

**THE VOYAGE OF CULTURAL TRANSITION: ADJUSTMENT ISSUES
OF CHINESE-SPEAKING FOREIGN-BORN STUDENTS IN A
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY FORM THE LARGEST
CULTURAL GROUP IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL SETTING**

By

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the adjustment experiences of 23 Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in a social climate where they form the largest cultural group in a secondary school setting. The study's objectives were to determine initial adjustment issues, to examine adjustment issues of international and satellite students as sub-groups within this population, to identify students' lived experiences concerning racism and discrimination; to identify adjustment concerns subsequent to graduation and to examine student perception of Canada's multicultural policy.

Ethnographic interviews were conducted over a four-week period. Data were subsequently categorized into 14 different categories: Agency, Chinese Population Concerns, Comparing Education Systems, Cultural Considerations, Current Adjustment Issues, ESL Program, Facilitating/Hindering Issues, Friendship/Peer Relationships, Initial Observations and Concerns, Language, Mental Health Issues, Multicultural and Assimilation Issues, Racism and Discrimination, and Satellite and International Students.

Adjustment issues were divided into two main categories: those pertaining to the large numbers of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students and those that are independent of their large numbers. Issues that seem to stem directly from the large numbers of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students are language development, developing friendships outside the Chinese cultural group, assimilation/integration issues, and EAL program concerns. Language, peer relations, cross-cultural concerns and education and the school environment are the adjustment issues identified in this study.

Satellite student results, further divided into satellite and full-satellite categories, produced somewhat different findings. While mental health issues began to emerge in the satellite category, they overrode the adjustment concerns of full-satellite students.

Students do not identify racism and discrimination as adjustment issues though they are part of their everyday lives. Students were aware of Canada's reputation as a multicultural country and understood the concept of cultural pluralism. Most students could see the benefits of this policy to them as Chinese-speaking foreign-born students. Some students felt the policy was good for Canada; others did not.

Recommendations included reviewing the current provincial EAL Policy in view of the changing demographics in some of British Columbia's school districts, placing a priority on identifying/addressing the needs of satellite students and increasing funding to develop and implement a more comprehensive program concerning racism and discrimination.

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“I am just like a boat between Hong Kong and Vancouver. I left Hong Kong, but I’ve not yet arrived in Vancouver. I feel, yeah, that’s my feeling” (Charles, February, 2000).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Canadian Historical Context

Canada's development as a multicultural nation has been tied inextricably to the immigration and settlement of foreigners, people other than the founding cultural groups at Confederation, the French, the English, and the First Nations peoples. Initially, immigrants were needed to settle throughout the country, to build railroads, to provide labour and expertise needed to farm the prairies, and to form the bulk of manual labour required to build this nation. Canada's immigration policy has changed over the years to reflect the demands of economic development and to reflect the changing attitudes of its population.

To begin with, Canada practiced Anglo-conformity, encouraging immigration to those who could easily *assimilate*. Preferred status was awarded to the countries of the British Empire, the northwest European countries, and a majority of the people of the United States. Other ethnic groups were considered acceptable, non-preferred, or non-assimilable, depending upon their place of origin and their race. Successive governments have adapted Canada's immigration policy and opened its doors to other ethnic groups in order to meet its economic needs.

During the 1920s and 1930s the *melting pot* theory evolved to replace Anglo-conformity. The melting pot theory reflected the belief that immigrants could retain the positive characteristics of their culture and add them to the values and beliefs of the dominant culture, thereby melding the cultures together. This was "assumed to be a necessary condition for equal opportunity and success" (DeVillar, Faltis, and Cummins, 1994, p. 350). Young (1990) suggests "the dominant groups project their own experience as representative of humanity (and)...since only the dominant group's cultural expressions receive wide dissemination, their cultural expressions become the normal, or the universal" (p. 59) mode of cultural representation.

In the 1940s and 1950s, in conjunction with the third wave of immigrants, “the arrival of many intellectuals among the postwar political refugees,” (Palmer, 1984, p. 82) and an increase in upwardly striving second and third generation non-Anglo-Canadians, pluralistic ideas began to emerge. Canada experienced the birth of multiculturalism. At this time, the term *cultural mosaic* arose to capture a developing acceptance of pluralistic cultures in this country.

In 1971 Pierre Trudeau, Canada’s Prime Minister, announced a new government multicultural policy within Canada’s bilingual framework. The intent of this policy was to “promote equality and mutual respect among Canada’s different ethnic or cultural groups” (Knowles, 1997, p. 178) and it set a different tone toward multicultural policy. Trudeau’s policy recognized the importance and contribution of ethnic groups other than the English, French and the First Nations, to the creation and development of Canada as a nation. The policy provided the means for these groups to receive government assistance to retain their heritage while embracing a Canadian identity. Despite opposition to this philosophy, Trudeau’s policy laid the groundwork for Canada’s current, unique, multicultural perspective, and reputation as a country where all people are welcome. This policy also:

provided the background to the shift in government policy from using multiculturalism as a way of meeting the wishes and concerns of migrants originating from Europe to one of using multiculturalism to combat racism, to reduce prejudice and discrimination directed against visible minorities, and to assist the sometimes difficult adjustment into Canadian society. (Wilson, 1994, p. 8)

Currently, Canada’s immigration policy centres on *cultural pluralism*, a policy encouraging its many ethnic groups to preserve their cultural identities while simultaneously expecting them to develop loyalty to Canada. This policy is significantly different from

Canada's earlier philosophy and is criticized by those who still believe immigrants should discard their culture and heritage and adopt a Canadian lifestyle. These individuals do not believe it is possible to simultaneously develop an allegiance to Canada and actively retain one's original cultural values and beliefs. On-going debate persists concerning the implications of cultural pluralism and whether this policy will ultimately unite or fragment the country. Verma (1984) discusses this policy as a fundamental socio-cultural ideological change. She contends that this perspective allows each ethnic group "to develop and retain its distinct culture and traditions within the framework of the larger society" (p. 62). Ramcharan (1982) suggests:

cultural pluralism...is the policy espoused by the Canadian society....the migrant group integrates into the social and economic institutions of the host society, and the host society on its part accepts the group as a lasting entity, with freedom to maintain its own cultural institutions including language, religion, and familial patterns that may differ from the majority. (p. 8).

Other authors, such as Bolton (1979) and Street-Porter (1978), suggest that cultural pluralism is the only policy to avoid racism (in Verma, p. 62). Moodley (1995) states that "although Canadian multiculturalism constitutes more rhetoric than substance, it fosters public tolerance. It bestows an aura of respectability to difference. It legitimizes minority spokespersons as recognized partners of government, to their mutual benefit (p. 11).

In the fall of 1999, at a Laurier Institution fund raising dinner¹, Dr. Milton Wong, Chancellor of Simon Fraser University (SFU), Burnaby, British Columbia, and Chairperson of the Laurier Institution, introduced the concept of a *tapestry* to describe Canada's multicultural

¹ The Laurier Institution is a multicultural think tank. I attended this meeting because of my interest in multicultural issues and because my husband is a member of the Board of Directors.

environment and the value of its many ethnic components. Comparing Canada's ethnic peoples to the distinct, but colorful and contributing strands in a tapestry, Dr. Wong maintains Canada, like a tapestry, is made stronger, richer and more vibrant because of its pluralistic character and the contributions of its diverse population.

B. Chinese in British Columbia

The Chinese immigrated to Canada during the 1850s² in response to political chaos and poor economic conditions in China. To begin with, Chinese immigrants were primarily male sojourners, temporary settlers who intended to return to China once they were financially successful. While some were from the merchant class, the majority of Chinese immigrants were peasants and labourers. They were prepared to work for low wages as unskilled labourers in areas spurned by others--railway construction, land clearing, mills, canneries, laundries, shopkeepers--and then viewed with contempt for doing so (Ward, 1990). As their original intent was never to settle in Canada, they left wives and families in China, and thus lived a life marked by hard work and loneliness. Successive measures imposed by the provincial and federal governments made it impossible for most Chinese to bring their families to Canada even when they decided to remain and had accumulated the financial means to do so.

The Chinese were never popular as an immigrant group among the white populace or the ruling elite and were among the most harshly treated of all immigrant populations in Canada. This treatment was particularly cruel in British Columbia where the majority of Chinese immigrants settled and where "Asians were at the very bottom of the immigrant hierarchy (Whitaker, 1991, p. 10). Ward (1990), in his preface, suggests that many believe racism arose

² Although some Chinese may have visited during the fur trade, the Fraser River gold rush in the late 1850s stimulated Chinese migration.

out of the economic tensions created by the availability of cheap Asian labour. While he believes economic tensions contributed to racial conflict and prejudice, he suggests these were “subordinate to psychological tensions as the central locus of racial animosity” (Preface, page unnumbered).

The Chinese were not viewed as being assimilable because of their race and their different ways. Instead, they were seen as unclean and unfit, harbingers of disease, drugs, and gambling. They could not be trusted among white women and young children. (Roy, 1980; Ward, 1990; Yee, 1988). The whites forced the Chinese to live in deplorable conditions, made it difficult for them to bring their families to Canada, and then used these factors as positive proof the Chinese could not be trusted or accepted as Canadians.

The Chinese were the only immigrants who had to endure head taxes. Four successive head taxes were imposed, beginning with ten dollars in 1884, and increasing to five hundred dollars in 1904. The Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 effectively prohibited Chinese immigration, disenfranchised the Chinese, and created insurmountable racial barriers. These barriers were somewhat addressed when the federal government repealed the Chinese Immigration Act in 1947, thus allowing the Chinese the right to vote and participate more fully in all areas of Canadian life. However, years of systematic racism and discrimination were not erased by this act. Invisible ceilings effectively barred the Chinese entrance into Canada, the right to live where they chose, the right to work in the professional arena and entrance into a number of professions for several more years. Only after 1967, when the federal government introduced the *point system* of immigration were the Chinese placed on an equal footing with other prospective immigrants and their immigration began in earnest. By the late 1970s, immigration from Hong Kong, Taiwan and China was fourteen times greater than previously and

the English speaking immigrants represented a much smaller proportion of the total immigration figure than in previous years (Ashworth, 1982, p. 77). Since then, their numbers continue to increase and they have either rivaled or become the largest immigrant population in Canada (See Table 1 page 7).

C. Educational Context

School populations in Canada have always reflected its history of immigrants. The school, as a socializing agent, continually adapts its educational policies to mirror society's changing beliefs about the responsibilities of educational institutions. Canada's changing attitudes towards its immigrant population, as seen through its move from assimilation to cultural pluralism, has also affected the way each provincial education department perceives its responsibility toward all foreign students³, whether immigrant or sojourner⁴, English as a second language (ESL)⁵, English as an additional language (EAL)⁶ student or International (Visa) student. With increased immigration in many Canadian centers, the immigrant student population has been growing in unprecedented numbers.

³ For the purposes of this study, foreign students are defined as those students born outside Canada who are attending a Canadian educational institution.

⁴ In this context, sojourner is used to describe students who leave their home country temporarily to study internationally. They expect to return to their country of origin once they have completed their academic studies.

⁵ The term ESL refers to students whose home language is not English. These students require English instruction before they are able to begin coping with Canadian school curriculum requirements. Most students in this category are foreign-born, but some are Canadian-born.

⁶ EAL is beginning to replace the term ESL and has been used at the site of this study since 1998. There is a technical difference between the terms English as a second language (ESL) and English as an additional language (EAL). ESL was coined during the period when policy makers believed students without English were in a deficit position linguistically. EAL reflects the contemporary belief that English is an additional language skill the student is acquiring and recognizes the fact that some students come to Canada with basic comprehension of more than one language. Other students, Canadian-born, begin their schooling without English language skills. No "deficiency" is connected with the term EAL.

Mansfield (1995) states:

This increasingly larger percentage of our student population consists of immigrants and refugees, foreign and domestic exchange students, children of temporarily stationed foreign personnel, foreign students whose education abroad is paid for by parents, and a variety of Aboriginal peoples. (p. 2)

He also asserts, "in the past decade schools in many parts of Canada have experienced a substantial influx of immigrants and refugee students, such that in some urban centers, they constitute a majority of the school population" (Mansfield, 1995 p. 1).

British Columbia (BC) is one of the Canadian provinces experiencing this growth in the EAL student population throughout the province, and particularly in all lower mainland districts. The British Columbia Ministry of Education created a draft ESL⁷ policy in 1998 to identify and address the implications of this burgeoning enrollment. The draft policy states that "since 1990, ESL enrolment has more than tripled, with about 90% of ESL students enrolled in Lower Mainland school districts" (ESL draft policy, p. 1). This statistic is critical because it represents a growing geographical area with a large immigrant population and an increasing number of students and school districts requiring specific educational assistance. The Ministry also recognizes that "British Columbia is a diverse society; people from all parts of the globe contribute to the social, cultural and linguistic fabric" (ESL draft policy, p. 1). The Ministry both understands and accepts the education system's responsibility to provide equitable opportunities for an increasing number of EAL students.

⁷ ESL is used in this section because the Ministry of Education used ESL in the policy they created for immigrant and sojourning students.

The Vancouver School District (#39), the second largest school district in British Columbia, has been concerned with foreign student needs for several decades. Since the early 1990s these students have rivaled the numbers of native born students in the district. For the past four years, ESL⁸ students have formed the majority population in many of Vancouver's elementary and secondary schools. Educators are increasingly interested in understanding the particular concerns of these students so they can better meet the needs of these children and the goal of multiculturalism. Banks (1993) asserts that the goal of multiculturalism is "to reform the school and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality" (p. 3).

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) has focused on the unique needs of its school population through the creation and development of multicultural and race relations policies and programs throughout the district. These policies address concerns related to living harmoniously in a multicultural context as well as developing individual and/or group sensitivity to differences in people as a result of race, religion, cultural beliefs and practices, political ideology, and economic circumstance. These programs provide the opportunity for students and all school staff to develop an awareness of their own perceptions and beliefs and to develop increased understanding of the problems faced by students and their families within these contexts. Foreign-born students in Vancouver begin their Canadian education in a school system that has both recognized and responded to the particular concerns of a large number of its student population through a supportive, inclusive environment and the development of race relations and multicultural policies to deal with its particular needs.

⁸ESL used in this context would also include those native born students who do not have English competency skills when they begin their formal schooling.

The increase in the foreign-born student population in the Vancouver school district has resulted from the immigration of many different cultural groups to Canada. For the last several years, Chinese-speaking students have represented the majority of these foreign and sojourning students. Their numbers have not only changed the makeup of individual school populations but have also resulted in many changes to individual school cultures.

Chinese-speaking students form the largest percentage of foreign-born students and have become the second largest cultural group in the Vancouver School District⁹ (See Table 2 page 11) as well as the largest cultural group in some individual schools in the district. I intend to identify the issues Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in this environment regard as most critical to their initial adjustment to life in Canada and to the secondary school situation and to determine which of these issues continue to be critical today. I also plan to examine student perceptions of Canada's multicultural policy in order to discern whether they believe it is possible to develop an allegiance to Canada while actively practicing their home culture in their new environment. And finally, I plan to examine their experiences of racism and discrimination, especially in view of the prior treatment of the Chinese in British Columbia.

This study will focus on all Chinese-speaking foreign-born students who formed part of the Grade 12 graduating class in one of Vancouver's secondary schools during the 1998 – 1999 school year. While the majority of these students immigrated from Hong Kong, Mainland China, or Taiwan, others immigrated from Brunei, India, Macau, Malaysia and the Philippines. The Chinese are not a homogeneous group (Lee, 1997; Min, 1995) and this cannot be emphasized enough. They immigrate to Canada from a number of countries and are themselves

⁹ Ministry of Education, Form 1701, Report 1527. Listed in Table 2 are the top ten home languages used by students in the Vancouver School District from 1997 - 1999. In the 1997 - 1998 school year, 102 different home languages were reported; in 1998 - 1999, 96 different home languages were reported.

TABLE 2

Top Ten Headcount Enrolment by Home Language Vancouver School District, 1997 - 1999

Language	1997 – 1998		1998 – 1999	
	Population	Per Cent	Population	Per Cent
English	23,586	41.03	23,350	40.96
Chinese	19,390	33.73	19,153	33.60
Vietnamese	3,091	5.37	3,043	5.33
Punjabi	2,510	4.36	2,518	4.41
Tagalog	1,497	2.60	1,535	2.69
Spanish	1,388	2.41	1,359	2.38
Hindi	1,042	1.81	966	1.70
Korean	557	.96	594	1.04
Japanese	409	.71	379	.66
Russian	287	.49	343	.60
Other ^a	3,716	6.53	3,755	6.63
Total	57,473	100.00	56,995	100.00

^aNote. The percent used in each of the "Other" categories reflects the total generated by the remaining 92 home languages in 1998 and 86 home languages in 1999 rather than the percent calculated when using 3,716 (6.47%) and 3,755 (6.59%) as a single calculation.

part of a larger population referred to as Asians. The following statement by Lee (1997) in reference to Asian Americans can also apply to Asian Canadians and the Chinese: "it must be emphasized at the outset that no one single set of Asian American family characteristics applies to all groups. There is tremendous cultural diversity within and among Asian American communities" (p. 4). Included in the differences Lee (1997) suggests are immigration issues such as language, educational level, socio-economic status, residential preference, religion, political circumstances, and experiences. Min (1995) and Uba (1994) also support these conclusions. The secondary school population will also be diversified based on the geography of their homelands, their political ideology, economic activity, personal circumstances and cultural beliefs.

Educators, health professionals, and others concerned about the welfare of foreign students may benefit from information gathered as a result of this study. Within the school context, educators may use results to provide improved student services, develop more appropriate means of communication with students and family members, develop and/or adapt appropriate curriculum offerings, and create or enhance existing programs addressing multicultural issues. Educators may use results to develop improved instructional techniques and instructional materials for their Chinese-speaking students. They may also, through increased cross-cultural knowledge, become more sensitive to the personal circumstances and adjustment issues faced by their Chinese-speaking students. Mental health professionals can use results of this study to increase their knowledge of the critical issues facing foreign-born students and to develop measures to support those requiring help.

C. Special Categories of the Foreign Student

I have chosen to create separate categories for the *international* and *satellite*¹⁰ students within the context of the more general term "Chinese-speaking foreign-born" student because of the different character of the relationship with their primary caregiver(s). This issue, I believe, creates an added dimension to the adjustment issue.

1. *International (Visa) Student*

The international student is a student who has permission of the Canadian government to study in Canada and must return home once educational study is complete. These students may be living with extended family members (aunts, uncles, and cousins), family friends, or guardians. Some may eventually live by themselves, and when this happens, they, in effect, become part of another category of foreign student, the astronaut (satellite, home-alone) student. Because of some similarity in their educational experience, international students may face comparable adjustment concerns to the satellite student. International students are sometimes called sojourners since the initial purpose of their stay in the host country is to visit, for an extended period of time, and then return home.

2. *Satellite (Astronaut, Home-Alone)*

The satellite phenomenon occurs when a family has landed immigrant status and the parent(s) travel back and forth between their home country and their host country, leaving their children to fend for themselves. The parent(s) remain in Canada long enough to meet residency requirements. "These are the *frequent fliers* who set up two

¹⁰ Satellite, astronaut, and home-alone are terms used by authors such as Bolton (1993) and Lee (1997). These terms are used interchangeably, though astronaut and satellite seem to be more commonly used.

households, one for the children in the United States and one for the adults who work in their home country” (Lee, 1997, p. 54). At times, one parent returns to the home country and the other remains with the children. When both parents return to their home country, their children become “unsupervised minors” (Bolton, 1993, p. 32) and thus cope with the additional responsibilities that normally fall within the realm of adults. Eva (1990) suggests the astronaut lifestyle belongs to the more affluent immigrants who commute regularly between Honk Kong¹¹ and Canada, tending to their business interests there and family responsibilities here. They create “remote” control parenting practices, “alternate parenting” by the one who happens to be in town, or “surrogate parenting” by friends or relatives. He also suggests this leads to family breakdown and no sense of commitment to the host country (p. 21).

In the satellite situation, family members cope with both the responsibilities of adjusting to a new country and culture as well as the additional stresses associated with the pain and loss of separation from a loved one(s). Each time the parent(s) returns to Canada, the children must temporarily adjust to their new circumstance, only to readjust when they depart again. I have found no empirical data in this area, but articles written point to the fact that these students seem to be susceptible to serious health and mental concerns and are sometimes the targets of gang recruitment tactics (Bolton, p. 32).

B. Personal Position

My interest in multicultural issues stems from a variety of perspectives. Though Canadian-born, I am of Ukrainian and German heritage. For the first few years of my life I lived in Hazel Dell, Saskatchewan, a Ukrainian community in northern Saskatchewan. At that time I

¹¹ Although satellite students come from other Asian countries, the majority seem to originate from Hong Kong.

spoke Ukrainian fluently and easily switched from English in my home to Ukrainian in my grandparent's home next door. Unfortunately, my mother did not allow Ukrainian to be spoken in our house, so my language facility disappeared when we moved from Hazel Dell to Fernie, British Columbia, where my father worked in the coal mine. Subsequently, we moved and settled in Vancouver, British Columbia. I began my school career in Vancouver's East End, an area primarily inhabited by immigrants and the working class. Even though we had left the larger Ukrainian community, we still observed Ukrainian traditions and celebrated Ukrainian Christmas. Ukrainian food—pyrohe, cabbage rolls, borscht, jellied meat—were a family mainstay. The nucleus of my parents' friends continued to be other Ukrainians who had migrated from the same area in the Ukraine, to the same Ukrainian community in Saskatchewan and now lived in the lower mainland.

Although my German heritage seemed lost within the more obvious Ukrainian practices, it was not forgotten. My mother continued to serve German foods—saurkraut, sausages, strudle, and kuchen—on a regular basis, and her Lutheran upbringing influenced our family's daily operation. Yearly, we trekked to southern Alberta/Saskatchewan from the Medicine Hat to Swift Current communities where my mother's family originally settled and where twelve of her fourteen older siblings remained. We then travelled more than 800 kilometres (500 miles) to northern Saskatchewan to visit my father's somewhat smaller family as he was the youngest of seven. These were major events in my life as I learned both the significance of my heritage and the importance of family. I also observed how distrustful and suspicious these people were of those outside the family constellation and their ethnic group.

Growing up in Vancouver's East Side played as much a part of shaping my identity as being of Ukrainian or German descent. Reflecting on my childhood experiences, it is difficult today to separate ethnicity and social class issues. I attended Britannia Secondary School, proudly referred to then as "the melting pot of nations" because it was, even in the 1960s, a school very much multicultural in character. Ethnicity did not seem an issue in the school environment, though it was sometimes an issue in my neighbourhood. At first I did not realize how disadvantaged we were compared to many of those who lived in Vancouver's West Side. Besides, I had never seen or met people who lived under different circumstances. Athletics provided the vehicle for me to initially experience Vancouver's east/west bias as well as feel the disadvantage of being from the working poor. Remnants of the inferior position I felt at that time exist today even though I have physically left this environment and the attendant socio-economic level. Emotionally, I remain there, sensitive to those living in circumstances similar to those I did as a young child, wanting to help them whenever and wherever possible.

As a young adult, I married into a first generation Italian family and now have considerable familiarity with this culture. I also added cannelloni, gnocchi, lasagne, pasta and pizza to my international repertoire. Like my Ukrainian and German relatives, Italians emphasize the importance of family and hard work. Like my relatives, they are often distrustful of those outside their cultural background and of those who do not originate from their geographic area. Family members outside their ethnic background are rarely, if ever, truly accepted. The fabric of my life has been enriched because of my experience with these three cultural backgrounds.

However, my pride as a Canadian surpasses all. Many of the customs and traditions I practise and many of my personal experiences growing up in Vancouver's East Side provide

insight concerning the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to an ethnic minority. These experiences also provide some awareness of the issues facing recent immigrants and an understanding of the issues facing the working class.

My gender affects my perception of and experience in these arenas as well. As a female growing up in a very patriarchal environment I was expected to develop and practice behaviors and competencies associated with my gender. Even though education was emphasized by my parents, women were expected to remain in the home, to leave the world of work to men, and to defer to the men in their lives. This belief was subsequently reinforced in the cultural environment of my married life. The duality of this role and the difficulties resulting from striving to meet traditional expectations with the desire to achieve recognition as a competent individual in the working world have always created considerable internal conflict for me. Balancing traditional expectations with my perception of today's expectations for women is not easily achieved and seems to be a fairly common concern for women of my generation who are attempting to bridge traditional expectations with today's contemporary ones.

As a secondary school teacher in the Vancouver School District in British Columbia, Canada, I have become increasingly aware of, and interested in, immigrant and international students who seem to face a number of problems in addition to those of Canadian-born students. Many have been uprooted from their place of birth and have immigrated to Canada and/or have chosen Canada as a place to study. Reasons for this move vary, but once foreign students arrive they need to make adjustments in order to cope with their new environment. Many strive to excel but are unable to do so because of their unfamiliarity with the English language, Canadian customs and Canadian traditions. They are trying to adjust to a new way of life and must

constantly balance new expectations with those of their native culture. This can be very difficult, demanding, and stressful.

The teaching environment in the Vancouver School District has changed considerably during the past ten years as the EAL population continues to increase. In my classrooms the majority of my students do not speak English in their homes. In all classrooms I have become part of the visible minority. In fact, during the past five years I have taught classes where I am the only Caucasian in the classroom. While I do not normally notice my students' ethnicity, I do notice the increasing numbers of students who have difficulty with the English language. I also notice how this impacts on all aspects of their ability to learn and my ability to teach effectively.

In the secondary school environment, where course content is such a critical issue and passing government exams so important to future success, developing strategies to assist students to become academically successful is increasingly difficult. This has become a concern of the majority of the teachers on staff and we frequently discuss the implications resulting from such a high EAL population. In addition, topics relating to our changing student population are often agenda items on professional development days.

Most teachers understand and accept that changing and adapting instructional strategies can no longer be left to the EAL Department. Understanding and becoming more sensitive to cultural differences has become increasingly important. Our students must develop language competencies, course content competencies, and cultural competencies in order to both adjust and adapt to the Canadian environment and to live comfortably in Canada. My interest and concern for these students has grown as their numbers have increased in my classroom.

While I am interested in the adjustment of all foreign students, I have decided to investigate adjustment issues of the Chinese-speaking, the largest immigrant population in the

Vancouver school district. In this school district they either rival or form part of the largest student population in the majority of the schools. I believe understanding their adjustment issues is particularly important for us, as educators, to provide them with the instructional program and support system they require to meet their particular needs. This is a mandate of both the provincial education policy whose goal is to provide an equitable education for all its students and the federal multicultural policy that stresses cultural pluralism. I also believe their adjustment concerns may be considerably different because they are part of the largest cultural group in the school. This circumstance is not currently reflected in our EAL policy and may have serious implications for policy revision. How these differences present themselves is certainly worthy of investigation.

In addition, I have a particular interest in satellite and international students. The majority of these students in the secondary school environment seem to originate from within the Chinese immigrant population and from studying the entire population I may uncover new and valuable information about these sub-groups of my target population. From my experience and observations as a secondary teacher, satellite and international students seem to be the most vulnerable of all the EAL students I meet. The additional challenges faced by satellite and international adolescents as they attempt to adapt to a new school system and a new culture without parental support nearby are difficult to fully understand or comprehend.

My particular interest in, and concern for, the astronaut and international student provided the impetus for my return to graduate school. In addition, my increasing interest in understanding the issues involved in cross-cultural communication and adaptation, and in improving my ability to assist students with both their academic studies and with their emotional, mental and physical well being as they adjust to a new culture and a new school system

determined the focus of my graduate study. My study, "investigating the adjustment issues of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in a secondary school where they form the largest cultural group" is a natural amalgamation of my interest in the adjustment issues faced by EAL students and my particular interest in the astronaut and international student.

There are five main objectives of this study:

- To determine initial adjustment factors of students who are Chinese-speaking foreign-born in a social climate where they form the largest cultural group in a secondary school setting.
- To examine adjustment issues of satellite and international secondary school students as sub-groups within the Chinese cultural context to determine whether their needs are substantially different from other students.
- To identify students' lived experiences concerning racism and discrimination in the school as well as the community in view of the history of racism and discrimination toward the Chinese in British Columbia.
- To examine students' perceptions of and subsequent responses to Canada's multicultural policy of cultural pluralism.
- To identify which adjustment issues continue to be important subsequent to secondary school completion.

This study will also investigate other issues in the area of student adjustment to a new school, a new culture, and a new country. Results of this study will be compared to results of previous studies with a similar focus such as Bolton (1993), Chiu (1995), Chuong (1989), Crano (1986), Duthie (1987), Hartung (1983), Klein, Alexander, Tseng, Miller, Yeh, Chu, and Workneh (1971), Klineberg & Hull (1979), Kring (1985), Mansfield (1997), Mickle (1985), Popadiuk (1998), Sharma (1971a), Wang (1990). Chinese student adjustment will be compared to adjustment issues of other foreign students. Issues such as age of migration, number of years in Canada, and citizenship status will also be considered when analyzing student responses. This study will also investigate the impact of school multicultural programs and clubs as well as student participation in school extra-curricular activities when considering student adjustment

issues. And finally, this study will attempt to determine whether Canada's policy of cultural pluralism has affected students' perceptions of their roles as students and ultimately, adults, in Canada.

Chapter 1 provides an overview for the focus of this study. Chapter 2 presents an extensive literature review in the areas relating to this study. Included in this chapter are the topics of adolescent emotional needs, the differences between the Eastern and Western cultural perspectives, theories and stages of cross-cultural adjustment, the impact of pre-migration preparation, and racism and discrimination. Also included in this chapter are the adjustment areas previously identified in other studies and literature in this area that have been placed in the following sub-sections: Language, Education, Family, Peer Relations, Personal, Mental Health and Cross-cultural issues.

Chapter 3 outlines the design of this study and the interview procedure used. Included are site selection, data collection procedures, characteristics of both the target and interview population, ethical considerations, and the characteristics of an ethnographic interview. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study, organized around the study's main objectives. Chapter 5 presents the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to become aware of the issues involved in foreign student adjustment, I investigated a number of interconnected topics. To begin with, I looked in the area of adolescent emotional needs to establish what needs are considered vital for individual growth. Next, I studied literature concerning the differences between what is often termed the *Eastern* and *Western* cultures, differences resulting in complex adjustment issues for foreign students. While the distinction between Eastern and Western cultures is no longer as clear as some authors suggest, it does provide a framework from which to operate. Further, there is substantial educational information on culture shock and theories related to cross-cultural adaptation. And finally, I looked at a variety of studies and educational papers related to immigrant and sojourner adjustment issues and mental health concerns.

Foreign student adjustment does not operate in a vacuum and is affected by other issues specific to the migration site. For this project it was important to examine Canada's immigration history and the development of its multicultural policy. In order to address any concerns my target population may express either in the school or the community environment, it was also important to investigate issues of racism and discrimination to be able to identify and understand their underpinnings. And finally, it was important to study the history of the immigration of the Chinese in British Columbia. This information provides the background setting for this study and may impact on student adjustment in the school situation and the larger society.

Adjustment issues vary in their intensity depending on issues such as English language facility, personality and experience of the foreign student, degree of family support, educational level, achievement level, and reasons for immigration/sojourning. Adjustment issue(s) may be seen as facilitating or hindering depending upon the personal context of the immigrant or

sojourner. A number of studies document the experiences of international students at university or colleges at the graduate level, but few studies focus on international students at the secondary school or university undergraduate levels. Compared to the literature available on foreign student adjustment, there have been few Canadian studies conducted at either the elementary, secondary, or undergraduate university/college level. Duthie (1987), Farrokh, (1988), Kring (1985), Mickle, (1985) and Stein (1986) conducted Canadian studies in the area of adjustment prior to the 1990s. During the last decade, graduate student studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and at the University of Calgary have investigated aspects of foreign student adjustment at both the university and secondary school levels. The Vancouver and Richmond school districts, two of the larger school districts in British Columbia, were the sites selected for the secondary studies by Bolton (1993), Mansfield (1997), and Popadiuk (1998). UBC was the site for Wang (1990) and the Calgary school district was selected as the site for Gougeon & Hutton (1992). These last four studies are described in a separate category entitled "Canadian Secondary School Studies Focussing on Adjustment Issues."

