problem..."

Her son observed, "She lost her self-confidence so she decided to study English and during her study she lost her self-confidence because even though she studying English she thought she not good enough a circular thing"

It is clear that this student had high expectations of her ability to learn quickly. She initiated the immigration. Her husband was, at first, reluctant to move but now he was enjoying his life here more than she did. She missed her family who are scattered around the world, her friends, and her country. Since coming to New Zealand, her husband had retired, played golf every day and spoke English better than she did. She saw English as a key to regaining her sense of identity and power but, still deep in the throes of culture shock, she perceived that her learning ability was limited.

The Korean film director commented in his interview on his feelings of loss of

power and loss of status when he first arrived in New Zealand. Prior to joining this English language course and despite his negative feelings about the type of work the job entailed, he had become a casting agent because, in this position, he thought he was able to regain some sense of identity, and power. He said that, "as a foreigner, people usually tell me what to do, but in this job, actors and actresses respect me. People usually do what I tell them. I say go this way and they go... I get asked to parties." When asked why he had not continued with this job he said he was becoming "a bit big-headed," the work was "not creative and I was losing my soul." As his English improved he felt that he was gaining more control over his life. He was then prepared to pursue the bigger goal of becoming a writer and director of movies in New Zealand. He said that he considered this goal was more in keeping with his self-image and would ultimately be more satisfying. To achieve this goal he recognized he needed formal English language classes and at the time of his interview he was feeling confident and satisfied with the progress of his language learning. It is also significant that at this same stage he was happily adjusted to life in New Zealand, was fully integrated into his New Zealand wife's family who supported and encouraged him in his endeavours.

The examples of these two students suggest that learners' English language progress may depend on where they are on the acculturation pathway. It also suggests that the pathway itself is affected by their language progress. This circular process needs careful consideration in programme planning and further research is indicated in this whole area.

Opportunities to use English outside the classroom

One of the problems identified by the research of White, Watts and Trlin (2001), was the limited opportunity students encountered of speaking English in the community. This was also seen as a problem by the participants in the current study and was linked directly by the students to the fact that they were attending a full-time class.

Lack of time since starting their course, was acknowledged as the major reason for limiting opportunities to speak English. Several of those interviewed said that they had withdrawn from the very activities and socializing that might help their English. The students talked about this in relation to communicating at work, interacting in the community and using English in their homes.

Prior to this course, several of the students in this study had worked in a part-time capacity in jobs such as kitchenhands or cleaners. Only one of the students interviewed was still working. She was looking after disabled people for one day each weekend and although she did not enjoy the job, she recognized that it gave her an opportunity to practice English.

Four of the students had been involved in their local community before enrolling in the English language class. However, at the time of interviewing, they had all withdrawn from any community activities citing lack of time. For example, one student had stopped attending a local swimming club, and the engineering professor who used to attend the professional association of engineers said that he did not now have the time to do this because he was studying.

There appeared to be a reluctance for the students to speak English in the home unless they were married to a native-English speaker. They saw their home as a haven, a place to relax. Even if other family members spoke English well, they still wanted to communicate at home in their native language. For example the older Korean student preferred to speak Korean all the time at home. During the interview, her adult son, whose English was fluent, said he was reluctant to practise English with her and although her husband offered to speak English with her on a regular basis, she resisted. "I don't want more pressure in my home. I want to be free in my home".

Attitudes of family members

Seven of the eight students interviewed felt that they were supported and encouraged by their partners in their English language learning. One Korean student, however, whose husband did not want to take part in the interview, commented that her husband said learning English was "her business" and he did not want to be involved. She felt he "doesn't have a positive attitude" about his life in New Zealand. On the other hand, she made it very clear that she was totally committed to New Zealand and said "I want to live New Zealand forever until I die. I don't want return Korea."

Another student felt that there was some conflict at home with her in-laws who lived with her. For work reasons, her husband lived most of the time in China and although he encouraged her to take classes, his parents, who did not speak English,

wanted their daughter-in-law to stay at home with them. They did not drive a car and felt confined in a foreign land. In the weekends when their daughter-in-law wanted to relax at home, they wanted her to take them out.

Overall, however, there is evidence of a feeling of support from the students' families. One partner said that he was very proud of his wife's English learning progress. When they first arrived he had had to do everything for the family because she could not speak English but now "I am very proud of my wife because when we came here I had to study and manage all the things of our family because she can't understand and speak English. So now is good. She can do something for our whole family, educating my daughter and a lot of things." This, of course, had helped his wife's confidence and she said that now she felt "more in the centre" and "it gives me much more power".

Students with younger children felt that after an initial period of adjustment, the children too, were supportive. Two of the mothers thought that their children had become more independent since they had undertaken their studies and one said that "showing the children that Mummy is studying is good for them". This student also commented that her communication with her children had improved since her study began and her English had improved.

