TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS

by

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ABSTRACT
TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS

Twenty-five ESL students who were identified by teachers as "academically successful", i.e. with at least a C average in their regular courses, were interviewed, using an openended conversational approach. Informants shared their own perspectives on their ESL and regular classroom experiences, their perceptions about themselves as students and their strategies for success. They compared experiences in Canada and their native countries, and talked about their home background. They were encouraged to identify both strengths and problems in their education experiences, and to suggest changes in the schools to help themselves as well as less successful students. Data concluded that informants showed additive bilingualism, many use L1 to learn their academic work, and overwhelmingly they support ESL classes which they credit with fulfilling both academic and affective needs. Academic work in the home country transfers to subjects such as Math, but they express frustration with written assignments and essay questions in subjects with heavy language requirements. In general there is little involvement with native-speaking peers. Informants were found to be highly disciplined, with high future aspirations.
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Chapter I

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS: AN OVERVIEW

A: The Problem

Large numbers of ESL students go through the public school system in Canada. Educators (Cummins 1984) tell us that such students are over represented in special education and remedial classrooms, and many drop out of the system without completing their education. This fact should make it imperative to examine possible factors for success in those ESL students who appear to succeed. What can we as educators learn from these students?

Where students must learn through the medium of a second language (L2) they will get very little out of their content classes if they lack adequate understanding of L2. In this education model they depend upon ESL support classes to provide the necessary instruction in the target language to prepare them for their academic classes. It is imperative that ESL classes be as effective and efficient as possible to shorten the length of time where the ESL students' academic education is placed on hold while they master the language of instruction.

It is becoming more and more apparent that this length of time is longer than previously expected. There is
recognition that fluency in oral communication is not
necessarily related to the language proficiency required for
academic success. Where students may appear to have
mastered English within one or two years, there is evidence
to show that this is an inadequate amount of time for most
to achieve the required language proficiency to succeed in
academic tasks. (Cummins 1981, Wong-Fillmore 1983, Collier
1987)

With the recognition of at least two kinds of language
proficiency, i.e. communicative fluency and the proficiency
required for academic tasks, there has been a shift in focus
from language for communication (narrowly interpreted as
conversation) to language as a factor in academic success,
i.e. "the interaction between learning to talk and talking
to learn". (Mohan 1981, 11)

We should distinguish between quantitative and
qualitative research on these issues. Studies of bilingual
education have looked at the quantitative aspect of the
issue, such as which programs are apt to enhance the
academic success of non-native speakers who, through
necessity or by choice, are getting their education in their
second language. Such studies, for example, have attempted
to explain apparent inconsistencies, such as marked
successes in Canadian French immersion programs in contrast
to below norm achievement of minority language students,
noting in conclusion that affective factors such as
recognition of students' (L1), socioeconomic status (SES), and positive experiences of bilingualism, i.e. an "additive" rather than "subtractive" outcome, appear to be salient factors for academic success in bilingual students. While useful as global indicators, such quantitative studies do not illuminate well the experiences of individuals as they succeed or fail in their academic courses.

From a qualitative point of view, a case study of academically successful students from minority groups whose first language enjoys no particular recognition or status within the majority culture and who receive no instruction in their first language, should serve to illuminate those educational experiences which are positive, and identify effective educational strategies, some possible areas for change, and some fruitful directions for further research.

While qualitative studies have looked at the question of success in language learning, (Naiman et al. 1978, Rubin 1975) to my knowledge no studies have attempted to get the ESL learners' perspectives on this issue of academic success with the purpose of gaining a sense of the concrete context within which he/she has successfully functioned. In this case study we will take into account the wider context, i.e. the interaction of the student within a certain academic and home environment.

We might expect, given their success, that these students, who enjoy little "official" recognition of the
Importance of their first language, must receive some "unofficial" recognition or some compensatory experiences either from their own background or from the school. We might also expect that their strategies for studying and completing their assignments could possibly provide models of effective strategies to be shared with those who are less successful. We would presume that there will be many individual styles within this category of "successful" student, and that there may be differences according to ethnic background.

The goal here is not to find a "representative" ESL student as subject to be generalized to the whole ESL population, but to reflect on theories of language and content learning by looking for patterns in success, at what students themselves perceive as their own strengths and weaknesses, and at what they perceive as positive in their home, school, and cultural background. It cannot be assumed that ESL students are a monolithic group. While one can expect diversity according to cultural or language background, differences among those who share the same first language are also likely.

B. Background to the Problem

This discussion will be presented in two parts. First, the situation in Vancouver, British Columbia, the location for this study, will be introduced, followed by a more general discussion of Canadian history as it relates to education of minority students and bilingual education.
1. The Vancouver Setting

In Vancouver just over half of the school population, representing 85 different ethnic groups, comes from an ESL background. This large number of students constitutes 60% of all ESL students in the province of B.C. In Vancouver 10,437 of these students of ESL background receive some kind of ESL assistance.

This assistance may take the form of "reception" or regular ESL classes, where students newly arrived with little or no English are introduced into the Canadian school system. The procedure for part or full integration into regular classes may differ within schools, but generally students identified by ESL teachers as "ready" are, in consultation with the school counsellor, assessed using both standardized and teacher prepared tests. These may include reading and grammar tests as well as samples of students' written work. In some schools transitional courses, where instruction is based on the required course of study, is modified to serve the special needs of ESL students. While transitional courses do not earn "official" credit, i.e. toward meeting requirements for secondary school graduation, their successful completion can perhaps allow students entry at a higher grade level -- that is they may, for example, go directly into a grade ten Social Studies course, bypassing the grade nine level course. Ongoing support in English Learning Centres (ELC's) is offered through individual tutoring and small group instruction.
This study looks at twenty-five of these students who have achieved a degree of success following their mainstreaming into regular content classes. We will attempt to gauge their aspirations and daily frustrations, those elements of their education which they perceive as successful and positive, and those which they wish could be changed.

2. Historic Background

The historic question of language-learning in Canada is an important dimension in our more immediate question of bilingualism, ESL students and academic success. Canada is a country of one million or more Native Indian people and millions of new Canadians of every ethnic and racial background. We have the mingling of two great European societies, the French and English. The special place of Native people, the rights of the English and French language, and of multiculturalism, is entrenched in our Constitution.

However, minority languages have been accorded little importance by the majority group, apparently with the view that assimilation would be advantageous both for the indigenous native population and for ethnic minorities. While millions of new Canadians have lost their mother tongue and have anglicized their names, (Ashworth 1988) the existence of heritage language classes attest to the will of other immigrants who, determined that their children
should not lose their heritage as exemplified in their native language, have acted to prevent the withering of minority languages.

Given the diversity of cultures within its borders, Canada is in an advantageous position to "champion ethnolinguistic diversity for the benefit of pan-human creativity, problem solving, and mutual cross-cultural acceptance." (Fishman 1982, 1) And if we believe, as does Fishman, that "the world's little languages and peoples are a treasure trove of wisdom and refinement" (Fishman 1982, 9) we must view the loss of native language to the individual as an unforgivable travesty. Indeed Cummins (1984) suggests that the success of a bilingual program is measured by the degree of "additive" bilingualism attained by the student. "Subtractive" bilingualism, where students replace or lose their native language while in the process of learning the target language is, by definition, a failure of the educational system and a disservice to the student.

The peculiarities to the Canadian situation are apparent. Thomas Berger, speaking on the topic of the constitution and the humanities states,

...though the French and English languages are constitutionally protected, and thus stand on a different footing from the language of other ethnic groups in Canada, they are in a sense a bulwark for those languages... Constitutional protection of French and English makes the way easier for other languages, because it negates the idea of a monolithic culture. In the same way the guarantees to the Indians, the Inuit and the Metis exemplify the Canadian belief in diversity. In this way the interests of the linguistic communities, and of the aboriginal peoples, merge with the idea of multiculturalism.
Much progress in bilingual education has taken place since the time of residential schools for Native Indians (Ashworth 1979) and lack of French language rights in provinces other than Quebec. In English Canada bilingualism has become a popular educational goal.

While for some time French (or other languages such as Spanish and German) has been offered to meet the language requirement for secondary school graduation, bilingualism was not the outcome. Immersion students attain levels of achievement far beyond students in core French programs. (Cummins and Swain, 1986) With the St. Lambert Experiment (1972), initiated by anglophone parents in the St. Lambert area of Montreal, (Lambert and Tucker, 1972) a snowballing effect attests to this shift in awareness of bilingualism as a desired learning outcome. With the evidence of the beneficial effects of French immersion programs, i.e. that students can become bilingual without loss of first language skills, that bilingualism appears to promote some cognitive benefits, and that in Canada fluency in both majority languages accrue economic, political and cultural benefits, Anglophone parents throughout Canada increasingly request French immersion programs for their children. The waiting lists and continuing requests by parents for more French immersion programs attest to the success and popularity of this bilingual program.

What of bilingualism and ESL programs?
It appears to be taking much longer to identify "additive bilingualism" as the optimal educational objective for minority language students, and to recognize that bilingualism for ESL students is a learning feat equal to the accomplishment of successful French Immersion students. Cummins and Swain point out that

Although immersion students appear to attain native-like receptive skills, their productive skills continue to remain non-native-like. They are, however, quite capable of communicating their ideas in spite of their grammatical weaknesses. It was suggested that this same level of productive skills in the second language among minority students would not be considered acceptable by the educational system. That it is praised within the majority culture when attained by majority language students and denigrated when attained by minority language students, is indicative of a linguistic double standard. (Cummins and Swain 1986, 49)

Perhaps because ESL programs have had the connotation of being remedial or special needs programs there has not been a similar emphasis on their importance, nor a body of evaluative research similar to that in the French immersion situation. Extra federal funding, available for French immersion programs, is unavailable for those of heritage language immersion programs or for ESL programs. While some Indian bands, again with federal funding, have in recent years initiated and supervised their own schools, in order to incorporate some instruction of the aboriginal language and culture, there are few examples of minority language bilingual immersion programs in Canada. However, the trend toward immersion programs, other than French, appears to be growing.
As Ashworth points out,

The time has come to put some time, money, and effort into eliminating the barriers that stand between men. Of all countries Canada has the greatest opportunity to show that this can be done. This land contains people of many cultures and many races; it is a land of great economic potential: but a mosaic is a fragile thing held together by balance and harmony and easily shattered. The quality of education given to Canadian born and foreign-born students in our schools will affect the balance and harmony both now and in the days to come. (Ashworth 1975, 192)

Following Ashworth's view of this positive role for bilingual education in Canada I will now address the particular issues for this study.
Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter I discuss theoretical concerns related to academic success of ESL learners, bearing in mind that informants for this study are participants in the educational model whereby the immigrant student is first enrolled in a regular ESL class, and following his/her achievement of what is deemed a satisfactory level of language proficiency, proceeds to regular class where instruction is offered through the medium of the second language.

Central to the work of this study are four main issues which will be discussed in turn in the context of relevant theoretical work. These are (1) academic success as distinct from success in language learning. This approach reflects the shift in emphasis in ESL education from learning the target language as an end in itself, to using the language as a means to an end, i.e. to learn academic content. Following the discussion on "academic proficiency" vis-a-vis "language proficiency", I will in turn discuss (2) characteristics of bilingual education, (3) affective factors relevant to ESL learners in regular classrooms, and (4) differences in academic success between ethnic groups. This discussion of theoretical aspects will be followed by a discussion of some case studies in the literature using a similar approach for data gathering, i.e. an "ask the learner" approach.
A: Academic Success and Language Learning

The major theoretical work on academic success of bilingual ESL students is contained in the work of Cummins. Past practice has largely been based on the precept that learning to speak the target language must precede instruction in academic courses, and this tended to ignore the importance of previously learned academic concepts already internalized by the student in his/her L1.

Cummins (1979, 1981, 1984) recognizes this when he argues that there is more to language competence than proficiency in oral communication. He proposes that fluency in conversational language or "basic interpersonal communication strategies" (BICS) is only one manifestation of language proficiency -- that the language proficiency necessary to study and process more abstract concepts in academic courses or CALP ("cognitive academic language proficiency") is a separate construct. He exemplifies the concept of two parallel language proficiencies with a "dual iceberg" representation; the iceberg tips representing surface language fluency in both L1 and L2, with the common base of the iceberg representing a "common underlying proficiency" (CUP). (Cummins 1984, 143) This model illustrates the "interdependence of conceptual knowledge across languages", which appears to account for the more rapid progress of older learners to acquire vocabulary when compared with that of younger learners.
It may appear surprising that older learners make more rapid progress in acquiring L2 in view of the popular myth that there is an optimal pre-pubertal age for L2 acquisition. However, a major reason for the advantage is obvious when the data are viewed from within the context of the CUP model. For example, in learning the term 'democracy' the task for a fourteen-year-old immigrant child consists of acquiring a new label for a concept already developed in L1; for a six-year-old immigrant child the term will not be acquired until the concept has been developed. The advantage of older learners lies in the interdependence of conceptual knowledge across languages. (Cummins and Swain 1986, 83)

Saville-Troike, (1984) looking closely at academic success at the elementary school level, appears to support Cummins' idea of the BICS / CALP distinction. She concludes in her analytical study that vocabulary is the language skill most related to academic success and that the one factor which did make a difference for academic achievement was the opportunity for students to discuss concepts in their L1 with peers or adults. Ironically she found that the lowest academic achievers were also the most successful at interpersonal communication.

Not all educators agree with Cummins's BICS / CALP distinction. For example, Edelsky et al. (1983) challenge Cummins. They argue that BICS and CALP are not separate constructs, but are interactive, on the basis that listening and speaking skills (BICS) are cited by reading specialists as the prerequisite for developing the literacy skill of reading and writing (CALP). In addition Edelsky et al raise the question of academic achievement, questioning the justification of Cummins's reliance on standardized test
scores, arguing that these do not truly measure students' academic achievement but merely "the ability to do the kinds of tasks usually associated with ditto sheet exercises in a test-like setting". (Edelsky et al. 1983, 11)

While reading specialists (Goodman, 1986; May, 1986) do appear to accept that oral language is the basis for teaching reading there are nonetheless many illiterates, but very few (the exception being those with physical or mental disabilities) who lack the ability to speak a language. This would lead us to suspect that different cognitive abilities are at work in the two activities.

Also it would appear that the added dimension of a bilingual setting, where instruction is in the second language, presents complicating factors not present in first language instruction. For example, learning the written word in L2 (where a student has already developed reading skills in L1) can hardly be considered the same process as that of first learning to read in either L1 or L2. One should expect differences according to the age, development, and past experiences of the learner.

To criticisms such as Edelsky et al, Cummins responds...

However, any dichotomy inevitably oversimplifies the reality and it became clear that the terms "BICS" and "CALP" had the potential to be misinterpreted... Consequently, the theoretical framework was elaborated in terms of the contextual and cognitive dimensions underlying language performance while still maintaining the essential aspects of the BICS / CALP distinction. (Cummins 1984, 138)
This issue of time, that is length of residence (LOR) and age of arrival to the host country (AOA), are also of concern in this question of academic success. The arbitrary decision to offer ESL classes for up to two years appears to be a response to the oral language proficiency acquired by most students in that time, i.e. BICS, without taking into account the longer time required to develop CALP. Cummins argues that this arbitrarily chosen length of time may not reflect the needs of immigrant children and has no basis from an educational perspective, when the research findings show that "it takes at least five years, on the average, for immigrant children who arrive in the host country after the age of six to approach grade norms in L2 CALP". (Cummins 1981, 148)

In her study on this topic of age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes, Collier (1987) analyzed data for 1,548 "advantaged" limited English proficient (LEP) students who received all instruction in English. Taking into account variables such as age on arrival, English proficiency level on arrival, basic literacy and math skills in L1, and number of years of schooling in English, Collier's conclusions were that LEP students who entered the ESL program at ages 8-11 were the fastest achievers, requiring two to five years to reach the 50th percentile on national norms. LEP students entering the program at ages 5-7 were one to three years behind the 8-11 group when both groups had the same length of
residence. Arrivals at ages 12-15 experienced the greatest difficulty, and were projected to require from six to eight years to reach grade level norms in academic achievement.