A. Emotional Needs

"Adolescence is a normal period of idealism, of striving for heights, of yearning to know oneself and be oneself" (D'Evelyn, 1957, p. 34). The basic emotional needs of children are love, acceptance, security, protection, independence, faith, guidance and control (Goodman¹², (1969). Adolescents have the same emotional needs. When these basic emotional needs are met, adolescents experience this developmental stage with less difficulty. Ideally, parents provide the

¹² D'Evelyn (1957) and Goodman (1969) are used as references because they provide a thorough explanation of the topic of adolescent emotional needs, needs that have not changed since the writing of these works.

guidance and instruction necessary for children to meet their emotional needs, but in reality, this is not always possible, nor does it always happen.

Adolescents need to feel loved and accepted for who they are and what they are striving to become. They need to believe they have parents, relatives, friends or significant others who love them unconditionally and will support them fully as they strive toward independence and adulthood. This means that as they are striving toward independence, they are encouraged to try new things and will be supported whether successful or unsuccessful. In their home environment they feel secure and protected. They should feel confident that their parents will be available for them on a daily basis, and particularly in crisis situations. They know they are an integral part of a family group and will be protected from frightening experiences or situations that might cause harm. Adolescents need adults who will guide them as they mature, who will assist them to understand how to behave and react in a variety of circumstances. Adult guidance is necessary for the adolescent to strive "to reach a stage of independent action and control to gain success according to his interests and abilities; to gain increased confidence in and understanding of himself and others; and to take his rightful place in peer and adult relationships" (D'Evelyn, 1957, p. 31). These adults assist the adolescent to develop a set of standards to live by. And finally, parents are there to set limits and provide the control required at times as adolescents mature. D'Evelyn (1957) states "youngsters need adult support for control even in adolescence. If adult control is minimal and can be counted on, the adolescent feels more safe and secure" (p. 32). Parents assist their children to set limits and develop appropriate coping behaviors in a variety of situations.

Meeting the emotional needs of adolescents can be difficult to accomplish without the additional concerns of adapting to a new country and a new culture. Parents in this situation are

also struggling to meet their own needs and are not always able to provide the support their children require. Several investigators support Xue (1995) who suggests that a large number of Chinese immigrant teenagers "believe that there is no parental help for them when they deal with problems in school, in society, or with friends" (p. 17). International and satellite students adapt to a new country and new culture without the consistent physical presence and emotional support of parents normally required to meet basic emotional needs. As Klein et al. (1971) states "the more we uncover the painful facets of the adaptation most foreign students make...the more difficult it is for us to take any position that would lead to the glossing over of foreign student problems" (p. 77).

B. Eastern and Western Cultural Perspectives

Several educational articles and textbooks as well as other studies discuss the cross-cultural adaptation difficulties caused by very basic differences between the Eastern and Western cultural perspectives and value systems. While Mickle (1985), Min (1995) and Shaw and colleagues (1994) provide empirical evidence to suggest cross-cultural differences are no longer as critical an adjustment issue, the majority of studies have indicated that these disparate perspectives contribute to the difficulties foreign students experience.

Before further examination of the Eastern and Western perspectives, it must be emphasized that while these systems are different, one is not superior. In contemporary society these systems are in constant flux, so that it is no longer possible to cleanly separate and delineate each viewpoint, or to attribute specific qualities of one perspective to all individuals from that cultural group. Elements of these perspectives are presented in this study to earmark some of the differences in these viewpoints without categorizing each Canadian or each Chinese person as mirroring the characteristics commonly used to describe the Eastern or the Western

point of view. As Min (1995) states, "just as there is no typical American family, there is no typical Chinese family. The Chinese family can best be viewed as a product of the complex interaction between structural factors (i.e. restrictive immigration policies and racism) and cultural factors (i.e. Confucian ethics)" (p. 68).

Historically, Chinese and Canadian¹³ cultures provided a clearer illustration of the Eastern and Western points of view. Each emphasized a different perception of the role of the individual in society. These differences influence the way individuals relate to others, how they perceive themselves, and how they interact in their family setting and in the larger society. The Chinese culture is known as a collective society. In a collectivist society, the self is primarily defined by social roles, memberships, and relationships of the individual to others (Cross, 1995, p. 675). The individual is connected to, and interdependent upon, the group setting. The individual's role and hierarchical relationship within the group is predetermined and understood. The needs, goals, and beliefs of the group often take precedence over those of the individual (Chapman, 1969; Gao & Ting-Tooney, 1998). The emphasis for many Chinese is on the group, and individuals establish their identity through their role in the group.

Canada's current multicultural composition makes it impossible to ascribe the Western perspective to its population base. Canada's population includes peoples from other areas of the world where the Eastern perspective originated and continues to thrive and their attitude is reflected in a changing viewpoint for a number of Canadian citizens as well as a number of Canadian residents. However, understanding differences in these concepts is useful because it provides a framework to better understand the social context of the students in this study.

¹³ The use of Canadian refers to Anglo-Canadian rather than French-Canadian.

For many Canadians, emphasizing the individual, and individual interests and needs continue to be important today. A number of young Canadians are encouraged to become independent, self-reliant, assertive, competitive, and to establish social ties separate from, but in addition to, those of the nuclear family. These youth place individual needs, goals, and beliefs above group goals. These individuals are encouraged to strive toward self-actualization. They may be part of groups, but their identity is determined through their individualism (Bean, 1995; Cross, 1995; Klein et al. 1971; Lee, 1997).

The behavior of many Chinese immigrants is guided by Confucian principles. "According to Confucius, man lives a good life by preserving self-respect and by observing a right and proper relationship towards others, whether they are his family or friends, his superiors or inferiors" (Chapman, 1969, p. 11). Because of this belief in Confucianism, a majority of the Chinese population place a value on education, respecting teachers and parents. Cauquelin (1998) suggests Confucianism explains why there is considerable Chinese support for the hierarchical aspect of relationships, patriarchal order and its role in maintaining social order and stability, the importance of self-cultivation and moral quality of individuals, and a natural order which creates harmony in the world. "The Chinese...try to keep harmony at all costs; language is implicit and indirect so they avoid saying no. One must watch body language, subtle remarks and patterns of conduct. There are terms for addressing others, which indicate respect for age or status" (Cauquelin, 1998, p. 153). By following these principles, many Chinese are able to *save face*, a convention of high importance to this culture.

"The family is the center of everything in Chinese culture. Although the structure of the traditional extended family continues to decline in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and many places in China, the importance of family in many aspects of a person's life still prevails" (Gao, 1998,

p. 13). As Shen (1990) suggests, "the Confucian ethical code, which is the essence of most Asian cultures, holds that the first loyalty is to the family, even above their allegiance to country and religion. The family represents a religious, economic, political, and social unit" (p. 3). Through the family unit many Chinese parents are able to control their children, place demands on them, and expect full obedience to their cultural values and principles. Gao & Ting-Tooney (1998) in describing the Chinese culture as a "we" culture, suggest the needs, goals, and beliefs of the in-group often take precedence over those of the individual (p. 3). Individuals within the family may thus be sacrificed for the good of the family as a whole.

Recent literature points to a changing focus in the Chinese culture and value systems. Lee (1997) suggests this change is the result of the economic and political changes in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China resulting from the communist take-over in 1949. Chu (1985), Garrott (1995) and Min (1995) suggest this change occurred as a result of the Cultural Revolution in China from 1966 – 1976 and the political and economic upheavals during this time. Chu (1985) contends that many of the Chinese who grew up during this period have a completely different perception of "self" as well as what is right and what is wrong (p. 255). They have developed a more individualistic perspective that is reflected in a changing focus toward political activism and material acquisition. While family is still important, political principles form the cornerstone of their beliefs. Their preoccupation with material goods can be viewed as a change in social structure because this change represents a core change in their belief system. Garrott (1995) in a study of Chinese cultural values at the college level in Chinese colleges found that the behavior of many contemporary Chinese students "exhibit a strong tendency toward individualism, rather than toward the collectivism generally associated with traditional Chinese society" (p. 211).

Similarly, the family is also the prime social group in Western cultures. The family unit, including the extended family, is an integral part of the individual's life, but it functions to support individual effort rather than group performance. Szalay et al (1994) suggest the relationship is built on love and friendship rather than hierarchy and roles. The inherent contrasts between the Western and Eastern perspectives and the subsequent emphasis on different values makes it more difficult for a number of Chinese students to adapt to the Canadian environment. When making reference to Chinese immigrant teenagers, Xue (1995) states they:

live with the impact of two cultures, they cannot grow up in the same way as the native Chinese or American teenagers...they have to struggle to behave well and follow the requirements of their new school system; they have to learn to live in a strange community with other ethnic groups; they have to bear their parents' overexpectation or blame; and they have to overcome isolation without the joy of friendship. (p. 35)

The picture painted of the Western perspective does not represent all families living in Canada. The family unit continues to be important but has undergone extensive social change. The family unit is no longer defined only in the traditional sense and may consist of a variety of living arrangements including situations where "family members" are not related at all by blood or through marriage. Blended families, same-sex couples, group homes, and other living arrangements coexist with the traditional family setting. Family support may take different forms from love and friendship, and may indeed, be based on patriarchal, hierarchical or complementary roles. Families may be struggling to meet basic needs so that individual support takes on a much different shape. However, the core difference between the Eastern and Western perspectives makes it easy to study them philosophically. In actual fact, the reality of applying

these perspectives to sample populations becomes more difficult with the passing of time and the cross-cultural migration and integration of the world's population.

C. Theories and Stages of Cross-cultural Adjustment

Any individual who enters a different environment, whether it is a change from secondary school to university or college, a move from one home to another, or relocation from one part of the country to another, makes several adjustments. When this move results in both a change of environment and the introduction of a different culture, resulting adaptations are substantial and often difficult to accomplish. The term used to describe the reaction to a sudden change in culture is called *culture shock*. This term is commonly used when looking at the adjustment of international students and all immigrants, regardless of the circumstances of immigration. The *International Students Handbook*, 2nd edition (1986), describes this phenomenon:

When you arrive in Canada, depending on your racial and class background, you may encounter an environment where the norms and values are radically different from your own. In such a milieu, day-to-day living can prove to be difficult and social situations can present numerous frustrations. Social psychologists define this experience as "culture shock". Some examples of this syndrome are loneliness, feelings of alienation, constant fatigue, the desire to remain withdrawn, frustration and anger. (p. 34)

Initially, most researchers felt that foreign adjustment follows a U-curve pattern with sojourners readjusting to their home environment experiencing a double-U or W-curve adjustment pattern. The basis of the U-curve adjustment pattern is "the idea that cross-cultural sojourners (and foreign students) progress through three main phases: an initial state of elation and optimism, replaced by a period of frustration, depression and confusion....and finally

followed by a gradual improvement leading to feelings of confidence and satisfaction with the new society” (Furnham & Bochner, 1986, p. 13). This general pattern was originally suggested by Lysgaard (1955) and is also supported by several other investigators (Dubois, 1956; Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Klein et al., 1977). Recently, some researchers have disputed the U-curve theory because they have found that individuals respond differently to adjustment issues and as a result, all individuals do not follow the same pattern. (Farrokh, 1988; Kring, 1985; Mansfield, 1995).

Many studies in the area of student adjustment focus on the common feelings associated with culture shock and the difficulties attempting to cope with the despair, isolation, alienation and sadness initially experienced in a new cultural environment. Several theorists have developed models to explain the stages involved with cross-cultural adjustment. Oberg (1960) described the stages of culture shock in the following manner: honeymoon, crisis, recovery, and adjustment. From these terms, one is able to picture the cycle of adjustment related to culture shock. Adler (1975) expands Oberg’s model to describe five different aspects to culture shock adjustment. He has called these contact, disintegration, reintegration, autonomy, and independence. This model more fully describes the process of rejecting/accepting the host and home cultures as adjustment occurs. Taft (1977) based coping skills on five areas he identified as social-emotional, ethnic and national identity, cultural competence, social absorption, and role acculturation. Although Ishiyama (1989) approached adjustment from a different angle than Adler and Taft, his model of adjustment with international students also centred around five thematic components: security, comfort, and support; self-worth and self-acceptance; competence and autonomy; identity and belonging; love, fulfillment, and meaning in life. As adjustment occurs, these thematic areas improve. Many theories exist relating to culture shock

and subsequent adjustment issues. They may have different labels, but they all depict the ebb and flow of sojourner and immigrant adjustment and present data indicating the difficulties associated with newcomer adjustment.

D. Pre-Migration Preparation

The literature I have read concerning foreign student adjustment indicates this experience is fraught with problems for most individuals. Researchers have investigated the effect of pre-planning on the adjustment process. Furnham and Bochner (1986) suggest that "cross-cultural problems arise because sojourners have trouble negotiating certain social situations. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the specific social situations which trouble a particular sojourner and then train the person in those specific skills that are lacking" (p. 15). This implies the adjustment period will be more manageable with pre-planning and training. They even suggest that prior cross-cultural preparation take the form of "programmes of preparation, orientation and the acquisition of culturally appropriate social skills" (Furnham and Bochner, p. 13). They assert pre-planning will not only enhance the adjustment experiences, but will also necessitate the development of new theories or models of adjustment. Gudykunst (1996) found that reducing uncertainty and anxiety was an important factor in cross-cultural adjustment. On the other hand, Mansfield (1995), whose "hermeneutic phenomenological" study investigated the initial adaptation experiences of six immigrant high school¹⁴ students in the Canadian secondary school situation, found little stress or anxiety associated with initial adjustment of his subjects. He suggests they had few prior expectations of the adjustment process and this may be why they experienced so little stress/anxiety (p. 242).

¹⁴ High school and secondary school are terms used interchangeably in this paper to denote schools with students ranging from Grade 8 - 12.

Two studies indicating advantages associated with prior experience or knowledge are Chiu (1995) and Crano (1986). Crano studied self-concept and the relationship of self-concept to academic, social, and personal adjustment of more than two hundred Latin American international high school exchange students in the US. Crano (1986) administered a pre-exchange questionnaire to determine problem areas and to measure the degree of difficulty experienced. During the year, students completed questionnaires in November and May. Results indicate a relationship between self-concept and adjustment, with fewer adjustment concerns for students with positive attitudes. Crano concluded that measuring self-concept prior to departure could provide valuable information concerning the subject's ability to "adjust to the personal, social, and academic aspects of the foreign living experience" (p. 15). Results also indicate fewer adjustment problems for students who had previously lived outside their own country. This result supports the Klineberg & Hull (1979) study of 2,356 international students, which determined that prior experience and positive attitudes toward the host nationals assisted students with positive adjustment to a foreign environment.

Chiu (1995) studied the effect of anticipatory fear on foreign student adjustment at Stanford University. Thirty-nine Asian students were divided into three groups based on anticipatory fear. Three subsequent sessions explored stresses and adjustment issues of foreign students. Results indicate that different levels of anticipatory fear affect the adjustment process. Students with least anticipatory fear experienced the most difficulties, and students in the moderate group adjusted more easily. Chiu suggests that it is important to measure anticipatory fear in order to be able to assist student adjustment in an appropriate manner after migration.

E. Racism and Discrimination

Canada's current multicultural policy embraces cultural pluralism and its population mix reflects this multicultural perspective. Cultural groups are encouraged to maintain, practice, and celebrate their cultural heritage while adapting to the Canadian identity. Some, like Berry (1976), Kehoe (1984) and Davetian (1994) support multiculturalism and believe cultural heritage is different from Canadian identity. Therefore, it is possible to celebrate one's cultural heritage while embracing the Canadian identity. Others, like Bissoondath (1994) and Granatstein (1998), believe focussing on one's cultural heritage will result in fragmenting rather than unifying Canadians. Maintaining and celebrating one's cultural heritage prevents immigrants from fully adapting and developing an allegiance to their new country. This debate continues, reflecting deep-seated attitudes and feelings about the value and use of its immigrant population and about the loyalty these people develop towards Canada. Some of these disparate feelings may be attributed to racism and discrimination.

Historically, Canada's treatment of its immigrant populations has not reflected its present policy. Immigrants were courted because they were needed to meet the economic conditions of the time, to populate the prairies and to perform those tasks the British and French would not or could not do. These immigrants were expected to settle in an environment where they, as *others*, were marginalized.

Racism and discrimination were reflected in the Canadian government's immigration policy that determined which immigrants were preferred or not preferred. The government reflected the beliefs of the majority of the English settled in Canada. As time passed, economic needs and political considerations altered Canada's immigration policy, but did not alter the imperialist beliefs of its ruling people, nor the racism that continued to gain momentum across

the country. "Imperialism and racism went hand in hand...Imperial expansions required the subjugation of the people already inhabiting the land" (Stanley, 1990, p. 145). Each province seems to have discriminated against the largest immigrant population within its borders. Hence, in Ontario and Quebec it was the Jews; in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Ukrainians; in Nova Scotia, the Blacks, and in British Columbia, the Chinese and later the Japanese.

Stanley's (1991) work suggests that racism existed not only on an individual level but that it also existed on an institutional level. Racist feelings existed prior to the creation of its major institutions and thus, the institutions reflected these beliefs. He contends that racism was deeply imbedded in Canadian society; that racism existed prior to the development of its immigration policy; and that racism shaped its immigration policies. He believes racism still "remains to be recognized as the major factor in shaping our society" (p. 4). Stanley further suggests that "white supremacy, as both ideology and organization, was deeply imbedded in British Columbia" (p. ii) and that government institutions were created to enhance the power of the Anglo-Canadians (p ii).

As government institutions, schools promoted the beliefs of the time, including the importance of imperialist expansion, the superiority of the British, the ideas of innate difference, and the concept of racial superiority (Stanley, 1990, pp. 148 – 151). Within this framework, immigrant children received their education and developed their attitudes toward the dominant culture as well as other ethnic groups.

In British Columbia, Roy (1980) suggests the Chinese were victims of racial intolerance in response to their different race and that this "hostility was rooted in fear of Asian superiority" (p. 285). Sandiford & Kerr (1926) also studied this particular issue. They determined that Japanese and Chinese students outperform other students in the classroom. They then

concluded, "the presence of so many clever, industrious and frugal aliens constitutes a political and economic problem of the greatest importance" (p. 367). Racism existed despite contentions otherwise.

The existence of racism and discrimination in the structure or fabric of schools have been addressed under the umbrella of social justice issues by a number of authors such as Scheurich (1994), Solomon & Levine-Rasky (1996) and Young (1990). Young (1990), who suggests educators are more aware of and sensitive to issues such as racism and discrimination, frames her discussion from a significantly different interpretation of the term "oppression." She suggests:

Oppression designates the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer not because a tyrannical power coerces them, but because of the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society....Oppression in this sense is structural, rather than the result of a few people's choices or policies. Its causes are embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules. (p. 41)

Scheurich (1994) states that these everyday practices in government institutions reinforce and retain the core belief of white supremacy (p. 306) while Scheurich (1994) and Solomon & Levine-Rasky (1996) suggest that schools, as government agencies, produce citizens whose behavior and attitudes reflect this social order. Structural inequalities in schools affect students of ethnic or racial minority through "evaluation of their academic potential, the curriculum they receive, the social relationship they develop with teachers, and the career and life opportunities" (Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 1990, p. 22) available to them. An ethnocentric perspective, a belief in the merit of current pedagogy and practice, and a fear of loss of power prevent some teachers from altering both their point of view and their teaching practice. When discussing the

oppression the minority student experiences, these authors do not examine the pedagogical effectiveness of speaking only English in the classroom and the importance of learning the accepted social practices in the host country. Regardless of the advantages or disadvantages of school policies and practices, changing the behavior of individual personnel in the education system does not eliminate structural racism and discrimination in the schools because these conditions are systematically reproduced there.

Berry (1976), in a study of multiculturalism and ethnic attitudes, found that Canadians reject explicit racism (p. 207). They, on the whole, display "a reasonably high level of overt, or explicit tolerance for ethnic diversity" though "a certain level of covert concern and reluctance to accept ethnic diversity was also uncovered" (Berry, 1980, p. 223). Fisher and Echols (1989), in a study on race relations in the Vancouver School Board, uncovered racist feelings and attitudes within the system despite the school board's implementation of programs to address this issue. While statements made by teachers and other personnel were acknowledged, many officials in the district believed it was no longer a serious problem to contend with because the VSB's programs effectively addressed any racism or discrimination within the system. In contrast to this, findings of a 1996 review of Canadian multicultural programs indicate that Canadians perceive racism in their environment. The authors concluded that intolerance was not only increasing but would continue to increase in years to come (pp. 43 - 44).

Racism and discrimination have shaped Canada's immigration program and multicultural record. Historically, the Chinese were particular targets of this type of violence in British Columbia in the schools and in the larger community. Currently, the Chinese are the largest immigrant population as well as the largest school immigrant population in British Columbia. In some schools they have become one of the largest cultural groups in the school. Investigating

student perception of the impact of racism and discrimination becomes an important aspect of their adjustment to living in Canada and accepting Canada as their new home.

Current literature examines the effects of racism and discrimination on the performance of immigrant students in the classroom and then subsequently, in the workforce. Tajfel (1978) suggests "the history and the contemporary features of social, economic, and other differences between social groups are reflected in the attitudes, beliefs and views of the world held by members of these (minority) groups" (p. 3). In other words, many students of minority groups accept, to some degree, the beliefs of the dominant culture. This ultimately affects their performance in school and the larger community. Ogbu (1974) and Ogbu & Simons (1998) studied the differences in performance of dominant and minority students and concluded that "differences were caused by the treatment of minority groups in society at large and in school as well as by the perceptions of the minorities and their responses to school due to such treatment" (Ogbu & Simons, p. 155).

Minorities are divided into two main categories, voluntary (immigrant) and involuntary (nonimmigrant/castelike) based upon whether they immigrate willingly or whether they are forced into a minority position by the dominant culture. Race is not used as a factor to categorize minority populations in this theory. Voluntary minorities immigrate willingly, accept their minority position because they believe it temporary, may face discrimination, and believe there are better opportunities for them in the host country. By definition, involuntary minorities are not immigrants, but have been forced into their minority positions by being "conquered, colonized, or enslaved" (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 165). They do not accept their minority position. Status as a voluntary or involuntary minority determines the attitudes and actions of

not only the original migrants or settlers but also successive generations towards the host country, its policies and programs, and eventual acceptance or rejection of those in power.

Involuntary minorities practice *cultural inversion*. This term describes the ability of some minorities to deem inappropriate the behaviors, events, symbols and meanings of a different culture because they are characteristics of that culture. Behaviors minorities deem appropriate for themselves are different from those attributed to the dominant culture (Trueba, Cheng, & Ima, 1993, p. 7). Status as a voluntary or involuntary minority affects the individual's perception of their status in society, the opportunities available to them after completing their education, and their interpretation of the everyday experiences they encounter. This theory attempts to explain why some minority groups and/or individuals are successful despite their minority position in their host country.

Trueba et al. (1993) suggests this theory of voluntary and involuntary minorities helps to explain why the Chinese are often successful in their new environments. Although they immigrate voluntarily and although they have similar beliefs to voluntary minorities, they have historically been treated like involuntary minorities in some situations. Because of their treatment, they respond in a manner similar involuntary minorities in some instances. "They develop a non-oppositional definition of ethnic identity, retain their home environment as their reference point, and excel because their culture places importance on academic achievement" (pp. 47 – 48). An aspect of this success lies in their ability to separate their culture from the dominant culture and to retain their culture despite living in a new environment.

F. Canadian Secondary School Studies Focussing on Adjustment Issues

Four Canadian studies investigate adjustment issues of foreign students at the secondary school age level. In 1992 Gougeon and Hutton interviewed 27 secondary school teachers from

three Calgary schools to determine their perceptions of the main difficulties faced by immigrant students. The focus of this study was to develop ways to improve communication in the homes of immigrant students. Teachers identified cross-cultural concerns, language difficulties, racial discrimination, and alienation as some of the key adjustment concerns.

The other three studies focus on secondary school age students, in an interview format, and are therefore the studies closest to my study in methodology and content. These are studies by Bolton (1993), Mansfield (1995), and Popadiuk (1998). Bolton's (1993) study examined facilitating and hindering incidents of eight male and eight female Hong Kong born high school students in a large Vancouver secondary school. All 16 students interviewed were between the ages of 16 and 18 and were enrolled in regular classes. They had lived in Canada for one and a half to three years. Her findings indicate that identity and self-esteem issues are more important to adjustment than language. However, language proficiency was related to improving individual self-esteem and self-identity and was at the heart of culture management and participation in the larger society. Lack of family support and the overall school environment were also cited as key adjustment issues. Bolton (1993) focussed on the counsellor's perspective when analyzing the data she acquired.

Mansfield (1995) conducted his study in Richmond, a school district adjacent to Vancouver. Like Bolton (1993), his subjects were recent immigrants. They had lived in Canada less than two years. He interviewed three female and three male Grade 10 immigrant students extensively over a six month period to determine the circumstance of their initial adaptation to the Canadian environment. Included were immigrants from Iran, Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan (two), and Somalia. Mansfield (1995) found that "all participants generally looked upon their initial period of adaptation in terms of growth and personal gain, and expressed the view

that adaptation was a positive experience" (p. 236). Besides language acquisition, Mansfield (1995) included cross-ethnic friendships, culture, race, and ethnicity as areas of particular concern. He suggests many students who currently immigrate have some prior English language facility and this may be the reason why language is no longer the most critical adjustment issue. Mansfield (1995) also suggests schools "need to begin to address other adaptation needs which may be as important as host language acquisition for the successful academic and social adaptation of students from other countries" (p. 263). Interestingly, Mansfield (1995) found that five of the six students in his study had no intention of assimilating. They defined themselves as sojourners rather than immigrants and were driven by personal choice and self-determination. This particular result may provide evidence in support of a changing "Eastern" perspective as outlined previously.

Popadiuk (1998) conducted the third Canadian high school study. She investigated adjustment issues of 21 international students from three secondary schools in the Vancouver School District. These students were between 15 and 18, were from five different cultural backgrounds, and spoke Chinese, Japanese and Korean. Like Bolton (1993), Popadiuk (1998) used the hindering and facilitating technique to determine adjustment categories. Language and communication concerns were secondary to personal and social concerns. Depression, in the form of homesickness, was identified as the most serious adjustment issue. Results are not surprising, as friendships and socializing activities are normally a prime teenage concern. Popadiuk (1998) also stressed the importance international students in her study placed on encouragement, validation, and emotional support. Like Bolton (1993), the emphasis of Popadiuk's (1998) study was to increase the information available for use in counselling EAL teenagers.

G. Adjustment Issues

This section examines key adaptation issues within the categories of language, peer relationships, education, family, personal, cross-cultural and mental health. Researchers have attempted to identify, categorize, and prioritize these issues. Results indicate many of the adjustment issues are interrelated and interconnected. As Kring (1995) summarizes:

The problems reported on by foreign students and studied have remained basically the same over the years. They involve having language difficulties, experiencing financial problems, adjusting to new and different educational systems, homesickness, adjusting to different social customs and in some instances, experiencing racial discrimination. (p. 10)

1. *Language*

Language has been identified as a critical adjustment factor in a number of empirical studies. Without English competency, it is difficult to communicate, to make new friends, to understand and meet educational requirements, and to manage everyday responsibilities such as shopping, banking, and following instructions. Some results indicate students find language to be the most critical factor in the adjustment process while others indicate language is one of the main adjustment issues.

Results from a study of Japanese high school students (Hartung, 1983) identified English language usage as a key issue in cultural adjustment. Two-thirds of these students had prior experience with English instruction, but they found this to be of little assistance in actually communicating with English speakers. Hartung (1983) states that:

The students' lack of fluency in English was a factor in their school life, family life, and in dealing with Americans in general. However, even when specifically discussing their facility in using English, many students wrote that "it was hard to

get away from the Japanese way of thinking” and that “cultural differences affected mutual communication.” (p. 25)

The second half of this quote outlines the importance of cross-cultural issues to the adjustment process. In a study of Khmer refugee children in the US, Lynn (1985) found that children associated their ability to speak English with survival and that as soon as English ability improved, they felt more comfortable and competent handling the responsibilities associated with daily living.

Four recent studies at the high school level identified language as a critical adjustment issue. Bolton's (1993) study of 18 Hong Kong born students identified language, identity and self-esteem issues, lack of family support, and the overall school environment as the most critical adjustment issues. In this study, language proficiency was secondary to identity and self-esteem issues, but was necessary in order to improve most of the other areas identified as key adjustment concerns. A second study (Shaw, 1994) examined Asian adjustment issues in a Boston area high school. Thirty students from a variety of Asian backgrounds participated in this study. Shaw (1994) found that difficulties with language filter through the educational setting into cultural differences and interpersonal relations. The third study, Mansfield (1995), identified language as a key adjustment issue, but secondary to developing peer relationships and the importance of personal choice and self-determination during adjustment. Students in this study resisted assimilation, wanted to retain their ethnic identities, and described sojourner rather than immigrant perspectives. In the fourth study, Gougeon and Hutton (1992) interviewed 27 high school teachers in Calgary to determine their perception of the main difficulties encountered by immigrant children. Teachers identified cross-cultural

concerns, language difficulties, racial discrimination and alienation as their students' main adjustment concerns.

International students face similar language problems as do immigrant secondary school students. Crano (1986) found language to be an important adjustment concern when studying self-concept and adjustment of international Latin American high school students in the US. In the Klineberg & Hull (1979) study, 2,536 foreign university students took part in a global study of adjustment. Findings indicate language was one of the key difficulties reported. Sharma (1971a) reports language problems were identified as a key concern of foreign non-European graduate students in North Carolina. Wang (1990) studied graduate students from the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Canada at the University of British Columbia. His study concluded that language was the most critical barrier to PRC student adjustment.

2. *Education*

The educational arena presents many problems for all foreign students. To begin with, students must acquire language facility, reading comprehension, and communication skills. They must adapt to differences in teaching styles and teacher expectations as well as differences in the teacher/student relationship. They must adapt to a variety of testing and evaluation techniques as well as to different behavioral and participation expectations in the classroom. They strive to excel in an alternate culture with different rules, regulations, and values. They attempt to meet their own expectations as well as those of their parents.

Several studies point to the adjustments international students make in an attempt to succeed academically. Furnham and Bochner (1982) feel the academic stresses of

foreign students are related to working under very different conditions with complex educational material. Sharma (1971a) examined adjustment problems of non-European graduate students in North Carolina. Although she found it difficult to specify particular adjustment problems of all non-European graduate students, results indicated they seemed to have more serious difficulties adjusting to their new environment than European foreign students do. In the educational realm they were concerned about admission procedures and differences between the American educational system and their home system. Using a critical incidence technique, Wang (1990) interviewed graduate Peoples Republic of China (PRC) students to determine their social and psychological adjustment to the Canadian academic scene. He found that student academic pressures, problems, and achievement as well as support and encouragement for academic study and research were the main concerns of these international students. Wang (1990) suggests "academic study and research is a primary task for most PRC students coming to Canada, therefore whether they can succeed in their academic study strongly affects their general procedure of adjustment" (p. 70).

Several studies indicate education and the high school setting are important adjustment areas for many foreign high school students. Bolton (1993) investigated the Hong Kong student adjustment process through a critical incident technique. Students reported more facilitating than hindering incidents in the school environment. They felt generally accepted by staff, liked the variety of course offerings, and found the ESL programs particularly beneficial. They also liked the variety of assessment tools and teaching/learning strategies in the school environment. Results of Hartung's (1983) study indicate that foreign students had difficulty adjusting to the overall teaching environment.

They had difficulties with the informal relationship between teacher and student, with their own inability to ask questions, with the outspokenness of the students toward their teachers and with the general lack of preparedness of students. Foreign students had difficulty adapting to the different education system although they liked developing their critical thinking skills.

