

**VALUING ENGLISH: AN ETHNOGRAPHY
OF A FEDERAL LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM
FOR ADULT IMMIGRANTS**

by

Laura Cleghorn

**A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto**

© Copyright by Laura Cleghorn (2000)



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-49781-X

Canada

Abstract

Valuing English: An Ethnography of a Federal Language Training Program For Adult Immigrants

Laura Cleghorn
Master of Arts, 2000
Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

This institutional ethnography of a Canadian federal language training program for adult immigrants explores the historical and sociological discourses that inform the field of ESL for adult immigrants and the attendant ideologies of language that accompany the notion of immigrant integration through language learning. The study zeroes in on one LINC program (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada), housed in a Somali immigrant serving organization in Toronto. Local and extra-local discourses converge in the site, policy becomes practice, and the ideologies and practices of the program and its participants are considered to account for the ways that institutional and social practices shape the social relations of the program. Lastly, the study considers a few examples of classroom linguistic interactions to look at how the notions of linguistic and cultural difference are constructed in and by the program to reproduce elements of Anglo-Canadian linguistic and cultural dominance.

Acknowledgements

Most of all I want to acknowledge and thank the participants in this study who allowed me to talk with them and to spend time with them at the Centre.

Throughout the thesis process, I had a lot of support from and many important conversations with my fellow student, Karin Meinzerl. Thanks also to my mother, Janet, and my sister, Amanda, for their ongoing support, and to my brother, Angus, for his wise counsel. Barbara Burnaby was an enthusiastic second reader, and Monica Heller was a steady and sure supervisor. Lastly, thank you to my partner, Paul Rooney, for his everyday encouragements and constant confidence.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
 Chapter One	
An Institutional Ethnography of a Federal Language Training Program	
Introduction: Immigration and Language Training	1
Institutional Ethnography: The Institution and Social Interaction	4
Institutional Ethnography and This Project	11
Methodology	16
Conclusion	23
Endnotes	25
 Chapter Two	
Federally-Funded Language Training for Adult Immigrants: Institutional Histories and Language Ideologies	
Introduction	26
A History of Canadian Federal Language Training Programs	27
Provincial and Federal Responsibility	32
Changing Immigration	34
LINC: The Reorganization of Federal Language Training Programs	38
The ESL Profession and Standardization.	44
Issues of Access and Control	47
Ideologies of Language and Immigrant Integration	50
Managing LINC	58
Conclusion	61
Endnotes	64
 Chapter Three	
Conditions of Institutional Constraint and Possibility: The LINC Program at the Somali Centre	
Introduction	65
Somali Immigrant Serving Organizations	66
LINC at the Somali Centre	70
The People and the Program	74
LINC's Relationship with the Centre	74
The Coordinator	77
The Teachers	80
The Cultural Interpreters	91
The Students	93
A Disruption of Order	99

Conclusion: Regulating LINC	101
Endnotes	104
 Chapter Four	
The Production of “The Problem”	
Introduction	105
The “Incident” and Linguistic Difference	107
The Production of Cultural Difference	111
Negotiating Difference	124
Teaching LINC	128
Gender, Nation, and Education	137
Conclusion	141
Endnotes	144
 Chapter Five	
Conclusion: Implications for Social Relations and Linguistic Interactions	
Introduction	146
Dominant Institutional Discourses	149
The Question of Integration	155
Looking for Change	156
The Politics of Language and ESL	159
Linguistic Interactions and Social Relations	162
Conclusion	163
 References	166
 Appendix A: Letter Requesting Administrative Consent	176
 Appendix B: Letter of Consent	177
 Appendix C: Staff Interview Questions	179
 Appendix D: Student Interview Questions	180

Chapter One

An Institutional Ethnography of a Federal Language Training Program

Introduction: Immigration and Language Training

Over the last decade, Canada's annual immigration levels have been on the rise and will continue to rise, or at least remain constant, in the future. Canada's immigration policy is required to sustain the population of the nation, because it is suffering from declines in the birth rate, continuous out-migration, and shortages in high-tech labour. The increased immigration levels needed to address the declining population and shortages in labour are accompanied by strict selection criteria that immigrants must now meet in order to be accepted into Canada. The criteria emphasize high education levels and linguistic proficiency in one of Canada's two official languages (French and English). Over the last ten years, however, roughly half of the immigrants who have settled in Canada did not speak either official language when they arrived (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996d, 1998c). In addition, Canada's annual immigration targets include a commitment to accepting a certain number of refugees, roughly ten percent of the total immigration level each year, many of whom will seek official language training and educational upgrading. While Canada's immigration policy focuses on selecting and accepting immigrants who are, ideally, better educated and proficient in English or French than in the past, many of the immigrants and refugees who settle in Canada do not already meet these criteria.