It is apparent that reaching L2 communicative competence (in the wider context of both BICS and CALP) is of importance to the students in minority language bilingual immersion programs, given that all instruction is in L2 and their education is "put on hold" until they can function sufficiently in academic classes.

Wong-Fillmore also concludes that two years is an inadequate length of time to develop the language skills necessary for success in academic classrooms, concluding that the required time may be up to six years, or even longer for poor language learners. Whether placing on hold the education of ESL students (until they master the language of instruction) amounts to, in Wong-Fillmore's words, a "minor inconvenience" or a "major educational barrier" depends a great deal on whether academic concepts can be incorporated with teaching the language. She suggests that "what is needed to meet the special challenge of educating limited-English-speakers in our schools is a combination of bilingual instruction and ESL. (Wong-Fillmore 1983, 171)

Timing of entry would appear to be an important factor also when "meaningful input" becomes an issue, since it is in the earlier grades that teachers use concrete and visual aids
to assist students to develop and internalize abstract concepts (CALP). Cummins (1984, 139-42) conceptualizes the construct of language proficiency along two continua, "context embedded" and "context reduced" content, and "cognitively undemanding" / "cognitively demanding" language situations. Cognitively undemanding, context embedded language is present in conversational settings which offer paralinguistic and contextual cues, and where meaning can be negotiated. At the opposite pole in this continuum are the more abstract concepts taught in the classroom, particularly those beyond the early grades in elementary school, which are cognitively demanding with reduced contextual cues.

Mohan (1986) carries this discussion further in his work on the contextual and cognitive dimensions of language as a medium for academic learning, in both context embedded (action situations) and context reduced (theoretical knowledge) situations. He cites some difficulties with "comprehensible input" which ESL students might encounter in the discourse of academic subjects, particularly where there may be no "shared background of experience" between learner and content. He suggests that educators consider the interaction of content and language (where language learning takes place in the context of a learning activity) and to be aware of techniques to overcome the lack of L1 instruction for the student.
To close this discussion of academic success I have chosen to consider some characteristics of academically successful students as described in the literature. For example, Marshall and Sokol (1969) compared students identified by their teachers as "independent, self-directing students" with less successful students, finding that the independent students had significantly higher mean I.Q., higher mean GPA, lower mean class rank, lower mean modules of unscheduled time, higher mean class load, higher proportion of college bound students, lower proportion of students known as disciplinary problems, lower mean number of absences, and higher proportion of females than males. While norm based IQ and GPA are irrelevant to this interview case study, it will be of interest to compare characteristics of the informants for this study with those described by Marshall and Sokol, who were identified by their teachers as "independent, self-directing students".

To summarize, this section has discussed the BICS/CALP distinction, which raises the importance of use of L1 for academic learning. Vocabulary as the language skill most usefully taught for academic success, the evidence that academic achievement is not necessarily related to conversational fluency, and the factor of time and timing which is deemed important for developing CALP in L2 were also discussed in this context.
B: Characteristics of Bilingual Education

That bilingual education is a reasonable educational objective is documented in the research on French immersion classes in Canada. In addition there is the evidence that monolinguals are a minority group compared with the rest of the world's population. With awareness of the cognitive and affective advantages of bilingualism (Swain and Lapkin 1982) one would expect a continuing interest by educators to encourage ESL students to maintain their first language. We look for evidence of this awareness in our informants.

One criterion for success of a bilingual program is "additive bilingualism". By definition the education system has failed a student if in gaining L2 the student loses his mother tongue. Retention of L1 and additive bilingualism as an educational objective for ESL students would be enhanced where there is recognition by the dominant society of the importance of the minority language.

Cummins (1984) provides a useful framework for discussion of bilingual programs which he categorizes according to the "additive" or "subtractive" qualities of each. These are:

(1) Submersion, the "sink-or-swim" situation where no special provision is made for ESL students getting their education in the majority language

(2) Monolingual Immersion, of which ESL programs provided for ethnic minority students in Vancouver schools
are an example

(3) **Majority Language Bilingual Immersion**, of which French immersion is the example

(4) **Minority Language Bilingual Immersion**, which is descriptive of programs such as the Ukrainian-English Immersion program in Edmonton.

Features of bilingual immersion programs which are absent in monolingual immersion programs are bilingual teachers (fluent in both L1 and the target language); use of paralinguistic clues, redundancy and concrete contextual presentation to assure meaningful input; and increasing use of L1 with an ultimate balance between L1 and the target language as the medium for instruction.

Informants in our study are in the monolingual immersion model where course work involves mastering abstract, context reduced concepts without provision for instruction in L1. Will these students, like those described by Saville-Troike (1984) intrinsically know the necessity to compensate for their lack of understanding by seeking out explanations in their L1? If this is the case, we might expect this strategy to change as they become more and more comfortable with using English to understand the abstract concepts in their academic courses.

C: **Affective Factors Related to Academic Success**

Choice of a language for instructional purposes (as in bilingual immersion programs) is an indication of acceptance
of that language by the dominant group in society. While
this "formal" recognition of the importance of their L1 is
lacking in the case of the informants for this study, we
will nevertheless look for "informal recognition" of L1 and
of instances where their L1 is a factor in their academic
success. For example, are the students encouraged to
maintain their L1? Do they feel comfortable speaking their
L1 at school? Do other students show any interest in
learning about them and their language?

It has been noted that for the ESL student the regular
class can be extremely threatening. (Cohen and Swain 1976,
Cummins and Swain, 1987) Here he/she is always open to
possible ridicule and misunderstanding from other students
and even teachers.

The stress felt by such students is also documented by
McColl (1976). A panel of six ESL students who "have made
the transition across language and culture successfully"
discussed their first Canadian school experiences, the
usefulness of ESL programs, some humiliations they
experienced at school and the stresses felt by their
families at home.

The kind of recognition by the dominant community of the
importance of the students' L1 appears to be an important
aspect of the students' feelings of self-worth and well
being. Cummins and Swain summarize possible destructive
results when affective factors are negative rather than
positive.

To be told, whether directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, that your language and the language of your parents, of your home and of your friends is non-functional in school is to negate your sense of self. One can imagine any number of responses on the part of the children who hear this message. They could accept the school's dictum and reject their families; they could feel anger and frustration towards their teachers and school, which could lead to hostility and aggression and eventually dropping-out of school, or to a denial of the value of school. And so on. Needless to say, none of these are healthy responses, but each of them has been observed. (Cummins and Swain 1987, 101)

The above negative situation will be compared to that of the informants for this study in an effort to identify the affective climate in their experiences at school.

D: Differences Between Ethnic Groups

Evidence of variability in academic achievement between different language groups in the U.S., not attributable to the socio-economic status (SES) of the students, is also borne out in Canadian results (with the exception of French L1 students). (Cummins 1984, 98) It was found that SES exerts a significant effect for majority language groups, i.e. French L1 born in Canada, but not for immigrant students. Students with Chinese background, both Canadian-born and immigrant, show an extremely high level of placement in academic streams at all SES levels.

In an attempt to explain such apparent inconsistencies Cummins cites work by Ogbu (Cummins 1984, 120) and Feuerstein (Cummins 1984, 123). Ogbu distinguishes between
three types of minority groups, i.e. "autonomous", "immigrant", and "caste" minorities. Autonomous groups are not subordinated economically or politically to the dominant culture, and possess a distinct racial, religious, linguistic or cultural identity. Jews are an example of an autonomous minority.

Caste minorities are regarded by the majority culture as inherently inferior, and their socio-economic prospects are poor. Native Indians are an example of this type of minority group.

Immigrant minorities differ from caste minorities in that they have come more or less voluntarily to the host society, with instrumental attitudes. They tend to be less affected by the ideology of the dominant group, and, in spite of discrimination, they appear to be better off than the caste minority. Chinese and Japanese are examples of immigrant minorities. The status of immigrant minorities may change. They may develop into either autonomous or caste minorities.

Feuerstein's concept to explain differences in academic success between different ethnic groups, "cultural deprivation", refers to a disrupted process of cultural transmission between generations. Ashworth's (1979) account of the B.C. government policy for Native Indian education of the past, where children were removed from their villages, placed in residential schools and forbidden to speak their
language, resulted in the loss to a whole generation of their language and many of their traditions. Their situation comes to mind as a tragic example of "cultural deprivation" according to Feuerstein's description. As Cummins takes pains to elaborate, there are similarities between Feuerstein's "cultural deprivation" and Ogbu's "caste minorities".

From the above theoretical work on immigrant minorities and academic success it appears that for immigrant students cultural autonomy may be a more significant factor than SES. Here we will seek evidence of autonomy in the minority culture, i.e. with instrumental attitudes toward the host society rather than a desire to assimilate, expecting that strong support from the culture would accrue affective benefits for our informants' academic success.

E: The "Ask the Learner" Approach

To my knowledge there is no formal study which asks the ESL learner to analyze his or her own academic success. However to analyze successful language learning Naiman et al. (1979) interviewed successful adult language learners ("successful" identifying those who had learned several languages) in a pilot study for a later controlled study looking at French language classes for English speaking students. They found that this case study technique provided a number of useful avenues for further research, and their approach is therefore of interest for this case study.
Similarly Rubin (1975), while again focusing on language learning rather than academic achievement (noting different rates of success of ESL language learners), advocates research on the topic of learner strategies and notes the efficacy of directly asking the learner. We will expect the similar approach used in this study to provide rich and varied data.

More related to academic achievement, though still mainly concerned with the learning of the target language, is the work of O'Malley et al. (1985) Beginning with the premise of the importance of learning strategies, i.e. "the operations or steps used by a learner to facilitate the acquisition, storage or retrieval of information" in order to promote academic learning, a two-fold study was undertaken. First, students were interviewed in order to identify a number of strategies. The resulting examples were then classified as metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and socioaffective strategies. Examples of metacognitive strategies are advance organizers, i.e. directed attention, selective attention, self-management, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies include repetition, resourcing (using target language reference materials), translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, imagery, and keyword (for learning L2 vocabulary). Socioaffective factors include cooperation (working with one or more peers) and question for clarification (asking a teacher or other native speaker).
The controlled study in the second phase tested the efficacy of teaching such strategies to students. The result varied depending on the task, but it was concluded that strategy training can be effective for integrative language tasks.

In the present study informants will be asked to identify their own learning strategies. Here the goal is similar to that of the O'Malley study, i.e. that learning strategies, once identified, could be successfully taught to less competent learners to enhance their academic development.

Summary of Chapter Two

The intent in this literature review is to identify salient aspects of theoretical work which relate to the research problem in this study. I have relied heavily on Cummins' work as the most comprehensive in scope to address the issue of academic success in ESL students.

The theoretical work mentioned in this chapter has identified some of the paths to be explored in the data gathering process. We are cautioned to look for use of L1 as a means of securing "comprehensible input" where L2 is insufficient to understand abstract academic concepts; to identify examples of additive bilingualism and other positive affective factors in the informants' school situation; and to explore effective student learning strategies.
Chapter III:

THE STUDY

This chapter will present the research project, explaining the approach and interview techniques used for data gathering, a description of the setting, and information about the informants.

A: The Method

The intent of this study was to get the academically successful ESL learners' perceptions of their educational experience. To my knowledge this has not yet been done in earlier research.

While useful as global indicators, statistics do not illuminate well the experiences of individuals as they succeed or fail in their academic courses and for this reason it was felt to be important to approach this from a qualitative point of view. This exploratory case study appears to fit the criterion suggested by Yin (1986) of "a situation where a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control". In determining the place of case study research in comparison with other approaches, such as a survey or experimental study, Yin offers that the case study is preferred where the following criteria are present: causal links too complex for survey or experimental research; the opportunity or need to
describe events in a real life context where there is potential for evaluation research; and an exploration of those situations where no clear single set of outcomes should be expected.

This study is not an ethnography of the life of academically successful students, but an exploratory case study using some ethnographic data gathering techniques. The end result does not assume conclusions related to cause-effect relationships and here we do not attempt to make such claims, i.e. that academic success is caused or made possible by such and such factor. Rather we hope to contribute toward a greater understanding, illuminating aspects of success in these students and their particular situations in Canadian secondary school classrooms.

Here our interest is to identify patterns which appear to promote or inhibit academic success. Of course we are dealing with these patterns as they are perceived by the students, not as they might be in reality. The main questions being asked are: What is it like being a student who happens to be getting his/her education through a second language? How does he/she cope and manage to achieve successful results? What insights can be offered to other ESL students, ESL teachers and subject teachers?

In discussing the interview as a data gathering technique Lewin (1979) elaborates on differences between face to face conversation and a written questionnaire. With
the interview is the opportunity to pursue a topic at length, and the opportunity for both the interviewer and respondent to clarify responses and questions which may be unclear to either.

On considering how to ask the questions, a conversational interview format as suggested by Burgess can elicit "open ended" responses which are outside the limits of a structured survey questionnaire. In a structured survey questionnaire the interviewer merely poses questions and records answers, and there is "no long-term relationship between the researcher and the researched", but rather one where

...it is assumed that the interviewer can manipulate the situation and has control over a set list of questions that have been formulated before the interview and which are to be answered rather than considered, rephrased, re-ordered, discussed and analysed. In short, the interviewer is assumed to have power over the respondent who is given a subordinate role in this context. (Burgess 1984, 101)

In contrast to this structured approach Burgess offers an approach used in a long tradition of social research of an "unstructured or semi-structured style of interviewing which employs a set of themes and topics to form questions in the course of conversation." Burgess terms such unstructured interviews "conversations with a purpose".

It is this "unstructured interview" which is employed for this study. While our schedule of questions indicates a structure, we avail ourselves of the opportunity to explore
any promising avenues which arise during the interview. There is additional flexibility with the option of altering the order of questions and the opportunity for future contact if there is need for additional information or clarification at a later date. (See Appendix I for the full schedule of questions.)

Questions

An attempt to formulate questions within certain domains related to the literature is the approach most likely to yield meaningful information. For the topic of academic success the literature indicates a need to examine the students' use of L1 and L2 as it relates to their studies, in order to determine their approach to understanding abstract concepts related to their academic courses. Affective factors which may relate to success and which will be examined are acceptance of their L1 by the dominant culture (in this case native speaking teachers and students), "additive" or "subtractive" qualities of their bilingualism, and how comfortable they feel in the school environment. In addition their home environment and the informants' own coping and learning strategies may provide insight into individual strengths which are relevant to their academic success.

Preparation of Interviewers

Interviewers were prepared in advance with detailed information on the reasons for the study and the importance
of their role in eliciting the information in a conversational interview setting. They were shown videos of the pilot interviews, and were given the overview of the project, the schedule of questions, and an outline of the interview process.

Data Analysis

Spradley (1979) suggests a scheme in his chapter titled "Componential Analysis" whereby a number of themes or "domains" emerging from the data are identified. The resulting analysis is the attempt to discover a "structural reality" arising from the informants' perceptions. This "structural reality" is the information base from which the researcher's interpretations and conclusions will arise.

In this study responses emerging from the data are reported under the headings used in the format of the original questions, though the order of reporting questions may vary. The arising themes are identified in Chapter Four and discussed further in Chapter Five.