Crano's (1986) study produced somewhat similar results. However, the Latin American students in this study found it difficult to concentrate on their studies. The Vietnamese in a study conducted by Chuong (1989) found adjustment difficulties in all areas of education from the organization of the educational system, through behavioral expectations in and out of school, to testing and evaluation procedures. Shaw (1994) found the educational setting difficult for her Asian high school students. Lack of communication skills made it difficult for them to meet the "challenge of coping with slang, humor, small talk, technical vocabulary, organizing a written essay or report" (p. 7) or participating in classroom discussions. They were more concerned with an inability to understand what was expected of them than the task of completing assigned work. In a study by Xue (1995), Chinese immigrant teenagers found it difficult to adjust to the freer environment in the classroom and the different relationship between students and teachers. Mansfield (1995) found that foreign students valued education. They seemed to recognize the educational opportunities available in Canada could result in bettering their lives and were prepared to forego immediate gratification to meet academic goals. They liked the critical thinking expected of them and were critical of rote learning. Results of these studies seem to indicate that even though many foreign students have a

variety of adjustment concerns in the educational environment, they are prepared to make the sacrifices necessary and eventually succeed.

3. *Family*

The family unit, including extended family members, and in particular, parents, plays a critical role in the adaptation and adjustment of both international students and other foreign students to their host culture. Parents have considerable influence in shaping the cultural and value system of their children. This influence continues after immigration, even as foreign students begin coping with a new culture. Eventually, many foreign students deal with both intergenerational conflict and cross-cultural conflict simultaneously. As Stein (1986) states:

The student is faced with learning a new language, new teaching and learning styles, new behavioral expectations and demands, and new peer relationships at the same time as she is having to cope with family pressures which force her to make decisions about maintaining old customs and behavior standards while trying to adopt to strange and often frightening, new Canadian patterns. (p. 3)

International students cope with somewhat different family issues. Unmarried international students leave their parents at home as they pursue their academic careers. Married students who leave their partners, children, and/or parents behind worry about them and married students who bring family members have the additional responsibilities of assisting loved ones to meet their own adjustment needs. The majority of international students, however, miss the support of friends and family members in their new environment. (Mickle, 1985; Sharma, 1971a; Wang, 1990). International student

adjustment is a very individual struggle as each person copes with his or her own personal experience and circumstances.

Satellite students struggle with a variety of adaptive issues as well as additional psychological concerns (Bolton, 1993; Lee, 1997) as they attempt to meet personal and family goals without family support nearby. They may feel the same responsibilities and face the same family pressures even though a parent or parents are not there (Bolton, 1993).

Fear surrounding China's takeover of Hong Kong in 1997 is often cited as an immigration incentive for many Hong Kong families. Hong Kong, as a colony under British rule, has enjoyed the freedoms afforded non-Communist countries. The fear of communist rule caused great concern for affluent Hong Kong families who believed their political and economic freedoms would be greatly affected under this regime. It also resulted in substantially increased immigration to other areas of the world, including Canada. Canada's political and economic climate is such that it welcomed these immigrants into the country.

The Chinese also cite increased educational opportunities and the desire for more security in the future (Chapman, 1969) as reasons for immigration. Large home populations in Hong Kong and few universities in relation to this population make it difficult to pursue an education after high school graduation. Chapman (1969) states, "when your student's family decided to leave Hong Kong, the decision was probably prompted more than anything else by the parents' desire to provide their children with better opportunities of education and more security in the future" (p. 20) and Tucker (1972) concurs "education is highly valued by the Chinese. Many immigrant parents

have transplanted their families in order to provide improved educational and career opportunities for their children” (p.63). Unfortunately, because of the Eastern perspective and the values in the Asian culture toward family, “academic achievement and upward mobility are not viewed by Asian parents as personal matters but part of their children’s obligation for the maintenance of family” (Shen & Mo 1990, p. 3). Children become the family’s economic investment in their future and the family’s honor, pride, and happiness is tied to their children’s academic success (Shen & Mo, p. 3). Academic failure is unacceptable. Children must listen to their parents’ wishes and follow their directions explicitly. Many children accept this responsibility and work toward this end (Mansfield, 1995).

Parents make sacrifices in their drive to provide a better future for their children. They may leave professional jobs with economic stability and accept jobs with less status in order to immigrate. Children may view the subsequent financial hardships as signs of parental failure and may even be forced to work to carry their share of the financial burden (Shen & Mo, 1990; Tucker, 1972). Children experience cross-cultural conflict as they continue to meet the demands of their familial background at home and strive to assume the values and behaviors expected in their host culture (Gougeon & Hutton, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Xue, 1995).

The importance and influence of family in the adjustment process cannot be underestimated. Children depend on family for economic and emotional support. In return, they try to meet familial expectations even when the host environment subscribes to a different value system. This duality creates conflict on a number of levels and results in exacerbated adjustment difficulties. Foreign students experience alienation and self-

esteem and identity problems as they cope with the cultural differences of their home and host cultures and proceed toward adulthood.

4. *Peer Relations*

Peer relations are cited as important issues in foreign student adjustment (Bolton, 1993; Crano, 1986; Duthie, 1987; Hartung, 1983; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Klein et al., 1971; Kring, 1985; Mansfield, 1995; Mickle, 1985; Molla, 1989; Popadiuk, 1998).

Students suffer increased feelings of homesickness, loneliness, loss, and isolation without social contact of either co-nationals or individuals from the host country (Mickle, 1985).

Foreign students tend to choose friends from their cultural background. Among the reasons offered are an attraction to those who are similar and a need for emotional support from those who already have experience with adaptation. Foreign students remain within their sub-group because it provides the security and support needed when adjusting to a new environment (Duthie, 1987; Mickle, 1985). Kring (1985) determined that Asian students commonly formed circles of friends from within their host community. This reduced anxiety and stress, but impeded adjustment, language acquisition, and the learning of values and customs common to the new culture. Mansfield's (1995) study showed that "school age migrants become friends with co-nationals or other immigrants to the virtual exclusion of receiving society members" (p. 248).

Even though foreign students establish friendships with co-nationals, they want and need social contact with people from the host country when they study abroad. Work by Mickle, (1985), Furnham & Bochner (1986) support Klineberg & Hull's conclusion:

Those foreign students who are satisfied and comfortable with their interactions with local people and the local culture during their sojourn would report broader and more general satisfaction with their total sojourn experience, not only non-academically but also academically.” (p. 53)

Many factors make establishing friendships difficult. Foreign students may understand the language, but they do not understand the “communication patterns and social conventions of a given society (that) are usually taken for granted by its members. Consequently, people tend not to be explicitly aware of the operation, or even the very existence of these rules” (Furnham & Bochner, p. 217) and this is difficult to learn. Japanese students in a study by Hartung (1983) were concerned with all aspects of peer relationships. They wanted to make friends, to understand the behaviors expected in a variety of social situations, and to understand the dating behaviors of their new culture. They felt cultural differences as well as different interests, made it difficult for host nationals to be interested in them. The Asians in Klein et al (1971) reacted to their isolation and feelings of loneliness by reaffirming their cultural roots and viewing Americans as insincere, superficial, and incapable of making real friendships. Mansfield (1995) sums up the dilemma foreign student's experience:

Participant experience suggests that an inability to establish friendships with receiving society peers, a need for assistance in negotiating adaptation and understanding the receiving society, and ease of negotiating relationships with those who share the same language – rather than choice – are the principal reasons why school age migrants generally associate with co-nationals or other immigrants rather than receiving society peers. (p. 249)

Peer relationships are difficult to acquire and maintain in a cross-cultural environment. Foreign students find social situations difficult to navigate and peer relationships with host nationals difficult to establish, serving to heighten feelings of loneliness, isolation, homesickness, frustration, and despair, and negatively affecting academic performance and adjustment to the new environment.

5. *Personal*

Self-esteem, identity and self-confidence concerns plague most adolescents. Prior investigation indicates effects of cross-cultural conflict exacerbate these issues for many international and foreign students, especially when host and home cultures are significantly different. Mickle (1979) states "the more experience we have with our Chinese students, the more we come to recognize that role-conflicts and loss of self-confidence seem to be the main contributors to their maladaptation" (p. 3). Ericson (1968) and Tajfel (1978) state that while adjusting, foreign students internalize society's negative perceptions of their society and in so doing, suffer identity confusion and loss of self-esteem (in Bolton, 1995, pp. 20 - 21). Mansfield (1995) suggests that identity changes with migration and this change results in an unstable self-concept. When this happens, teenagers experience identity confusion (Xue, 1995, p. 9). Ethnicity confusion results; identity and self-esteem issues increase. Unless the foreign student is able to deal with these crises, severe mental health issues occur. Gougeon and Hutton (1992) found that alienation occurs as immigrants begin to adjust to a new culture.

6. *Mental Health*

Differences in attitudes between the Asian and Western cultures present particular mental health and counselling problems for Asian students (Smith, 1989; Shen & Mo,

1990; Lee, 1997; Schneider, Lawrence & Spinler, 1986; Lorenzo, 1995; Bolton, 1993; Khoo, 1994). In Asian culture, mental health issues are a sign of lack of control or willpower, a lack of maturity, and mental illness. Children are taught to internalize their feelings and cope with the anguish themselves or just live with it. "For Chinese students, there is a stigma attached to needing psychiatric services, associated with shame, 'loss of face,' loss of status, and being sent home as a failure" (Mickle, 1985, p. 3). Children are taught to trust only family members, so seeking help outside the family is difficult and a last resort. Lee (1997) aptly describes this attitude:

Most Asian Americans attempt to deal with their psychological problems without seeking professional services. Many tend to rely on the family in dealing with their problems. Traditional families often treat mental disorders by urging the disturbed family members to change their behavior. They believe that self-control, will power, avoidance of unpleasant thoughts, keeping busy, and trying not to think too much about problems can help individuals to deal with their troubles. (p. 14)

As Asian students adjust to Western culture, they become aware of the counselling opportunities available to them. They are often discouraged when they seek help because cultural differences make it difficult for them to establish a meaningful client/counsellor relationship. Their view of the role of the counsellor is considerably different from the Western perspective (Bolton, 1993; Khoo, 1994; Lee, 1997; Lorenzo, 1995; Smith, 1989). Due to the hierarchical aspects of the relationships in their culture, Asian students normally adapt a passive role in the counselling process, expecting counsellors to adopt a direct counselling approach. Instead, counsellors adopt an indirect

approach, expecting their clients to provide information during the counselling sessions. This can be very frustrating for Asians and results in their abandoning the very services that would assist them with their adjustment problems.

Prior investigation has identified areas for improvement in counselling. Studies by Bolton (1993), Khoo (1994), and Lee (1997), and Smith 1989 suggest counsellors need to understand and adapt their counselling styles to meet the special needs of their Asian clients. They need to become aware of their own cultural and training bias, they need to develop a sensitivity and understanding of the Asian culture, they need to adjust their counselling techniques to meet the needs of Asian clients who view the counsellor-client relationship differently.

7. *Cross-cultural*

Many adjustment issues arise because of differences between cultures, cultural values, and cultural behaviors. They have already been identified within the other categories of adjustment discussed in this paper. Gudykunst and Kim (1984) suggest this miscommunication occurs because of ethnocentrism, the “tendency to judge 'others' behavior by our own standards” (p. 83), from our own perspective, our own ethnocentricity. Communication occurs when we are able to understand the behavior of others based on the context of their culture without making a value judgment of this behavior (Gudykunst & Kim, p. 5). This applies to both parties in the adjustment process and is an area particularly in need of addressing in today’s modern world where there is constant interaction between or among cultures and countries.

Racism and discrimination are adjustment issues that could fall within the realm of cross-cultural adjustment. While these concepts have been addressed in a separate

section of this study, investigating prior work that has identified racism and discrimination as adjustment issues is important. Klineberg (1979), Furnham & Bochner (1986), and Kring (1985) suggest discrimination contributes to student loneliness, loss, and isolation. Chong (1989) and Mickle (1985) view victimization and violence as aspects of racism. One student states, "through my experiences with discrimination, which came primarily in the form of cruel jokes, I soon discovered that to eliminate these irresponsible acts I must be accepted and respected by my peers" (Chuong, 1989, p. 3). Lynn (1985) states that racism occurs frequently in the school environment in the form of physical contact and name-calling. Other behaviors such as labeling and stereotyping may also be viewed as racist. Gougeon and Hutton (1992) state teachers in their study view racial discrimination as a key adjustment issue of their secondary school students.

Racism and discrimination take on many forms and both are perceived and interpreted differently from individual to individual. Students experience personal racism when behaviors or comments are specifically directed toward them. They may feel uncomfortable, upset, or totally rejected. In the larger school setting, they may be subjected to institutional racism even though teachers and other personnel in the system are becoming more sensitive to situations that may be regarded as racist in nature. The school, as a hierarchical institution created in an environment catering to a dominant Anglo-culture, continues to perpetuate discriminatory practices despite well-meaning school personnel who are not aware their policies, procedures, behaviors, or course content may have racist underpinnings.

One assumes racist attitudes exist only within the dominant culture. This is not always the case. Results of a study prepared for the Corporate Review Branch

Department of Canadian Heritage suggests that "63% of respondents [agree] that whites tend to discriminate against non-white, while 53% felt that non-whites tend to discriminate against whites" (p. 43). In fact, racist attitudes, comments or behaviors may arise from individuals or groups within the subordinate culture toward the dominant culture. In a recent study Mansfield (1995), students expected to encounter racism from the dominant culture in Canada because other family members who emigrated to the US experienced a negative ethnic and racial climate there. Instead, "participants experienced little or no prejudice, racism, or exploitation from receiving society members" (p. 252) in Canada, though they experienced discrimination and exploitation from members of their own ethnic communities and from other immigrants. Mansfield (1995) states:

Incidences of exploitation experienced by study participants such as the abusive treatment of a participant's father at the workplace, underpayment for waitressing work, and attempted extortion for "protection" were not concerns with the receiving society, but rather, with other immigrants. (p. 253)

These students attributed their experience with the host society as part of Canada's multicultural perspective, believing these actions indicated acceptance by Canadian society. Ultimately, racist comments and discriminatory behaviors are not forgotten and affect adjustment regardless of their place of origin.

8. *Other*

Foreign students face concerns other than the ones previously identified. Included are financial problems, housing difficulties, employment considerations, health and medical care, religious practices, and regular activities such as eating, shopping, banking, and transportation (Klein et al, 1971; Sharma, 1971a; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Wang,

1990). These issues are common to most students. However, for the foreign student, they contribute to the anxiety of learning to cope in a new country.

H. Summary

Immigrants have played an integral part in Canada's history, and will continue to play a key role in its future. Researchers have studied extensively many aspects of adjustment to a new culture and a new country. They have examined the differences between the eastern and western perspective, viewed as an individualist emphasis in the west and a collective or group emphasis in the east. Immigrants and sojourners who come from cultures emphasizing a collective point of view have more difficulties adjusting to a host country emphasizing the individualist perspective.

Investigators have examined, documented, and developed several theories or phases of cross-cultural adjustment and culture shock. Each of these theories points to the many adjustment issues associated with immigration or international study. Other studies have investigated the importance of pre-migration preparation and its impact on adjustment. All studies indicate that adjusting to a new culture, a new education system, and a new country is difficult.

Researchers have also examined specific issues of cross-cultural adaptation in an attempt to determine the most crucial issues. Results are inconclusive. Individual issues such as language, communication, family, peer relations, and education are normally seen as important, but the order of their importance can vary depending upon the focus of the study. Likewise, the significance of racism and discrimination depends upon the target population and the experiences of this population. Mental health and personal issues seem to be targeted more frequently in

studies with a psychological focus. Regardless, adjustment is a major issue faced by all immigrants and sojourning students.

There have been more studies investigating student adjustment at the university and post-graduate levels than at the secondary school level. A majority of the studies to date have been conducted outside Canada, primarily in the United States. Few studies have taken place in Canada. Mickle (1985) investigated the adaptation of Hong Kong students at the University of Toronto and York University and concluded that loneliness, homesickness, and separation from friends and family were the main problems faced by her students. In the 1980s, several researchers investigated adjustment issues of international and immigrant students at UBC. Kring (1985) investigated incidents that facilitated or hindered international student adjustment; Stein (1986) investigated the differences in male and female immigrant students in the Department of Counselling Psychology; Farrokh (1988) investigated the patterns of adjustment of international students. These studies pointed to adjustment issues of language difficulties, homesickness, financial problems, educational concerns, peer relationship difficulties, and in some situations, racial discrimination. Duthie's (1987) study at UBC investigated the impact of a program designed to assist international student adjustment. International students found the host-program to be worthwhile. In 1990, Wang, like Kring (1985), used the facilitating and hindering investigative technique to examine PRC student adjustment at UBC. He found there were more facilitating than hindering incidents and that academics, family concerns, cross-cultural issues and language comprehension were the areas most frequently cited as areas of adjustment concern.

While these Canadian studies support findings of studies in other areas of the world at the university undergraduate and graduate levels, their target population is considerably different

from the target population of this study. I have yet to find any work specifically targeting adjustment issues of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students or a work investigating the adjustment concerns of the satellite situation. Neither have I found a study of adjustment issues where the target population forms the largest cultural group in their new environment. Each of these areas has merit for study purposes. The four Canadian high school studies I have previously identified are worth looking at more closely.

Gougeon and Hutton (1992) interviewed Calgary high school teachers to determine teacher perceptions of the main adjustment difficulties of their immigrant students. Racial discrimination, language difficulties, cross-cultural concerns, and alienation were identified as some of the key adjustment concerns. Results of Gougeon and Hutton (1992) create an empirical base in the area of foreign student adjustment. However, this study provides information about a broad spectrum of immigrant students and does not isolate a specific immigrant population. In addition, students in this study were still in high school, so their adjustment perspective would be different from one where students had already graduated. And finally, while the information teachers provide has merit and is worthy of note, learning adjustment concerns directly from the students themselves adds a dimension of authenticity that cannot be truly duplicated through observation.

The three remaining high school studies, conducted by Bolton (1993), Mansfield (1995), and Popadiuk (1998), use an interview format, and are the closest I have found to the focus of this study. Bolton's (1993) Vancouver study identified language differences, identity issues, lack of family support, and the entire school environment as their key adjustment concerns. Although Bolton's (1993) study examined adjustment concerns, its target population of 16 to 18 year old Hong Kong born students is different from the focus of this study. She elicited both

facilitating and hindering incidents and focussed on the counsellor's perspective when analyzing the data she acquired. This study will investigate all Chinese-speaking foreign born students, regardless of country of origin or length of stay in Canada. The target population has left the secondary school system and this may result in a different and perhaps a more mature perspective than Bolton's (1993) findings from students still in high school. In addition, this study intends to specifically investigate issues of multiculturalism and racism as they apply to the students of this target population, and to determine which issues, if any, continue to be of concern after the initial adjustment period is over.

Mansfield (1995) conducted his study in Richmond, a school district adjacent to Vancouver. These six students were from a variety of different backgrounds and had lived in Canada less than two years. Mansfield (1995) concluded self-determination, personal choice, and peer relationships were important adaptation issues. Students held a sojourner rather than an immigrant perspective, resisted assimilation, and did not need to alter their ethnic identities. They preferred co-nationals rather than host nationals as friends. Mansfield (1995) concluded there were no adaptation patterns among his interviewees.

While Mansfield's (1995) study examines adjustment issues of high school students, his subjects were from five different countries. Because of this, results of his study provide adjustment information based primarily on length of stay in Canada rather than adjustment issues for a particular ethnic group. The sample size is too small to generalize the results generated by this study to an entire immigrant population. Applying results of Mansfield's (1995) study to a study of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students is difficult because Mansfield (1995) investigates adjustment issues of a variety of students and their backgrounds while this study will focus more specifically on one cultural group. Further studies are needed to determine whether

Mansfield's (1995) study reflects a change in the immigrant and sojourner student attitude, whether this is a factor of length of stay in Canada, or whether this attitudinal change mirrors Canada's shift from multiculturalism to cultural pluralism. Time may tell what impact this attitude will have on Canada and the Canadians of the future.

Popadiuk (1998) interviewed 21 students from three secondary schools in the Vancouver School District. These students, aged 15 to 18, were from five different cultural backgrounds. They identified homesickness as their most serious adjustment issue. Personal and social concerns were considered more important than language and communication. Results of this study may be used as a starting point for examining adjustment concerns of international students in the Vancouver School District. However, the international students in this study were Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, so results could not be generalized to a population of only Chinese students. Again, the age category of these students and their length of stay in Canada might make results different from those proposed in this study.

I have not found a study that investigates initial adjustment issues and then compares these issues to current concerns or a study targeting a student population of recent "graduates." I have not found a study specifically targeting all Chinese-speaking foreign-born students or a study investigating adjustment issues where the target population forms part of the largest cultural group in the school. In this situation, the largest cultural group in the school is different from the dominant societal cultural group. Schools in the Vancouver and lower mainland districts are currently encountering this phenomenon. As the Asian, and in particular, the Chinese immigrant population increases, more schools will need to address the educational and societal ramifications of this situation. I believe this particular characteristic will have considerable impact on student adjustment issues and ultimately, on the character and focus of

the individual Canadian identity. A study such as this one is important and timely for the students, their schools, the education system, and ultimately, Canadian society.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A. Overview

For several years, the VSB has been faced with an increasing number of immigrant students in its school system. Asian students have formed the largest numbers of these immigrant students for the past few years (See Table 2 page 11). In fact, in several Vancouver schools the large number of Chinese-speaking students rivals the English-speaking students in their numbers. This, I believe, will have far reaching consequences for students in these schools, for teachers who work with these students, and for the education system. The focus of my study investigates foreign student adjustment in an environment where the number of foreign speaking students outnumbers Canadian-born English speaking students. This situation exists in some of the schools in the Vancouver school district. Specifically, the focus of this study is to investigate adjustment issues of the largest immigrant population in the school, the Chinese-speaking foreign-born students.

At the site of my study, the secondary school where I am the Business Education Teacher/Leader (Department Head), Chinese-speaking foreign-born students are also the largest cultural group in the school. I chose this location because I have a working knowledge of the students, the school, and the community and because this is the site where I became increasingly aware of and interested in the difficulties foreign students face as they adjust to a new country and a new culture. Also, the students either know me or know of me and I believe this will increase their participation rate in this study. Because of the demographics of the student population in Vancouver, I also believe other Vancouver schools would furnish similar statistical information. I also believe this particular factor will result in different adjustment issues for students of this target population and may eventually result in changing strategies for the

education of EAL students in schools. Certainly, having two large cultural groups will alter the shape of the school cultural environment and the school as an institution of socialization. It may also have far reaching ramifications for Canada and Canadian society in the future.

I had not found any work specifically addressing adjustment issues of recent secondary school graduates of an immigrant background, a target population limited to Chinese-speaking foreign-born students, or a target population where the foreign-born student forms the largest cultural group in the school. As a result, the focus of my thesis is to study "the adjustment issues of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in a secondary school environment" where they form the largest cultural group in the school.

This study investigates other issues in the area of student adjustment to a new school, a new culture, and a new country. As part of this investigation, this study will examine the impact of the school's extensive extra-curricular program as well as the school's multicultural programs and clubs to the adjustment process. Results of this study will be compared to results of previous studies with a similar focus. Chinese student adjustment issues will be compared to adjustment issues of other foreign students. Age at migration, number of years in Canada, and citizenship status will be considered when analyzing student responses.

B. Significance of the Study

Despite the fact their numbers are increasing in Canadian schools, few Canadian studies address adjustment issues of the teenage immigrant population. There appears to be no study investigating foreign student adjustment issues in an environment where foreign students form the majority of the school population or study investigating the phenomenon where a foreign-born cultural population forms the largest number of students in the school population. I have found no empirical study investigating the satellite phenomenon, though other literature and

studies allude to satellite students. This study proposes to investigate a target population where the students are not only foreign speaking and from the same cultural background, but where they form the largest cultural group in the school setting. A study with this focus is important and overdue. The characteristics of both Canada's population and immigration policy and the subsequent changing character of the school student population in many regions, but in British Columbia's lower mainland, in particular, make it a topic worthy of investigation. Results of this study will be particularly important and worthy in areas where there is a substantial Chinese-speaking foreign-born student population and where satellite or international students are identified as a sub-group within this context.

Several parties, including educators, health professionals, and government agencies may benefit from a study such as this. Results of this study may be used to increase staff awareness of the main adjustment issues facing immigrant and international students. Educators may use results to improve student services, develop more effective communication between/among students, teachers and parents, improve instructional strategies and/or curriculum offerings, and either create or enhance existing programs dealing with multiculturalism. Mental health professionals may be able to increase their knowledge in the area of foreign student adjustment and develop procedures to deal more effectively with these students and their families. Government agencies could use information about foreign student adjustment to review and adapt their policies to better serve the needs of this growing population segment.

C. Selecting a School Site

My interest in this particular topic resulted from my work in a secondary school environment where EAL students formed the majority population. Over the years I had noticed not only an increase in the EAL population, but also what appeared to be an increase in the

problems facing these students. I now believe the problems or concerns did not increase. The sheer numbers of EAL students in my classroom made these problems more obvious. Initially, I was particularly concerned with the emotional well-being and individual self-concepts of these students. They were not always performing as well as they wanted academically, or as well as they were expected. Many students studied excessively, only to be demoralized by test results. Others were upset or depressed and obviously lonely as they struggled to find new friends and develop some roots in Canada. Against this background, it was easy for me to select both an area of study and a site for my study.

In the spring of 1999, I approached my school principal and outlined the content of my proposal. After receiving his verbal approval, I approached the Director of Curriculum Instruction at the VSB with the same explanation and request. I was granted verbal approval, contingent on the approval of the ethics committee at UBC. After meeting with Dr. Donald Fisher to discuss the merits of this topic, my study was formally underway. In September, 1999, I received written approval from my school principal and from the VSB to investigate this topic, use the site for ethnographic interviews, and to access very basic data concerning the home languages of the students of my target population. In late September I met with my thesis committee, received their suggestions and approval for this study and began to make final preparations for my submission to UBC's ethics committee. Approval was granted January 13, 2000.

C. School Site

The site chosen for this case study has been the largest high school in the Vancouver School District for some time.¹⁵ Its population is consistently over two thousand students. This school is situated in Vancouver's southeast and is viewed as the East Side school most similar to Vancouver's West Side schools because its community characteristics are similar to the community characteristics of West Side schools. Schools in the Vancouver School District are not only divided by geography, but also by social class, with east-side schools traditionally serving the immigrant, refugee, and working class populations. Fewer students from Vancouver's east-end attend post-secondary education institutions as more choose to start working after graduation. Vancouver's west side has traditionally been comprised of Vancouver's upper class, the nouveau rich, and more recently, the affluent Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan. This is changing somewhat with the steady influx of immigrants, but there is still a decided social class division in Vancouver's east-west population.

The community around this school site experienced a 49 percent change in residents during the 1986 – 1991 time period compared to a 40 - 80 percent range throughout the city. Community residents are low middle to middle-class when compared to the citywide average. Relatively few persons are identified as low-income.¹⁶

All Vancouver schools have a high immigrant population. At this site, for the past three years, students with a home language other than English have formed the majority of the school population (See Table 3 page 68).

¹⁵ The school's last Accreditation Report of 1997, based on the 1996 – 1997 school year, is the reference for the school related statistical data used in this study. Information within this report provides socio-economic data on the school, the community, and the Vancouver School District, as well as information pertinent to the site of this study.

¹⁶ Accreditation Report, 1997, p. 45.

TABLE 3

School Population by Home Language

Language	1996/97		1997/98		1998/99	
	Numbers	Per Cent	Numbers	Per Cent	Numbers	Per Cent
Arabic	8	.39	--	--	--	--
Chinese	859	42.36	893	43.29	884	43.57
Croatian	6	0.30	10	0.48	12	0.59
English	736	36.29	755	36.60	725	35.73
Greek	7	0.35	--	--	--	--
Hindi	36	1.78	37	1.79	42	2.07
Italian	9	0.44	8	0.39	6	0.30
Japanese	8	0.39	8	0.39	6	0.30
Jarati	9	0.44	9	0.44	7	0.34
Korean	51	2.51	48	2.33	44	2.17
Kurdish	--	--	6	0.29	12	0.59
Polish	--	--	16	0.78	13	0.64
Portuguese	--	--	12	0.58	10	0.49
Punjabi	83	4.09	66	3.20	60	2.96
Spanish	65	3.21	79	3.83	71	3.50
Tagalog	37	1.82	39	1.89	39	1.92
Vietnamese	31	1.53	32	1.55	40	1.97
Other	77	3.80	45	2.18	58	2.86
Total	2,028	100.00	2,063	100.00	2,029	100.00

In the 1996 and 1997 school years, thirty-five different languages and in 1998, forty-three different languages were spoken in student's homes.¹⁷ Since at least the 1996-1997 school year the Chinese-speaking population has been the largest student population of the school, and this has continued into the new millennium.

The school itself is comprehensive in size and program offerings, catering to it diverse student population in a variety of ways. The EAL program is large, employing the equivalent of nine and four-sevenths (67 teaching blocks) full time teachers. Academically, the school's scores have been improving with a school grade point average (GPA) of over 2.84 since 1993. In addition to comprehensive academic offerings for its academically minded students, the school has extensive Business Education, Fine Arts, Performing Arts, and Physical Education programs and four alternate programs to assist students with specific learning difficulties. Twenty-five extracurricular clubs and an extensive extra-curricular athletic program cater to a variety of student interests. Included among these are several clubs--Chinese Christian Fellowship, HOSTS, Mosaic Club, Roots International, and Outdoor Club--whose focus is specifically to assist EAL students develop a positive feeling toward the school and become involved in the school community quickly.¹⁸

While it was a convenient site for me as the Business Education Teacher/Leader in this school to choose this site for my study, the school's size and the comprehensiveness of both its academic and extra-curricular programs make it an excellent site for a study involving foreign

¹⁷ Data to support this statement received from the 1997 Accreditation Report and from the information technology department at the Vancouver School Board. Due to guidelines of the Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy Act it is not possible to report details of student populations where there are fewer than six students in an ethnic group. They will, in future, be reported collectively, under the category of "Other." For the school year of this study, the "Other" category is comprised of twenty-seven different ethnic populations.

¹⁸ Accreditation Report, 1997, pp. 25 – 35.

student adjustment issues. The student population demographics meet the requirements of the focus of my study.

E. Selecting the Target Population

After much consideration, I decided I would select my target population from the list of names of the graduating class of 1998 – 1999. While I did not specifically know the student demographics of this class, I believed their ethnicity would be representative of the total school population. I also felt targeting students from a population that had left the school environment would be beneficial because they would have a different and perhaps more mature perspective when reflecting upon their adjustment experiences than students within the school environment. I also believed they might speak more freely about their school experiences because these experiences were in the past.

My study began with a list of students enrolled in the school's graduating class as of June 30, 1999 (See Table 4 page 71). I identified each student based on the student's home language and country of origin by accessing the historical option of the school's database and entering each student's name or student number. From this grade 12 list I identified 193 students who spoke Chinese as their home language (See Table 5 page 72). One hundred thirty-four of these students were both Chinese speaking and foreign-born. These students formed the largest cultural group in this grade accounting for 33.42% of the total grade 12 population. With their Canadian-born Chinese-speaking counterparts, they formed 48.1 percent of the grade 12 population. The majority of the Chinese-speaking foreign-born students were from Hong Kong,

TABLE 4

Grade 12 Population by Home Language, 1998 - 1999

Home Language	Number	Percent
English	125	31.17
Chinese	193	48.13
Croatian	6	1.50
Hindi	6	1.50
Korean	10	2.49
Punjabi	13	3.24
Spanish	15	3.74
Vietnamese	6	1.5
Other	27	6.73
Total	401	100.00

but others students were from Brunei, India, Macau, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Table 6, page 73, shows the country of birth of the Chinese-speaking students in this target population.