The federal government has responded to the problem of adult immigrants and refugees with minimal skills in the official languages by providing, over the past 50 years,

federally-funded English and French language training programs. The federal programs, organized in conjunction with the provinces, are intended to increase the opportunities for adult immigrants and refugees to find work, to continue their education, and to generally improve their access to mainstream institutions and services. Federally-funded language training programs are viewed as a valuable resource by the government and by immigrants and refugees themselves because it is through language training that immigrants and refugees might improve the access they have to symbolic and material resources.

The first of the federally-funded English language training programs, introduced in 1947, provided language training in preparation for citizenship. It was a program that was engaged in the project of nation-building, and the expectation was that the immigrant's language(s) and culture(s) would be replaced by the language and culture of Canada. It was, then, straightforwardly assimilationist (see Ciccarelli, 1997). Over time, the process that characterizes the adaptation of immigrants and refugees to Canada has shifted from the notion of assimilation to be reconceived as "settlement and integration" (CIC, 1996c). The current manifestation of federally-funded language training for adult immigrants is the LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) program, introduced in 1992. The goal of LINC is to facilitate newcomer integration through language training. The original LINC policy document from 1991 states that "the basic ability to communicate in one of Canada's official languages is often the essential first step towards successful integration" (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1991b, p.1).

Although Canada's Official Languages Act of 1969 (amended in 1988) recognizes English and French as the country's official languages, the LINC program is provided in English only. This is due, in part, to the fact that the province of Quebec, where the

majority of Canada's francophones live, has established provincial control over the jurisdiction of immigration. The province has full responsibility for settlement services including French language training for adult immigrants. The rest of the provinces in Canada work in conjunction with the federal government in matters of immigrant integration and settlement. The LINC program for adult immigrants is understood as a settlement language training program. The English language is taught alongside the program's mandate to "introduc[e] newcomers to shared Canadian values, rights and responsibilities (EIC, 1991b, p. 3).

As federal programs, LINC and the previous manifestations of federal English language training programs have always had nationalist objectives. The building of the nation, immigrant integration, and the teaching of English form a historically and socially significant nexus. This project engages with the links between English language training, the notion of integration, and what this means for the nation to examine the relationship between ideologies of language and nation and the practices of immigrant language education. I have chosen to look at the ideologies and practices that inform the field of ESL for adult immigrants in one instantiation of the LINC program in Toronto, with a view to tie those ideologies and practices to the larger socio-historical context that shapes the program. Canada's history of the institution of federal language training and the ideologies of language therein are the first considerations in this study of federal language training for adult immigrants. With that established, the policies and ideologies of LINC are explored to consider how policy figures in practice in the local implementation of a LINC program.

This project contemplates the relationship between governmental policies and local institutional practices. The challenge here is to show how these influence one another; that is, to consider how the practices of the people in the program and the program itself are linked to policies and ideologies that are shaped by dominant social processes. This form of social inquiry immediately engages with the project's sociological dimensions when it asks about the relationship between policy and practice. The field of sociology, and sociology of education in particular, concerns itself with the nature of the relationship between "macro" and "micro" processes that explore how the relations between social structure and social interaction are understood. It is my intention to show that these are inter-related processes. By conducting an institutional ethnography of one LINC program, I will show how the socio-historical discourses that inform the current manifestation of ESL for adult immigrants are reproduced in and through local expressions of social interaction which are also mediated by the institution.

Institutional Ethnography: The Institution and Social Interaction

Institutional ethnography has as its focus the relationship between everyday talk and social structure to consider how this relationship is mediated by institutional practices. To clarify, the term institution is broadly construed here to refer to the "common sense" and everyday discourses, ideologies, and practices that are contained by and within the institution that shape and define what that particular institution is and does. In the case of LINC, I refer to the institution also as the actual physical location of the site of the LINC program that I am studying. The manifestation of this program is shaped by governmental policies of language training and immigration and by local practices that derive from the social relations produced inside and outside the institution.