The Pilot Interviews

Pilot interviews with a Vietnamese and Italian student indicated that such conversational interviews are a rich source of data to increase our understanding of the student within his/her educational context. Following these pilot interviews the schedule of questions was extended and tested in an audiotaped interview, which was arranged through the
ESL teacher and conducted at the student's school. This final pilot interview took longer than the following interviews where questions were presented and discussed in advance with the informants.

B: The Setting

The twenty-five informants were enrolled in 1987 in four Vancouver secondary schools. Twenty-three of the interviews took place in June 1987. Informants were interviewed privately in an unoccupied classroom. Sufficient time was allowed at each interview for the full schedule of questions and to probe further for clarification and additional information. These interviews were both video and audio recorded.

Interviews were conducted by ESL and regular course teachers who had indicated their interest in being involved in this study. Interview times were arranged in advance, and took place to suit the schedules of the student informants during school hours. Two interviews (both arranged to accommodate the students' schedules) were conducted outside the school setting -- one at the student's workplace and another during a telephone interview later in the summer when the informant had returned from visiting relatives in the U.S. These two final interviews were not tape recorded, but extensive notes were taken. Where responses were unclear or of insufficient detail informants were contacted further by telephone.
For this exploratory case study, twenty-five ESL students were identified as academically successful from four secondary schools in Vancouver to meet the following criteria:

1. Informants selected were students who had had a reasonable amount of time to develop sufficient English language skills and/or who were displaying academic success in content area courses in their schools. Time spent in Canada varied from two years to just over five years. "Academic success" is defined as achievement of at least a C average in content courses such as Math, Science, Social Studies, and English.

2. Students must have arrived in Canada with little or no English. Such students would likely have received some ESL support, whether in a traditional ESL class or in some other form. One informant had received ESL training in the Philippines after leaving Vietnam and before coming to Canada. Time spent in ESL classrooms varied between eight months and four years, six months.

3. Length of residence in Canada was arbitrarily set for approximately five years in keeping with research which suggests that it takes 5-7 years to develop language skills required for academic success. (See p. 15 above.) Three of the informants have been here longer, and many for a much shorter period.
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<td>11</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Cantonese</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AOA = age on arrival  
Other = other languages spoken  
NC = native country

Informants 7 and 8 are siblings.  
Informants 11 and 15 are siblings.  
Informants 16, 17, and 25 have been here some months longer than the suggested five years.
4. Students from a range of cultures were chosen in order to get some sense of possible variance between language groups (with the realization that there are also likely to be individual differences among those speaking the same mother tongue).

D: Data Collection

Following a request for participation, data was collected from four Vancouver Senior Secondary Schools. At an organizational meeting interested teachers who had responded were brought together and more fully informed about the aims of the study. They were provided with a written overview of the interview process and the schedule of questions.

These teachers were shown videos of the pilot interviews, and were made cognizant of the desired "conversational" and open-ended interview techniques, in order that interesting leads and the direction of the interview (i.e. to not be concerned with the order of questions, etc.) would allow full scope for the informants' answers.

The informants who were identified by the ESL teachers (according to the necessary criteria) were given advance preparation, outlining the purpose of the study and the reason they were chosen to participate. All were given the option of withdrawing at any time during the procedure, and
informed that they could refuse to respond to any of the questions. They had the opportunity to read over and discuss in advance any difficult or unclear points. This was a useful preparatory step, since many of the questions require introspective answers and memory recall. Advanced preparation lessened the possibility of informants' apprehension or lack of comprehension of questions, and likely resulted in time saved and with increased informant input during the actual interview.

Written forms filled in by students collected pertinent background information.

Interviews were conducted by three ESL teachers, and two subject area teachers. The decision to use a number of different interviewers was to take into account the informants' needs, since the teachers and informants had established a rapport and trust with each other. The interest and enthusiasm for the study on the part of the involved teachers was gratifying.

Two of the informants who could not be accommodated during this time were interviewed at a later date. Otherwise the interview sessions took place in June, 1987 over a two week period. In all cases the informants were available for further contact and this opportunity for clarification and/or additional information where required was helpful.
During the interviews none overtly refused to answer any of the questions, but there is of course no way of knowing whether they gave full answers to all the questions. The informants appeared to be comfortable, and a number of them reported that they welcomed the opportunity to be heard and to possibly benefit future ESL students.
Chapter IV

DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Introduction:

This chapter presents the informants' edited responses to the central question of this study, i.e. of what may be important factors in their school and home experiences which promote (or make possible) their academic success. In dealing with theoretical aspects of this problem (Chapter Two), a number of issues were discussed, i.e., that social interaction in L2 need not affect academic success, but that use of L1 to provide meaningful input and discuss abstract concepts may be important; characteristics of bilingual education and the importance of positive recognition of the minority student's L1 by the majority culture; affective factors relevant to ESL learners in regular classrooms; and differences in academic success between ethnic groups.

Here we will look to the informants' responses to compare their personal experiences with salient factors from the literature. An attempt will be made to determine whether students perceived that parental support played a role in their success, whether certain school programs were deemed particularly helpful, or whether the students had developed strategies for learning that they felt were responsible for this measure of success.
I have chosen to present the informants' responses under the headings of the schedule of questions as listed below, though allowing some flexibility in the order with which questions are to be discussed.

A: Perceptions About Canada and Native Country
B: Perceptions About Themselves as Students
C: ESL Experience
D: Experience in Regular Classes
E: Student Strategies
F: Home Effect on Schooling

Following each section I will summarize what appear to be salient issues which will then be discussed more fully in Chapter Five.

A: Informants' Perceptions About Canada and Their Native Country

Here informants speak of their families' reasons for immigrating to Canada and clarify their feelings about leaving their native land. They describe adjustments that were necessary since their arrival to Canada, and their future aspirations. It is assumed that the degree of their emotional well-being in a new land would ultimately affect their academic success.

The majority of the informants arrived in Canada through the efforts of determined parents seeking greater educational and economic opportunities for their sons and daughters.
Seven of the informants already had family ties in Canada, being sponsored by relatives presently living here, and expressed happiness at being reunited with a parent, grandparents or siblings.

**Int:** Why did you and your family move to Canada?

**I#14:** Probably for a better life. Canada is a big, underpopulated country, and if you work hard you will be successful.

**I#9:** My father says "my education" but I think financial problems. My father was unemployed for nearly ten years and thought that education and opportunities were better here. In Korea there is too much competition. Canada is a land of opportunity.

**I#22:** My father thought there was a better future for us here than in Italy. He came for his sons, not for himself.

**I#25:** For a better life for us. There is an uncertain political situation in China. Relatives here and in the U.S. could sponsor us. We were first accepted by Canada, so we came here. My parents still want to move to the U.S. They think that the schools (in the U.S.) are much better (than Canadian ones).

Others came as refugees, to escape the political turmoil in their native countries.

**I#2:** We were escaping—looking for justice and freedom. We were relieved at escaping and being alive.

**I#3:** The political situation in my country (Guatemala) is not good. I can't talk about the things that happened in my country.

**I#15:** The Russians came to Afghanistan and wanted us to change our religion.

**I#24:** Communists took over my father's business and sent him to work in a work camp. He escaped and came here, then sent for us.
Table II: Parents' Education and Occupation in Native Country and in Canada

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<th>OccNC(M)</th>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>maid</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>business</td>
<td>housewife</td>
<td>comp emp</td>
<td>housewife</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>engineer</td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>labasst</td>
<td>lab asst</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>PS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FE = Father's Educational Background  
ME = Mother's Educational Background  
ES = elementary school  
SS = secondary school  
TT = technical training  
PS = post-secondary  
AD = advanced degree
The informants appear to view Canada as a land of opportunity, providing upward mobility for those with potential who are willing to work. "Work" includes getting an education, an important pursuit of the informants. This faith in a future in Canada is confirmed by the fact that only four of the informants plan to return to live in their native countries (though three more would return with a change in the political situation.) I#9 reported that he would return to defend his country (Vietnam) if there was threat of an invasion by North Vietnam. I#22 envisions as the best of both worlds the possibility (when well set-up at age 40) of living six months of the year in each country.

Common to all the informants are the instrumental (rather than integrative) factors which originally prompted the families to move to Canada. They came to escape intolerable conditions in their native countries and/or to avail themselves of the comparatively higher standard of living and greater educational and economic opportunities. With the exception of I#21, whose father, a minister in the Korean church, was invited to come to work here, they have left everything behind, and are now attempting to survive and adapt to Canadian life while maintaining their own ethnic identity. Many expressed a desire to return to their country for a visit, but it is obvious that they now feel that Canada is where they will likely remain. I#20 expressed a potential problem with returning: "I'm used to living here and would have to readjust."
Informants expressed mixed reactions regarding the decision to move to this country.

I#9: I was excited. I thought Canada was farms and buffaloes. I was partly sad, but mostly excited.

I#18: No one told me. I just went because it was like going on a trip or something. I went with my aunt and four cousins (the same aunt he now lives with.)

I#24: I was sad to leave my friends, but happy to be seeing my father again. I was nervous about school.

In spite of the fact that their parents, in many cases, are underemployed according to educational background and positions held in their native countries, the student informants appear to have adjusted to Canadian life. (Table II compares parents' former occupations in their home country with present occupations here in Canada.) This is not to imply that our informants with their parents may not be under a great deal of pressure and stress; only that if this were the case the informants (with one exception as noted in the following) either did not recognize it or chose not to discuss it.

I#17: The last two years I've really slowed down on the homework. Lately I'm under stress and can't concentrate. Normally I just do my English homework and otherwise I cram at exam times. I know that this is not a good way, but I just can't help it. There's so much pressure.

Most found some aspect of Canadian life to enjoy.

I#8: I like the freedom here. I would change some people, not all, who stare at people who don't speak English.

I#2: Here there is good government, good law. People are fairly treated.
Table III: Comparison of Parental Expectations For Their Children With Informants' Own Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I#</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>Parent Expectation</th>
<th>Informant Aspirations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Electronics/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Informants Choice</td>
<td>Engineering/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Be successful</td>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
<td>University/Film-maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Post Graduate/Scientist</td>
<td>Electrical Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>Military College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Doctor or Lawyer</td>
<td>University or Mechanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Afghan</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Accounting Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Doctor or Biologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Accounting Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Afghan</td>
<td>Policewoman</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>Accountant/Historian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
<td>Doctor/Fashion Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>University/Pol Sci.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Univ. in Korea/Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Real Estate Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Nuclear Control Asst.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Informant's Choice</td>
<td>Commerce Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Medical Doctor</td>
<td>Chartered Accountant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I#9: In Canada you can try for anything. There's not much pressure and you can swim and play basketball. In Korea people are so competitive they wouldn't play with you. There is lots of pollution in Korea, and no time for activities such as students taking part in government.

I#7: China has a large population. Canada has fewer people, fresh water, and natural beauty.

I#16: I like the people. They're really friendly. People said "hi" right away, and that was the only word I knew.

I#22: Italy is more of a fun type of country, but here if you want you can have the same enjoyment as in Italy. It's easier for my parents to buy a house, because they can get a loan from the bank.

Whether the parents had themselves attended post-secondary institutions appeared to have little significance on their aspirations for their sons and daughters. Table III (p.44) compares the parents' aspirations for their children with those of the informants, which appear to coincide, and which, with only a few exceptions, include post-secondary education.

Summary

In general the informants appear to be aware of opportunities available here which were not open to them in their own countries, i.e. education, freedom, and economic opportunity. There appears to be acceptance (though in varying degrees) of their parents' decision to come here. Like other "independent self directing students" a high percentage of them are "college bound". Perhaps the determination of their parents to come here in order to assure an opportunity for their sons and daughters education puts a great deal of pressure on them to live up to their parents' expectations.
B: Perceptions About Themselves As Students

The informants have been identified by teachers as academically successful. They would appear to be model students -- highly motivated and responsible, polite, attentive and reliable. If positive self-image is a factor in success, does their self-image reflect their achievements, do they see themselves as "winners"? Do they feel that they are comfortably a part of Canadian school system? And given the encouraging results regarding cognitive advantages of bilingualism (discussed in Chapter II) how do the informants evaluate their own bilingualism?

Int: You seem to be a successful student. What do you think are the reasons for your success?

I#10: To tell you the truth I think that...there is not so many reasons. You just go home and do your homework and study hard. That's basically what I do.

I#22: You have to like school. I like to study and always liked to study until grade eleven. But in grade twelve I hated it because of social opportunities. Some extra time with the teacher after school will help you very much.

I#4: I study very hard -- late at night and early morning.

I#13: I don't feel all that successful but try my best to study. Now (in Canada) I have to work double harder. A Canadian student might study one hour. I have to study two hours just to finish it up.

I#17: You must study continuously and not try to cram things into a short period of time. If you don't understand something you must go and ask the teacher. Don't let everything pile up. Get help if you don't understand.

I#16: Student attitudes in Canada has to change a bit. They say, "What can I do? I'm dumb." It's not a good attitude. They should be able to do it (succeed in school). I've never failed a course. The lowest I got was a C. If they go to classes every day, and listen to the teacher in class, they should be able to get at least 50%. When people fail I'm surprised.
Though informants may appear to be passive, i.e. some do not speak out or interact in class, they are active participants in their education "behind the scenes", asking for extra help when they don't understand, doing extra studying and review, making certain they are keeping ahead in their work. Only one reported finishing homework at school.

Their willingness to live within Canadian customs suggests a comfortable adjustment and understanding of the Canadian situation.

Int: Should Canadian schools be more like those in your native country?

I#15: In Canada there is a population with people from many different places. So things can't be changed for everybody. It's okay how it is here.

I#22: Here most exams are written. In Italy oral tests are used for History and Geography. I would be more successful with oral tests as I enjoy talking to a person. Maybe that's not desirable for here with written traditions. Schools shouldn't necessarily change to suit immigrants.

I#16: Maybe Canadian schools shouldn't change because they (Canada and Taiwan) are two different cultures. Each has advantages.

The students appear to have adopted their parents' (and/or their countries') aspirations as their own.

I#25: My mother started me off at a young age to 'learn ahead' before everyone else. Every day we worked ahead at my lessons. When I got ahead my mother just let me do it on my own. Pride is instilled in me and I want to do well.

I#16: In Taiwan studying is the most important thing. People don't play around. I work hard and don't waste time.
They display this adult orientation in their comments about school also, showing little evidence of identifying with mainstream Canadian students. Indeed they appear for the most part to ally themselves with their teachers and to view the behaviour of some of their native speaking peers as immature and unacceptable. Questions about differences in the schools in their native countries, and what they would like to see changed in Canadian schools prompted the following responses:

I#24: Students should take care of the school. When I see the principal picking up garbage... (shakes her head.) In Vietnam it was the student's responsibility to look after the school.

I#13: There is too much freedom in schools that is used unwisely by students. There should be classes -- not brainwashing -- to teach students not to damage school property. Students smoke in the washrooms even though there are smoking areas. The school doesn't do anything about it. In hallways there is fighting. And there is a lack of respect for people's feelings. In Hong Kong school regulations are too tough and here there is too much freedom. If they combined the two it would be better.

It is not surprising that the informants do not entirely sympathize with native speaking students. Comparing the Canadian school experience with that in their native countries leads the informants to conclude that in many ways students in Canada have a rather soft time of it.

Int: How are schools here similar or different from the school you attended in your native country?

I#1: Schools are much harder in Spain. Teachers make you study harder and more. Over there the teacher talks real fast. If you don't understand you have to go to the blackboard. In Canada teachers are a lot more comfortable and easy going. They treat you like a friend. Over there you're Mister and I'm Mister ___. No first names.
I#9: School days are three extra hours longer. Most students did volunteer study after school and again in the evening and before school. We used schools for study due to crowded homes. There is more competition, less sports and PE in Korea. Classes are larger with 45 to 50 students. Once there were 100 students in my class. The teacher didn't know the students' names. Discipline is different. Here if students don't work teachers talk to them, then give up. In Korea the teacher forces the student to study. (When questioned further he mentioned corporal punishment as the means to force students.)