TABLE 5

Chinese-speaking Grade 12 Students by County of Birth

Country	Number	Percent
Brunei	4	2.07
Canada	59	30.57
China	9	4.66
Hong Kong	93	48.19
India	1	0.52
Macau	2	1.04
Malaysia	2	1.04
Phillipines	1	0.52
Taiwan	22	11.40
Total	193	100.00

F. Data Collection and Procedures

On January 28th, 2000 I mailed 135 letters to students who were part of the 1998 – 1999 graduating class and who met the criteria of Chinese-speaking foreign-born (Appendix A). One of the students did not participate, as he was not foreign-born. I outlined the focus and purpose of my study and asked students to reply by completing a suggested interview time sheet and returning it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope (Appendix B). Students could also return the envelope to my letterbox in the school. They were asked to reply by February 11th in order to have interviews completed before college or university students became busy with their

term end work. On February 1st, I received my first reply. By February 11, I had received 18 replies and a telephone call from one parent whose son was in Ontario and could not participate. I spoke to the Counselling Teacher/Leader to find out whether she knew of other students who had left the lower mainland to study. Subsequently, a Reminder Notice (Appendix C) was sent to the remaining 111 students just in case they had intended to participate, but had inadvertently forgotten to return the consent form. This notice was mailed on February 18th and eventually produced seven more responses, six of which were via e-mail. Five of these seven agreed to be interviewed. Eventually, I was able to interview 23 students (See Table 6 below).

TABLE 6

Chinese-speaking Foreign-born Participants by Country of Birth, 1998 - 1999

Country	Sample	Gender		Per Cent in Relation to Sample Size	Size of Sample in Target Population	Per Cent of Sample in Relation to Target Population
		Male	Female			
Hong Kong	20	10	10	87.0	93	69.4
Macau	2	1	1	8.7	2	1.5
Taiwan	1		1	4.3	22	16.4
Other	--	--		--	17	12.7
Total	23	23		100.0	134	100.0

The sample of students interviewed is not representative of the target population and will therefore limit the results of this study. Results may be more applicable in future studies investigating adjustment issues of students from Hong Kong rather than the more inclusive "Chinese-speaking foreign-born" category. Findings based on the student(s) from Taiwan and

Macau may add to findings of other studies. Even though the majority of the students in this study are from Hong Kong, they represent a considerably larger percent of the sample than the percent in the target population. The single student from Taiwan represents 4.3% of the sample size while Taiwanese students comprised 16.4% in the target population. Both students from Macau agreed to participate in this study. They represent a larger percent in the sample than in the target population.

Interviews began on February 15th and continued until March 9th. Eight interviews were conducted the first week, five interviews the second, eight the third, and two in the fourth. Students were given the choice of being interviewed in my room at school, in their homes, or at a location of their choice. All chose the school environment.

Interviews lasted between 40 minutes and two hours depending upon the particular dynamics of the interview session, the time of day, the energy of the student, the personality of the student, and the ability of the interviewer to adapt to the individual student's needs during the interview session. Some students were naturally more talkative; others seemed hesitant or reticent to talk. Their personal circumstances affected the interview length as well. For one, in particular, an internal struggle seemed to prevent her from opening up. I would have liked the opportunity to talk to her again as her circumstances were particularly heartwrenching. She was also among the first I interviewed and I felt I might have been more successful if I had interviewed her toward the end of the interview sessions when I had gained more interview experience. Others were prepared to talk at length and I eventually brought these interviews to a close because I thought these sessions superseded what was an appropriate interview length for the terms of this study. Students often talked about things other than their adjustment issues. In these situations, I turned the tape off and we talked amiably outside the interview context.

Interviews were transcribed in the order they occurred. Interviews took between two and five hours to transcribe depending upon their length, the loudness of the student's voice, and their accent. After the first few interviews I copied words I believed would be difficult to understand when replaying the tape and this helped immeasurably with transcription time. Transcriptions were completed by March 12th. They ranged in length from nine to 23 pages and produced more than 300 pages of transcript. All transcript pages were subsequently numbered by line, sequentially from interview one, producing 13,254 transcript lines (See Appendix D). Each student was mailed a hard copy of his or her interview as soon as it was transcribed. A letter accompanied the interview (Appendix H). The letter both thanked the student for participating and encouraged him/her to make any editing changes required in order to portray as accurately as possible the student's personal adjustment experience. Students were asked to return any changes within one or two weeks of receiving the transcript. Three students returned transcripts with minor editing changes. A fourth e-mailed an additional page of reflections. Throughout the interviews I experienced a full range of emotions—from exhilaration and excitement to anger and disbelief. Their stories were truly remarkable; their experiences varied.

G. Characteristics of the Interview Population

Twenty-three¹⁹ of 134 students agreed to be interviewed. Of these, I had taught 12.²⁰ The higher response rate from students I knew supports authors Lee (1997), Shen & Mo (1990), Smith & Smith (1989), Uba (1994) who suggest that culturally the Chinese do not speak of their

¹⁹ See Appendix D for basic data on interviewees.

²⁰ This represents a 38.33% response rate from 46 students I had previously taught, a considerably higher response rate than the 11% response rate of the students I did not know.

circumstances to those outside their familial group unless some trust has previously developed. Doing so causes “loss of face” in their culture.

Eleven of the interviewees were male and 12 were female. Thirteen of the students were Canadian citizens while six others were either in the process of applying for citizenship or waiting for formalization of their citizenship status after taking citizenship tests. Two of the four remaining students indicated they were planning to apply for Canadian citizenship.

They ranged in age from 17²¹ to 19. Their home environments varied greatly. There were two International (Visa) students, one of who lived with an aunt; the other lived in a home-stay arrangement. One of the two students living with grandparents had been in this arrangement since his parent’s divorce when he was a baby and had immigrated to Canada with his grandparents. The other lived with his grandparents despite having parents nearby. Nine students were living in home environments with both parents. The 11 remaining students were living in arrangements that could be described as satellite or astronaut environments. This group will be further sub-divided depending upon whether the satellite arrangement involves one or both parents.

H. Ethical Considerations and Student Bias

Ethical considerations are of paramount importance in a study such as this one. As Palys (1997) states, “people entrust their views to us, and part of our moral obligation is to ensure that they are treated with respect, fairness, and a sense of justice” (p. 206). Participants must be given a clear explanation of the proposal, the reasons for the study, and the important role they play within this process. Participants must have confidence their rights will be respected and

²¹ In order to interview this student, I created a Parental Consent Form at his original interview time. Two days later, after the form was signed, the interview occurred. See Appendix E.

protected. They must be assured their anonymity will remain in tact. Participants need to be assured that all data and documentation will be destroyed once the study is complete. Confidentiality in all aspects of the study is critical. Participants must be thoroughly informed of the interview process and then re-informed as the interview progresses.

The interviewer maintains his/her integrity by conducting all interview aspects thoroughly and in a reflexive manner. The interviewer needs to be aware of both the participant's feelings and of any particularly sensitive areas. He/she must be ready to adjust interview format and questioning should it be necessary. Care must be taken during the ethnographic interview to allow the interviewee the opportunity to determine the interview format. The interviewer guides the interview, but does not pre-determine results through directed questioning techniques. Once interviews are complete, the interviewer analyzes and reports findings as objectively as possible. This maintains the integrity of his/her work as well as the integrity of participants and the entire study.

As a teacher at the site of this study, ethical considerations are even more critical. My role as teacher automatically places me in a position of authority and of trust for many of my students. All students at the school will see me first and foremost as a teacher. My ethnicity, my age, and my gender will be secondary to my role as a teacher at their school. In addition, I expect that students I have taught will also see me as a caring, concerned adult whose interest lies in understanding EAL adjustment issues. This topic is certainly one I have talked about openly in my classroom. Honoring this special position is of paramount importance.

Students I have taught may be more willing to disclose adjustment issues because they know me, are aware of my concern, and have developed some feelings of trust. Students I do not know may be willing to divulge information because I am a teacher and their experience with

teachers has been primarily positive or because my reputation as a teacher has preceded me. Other students may just want their stories told, and I am providing the opportunity for this to occur.

There are a variety of reasons why students may have chosen not to participate. My ethnicity, gender or age could make it difficult for them to feel any connection to me as an interviewer. Their cultural beliefs may prevent them from participating and speaking frankly to an individual outside their ethnic background. They may not be ready to discuss their adjustment issues at this time, especially if they are still fresh and painful to think about. They may not see the importance of a study such as this one or they may not see how it will help them in any way. They may be unwilling or unable to take the time required for the interview process. They may not, as yet, feel any connection to their host country or their new homeland and this makes it difficult for them to participate.

Students who have participated in this study have their own reasons for agreeing to do so. Among the reasons they gave are a willingness to talk about their adjustment issues, an interest and an inquisitiveness about the interview process, an interest in the procedure required for post-graduate study, a desire to help me with my work, a desire to re-connect with their school, and a belief in the merit of the focus of this study. Many of these students have definite beliefs about their adjustment issues and the difficulties they faced adapting to a new environment. They also have views about the EAL program at the school, the number of EAL students in the school, and about a number of other issues with respect to their education and their involvement in their community and participation in Canada. This study provided a legitimate means for them to describe their experiences and express their concerns. Several stated the topic was important and

interesting and they were pleased to have the opportunity to describe their experiences and state their point of view.

I. The Ethnographic Interview

The main instrument used in this study is the ethnographic interview. According to Spradley (1979) the ethnographic stance is different from other qualitative methodologies because this perspective focuses on understanding the world from the subject's point of view. "I want to understand the meaning of your experience, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them" (Spradley, 1979, p. 34). Describing findings from this "other" perspective is the signpost of ethnographic investigation. Subsequently, interpreting this perspective in terms meaningful to the reader becomes the dual task of the ethnographer.

Ethnography is rooted in anthropology and sociology. Hence, ethnography involves the work of describing a cultural perspective rather than studying an individual perspective. The focus is on the social behavior of people rather than the psychological standpoint of the individual. The ethnographer must use the tools of their trade—notebook, tape recorder, and camera—as well as keen observation skills when building up a reservoir of data for later classifying, evaluating, and interpreting. Developing sensitivity to changes in body language and developing an awareness of the feelings or emotions of the interviewee is important for the ethnographer.

Ethnography is different from other forms of scientific study because "the subjective perception and biases of both participants and researcher (are included in) the research frame. This admission of subjectivity constitutes a major difference between anthropological research and research from other traditions" (LeCompte & Pressle, 1993, p. 95). Ethnographers

understand that while the investigator attempts to remain objective, personal experiences and personal point of view impact on the interpretation of any findings. An ethnographic account represents the researcher's interpretation of what is observed and/or recounted (Jacobsen, 1991, p. 3).

Interviewing techniques are substantially different from other types of interviews. In an ethnographic interview, the interviewer determines a list of issues to be covered, but does not ask each interviewee the exact same questions. Instead, interviewers prefer to adopt a more "flexible approach, allowing the discussion to flow in a way that seems natural" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1993, p. 152), using notes as a reference point from which to operate. They expect this technique will assist in the development of rapport between the interviewer and interviewee. In this way, issues generated will originate from the interviewee's perspective rather than the interviewer's preconceived agenda.

The terms used to evaluate qualitative studies are not universally accepted. Some researchers such as Kvale (1966), LeCompte & Goetz (1982), Lecompte & Pressle (1993) and Sanjek (1996) use internal and external reliability and internal and external validity, terms commonly found in quantitative research, to describe and evaluate the merits of qualitative work. These terms are used even though procedures followed in qualitative studies are different from those employed in quantitative studies. Others, such as Lincoln & Guba (1985, 1989) suggest judging qualitative research through the use of quantitative terminology is inappropriate, ineffective, and inaccurate. Instead, they suggest using terms such as transferability, dependability, trustworthiness and objectivity are more appropriate to measure the quality of research and they cannot be confused with the terms used in quantitative work. Using these

terms more accurately represents the goals of a qualitative study that is unable to produce reliable or valid results in the same way as a quantitative study.

When ethnographers address the merits of a qualitative study by using the terms reliability and validity, reliability means the ability to replicate research findings while validity refers to the accuracy of findings (Kvale, 1996; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; LeCompte & Pressle, 1993). Reliability is further subdivided into two main categories, internal and external. Internal reliability refers to the degree other researchers, using the same set of data, would produce the same findings. External reliability refers to the ability of other researchers using similar methods to reproduce similar findings in a study of a similar focus. Validity is also divided into two subsections, internal and external. Internal validity refers to the ability of researchers to accurately describe and measure what they have observed while external validity measures the ability to take the findings and reproduce them in a similar study (Kvale, 1996; LeCompte & Pressle, 1993).

Most researchers would agree that establishing reliability in qualitative research is difficult and affected by several factors. Among these are the difficulty of reproducing the original research setting, differences in reporting the findings, the ability of the ethnographer to take and transcribe notes, the questioning techniques and ability of the interviewer to adapt to the focus of the interview, and the available tools of the trade such as tape recorder, video cameras and cameras. Ethnographers address external reliability by "handling five major problems: researcher status position, informant choices, social situations and conditions, analytic constructs and premises, and methods of data collection and analysis" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 37). Each of these areas is carefully described and/or documented as part of the research findings. Ethnographers consider a number of factors when addressing internal reliability. Among these

are using verbatim accounts of what was said, using multiple researchers to gather data, employing the use of participant researchers to aid in data collection, providing the subjects with samples of interviews or findings for corroboration, and using cameras or tape recorders to mechanically reproduce interviews for future reference (LeCompte & Goetze, 1982, p. 43).

These same ethnographers (Kvale, 1996; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; LeCompte & Pressle, 1993) would suggest that while problems with reliability might weaken the credibility of a qualitative study, validity may be one its strengths. Internal validity is established directly from the data collected and the techniques used to analyze the data, the interaction between the interviewer and the subject, the constant reflection of the interviewer, and the disclosure of the ethnographic perspective. External validity (generalizability) is difficult to measure in ethnographic interviews because of the difficulty of replicating the conditions of the study. Variables such as target population, characteristics of respondents, interview site, interviewer/interviewee match and experiences of respondents may vary from one study to the next, and as a result, affect external validity of the study.

Kavale (1996) suggests the quality of an ethnographic study can be determined by identifying and evaluating the following attributes: appropriateness, clarity, comprehensiveness, credibility, and significance (p. 233). The ideal ethnography describes "participants, setting, and circumstances so clearly that the image reproduced constitutes a verbal photograph" (Kvale, p. 238).

Researchers who do not support the use of quantitative concepts for qualitative study present the following information. Denzin & Lincoln (1994) support Corbin (1990) who states "the usual canons of 'good' science should be retained, but require redefinition in order to fit the realities of qualitative research" (in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 508). Denzin & Lincoln

(1994) would also support Guba & Lincoln (1989) who suggest the term *trustworthiness* replace the "conventional criteria for judging the rigor of inquiries ... internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 234). The qualities they use to judge the goodness of a study are considered "*parallel, or foundational*" (p. 233) because they are intended to correspond to the conventional research terms used previously in qualitative and quantitative research. Credibility and transferability are thus coined in place of internal and external validity, confirmability parallels objectivity, and dependability and comparability are used in place of internal and external reliability.

Despite conflicting perspectives among qualitative researchers, the measure of a sound qualitative study revolves around developing a specific set of pre-determined criteria to describe and follow, a clearly articulated description of the procedures used and a comprehensive explanation of both the means of identifying the issues as well as an explanation concerning how findings were presented. Employing these techniques enables others who read the work to evaluate its merits. This study describes the format of and procedure used throughout the interview process, the means for categorizing and identifying the key issues extracted from student transcripts, and then the rationale in place for presenting findings.

J. Interview Procedure

Each interview was divided into three sections, the pre-interview, interview, and post interview. At each part of the interview process, participants were given a clear outline of what to expect and how to proceed.

1. *Pre-Interview*

Without exception, all students arrived for their pre-arranged interview times.

They seemed willing and ready to participate. During the pre-interview phase, the

investigator outlined the focus of the study, explained the purpose of the consent form (Appendix F), and witnessed the signing of this form. All participants were given a copy of the form for their use. The interviewer then requested permission to take a photograph (Appendix G) in order to create a collage of student pictures to be used only once at her thesis defense. Participants signed an additional consent form, in duplicate, before the photograph was taken. Once permission was granted, participants were given a full explanation of the importance of confidentiality to all aspects of this study. They were assured all materials used in connection to this study would be destroyed once it was complete and that only the interviewer and her main advisor, if necessary, would see any of the transcripts or other data.

2. *Ethnographic Interviews*

Each interview (Appendix I) was tape-recorded. I began each taped interview by re-emphasizing the importance of integrity and confidentiality to all aspects of this study. Interviews lasted between 40 minutes and two hours. During the interviews, I interviewer made notes, primarily in reference to words or phrases that might be difficult to understand and transcribe during the transcription process. I also paid particular attention to each student's body language throughout the interview process. Students were given leeway when answering questions, although the interviewer had particular topics of interest deemed important to cover. Areas included initial adjustment and adaptation issues, current adjustment concerns, the school experience, suggestions for an improved school experience, issues of racism and discrimination, and the participant's views on cultural pluralism and its importance to them and their families as relative newcomers to Canada.

3. *Post Interview*

Once the interview was completed, students were asked to fill in a General Information Sheet (Appendix J). Before completing this sheet, the investigator explained the purpose of the information required, and then described each section of the sheet with the interviewee. Participants were then asked to show their consent by signing the sheet. The data sheet was divided into three sections. The purpose of the first section was to gather basic demographic information. Data collected from the remainder of the form was to be used to corroborate information students described during their interview sessions in the areas of racism and discrimination and both initial and current adjustment issues. Ultimately, only the demographic information and the data collected concerning current adjustment concerns were used. Analyzing and comparing the remaining data seemed beyond the scope of this study.

K. Limitations

There are several possible limitations to this study. The target population of this study is students who have left the secondary school situation, so contacting them presented a problem. Since *graduation*,²² they may have returned to their home country or changed their address. The number of non-replies could affect the external validity of the study. Students may no longer feel a connection to the school or understand how participating in an interview will assist future foreign students. Their experiences may be too painful to discuss or personally address. Those students who choose to participate may be very different from those who do not participate. Cross-cultural differences could inhibit or shape student answers in such a way as to affect the

²²Many students who attend graduation ceremonies do not graduate. These ceremonies are currently titled, "school leaving" ceremonies.

validity of the data collected or prevent them from participating at all. Unless interviews can take place over a short period of time, interview validity may be questioned. Student answers could be skewed from those interviewed toward the end of the interview period, especially if they have time to learn about interview questions prior to their scheduled interviews. Some students may need more than one interview session before they feel comfortable disclosing information they consider sensitive. And finally, the political climate surrounding the satellite student may silence them from participating. They may understand how precarious their position could be if government agencies realize they are unsupervised adolescents.

When analyzing the data of this study, two other items of concern emerged that may also be viewed as limiting. The terms "Canadian" and "Asian" did not seem to have consistent meanings among the students interviewed. At times, it was difficult to know whether student and interviewer definitions of both terms were similar or different, whether individual student definitions were similar or different, and whether student's definitions of these terms remained stable throughout the interview.

Student interpretations of the word "Canadian" seemed to fluctuate. Students who were asked to clarify the term Canadian hesitated before indicating blond hair, blue eyes. Students stated they did not have Canadian friends even though they also indicated Canadian-born Chinese (CBC) were part of their friendship group. All students did not include the CBC's as part of their definition of Canadian. The term Canadian seemed to refer to Caucasians and was not used to include others of color. Students also seemed to confuse ethnicity and citizenship issues. Some of the students interviewed separated CBC students from other Canadians because of their different ethnicity and cultural background. For them, being Canadian-born did not make their Chinese friends Canadian.

The term "Asian" was used in a variety of contexts. This term did not always have the same meaning among students and at times it was used in a different manner throughout a single interview. "Asian" seemed to be used interchangeably with "Chinese" most of the time.

Students also used this term when speaking specifically about a sub-group of the Chinese such as the Taiwanese or those born in Hong Kong. Chinese was also used to mean only foreign-born Chinese and in reference to Canadian-born Chinese. Asian was also used to identify other cultural groups such as the Japanese or the Koreans. While I did not explore the reasons for the discrepancy when using "Asian", a possible explanation might be a general lack of specificity by the larger society when using this term. Others reasons might include student carelessness when answering questions, a lack of understanding of the term and student desire to use the politically correct term.

Defining each of these terms prior to the interview process could be a possible solution to problems resulting from a variety of interpretations of these terms. However, defining these words may also decrease the spontaneity of student responses as students readjust their answers based on a different definition of terms they use.

L. Data Organization and Examination

The first step in the analysis of student transcripts involved multiple readings of student responses to develop an understanding of the content and to develop a sense of direction concerning interviewee responses. As a result of analyzing interview transcripts, certain issues and themes emerged as critical adjustment issues for students in this study. As these themes began to surface, key quotations were marked and then compiled into a list of quotations. Pseudonym, line number, and general topic identified each quotation. Next, I created a spreadsheet (Appendix K) to be able to list all the issues or themes identified. Transcripts were

then re-analyzed and themes tallied. At this time, additional quotations were highlighted and then added to the compiled quotation list. From this list of highlighted quotations, a 44-page list of key quotations was created. It was possible, because of the format of the spreadsheet, to easily identify the student making the statement(s). As this analysis continued, more issues were added to the list and counted. Subsequently, this table was used to examine the data in another way. This time, key themes and key issues within these themes were identified and recorded both by line number and student number. Again, additional categories were added when they seemed important. At times, student statements covered more than one area. The line number of these statements was then placed in multiple categories where necessary so that these statements could be categorized within each issue they addressed. Information gathered from creating both lists was compiled to develop a comprehensive set of data from which to identify the key topics identified by the students in this study. In all, 82 separate sub-sections were created to compile the data from the student transcripts and to identify the main issues expressed by these students. The data were eventually transferred to 14 different files from which the transcripts were analyzed. They were labeled Agency, Chinese Population Concerns, Comparing Education Systems, Cultural Considerations, Current Adjustment Issues, ESL Program, Facilitating and Hindering Issues, Friendships/Peer Relationships, Initial Observations and Concerns, Language, Mental Health Issues, Multicultural and Assimilation Issues, Racism and Discrimination, Satellite and International Students. From this compilation, it was possible to address each of the five objectives of this study and to identify the issues the students of this target population address most often. At times it was necessary to use several files in order to provide a comprehensive examination of an issue or theme generated by these students.

Findings presented in the next section are based upon the three key components of distribution, frequency, and significance. My first concern was to identify issues common to a minimum of five of the 23 students in this study. Key issues are thus identified based on the total number of students who raised an issue. I then looked at the frequency each issue was identified and used this number in combination with the number of students raising the issue as a determining factor when assessing its importance to this study. I also looked at the overall importance of the issues students identified in relation to the five objectives of this study, reporting on concerns that seem most directly related to this study.

Because one of the main objectives of this study was to identify adjustment issues of international and satellite students as sub-groups of the total Chinese foreign-born student population, students were identified and then divided into sub-groups based upon their personal living arrangements. International students formed the first sub-group. Satellite students were further subdivided into two groups depending upon whether one or both parents returned to their home country for extended periods of time because this factor seemed to be critical to their adjustment. Students living with both parents were divided into two groups based upon their age at migration and whether they began their Canadian education in an elementary or a secondary school setting because their interview responses seemed to suggest this was a key adjustment consideration. Dividing the interview population into these five sub-groups made it possible to identify key adjustment issues within each of the sub-groups and to determine whether adjustment issues within a sub-group were similar to or different from the entire target population interviewed.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

A. Introduction

Findings in this study are based on interviewer questions and student responses formulated around the five objectives in this study. Within each objective, findings are examined based on distribution among the student interviewees, the frequency identified, and the importance of the finding to the objective under analysis.

The sheer size of the Chinese student population in the secondary school environment impacts on every adjustment concern and raises issues new to the area of student and immigrant adjustment. The majority of the students were aware they were part of the largest cultural group in the school. Students themselves constantly refer to both the positive and negatives aspects of being part of a large Chinese population. Their large numbers change their assimilation or adaptation process. Today's Chinese-speaking students live in an environment where the quality of the choice to adapt is different from previous situations when their numbers were smaller and less significant in both the school and community environments. Students today are able to decide whether to replicate their home environment in Canada or reach out to adopt and eventually embrace a new homeland. They can choose to actively develop their English language skills, meet and make Canadian friends, and become part of the Canadian tapestry. Or they can choose to remain within their cultural group acquiring and developing only the level of skill they deem necessary for success in their host country while remaining separate and distinct, adjacent to, but never fully part of, the Canadian scene.

Inevitably, mitigating factors enhance or hinder an individual's decision to either adopt or retain a lifestyle and these factors are interpreted differently depending upon the person whom

experiences them. Students have a varying degree of insight or understanding as to the consequences of their decisions. This is reflected by Don's²² insight. "I think most of the people, again, they are young still, they are just studying here, they go to class, they don't know how their future is going to be.... so they don't really care about how good their English is" (12968 – 12971²³). Allan's description of taking the easy way out when making friends is also representative of other students: "they mostly speak Chinese and people like to take the easiest way to take some advantage and I think I am one of them" (6899 - 6900). This statement is significant because it illustrates the Chinese student's actions with respect to peer relationships, an area they identify as key to their adjustment.

The adjustment environment of students who form the largest cultural group in a secondary school is considerably different from foreign students who are small in numbers in the school environment. Students who form part of the largest cultural group can take comfort from their large numbers and choose to stay within their cultural group in the host country. Students often describe the struggle they experience as they identify those factors they believe will enhance their adjustment, but then they ultimately choose behaviors they recognize will impede the progress they articulate as important because it is easier or more comfortable to remain within their cultural group. Student-identified issues stemming from the large numbers of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students within both the school and community environments will be discussed first: these issues seem to most directly relate to the particular characteristics of this study's target population.

²² I selected Canadian rather than Chinese pseudonyms because each of the students interviewed had adopted a Canadian name. I selected Canadian names based on the names of my family members and my thesis committee.

²³ Each line of the student transcripts was numbered consecutively beginning with the transcript of the first student interviewed. In total there were 13,254 lines.

International and satellite students experience somewhat different adjustment issues. International students recount fewer adjustment concerns than do other students in this study. The adjustment experience of satellite students varies greatly depending upon whether one parent remains in Canada or both parents return to the home country. Where the student is “home-alone,”²⁴ there is an overwhelming sense of isolation, loneliness, despair and depression permeating their stories and overriding their other adjustment issues.

Students seemed aware of Canada’s unique multicultural policy, often citing it to explain their personal circumstance, their cultural perspective, their ethnicity issues and their participation in Canadian society. Issues of racism and discrimination emerged in a continuum, from a peripheral position to an integral aspect of their personal adjustment experience. For some students, this concern colored their interpretation of a number of events in their lives, and they referred to racism and discrimination throughout their interview. Other students only talked about this issue when I asked them questions about their experience in this area. The key adjustment areas identified by students in this study are language development, peer relationships, cross-cultural adaptation, and education. Mental health issues seem to be a concern for one segment of this target population, the satellite students. Other students mention sadness, loneliness, and fear, fleetingly. Once they make friends, other issues were more critical to their adjustment.

B. Impact of Large Numbers to the Adjustment Process

Eighteen of the students in this study were very aware of the large numbers of Chinese students in their midst. As Marie states “there were SOOO many people in the school, like in Hong Kong” (5306) and Paul recounts, “oh, it’s just like Chinese school because too many Chinese in there. Yeah, and people are talking Chinese in the hallway and other stuff. Reading

²⁴ “Home-alone” in this context means without parental supervision.

Chinese comics, Chinese newspaper and magazine" (10868 - 10870). The large Chinese population was also a topic of discussion outside the school environment. Beth recalls:

actually, when I first came to (school name) every night, well not every night, but at home, right, I would tell my parents it's kind of funny how in a classroom there's almost more Chinese or Asian people in the classroom than any other group which was really weird. (8039 - 8044)

This large Chinese population changes the face of the adjustment experience. Students new to school begin adjusting to a new school situation and a new culture buffered by a large student population from within their cultural group. On one hand, the large numbers of Chinese students in the secondary school environment may facilitate the adjustment process because other students make new students whose language and cultural beliefs are similar to theirs. Ten students suggest having a large number of Chinese students facilitated adjustment. Suzanne states, "I sort of feel at home when people around me are the same as me. Everything would be more difficult if there were less (Chinese)" (2825 - 2826) while Beth suggests, "I think it's helped. Because then visibly you are no longer the minority at school or in the classroom" (8051 - 8051).

On the other hand, adjustment may be hindered because the student becomes too comfortable in this setting to struggle to acquire those skills necessary for integration in the larger Canadian society. Six of the students interviewed present this point of view. They believe the large Chinese population makes adjustment more difficult. Roger, who started his schooling in an elementary school situation where there were few Chinese students suggests, "before coming to this high school there weren't many. This forces you to hang out with different people" (171), while Paul presents this perspective in a slightly different way: "no, I don't think

so because as they get to know each other they just keep doing the same thing as they were in Hong Kong” (11111 - 11112). Two students made statements presenting both sides of their predicament. Valerie’s statement captures the struggle these students describe throughout their interviews:

At first, like in Hong Kong I was always nervous about, I didn’t think that they had lots of Chinese people it surprised me because when you walk around you see lots of Chinese people so sometimes it’s good and sometimes it’s not. Because, it’s good when you don’t understand something you have people to talk to in your own language, but it’s not good because you know they’re Chinese people and you’ll start talking Chinese with them and so you don’t really have a chance to meet other people. (710 – 717)

Two other students present a completely different perspective that might have some merit. They suggest the large Chinese population would be important, if, in fact, the Chinese students got along. Kathryn provides this insight when she states, “just the fact that most of the kids are Asian? I guess it might be easier if all of them got along, but I know there are lots of cliques and one group would be talking up a storm about the other group of Asians and not everybody gets along” (10442 – 10445).

Adjustment may not be an issue for students in this environment who do not want to adjust. The large numbers of Chinese students may make it possible for them to remain within their cultural setting and to actively resist adjusting to the new culture. In addition, student experience in the school situation in this study may be mirrored somewhat in the community they live, but this experience will be very different from other immigrants or sojourning students who settle in Canada where there is not a large Chinese population. The Canada they know is very different from Canada outside the lower mainland.

Twenty of the 23 students in this study as well as 93 of the 134 students in the target population are from Hong Kong. The hegemonic relationship between the Hong Kong students and the other Chinese students in this environment may be similar to the relationship normally in existence when a minority group integrates into a dominant one. Conflict students speak of may result from this struggle between the Chinese cultural groups in the school setting. Chinese students immigrating from areas other than Hong Kong may be simultaneously adapting to two different environments: to a somewhat different Chinese environment as well as to the Canadian environment.

Four themes emerged as pervasive adjustment issues throughout this interviewee population. Each of these categories is directly related to the cultural demographics in the secondary school environment attended by these students and in the community environment where they live. The areas cited by these students are the development of English language skills, peer relationships, assimilation and integration issues, and the EAL program itself. In each of these situations students are faced with a difficult predicament. Do they actively reach out to develop, acquire, or embrace these aspects of their adjustment or do they choose the comfort and safety of their cultural background? This dilemma is experienced on a daily basis and is played out differently depending upon the age of the student, the personality of the student, their level of English upon immigration, the age of immigration, the characteristics of their initial friendships, their attitude toward their immigration, and their desire to assimilate or integrate into the Canadian society.