Summary

The study has explored the relationship between the home lives of eight adult migrant students and their English language learning. It has gone beyond the perceptions of the students and embraced the viewpoints of other family members. The impact of learners' personal lives on their learning and the impact of the requirements of the language programme on their personal lives has been examined within the contexts of expectations, motivational factors, first language maintenance, issues of identity, power and culture shock, opportunities to use English outside the classroom and the attitudes of family. From this study, three significant findings have emerged.

Firstly, a motivation internal to family relationships was established. Communication in English within the family was recognized as essential for maintaining good relationships with young bilingual children and with native-English speaking partners. This conflicted with the desire of some parents for their children to

maintain the first language. Nevertheless, it appeared to be a driving force behind much of the learning.

Secondly, the feelings of loss of social identity and power experienced by some of the participants in this study, played a significant role in their language learning attitudes. These feelings appear strongly linked to the stage the learner is at in the acculturation process. Progress in the learning of these students seemed to depend to a significant extent on these factors.

Thirdly, opportunities to use English outside the classroom were often limited by the time pressures created by the demands of the language programme itself.

Each of these three findings can guide us as planners and teachers to develop our programmes so that we acknowledge the needs and difficulties students experience while learning English. They can encourage us to create activities and opportunities that help build bridges between the classroom and their homes.

Implications for Programmes

A research project of eight case studies cannot produce conclusions that can be generalised, but it can indicate areas that warrant further investigation and it can suggest possible actions.

The description of an additional form of motivation coming from within the dynamics of the family provides us with a new means to encourage the students. As well as ensuring that topics and tasks are relevant to their goals of integration with their host society and to finding satisfying jobs, it may be effective to draw resources directly from the students' family lives. For instance, we could set homework exercises that require students to communicate with their children, asking them to discover teenage vocabulary that could be brought back to the classroom for further exploitation, or to write dialogues for a family occasion involving an English language speaker. Students could ask their children to contribute problems they have encountered at school for group discussion and school counsellors could be invited into the classroom to answer questions prepared by the students in consultation with their children and partners. According to Tudor (1996, 85) personalising the learning content of the tasks will increase the intrinsic interest students have in their learning. For those students whose prime aim lies elsewhere, these family

motivational contexts may add an extra dimension to their language.

Many immigrants, when they first arrive in New Zealand are not prepared for the physical and psychological effects of moving from a familiar culture to a totally new culture. Culture shock, the second stage in the acculturation process, is a recognizable syndrome that can curtail normal functioning for varying periods of time. As teachers, we need to learn to recognize it and to attempt to alleviate its effects. One way to do this is to inform students that the four stages of acculturation are commonly felt by most newcomers and to set tasks that help the students identify and talk about the stage they are at that moment. Students who have passed through the second stage will be able to talk about their own experiences and give advice and support to those who are still suffering from culture shock.

Further research is indicated into the effects of each stage of the acculturation process on the progress of language learning. For example one hypothesis is that learning from their own mistakes could be counterproductive to students who are in the second stage of the process. Their errors could be seen as a further example of failure, thus increasing students' anxiety and undermining an already fragile confidence. On the other hand, exercises that push students to explore the language and make errors might produce exactly the sort of challenge that would be productive to a student in the third or fourth stage of the pathway.

For all students the empowerment engendered by language is likely to be an effective force. Designing language tasks that have immediate, explicit empowerment outcomes are therefore indicated. An example is to practise a dialogue that might help in a difficult social interaction such as when faced with racist taunts.

In this study, it is clear that unless the English language students are married to English speaking New Zealanders, the opportunities to use English outside the classroom are limited. As full-time students, the demands on their time do not allow them to seek out English speaking situations in the community. If attending an English language course actually curtails students from participating in the very community activities that teachers encourage, perhaps teachers have a responsibility to ensure that interaction in the community becomes an integral part of our programmes. For example, homework concessions could be made in favour of attendance at a community event. A classroom session could be replaced by

attendance at a local function or meeting. Students would prepare for the event in the classroom and be expected to report back afterwards.

Conclusion

The relationship between the personal lives of students and their public lives as language learners is a symbiotic partnership creating both problems and opportunities. Education providers have a responsibility to recognise and respond to students' needs, minimise their problems and take an active professional role in helping students make use of their opportunities. By understanding more about the impact of language learning on their lives and the impact of their personal lives on their language learning, programme planners should be better able to fulfil this responsibility. They will also have the knowledge to utilise and increase the various motivations of the students and to improve provision of the necessary linguistic tools. By bridging the gap between students' needs and our programmes we will help our learners achieve the dreams they and their families came here to find.

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