I#15: Here we get two days off. In Afghanistan only Friday morning to noon is a holiday.

I#24: There is lots of memorization for homework. Homework exercises are varied amounts, but less than here. School was one half day from 7:00 to 11:00, with one fifteen minute break. Subjects are changed each hour, with the teacher moving and students remaining in the same classroom. Students clean classes and the hallway. I liked this leadership role where the students take care of the class. Student leaders take attendance, copy assignments on the board, and mark the work. There is competition between classes, but cooperation and helping other students in our own classroom. You feel close to your classmates. Here students don't try very much to help other students. In Canada we just work for ourselves as individuals.

I#25: In China students love to learn and success in school and popularity are linked. Here marks aren't important and students who skip out can still be popular. People aren't judged according to their performance. In China students skipping out wouldn't be allowed. (When asked what would happen...) The teacher would visit the parents. Teachers and parents cooperate. You couldn't get away with it. Here society gives too much space. There is nothing the principal can do.

I#23: Schools here are easier. If you fail one or two courses you can still go on, and take these courses at summer school. In Colombia if you fail you are allowed to try the test again, but if you fail it a second time you must repeat the whole year.

I#19: Teachers are stricter and use punishment, while here teachers are not strict enough. Students don't listen.

Given the positive cognitive benefits with bilingualism as discussed in Chapter Two, it was of interest to discover whether the informants had perceived such benefits as
part of their own experiences. This did not appear to be
the case. To the interviewer's question, "Are there
benefits to learning another language?" six responses
indicated instrumental benefits and none responded that it
makes you a better student.
I#6: It helps for getting a job, and for travel.
I#22: It's better to find a job. (Used example of jobs at
Expo)

However, thirteen cited integrative benefits:

I#23: You can communicate with so many people.
I#20: The person who knows two languages are worth two men.
You can communicate with two different kinds of people and
learn (about) different cultures, too.
I#13: You get to know more about people, because before you
only know one language. In Vancouver it is a different
culture, you go into something new, but it is not that
new. The way people see things are different, but in some
ways similar too. I just feel kind of amazing like how
similar they are sometimes and how different they are in
another way.

The almost total lack of interest in the informants' L1
by the dominant culture is apparent from the response to the
question "Have you ever taught vocabulary from your first
language to other students or teachers?" However, the few
positive responses indicated that the experience had pleased
the informant.
I# 16: Sometimes I say "Happy New Year" or "How are you?"
It's very interesting to walk down the hall and the English
(ESL) teacher says, "How are you?" in Chinese. I think it's
fun.
I#10: No, you are the only one who speaks Chinese. (to the
same ESL teacher)
I#9: Yes, to friends and to the ESL teacher. They couldn't follow it. I think Korean is the most difficult language.

I#18: I taught a friend in grade nine to count in Vietnamese. That friend taught me to count in Chinese.

I#22: Mostly to say hi. I teach Italian to Canadians (of Italian origin) who can't speak Italian anymore.

I#21: Not really. Koreans who have been born here don't speak that well. If they want to (have him speak in Korean) I would be glad to.

Summary

These data demonstrate that the informants did not appear to think that the curriculum should change, but what they appeared to dislike the most was the lack of discipline of some of the regular Canadian students. Those Canadian students who, like themselves, are hard working and high achievers were not mentioned.

Very clearly the issue arises as to how earlier discipline and longer school hours in the home country influences present success in Canadian schools. The differing educational strategies and objectives, i.e. a concentration on memorization, corporal punishment, and formalities between teacher and pupil in the earlier experiences in the native countries are no longer strongly emphasized in general school life in North America. While imposed discipline appears to the informants to be slack in Canadian schools in comparison to their own countries, self-discipline and consistency are undoubtedly necessary for academic achievement, and may be even more necessary for the
students who must learn in their second language. Rather than the need to change in order to adjust to Canadian schools, it is a matter of applying their self-directed discipline in their present situation. Convinced that education (which they believe Canada can provide to those willing to prove themselves) is the route to an economically successful and satisfying future, the informants are motivated toward academic success.

However, I detected little or no awareness that the informants perceive of anything remarkable either in their achieving good marks while learning in their second language or of the bilingual outcome of their education. One might ponder whether they would feel more confident, and therefore perhaps achieve even more successfully, if the importance of their bilingualism were overtly recognized in the schools.

C: In The ESL Classroom

This section will report the informants' experiences in ESL support classes with the objective of determining whether these classes are considered important to their future academic success. Then an assessment of the informants' bilingualism will determine whether they are in the category of "additive bilingualism" deemed by educators to be important for the student's academic success as well as his/her sense of well being. It is also considered a criterion for judging the success of the education program.
This section will conclude with the informants' own recommendations for ESL classes.

Overwhelmingly the informants agreed that ESL classes are necessary for future academic success. What they expressed as particularly important include both affective and cultural factors in addition to the presumed academic role. These will be discussed in turn.

**Affective and Cultural Factors**

The ESL classroom appears to be viewed as a risk-free environment, an essential preparatory step toward regular classes, and one where friendships are made. For some informants ESL classes appear to replace the class solidarity missed from their native country, where the class studying the same program stays together over several years and the teachers move from room to room. Many continued to feel a bond with former ESL teachers even after being mainstreamed into regular classes, knowing that they could go to them for help if necessary.

Int: How do/did you feel in your ESL classroom?

I#8: It feels comfortable where people have the same problem. Also the ESL teacher was extra nice.

I#2: Very good. ESL people are very fortunate. You can get used to speaking English. You can speak slow and wouldn't be so ashamed because everyone is in the same situation.

I#24: It was comfortable because of meeting friends from other countries. It was easier to make friends.

I#19: Great. I met a lot of friends from other countries.
I#25: It is necessary to adjust to the different school system. Maybe ESL classes aren't necessary for all students. I would have liked to be in other classes sooner, but maybe for some shy students this wouldn't be so good. They wouldn't interact. At least to some extent students interact in ESL classes.

I#3: Moral support. Schools are smaller in Guatemala, and here you feel afraid.

It appears then that ESL classes have an important introductory role in helping minority students to feel comfortable and secure in their new school environment.

The ESL classroom is also an introduction to Canadian culture for new students.

I#13: In ESL you get more chance to speak and listen. You can ask about culture.

I#22: I never saw anyone from India before. They're very nice guys. (Before I met other people) I thought only Italians were nice.

Academic Role

The important role of the ESL classroom for academic success was expressed unequivocally. The question, "Are ESL classes necessary for later success in school?" prompted nineteen affirmative responses. Here the informants speak:

I#7: Yes, but at first I didn't think so. Looking back I realize it was necessary. It was quite valuable. I just now realized it when taking the English 12 government exam.

I#4: Yes, because the language is necessary. It would have been difficult to go right into content classes.

I#16: Yes, because when you go into regular classes the teachers don't pay much attention to you. There is hardly any discussion. You just listen to the teacher and hand in assignments.

I#10: Yes, because it gets you started on very basic things, like learning the alphabet.
I#17: Yes, because it prepares you from the very basics.

I#20: I think if ESL wasn't there I couldn't have made it this far. ESL was really the factor.

Given the general feelings about the value of ESL programs, the informants were asked to consider what ESL class work had contributed to regular classroom work.

Int: How did/does ESL help you most in your subject classes?

I#21: It gave a basic standing in English, and an understanding of what was going to happen in regular class.

I#16: It was useful not just for English, but English associated with other subjects like Math. You learn basic other things, not as difficult as regular classes, but helping you learn in regular classes.

I#3: Primarily it helps with English and some subjects like Science, with writing essays and reading English (literature) and Social Studies.

I#17: At the beginning I didn't know how to read a map. ESL classes teach map reading skills before grade ten geography.

I#13: There are different meanings for the same word. Like Math. What does that vocabulary mean with Math problems? What is the question really asking -- by something, from something. And I don't feel that sure about words that have to go together (verbs and prepositions). ESL helped by (my) learning how to give an oral presentation and how to write projects.

I#15: I didn't know enough English in content courses. ESL helps with vocabulary mainly. It teaches about Socials and Math.

The informants here have stressed the importance of learning language to prepare them for their regular classes. None said, for example, that learning the past tense is important, but rather stressed vocabulary related to their academic subjects.
"Additive Bilingualism"

All informants (with the possible exception of I#22 who lives here alone and seldom speaks her native Spanish) are in an "additive bilingualism" category, that is they will maintain their L1 while becoming increasingly fluent in the target language. However, this bilingual fluency is somewhat modified by the apparent loss of L1 writing skills, though most do read in their L1, and in a few cases a conscious effort is made to maintain written fluency.

Int: When do you read in your native language?
I#10: Chinese papers at home. I don't read in Chinese unless my father asks me to.
I#7: For Physics problems (for example) I read the English textbook. If it's not clear then I read the Chinese textbook. Reading in both languages makes it clearer.
I#19: I write letters but seldom read in Chinese. I'm losing it a little.

In no instances did there appear to be any motivation on the part of the informants to entirely assimilate into Canadian society by replacing their native language with English. Their native language is spoken in the home by all but the above mentioned informant. Fourteen of the informants also speak their native language with friends or others besides parents and siblings, and nineteen mentioned seeing native language videos and movies. Written fluency in the first language is, however, neglected with the exception of a few who make a conscious effort to practice the literacy skills. Only I#16 mentioned a conscious effort to seek out
as friends native English speakers in addition to those of his own language group.

A further indication that informants show elements of "additive" bilingualism (vs. assimilation) is apparent in their responses to the question, "When do you feel really happy at home?" Most cited their happiest times as being those occasions when the immediate or extended family was all together.

I#25: When my whole family, my grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles get together.

I#5: At dinner time because everyone is together and we can talk together in Mandarin.

I#14: When we are all together. It doesn't happen very often because my mother works two shifts in a laundry job. (She is the sole support for her family.)

I#19: When we are talking and joking with the family. We don't have that much time together.

Two exceptional responses were:

I#6: When I'm alone and can listen to music, watch TV and eat a snack.

I#23: When I'm alone or with my friends.

Given Canadian policy on multiculturalism, it is fitting that, for our informants, adjustment to Canadian society does not demand assimilation.

I#13: At school I speak Cantonese sometimes to friends who prefer to speak Cantonese with me. It makes a feeling of being closer, special. It's the same as in Hong Kong where a lot of white people who can speak Cantonese choose to speak English when they are together.
It is clear also, from their expressions of the importance to them of family gatherings, that maintaining one's first language also incorporates the maintenance of one's cultural and family ties.

Recommendations For ESL Programs

Here the informants speak to the question, If you were the ESL teacher, what would you change in order to help your students with their subject classes?

I#1: Spend more time, like after school, to help students with assignments and to explain vocabulary and language. Give reading instruction.

I#7: Put more work on the students because work means faster improvement.

I#9: We should memorize more vocabulary, maybe ten words a day. Take more dictations. Push students a little more.

I#16: Having students study in small groups would help. Help us to understand about Canadian life, how do people do things here? Why do they go on strike? It's really difficult because stuff in regular class isn't really simple stuff. But it's helpful to have people study regular class work in a group.

I#22: Make it last longer. The beginning year can be easy, but in second year it could be more of a regular class. They're doing that now (in transitional classes). That's very good. I'm talking about before they had those classes. Transitional classes give a lot of help in English.

I#24: Assign more essays. Practice speaking more. Do real schoolwork, like Social Studies and Science.

I#25: Teach the vocabulary from academic courses. Spend more time on vocabulary every day. I used to study vocabulary and it really helped.

I#20: Nothing. They are doing well. They always consider wanting to change things, evaluate the ESL program.

I#3: The program is good, but more speaking and reading would help. Teachers don't make the students talk enough to develop spoken English.
When asked what was useless and unnecessary, the informants responded with the following:

I#24: One block where students could read individually and study novels. We could do this at home.
I#23: Cut out all the singing. It's kind of stupid.
I#13: We don't have to spend so much time on one thing. When we get the idea we could move along.
I#16: Not anything, really, on looking back. When I went into regular class I realized that ESL had been useful. But at the time I had feelings, "Why am I doing this? It won't help me in regular class."
I#19: Nothing. Everything is to teach you to use the proper language.

Summary

While informants had a few complaints and suggestions, there was overwhelming acceptance of the importance of ESL support to assure future academic success.

Five felt that changes in ESL classes were unnecessary. Where changes were suggested they involved more, more, more... More time outside school hours to help students with their class assignments, to explain vocabulary and improve reading skills. (In other words, ongoing ESL support.) According to our informants, ESL classes should teach more vocabulary and reading, and provide more speaking and practice in oral presentations.

As for content, a role was identified for the ESL classroom as a vehicle to learn vocabulary related to specific subjects. A cultural role is to provide background
in Canadian history and about famous Canadians, and background to help informants understand about Canadian life, i.e. "Why do they (union members) go on strike?"

Affective factors such as moral support, a risk free learning environment, and an opportunity to meet friends, which were mentioned as having been important factors in their adjustment to Canadian schools, might therefore ultimately be a possible factor in their academic success.

Additive bilingualism might also be assumed to have a beneficial result, though as with other affective elements this is speculative. The fact that students are comfortable speaking their native language at school is an indication of a more accepting and humane attitude on the part of school administrators. Such acceptance may be an important factor in the academic success of these students.

D: The ESL Student in the Regular Classroom

In this section informants will relate their experiences when mainstreamed into the regular academic classroom. Such an exploration, in addition to identifying positive aspects, is intended to determine difficulties in particular subject areas, communication problems in the classroom, how informants prepare for their assignments and exams, what kinds of assignments and exam questions are easy or difficult, and how comfortable they feel within the classroom. This section of questions is meant to provide a description of the experience in order to better understand the informant within his/her school environment.
## Table IV: Informants' Subject Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I#</th>
<th>M/F</th>
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*GA denotes grade average, determined by assigning a number to, then averaging the letter grades, i.e. A (1), B (2), C+ (3), C (4), C- (5). The lower number denotes higher grade average.

Gen = gender
NC = native country
FS = favourite subject
LFS = least favourite subject
ES = easiest subject
MDS = most difficult subject
Responses to questions on subject preferences and subject difficulties are presented in Table IV, p 61.

Int: Is difficulty more often with language or with understanding content? (Specify if different for different courses, i.e. Math vs. Social Studies).

To this question ten responded that language is the main barrier to their understanding, six that it is the lack of understanding of the concepts, and eight expressed that both language and concepts cause them difficulty. This varied with different subjects:

I#13: There is difficulty with both the concepts and the language with Physics. But maybe if I understand English better it would help. But in Physics even if the teacher explains the words I still might not understand. In Social Studies it's different. If I look up a word I can understand it.

I#14: In Biology the language is the problem. In Math the language is not difficult.

I#21: It varies between subjects. The language is more difficult in Social Studies than in Math.

I#9: It depends on the subject. In Science content is most difficult. In Geography the content is easier than the language.

I#25: By now it's the concepts and content. It's the same for all subjects.

I#17: Probably the language. Sometimes you understand one meaning of a word, but some words have so many different meanings.

It is apparent that the informants have a number of likes and dislikes, and encounter more difficulties with certain subjects than with others. In order to get a sense of what is expected of students they were asked to relate some of their oral and written assignments and how they
prepared for them. Some examples are as follows:

Oral Assignments:
(History) on "Heritage Buildings in Vancouver".
(Social Studies) on current events.
(English) a presented topic a topic chosen by the student.
(English) on an author.
(French) a group presentation: "A Trip In The Jungle".