1. *Language Development*

Twenty-two of the students in this study identify language as a key adjustment issue. Despite this fact, fifteen students admit they speak English only within the

confines of the classroom. Two others indicate they speak very little English outside the classroom. Language is the thread connecting all adjustment processes and is used to explain their choice of friends, their difficulty with their education, and their difficulty asking for and receiving assistance in other aspects of their life. As Allan suggests, "English, yes. I think it is the most, almost the only thing, because every problem has relations with English" (6906 - 6907). Allan, Don, Charles, and Roger say that initially it is hard to use English to get help. Instead, they ask other Chinese students for help and this eventually prevents them from developing their English skills. Some students suggest they are afraid to use their English because they will be laughed at, both by their Chinese peers and by the general student population as well. John suggests Canadian students do not have the patience to wait while the Chinese student organizes his/her thoughts and then speaks very slowly in an attempt to express himself/herself. Allan sums up the English speaking dilemma with this comment that represents the statements of many of the students in this study:

Actually, it's not a very good place for us to learn English. Because every time, even though we are in class we speak Chinese. So, it's very hard. There are so many people that speak Chinese and they don't think speaking Chinese is a problem. (7016 – 7018)

2. *Developing Friendships Outside the Chinese Cultural Group*

All 23 students interviewed identify friendships as a key factor to their adjustment to their new environment. They express the importance of friendships when they refer to missing friends from their home country, the difficulty of making friends in Canada, the improvement of their adjustment experience once they made friends, and the composition

of their friendship groups today. Eight students say they have made friends outside the Chinese cultural group while 14 students state they have only Chinese friends. From student answers, it is not always clear whether these friends are Chinese foreign-born or whether they also include CBC's. Seven students specifically state they would like to make friends outside their ethnic group, but the struggle they envision acts as an obstacle they cannot overcome. The following statement by Valerie and then, Catherine, are representative of this attitude. "Yes, at first I really wanted to make friends with other ethnic groups but it's kind of hard, so it's easy to shift to Chinese people" (Valerie, 557 - 558) and "I think it's good to have friends who speak English.... sometimes it's very hard to actually meet them" (Catherine, 3285-3286). Having friends from the same cultural group, friends with the same language, is not only easier but also less fraught with danger and the unknown. Paul, who emphasized the importance of developing Canadian friends and whose original experience in Canada enabled him to make friends outside the Chinese culture states:

in (school name) I only can make tons of Cantonese friends. It's hard to make other...it's hard to talk to them because we are from a different culture and when I get to (school name) I get back to my Cantonese life. I didn't watch any English movies, or listen (to) any English songs. (10885 - 10895)

Students in this study differ in their own ability and desire to reach out to form friendships with students outside their ethnic group. Suzanne suggests "I would really feel more comfortable with Asians" (2954) while John states "but like I don't care to make friends with just anybody. Like, it's hard to keep the relationship. Maybe, I know them in class, but I won't phone them, I won't contact them." (12877 - 12878). On the

other hand, Suzanne also suggests "I guess I will just have to go and seek them" (2949) and Charles states "I think I should participate more in here and get a little bit more open" (2041).

They differ in their perception of the reception they will receive if and when they make this move. While Janet comments, "some were friendly. But I cannot talk very well, so I didn't talk to them. So I just did my work and just go home the rest of the time" (11465 - 11466). Nick, one of the International students, states, "they are not so friendly" (7298). This struggle is intensified due to the differences in the activities the Chinese students prefer and their perception of the activities Canadian students like. Don hesitantly explains that "because...like we're from a different country then maybe our interests are different, the things we like are different, the things we do are different" (12882 - 12883). Like other students of this study, Don chooses to maintain his Chinese friends rather than make Canadian friends. This is a very natural behavior and one most people would choose under similar circumstances. This statement may also suggest that when Chinese students are large in number, they really may not want friends outside the Chinese cultural group. Students from other cultural groups may not be welcome or might find it difficult breaking into the circle of Chinese friends.

For Chinese-speaking students in this study, developing friendships exclusively within their cultural background is both satisfying and comforting. Students value Canadians as friends because they can teach them about Canadian culture and Canadian ways. Canadian friends are not viewed as important for the day to day interactions normally occurring in peer relationships. Individual students talk about developing Canadian friendships as a thing they see happening one day in the future. Linda's

comment is representative of this perspective. She says, "I don't know, I guess like when I went out to have a job I guess I will make friends with non-Asians, but now I am studying and I just like to be with my old friends and they are all Asians" (1317 - 1319). Whether these students are ultimately able to bridge this gap and develop Canadian friends remains to be seen. For the actions they make today ultimately create a distance between them and their host culture that is difficult to overcome. And both the size and composition of the Chinese population within their grasp may make it unnecessary for them to integrate in this way at any time during their lives.

3. *Assimilation/Integration*

All 23 students in this study identify adjusting to a new country and a new culture as a critical adjustment concern. They discuss the differences between the Canadian and Chinese education systems, the differences between the Chinese and Canadian cultures, and the differences in the activities the Canadian and Chinese teenagers enjoy. They also talk about the differences between their home environment and the Canadian home environment.

Adjustment becomes more difficult and takes more time when it involves the ability to continue to interact with your own large ethnic population. It becomes increasingly possible to live in the host country without having to integrate or to integrate minimally. Nick, Paul, and Linda who suggest living in Canada can be very similar to living in Hong Kong present this point of view. Linda suggests it's "quite comfortable, because everything is—like Richmond is like all—everything is Chinese those kinds of things. It's kind of hard to really adapt to the English culture" (1031 - 1033). Both Nick and Paul claim there is really no difference at all. All activities and behaviors from Hong

Kong can be maintained or replicated in Canada. They spoke Cantonese and English in Hong Kong and now speak English and Cantonese in Canada; they ate Chinese and Western food in Hong Kong and now eat Western and Chinese food in Canada; they were able to practice Chinese cultural activities in Hong Kong and they continue practicing these activities today. The conflict between adapting to new ways when realistically it is possible to maintain old behaviors is a very real predicament. Valerie sums up the adjustment/integration issue when she suggests it is important to understand and cope with this conflict while adjusting. "I guess if you really want to adjust/adapt to this new culture, first of all you have to, you can still handle with people from Hong Kong. At the same time you can still handle Canadians" (823 - 825). The students in this study are grappling with assimilation and integration issues in an environment where there are not only obvious benefits to retaining their cultural ties, but the large numbers provide the security and opportunity to do so.

4. *EAL²⁵ Program*

Historically, Vancouver has been one of Canada's main immigration centres. As such, the school district has been trying to meet the needs of a diverse student population since its first class in Gastown, 1873 when "the school district included the area within a three-mile radius with the mill as its centre....There were 16 pupils in the first class, Indian, Kanaka and white" (Ashworth, Cummins, Handscombe, 1989, p. 1). As early as 1906, and prior to the inception of the Department of Education, the VSB created its first EAL class at Strathcona Elementary School. Since then the EAL student has been an integral part of the Vancouver School District school population, coined as "New

²⁵ EAL is the acronym used in this section of the study because the school site has switched to EAL program and EAL student. ESL is maintained in student quotations because students use the term ESL.

Canadian” in the 1950s and 1960s, ESL from the 1970s through most of the 1990s, and EAL toward the end of the 20th century.

Initially, EAL teachers at the elementary and secondary level were expected to assess and evaluate students who came to register. Subsequent to a 1982 review of the EAL program, the VSB created the Oakridge Reception and Orientation Centre (OROC) where students new to Canada receive a comprehensive assessment before being placed in one of its schools and EAL programs, at a level meeting the individual’s needs. Each secondary school has developed its own curricular offerings in an attempt to meet the needs of its own EAL population.

At the site of this study, the ESL Program developed by the Vancouver School Board to assist students new to Canada is an integral part of the school’s curriculum offerings. EAL students are placed in an EAL class in one of three levels. As they progress through the levels, they spend less time in their EAL classroom and more time integrating into the regular student²⁶ population. When their course loads included EAL classes and regular classes, they are called “in transition.” Comprehensive assessment exams are conducted three times yearly to determine the progress of each EAL student. Subsequent to this evaluation, and depending upon factors such as class size restrictions, course content, time of year, student ability and teacher consent, students move through the EAL program and make the transition from EAL classes to regular classes. While this integration varies from student to student, it normally takes from two to five years.

The school’s EAL program was developed prior to the influx of Chinese immigrants, at a time when there were fewer immigrants and when one ethnic group did

²⁶ Students who are no longer part of the EAL program are often identified as regular students.

not comprise the majority of the EAL student population. It was developed to meet the needs of the immigrant population at that time. Changing demographics affect the composition of the school's immigrant population and the students in the EAL program. Changing demographics ultimately affect teacher instruction and the way the program is administered. Changing demographics may ultimately mean revamping the program to meet the needs of a very different immigrant population.

Fourteen of the students in this study participated in some way in an EAL program. Seven of the remaining students recall enrolling in a regular class in their elementary school. They state that separate EAL classes began in the intermediate years in their elementary schools. The primary program to which they belonged did not have separate EAL classes or programs designed to specifically assist the EAL student. The two remaining students' English levels were sufficient to have them placed in regular classes immediately upon immigrating. Ten of the students in this study speak against the EAL program and seven speak in its favour.

Six of the nine students forced to adapt to Canada without the support of the EAL program view the program skeptically. They feel the initial difficulties of starting school in a regular classroom are outweighed by the advantages of being immersed in a new language and integrated with regular students from the beginning of the adaptation experience. They see the EAL program as hindering the assimilation process because the program isolates EAL students from the regular student population and it encourages cultural groups to maintain their ties rather than to begin the integration process. Roger is one of the most adamant. His statement is powerful, reflecting the most extreme position of students who view the program negatively:

I think cancel the ESL program. Because the ESL program puts people that speak the same language (together)...they start speaking Chinese and they don't learn the language. You have to force them, put them in normal classes. You know, for the first while who cares if they don't know what you're saying. After a while they will. They must, or otherwise you (the student) fail and that's the intensity.

(263 – 267)

Student skepticism revolves around their beliefs the program holds them back and is a dividing rather than an integrating force in their school. Dennis' statement "you know I see the people in ESL at this school and I never really knew them; they've just kind of stuck to themselves like an ESL group where they spoke Chinese to each other" (1756 - 1758) is mirrored by Linda and Janet. Dennis' statement, like many others, uses descriptors like "they" and "them" and indicates how some of the students in this study no longer relate to their own EAL and immigrant backgrounds, viewing current EAL students separately from the rest of the school population. Though they may not be aware of this, using "they" and "them" also indicates their sense of inclusion in the Canadian school culture.

Students believe the EAL program prevents them from taking meaningful credit courses toward graduation, college and university, and eventually the career of their choice. Instead, they must take non-credit courses designed to improve their English competency, courses without sufficient content to challenge them intellectually or cover the materials they believe they already learned in their home country. Charles remembers the courses he took in his first year as "except English, I felt all others, science or something like that just I think it's a little bit low comparing to my standard, I think,

because I was an A level in Hong Kong" (2005 – 2008). Some of the students can see the merit derived from learning English in this environment, but they rail against what they view as a program preventing them from getting a Canadian education. Paul reflects that when he was in the EAL program he thought "ESL is nothing to me; just keep me at the same stage, the same level" (11047 - 11048). Today, he feels differently. Several students also see the EAL program as effectively separating them from the regular student population. The label, "ESL", remains with them throughout their secondary school years. Beth addresses this topic when she says:

some of the kids feel...they were labelled as ESL kids. They felt that being labelled as ESL and being stuck in ESL they were already kind of segregated and put away into the ESL class. So, they didn't feel they had any encouragement to become kind of the dominant group. (7962 – 7966)

Paul comments "some of the ESL students don't want to be called ESL students. Yeah, because they think ESL is low level compared to regular class" (11285 - 11287). Rather than serving to provide them with the requisite English skills needed for success, students view the EAL program as a holding tank, the place where some English is learned, but a second class place preventing them from integrating into the larger student population and truly "getting a Canadian education."

Students also know that for a large part of the student population the EAL classroom is the initial setting where friendships are formed. The EAL program provides the opportunity for them to make friends, but because of the demographics of their school's EAL student population, their friends are other Chinese-speaking students. Rather than facilitating the adjustment process, the EAL program effectively separates its

students from the larger, more diverse student population and contributes to adjustment difficulties. Friendships formed in the EAL program are retained. Janet, referring to her own experience, explains “I have many friends in the ESL class but not many in the regular class” (11458). Marie’s statement in reference to her brother’s experience captures both the difficulty and the dilemma Chinese EAL students encounter in their school environment. This statement also illustrates the cyclical aspect of the problem:

OK, first it’s the friend’s part. Like he start hanging around with the people who speak the language he is most comfortable with. And, by doing that, he wasn’t really advancing in his English language. And teachers see him as an ESL student. He hangs around Chinese and he has difficulty in school...I think it’s like a cycle—because his English wasn’t good enough, he started meeting the same ethnic, like, Chinese friends and then because of that his English wasn’t improving. (5353 – 5360)

According to these students, when EAL students begin integrating into regular classes, they do not integrate socially, maintaining friendships formed in their EAL classes. Originally, making friends both inside the EAL program and in the regular school environment would be a major benefit of the EAL program, but in the secondary school environment of this target population, the large numbers of Chinese-speaking students worked against the EAL program’s original intent. Marie’s comment already made reference to this. By the time they are placed in regular classes, they have the EAL label, they have formed friendships in the EAL environment, and these two factors effectively prevent them from mixing with the remaining student population.

All seven students who talk about the merits of the EAL program were participants in the program themselves. They make reference to the positive feelings generated from mixing with other EAL students, the importance of friendships gained, and the development of their English comprehension skills. Linda and Janet value the friendships they have made with other Chinese-speaking students, believing these friendships helped them with their adjustment. Carole and Beth believe their school experience improved once they were part of the EAL program, mixing with other students like them and being taught by caring, sensitive EAL teachers. Four other students who believe EAL students learn English in the EAL program support Catherine's comment. "I think the ESL program is good for those who intend to learn English" (3164).

Four students present both points of view at different places throughout their interview, while two present both perspectives simultaneously. Don states that "it's nice. In the class we have different kind of people, not only Chinese....although we are in ESL class we always speak Chinese, so it doesn't help to learn English" (12783 – 12785). Tina's comments also present both points of view: "they were helpful by the way that they can place you in a more to your level education situation....Then, on the other hand, like my brother he was unable to get out of ESL courses and so he thinks his life is ruined" (4824 – 4826).

The character of the school population of the students in this study suggests the EAL program may need to be changed in order to address specific issues raised by the demographic changes in the student population. At the program's inception, it was not possible to foresee the change in the demographics of the immigrant population, nor the

numbers of immigrants the program would eventually address. Students new to Canada need to learn adequate English skills and to develop an understanding of Canada and its culture. Housing students in classes where it may be easier to retain home language and develop friendships primarily within one's cultural group rather than building connections with other students and learning English skills defeats one of the major objective of the program. Adapting the EAL program to fulfill the program's objectives and meet the needs of its large Chinese-speaking population while continuing to meet the needs of the other EAL students is a difficult challenge to undertake.

C. Key Adjustment Issues

The previous section dealt with adjustment issues particularly pertinent to the demographics of both the school and target populations in this study. This section discusses key adjustment issues reported by student interviewees where specific demographics of the target population are not pivotal to the adjustment issue described. Issues analyzed in this section were selected because they are cited by the majority of the students interviewed, they are reported frequently, and because they are viewed by these students as being critical to their adjustment in Canada.

Four adjustment issues emerged as most critical for the students of this study (See Table 7 page 108). They are language, peer relationships, cross cultural concerns and education. Language was cited by 22 students 156 times, peer relationships was cited by 20 students 54 times, cross cultural concerns was cited by 16 students 61 times, and education was cited by 14 students 18 times.

TABLE 7

Key Adjustment Issues of the 23 Students Interviewed

Issue	Number of Students	Times Cited
Language	22	156
Peer Relationships	20	54
Cross Cultural Concerns	16	61
Education	14	18
Mental Health	13	29 ^a

^aNote. Eight of the 13 students who identified feelings of fear, loneliness, isolation, and depression 24 times were either satellite or full satellite students. This issue will be discussed within the full satellite sub-group where it has been identified as a critical adjustment concern.

1. *Language*

The importance of language acquisition is the adjustment issue cited most frequently by students in this study. Twenty-two students identified this issue 156 times in a variety of contexts (See Table 8 page 109). This category is divided into four sub-categories labeled Language Acquisition, Communication, Colloquialisms and Writing. Within these sub-categories Language Acquisition was cited by 22 students 102 times, Communication was cited 42 times by 18 students, Colloquialisms was cited six times by six students and Writing was cited six times by five students. Because students do not specify what they mean when they use the general term language, it is difficult to separate the language acquisition category into sub-sections.

TABLE 8

Issue 1: Language Acquisition by Sub-category as Cited by 22 Students

Sub-category	Number of Students	Times Cited
Language	22	102
Communication	18	42
Writing	6	6
Colloquialisms	5	6
Total		156

Twenty-two of the students believe English is the most crucial adjustment factor. Language development impacts on every aspect of their adjustment to living in Canada. "The first thing I fear, of course, is the language" (Roger, 40), "I guess the most important one is language problems (Valerie, 409), " I guess it's mainly just the language barrier" (Dennis, 543 - 546), and "well, I think mainly language problems since language is the bridge to communication" (Brian, 12152) are comments representative of student concerns capturing the significance of this adjustment issue.

Students are aware of the difficulties of learning to speak English, but they are unable to agree upon a solution to this problem. They are also aware their numbers tend to exacerbate the problem. They want to learn English, but all around them are other Chinese speakers who make it easy for them to communicate in their home language, and who subsequently make it more difficult for them to acquire language competencies. Students comment on the difficulties of communicating in English at school, in the

community, with their friends, and at home. These difficulties extend beyond the problems associated with the technical difficulties of learning a new language and are discussed from a variety of perspectives by the students interviewed.

Students discuss the issue and problems of communicating in English. They talk about the positive and negative aspects of being forced to speak English in the school and the advantages of being able to speak their home language. Some students suggest the school should force its students to speak English within the school, at all times. Roger and Paul believe having to speak English when they first immigrated is the reason why their language skills developed quickly. Carole, Beth, and Linda believe forcing is ineffective. Rather than assisting them to develop language skills this policy made them even more hesitant to talk. Carole says, "oh, they used to say that only English can be spoken in classrooms. So, what ended up happening was that I wouldn't speak at all. So, I'll be saying nothing which didn't really help" (9540 - 9541). Instead, time, as Linda says, will solve this problem because language skills will naturally improve the longer they remain in Canada (1007 - 1009). Other students refer to the school's attempt at an English only policy in the classroom, but acknowledge how ineffective this policy is because students continue speaking Chinese. As Suzanne comments, "it was kind of boring, so we just got talking a bit, but, like around me, right, they are most Chinese-speaking people, right, and we feel it is more comfortable if we talk in Cantonese. So, we just chatter a bit" (2673 - 2675). On the other hand, some students, like Kathryn, suggest students speak Chinese to assist others who do not understand teacher instructions. "I have seen ESL students struggle and they would whisper to a friend and

talk in Cantonese or Mandarin and ask them if they knew what was being said and if the teacher heard them, they would be reprimanded” (10286 – 10288).

Students point to other factors that impede the development of communication skills and language comprehension. They continue to watch Chinese TV and read Chinese newspapers and magazines exclusively. They are afraid other students will laugh at them. Their friends, other Chinese students, not only make fun of their attempt to speak English, but are also unreceptive to communicating in English when speaking Chinese²⁷ is so much easier. As Catherine says, “it’s just that everyone else is speaking Cantonese. Like everyone, that it’s kind of hard for me to motivate them to speak English to (me)” (2714 - 2715). Students are not sure whether they can make themselves understood even when they do attempt to speak English. Nicole recounts, “I can’t express myself properly...I go and say this whole big long story about things to get my point out. And then, if I tell it to somebody who spoke English only, they would just use one word to describe what I am saying” (4150 - 4152).

The home situation often impedes the development of communication skills and language comprehension. Twenty-two students continue to speak Chinese in their homes. Janet, Beth, and Valerie talk about the home situation where parents continue to speak Chinese. Parents are upset when their children attempt to speak English in the home, believing they are hiding something or trying to become too Canadian. Students also find it easier to speak Chinese and communicate with parents whose English language comprehension is poor. Janet’s comment both represents and aptly describes the conflict faced by Chinese students who attempt to speak English outside the

²⁷ Students use “Chinese” to mean Cantonese, Mandarin, or Taiwanese.

educational environment:

I tried to initiate to speak English at home, but my parents don't speak English.

So, when I speak English they think I talk behind them and so I cannot practice more. And I am afraid to try to speak with my friends....Because I have bad pronunciation and they would laugh at me. Also, although I know they do not purposely laugh at me, I know my pronunciation is bad. (11907 – 11915)

Some students do not intend to learn English. They are here because their parents have forced them to immigrate and they fully intend to return home. They see no point in learning English when they intend to leave Canada as soon as possible. Paul suggests EAL students think "my parents have forced me here to study about three or four years, and they (are) always thinking about life in Hong Kong. That's why they don't want to learn English at all so they think their English is weak and they don't want to talk to other people" (11307 – 11309). These behaviors suggest these students do not understand the importance their home country places on English language ability. Their resistance in learning English and adapting to Canadian culture may be their way of responding to the forced character of their immigration. Their response toward their immigration status may be similar to the involuntary minorities described in Ogbu & Simons (1998) even though their parents, rather than the Canadian government, have placed them in their current environment. Their response may also be similar to the migrant/guest workers Ogbu & Simons (1998) identify. These immigrants do not plan to settle in the host environment, adopt a sojourning attitude, learn what is necessary of the host culture and language to achieve their goals, and return home.

Language development is hampered because students only speak English within the classroom. Outside the classroom, Chinese is the language of choice and is used to communicate with friends and family members. Students watch Chinese TV, go to Chinese movies, and read Chinese newspapers and books. No attempt is made outside the school environment, except for homework, to develop English competency in any way. Valerie is one of the students who refer to this situation by indicating how different things are in her home. As she says:

my Dad really wants us to be a Canadian, so first of all he doesn't want us to watch too much Chinese TV, so we don't have Chinese TV right now. He encourages me to read English newspaper, like the Vancouver Sun, and sometimes he makes you join some community activities. (735 - 739).

Linda suggested "I think that school can help the ESL student to learn English and adapt better by assigning watching English TV as homework" (1326 – 1327) and Deirdre went as far as to say teachers:

should ban their (the EAL students') own language and try to push them to speak English. So, they would have more friends, not just their own race. But have a variety of other friends and get to know them and meet other people....They kind of just block themselves like that, so I think they should make this rule that they shouldn't speak Chinese or their own language. (6292 - 6297)

Six students point to the difficulties Canadian colloquialisms present when communicating with others outside the Chinese cultural group. They recognize developing friendships outside their cultural group would be easier with English language skills. However, students in this study also realize there are idioms Canadians use that

they cannot understand because they are common to those who have grown up with the English language, and are not technically part of formal English usage. These students believe Canadian colloquialisms prevent them from making and maintaining friends and communicating effectively. Nick, one of two international students in this study, suggests:

I don't think we can learn English from the book. Especially every country they have a way to talk. Like in Canada it is different than the US (United States of America). So, if I am not going to use English during the conversation or talk to someone else it is very hard for me to learn English. (7132 - 7134)

Five students specifically indicate writing effectively is an important aspect of language development and is needed for academic success. Catherine and Paul suggest some Asian students do not develop language competency because academic success is unimportant to them. Instead, having a good time, skipping classes, and meeting friends, are more important than success.

This point of view is contrary to the stereotypical view of the hardworking and academically competent Chinese student, but is supported by recent work of Garrott (1995), Lee (1997), Maclear (1994), Min (1995), and Trueba et al (1993). Their work points both to a changing Chinese cultural perspective and also describes the difficulties the Chinese student experiences when he/she does not fit the mold of this stereotypical position. Chinese students are not seen as having the same educational difficulties and behavioral problems as other students in classrooms. Because of this, educators do not always recognize problems their Chinese students are experiencing that they recognize in other students.

This study cannot determine whether skipping classes, meeting friends, and having a good time supports the recent work of Garrott (1995), Lee (1997), Maclear (1994), Min (1995) and Trueba et al. (1993) or whether other factors contribute to this behavior in the students of this study. This type of behavior may be caused by reasons other than lack of interest in academic work. It might be the Chinese students' reaction to the factors surrounding their immigration and the means by which they can assert their independence. It might also be the students' reaction to the difficulty of learning the language and adjusting to a new culture. And it might be nothing more than teenagers wanting some extra time to spend with their friends during school hours.

Don and Paul are two of the students who talk about these behaviors. Don refers to his own reasons for skipping as sometimes I "go to a friend's house and play" (13055). Paul refers to his and other students' reasons for skipping throughout his interview. "Maybe, I think I can't get a good mark in the class, that's why I give up. I use the time to study another class during the time when I skip...but most of the people who skip classes, they drive their car, go for lunch, dinner, and play video games" (10974) and "because all the Cantonese guy, they don't care about school. They just come to school, chatting, some are study, some are playing" (11097 - 11098).

Language acquisition is the key adjustment issue identified by the students in this study. The importance of language as a critical adjustment factor is supported by several previous studies in the area of sojourner and immigrant adjustment. Shaw (1994) and Hartung's (1983) study on Asian and Japanese high school students, respectively, produced similar findings in high school environments. There is some evidence to support Lynn (1985) who reported improvement in everyday living with increased

language competency. Both international students identified language as a key adjustment issue. This finding is supported by Crano (1986), Klineberg & Hull (1979), Sharma (1971a), and Wang (1994), who studied international students at the graduate level, and with Popadiuk (1998) who found language to be a main adjustment issue of her international students in other Vancouver secondary schools. Other researchers, Bolton (1993) and Mansfield (1995), report language as a critical adjustment issue though secondary to other adjustment issues. The results of this study continue to show how critical language acquisition is to the adjustment of immigrants and sojourners in Canada and elsewhere. For the students in this study, language acquisition becomes a more critical concern because they are surrounded by such large numbers of other students who speak their native language.

2. *Peer Relations*

Twenty students identified peer relations as an adjustment issue 54 times. Students talked about the sadness of missing friends, the difficulty of making friends, the importance of finding friends from their own cultural background, the difficulty and at times, the importance, of making Canadian friends, the overall importance of friendships to their adjustment to their new environment, and the ethnic backgrounds of their friends today as well as when they first immigrated.

At times, friends were more important to student adjustment than families. Friends could share their concerns and truly empathize because they were experiencing the same difficulties. Friends could help them with the difficulties they faced at school. Friends became the emotional support system in their new environment because families, primarily parents, did not have to integrate into the Canadian culture in the same way nor

to the same extent. Parents placed pressures on their sons and daughters to excel in school, to adapt to Canadian ways, but to remain Chinese. Sometimes parents were not there, having returned to their home country. For satellite students, friends took on even greater importance. They became a surrogate family, even though the interaction between satellite students and their friends was quite different from the interaction between parent and child.

Six students talk about missing friends after arriving in Canada. Some recall knowing they would miss their friends. Another understands the importance of friendship after immigrating. Suzanne, Valerie, Marie, and Allan make statements such as "I think I will miss my friends," while John poignantly captures the sense of loneliness and separation he felt barely three weeks after immigrating to Canada:

I suddenly find that friendship is very important....that's the first that I felt that my sixteen years old birthday was quite lonely to me because I spent it by myself, and at that time my parents were not here. They were in Hong Kong. (8409 – 8412).

Missing friends can be made more bearable when one forms new friendships. Students in this study make reference to the importance of finding new friends 42 times. Interviewees were divided into two groups to examine this issue: those who began their adjustment experience in elementary school and those whose adjustment began during their secondary school years.

Ten students began their Canadian education in an elementary setting. Six of these students did not participate in any EAL program, one student participated in some EAL activities during the week, and three students were enrolled in an EAL program in

their schools. Two of the three students who enrolled in the EAL program formed friendships exclusively with Chinese friends. The third describes both her friends and the segregation that occurred during those days in her elementary school:

I only hung out with all the immigrant(s) and....we weren't just Asians. We were all immigrants; some Indo-Canadian kids, too. We only hung out in one corner of the playground. Where all the fluent English speaking kids or whatever would try another part. (Beth, 7771 – 7774)

The seven remaining students developed friendships outside their ethnic background as well as finding Chinese friends. Today, four of these students who started elementary school in Canada say that ethnicity is not an issue in their choice of friends. Roger states “I think if you have to make friends with anyone it shouldn't be based on race, it's the personality, really the personality” (376 – 377) and Nicole says, “I don't think their nationality is as important as you get to know them. They will just become your friends” (5988 - 5989).

The secondary school setting seems to change the character of friendships. Beth, who is very articulate, suggests teenage insecurities contribute to the cliques that develop in the high school situation. She reflects:

High school changed everything because, well, not really. I don't know. High school, it seemed once you went into high school everyone went into their color coordinated groups. I don't know that's what I saw from my view. It wasn't like I didn't have any friends that were of other nationalities because up until high school I had close Caucasian friends and whatever, but once I got to high school I

was in the Chinese immigrant group. And I guess there were other groups like that. (7798 – 7803)

Students in this secondary school environment speak of the loneliness they felt prior to making friends. Three students comment on how the timetable contributes to this difficulty. They suggest changing classes each hour and then seeing classmates only three times each week did not give them enough time to form friendships during class time. As Linda says, “yes, you kind of can’t really make friends that easily because you can’t see them for all day, like in Hong Kong. And, not being able to make friends would be kind of hard to adjust. So, you just keep on going to the ESL people” (1125 – 1127). Charles and William say they formed friendships through playing basketball and other athletic activities.

Only one of these secondary age students indicated they had found friends outside their cultural group. Upon questioning, the others might specify that their friends were all Chinese or Asian, all Chinese with some CBC friends, and often Chinese with Canadians. When asked to describe their Canadian friends, they would say “Chinese, but Canadian-born.” Explanations for Chinese only friends ranged from “they were kind; and I trusted them very much” (Nicole, 4450), “cuz you know you speak the same language, have the same culture, having friends is really good for you to adjust to a new environment” (Linda, 1220 – 1221), and “I would really feel more comfortable with Asians” (Suzanne, 2954).

Thirteen of the students believe their friends helped them to adjust to their new environment. They were supportive, they shared the same cultural background, they enjoyed the same activities, and they spoke the same language. Four students suggest

having only Chinese friends hinders adjustment because they do not speak English, they do not seek friendships outside their Chinese friends, and they do not learn about the Canadian culture. Don summarizes, explaining both perspectives when he says, "because, maybe we are from Hong Kong, we feel more comfortable talking to Chinese. And it's easier to communicate together. It's easier to go together, or go out or help each other, or we have more fun when we play together" (12868 – 12870) and

I was thinking that's not good because it's hard for me to learn English. Because when we only know the friends from Hong Kong or Chinese, both of us only speak Chinese and it's not the way to improve our English. So, sometimes I just talk more to the people who are not Chinese. (12903 - 12906)

When asked about forming friendships with Canadians, the responses ranged from "it's not quite important" (Nicole, 4964), and "it's just not comfortable being with non-Asians" (Linda, 1069) to comments about the different types of activities the two student populations enjoy, "like they (Canadians) go, when they party for example, they usually drink, smoke, and almost everything you can think of. And, for Chinese, they usually go Karaoke, or pool, or parties at home, or play MJ²⁸" (Carole, 9403 – 9405). Today, fourteen students describe their friends as Chinese exclusively, eight state they have Chinese and Canadian friends, and one says that all her friends are outside the Chinese cultural group.

Even though only two students indicate that Canadians were not friendly, there does not seem to have been any consistent interactions between the Chinese students and the other students. At no time during discussion about forming friendships did the topic

²⁸ MJ (Mah-jongg), a popular Chinese game.

of racism and discrimination enter the conversation as a reason for the separation between cultural groups, though this may have been a factor in Beth's observation that in "high school everyone went into their color coordinated groups" (7799 – 7800)

Interestingly, the only student who specifically stated she had no Chinese friends later said, "I think it's also important to have friends of your own race. First of all, so when you bring them home your parents will feel an approval, kind of" (6474 – 6475). This student is having difficulties at home because all her friends are outside the Chinese background.

Students were asked whether they could see any Canadians other than CBC as friends in their future. The majority of those who could, saw these friends not as friends in the normal context, but as individuals who would help them understand Canadian culture, teach them Canadian ways, and general perform a mentor rather than a friendship role. Brenda, Paul, and Suzanne would support Valerie's explanation, "sometimes, they have a better idea about Canada so if you have questions you can just ask them. And in daily conversation you can learn more about the country, you can learn about the culture and customs about this country" (780 – 782).