Written Assignments:
(Socials Studies) "Sundays in the 1920's compared with the present."
(Science) a report on Cockroaches.
(English) essay on a famous person.
(English) essay to critique a novel.
(Geography) unspecified written assignment.
(Science) A Biographical Report on a Scientist.
(Economics) unspecified essay.
(Consumer Education) weekly short assignments.

Preparation for oral and written assignments and exams were fairly standard and straightforward. For oral assignments most followed the procedure of researching, planning and then practicing the presentation in front of a friend, partner or family member. Most reported feeling nervous, with one exception, the Italian speaker who "enjoys talking to a person".

I#22: I just use a paper for notes, but when I speak I put it in my own words. I can make it funny and more interesting. Some students are just talking to the air or to the teacher. I had a lot of questions (audience response) after my assignment.
On preparing for written assignments:

I#17: I try to apply what I've learned into my writing. I try to make an outline, do brainstorming and develop into paragraph form. I proofread and then make a good copy. Sometimes I rewrite. For vocabulary I use a dictionary and thesaurus, and try to use a variety. I use a Chinese-English dictionary.

As for preparation for exams, eighteen of those who responded always study alone and three study sometimes with a friend or sibling for certain subjects. None reported studying regularly with another person, though they may seek clarification from a teacher or another student for those points that are not understood.

Int: How do you prepare for exams? (study alone / with friends / memorize information, etc.)

I#5: Study a lot at home. Understanding is more important than to memorize.

I#1: Leave the easiest for last and start with the hard ones. In Math I spend 1 or 2 hours doing the exercises, trying to do them by myself. For language heavy subjects I go through the book, reading and trying to get the main ideas. I highlight these and try to memorize them.

I#4: I don't memorize, but go by logic.

I#8: Do it day by day, usually after school, so that when exams come up there is no need to study for them. I can review only. Some things I memorize.

I#16: For provincial exams I studied an old test paper. I pick out the things I don't understand and go over them. I just drop the things I already know. I don't memorize. The questions give you questions in your mind. You have to find answers to them.

I#20: Having to write and express ideas is new to me. In Korea exams are mostly multiple choice. I give myself a question and try to write. I don't believe in memorizing.

I#25: Make chapter notes and memorize the notes. I mostly study alone, but it is different for different subjects. For French I need to practice with a friend.
I#12: I study alone. I take the important points and look over notes, then I test myself by asking myself questions and writing down answers. Otherwise I would forget about them.

Essay questions were mentioned as the most difficult type of exam questions for reasons as follows:

I#21: Paragraphs asking me to "explain in detail". If I memorize (in advance) I can forget one sentence and it's all off. The thought of this kind of process is psychologically scary.

I#20: Questions like "explain" or "describe". Questions that demand your English ability, that you have to write.

I#2: Algebra word problems. When vocabulary is uncertain it is hard to understand the question.

I#17: Written essays because of the English problem. Sometimes I get the idea but what I write is not that good. It pulls my mark down quite a bit.

I#3: Essay questions because you don't have the chance to rewrite what you've written.

In addition to essay questions I#24 added problem solving in Physics and Chemistry as also difficult, I#25 mentioned multiple choice questions because "sometimes they are tricky", and I#9 reported cloze exercises as most difficult.

As for easiest questions, calculations, one word answers and true and false were mentioned, but the overwhelming choice was multiple choice -- "multiple guess" as I#7 put it. Two mentioned multiple choice as giving you an extra chance; if you didn't know for sure, you could usually pick the right answer.

Int: Do your course teachers give extra help to ESL speakers?
I#1: Yes, if you don't understand you can go and ask. He (a certain teacher) doesn't mind explaining three or four times. All the teachers are helpful.

I#13: Some do, some don't. Most are too busy. Classes are large, and there isn't that much time for individual help. Sometimes teachers allow extra time, but I can be on time in my assignments (so does not need special concessions).

I#15: If you ask for help after school.

I#19: Sometimes, but some ask other students to help you. It's not like ESL teachers who ask you where you are and help you individually.

I#2: Sometimes they don't even notice I'm an ESL speaker, so there is no difference.

I#16: Most teachers give extra help, not just to ESL students but to anyone who wants help, ESL or regular.

I#17: Not really. Everyone is treated the same. You shouldn't expect the teachers to treat you differently because in university everyone should be the same.

Some of the informants mentioned a special rapport with certain course teachers.

I#24: I like Chemistry, Physics and Accounting because of the teachers. It's fun, no pressure and easy going teachers who are always in a good mood.

I#16: My Geography teacher had the ability to get things into your mind. When questions came out he would put that answer on the board. He gets you really involved in the subject and really interested.

The informants overall feel less comfortable in content classes than in ESL classes. This is understandable, given the different focus and structure of regular and ESL classrooms.

What makes the informants uncomfortable in regular classes?
I#19: I sometimes feel that some students are prejudiced. I feel left (alone) and unliked. Maybe it's because I don't speak that much. But this is changing. If you like to speak with others you need to know the language so you're not afraid to speak to others.

I#13: Teachers sometimes use Canadian expressions and I'm not sure what the teacher is trying to say. Sometimes you can explain, "I don't understand" and they think you are daydreaming. Sometimes they are so busy -- upset with noisy members of the class -- and don't welcome student questions. In Canada if you don't say anything you are chicken. In our culture it doesn't mean the same. Not saying something is polite. Sometimes students keep pushing day by day. When you (finally because of being pushed too far) say something back the students are so shocked and surprised, and after that they are so nice and polite to me.

I#2: My accent and my name. But practice and time will help.

I#16: Sitting in the back of the classroom when people in front of me are disturbing me.

I#9: My pronunciation. Other students imitate my wrong pronunciation and tease by telling jokes in slang (which the informant has trouble understanding).

I#4: Not any more, but at first Canadian students would make fun of me.

I#24: In some classes the teacher doesn't care about all the students -- just those who are good in their classes.

I#7: I get along with the students and teachers. No problem.

Volunteering answers in class and participating in class discussions was an uncomfortable experience for most. (It could be noted, however, that many native speakers also feel this reticence.) Of those who responded, five volunteer to participate, four do not. Thirteen qualified their responses:

I#24: I will answer questions if I know the answer, but I don't join in class discussions.
I#25: I prepare in advance for discussions. I check with my friends, "Do you know what I'm saying?" I volunteer in other courses, but not so much in English.

I#19: Yes, but I'm kind of shy to answer in whole class. It is improving. I never answered at first. But it would help if I talked more.

I#17: If the group is small I will ask questions. But I don't like to volunteer to the whole class.

I#8: I gradually feel more comfortable. Still I don't talk as much as I should and leave it up to others.

Int: How do you feel about being asked when you have not volunteered to answer? Is it the same for ESL class?

I#12: If I don't know (the answer) I get nervous. I get lost sometimes and don't know the answer. In ESL all the people are the same and the teacher always talked slowly so we understood.

I#3: Like any student I don't like it, but I answer as them as well as I can.

I#17: At first quite nervous. I try to answer if I know. If I don't know I just say, "I don't know." In ESL class I am more willing to ask questions. Everyone around you is the same. They won't laugh at me.

I#25: At first it made me really nervous. Now it doesn't bother me. In ESL it wasn't the same where everyone is at the same level and you won't get laughed at. Now I'll try not to make a fool of myself and only answer if I'm sure.

I#20: I am annoyed. I don't like teachers who just go around saying, "You. You. You." I feel nervous, and more nervous if I don't know the answer. I think that's what every ESL student feels. So when I get a teacher who asks a lot of questions it's really bad. Sometimes I sit at the back of the room.

I#21: I feel scared and say, "I don't know." It was different in ESL class because everyone knows you aren't a good speaker and understands when you make mistakes. There are things I might understand but I'm kind of afraid of it when I haven't tried it (to express them orally).

I#15: It's okay. If I don't know, that's okay too. Because for most other students it's the same. They don't know some things. It's the same for ESL class.
It is obvious that the informants show variations of discomfort which could be found in the wider population. However, in the case of the ESL informants the nervousness appears to be exacerbated because of the language difficulty and the fear of ridicule with mispronouncing a word.

I#14: Sometimes I know the answer but it just won't come out. When I'm asked I get nervous, even now. It's still the same. I'd rather volunteer the answer. In ESL it was quite different because usually in ESL class you tend to be more comfortable. Sometimes you don't know how to pronounce a word and you can just ask your neighbour.

Lack of active participation is detrimental to school success in some classrooms where students are evaluated on oral participation. This fact places a heavier penalty on students who lack confidence in speaking. The informants perceive this as a distinct liability.

Content teachers face the task of providing meaningful information for all students; comprehensible input becomes increasingly difficult as concepts to be presented become more abstract and further removed from the present context. Of course teachers are aware of the problem of modifying language to explain content. One informant realizes that, "Sometimes the language used is difficult even for native speakers. And the reading. You have to read it two or three times to understand it." (I#3) An added handicap for ESL students, already at a greater disadvantage given that instruction is offered in their second language, is the lack of a "shared background of experience" for understanding much of the material being presented.
I#17: There is so much missing background like ancient Greece and historical events that I have no idea what's going on. I get the literal meaning only. Reading between the lines is difficult. But in Science it's okay, because it's straightforward.

Informants reported some perceived problems with classroom lectures and offered a number of suggestions which dwelt more specifically on the classroom teachers' style and clarity of presentation. For example, many suggested that it would help them to understand lectures and to take notes if teachers would stress and repeat important words and ideas and write them on the board. Inability to listen and take notes at the same time was cited by several informants as a difficulty -- they appreciate when teachers give students enough time to jot down important ideas and vocabulary.

In most cases those informants who reported difficulties with slang or use of idiom were unable to cite specific examples where this had occurred. One mentioned idiomatic phrases in Algebra without specifying. Another cited the novel "Huckleberry Finn" as an example of idiomatic usage which made understanding very difficult. Still another felt that slang and idiom was more problematic for informal conversation, where "a piece of cake means easy", than for subject courses. Specialized vocabulary according to subject, such as determining which of a number of dictionary definitions to choose when vocabulary becomes specialized according to subject area, was more often cited as a communication problem in class than use of slang or idiom.
While the informants have a number of difficulties which would appear to be similar to those of the general population, i.e. difficulty understanding content and lack of confidence in speaking in front of the class, these problems are almost surely exacerbated because of their non-English background. The fact that many mentioned incidents where they had been ridiculed for their accents attests to this. Communication problems also result in receptive situations such as difficulty in understanding due to the teacher's delivery, which they find at times too quick or too difficult. Notetaking while the teacher is speaking is difficult when the informant must devote full attention in order to understand what is said, and they would appreciate the repetition of important points and time left to make a note of these. Finally, some informants express a lack of background in western thought which native speakers would have learned from early childhood experiences through to the present. This appears to be a particular deficit for the study of English Literature and Social Studies. Table IV (p 61) indicates that English and Social Studies are overwhelmingly the most difficult subjects, particularly for the informants of Asian background.

On the positive side students appear to have worked on a number of interesting and useful assignments, and several commented on enjoying the classes of a particularly gifted
and/or understanding teacher. Such student/teacher rapport is, no doubt, a beneficial factor influencing the academic success of students.

E: Student Strategies

A major issue as ESL learners go about learning context-reduced, abstract material is that of "meaningful input". When they do not understand due to difficulties with the language of instruction, how do they cope? In the earlier discussion of the literature it was noted that the students who were most successful academically were those who had the opportunity to discuss concepts in their L1. (Saville-Troike 1984) Will this also be one of the strategies of these "academically successful" informants, or will they rely on native English speakers, students or teachers, to further define the concepts in L2?

This section will explore the informants responses to questions about their own learning strategies which might contribute to their success and to relate what they would consider to be useful changes to help students succeed.

When they do not understand the concepts due to their difficulties with the language of instruction, many of the informants responded by making use of L1, particularly at their initial introduction into regular classes.

I#20: I used a Korean Bible to help me understand English literature.

I#25: It is always in Chinese when my brother helps me.
I#7: I have correspondence books from my uncle in China for Algebra, Physics and Chemistry. In Algebra and Physics I used Chinese so I did well. I didn't read many Chemistry problems (in Chinese) so I didn't do as well. For me it's good, (i.e. a good method) but it depends on time.

I#11: At first my uncle helped me with my school work in Persian. But not now.

I#5: My parents help me study (in Mandarin).

I#21: I think in Korean. For written assignments I go to my brothers and sisters for help. Notetaking is also in Korean. (Translate notes at home and writes in English.)

Six of the informants use (or have used) textbooks and encyclopaedias written in their native language. Four others said that they would use them if they were available. Thirteen do not use them because they feel this is not a good method. As for dictionaries, six informants use an English dictionary only; three use a bilingual dictionary and nine use both kinds. Those who make use of both kinds use them for specific occasions, i.e. when writing in Chinese. For their school work they try the English one first, then resort to the bilingual one when they don't understand the English definition.

Eleven of the informants do not use L1 for academic work. Nine use the native language and two did in the beginning but no longer do so very often. One informants' father asks her to translate her school work to the native language in order to explain to him what she is doing at school. While some informants indicated that translating for notetaking, etc. would be a very time-consuming and inefficient method, others appear to depend upon the use of L1 to provide "meaningful input" in their content courses.
In response to the question, "When you have difficulty with your school work to whom do you go for help?", the responses were as follows:

- course teacher after school -- 7
- ask course teacher during class -- 0
- course teacher and ESL teacher -- 5
- course teacher or a friend -- 1
- friends only -- 1
- ESL teacher or teacher librarian -- 1
- ESL teacher or friend -- 1
- family members or teachers -- 5
- books -- 1
- tries to work it out alone -- 1
- native speaking student -- 1
- ESL friend, i.e. friend from same lang. group -- 6

The decision on who to go to is based on the following:

I#7: The subject teacher because teachers are smarter than friends.

I#10: At school to the ESL teacher because I know them better (than the subject teacher) At home I will ask my uncle.

I#25: I ask my brother for all other subjects, and my friends for English. I don't choose teachers because it is always at homework when the problems arise.

I#15: I ask friends first if they know how to do it. (Among his friends he is the one who usually goes to a teacher for help, then explains to friends.) I don't mind being seen as the dumb person. So much I learn.

I#12: I ask the teacher after school. I will ask a question in class if I really have to. There's noone in my family to help.
I#20: Maybe sometimes I ask a friend when the question is going to seem really silly.

When asked if friends are important for school success, the informants responded:

I#7: For some smart people they can do both (make friends and succeed in school). But for me friends distract. I will go out with friends when I am grown up.

I#13: Yes, because you can ask and get help if you don't know something. They can proofread your written work. Also for support. School is a place for you to learn how to live with other people and learn social skills.

I#16: Yes, because you tend to follow what your friends are doing. Brainy friends who get straight A's taught me to separate fun time and study time -- to say no. Athletic friends can teach you to take things easy. I get to know each type and learn from each type. It's not a good idea to hang around certain groups, like privileged groups who tempt you to do things just to fit in. I don't do that.

I#25: Yes, because friends influence you. It depends on what kind of friends. It is important to choose carefully.

I#8: Yes, very. Sometimes friends understand problems when your parents don't.

It would appear from these responses that friends are considered only marginally important for academic success, but that they meet strong affective needs, i.e. emotional support and belonging.

In many cases the informants' grade achievements would be acceptable for high achieving native speaking students. Given the fact that several of these students work part-time (up to 20 hours per week out of necessity) and are learning in their second language, their achievements appear even more remarkable. (See Table V, p76, showing hours of homework and hours spent in outside employment.)
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<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
<td>friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>-1**</td>
<td>friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
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<td>2-3</td>
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<td>alone</td>
</tr>
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<td>19</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>up to 7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>alone*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*denotes usual study time is alone, but with friends for specific subjects or occasions.

**This is the student who has slowed down because of stress. She does minimal homework, then crams at exam time.

Hrs/HW = hours of homework per day.
Hrs/Emp = hours of employment per week.
Int: What school experiences from your native country have helped you here in Canada?

I#2: The rules in my country are strict and I used to have harsh tests. Here it is easier, so I don't have problems.

I#13: The way of the culture and the school regulations are really tough (in Hong Kong). It was too strict. I learned to work harder, so here it is automatic to complete assignments on time and other things.

I#14: You have to do more in my native country. I got used to working really hard.

I#22: Schools in Italy required more homework. In Grade 7 I was studying four hours a day. Here I study three hours a day. And there you go to school on Saturday. Here you get extra time on the weekends to study.

I#25: My attitude toward school. Earlier discipline and longer hours help me in Canada. I am used to using extra time for school work.

I#6: Math and Science in my native country helped prepare me for here.

Int: What are important things to do to be successful in school?

I#25: Study and review. Lots of repetition helps. Ask questions when you don't understand. To learn a second language you shouldn't be shy.

I#22: Get a lot of extra help from teachers. Make better friends with teachers. I've had lots of "friend" teachers (i.e. teachers with whom he has established a rapport). They'll help you -- give you that extra help that you need. (He uses the example of his geography teacher.) I was there every day. At the end he gave me an old exam to help with the final. I was the only one (to whom he gave old exam papers) because I was there every day. He saw that I really wanted to get through. If you see a teacher really cares for you, you will study more to show the teacher how much you appreciate what he has done for you.

I#16: Your attitude. Accept things and friends the way they are. I found that I can make friends individually, not with just one group.

I#17: You have to read more variety, with different writers. Don't restrict yourself. Sometimes go out with friends. You pick up different things.
I#11: You have to study. And have good parents. You need to have a comfortable life or otherwise your mind won't be on your work.

I#24: Keep asking questions and go for help with problems. Do your homework. Reading is good for essays.

I#1: Study hard and take everything seriously. Don't waste time in class.

I#7: Don't make too many friends. Work hard.

Int: If you were the teacher what would you change in order to help students learn better?

I#12: Treat everyone the same. Don't play favourites. Teachers favour the smart students who talk a lot in class.

I#16: Find out what problems the students are having. Help them understand on an individual basis, because usually after the first time they won't have problems at all.

I#17: Teach about historical events and (promote) understanding of the country. Teach more vocabulary.

I#22: Spend more out of class time with the students. But most teachers do that now.

I#8: Know the students personally. Go to them and ask if they need help.

I#2: I wouldn't put too much pressure on students. Students should have the feeling that they are successful.

I#4: Put more restrictions, more homework, extra work.

I#24: Explain carefully and make sure students understand. Give time to copy notes, not while explaining. Accept good reasons for not doing homework. (Explains that she had felt unfairly penalized for a late assignment when she had been ill. Because of her part-time job she had been unable to remain after school to explain to the teacher that her illness was the reason for the late assignment.

Summary

Here an attempt has been made to assess strategies employed by the informants which may be relevant to their academic success. Use of L1 was found to be necessary for
many of the informants, and in varying degrees. Help through L2 was usually sought from teachers -- mainly their course teachers -- rather than native speaking peers. Some informants felt more comfortable asking their ESL teacher for help. Only one of the informants mentioned seeking help from a native speaking student. Friends were considered to be important for school success, but mainly important for affective reasons such as moral support.

It is obvious that most informants find homework necessary for success in school. Depending upon assignments, some will spend up to seven hours in one night to accomplish their school tasks. When outlining their views on the effects of former school experiences it is apparent that they were used to longer school hours and harder work in their home countries, so did not find it unusual to spend a lot of time at their homework. It is apparent that, like other "independent self-directing students" they have little unscheduled time.

In looking at their hours of work and homework it is apparent that some are paying a high price for their measure of academic success. In one case an informant appears to be suffering symptoms of stress which might benefit from professional counseling. It was obvious during the interviews that certain informants are under inordinate pressure to succeed at school in addition to holding an outside job to provide, in some situations, necessary financial assistance for their families.
E: Home Effect On Schooling

Having arrived after ten years of age, the informants for this study had already attended school in their native country for a number of years. In Cummins' terms they would already have developed a degree of CALP, a "common underlying proficiency" which is transferable to L2. Attitudes toward school and learning would already have been substantially formed.

Discussed above are the motivations for the family to have moved to Canada. The parents in most cases were seeking greater future opportunities for their sons or daughters. Here we will explore the parents' concerns about their children's education, about Canadian schools, and the extent of their own direct involvement in the schools. The informants' perceptions of those aspects of their home life that might relate to academic success will also be presented.

Int: What do your parents feel about education?
I#1: Education is the main thing in your life. Without an education you are nothing.
I#3: They are happy that I'm getting a good education. It is important to them that I continue.
I#9: They think it's important and that's the reason for coming here (to Canada).
I#22: They feel the same way I do, that without an education you're a nobody.
I#20: They feel strongly about the importance of an education. They really want me to go to post-secondary education even if I don't want to.
Above (see Table II, p41) is a comparison of parental expectations for their children with those of the informants themselves. In most cases parents wished their children to complete post-secondary education, though few had chosen a specific profession. The usual message appears to be, "Go on to university, but make your own choice about what to study."

Int: What future plans do your parents have for you?

I#8: Go into post-graduate training and be something big like a scientist. That's my interest and my parents are happy with this also.

I#24: Go to university and get a good job if that's what I choose. Otherwise find a job if you can't do it. I don't get pressure (from parents) but lots of encouragement.

I#25: They wanted me to become a doctor, but accepted my choice to be a chartered accountant. They accept my choice as long as I go to university.

I#17: They want me to go to university, but to decide for myself what I want to do.

I#21: I told them I would be a writer and go back to Korea. They just agreed with me.

I#13: In my family we plan our own future. My parents allow us to make our own decisions.

I#20: My father wants me to be a lawyer, but in the end would say "Do what you want to do". I think the reason is that lawyers earn a lot of money. It's not too hard a job, a lot easier than janitor or landscape work.

I#22: They told me it's my life. If I make a mistake I can't go back and say "You told me to do this. It's all your fault." I should be my own man. Take my own responsibility.

Int: How do your parents help you in your school work?

I#11: My mother wants me to become a doctor. She doesn't allow me to do any housework, so that I have more time to study.

I#25: Their attitude has instilled in me the desire for success.
I#21: They don't force me to study. I think it's really great. Lots of students get too much pressure from parents and my parents don't do that. When I feel free I can do the things I want.

I#24: My parents have confidence that I'll do my work. They don't help with the actual work. Sometimes they give prizes for success, but when I do bad they just encourage me for next time.

I#16: They let me know that if I fail I can try again. It's not a big deal.

I#4: My parents don't help directly, but are encouraging about school.

I#15: They don't know that much English. But sometimes if I need to write a story my father tells a story in Persian and I translate it into English.

In many of the above responses there is a sense of the parents empowering their children, providing them with strong values and support while allowing them to make real decisions about their own futures.

While many of the informants mentioned "indirect" help, i.e. moral support and encouragement, eleven interpreted this question to mean direct help with assignments or homework. These eleven reported that they get no help from parents because their parents are uneducated and/or do not speak English.

The parents have very little direct contact with the teachers and schools attended by their sons and daughters, yet for mainstream students parent/teacher interaction is generally perceived as being desirable to promote success.

Int: Do your parents meet with your teachers? When?
I#8: In grade six, but not since then. They're busy and not worried about me in school. They know I'm doing well.

I#2: My guardians have not, but my cousin visited. My guardians don't even realize that I'm doing well. They think it's important that I go to school, but otherwise they don't have any contact.

I#1: They've visited a few times. They like it. My brother would come (to visit teachers) if there were problems.

I#10: No, they don't have time for that. They both work. They know that I'm trying my hardest and that's all anyone can do.

I#25: No, because of the language problem. They are confident that I am doing fine.

I#15: My parents have met teachers, but not at school. My mother invited the ESL teacher to come to our house. She liked the teacher very much.

I#23: My brother lives with my father, and he came one year ago. I doubt that my father ever had contact with the school.

I#16: My father has to go for dialysis every Thursday. Usually teacher nights are on Thursdays.

I#17: My sisters and brothers (and I) look at each others' report cards and encourage each other. My parents don't go to Parents Night.

I#20: My father visited the school counsellor for post-secondary education planning. I was really worried and didn't want him to meet the teacher. But you know I think it showed me that he really cared about my education.

I#13: My oldest sister came to the school last year.

When asked what their parents like or dislike about Canadian schools, five parents were reported to generally like Canadian schools, eight as disliking some aspects, seven indicated both likes and dislikes and five offered no comments.

I#15: They like it, but they don't like too much freedom which is here in the schools. They don't like the mix of boys and girls.
I#5: They like it because teachers are not too strict. But they think school days should be longer and (school in session) six days.

I#13: They don't know much about Canadian schools. They probably have no comment at all.

I#8: In Canadian schools you can have your own idea and express more. Sometimes teachers are not strict enough and don't give enough discipline, too much freedom.

I#2: They wouldn't want programs such as sex education. (But--the student feels that such programs are necessary.)

I#1: They like it. Soccer fields are bigger. They like the aspect that it's easy to change from one subject to another one. I can't think of anything they would like to change.

I#23: My mother has never been here. My father dislikes the way teachers are treated by students. Here a student can tell a teacher where to go and nothing happens -- the student is just kicked out of class. In Colombia the student would be suspended and the parents would have to come to school.

I#24: They don't like the idea of having boyfriends and dating. In Vietnam students do not pair off. They wish students would keep the school clean and that they were more polite.

I#16: They think Canadian students are too free and they (his parents) have stereotyping of people who don't study or who smoke as being bad. But I think it's because people have had different choices.

I#25: You are training with Caucasians. You should act according to your culture, not try to imitate Caucasian culture. They think there are better programs in the U.S. where there are more prestigious universities. Also it's softer here than in China where school is six days a week, so, "Do better".

Summary

Education appears to be perceived by the parents as the cornerstone for building a secure and successful future -- a perception shared by the informants. It also appears that, having instilled such values into their children, they (the
parents) allow their children a degree of personal choice and responsibility for their future plans. They appear to have confidence in their children's abilities to succeed. The students appear to accept that their parents are pleased and confident with their school performance, and do not require that they become involved in school visits, etc.

However, the account of the informant who originally was not comfortable about his father's visit to the school, but was nonetheless pleased at the outcome because it showed him that his father really cared about his future, raises the question of whether such interaction might not profitably be encouraged more. While Vancouver School Board policy allows for interpreters for parental interviews when language is a consideration, it is possible that the parents (at least those relevant to this study) are unaware of the opportunity to inform and question teachers about their concerns.

Some parents have concerns about different cultural values found in Canadian schools, i.e. coeducation, dating, etc. This could place conflict upon the informants, who may agree with some of the Canadian ways and yet defer to their parents. From the informants responses it is nevertheless clear that strong parental and family ties provide a sense of belonging and support, though there are examples of home pressures, i.e. the mother working two shifts in a laundry to support her children. Such situations would likely put a
great deal of pressure on students to succeed. It may be that lacking such support from their families might cause many ESL students to fail or drop out of school.

Summary of Chapter IV

This presentation of the data is an attempt to illuminate the lives of ESL students within a particular bilingual educational framework with the purpose of allowing teachers a clearer understanding of what is involved in their pursuit of academic success. In Chapter III a distinction was made between quantitative and qualitative research. A quantitative approach, for example, might seek to prove cause-effect relationships. Here no such claims can be made. While examining a number of issues, i.e. parental involvement with the schools, use of L1 and L2 for meaningful input, amount of homework, additive bilingualism, etc., no claim can be made that one or the other is responsible for the informants' academic success. We have identified difficulties faced by ESL students, realizing that these are many of the same difficulties as mainstream students, i.e. nervousness about oral work in the classroom or understanding difficult and abstract concepts. Though no "proof" can be presented that difficulties are exacerbated because of their ESL nature I believe that the data indicates the informants' real fears. In collecting data neither has there been any attempt to examine and compare the success of these informants with failure of other ESL students. Here the informants have expressed their
experiences and aspirations in the hope that they will provide insights for instruction and further research. These issues will be discussed further in Chapter V.
Chapter Five

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I will first attempt to address the central question for this study, i.e. what these twenty-five informants can tell us about their experiences of successfully getting their education in their L2, by comparing the data with relevant issues which have previously arisen in the literature. Following this will be a general discussion on points which, to my knowledge, have not yet been touched upon in previous literature. Then I will address the question of what might be implications for instruction arising from the data, and possible areas for future research.

A: Relevant Issues From the Literature

Returning to the theoretical framework for our questions, discussed in Chapter 2, I will now look for practical manifestations in the experience of the informants which appear to be related to academic success. The literature alerts us to consider the following:

1. Use of L1 for academic learning
2. Interaction with native speakers
3. Vocabulary as the language skill most related to academic success
4. "Additive" qualities for assessing bilingual programs
5. Differences according to ethnic groups
I will discuss each in turn.

1. Use of L1 For Academic Learning

In this section I will first discuss the use of L1 in the present school situation in the host country of Canada, followed by the informants' perceptions of how education in their native country might influence present academic success.

In Canadian Schools

Saville-Troike states that what really made a difference for academic success was the opportunity to discuss the concepts they were learning in their native language with other children or adults. She adds,

We need to recognize that there is a qualitative difference between the communicative tactics and skills that children find effective for meeting their social needs and goals and those that are necessary for successful academic achievement in the classroom. The lowest academic achievers in our sample were among the most successful at interpersonal communication, especially with other children... The few students in our sample who could cope with independent instructional activities in regular classrooms possessed skills that are not generally taught in ESL classes at the elementary school level but could be, such as how to make good use of a bilingual dictionary... Developing social language skills is a desirable but insufficient goal for English teaching and (ironically) may even interfere with academic achievement. (Saville-Troike 1984, 216)

She argues that in teaching ESL we must forego the short term goal of teaching language for social interaction only, emphasizing that academic competence should be the desired outcome if we are to fulfill our responsibilities to our students and to justify the time spent in ESL classrooms.
As with Saville-Troike's experience, and in what appears to support the BICS/CALP distinction raised by Cummins, the use of L1 also proved to be important for many of the informants in this study, particularly in the beginning of regular courses, in notetaking, independent study and getting help. As reported in Chapter IV, some mentioned the help of older siblings, ESL friends who had taken the course, an uncle or a parent. They also mentioned the practice of discussing homework, etc. at noon hours with friends from their native language group.

As for written L1 material, bilingual dictionaries proved helpful for some informants. Some used text and reference books from their native language, and others expressed that they would have used them if they were available. I#2, a Vietnamese speaker here for two years, reported only recently finding some material about Canadian society, written in Vietnamese. He said it was very helpful and felt that translations of Canadian history texts, etc. would also be useful to new arrivals, particularly at the beginning of their time in regular classes.

The most dramatic example of use of L1 for academic learning cited above, is that of I#7 whose uncle in China sent him Chinese language correspondence courses for Physics, Chemistry and Algebra. This student has been here for five years: for him use of L1 for academic learning does not appear to be diminishing with time. However, he himself indicated that, though effective, it is a time consuming
method. He stated that lack of time prevented his studying Chemistry in both Chinese and English, and this was reflected in his lower mark for Chemistry compared to that for Algebra and Physics (which he had studied using his "dual language" method.) His final mark for these three courses are B, A, A respectively. (At the same time he expressed the same concern raised by Pavelich 1978, to be discussed in further detail below, with his statement that English "will kill me at university".)