Attempting to develop the means to assist Chinese-speaking students, Canadian students, and other students to integrate is a complex issue. Chinese-speaking students sound as though they would like Canadian friends. Their large numbers impede the formation of friendships outside the cultural group because of the security associated with keeping co-nationals as friends. Fear of the unknown and an element of risk are associated with attempting to form cross-cultural friendships. Expecting interactions to occur without assistance is difficult to accomplish when there is a language barrier and

cross-cultural differences. This task becomes even more difficult when, as in this situation, the Chinese students form such a large percentage of the student population. There seems to be no drive by the Chinese population to integrate or to be inclusive or welcoming to students outside their culture. When there is such a large ethnic population, Canadian students may not see the need to go out of their way to be welcoming and inclusive either. Segregation may occur unintentionally in absence of action by either ethnic group.

Previous studies on foreign student adjustment have pointed to the importance of peer relationships in the adjustment process (Bolton, 1993; Crano, 1986; Duthie, 1987; Hartung, 1983; Klein, 1971; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Kring, 1985; Mansfield, 1995; Mickle, 1985; Molla, 1989; Popadiuk, 1998). This study adds further weight to earlier studies. Like the students in Mickle (1985), students of this study, with the exception of those identified as satellites, report decreased loneliness when they formed friendships. As with Duthie (1987) and Mickle (1985), most students stayed within their sub-group because it provided security and support. Further, this study corroborates Kring (1985) who showed that Asian students form friendships from within their community and that this behavior reduces student stress while impeding language acquisition and adjustment into the new culture. Results of this study indicate some support for Mansfield (1998), who found students not only seek co-nationals for friends, but also seem to actively resist forming friendships with host nationals and actively resist adapting to the new culture. For the students of this particular study, an aspect of their resistance may be related to the large Chinese population within their school and community environments.

However, findings in this study are also somewhat different from Mansfield (1998). In the current study, students who began their immigration experience in the secondary school setting did not make friends with host students. Students whose adjustment began in the elementary setting outside the EAL program reported different experiences. Initially, most of the elementary school-age children developed friendships outside their ethnic group. Then, in the secondary school setting, they formed closer ties with Chinese students, both foreign-born and Canadian-born, to the exclusion of others. Why this would happen is difficult to determine, though possible reasons for the change in the secondary school situation might include larger Chinese numbers in comparison to the total school population, fewer opportunities to interact with peers because of timetable and free-time restrictions and increased competition among peers. An element of cultural inversion may also provide an explanation for the change in friendships from the elementary to the secondary school environments. Students at the secondary school level may have a clearer sense of difference between their culture and the dominant culture in the school and the greater community. They choose friends whose culture is similar to their own, viewing the dominant culture as one for Canadians, effectively separating and distancing themselves from the remaining student population. A clearer understanding of why the change in friendship occurs may make it easier to find concrete means to facilitate cross-cultural student integration in the high school setting.

3. *Cross-cultural Concerns*

Sixteen students describe cross-cultural concerns 61 times throughout the transcripts (See Table 9 page 124). This issue was subsequently divided into four sub-

categories named Chinese and Canadian Cultures, Pop Culture Differences, Chinese and Canadian Families and Cross-Cultural Conflict. Fourteen students described differences

TABLE 9

Issue 3: Cross-cultural Concerns by Sub-category as Cited by 16 Students

Sub-category	Number of Students	Times Cited
Chinese and Canadian Cultures	14	26
Pop-culture Differences	10	18
Chinese and Canadian Families	8	9
Cross-cultural Conflict	8	8
Total		61

between Canadian and Chinese cultures 26 times, 10 students explain differences between the pop culture of the Chinese and Canadian teenagers 18 times, eight students describe the differences between their family and Canadian families nine times, and eight students talk specifically about cross-cultural conflict eight times.

When discussing cross-cultural concerns, students describe how their family environment either facilitates or hinders their adjustment and how personal attitude impacts on their decision to assimilate. Four students state the onus is on them; they cannot be forced to integrate and as Carole explains “there is really nothing that can be done because even if you make the policies, it will depend on people to listen” (9577 - 9578).

Carole also suggests “the culture difference is so big that sometimes it is really impossible to solve all the problems” (9920). For the most part, students view Chinese and Canadian culture through parental and societal attitudes towards their children. Students believe the Chinese culture is more traditional, more restrictive and more demanding. There is less room for tolerance of difference, less emotional support. Chinese people are busier and less friendly. Kathryn suggests the Chinese, who have a long history of traditions and beliefs, like to come to Canada because they know they do not need to leave their beliefs behind (10456 – 10458). Deirdre states that “in Chinese culture, they force their kids, they force them a lot, they push them a lot; they give them a lot of pressure to do what the parents want. In Canada, it’s what we want, it’s what the kids want” (6385 – 6387), while Beth speaks to the more traditional perspective “like familial piety. Just obedience to the family, placing the family above all. They’re just unspoken rules and morals that your parents try to hammer into you. This is the way you have to be because you are Chinese” (7874 – 7876).

Canadians are more tolerant, more emotional, and more easy-going. Beth grapples with these differences by describing Canadian culture and values as “a lot of things like, mainstream ideas. Kind of there’s the open mindedness towards everything; towards all nationalities, whatever, sexual orientation, you know. Political opinions, you know that kind of thing” (7881 – 7883), while Catherine explains the differences as “I think because they (Canadians) are so used to accepting like different cultures” (3361).

Dennis, Valerie and William each talk about the freedom Canadians experience. Teenagers are often able to choose their own activities, the courses they take and the

careers they intend to follow. With adults, this means a more equal relationship and respect earned rather than determined by position. As Dennis explains:

Chinese culture it's more like you should respect your parents because they have more power...it's more like you should respect them because they're older...and they know better whereas here it's kind of like you should respect them, because, I don't know, they're trying to help you....I guess what I am trying to say is that it feels like the teachers and students here, and the adults and children are more equal to each other, than they are in Chinese culture. (1724 – 1734)

For the most part, students seemed to accept the Canadian culture they see. John was the only student with negative comments. He suggests the “philosophy of Canadians is only to take care of themselves” (8684), while the Chinese philosophy is to support and take care of the whole group. He also suggests that Canadians are less welcoming than the Chinese are.

Students have mixed perceptions about the support their parents and families provide to help solve their adjustment issues. Common refrains include they have to work, they do not speak English, they are not here, Chinese families do not provide emotional support, they are too old, they do not care, or it is up to me. Some students talk about how they are helping their parents adjust, or that adjustment is occurring simultaneously. Charles says, “I think we are both learning. We talk, we exchange experiences, we speak more, talk about it more” (2058). Suzanne says, “actually, I feel that I am helping them instead” (2933), and Janet states “when my parents are here I have to take care of them” (12058 – 12059). And always, there is conflict between retaining traditional Chinese ways amidst living and learning in a different cultural setting. Beth

explains, "when you are Chinese you are sometimes viewed as a representative of everyone and all things Chinese....But then, at school and in most aspects of my personal life, I'm totally white. Like my values aren't very traditional, like Chinese traditional" (7863 – 7869). In this statement, Beth not only makes a distinction between what she views as her family's beliefs and Canadian beliefs, but she also states that she now identifies primarily with Canadian beliefs, the beliefs of the whites. Beth has made the ultimate distinction on the basis of race rather than culture.

Other students describe the support provided by their parents. They explain that parents provide financial support, they ask about their education, they encourage studying, and they perform normal parenting duties. One student said that his parents provided emotional support. Three students, Linda, Brenda and Kathryn, provide concrete examples of parents encouraging them to learn about Canadian ways—through community activities, holidays throughout the province, and encouragement to read English materials and watch English TV.

Students often cite differences in pop culture to show the contrast between Chinese and Canadian cultures and to explain why they have only Chinese friends. Linda defines culture as pop culture when she says, "everything. The books you read, the songs you listen to, the TV you watch, just something that's inside" (1229 - 1230). Roger, who has been in Canada since 1988, and has multi-ethnic friendships, speaks in terms of "they." He suggests "I would reach out" (324) but "they wouldn't go to dances; most of them don't go to school dances; and it's just not part of the culture; most of them just like to study, and they're not the wild type" (326 – 328). Paul and Valerie both explain that Canadian and Chinese teenagers have different areas of interest, and they like to do

different things. Don says Canadians are unable to join in conversations or participate in Chinese activities because the activities of the Chinese students are still centred on events and happenings in Hong Kong. He explains "maybe go Karaoke and listen to Chinese songs and go to Chinese restaurant. We know what happens in Hong Kong and we can share in the web site and the Internet" (12890 - 12892). Suzanne expresses this point of view somewhat differently. Canadians, "they talk about the movies here, the television shows here, songs here, but I wasn't really, I just came here, right, so I didn't know much about it, so I can't really (participate)" (2632 - 2633). Dress, clothing, accent, the way they talk and the way they spend their free time are also mentioned as differences that make interaction difficult.

Cross-cultural adjustment is difficult. For the students in this study Chinese student perceptions as well as the large Chinese population work together to hinder and at times prevent interaction between/among the student populations. Chinese students remain in social settings where they find emotional support and security. Expecting students to actively adapt to a new culture when there is no apparent need to do so is an unreasonable expectation.

Results of this study counter findings by three other researchers--Mickle (1985), Min (1995) and Shaw (1994)--who suggest that cross-cultural differences are an important adjustment issue, but not as important as in the past. Students in this study believe this issue is critical and they use cross-cultural differences to justify maintaining their home culture and customs in their host environment. The large numbers of Chinese students and families discourage cross-cultural integration. The Chinese students' environment in their country of birth is replicated in Vancouver in such a way that some

students do not see any difference between the two settings. Linda, Paul and Nick comment on the similarity between the two settings and their ability to maintain their Chinese lifestyle in Canada (See page 97).

Literature outlining the differences between the two cultures is somewhat supported by statements these students made. From their point of view, the Chinese culture is more traditional, more hierarchical and more restrictive. Unlike literature in the area emphasizing the importance the Chinese place on the family unit, however, few students in this study refer to the importance of the Chinese family unit at all. In fact, during a discussion about the differences between the Chinese and Canadian culture, Brenda states when asked "If you were to describe some differences between the Chinese culture and what you have seen about the Canadian culture, what would you say?"

I don't know. What I can think of is, if I would say a difference, all I can think of is like Canada is more of a quiet place. Vancouver, I guess I should say.

Whereas Hong Kong is more busy and it's more alive kind of thing. Like, Canadian culture is more family-oriented. I think so."

She then replies to this question "and the Chinese culture is?" "Well, we have our family but sometimes the emphasis is not always there: it could be on school, it could be on family; it could be on work. But, it's seldom like as family oriented" (Brenda, 2000, 4261 – 4274).

Brenda's statement may stem from her previous observation that Canadian culture seems less formal, less restrictive, and more tolerant. This observation is supported by Tseng & Hsu (1991) in Lee (1997) who describe the contemporary Chinese American family as a "family system...molded by economic, political, and sociocultural factors

outside the family" (p. 56). John is the only student who makes an indirect reference to the individualistic perspective described by researchers and authors when characterizing Canadian culture.

4. *Education and the School Environment*

Fourteen students described differences between the Chinese and Canadian educational experience as an adjustment issue. They describe the differences between Chinese and Canadian teachers, differences in student attitudes and the differences in the activities available for them in the school setting. They were asked about their participation in extra-curricular events and whether they were aware of the school's clubs or activities specifically designed to assist ESL and foreign students adapt to the Canadian secondary school setting.

Valerie's summation captures many of the points students discuss when looking at both education systems:

Teachers are more friendly when compared to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong you focus on studying, studying, studying. And, in Canada they have a variety of activities in classes. Like you have discussion, homework projects, presentations, and it's more interactive. But in Hong Kong it's like spoon-feeding. So, like the teacher gives you lots of materials and you have to memorize them. And, in here it gives you a chance to really understand the material and discuss with other people. (610 – 617)

Students who began their education in Canada in the elementary situation remember the craft and play times, the games, the friendliness and helpfulness of the teachers, the reduction in homework, and the decreased pressure. Teachers, in particular,

seem to have enhanced the quality of their initial experience. "Hong Kong teachers pushing me more to work harder, to think more. But, in Canada, if you can't think, the teachers help you to think" (Janet, 11566 - 11567). One student, who had been hit repeatedly in Hong Kong because she was slow in her school work and slow eating lunch during her kindergarten and grade 1 years, was particularly pleased with the school and teachers here. "When I got here, it totally changed because the teacher was willing to spend more time teaching me....So, I started learning more and I caught up" (Carole, 9975 - 9977).

Some students believe Canada's education system is better because it is more comprehensive, while others believe the Chinese system is superior. Although Kathryn was happier in school in Canada, she explains:

if it was for pure learning and if that's all I ever cared about, then the Hong Kong system would be more preferable because they teach a lot quicker...because they give you so much homework and everything drills into the mind more. If I continued there I think I would be a lot smarter than I am now. (10236 - 10240)

A majority of the students believe getting an education is both necessary and important to future success, whether in Canada or in their home country. Frank, Paul and Nicole mentioned the value of a Canadian education to their success in Hong Kong. Frank says "I think graduating from a university in Canada would be better than graduating from a university in Hong Kong. It would be easier to find a job in Hong Kong" (3722 - 3723). Paul's comment "well, if you went to Hong Kong it's different because they think English speaking is much better than Chinese" (11296 - 11297) is

supported by Nicole who states, "because I think that in Hong Kong when you are trying to find a job it is important for you to know English" (4913 - 4914).

Skipping was mentioned when comparisons were made between the two school systems. Nick, who is surprised by the number of students who skip in Canada, suggested this would not happen in his home country without severe consequences. In Canada, he believes, there is not the same pressure to attend. Paul, who admits to skipping in high school, says the consequences of skipping are minimal. "Some of my friends they skip about three weeks classes. When they come back to see the counsellor and the counsellor suspend them for a week and then they got another week holiday. That's amazing" (10968 - 10969). Paul indicates a possible explanation for skipping is this lack of consequences and the knowledge he and his friends had that there was summer school if they were not successful during the regular school year.

Students identify interpersonal relations as another important aspect of their school environment. Carole, Nick, and Roger recount incidents where other students were unfriendly or unwelcoming. Roger states "I guess kids can be cruel and we all know that" (110). Carole was particularly upset when the least friendly students were other Asians while Nick, an international student, found most students unapproachable and unfriendly. For the most part, the remaining participants in this study found students in the school approachable and friendly. At times, though, because of the composition of the school's student population, it was difficult to tell whether the friendly students were other Chinese students or members of the general student population.

Several school activities are designed to assist EAL students integrate into the larger school community. Among these are the HOSTS Club, the Volunteer Club, the

Outdoor Club, the Buddy Program, and the ROOTS Club. Students were asked about their participation in school activities because one of the school's foci is to encourage EAL participation and because existing literature points to the fact EAL students do not participate in extracurricular programs in their host environment.

Nineteen students participated in extra-curricular activities throughout their secondary school careers. These activities ranged from school athletic teams to the Library Club, the Volunteer Club, the Outdoor Club, HOSTS, the Buddy program and the school newspaper. Two students said they did not participate because they were concerned about schoolwork and academic performance.

Why students in this study participate so inclusively in the school's extra-curricular program is difficult to explain, though their participation in this study indicates that they are willing to participate in activities outside their regular routine. Today's students may have a different attitude toward participation than students in the past. Carole states "I think it's easier to get along with people (when you are) actually involved in clubs and sports" (9346 - 9347). She and John both suggest that extra-curricular activities be made a requirement for new students in order to encourage them to integrate into their new school environment. Another explanation may be the school's focus on integration and student participation. Even so, only eight of the students could specifically name any school clubs or activities designed for this purpose. A further explanation may be that students volunteering for this study might possess personal characteristics common to students who participate in school extra-curricular programs. The high student involvement may not reflect the school's focus on involving EAL students in its many school clubs and programs.

Students were concerned about their education. However, when comparing school environments, most students described the differences between the Chinese and Canadian school systems rather than specifically identifying course content, instructional techniques or testing and evaluation as important adjustment issues. Factors that may relate directly to school performance were discussed earlier under the language issue areas such as communication skills, writing skills, language comprehension, and Canadian colloquialisms.

Students also identified interpersonal relations with teachers and other students as important aspects of the total educational adjustment experience. Demands placed on them by parents concerning school performance were examined in the context of cross-cultural differences rather than issues within the school setting.

Students presented a different outlook from previous studies when they identified education as an adjustment issue. This makes it difficult to make a direct comparison to other studies pointing to the importance of the educational curriculum to student adjustment. Certainly, findings in this study support Shaw (1994), whose study identified language difficulties as critical to educational performance, and Manfield (1995), whose study suggests that students value a Canadian education. In addition, results of the current study support some of the findings of Bolton (1993), specifically the importance of the friendliness of staff to adaptation.

5. *Current Adjustment Concerns*

One of the main objectives of this study was to determine which adjustment issues continue to be important upon high school graduation. Each student was asked this question during his/her interview. In addition, subsequent to the interview, each

student was asked to identify, from a list of thirty items generated from previous studies on immigrant and sojourning adjustment, issues they considered important today (Appendix J). I expected that data collected would corroborate the issues students identified during the interview sessions.

Interview and data sheet responses, however, produced different findings. Interview responses suggest six students view language as the only continuing adjustment concern. They report continued difficulties with the English language, in communicating, and in writing. Eleven students state they no longer have any adjustment concerns. Identity issues seemed to be emerging as a concern for three students. These students describe their frustration when others could not see them as Canadian because of their Chinese background.

Results generated from the 30-item list indicate quite a different focus to current adjustment concerns for the students in this study. Students identify meeting personal expectations as their most important concern. This particular issue is important for all teenagers as they strive toward independence and adulthood. For students of this study, this issue might be accentuated because of parental conflict and/or cross-cultural concerns. As with interview results, aspects of language acquisition remain important concerns of students after leaving secondary school. Students identify family relationships and expectations as the third most important area of concern. The fourth issue, according to student responses, indicates students continue to miss family and friends who remain in their birth country. Even though they continue to experience feelings of loneliness, they view other adjustment areas such as language acquisition, peer relationships, cross-cultural concerns and education as more important adjustment

concerns. Racism and discrimination are not identified as key adjustment issues for students in this study after leaving the secondary school environment.

While I expected to see some differences between student-generated answers and list of possible adjustment issues I provided, I also expected to find greater similarities between these data collection techniques. There are several possible reasons for these discrepancies. The question of current adjustment concerns occurred toward the end of the interview where I felt students would be comfortable and in tune with the issues of their adjustment. Yet, many of these students could not identify many current adjustment concerns. They may not be aware of their current adjustment issues or they may have glossed over their concerns. They may not be able to spontaneously generate a list of their current adjustment issues. Selection from a predetermined list may assist students to identify current concerns because suggestions have been provided for them and they have the opportunity to react to the list they view.

D. Satellite and International Students

Thirteen of the twenty-three students interviewed in this study can be identified as either an international student or a satellite student. Two are international students and the other eleven, satellite. Satellite students can be further subdivided into two groups based upon whether one or both parents return to their home country. This particular detail seems to make a crucial difference to the student adjustment and adaptation process.

1. *International Students*

Both of the international students in this study began their Canadian education living with aunts in a homestay situation. Frank now lives with an English-speaking Canadian family, while Nick continues to live with his aunt and her family. Although

parents made the decision for these boys to study in Canada, both indicate they were looking forward to sojourning. Each student cites language, friendship, and education as their main adjustment concerns. They state they make contact with family members on a regular basis—for Nick, weekly and for Frank, monthly. As a result, each continues to feel supported by his family, though they are far away and cannot really help should a problem arise.

Their interview responses are often clipped, but they still create the impression that adjustment was not that difficult. Both of these students state they have no current adjustments concerns.

The majority of their friends are Chinese-speaking, they have adjusted to the Canadian education system, and their language skills are improving. Both international students suggest the Canadian education system is more comprehensive, requiring skills other than memorization. Nick says, “the system is more perfect here” (7355) because of the counselling situation in Canada and Frank states “we know more beside that, beyond the knowledge in the textbook” (3479 – 3480). Each of these students participated in the extra-curricular program, indicating the Buddy program, HOSTS, and Outdoor Clubs, activities designed for EAL students. Frank states that Canadians are friendly and welcoming, while Nick suggests Canadians need to be more friendly and welcoming.

Nick and Frank’s interviews do not support previous studies in the area of international or visa student adjustment that point to the difficulties of sojourning. Both international students suggest adjusting to Canada is not that difficult. Living in a community with a high Chinese population may have helped them with their adjustment though Nick, who is from Macau, says this made no difference because they speak a

different language, they speak Cantonese (7417 – 7418) and because “it’s not important for them to be either Canadian or Asian. They are my friends. I don’t need to classify them so specific” (7562 – 7563). John, a satellite student with a particularly difficult and painful adjustment experience, may have provided some insight and a reasonable explanation to both Nick and Frank’s positive tone when he compares the characteristics of the international student to some of the other students’ immigration experience:

I would say what is really interesting to me is that international students...come to Canada because they want to learn English. But for the landed immigrant students, I think most of them are forced to come to Canada, right. So then, if they are forced to do so, they will kind of refuse the Canadian society. (9087 – 9091)

Nick and Frank's responses support previous results in the area of international and visa student adjustment which point to difficulties with language, education and friends. However, neither of the international students in this study identified difficulties in the areas of cross-cultural concerns, mental health, and identity or self-esteem issues. Because of the small size of this subgroup, it is difficult to take these results and apply them to other studies of international students.

1. *Satellite*²⁹

There are six students in the subgroup satellite. This label identifies and separates those satellite students who have one parent in Canada from those satellite students whose parents both return to their home country. Two of the six students are female; four

²⁹ For the remainder of this study I am separating satellite students into two categories. “Satellite” denotes one parent remains in Canada while the other leaves for extended periods of time, ostensibly to work. “Full satellite” refers to the situation where both parents leave Canada for extended periods of time while their child (children) remain in Canada without parental supervision and often unsupervised.

are male. They have lived in Canada from 2.5 to 14 years. The personal circumstance of these students varies considerably. One lives primarily with grandparents and another with a mother who has remarried since immigrating. The four remaining students live with their mothers in a home environment similar to a single parent environment.

Satellite adjustment concerns are somewhat similar to the adjustment concerns of the total students interviewed though their order of importance is rearranged (See Table 10 page 140). Language is still the most critical adjustment issue and is cited 57 times by all six students. Cross-cultural concerns are the second adjustment issue of this subgroup and are cited by five students 15 times. This finding demonstrates cross-cultural concerns are more important to satellite students than peer relationships are. Five students cite peer relationships as the third most important adjustment issue seven times. While this issue remains important to this subgroup, it is cited considerably less often than the response rate generated by the total interviewee population. In the satellite subgroup three students cite education five times and three students cite mental health issues four times. Even though education and mental health issues are cited substantially less than the first three issues, they are reported by 50 percent of the subgroup. This makes them important adjustment issues, though not as important as language, cross-cultural concerns, although peer relationships. Mental health issues begin to emerge as an adjustment issue in this subgroup, though they are not critical for the entire student interview population.

TABLE 10

Key Adjustment Issues of the 6 Satellite Students Interviewed

Issue	Number of Students	Times Cited
Language	6	57
Cross-cultural Concerns	5	15
Peer Relationships	5 ^a	7
Education	3	5
Mental Health	3	4

^aNote. For one of these students, education was used as a reason for immigration, then discussed only in relation to changing secondary schools in Vancouver.

Four of these students indicate they experienced racism and discrimination and two say they have observed racism and discrimination in the school or the community.

Deirdre and Allan talk at length of the difficulties they faced during their initial adjustment period. Deirdre, who has lived in Canada for ten years, describes this period in the following way: “so I came here and I felt very lonely and isolated. I couldn’t speak any English. My Mom and I came and my Dad was actually back home making money and I had a hard time” (6036 – 6039). She continues to recount experiences with racism and discrimination, difficulties making friends, and conflicts with her mother due to cross-cultural differences. Today, she is the only student in this study without Chinese friends. She maintains her mother applies too much pressure to maintain her Chinese culture and Chinese roots. Deirdre is the student in this study who believes today’s EAL

students are really lucky because there is so much assistance available to them. She also believes EAL students should be forced to adapt to Canadian ways and to develop friendships outside the Chinese cultural group.

Allan has lived in Canada for three years. His description of the loneliness and isolation he felt is particularly moving: "it(s) just like I lost something . . . And so it's just like I have lost everything and I have to start over again" (6675 – 6683). Like Deirdre, he believes there are so many Chinese students in the school speaking Chinese that the school is a poor place to learn English. He has also felt the impact of racism and discrimination in the school from both students and teachers.

For the satellite students in this study, living in a single parent environment in Canada does not seem to have intensified the adjustment difficulties faced, though the order of their adjustment issues changed somewhat. All of the students in this group take for granted their father's trans-continental travel, referring to business concerns necessitating this travel. Without exception, father's travel was mentioned as an incidental factor during the interview process and then discussed further because of the interviewer's interest. Only Deirdre, whose parents subsequently separated and divorced, personalized this separation as a key adaptation issue. Racism and discrimination are identified as issues faced by four of the six students. Whether they are more sensitive to these issues because they have only one parent in their home environment or whether there is some other common characteristic is difficult to determine.

3. *Full Satellite*

Five of the students in this study can be identified as full satellite students. Four of these students are female. One student lives with an older sister in her aunt's home

and another with a grandmother. The others live without adult supervision. One has lived as the youngest of four siblings in a satellite arrangement since she was nine years old. The other three are the eldest in their families and have had the additional responsibilities of taking care of younger siblings while adjusting to a new culture and a new environment. In each of these situations, the younger siblings have resisted living in and adjusting to Canadian ways and have caused additional worries and problems for the eldest member in the family group. Two of these students have lived through the death of a member of their nuclear family—a father and a sister. For one, this meant living alone in Canada while her father was dying of liver disease in Hong Kong. For the other, this meant dealing with the additional problems of a sister dying in Canada of brain cancer. Two of these students have been responsible for assisting a younger sibling with learning difficulties.

Though they are not reported as frequently as language, all five full satellite students identify health and peer relationships as adjustment issues (See Table 11, page 143). Mental health issues are reported 24 times and peer relationship concerns 18 times. Language is identified by four of the five full satellite students 28 times. Education continues to be an important adjustment issue even though it was identified only four times by four students. The overriding adjustment concern of this subgroup, mental health issues, colors and affects the shape of the entire interview, making it difficult for these students to address other adjustment issues in as much depth.

TABLE 11

Key Adjustment Issues of the 5 Full Satellite Students Interviewed

Issue	Number of Students	Times Cited
Mental Health	5	24
Peer Relationships	5	18
Language	4	28
Education	4	4

^aNote. This count does not convey the significance or pervasiveness of mental health concerns as an adjustment issue. Feelings of loneliness, sadness, fear, helplessness, and depression are woven throughout four of these student's interviews. The fifth student, who has lived in this environment since she was nine, no longer talks in terms of mental health issues. She views her parents' visit as an inconvenience because she must adjust to their needs when they stay in Canada.

Language, as a key adjustment issue, is reported by full satellites in a similar response rate as reported in the entire student population of this study. Although mental health concerns are not a critical adjustment issue for the majority of the students interviewed, they are a key adjustment concern of the full satellite student. Peer relationships are the third adjustment issue for full satellites and are reported in a similar response rate to the total student interview population. Education has been included as an adjustment issue because four of the five students mentioned it.

Satellite students face similar adjustment issues as other Chinese-speaking foreign-born students, but these are amplified because of the overriding emptiness of their home environment. They speak of their loneliness, their fears and worries, and their sense of loss. They desperately miss family and friends and may seek out other Chinese students living in similar arrangements. Two of the students specifically address the difficulties of coping as teenagers, at a time when they are dealing with their own identity and developmental issues. Marie, who believes parents should be there to guide their children during their teenage years or they may end up relying on friends and making bad choices (5795 – 5799), agrees with John who struggles to explain:

I think that at the age of fourteen or fifteen, it is an important time to explore yourself in your personality...my sister, she didn't like school at all. She didn't go to school at all. So, when you are not in school, you couldn't learn many things. You couldn't establish your own personality. And then it is quite difficult for you to find your self-esteem....when I was fourteen or fifteen, I was in Hong Kong.. I had my parents over there... my siblings didn't like school, and then they didn't have their parents with them, so then they couldn't understand what was going on with them. (9132 – 9157)

Full satellite students struggle to make sense of the new school environment and the different culture, alone, while dealing with the additional loss associated when family members return to their home country. Despite this distance, these students feel the pressure to meet familial expectations and do well in school. They may reach out to other Chinese students who are often in similar situations and they feel supported because of this. Often, they keep to themselves, remaining quiet about their despair. Nicole talks

about the difficulties of maintaining friendships and remaining insular. "Well, sometimes I feel they are very close to me, but then sometimes I feel they are kind of far away from me, so I still kind of feel lonely when I am with them" (4955 – 4957) and "because people like us are very defensive and just try to be an island and cut themselves off from others" (5030 – 5032). These students indicate they are unable to seek outside help because it would be a sign of weakness on their part. Nicole suggests, "I don't like people to feel sorry for me because I think that feeling sorry for someone is just like taking their power away from them" (4619 – 4621). Nicole believes that seeking help would undermine her personal autonomy rather than assist her to cope with a very difficult situation. Two students say they have not fully adjusted to living without their parents, and that the sense of loneliness and depression does not abate.

Three of the students describe the difficulties they face when parents return to Canada. They must readjust to their parents' presence, live with different rules and regulations, and assist parents with daily living arrangements. Nicole puts up with it and personally feels "she (mother) is getting too involved in my life, but I will still answer her questions" (4708 – 4709). Janet says that when her parents are around she is limited to what she is able to do and she has less time to herself. She views her parents as an intrusion and she states, "well, now I kinda don't care about it. Because now I can tell myself to do my own things. When my parents are here I have to take care of them" (12057 – 12059). Satellite students may not look forward to this invasion in their lives, even though they are sad and lonely without parents nearby.

Students indicate the adjustment/readjustment cycle takes place even when parents talk to them by phone. Students talk to their parents anywhere from daily to once

every week or two. Marie, who talked to her parents daily explains, “so, I always have to talk to them on the phone.... Sometimes I just feel like crying. Once I hang up the phone it’s like, oh, my god, it’s so good to hear their voice on the phone. And once you hang up, reality is back” (5685 – 5691). Two of the students indicate they begged their parents to return home but were unsuccessful.

These satellite students, as well as others in the study, refer to other friends and students they know living in similar arrangements. Marie describes the living arrangements of satellite students such as herself who live with other relatives or grandparents and then comments, “they are just living with relatives and grandparents so that their basic daily life things are being taken care of.... I think it’s a cover up. It seems like you are living with your family, but you’re actually not” (5773 – 5780). Catherine would probably agree. She has been living with an aunt and she states, “but sometimes I think that my aunt doesn’t really like me and my sister” (3326 – 3327). Some describe the satellite situation matter of factly, indicating business concerns force parents to remain in Hong Kong. John suggests each person in a Chinese family has responsibilities. Children are responsible for their education and mothers are responsible for the children:

but the father it’s to earn money, right; the only purpose to earn the profits to support the family. So, then, at that time, my father went back to Hong Kong to deal with his business. My mother sometimes she stays here.... but most of the time she has to look after my father in Hong Kong. (8503 – 8507)

Beth refers to the satellite situation as one of:

successful Asian parents who are in some type of business. It's just they think that, I think the intentions are good and they're there, but it's just not the way to have it. Because they think by sending the kids here to have a better education... but leaving the kids alone, because the parents can't be here, because they have their careers over there. So, they think by leaving the kids alone with enough money or whatever that they would solve everything, but really there's no support for the kids. I mean you're like a teenager living on your own in a foreign country. (7995 – 8003)

Deirdre, who has distanced herself from the satellite situation since her parent's divorce, claims all of her mother's friends have children living under full satellite conditions. She speaks strongly and negatively of this phenomenon:

because money is very important. Money is everything. And they want their kids to be happy and to have a good life. That's what they think. They think that happiness is, well, this is from my point of view and my family's point of view, they think that money is happiness; you can buy happiness. So, they think that working, sending money to the kids will bring them happiness, instead of being there with the kids (6557 – 6563).

Four of the students in this subgroup intend to leave Canada once their education is complete. They have never really felt part of Canada, even though they suggest Canadians are friendly and welcoming. Nicole, who has lived in Canada for seven years comments, "well, I never felt that I belonged here and I never had the feeling of home

being here” (4788 – 4789). They remain in crisis, adults before their time, youth without a youth, burdened by responsibilities normally reserved for the adult population.

E. Racism and Discrimination

Students were asked questions concerning racism and discrimination in order to determine the impact of this issue in their lives. Six students made reference to experiences with racism and prejudice prior to specific interviewer questions in this area. When asked, ten students stated they had personally experienced discrimination or racism in some way while eleven felt they had not. Two students presented both positions at different times throughout their interviews. Five students commented specifically about the negative and sometimes hostile attitudes within the Chinese community, primarily between newcomers and the Chinese who had lived in Canada for a longer period of time. When asked whether they had observed incidents of racism or discrimination, five students indicated yes. Several students mentioned they had learned about incidents involving racism when talking to friends or as hearsay. Allan’s comments recount an incident he heard about. “Some of the students, like some of my friends, they told me their teacher, well he doesn’t like Chinese, he always punish Chinese people. He is very mad at some Chinese people. But I didn’t experience that. I heard something about that” (6984 – 6988).

Some students minimize the racist attitudes and behaviors that exist in the many daily interactions occurring within the school and teenage student population unless the interactions are heightened somewhat through the intensity of the interaction. They couch their statements with comments such as “not really” (Valerie, 599; Linda, 923), “not that much” (William, 2385), “no, I’m lucky I guess” (Suzanne, 2725), and “not a huge issue” (Roger, 222). Brian suggests:

I guess that racism does exist. It might not be evident in (school name) because the Chinese-speaking group of students forms part of the largest cultural group... so, because Chinese students are part of the majority in this school, I think other races might tend to, might not express racism that evidently. (12372 – 12376)

Other students refer to the prejudice they have encountered. “They’re kind of prejudicial” (Dennis, 1425), “in elementary school there were racist names” (Deirdre, 6278), “every now and then you have little, weird encounters” (Beth, 7844 – 7845), and “there was a lot of racism during that time, even with Chinese people” (Carole, 9250 – 9251).

Racial slurs are used between friends “in jest” or to express frustration or anger when interacting with one another. In this context, students do not equate these statements as racist, though they realize this type of name-calling is inappropriate. William, who later suggests there has always been some racism, describes interactions with his friends, “when you’re mad at them or he’s mad at you, it’s harsh (to) make fun of your” (2389 - 2390) friends using ethnic slurs in name calling situations. Racial names like “Hongers”, “Chinks”, “CBC” or “Bananas”³⁰ are used by Chinese and Canadian students toward other students in the school to identify, categorize, antagonize and/or slight the Chinese population in the school. These labels are used randomly, serving to vent the feelings of the speaker.

Analyzing the impact of racism and discrimination on student lives is a complex and difficult undertaking. Students describe situations in the school that have made them feel uncomfortable, wondering whether they are based on discrimination. One such example is an interaction with a teacher who says, “oh, you are an ESL student. I thought you were born in Canada” (8394 – 8395). Other students consider as examples of racism and discrimination

³⁰ Banana is a slang term to describe Chinese students who think and behave like Caucasian students. Hence, yellow on the outside and white on the inside.

trying to make students speak English in the classroom, requesting a student repeat a question or an answer because the original question/response could not be understood, and pointing out situations of cheating when they involve Chinese students only.

In the larger community, discriminatory behaviors revolve around service students and their families receive in stores or restaurants. Students claim English speaking customers receive prompt and friendlier service, while service to the Chinese is only satisfactory. Sales and restaurant personnel do not speak in a conversational, but a more businesslike manner to Chinese patrons. Some students indicate they feel ignored or passed over for service to other Caucasian customers and believe this poor service is due to their Chinese background.

The school environment is viewed by most of the students as a welcoming space, basically free of racism. Yet, interactions among students, and between students and teachers or teachers and students might indicate otherwise. Deirdre, Dennis and Carole recall situations in elementary school they feel were racially motivated. Brenda, in particular, was the target of vicious attacks, started originally by another Chinese student. Eventually, she ate lunch with her teachers. She remembers this experience and the teacher ineffectiveness in helping her “but, there was a lot of racism during that time, even with Chinese people” (9252 – 9254). She justifies teacher ineptness with “they (teachers) were really friendly, but they couldn’t, I guess it was a new issue so they didn’t know how to handle it. So, they just kind of let it go” (9267 – 9269). Carole then continues to explain that it was very different ten years ago; today “it’s all right to be different” (9338).

Dennis refers to the segregation that occurs in the secondary school between the EAL students and the regular students, and among the regular students in the school, divided along

ethnicity lines. Dennis suggests one can “feel the segregation...you can see it anyways in the hallways...other Chinese kids who are, like you know, students, in one corner, with other people” (1499 – 1502). Kathryn says that the Chinese groups in the school do not mix because they just do not get along and everyone knows it (10442 – 10445), while Marie and Beth suggest these separate groups or cliques are based on friendship patterns. “(T)here is so much insecurity going on in high school, that everyone likes to stick to their own cliques” (Beth, 7827 – 7828). And again, because of the high Chinese student population, it is possible to have many Chinese groups based on country of origin rather than divided by animosity or misunderstanding between/among the Chinese, Caucasian, and other students in the school.

Some of the students in this study have also experienced blatant examples of racism in the school system, at university, and in the community. While students try to brush off the impact of these experiences, they have a long lasting effect, coloring attitudes towards people outside the Chinese community and towards Canada as well. Brenda and Don recall the most blatant school examples. Don, whose education in Canada began at a nearby secondary school, recounts the statement of one of his teachers there: “you guys, you Hong Kong guys, if you want to fight, go back to Hong Kong” (13068 – 13069). Charles, who is now attending a nearby college, remembers a derogatory statement his English instructor made to the class concerning the immigration of large numbers of Asians, the amount of space they now occupy in Canada, and the problems this creates (2099 – 2105). Beth, who refers to prejudice and racism throughout her interview, describes the larger community’s racist feelings in an incident involving her grandparents shortly after Canada accepted two boat loads of Asian refugees in the spring of 1999. Public sentiment did not seem to support this government decision. This is a

particularly poignant quotation because it captures the the anger and resentment of a number of Canadians during that time:

this Cauacasian lady who looked at my grandfather and he was kind of scratching his head. And she kind of said to herself, but loud enough so others could hear...“oh, that must be from all the unsanitary conditions while you were in the boat, heh”. I just froze. I don’t know I felt like confronting her, but I didn’t. (7913 - 7918)

Students seem to be particularly upset when the discriminatory attitudes or behaviors originate from other Chinese people. Roger says, “I have been bullied by, you know, by elder people who are Oriental” (233), and Beth comments “it’s really interesting how immigrants, or older immigrants who have already come here, how they see the really ‘fresh off the boat’ immigrants. Because, sometimes there’s a lot of hostility. You know, which is really hypocritical, because I mean, we’re all immigrants” (8148 – 8150). This friction is also played out in the school environment between the Chinese students.

Students are not yet able to grasp the complexity of both the cultural identity of being Chinese, and the assimilation/integration issue that slowly changes fellow nationals from “us” to “they.” This is evidenced not only by experiences these students encounter in the school and the community, but also by student transcripts where interviewees talk in terms of “they.” In using descriptors such as “they” or “them” students indicate they have either consciously or unconsciously distanced themselves from other Chinese students whose attitudes and behaviors are different from theirs. These references may also indicate a changing identity, one of cultural transition.

A few students provide explanations for the negativity toward the Chinese people. Linda and Suzanne state that Chinese are noisy and loud, and that Chinese students are sometimes rude

because they make no attempt to speak English. Valerie, who did not expect to encounter any discrimination or racism because she had heard Canada was a multicultural country, states, “but sometimes there may be cases where people doesn’t like Chinese. In Hong Kong, we don’t like people from other countries, too” (599 – 601). Catherine supports Valerie when she says, “I also find that sometimes some Chinese they don’t, they are not really too nice....I think because they are not used to accepting different cultures” (3352 – 3361). Beth, when referring to her own family says:

like my relatives and stuff, I don’t know if you would call it reverse racism. They’re a lot more closed-minded. I mean, everything. Well, from my family it’s less against...but kind of stereotypical views of Caucasians and there’s also a lot going on between other minority groups you know. Like other minority groups often have negative labels. (7884 – 7896)

These statements indicate racist attitudes are present throughout the entire population and are not reserved for the dominant culture in the school or in the community.

The experiences of these students support Stanley (1991), who suggests that racism is not a marginal phenomenon, but is embedded within the fabric of Canadian society. We would expect the school, as a major institution of socialization, to reproduce racist attitudes and beliefs without consciously attempting to do so. Evidence gathered from student transcripts suggests racist attitudes and behaviors are common day occurrences both in the school and in the greater community. These attitudes and behaviors are found within the total school population—from the Caucasian population to the Chinese and other minority populations and from the Chinese to the Caucasian and other school immigrant groups. The large Chinese student population is able to buffer the impact of discriminatory or racist behaviors somewhat because students live within

the framework of their cultural group as a subgroup within the larger society. Students accept and minimize the everyday exchanges and behaviors, often not attributing them to racism or discrimination. These exchanges are part of their reality.

F. Canada, Multicultural Policy and the Chinese Student

1. *Cultural Pluralism*

During the interview process, ten students spoke about Canada's immigration policy and made reference to aspects of Canadian multiculturalism including its reputation as a multicultural country. Marie's "I think it's important since Canada is a multicultural country if you know, you get to know other cultures. You are not stuck in your little circle" (5973 - 5974) and Valerie's "I heard that Canada is a multicultural country" (599) are examples of student statements acknowledging Canada's multicultural reputation.

Students used the term cultural pluralism in their explanations. As a result, a question concerning cultural pluralism became part of the interviewer's questions. The interviewer gave a brief description of this term to students who had not heard it before. Even though students could not always put a name to the concept, they were aware of its basic premises and used its precepts when describing Canada's multicultural policy. Charles struggles with a definition of cultural pluralism before saying, "I think, in Canada, this term means a mosaic that you can, some people, some ethnic groups can get together and exchange experiences" (2116 - 2117).

Some students knew Canada encouraged its immigrant populations to continue practicing their cultural customs and beliefs in Canada; a few thought old beliefs should be left with home countries; others felt it was too difficult to disregard traditions. These

students stated it would be difficult to live in a country where they would be forced to forget or ignore their heritage:

It's very hard for us to forget all the customs, all the culture, and that is good for the government to encourage the multicultural. Especially if they allow us to celebrate our Chinese New Year. People will be happy with that because they are not forcing us to learn a new thing and forget what we are. (Allan, 7047 – 7050)

Students indicated a range of perspectives as they reflect on their perception of the positive and negative aspects of Canada's multicultural policy. Most students support the concept of cultural pluralism. Carole, Deirdre and Kathryn are some of these students who believe it is possible to maintain one's cultural beliefs and practices and develop an allegiance to Canada. On the other hand John and Don present a different point of view. In the following statement John seems able to separate the policy's benefits to him as an individual from the possible benefits or detriments to Canada as a nation. "For me, I personally think...that is a good idea, but technically, I don't think this kind of policy can help this country" (9079 – 9081). Beth is supportive of Allan's position. She believes that strictly maintaining one's own culture is "kind of over the line" (12013).

2. *Why Immigrate? Why Canada?*

Students in this study indicate four main reasons for their family's decision to emigrate. Several students stated that it was their father's or their parents' decision to move. For them, no further explanation was necessary. The three remaining reasons students give are education, the transition to Chinese rule over Hong Kong in 1997, and a search for a better life.

Twelve students use education as either the main reason or one of the main reasons for their family's immigration decision. Students expanded on their definition of education throughout their interviews. They talk about the importance a Canadian education would mean to their parents and to their future careers. These students suggest there is greater opportunity for post secondary education in Canada, that a Canadian education is valued in Hong Kong, and that developing English skills will help them find a more lucrative job in their home country.

Six students cite their parents' fear of a Communist takeover of Hong Kong and the resulting impact on Hong Kong's business concerns as the reason prompting their family's immigration decision. Deirdre explains, "my Mom told me that we came to Canada because of China taking Hong Kong back. And they're fearing that in Communism we won't do well. Money problems and all that. And they think it will be better for me" (6105 – 6107). John's explanation expands into the political aspects of 1997 and his parent's decision:

Hong Kong must be independent to China. And then my parents were afraid....about 20 or 30 years ago, the political situation in China was very unstable. And at that time hunger and killing happened....my parents were born at that kind of period. So then they were afraid of what might happen if Hong Kong returned to China in 1997. (8227 – 8231)

Five students cited a "better life" as the reason for their family's immigration decision. These students did not elaborate, believing the term to have a universal definition. In addition, both international students chose Canada because of its education system.

Throughout the interviews, students referred to Canada's reputation as a multicultural country when discussing their family's decision to emigrate here.

3. *Student Identity*

Students were asked to define themselves based on categories of Chinese, Canadian, Chinese-Canadian or Canadian Chinese. Six students define themselves as Chinese and eight defined themselves as Chinese-Canadian. Two students identified as Canadian-Chinese, two as Hong Kongese³¹, two as Asian, and two gave no response. One student suggested she was "in limbo."

Some students found this question a difficult one to answer. Beth's statement captures the complexity of this issue as she examines her own position:

It depends how people ask me. Some people ask me "what is your nationality" when what they really want to know is what is your ethnicity. And, so if people are wondering what my ethnicity is I say, "OK, I'm Chinese." Right. But, if someone is asking my nationality, I automatically say "Canadian" because I have been here so long, I'm a Canadian citizen. But, I guess, on paper I would call myself Chinese-Canadian. (8022 – 8028)

Others suggest ethnicity is not an issue in Canada because Canada is a multicultural country where all cultures are accepted. They believe the ability to maintain and practice one's culture is a positive aspect of living in Canada. Still others, Canadian citizens, identify themselves as Chinese because they were not Canadian-born and because they still did not know enough about Canada and the Canadian culture to view themselves as Canadians.

³¹ "Hong Kongese" is a student-generated term. These students, both males, could not identify with being Chinese because they were from Hong Kong and because they had such negative feelings toward Mainland China.

Carole, Don, and Janet are three students for whom citizenship is not a big deal. It's just a piece of paper; the means by which they can travel freely between their home country and their host country. Don says, "I don't think it's a big deal for me. It's just a certificate, something like that. Just a card to say you're Canadian citizenship. It doesn't change anything" (13147 – 13148) and Janet would add "nothing special....Just to stay here. I can come to Canada without having the Visa and I can stay for a long time. And also, I can go back to Hong Kong" (11870 – 11872). Two other students are looking forward to becoming Canadians, and another, who only recently received his citizenship papers, is pleased with this status.

There does not seem to be any relationship in student answers between the number of years they have lived in Canada and their identity issues. Students who are most effusive about Canada have lived here 2 years and 5 years respectively. Instead, student attitudes toward the immigration process, their personal experiences, and their desire to integrate/assimilate drives their connection to their host country.

4. *Assimilation and Integration*

Eight students discuss the assimilation and integration issue. Each of these students, to varying degrees, indicates they believe the onus is on them to adapt, to make changes, and to adjust to the new culture. "It's just, I mean you have to adapt somewhat" (Linda, 1278), "it just occurred to me that oh I moved and I had to adapt from there" (Carole, 9209), and "because, if I want to stay in Canada, I should" are samples of this student perspective. Students also suggest they have a choice in the integration process. "(I)t all depends on the person....it's all his choice" (Allan, 6911 - 6913), "I think adjusting has more to do with wants initiative to adjust" (Brian, 12507), and "there is

nothing that can be done because even if you make the policies, it will depend on people to listen to it" (Carole, 9577 – 9578) are samples of statements students in this study have made that indicate these students believe they are able to choose whether to become part of the Canadian culture or remain within the Chinese culture.

Beth, Carole and Dennis are upset because they are unable to read or write Chinese and they feel this loss keenly. Beth and Marie are frustrated when others see only their ethnicity, their Chinese background, and do not see their Canadian side. As Marie states, "it's just, well, when a person has never talked to you before and they see you as a Chinese. Whether you speak English or not. Whether your heart is fully Canadian" (5509 – 5512). When asked to define "Canadian" Brenda is one of the students who laughs and says, "blond hair. I don't know how to say it in a better way" (4189). One student feels she is in limbo, without an identity, because she no longer feels she belongs in either group. She explains:

I think sometimes I don't know what category I go into. People ask me "are you Canadian" or (pause) I think that's a main concern because I would say I don't know. Because I can't say I am Taiwanese because I don't read and write Chinese. I can't say I'm Canadian because I don't think Canadian. (9384 – 9386).

Another student, who defines himself as Chinese, uses an amazing metaphor to describe his changing identity: "I am just like a boat between Hong Kong and Vancouver. I left Hong Kong, but I've not yet arrived in Vancouver. I feel, yeah, that's my feeling" (Charles, 1925 – 1926). This metaphor may be appropriate for other students in this study.

Students often do not see they are adapting until they return to their home country for a visit. Janet, who recently visited Hong Kong says, "...people are faster there and I feel I'm slow. Like, it's kinda, I'm in a different culture now" (11888 – 11889). John, who has just returned from a trip to Hong Kong, recognizes, "...the way we are living in Canada is so totally different....you have changed your life in Canada. And that's quite difficult for you to go back to Hong Kong or Taiwan" (9117 – 9120). Later on, John, who defines himself as Asian, shows his growing affiliation with Canada in this quote: "...so, then when I watch TV and I see the Canadian team win the championship, right, I feel that's good, that's good for them, that's good for us. I feel proud. We are kind of like, the Canadian team is a kind of proud to us" (8820 – 8824).

Each of the Chinese students in this study falls along a continuum when they are viewed from their integration into Canadian culture--from Nicole, a Canadian and a satellite student who has lived in Canada for seven years who says she has never felt at home in Canada or that she belonged--to Kathryn, a Canadian who has lived in Canada for eleven years and says, "right now, it feels like I was born here and I have been here forever, because I have been here so long. Nobody comes up to me to pick on me or anything" (10174 – 10175). Their attitudes, their immigration experience, and the length of stay in Canada all impact and contribute to their desire to assimilate and their place along the continuum.

4. *Home at Last*

The majority of the students in this study intend to return to their home countries once they have completed their education. Other students, who appear to have adapted more completely to the Canadian lifestyle, plan to make Canada their home. The

decision to stay in Canada or to leave seems to be based upon the student's initial status and home environment upon immigration and their current attitude toward assimilation and integration into Canadian society. Students who immigrated to Canada with families who also settled in Canada intend to remain in Canada. Students who immigrated to Canada and whose parent(s) remained in or returned to their homeland, intend to return to their home country. The majority of students designated as satellite, whether satellite or full satellite, fully intend to return to their home country once their education is complete. Chinese students with parents who remain in Canada have characteristics similar to voluntary minorities while any satellite and full satellite students maintain migrant or involuntary minority attributes.

Allan, Don, and Brian, whose fathers continue to work in Hong Kong, use their father's business dealings as the reason why they will probably return to Hong Kong. Allan and Frank also cite Canada's poor economy and high taxation rates as reasons why Canada is not a good place to live. Three students say they will stay if they can find a job. For Catherine, Janet, John and Nicole, the difficulties adjusting to a new culture when families remain in Hong Kong take priority over any benefits that may result from remaining in Canada. They do not feel a connection to their host country. Their identities are in conflict and their focus remains with family members living at home.

Findings in this study support previous literature and findings such as Chapman, 1969, Shen and Mo, (1990), Tucker, (1972) who found the importance of an education, 1997, and a better life reasons families immigrate. Ericson (1968), Mansfield (1995), Mickle (1979), Tajfel (1978), and Xue (1995) have cited the importance of identity formation and self-esteem issues to foreign student adjustment in studies. These issues

are somewhat supported in this study especially in the satellite and full satellite population.

G. Suggestions for Improving Initial Adjustment

Eighteen students provided ideas or suggestions for improving their initial adjustment period in Canada and Canadian schools. The most important of these involved developing ways to integrate the EAL student with the regular student population and thereby accelerate the friendship making process. Eleven students made suggestions ranging from hold an assembly the first week of school to welcome new students, encourage regular students to make friends with EAL students, provide programs where the EAL and regular students are forced to mix, require EAL students to join clubs or sports activities, find ways to encourage and promote cross-cultural friendships and develop strategies to make students see the importance of learning English, to cancel the EAL program. Yet another student suggested it was not possible to improve the adjustment period because the onus is on the EAL student to adjust. Programs in place are only effective when the EAL student is willing to take advantage of them.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Overview

Five objectives were of concern in this study. The main objective was to determine the adjustment issues of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in a secondary school environment where they form the largest cultural group and to determine whether this attribute was critical to their adjustment process. A second objective was to identify the adjustment concerns of international and satellite students as sub-groups within this large cultural group. Would their adjustment issues be similar to or different from other Chinese-speaking foreign-born students? Though the satellite situation is not new, there is little, if any documented data involving this phenomenon. Another objective was to investigate the issues of racism and discrimination within this target population to determine whether it existed and what shape or form it took. A further objective of this study was to examine Canada's multicultural policy through the eyes of this target population to determine both their understanding and assessment of this policy. And as a final objective, this study intended to identify those adjustment issues that continue to be important subsequent to high school completion. Educators and other interested personnel can then develop policies and programs with a focus toward addressing the issue(s) students living the experience identify as most critical.

B. Review of Methodology

I selected the ethnographic interview as my main investigative tool because of its focus on recounting the adjustment experience through the eyes of the students interviewed. In addition, this qualitative methodology presents the interviewer's position, so that findings may be evaluated with this lens in mind.

All Chinese-speaking foreign-born students who were members of the graduating class of 1999 in a single secondary school site were chosen as the target population for this study. One hundred thirty-four students met this requirement. These students formed the largest cultural group in the school.

Students were notified by mail and contacted after they indicated an interest in taking part in the study. With the first mailing 18 students agreed to participate. Five more agreed to participate after receiving a reminder notice. Although students were given a choice of venue; all interviews took place in my classroom over a four-week period. Students were given clear instructions concerning the importance of confidentiality to this study, and then asked to sign permission forms. Interviews lasted from forty minutes to two hours depending upon the interviewee, the time of day, the personality of the interviewee, the willingness to divulge information, and the interviewer-interviewee match. After the interview, students were asked to complete a general information sheet. Initially, the purpose of this sheet was to gather biographical information and to corroborate findings from student interviews in the areas of racism and discrimination, initial adjustment concerns and current adjustment concerns. The only information used was the biographical data and the answers from the question on current adjustment concerns.

Interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. This process took anywhere from two hours to five hours per interview depending upon the length of the interview, the tone of the interviewee, and the interviewee accent. Each student received a transcript of their interview with an accompanying letter thanking them for participating. Students were encouraged to read their transcript, to make any changes where necessary, and to return completed transcripts within one or two weeks of receiving the completed draft. Three students

returned transcripts with minor editing corrections and a fourth sent an additional page of reflections via e-mail.

Once interviews were completed and transcribed, transcripts were read in order to gain an overall impression of the transcript content before analyzing the content. Issues and themes emerged and expanded with each reading. Transcripts were subsequently catalogued into eighty-two categories from which fourteen areas were generated and data analyzed. These areas were Agency, Chinese Population Concerns, Comparing Education Systems, Cultural Considerations, Current Adjustment Issues, EAL Program, Facilitating and Hindering Issues, Friendships/Peer Relationships, Initial Observations and Concerns, Language Acquisition, Mental Health Issues, Multicultural and Assimilation Issues, Racism and Discrimination, Satellite and International Students.

C. Findings

This study produced a number of findings based on the target population as well as the specific objectives as outlined below.

OBJECTIVE 1: to determine initial adjustment factors of students who are Chinese-speaking foreign-born in a social climate where they form the largest school cultural group

In order to examine and then analyze results in relation to this first objective I identified two different sets of data from the transcripts. The first set of findings pertains directly to the size of the target population as the largest cultural group in the secondary school. The second set of data examines adjustment issues of this target population that do not pertain as directly to their numbers in the secondary school environment.

The large number of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students in the secondary school site impacted on a number of adjustment issues. Students acted with some agency when they consciously chose behaviors in conflict with the areas they identify as critical to their adjustment.

An example of this might be speaking English only in school classrooms when they cite language as the most critical adjustment factor. Other issues that emerged were peer relations, assimilation and integration issues, and the perceived benefits/drawbacks of the school's EAL program.

While students understand the importance of these four areas to their adjustment in Canada, they often choose the easier route, to remain within their cultural group, rather than make the effort they say is necessary for adjustment in the host culture. This is made possible because of their large numbers and the comfort and security provided them within their Chinese culture. The insecurity and risks associated with reaching out prevent students from more actively integrating into the host culture. Maintenance of Chinese friendships is easier because of the large numbers of Chinese students in the school and because Chinese people form the majority in their community. Students did not choose to face the difficulties associated with learning a new language and developing new friendships outside the Chinese culture. Although language acquisition is viewed as the most important adjustment issue, the majority of the students spoke English only at school in the classrooms. Even in classrooms, students say they continue to speak Chinese. Outside the classroom students continue to use their mother tongue. English is often not needed outside the classroom. Both friends and family members often discourage speaking English. Students in this study see the advantages of assimilating or integrating into the Canadian culture and often speak of their responsibility to do so, but their large numbers make it not only possible for them to live in Canada without having to consciously change, but there is a sense of security in remaining with their Chinese co-nationals. Though students often talk about the conflict they experience and are able to articulate this problem, they

do not take steps they believe necessary for their successful adaptation into the new culture. For many there is a sense of resignation associated with this decision.

The EAL program is seen as having benefits and drawbacks. While it helps students with English language skill development, it is also seen as slowing down academic progress. Students rail against the EAL label, viewing the label negatively. They believe this label effectively separates them from the regular student population for their entire Canadian secondary school education. Because of the high proportion of Chinese foreign-born students in the EAL program and because of the segregating feature of this program in the school, friendships formed here serve to maintain cultural ties and subsequently isolate rather than integrate students into the regular student population. Students in the EAL program have no need to reach out to form friendships either during the initial adjustment period or when fully integrated into the regular program. Students recognize the need for a place to learn English, but feel the EAL program's drawbacks outweigh its benefits.

The second set of issues identified as adjustment issues are ones pertinent to students in this study, but are not necessarily related to their large numbers in the secondary school setting. The four issues identified are language acquisition, peer relations, cross-cultural concerns and Canada's education system and the school environment. A fifth issue identified mental health as an area of concern in the satellite subgroup and as a result is discussed within that objective. Each of the issues identified as key adjustment areas in this study is identified in other study of foreign student and sojourner adjustment.

Language acquisition was identified as the main adjustment concern by 22 of 23 students and was cited 156 times. Within this area, students identified learning English as a problem generally, as difficulty in communicating with others, as problems in writing, and as difficulty

understanding Canadian colloquialisms. No consensus emerged on the means to develop English skills. Solutions include forcing students to speak English and cutting out the EAL program. Other students suggest, with time, they would eventually learn English. Still others state that some Chinese students will not learn English because they do not want to immigrate, have no intention of staying in Canada, and are simply waiting for the opportunity to return home.

Results of this work support previous studies by Bolton, (1993), Hartung (1993), Mansfield (1995), and Shaw (1994) who determined that language was a critical adjustment issue for immigrant and sojourning students. This study also supports the work of Crano (1986), Klineberg and Hull (1979), Popadiuk (1998), Sharma (1971a) and Wang (1994) whose studies on international students also found language to be a key adjustment issue.

The importance of peer relationships was identified as the second most important adjustment issue of the students in this study. Twenty students cited this issue 54 times. Students talked about missing friends and the difficulty of making friends in Canada. Friends were often considered more important to the adjustment process than family members were. Students who began their schooling in the elementary situation were more likely to develop friendships outside their cultural group. Aspects of cultural inversion may provide some explanation for the change in the character of the friendships from the elementary to the secondary school level as well as the difficulty in forming friendships outside the cultural group at the secondary school. At the secondary school level students would have a much clearer sense of self as well as the differences between their culture and the dominant culture. They may view the dominant culture as one for Canadians, and retain their culture as one for the Chinese.

For 22 of these students, current friendships are primarily other Chinese students, though they may be either Chinese foreign-born or Canadian-born. Developing friendships with Canadians outside the Chinese culture is important because of the assistance they might provide for adjustment purposes. They see this happening once they finish their education and begin working. In the meantime, they maintain relationships primarily with other Chinese-speaking students.

Results of this study add support to several previous studies citing peer relationships as a critical adjustment issue. Among these are: Bolton, 1993; Crano, 1986; Duthie, 1987; Hartung, 1983; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Klein, 1971; Kring, 1985; Mansfield, 1995; Mickle, 1985; Molla, 1989; Popadiuk, 1998. This study also adds weight to Duthie (1987) and Mickle (1985), who suggest most students stay within their cultural group because it provides security and support and to Kring (1985) who showed that forming friendships with one's co-nationals impedes language development and adjustment into the new culture. As with Mansfield (1998), this study suggests that some students actively resist forming friendships outside their cultural group and actively resist adapting to their host culture.

Cross-cultural concerns were identified as the third adjustment issue for the students in this study. They were cited by 16 students 61 times throughout student interviews. Included in this category is a comparison of Chinese and Canadian cultures, a comparison between Chinese and Canadian families, differences in pop cultural activities, and examples of cross-cultural conflict. Students describe differences in culture through the expectations placed upon them by their parents and compare this to the expectations Canadian parents place on their children. Chinese students in this study believe they have more pressure and higher expectations placed on them by their culture and their parents. They also say they have less freedom. They cite

differences in activities Canadian and Chinese teenagers enjoy as reasons for maintaining their Chinese friendships. And they talk about the conflicts that occur with parents in part due to their age and also due to their adjusting to Canadian culture.

Results of this study counter findings by Mickle (1985), Min (1995), and Shaw (1994) who found that cross-cultural concerns were not as critical an adjustment concern as in early studies on adjustment. Students in this target population believe cross-cultural concerns are a critical adjustment issue and suggest cross-cultural differences as reasons why they maintain their home culture and customs in their new environment.

Fourteen students identified education and the school environment as an important adjustment area. Students in this study compare the Chinese and Canadian education systems when explaining this adjustment issue. The Chinese system was viewed as more strict was based on memory and regurgitation, and involved much more homework. Canada's education system was viewed as more comprehensive, developing skills in a number of areas such as presentations, homework projects, and class discussion rather than memorization. Teachers were also viewed as being more friendly and helpful. Some students viewed the Chinese education system favorably while others, the Canadian system.

These results are difficult to compare with other studies of a similar focus because students in this study identified aspects other than curriculum content when discussing their concerns about education and the school environment. This study supports Mansfield (1998) who found that students value a Canadian education, Shaw (1994) who found language ability relates to academic performance, and Bolton (1993) who suggests teachers are friendlier in Canada and this facilitates adjustment.

In this study, relationships with other students were also identified as part of the school environment. For the most part, students are seen as friendly even though there is not much integration within the student population. There seems to be segregation between EAL students and regular students. There is also segregation by ethnicity among the regular student population. Some students indicate that within the Chinese student population, students form friendships based on their home country, indicating that segregation occurs within the Chinese student population as well as between the Chinese immigrants and the dominant school cultural population.

Nineteen students participated in the school's extra-curricular activities, from school teams and clubs such as the Library Club and the school newspaper, to clubs specifically designed for the EAL student. This finding does not support other studies that claim foreign students do not participate in school activities. However, at the school in question, there is an emphasis on creating integration opportunities between the EAL student and the other students. This high participation rate may reflect this school focus or may reflect the characteristics of students who elect to participate in studies such as this one.