The method of using L1 to understand concepts was not initiated as school strategy (though it might be). In response to their need for meaningful input an uncle, father, older sibling and native language reference material, all resources outside school, were instinctively sought out by the students themselves.

In the Home Country

If discussion of academic concepts in L1 is important in the host country, then we might expect previous education experience in the home country to be important also, because it provides individuals with the opportunity for discussing academic concepts in their L1 and would be expected to make a major contribution to the underlying proficiency (CALP) described by Cummins (1984, 136).

Several of the informants (who all arrived later than ten years of age when they had had an opportunity to develop
CALP in L1) equate their success in Math and Sciences with earlier scholastic experiences in their native countries. What appears to have happened in several instances is that Math and some Sciences were previously learned in the home country, and therefore the abstract concepts in the present Canadian context offered little challenge. It was only left to the students to find the L2 labels to apply to the concepts. To paraphrase Cummins (see p.13 above) if you already know the concept in L1, then substituting a new label for it in L2 is a simpler process than having to learn both the concept and label through L2. In certain cases the informants here are saying that Math, already learned before coming here, may even be a bit boring.

I#5: Math is my least favourite subject because it's too easy. I already learned it in my country.

I#6: Math and Science in my native country helped prepare me for here.

It is obvious that the informants brought from their native countries other important educational tools besides academic proficiency already learned in certain subjects. These include the discipline to study long hours to succeed, and will be discussed in Part II, Section B. What they could not bring and must take the time to internalize here if they are to broaden education horizons, is the fluency to enable them to meet requirements in other, i.e. humanities courses. (This issue will be discussed in Part II, Section C.)
2. Interaction With Native Speakers

Saville-Troike's observation that developing social language skills may even interfere with academic achievement appears to be borne out in the data for this study. Perhaps the highest achiever is I#7, who won a provincial Math competition and the top Physics prize for his graduating class, was also was the most unequivocal about the lack of importance of friends for academic success.

I#7: For some smart people they can do both (have friends and achieve high marks). But for me friends distract. I will go out with friends when I grow up.

While the informants for this study appeared to display competent social skills, many did not appear to seek maximum exposure to L2, and overwhelmingly academic success appears to have had priority over social and leisure activities. Most reported studying alone, maintaining busy schedules of homework, and many also worked at a part-time job, leaving little time for socializing. When they do seek out interaction with native speakers it is most often to their teachers for help with their courses. It does not appear that their native speaking peers occupy a major role in their lives.

Where social and affective factors are considered as desirable, informants offer reasons that are unrelated to academic success. I#16, who wished for more interaction between ESL and native speaking students is referring to friends for other than academic reasons:
Int: If you could make changes in the running of the school, or in the way your classes are presented, what would you like to change?

I#16: I would like to have ESL students associate more with other students, enjoy doing things (together) with a group. Have people who have been to ESL classes and regular classes do activities together and help new ESL students. I enjoyed tutoring other ESL students, and games like volleyball. But doing it casually is better.

I#16, in wishing more interaction with native speaking students, is in contrast with many of the informants who expressed surprise and dislike for what they perceived as the lack of respect shown by their native speaking counterparts. They, themselves, defer to their parents and teachers rather than identifying with Canadian born students.

3. **Vocabulary as the Language Skill Most Related to Academic Success**

Vocabulary learning is cited as an expressed need by several informants, again appearing to confirm the findings of Saville-Troike (1984), who advocates more emphasis on vocabulary learning and less on conversation. The specialized vocabulary for academic subjects was identified by the informants for this study as one of the communication blocks in content courses. Idiomatic expressions, perceived by informants as more related to conversational needs, were not considered as a problem for academic situations except for the example of Huckleberry Finn which requires an understanding of English conversation as an academic subject.
This finding tends to confirm that the education model of concentrating on content in ESL classes is a positive one for academic success. Informants appreciated the transitional courses, designed for this purpose, and the ongoing tutoring and support in English language centres.

However, while accepting that vocabulary related to content courses is likely more important to the informants than, for example, the past tense or some other grammatical focus, it is possible that vocabulary content might be chosen by the informants as most helpful because this is a learning activity common in ESL support classes. Had there been emphasis on other aspects, i.e. training in study skills such as previewing and advance organizers, finding the main idea, etc., informants may have made other choices.

4. "Additive" Qualities for Assessing Bilingual Programs

Theoretical concerns for "additive" bilingualism as a criterion for success in bilingual programs has been discussed in Chapter II. In addition, it is compelling to compare "then" and "now" when faced with evidence of past education policies directed against minority students (Ashworth 1979).

While bilingualism (the conscious attempt to preserve and nurture the L1 of the student while L2 is added) may not be a specific academic objective in monolingual immersion programs, the model for the informants for this study, the present data, nonetheless, indicates an encouraging change in
the school environment from the days when ethnic minority students were not allowed to speak their native languages at school, suffering policies which were at worst racist, at best an ethnocentric belief that use of the native language would diminish students' progress in English.

The fact that our present day informants readily report speaking their L1 both at home and at school, and that they used L1 textbooks, etc., is an indication of positive changes which have occurred in pedagogical practices.

That all informants appear to be maintaining their first languages indicates that L1 use (and therefore recognition of the importance of "additive bilingualism") is at least no longer officially discouraged in our society. I believe such acceptance likely to be a strong affective reinforcement for the students. However, there was little awareness on the part of the informants of the cognitive benefits of bilingualism which are based in theory and research. Some "official" recognition of their bilingualism might serve to make them more cognitive of their remarkable accomplishments. The "double standard" (see p.9 above) comes to mind. Surely native speaking students who had become as fluent in a target language as these ESL informants, would receive a great deal of credit and positive feedback. This strategy is obviously not one with which these informants are familiar.

Some informants' indicated that there is still a lack of acceptance by some English Canadians who resent people who
don't speak English. Also there is the overall fear of speaking out in class, particularly at the initial stages of introduction into regular classes. So there remains some "unofficial" lack of acceptance.

Also, when examining the ESL experience we will see that there are some inequities. For some time European languages have been recognized for study and credit in Canadian secondary schools as a subject for credit. The three Spanish speakers are able to benefit from their L1 to the extent that Spanish is a subject which can be taken for credit. They can enroll in Spanish for an easy credit. This year Mandarin and Japanese have been introduced in school districts taking part in the Pacific Rim initiatives program. However this option is so far unavailable to those in the other language groups. If bilingualism is truly an accepted educational objective (as it appears to be for French Immersion, for example) then all bilingual students should deserve credit towards high school graduation based upon their knowledge of their native language. It would cost nothing to implement such a policy, which would serve to acknowledge the achievement of bilingualism for ESL learners as with native speakers, and would demonstrate positive acceptance of minority languages. Practically it could also free up a block of course time for improvement of English skills in a non-credit (since credit is deserved for their knowledge of L1), and therefore non-threatening, program. Students would, of course, have to demonstrate
mastery of their L1, both spoken and written. For example they might be asked to write in L1 a major essay on a suitable topic. Native speakers of these languages could mark them to assure a standard comparable to that attained by students in French Immersion programs.

5. Differences According to Ethnic Group

With the initial selection of informants the intention was to achieve a balance of many factors, including home and ethnic background. What we ended with is an overrepresentation of Asian students. There may be at least two reasons to explain this imbalance. First there is a higher percentage of Asian speaking students in Vancouver than other groups such as Afghani and Hindi. Secondly as touched upon in Chapter II, Asian students are statistically shown to be more academically successful than other groups regardless of SES (see p22 above). It appears that this is borne out in this study. There was no attempt to control for SES, and it is apparent from Table II (p41) that there is a wide range as indicated in parents' education and work in their home country.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to closely examine the issue of ethnic differences, it is nonetheless interesting to note contrasts which emerged in the data. For example, comparing I#7, the Chinese student who attributes his success in Math and Chemistry to his correspondence courses in Chinese, with I#22, the Italian
speaker who spent a great deal of time getting help and information from his Geography teacher, serves to illustrate that whatever we think we know as teachers we must not forget to take into account individual differences.

I#7 and I#22 are both bound for success, but a different kind of success. I#22, who plans to become a real estate agent, "enjoys talking to a person" and I#7 will wait until he is finished school before he has much time for friends. His career plan is to become an electrical engineer, training through the Canadian armed forces.

In this kind of exercise there is a fear of promoting stereotypes of the "disciplined Asian" and the "affable Italian", and therefore prompts one to look for individual differences within ethnic groups. Another Mandarin speaker, though from Taiwan instead of People's Republic of China (the country of origin of I#7) who plans to study computer science at UBC, was cited earlier for his exceptional interest in making a variety of friends, for his flexibility in seeking to understand native speaking students, and for his suggestion for more contact between ESL and native speaking students. He appeared interested in gaining more background on cultural matters, i.e. to understand why there are so many strikes in Canada. He illustrated that he also enjoys getting to know and to know about people.

I#13, a Cantonese speaker from Hong Kong who found Math to be her most difficult subject remarked, "People always
think if you are Chinese you are good at Math."

Such differences may relate to circumstance or background more than some inherent affinity for certain subjects attributable to ethnicity. If they remained in their native countries other interests and abilities might emerge -- surely they do not all become Math or Computer wizards. They obviously have narrower options in Canada where humanities subjects with heavy language requirements and an unfamiliar background of experience are intimidating. The Italian and Spanish speakers share more of the same world view and literary traditions of native speakers of English than those of Asian cultures, as well as a similar alphabet. It is not surprising that the Asian students in particular grasp at math related subjects where they feel they have a chance at academic success and were the ones most likely to rely on L1 for "comprehensible input".

Summary of Relevant Issues Arising From the Literature

It would appear that for some informants the use of L1 is essential to their success in regular classes, though others did not express this need, citing that they believe it would be an inefficient method. Such differences highlight the need for educators to look at students as individuals. Where informants sought "comprehensible input" in L2, the teacher rather than a native speaking student was most often approached. Also, informants confirmed the importance of dealing with course related vocabulary vis-a-vis conversation.
Also, while there is still evidence of the "double standard" of minority language bilingualism and majority language bilingualism, i.e. little self-recognition or recognition by the majority culture of the achievements of the informants, there has been a positive shift in acceptance of minority languages in the society (as exemplified by the informants freedom to speak it at school, etc.) Recognition should go beyond neutral acceptance, however, if we are to avoid this double standard.

Finally, an attempt to look at differences according to ethnic origin attempted to explain the overrepresentation of Asian students compared with other language groups in this category of academically successful students.

B: Other Issues Arising From the Data

In this part issues which do not appear to be formally raised in previous literature will be discussed, including possible influences from earlier education in the home country, which include both parental and societal expectations; discipline and time required for ESL to achieve academic success; and a second look at academic "success". Each will be discussed in turn.

1. Education in the Home Country

The aspect of earlier academic learning in the home country, i.e. Math, which give such students an advantage in this subject in Canadian schools, has been discussed above.
In addition there is the disciplinary aspect, the work habits and attitude towards school which informants have developed early in their school life and bring with them to Canada.

I#2: The rules in my country are strict and I used to have harsh tests. Here it is easier so I don't have problems.

I#13: The way of the culture and the school regulations are really tough (in Hong Kong). It was too strict. I learned to work harder, so here it is automatic to complete assignments on time and other things.

I#7: You have to do more in my native country. I got used to working really hard.

I#22: Schools in Italy required more homework. In Grade 7 I was studying four hours a day. Here I study three hours a day. And there you go to school on Saturday. Here you get extra time on the weekends to study.

I#25: My attitude toward school. Earlier discipline and longer hours help me in Canada. I am used to using extra time for school work.

In Chapter Four a discussion of informants' adjustment to Canadian schools related how students who are obviously used to different kinds of schools adjust to doing school in Canada. It was suggested that while much of the harsher discipline of earlier days has now been replaced in Canadian schools by freer and less formal rules, there is still no short cut for self-discipline and hard work when the goal is for academic success. Most teachers would welcome such diligence and desire to learn in their students, both Canadian and foreign born.

However, what appears to be lacking in the earlier experiences of the informants, and does therefore appear to
require adjustment, is an approach different from memorizing and problem solving. For example, many reported that they avoided participating in discussions. While this reticence could be attributed to language difficulties, there may also be cultural differences. Most disliked integrative tasks such as essay type questions, preferring discrete type tasks (though this might well reflect the preferences of most Canadian born students also). Some appeared to have difficulty accepting that students are required to discipline themselves (rather than have this imposed by the teacher) and found it difficult to work in a classroom where there was talking, etc. by other students. (Again these could well be problematic for Canadian born students as well.)

In summary, the informants appear to have brought with them the valuable learning tools, discipline and desire to learn. These qualities are high priorities within their cultural and home backgrounds, and serve them in good stead in the host country.

2. Discipline and Time to Achieve Academic Success

It is fortunate that the informants appear to have an abundance of self-discipline to stick with the job, because what becomes apparent from their perceptions of their experience is that it takes an inordinate amount of time to learn in a second language:

I#13: Now (in Canada) I have to work double harder (sic). A Canadian student might study one hour. I have to study two hours just to finish it up.
Of course the issue of time arises also in the literature. In Chapter II it is cited that it takes from five to seven years or perhaps longer to achieve proficiency in L2 as required to master abstract concepts. However, these informants are not measuring their time in years, but in hours per day.

In Table V (p76) the homework schedule of informants displays that some of these students study up to seven hours per day. Time and discipline appear to be essential for keeping on track with their academic work. Lacking this time or discipline may place an ESL learner at too much of a disadvantage to be successful.

3. A Second Look at Academic "Success"

Except for the use of first language to understand content, strategies for homework and study which our informants reported may differ only in degree from Canadian born, high-achieving students. While they are likely under more pressure than native speaking students, like any good student they go for help when they don't understand, do their homework, review work continuously and prepare for exams. Such motivation and effort must be a major contributing factor toward their success.

It is worth noting, however, that in this study "success" is circumscribed within certain subjects, i.e. Math and Sciences, and for the most part excludes Social
Studies and Literature. The informants, whose "academic success" is largely concentrated in Math and the Sciences, acknowledged as a problem their lack of writing skills and background in the humanities subjects as well as in fundamental knowledge about Canadian culture and aspects of Canadian life.

In responding to the question of their favourite subject they mentioned as favourites Math and Science courses which they had learned it in their own countries. Typical responses were as follows:

I#17: I like Math because you don't need that much English, and most Science courses.

I#2: Chemistry and Physics because I already learned them in my country. English is the least favourite because I only learned it two years ago.

I#25: Math, because I do well. Math was easier in the beginning, but Algebra 12 got harder. I can't read ahead so I won't be as good at it (won't get as high a mark) as before.

I#20: Sometimes it gets hard if they (the subject teachers) ask something about a Canadian celebrity -- something you can't really find in a book. I understand the English, but I don't understand what they're talking about.

Section A above was a discussion of academic concepts the informants have brought with them as educational benefits. It is also important to note here what is lacking when they attempt to use L1 for academic learning. For example, I#7 stated that "English will kill me at university". He continues to lack confidence in writing essay questions in tests and assignments. Informants also mentioned a lack of background in western thought which
would enable them to understand literary references and current topics grounded in Canadian history.

The majority of the informants, oriented to achieve good marks, will most likely be directed toward Sciences and Math when they go to university, where they have the most chance for success. Ignoring humanities courses with heavy language requirements perpetuates the problem, as students then avoid the practice necessary for success and enjoyment of such subjects.

Pavelich (1978) discussed a technical writing course introduced at the University of British Columbia when this very problem occurred with foreign students who were perceived by their Math and Science professors as model students. However, on completing their degrees in Pharmaceutical Science they were refused practicing licenses because of inadequate spoken English. This led to the testing and streaming of all first-year students and the result that English 100 has become a two year course for 25% of the first year students.

While the students described by Pavelich were foreign students who were recent immigrants from Hong Kong and India, the situation appears to fit the informants for this study also, in spite of their having had a somewhat longer time immersed in an English speaking environment.

Saville-Troike's (1984) caution to consider the student's ultimate academic success is applicable here,
if for many the humanities courses will be avoided in favour of Math and Science oriented careers. Without solid grounding in the language and cultural context they may, like those described by Pavelich, have difficulty in functioning adequately in their future work environment. In addition they are likely to pass over opportunities for study in humanities subjects. I think it reasonable to assume that some would pursue careers in the realms of literature, history or social sciences if learning in their L1, and, if this is true, their choices have been considerably narrowed because of their need to learn in a second language.

As educators it is important to continue looking for answers to alleviate this problem and to encourage interested students to pursue humanities subjects.

Summary of Issues Not Raised in the Literature

This discussion of issues which have not been highlighted in previous theoretical discussion has included discipline and informants' earlier academic work (CALP in L1) order to appreciate more fully the effect of home background which likely contributes to the informants' academic success in Canadian schools. The informants rely upon their strong backgrounds in Math and Sciences learned in their home countries. In other subjects not introduced in their home country, i.e. English literature and history they are at a disadvantage. Numbers of hours spent in homework
by some informants are especially high. Finally, academic success was considered in a wider context than that of achieving a high mark in a limited range of subjects, though this is not to undervalue the considerable achievement of the informants, but rather to identify an expressed deficit, and the difficult constraints in getting an education in a language other than L1.

C: Implications For Instruction Arising From the Data

In addition to the above mentioned desirability to widen the ESL students' academic choices, this discussion will summarize issues already presented that relate to the informants' views on ESL programs and on communication difficulties in the regular classroom. On both these topics informants raise suggestions to meet instructional needs. This will be followed with discussion regarding interaction between ESL and subject area teachers and interaction between ESL and Canadian born students.

1. A Role for ESL Support

The fact that ESL classes had played a central role was reported by all students. Our informants have assessed what has been positive about ESL support classes. What has appeared most helpful, in addition to academic needs, is the supportive environment and opportunity to make friends with other immigrant students upon their first arrival. The less threatening environment in the smaller ESL class where
immigrant students are introduced to North American schools and culture, and learn the fundamentals of the spoken and written language, appears to have been indispensable to our informants. Needs which appear not to have been adequately addressed are for more oral and written practice, the opportunity to learn content and more vocabulary, and for more background into Canadian history and culture.

Another need, which it appears is being met in some cases, is that of ongoing tutoring after the student is mainstreamed into regular classes. ELC's and special tutoring sessions before or after regular class hours was appreciated by those benefitting from these programs.

In this monolingual immersion model of education, ESL classes are considered by the informants to be necessary for academic success of students.

2. Communication in the Classroom

Several informants expressed that it would be helpful if teachers would emphasize and repeat important points. There was a concern also about copying notes while the teacher is talking, and informants appreciated those teachers who write notes and important points on the board and allow some class time for copying them. Also informants had difficulty following if the teacher spoke too quickly.

I#22: At first if I missed just one word I couldn't get the meaning. It would be helpful if teachers repeated important points.
It is apparent that L1 use is important for some students' academic success, and teachers might encourage this strategy with students. While such materials are presently available to some students, from the informants' responses it would appear that some basic reference material in the languages of the various ethnic groups, such as history, literary works, math and science texts, would be useful additions to school libraries. A need for tutors of different language groups was expressed by some of the informants, particularly at the beginning stages of mainstreaming into academic classes would appear to be helpful, particularly for those students without an older sibling, parent or other relative who can assist them.

Finally there appears to be a need for teachers to be aware of cultural differences, i.e. speaking out in class was mentioned as a Canadian trait, where in China silence shows respect. Course teachers might also empathize with ESL learners who are inordinately fearful of speaking out in the larger classroom setting.

3. **Cooperation Between ESL and Subject Teachers**

Informants have suggested that transitional courses and ongoing extra tutoring (given by ESL teachers) for preparing course assignments are helpful. Such initiatives would demand increasing cooperation between ESL and subject teachers. It is beyond the scope of this study to detail what may be required for the two specialists to work
together. In general though, a needs assessment would be required, and consultation time made available. ESL teachers would be required to know the types of assignments, and the objectives of the content teacher. From information provided by the ESL teacher, the academic specialist would come to appreciate some of the problems of individual ESL students, such as their fear of speaking out in their classes and cultural differences according to student backgrounds. For example, teachers who give marks for class participation might reassess this practice and make some concessions about asking questions of ESL students, particularly when they are first mainstreamed into regular courses.

This interaction with content teachers is within the perceived role of the ESL teacher, who sees his/her role as advocate, and cultural arbiter for the ESL student. (Defoe 1988). There is no apparent good reason for ESL students to be the only ones learning about a new culture: this would optimally be the case for teachers and native speaking students also.

In addition, attention should be paid to those gifted teachers, examples of whom were mentioned by the informants, who are able to explain content masterfully and inspire the students to delve deeper into the subject.

For such cooperation to be realized it would be necessary to provide consultation time for ESL and content
teachers, as well as inservice workshops and more emphasis and training for cooperation between regular and resource teachers during teacher training programs.

4. Interaction Between ESL and Native Speaking Students

In Chapter One was a discussion of Canada's aspirations for a multicultural society, a "mosaic". The desirability for a member of an ethnic minority to maintain L1 was expressed, understanding that the loss of a language, "subtractive bilingualism", is both a travesty and educational failure.

But for a "mosaic" to portray a strong and effective message, each segment must contribute to a unified whole. For multiculturalism to succeed we cannot substitute the "two solitudes" of French and English with eighty or more solitudes to represent each individual ethnic minority. There must be equality of opportunity and equal respect for all language groups within the framework of Canada's recognized majority languages of English and French for Canada's multicultural society to flourish.

Equality of opportunity must finally address the deficit of monolingual anglophones, who may enjoy majority status within Canada but who have minority status in the larger world where most people are bilingual or multilingual. Native speakers of English are considered to have been privileged because of the widespread use of their language. But if we remain monolingual when bilingualism is considered...
a desirable educational goal, then it can be argued that monolingual anglophones are disadvantaged. I believe that all students, ESL and anglophone, are entitled to learn other languages. Opportunities not available in the past are in our midst today. Native speakers of various languages are available to be language teachers in immersion programs throughout the schools. Understanding of others becomes increasingly important given present emphasis on global trade and interaction between peoples of many countries. And as mentioned earlier, there appears to be a new awareness about the importance of bilingualism within Canada, emphasizing fluency in both official languages. We could extend and capitalize on this enthusiasm by working to establish opportunities to learn other languages. In Canada we pride ourselves on our communication technology. We could also become leaders in language teaching. This would put a new emphasis on "multiculturalism", an official policy of which Canadians can be proud.

D: Suggestions For Further Research

The informants are saying that for them studies are taking much longer than for native speaking students. This perception might be looked at in more detail. Are there ways of helping students get through their course material more quickly?
This is an addition to the research perspective that links language proficiency to academic achievement, determined at a general level by comparing language test results to academic success. An alternative is to examine the specific academic tasks which students must complete for a letter grade, and to look for a response to the issues raised. For example homework is an issue -- the student's response is to put in longer hours. We need research to tell us more about this. What takes the time? Why? What student strategies help or hinder? O'Malley et al. (1985) concluded in their research that learning strategies can be taught and improved, thereby making learning more effective. Can it also make learning less time-consuming?

Another area for qualitative research is to find ways to effect a more integrative approach in order that students in ESL classes are focussed upon "real tasks", i.e. tasks related to content from the regular curriculum. Central to this approach is to find ways of making abstract concepts meaningful. In Vancouver schools, with some eighty different ethnic groups, it is unrealistic to expect that bilingual minority immersion programs are possible for all students of ethnic minority language groups. It is therefore important to determine specific ways for the presentation of content classes through the medium of the second language (along with the above suggestion for L1 input when required). While educators (for example Mohan 1986) provide a model, there are few specific examples for teachers to follow.
An additional research topic which might shed more light upon this issue of academic success is a comparison of students such as the informants for this study with those who are unsuccessful and in danger of dropping out. Other studies could identify strategies for successful interaction between ESL and subject area teachers, an area that appears to be sadly neglected in teacher training courses.

E: Closing Comments

Chapter One briefly outlined an historic perspective on bilingual education in Canada. This discussion of successful academic students has remained within the context of the "monolingual immersion" program as it now exists in Vancouver. An alternative program, i.e. the introduction of heritage language immersion programs where student numbers warrant such initiatives deserves some consideration.

In addition to probable cognitive advantages of bilingualism, Ashworth (1988) lists as advantageous for immersion students in this education model their not being at a loss for meaning, therefore eliminating the need to mark time while gaining mastery over the second language. The disadvantages of such programs include the possibility that students will not take seriously enough the task of learning the second language, and that where there are a number of different languages spoken the programs would be costly and unwieldy to run. Also there is the danger that
it may promote even more prejudice where members of a visible minority group are segregated for part of each day.

However, it is clear that there are now a number of potential educators of ethnic minority background who could fill the necessary positions as teachers and /or tutors. Also there appears to be no good reason why anglophone students could not benefit by participating in such minority language immersion programs.

Whatever the future scenario for bilingual teaching, it appears that teachers will be equally challenged in the years ahead.

This exercise of "asking the students" has made me aware of the potential to learn from students in "a conversation with a purpose". In sorting through the data I came to recognize the informants as individuals, and to empathize with their lives and problems. I heartily recommend this to others. Even a short and informal study, conducted within the classroom and encouraging students to evaluate school programs, can preclude the all too familiar situation where the student is the missing component in a strategy plan.

McColl (1976) has offered a useful model for a panel discussion to allow teachers and native speaking students an opportunity to empathize with some concerns of ESL students.

As with McColl's panel of students I think of the informants for this study as "survivors", willing to tell
their story because they felt that the opportunity to share their perceptions and experiences held some importance. I thank them all. I trust that I#2 expresses the sentiments of all twenty-five students who were involved when he states:

I think it's a good opportunity for me to help the program. To help the others who are coming after.
CHAPTER NOTES

1 Eight of the twenty-four informants for this study were already bilingual or multilingual upon arrival, so for them English is not a second, but a third or fourth language. But for our purposes throughout this discussion they are all identified as ESL learners, that is, learners of English as a "second" language.

2 Vancouver School Board statistics, published in The Vancouver Sun, June 18, 1988.

3 Heritage language classes include language classes conducted outside regular school hours for children of ethnic minorities, as well as minority language bilingual immersion programs such as the Ukrainian Bilingual Program in Edmonton, Alberta. For a discussion of such programs see Cummins 1981, 1984.

4 Berger, Thomas R., "Toward the Regime of Tolerance", an address presented at the National Symposium on the Humanities, sponsored by Simon Fraser University and the University of Western Ontario, at Holiday Inn Harbourside, Vancouver, B.C., Feb. 12, 1983.

5 For example see "Bilingual Boom: French Is Taking Off", The Vancouver Province, June 23, 1985.

6 Immersion programs in Japanese and Mandarin will be introduced in 15 school districts by September 1989. This is expected to double to 30 school districts within five years. See "Pacific Rim program catching on", The Vancouver Sun, June 21, 1988.

7 Ibid. There is increasing interest in Asian languages in British Columbia schools. By 1989 Japanese and Mandarin immersion programs will be offered for grades 6 to 12, in school districts taking part in the Pacific Rim Initiatives program.
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APPENDIX A: ESL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

I: Student Narrative

Tell the story of your education starting with your school in your home country.

II: Student Perceptions

A. Perceptions about Canada and Native Country

1. Why did you and your family move to Canada?
2. How did you feel then about moving?
3. How do you feel about living here now?
4. How do you compare Canada with your native country?
5. What do you like most about Canada?
6. What do you wish could be changed?
7. Do you plan to go back someday to live in your native country?
8. What are your plans for the future?

B. Perceptions about Self as Student

1. You seem to be a successful student. What do you think are the reasons for your success in school?
2. What is the purpose for getting an education?
3. What advice would you give a younger brother or sister to help him or her succeed in school?
4. If you could make changes in the running of the school, or the way your classes are presented, what would you like to change?
5. What should teachers do to help students succeed?
6. How are schools here similar to or different from the school you attended in your native country?
7. Should Canadian schools be more like those in your native country. (Explain)
8. Are there any benefits to learning another language? (Explain)

9. Have you taught any vocabulary from your native language to a native speaking friend or teacher? (Specify)

III: ESL Experience

1. When do you use English outside of school? (TV/radio/movies/conversation with family members and friends)

2. What do you read in English besides school assignments? (newspapers/magazines/novels/other)

3. How do you choose this material?

4. When and to whom do you speak your native language? (a) at home: always/only sometimes (specify) (b) at school: when/to whom

5. When do you read in your native language? (Specify how material chosen and types of reading, i.e. recreation/specific topics, etc.)

6. Do you go to native language movies?

7. How do/did you feel in your ESL classrooms?

8. How does/did ESL help you most in your subject classes?

9. Are ESL classes necessary for later success in school?

10. If you were the ESL teacher what would you change in order to help your students with their subject classes?

11. Was anything in your ESL class useless or unnecessary?

IV: Content Classes

1. Which subjects do you enjoy most? Least? (Elicit reasons)

2. Which subjects are easiest? Why?

3. Which subjects are most difficult? Why?
4. Is difficulty more often with the language or with understanding content? (Specify if this is different for different courses, i.e., Math vs. Social Studies)

5. What assignments have you had in your courses this term? (oral/written)

6. How did you prepare for your oral assignments?

7. How did you prepare for the written assignments?

8. How do you prepare for exams? (Specify, i.e., study alone/with friend, memorize information, etc.)

9. Which type of exam questions do you find most difficult? Easiest?

10. Do your course teachers give extra help to ESL speakers? (extra time to finish assignments? other?)

11. Is there anything that makes you feel uncomfortable in any of your classes?

12. What difficulties do you have with content classes?

13. In lectures and class discussions do you get the meaning behind them?

14. What would help you understand meaning more easily?
   - Should the teacher speak more slowly?
   - Should the teacher speak louder?
   - Should the teacher stress important words or ideas?
   - Should the teacher repeat important points? Other?

15. Does the use of idiom or slang make it difficult to understand the speaker? (Give example)

16. Do you have communication problems in class? What do you do?

17. Do you volunteer to answer questions and join in class discussions?

18. How do you feel about being asked when you have not volunteered to answer? Is it the same for ESL class?
V: Student Strategies

1. When you have difficulty with your school work to whom do you go for help?

2. Do you use a dictionary? Monolingual? Bilingual?

3. Do you use reference books in your native language?

4. Do you study with a friend? (Specify when and with native speaker or ESL speaker)

5. Do you read about or discuss content being studied in your native language and then translate into English?

6. When do you take notes in class? In English or in native language? Why do you use this language? (speed/to improve command of the language)

7. Are friends important for school success?

8. Do you do homework? How much? When?

9. What school experiences from your native country have helped you here in Canada?

10. How have your strategies changed? What were they? What are they now?

11. What are important things to be successful in school?

12. If you were the teacher what would you change in order to help students learn better?

VI: Home Effects on Schooling

1. How do your parents help you in your school work?

2. What do your parents feel about education?

3. What future plans do your parents have for you?

4. When do you feel really happy at home?

5. What do your parents like or not like about Canadian schools?

6. Do your parents speak and use English? (outside the home/at home)

7. Do your parents meet with your teachers? When?