OBJECTIVE 2: to determine adjustment issues of satellite and international secondary school students as sub-groups within the Chinese cultural context to determine whether their needs are substantially different from other students in this study.

Thirteen of the students in this study were identified as either international or satellite students. The sub-category, satellite student, was further sub-divided into "satellite" and "full satellite" depending upon whether one or both parents returned to their home country because this factor seemed to be critical to their adjustment issues.

There were two international students in this study. Both international students cite language, friendship and education as their main adjustment issues. They feel the Canadian

education system is more comprehensive than the Chinese education system. Each of these students participated in extra-curricular school activities identified in the school as specific to EAL students. They continued to feel supported by family even though family members remain in their home countries. Racism and discrimination was not an issue for them. Responses by these students do not fully support previous study on international students because these students do not indicate adjustment difficulties with cross cultural issues, mental health issues, or self esteem and identity issues. These students report no current adjustment concerns and do not see the large Chinese population as particularly assisting them with their adjustment.

Because there were only two students in this category, it is difficult to make generalizations in relation to adjustment issues of a larger international secondary school population or to analyze the impact of the large Chinese numbers on their adjustment in the school system or to their host country. However, both of the international students of this study would add support to Popadiuk (1998), who found peer and teacher relations important adjustment concerns for the students in her study.

Six students in this study were identified as satellite students, a category generated to indicate students with one parent remaining in Canada. Their main adjustment issues are language acquisition, cross-cultural concerns and peer relationships. Mental health issues are raised more often than in the total student population, especially issues related to loneliness and the difficulty of making friends. Racism and discrimination is an issue though it is viewed as a periphery issue. Students talk about their father's travel and business practices matter of factly, but as incidental to their adjustment. One interview is insufficient to understand the impact of a single parent home to student adjustment, though from the interviews in this study, living with one parent is considerable better than living without parental support.

Five students in this study were identified as full satellites, to indicate both parents returned to their home country, leaving children unsupervised for extended periods of time. These students live in varying arrangements from staying with an aunt or a grandmother, to living with other siblings. Full satellite student adjustment is definitely affected by home living arrangements and lack of parental supervision. Loneliness, depression, a sense of isolation, and despair permeate these interviews. Three of these students are eldest siblings, left with the care and responsibility of younger siblings. Two have faced deaths in their nuclear family, and have coped with this trauma in addition to those issues they identify as critical to their adjustment in Canada. The main adjustment issues they identify are language acquisition, mental health, peer relationships, and education.

Even though language acquisition is cited most frequently, mental health issues are the most important adjustment concern. They may not be mentioned as frequently, but the importance of this area affects the shape of the interview and the subsequent questions asked. Once the home situation has been exposed, students begin to open up and eventually speak frankly about this situation. Sadness, loneliness, despair, isolation and depression hang in the air throughout the interview. These students are living in pain, suffering from varying degrees of depression and mental health disorders. They are unable to connect easily with adult figures from their host country and are afraid to expose themselves or their circumstances to others. They are coping the best they can in isolation because they feel disempowered when they cannot handle their difficulties themselves or because their culture does not support seeking help for mental health issues. Depending upon their personality and their experiences, these students show their pain in a variety of ways. Among these are an initial hesitancy to expose themselves, a tightness in their body language, the curtness of some student's responses, the lengthly

explanation of other student's responses, their insights, and their justification or rationalization of their living arrangement. They are bound by parental and cultural expectations and, at least, for the full satellite students in this study, they are working hard to meet them. In addition, John suggests the Chinese do not reach out or trust others easily, even though he feels Canada has provided many opportunities, through the United Chinese Community Enrichment Society (SUCCESS)³², for them to do so.

Full satellite students continue to attempt to meet parental expectations even though parents are not present. Friends, used for emotional support, may live in similar circumstances. Full satellite students are hesitant to talk about or divulge information about their living arrangements. These students feel they should bear this experience without assistance because in their culture one does not reach out, but handles problems that come their way.

Three of the five students talk about the difficulties associated with adjusting and readjusting when parents return, leave, or even when phone contact is made. This adjustment cycle does not abate. There is some ambivalence associated when parents return for a visit because students know they will be left alone once more. When parents return, students are forced to abide by parental rules restricting behaviors and freedoms these students normally enjoy. At times, full satellites assume a parental role when they are expected to look after parents who return to Canada.

Full satellite students state that their parent's business arrangements necessitate this living arrangement. Money is important and the deciding factor. The father's responsibility is to provide money for the family and even though the mother's responsibility is to look after the children, she accompanies father to look after him.

³² SUCCESS is a Chinese organization originally set up in 1974 with aid from the Canadian federal government to assist Chinese immigrants and Southeast Asian refugees settle in Canada. SUCCESS has become a non-governmental self-supporting agency.

Four of the full satellite students in this study fully intend to return home because they do not feel like they belong in Canada. They are caught between adjusting to a new culture while emotionally remaining with their family members in their home culture.

Vancouver and the surrounding school districts enrol large numbers of Chinese-speaking foreign-born students. The satellite phenomenon seems to be both acknowledged and tolerated within this population. Satellite students speak of their situation matter of factly. Full satellite students are most hesitant to divulge particulars of their home life and do not disclose their circumstances easily. Even as a teacher of one of these students, with prior and considerable background knowledge outside the interview session, home circumstances were not divulged until I asked for a point of clarification concerning an interview response. After his home environment was out in the open, the student returned to this crucial factor repeatedly. Admitting his home situation to me was almost like admitting his home situation to himself.

Once full satellite students disclose the personal characteristics of their personal living arrangements, the focus of their interview changed. Students seemed almost relieved to have the opportunity to talk about their personal circumstance, and in varying degrees, painted a stark portrait of their living arrangement and adjustment experiences.

Somehow, school authorities must develop the competencies to identify these students in a more accurate and comprehensive manner and then develop the skills to provide the assistance the full satellite students so desperately need.

OBJECTIVE 3: to identify students' lived experiences concerning racism and discrimination in the school as well as the community in view of the history of racism and discrimination toward the Chinese in British Columbia.

Students in this study encounter racism and discrimination on a regular basis both in the school environment and in the larger community where they live. Racism and discrimination arise between students, student groups and students and teachers. Prejudice also exists within the Chinese population, primarily between recent immigrants and the Chinese who have lived in Canada for a longer period of time, though students refer to segregation within the Chinese sub-groups in the school.

The sheer numbers of Chinese in the school may exacerbate the situation. When there is no need for Chinese students to mingle or interact with other students, Chinese students' behaviors may be viewed as exclusionary by non-Chinese students. Chinese students may also be seen as a threat because of their large numbers. Student reaction to the large Chinese population in the school may mirror reactions of the larger community population toward the Chinese now living in their midst. Racist and discriminatory behaviors may also occur because the Chinese are unable to assimilate into the dominant culture because of skin color. Different cultural practices may also make them appear unwilling to do so.

Students organize themselves within the school by cultural background. EAL students maintain their own friendship groups within the EAL environment, primarily based on country of origin. The Chinese students often form friendships based primarily on country of origin, but also on cultural background and do not necessarily mix amongst themselves. Other groups are Chinese only, accepting either Chinese foreign-born or Canadian-born members. While students indicate they would accept other students outside their group, they also point to differences in pop culture that make this difficult to accomplish.

Students minimize regular encounters with racism and discrimination because they are viewed as minor and because the students themselves use terms like *Honger*, *Banana*, *CBC*, to identify, tease, and slur their peers. These terms are not always viewed as having a racist component.

While students minimize regular and often daily encounters with racism and discrimination, they do present, at times unwittingly, a picture of discrimination on a larger scale, both in the school and in the greater community. At the elementary school level, one student experienced multiple encounters of prejudice by another Chinese student and teachers seemed unable to help. Another student accepted the segregation in her elementary school playground between immigrant and non-immigrant children. Students recount examples of racist comments by teachers and teacher behaviors they believe discriminatory. They speak of behaviors of other students that indicate racist attitudes. They speak of conflict between and among student groups that are based on ethnic background. They indicate some of the segregation in the school is the result of discrimination between and among the Chinese students as well as between the Chinese and the other cultural groups in the school and vice versa.

In the larger community, students in this study point to differences in service they receive from the English speaking community. They also refer to negative attitudes and derogatory comments others direct toward them. One student recounted an example of comments made by his instructor at a nearby community college. Another recounted racist comments toward a grandparent by a bystander shortly after the boat people incident in the summer of 1999. Students seem to be most upset when racist and discriminatory behaviors originate from a member of their own cultural group, usually Chinese who have lived in Canada longer. They are more accepting of racism and discrimination outside their cultural group because they admit

there is racism and discrimination within the Chinese culture, and less tolerance of others in their home country than in Canada. Canada's reputation as a multicultural country is upheld as a sign of Canada's tolerance toward its immigrant population.

Students in this study seem unaware of the history of racism and discrimination directed toward their ancestors in British Columbia. This may be seen as a weakness of the provincial curriculum that deals with the history of British Columbia, but does not speak to the treatment of one of its early and major immigrant groups. Most of the students interviewed did not have family or friends living in Canada or British Columbia prior to their immigration. Unless they had read about the discrimination against the Chinese in British Columbia, they would have no prior knowledge of the injustices dealt the early Chinese settlers. However, their lived experience indicates racism and discrimination are still ongoing experiences for these students, though the majority of the incidents may not be as blatant as in the past.

OBJECTIVE 4: To examine student perception of and subsequent response to Canada's multicultural policy of cultural pluralism.

Students present three main reasons why they and their families decided to immigrate. Included are education, the desire for a better life, and 1997, the year Mainland China took control over Hong Kong. Canada was named as a destination location because of its multicultural policy and its reputation as a tolerant country.

Most students seem to understand Canada's multicultural policy, cultural pluralism, encourages immigrants to maintain their language and practice their cultural beliefs. They accept this as their reality, saying they could not stay in a country without this type of policy toward its immigrant population. Students have varying responses concerning their perceived ability to maintain their culture and subsequently identify with Canada and the Canadian way. Student identity issues around the terms Chinese, Canadian, or Chinese Canadian seem to have

no relation to the number of years they have lived in Canada, but are more related to their attitudes, their desire to become part of the Canadian culture, and their personal experiences.

Some students support cultural pluralism because it enables them to retain their culture, but ultimately feel this policy will be detrimental to Canada, as it will create a divided nation. They believe immigrants should and must be prepared to make adaptations when they immigrate. Others believe the underpinnings of Canada's multicultural policy signify an acceptance of other cultures without a unifying Canadian culture and without the need to assimilate. Still others view their citizenship as a piece of paper, nothing more, enabling them to commute freely between Canada and their home country.

Students speak in terms of the differences between their home culture and the Canadian culture. The Canadian culture is seen to be friendlier, more accepting, and less stressful while the Chinese culture is viewed as being busier and more demanding.

Even so, many long to return to their home country. Some of the students in this study believe a number of Chinese students will not integrate because they were forced to immigrate. They refuse to accept anything they perceive as Canadian, such as developing English language skills, obtaining a Canadian education, or establishing friendships outside their ethnic group. Instead, they are waiting for the time when they are able to return to their home country and resume their original lives.

The theory of voluntary and involuntary minorities as cited in Ogbu (1974), Ogbu & Simon (1998) and Trueba et al. (1993) may provide some explanation for the difference in attitude students in this study exhibit toward integrating into the Canadian environment and forming friendships with non-Chinese students. Parental attitudes toward immigration, as evidenced by their decision to remain in Canada or to return to their homeland, seems to become

a critical factor when determining their son or daughter's attitudes. In most instances, parents of students who began their education in Canada at the elementary level remained in Canada, making Canada their new home. These parents, as well as parents of secondary age students whom immigrated, then remained in Canada, have characteristics common to voluntary immigrants. These students, for the most part, intend to remain in Canada where they are encouraged to retain their Chinese culture and where they believe they will enjoy a better life.

Other students, the majority of which have a parent(s) who returned to their homelands, exhibit characteristics of the involuntary minority or the migrant/guest worker category even though they do not meet the criteria outlined for this category. While these families have immigrated voluntarily, the actions of the parents confuse their sons/daughters. Students in this situation often feel they were forced to immigrate, and they intend to leave as soon as they are able to. Their parent(s), who have returned to their homeland, provide additional evidence to their children of the temporary condition of their status and exacerbate their feelings of being in an environment by force rather than choice. Although some of the students in this study exhibit characteristics of the migrant or the involuntary minority, these categories do not completely capture the circumstance of these students who live in an environment where they are part of the largest cultural group, where they can choose whether to integrate or retain their home cultures, and where their home country is perceived as having economic advantages superior to the host country.

OBJECTIVE 5: to determine which adjustment concerns continue to be important subsequent to secondary school completion.

Students were asked to identify the adjustment issues they currently face as part of their interview and on the general data sheet they completed subsequent to their interview. It was

expected that these sources would provide similar answers, though in actual fact responses were very different.

Student generated responses were compiled and tabulated. During the interview, students indicate they have few current adjustment concerns. Eleven students suggest they have no adjustment concerns. For the students in this study, language acquisition continues to be an adjustment issue. In addition, identity issues have begun to emerge as an area of concern for some of the students.

Student responses from personal data sheets were also compiled and then compared with interview responses. Based on the information from the data sheet, these students identify a number of current adjustment concerns that are not indicated throughout the interview process. Continuing areas of concern are meeting personal expectations, language acquisition, meeting parental expectations and conflicts with parents. They are also lonely, miss family and friends, and are concerned about having values different from the host country.

Such a disparity between interview results and personal data sheet results is somewhat confusing. While I expected results between the student interviews and the data sheet to produce some differences, it was also expected that general data sheet results would corroborate student interview results. This did not occur. A possible explanation for this inconsistency may revolve around the comprehensive selection available on the personal data sheet. When students are able to view a list of adjustment concerns, they are able to react and respond to a generated list rather than spontaneously creating a list from an interview question.

In view of the adjustment concerns generated on the general data sheet, students in this study continue to have a number of adjustment concerns subsequent to graduation in addition to the language issue cited through interview generated responses.

C. Recommendations

Twenty-three students participated in this study. Twenty of the students were from Hong Kong, two from Macau and one from Taiwan. Eleven of these students were male and 12 were female. They live in a variety of home environments from dual parent to single parent, from living with relatives to living with siblings. Some are home alone. They spoke with sincerity and openness during their interviews. They recalled a number of experiences and identified both their initial and current adjustment concerns. They spoke freely about their experiences with racism and discrimination as well as their perception of Canada's multicultural policy and multicultural reputation. Some of these students have embraced their new homeland; others are waiting to return to their country of birth. Each of these students has changed as a result of their voyage from their birth country to their host country; the host country has also changed as a result of their individual and collective voyages. Results of their interviews point to the need for further study in this area by the provincial government, school boards or school districts, and by others interested in immigrant and international student adjustment.

1. *The Educational Arena*

The government of British Columbia has recently created an ESL policy designed to address EAL needs throughout the province. This policy was created to meet immigrant needs where the immigrants were part of the minority population in the school, in situations where there was greater ethnic diversity among its immigration population, and in situations where it was expected they would not only integrate or assimilate but would also want to do so. In schools and school districts the impact of a large, single immigrant population may change the needs of the EAL students in that

district. Current EAL programs and policies may no longer meet the needs of this EAL population.

School districts with a large Chinese population need to re-examine their EAL programs to determine whether these programs continue to meet the needs of their changing EAL population. These programs were developed at a time when the effects of large numbers of one immigrant population could not be foretold or accounted for.

The satellite phenomenon has received little attention to date even though this phenomenon has been documented in written texts for more than ten years. Educators and other school personnel are aware of these students and some of their particular adjustment concerns for some time, but have been unable to effectively identify these students and then address this phenomenon. In view of the large number of students in the satellite category in this study, and in view of the fact that other students in this study address this phenomenon in their interviews, more students may be living in satellite situations than school personnel and other officials have estimated. Further investigation into this area is warranted

Other issues were raised in this study. Among these are racism and discrimination and other issues associated with integrating different cultural groups in a multicultural secondary school environment. These issues can be investigated in the education arena at the school board or district levels and at the provincial level. They can also be investigated by future individuals interested in adjustment issues of immigrant and sojourning students.

The provincial government should:

- Look at its ESL Policy to determine whether this policy continues to meet the needs of a large, ethnic immigrant population.

- Place a higher priority on investigating and addressing the satellite situation as it may be more prevalent in a number of school districts than previously acknowledged or imagined. Subsequently, develop a protocol and a policy to assist school districts facing this phenomenon.
- Pay more than lip service to the issues of racism and discrimination. Increase funding to address racism and discrimination and incorporate a program addressing this and other social justice issues as part of the province's core curriculum.

Individual school boards or school districts should:

- Review their EAL program and delivery systems with a sensitivity to the different needs required when Chinese students form such large numbers within the EAL program.
- Form a committee to address the issue of more effectively integrating the school population. This means EAL students with other immigrant students and all immigrant and sojourning students with regular students.
- Develop an accurate and more comprehensive process of identifying satellite students so that their needs can then be addressed more effectively.
- Create a committee to develop concrete policy and protocol concerning the full satellite student phenomenon.
- Place a higher priority on addressing issues of racism and discrimination throughout the district rather than leaving this issue as an extra-curricular activity in individual schools.

2. *Further Study*

Results of this study point to a number of areas where further investigation may be warranted.

- Studies examining issues of Chinese students where they form the largest cultural group in the school are important because of the differences to the school culture that result from a changing population dynamic.
- Further investigation into the theory of voluntary and involuntary minorities is worthwhile, especially as these this applies to the immigration and integration of the Chinese in Canada.

- A study examining the benefits and drawbacks of the EAL program and its delivery in districts where there is a large immigrant population is warranted. These programs were created at a time when the EAL population did not rival the non-EAL population in the schools, and at a time when the immigrant population was not so overwhelmingly one ethnic group.
- A study examining the impact cutting the EAL program would have on non-EAL students is warranted. Where large EAL numbers exist, integrating EAL students directly into the classroom may mean making considerable changes to program instruction and delivery.
- The satellite phenomenon needs further study in order to become more aware of this issue, the extent of its existence, and the resultant needs of students living in this situation.
- A study examining the needs of international students where they form part of the largest cultural group may be worthwhile. Their adjustment issues may change from situations where they are the minority population.
- Results of this study suggest further investigation in the area of racism and discrimination is also warranted, especially when students accept their everyday interactions as their reality, and do not question these interactions.
- A study investigating the dynamics of group formation may assist educators in schools where the focus is on integrating a diverse student body.
- A study investigating adjustment concerns of students and/or immigrants subsequent to the initial adjustment period may be warranted in order to identify and more ably assist these individuals with their continued adjustment issues.
- A study investigating the advantages the EAL student gains from participating in school extra-curricular programs may be beneficial.
- A study investigating what factors contribute to student involvement in extra-curricular activities may be worthwhile.
- A study investigating the advantages and disadvantages of school-based policies and practices designed to facilitate integration among students and to enhance the multicultural culture in the school community may be beneficial.

E. Final Thoughts

Examining and analyzing adjustment issues of secondary school students in an environment where they form the largest cultural group in the school is decidedly different from

examining adjustment issues of students in situations where they are lost within the dominant school culture. The students in this study experience adjustment concerns similar to students in other studies on adjustment, but their large numbers make a significant difference to the shape of this adjustment. Their large numbers make it possible for them to remain totally within their home culture or to more actively seek out the new host culture. For many, reaching out toward the host culture is a conscious and difficult decision and does not occur from living within a diverse Canadian community. For others, who feel they have been forced to live in Canada, there is active resistance toward integration.

Many of the students in this study who seem aware of this duality, choose to remain with their Chinese co-nationals because it is more convenient and straightforward, because it provides them with a sense of security and comfort, and because it is the easier route. Their numbers make it possible for this to occur.

On the other hand, they speak of the advantages of adapting to the Canadian culture and the necessity and importance of learning the English language and Canadian ways. They are caught between their Chinese culture and the Canadian culture. Yet, they are adapting more than they realize, and their large numbers means it takes longer for this adjustment to occur. For the most part, they view Canadians as friendly and Canada as a welcoming and tolerant country that encourages foreigners to keep their ethnic identity intact.

Time is needed before we will know whether students in this environment are able to maintain and practice their Chinese culture while adopting a more inclusive and personalized Canadian identity. Will these students, as adults, marry Canadian-born Chinese or marry outside their cultural group? Will there be greater tolerance of difference in future generations? Will citizenship eventually mean more than a piece of paper allowing them to commute between

Canada, their home country, and other countries in the world? Will Canada eventually be seen as more than a country where they are able to freely practice their cultural customs and beliefs? The next generation, Canadian-born, may be the ones to answer these and other questions as they take their place beside other second generation immigrants who will shape the Canada of the future.

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APPENDIX



APPENDIX B

CONSENT/CONTACT FORM PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Centre for Policy Studies in
 Higher Education & Training
 Faculty of Education
 2125 Main Mall
 Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4
 Tel: (604) 822-2593
 Fax: (604) 822-6988
 e-mail: cpse@interchg.ubc.ca

I am prepared to participate in the ethnographic interview section of your study on the experiences of Chinese speaking non-Canadian born students in Canada. I understand the information I provide will be kept in strictest confidence and that I will not be specifically identified in this study.

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ POSTAL CODE _____

BEST TIME TO CALL _____ E-MAIL _____

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: Please indicate your preference(s).

Monday	4:00 – 6:00 _____	Friday	4:00 – 6:00 _____
	7:00 – 9:00 _____		7:00 – 9:00 _____
Tuesday	4:00 – 6:00 _____	Saturday	9:00 – 12:00 _____
	7:00 – 9:00 _____		1:00 – 4:00 _____
Wednesday	4:00 – 6:00 _____	Sunday	9:00 – 12:00 _____
	7:00 – 9:00 _____		1:00 -- 4:00 _____
Thursday	4:00 – 6:00 _____	Other	_____
	7:00 – 9:00 _____		

DATE

SIGNATURE

NOTE: Please return this Interview Form by February 11th. I would like to begin interviewing toward the end of February so as not to interfere with any of the exam schedules of students who are now attending a college, university, or other post secondary institution/program. Interviews will take place wherever you feel most comfortable. Suggestions include () Secondary School, your home, or a favourite restaurant.

[illegible]



APPENDIX G

**Centre for Policy Studies in
Higher Education & Training**

Faculty of Education

2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Tel: (604) 822-2593

Fax: (604) 822-6988

e-mail: cpse@interchg.ubc.ca

I am willing to allow my photograph to be taken and to be used in the thesis defense of the following research study: "To investigate adjustment issues of Chinese speaking foreign born students when they form part of the largest cultural group in a high school environment." I understand my identity will be kept in strictest confidence and both my photograph and the tape will be destroyed once this research is complete.

DATE

SIGNATURE

A P P E N D I X H

Mrs. D. B. Minichiello
School Name
School Address
School Postal Code
METRIC DATE

STUDENT NAME/ADDRESS

Dear _____:

Thank you again for participating in my research on "Chinese speaking foreign-born students." A copy of your transcript is enclosed. Please read it and make any changes, additions, deletions you feel are necessary to portray an accurate picture of your adjustment experience. If you want to meet with me again after reading this transcript, feel free to call me to set up a time.

Again, I appreciate your help in this important area.

Sincerely,

Diane Minichiello

dbm

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW FORMAT

PRIOR TO INTERVIEW

A. Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. I would like permission to tape this interview, as it is not possible to listen to you, make comprehensive notes and understand what you are saying at the same time.

I have chosen your graduating class as my target population because I believe you are close enough to the school situation to remember your school experience and your migration experience, yet have the maturity to view this experience from a slightly different context from either the high school student and/or the student who is in the midst of their first few months in Canada. Throughout this interview, feel free to ask me any questions, and, of course, to ask for clarification if you do not understand my question. Do you have any questions at this time?

I would like to impress upon you the importance of confidentiality in this study. The only person who may see any of this material is my main advisor, Dr. Donald Fisher, and then only when/if I have difficulties. At this point, I don't envision this happening. Any notes I take during this interview, the cassette recording, and the hard copy of these notes will be destroyed once my research is complete.

B. Photograph Consent Form

Students were asked for permission to be photographed and a clear explanation was given concerning the use of this photograph. I wanted to use the photographs to create a collage as an opening for my thesis defense. Twenty-two of the twenty-three students agreed and signed the consent form, Schedule G.

C. Interview

Issues of confidentiality were again re-explained and taped with the beginning of each interview.

NOTES

1. The following list of questions is a guideline of the questions and areas I followed during the ethnographic interviews. The interview format varied depending upon student responses, but I attempted to cover the information in this outline.

2. Occasionally, a student would express concern over the appropriateness (whether answers were right/wrong) of responses and whether the information they provided would help me do well. They were reassured that there were no right/wrong answers. Participating in the interviews and answering any questions or providing information was all they needed to do.

D. Post-Interview Information

Students were told they would receive a hard copy of the interview within one week of the interview date. They would then have the opportunity to edit, add/delete to their original text, or do nothing. The choice was theirs. I also indicated that I would like feedback within a week or two. If I did not hear from them I would assume they were in agreement with the transcript. I also said I was available for additional interview time if they wanted to meet with me again.

NOTE: Five of the twenty-three students made cosmetic changes to the transcript. They were concerned with improving their sentence structure and changing words like “cuz” to “because.” There was only one instance when the actual content of a question changed and this was in the area of parental support with adaptation issues.

GENERAL INTERVIEW FORMAT

BOLD – questions

Regular – additional information I hoped to uncover

Pre-Migration

Describe, in detail, what you can remember about your feelings as you/your family prepared to immigrate to Canada.

- Were you part of the decision to migrate/study in Canada?
- Did you/your family anticipate any problems prior to immigration?
- Did you/your family expect to stay in Canada or was this just a temporary move?

Immigration

Describe, as fully as possible, how you felt prior to and during your immigration.

What you can remember about your initial reaction(s) when you arrived in Canada?

As you reflect upon your first few weeks in Canada, recall any incident(s) or situation(s) that made an impact on you. (*these may be negative or positive*)

Describe the reception you received from each of the following groups? "Canadians"? Asians? Friends? Teachers? Relatives? Other Students? Others?

How would you describe your current experience as an Asian living in Canada?

Which concerns, if any, do you still face as a Chinese foreign born individual in Canada?

School Experience

What were your initial reactions to Canadian schools and the Canadian educational system?

- What do you think can be done to improve the quality of this initial experience?

Can you, as you reflect back to this time, explain when the school situation become easier?

Describe what your school experience in Canada was like once the initial experience was complete.

- Identify and explain any school policies/procedures that helped you adjust more effectively?
- Identify and explain any school policies/procedures that hindered your adjustment process.
- Outline any school policies/procedures that you feel might make the adjustment to a new school system easier.
- How do you view the role of your EAL counsellor? the translators? the ESL courses?
- Did you participate in any of the school activities such as the athletic teams or school clubs?
- Were there any activities you can remember that specifically catered to the ESL population?

As you consider your personal situation today, what areas related to school and your education do you still see as areas of concern today?

As an Asian student in your school, you were part of the largest ethnic student population in the school. Were you aware of this? If so, did this knowledge have any impact on how you viewed yourself in the school? The larger community?

- Explain whether you believe being part of this student population helped you adjust to living in Canada.

Family/Friends

What role has family played in your ability to adjust to living in Canada?

In particular, how have your Mother/Father assisted/hindered your ability to cope with Canada, Canadian ways, and the Canadian education system?

Describe your friends and explain how they have supported/hindered your ability to cope with Canada, Canadian ways, and the school situation.

- Explain whether it is necessary/important for you to have “Canadians” as friends or friends other than Asians.
- What role do you believe non-Asian Canadian friends will play in your future?

Multiculturalism/Racism/Discrimination

Did you see or experience any incidents of discrimination or racism with the school or in the larger community? Explain.

Have you personally experienced racism or discrimination since your arrival in Canada? Explain.

- As you consider your personal situation now, identify any other areas of concern that you feel are directly related to being Chinese speaking, foreign born.
- If you were to describe yourself to another person, would you define yourself as Chinese, Canadian, Chinese-Canadian or Canadian-Chinese. Explain.

Have you heard of “cultural pluralism, the term used to define Canada’s current multicultural policy?

(Where students had not heard the term, I gave a simple definition.)

How do you see this policy as impacting on your life in Canada?


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Fax: (604) 822-6988

e-mail: cpse@interchg.ubc.ca

DATA/GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET

I am willing to complete this general information sheet used for research on the "adjustment issues of Chinese speaking foreign born students when they form part of the largest cultural group in a high school environment." I understand the information I provide will be kept in strictest confidence and will be destroyed once this research is complete.

 DATE

 SIGNATURE

DEMOGRAPHICS

NAME _____

GENDER (M) _____ (F) _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

BIRTHDATE _____

DATE OF IMMIGRATION _____

YEARS IN CANADA _____

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP _____
Yes No

DATE _____

INTERNATIONAL/VISA STUDENT _____
Yes No

DATE _____

I INTEND TO MAKE MY HOME IN CANADA _____ MY HOME COUNTRY _____ OTHER _____

FAMILY BACKGROUND
Circle either **Yes**, **No**, or **NA** (Not Applicable) to each of the following questions.Does your family maintain a residence outside Canada?
If so, where? _____

Yes No

Does your father's occupation take him outside Canada on a regular basis?

Yes No NA

Does your mother's occupation take her outside Canada on a regular basis?

Yes No NA

Do you have relatives other than immediate family living in Canada?
If so, where do they live? _____

Yes No

What is their relationship to you? _____

Does your family live with these relatives now?

Yes No

Did your family ever live with these relatives?

Yes No

Have you ever lived with guardians other than your mother or father in Canada?
If so, what was their relationship to you? _____

Yes No

Were you ever responsible for looking after yourself
when your parent(s) returned to or remained in your birthplace? Yes _____ No _____

What is your current living arrangement?

**Place a checkmark () under the term that best describes how you feel about each
of the following statements or situations.**

	Totally Agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally Disagree
1. Before coming to Canada, did you:				
feel foreign students would face discrimination in Canada?				
feel Asian students would face discrimination in Canada?				
personally know anyone who had faced discrimination in Canada?				
think about discrimination in any way?				
2. Since arriving in Canada:				
discrimination has been a concern for my family.				
discrimination is more of a problem than I expected.				
discrimination is less of a problem than I expected.				
discrimination is not a problem.				
I have personally experienced discrimination.				
3. On the whole, people in Canada are approachable.				
4. On the whole, Canadians are friendly.				
5. It is easy to make friends in Canada.				
6. Generally, Canadian people have a positive attitude toward foreigners.				

Indicate how important these situations were for you when you first arrived in Canada. Then, use a checkmark () to show which areas are still problems today.

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	A Current Problem
7. Understanding the language					
8. Communicating and interacting with other students					
9. Communicating and interacting with teachers					
10. Communicating with other people I meet					
11. Having my actions or behavior misunderstood					
12. School related performance					
13. Course content in school					
14. Meeting my parent's expectations at school					
15. Meeting my own expectations at school					
16. Conflict between my parent's and my expectations					
17. Concerns of racial discrimination					
18. Feelings of loneliness					
19. Fear of being different					
20. Fear of not finding friends					
21. Making friends of the opposite sex					
22. Difference in climate between Canada and my home country.					
23. Difference in food					
24. Differences in culture					
25. Different customs					
26. Different values					
27. Different traditions					
28. Missing family from my home country					
29. Missing friends from my home country					
30. Missing my home country					
31. Fear of the unknown					
32. Unfriendliness of people I meet					
33. Student/Teacher relationship					
34. Fear of being unable to do everyday things					
35. Fear of not belonging to a group					
36. Fear of not understanding boy-girl relationships					
37. Fear of bullying or harrassment					
38. Add any problems you believe have been left off this list and then complete the table for these problems.					
39. _					
40. _					
41. _					
42. _					
43. _					
44. _					
45. _					
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THESIS VARIABLES

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