Institutional ethnography is interested in the relationship between the social structure of the institution (broadly conceived) and the production of social interaction in that site. Social interaction is informed by specific local and extra-local ideologies that shape the discourses and practices of the people in the institution. The ideologies that govern the ways that knowledge is produced and meaning is rationalized are locatable in discourse. As Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) note, “the most tangible manifestation of ideology is discourse” (p. 26). Discourses, as I understand them, represent a whole range of “texts” available to us, from everyday talk to governmental policies and the law, that permit and also constraint what kinds of talk and action are possible. Certain discourses and ideologies achieve dominance because they are all structured by material and symbolic relations of power that legitimize certain forms of knowledge over others. Discourses are not wholly totalizing, however, because articulations of discourse contain oppositional or counter-discourses that can potentially disrupt the rationality of the discourse. One of the focal points for institutional ethnography is the ways in which the institution contends with certain ideological and practical disruptions, ambiguities, and contradictions. Institutional ethnography considers how specific social interactions are local level expressions of the discourses and ideologies that structure the larger patterns of social structure and social relations, and how the local relations are shaped and constrained by the mediations of the discursive order of the institution.

In what follows, I will outline some of the institutional ethnographic work that has influenced the theory and methodology of this study. To begin, the work of Hugh Mehan (1987, 1996) and Aaron Cicourel (1987) is particularly good in the way that it accounts for the influence of relations of power on decision-making in institutional settings, as well

as the ways in which the authors structure for discussion the domains of social interaction and the institutional order. Mehan (1987) puts it simply, to explain that his work “look[s] for ways in which circumstances which originate outside the institution interact with circumstances which originate within it to influence the course of interaction and the work of the formal organization” (p. 293). Mehan’s (1987) article locates the influence of economic, practical, and legal constraints in the talk of educators who are meeting about placing and classifying “special needs” students. Cicourel’s (1987) article has a similar focus on how decisions are made about the case of a patient at a teaching hospital. The “bureaucratic context” of the hospital consists of the order of social interaction and the organizational accounting procedures that create and transmit knowledge about the patient (p. 348). Cicourel identifies the nature of the interplay between the bureaucratic organizational structure and the social interactions between the patient, resident, and supervisor, to display how the decision-making of the professionals presupposes certain kinds of local and background knowledge.

The production and reproduction of professional knowledge in decision-making is of primary concern in these studies. Mehan’s later work (1996) continues to discuss the categorization of learning disabled students, but with a greater focus on “the politics of representation” to explore how larger sociological and historical discourses are mobilized to create and reproduce categories that classify students. Mehan shows how repeated decision-making about a student increasingly “textualizes,” that is, fixes and determines, the identity of the student as “regular” or “special” (p. 253). Furthermore, in the decision-making process, Mehan shows how the esoteric knowledge of the “experts” is rendered authoritative over and above the opinions of teachers and parents in less prestigious

professional and social positions. The work of Cicourel and Mehan discussed here concerns itself with how professional discourses work in interaction to classify the subjects of the institution and thereby reflect and reproduce dominant modes of representation and dominant forms of knowledge. Mehan's work goes further than that of Cicourel to assert that the relationship between social interaction and organizational structures works in powerful ways to reproduce a stratified social structure.

The ways in which institutions work to structure social interactions to reproduce a society stratified by gender, race, and class are a primary concern in ethnographic studies that stretch across various academic disciplines and fields. Over twenty years ago, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) asserted that the institution of education is a primary centre of cultural and social reproduction. Schooling is a process of selection determined by class interests; it is an "educational process of differential elimination according to social class (leading to a determinate distribution of competence among survivors)" (p. 73). The linguistic and cultural capital of the students is directly linked to the degree of success of the students, because, in the educational process, the institution performs the function of legitimating the linguistic and cultural authority of the dominant classes, thereby devaluing that of "other" languages and cultures. Bourdieu and Passeron make the case that the linguistic and cultural assimilation that takes place in the education system functions as symbolic domination; it is the articulation and workings of relations of power without the use of direct force or coercion. The educational system "contributes irreplaceably towards perpetuating the structure of class relations and, simultaneously, legitimating it, by concealing the fact that the scholastic hierarchies it produces reproduce social hierarchies" (p. 205).

The recognition of the field of education as a site of cultural and social reproduction and symbolic domination has engaged the attention of ethnographers because it is through ethnography that one attempts to answer the question of how social stratification is reproduced through the workings of the institution. The effects that the workings of the institution have on the subjects of the institution is also an important part of the inquiry. The work of Bourdieu and Passeron tends to paint a rather structurally deterministic picture in this regard. Their work, along with that of Mehan and Cicourel discussed above, does not consider some of the ways that symbolic and linguistic domination might be challenged or resisted. Some critical ethnographers in the field of education, however, explore “schools as sites of social and cultural reproduction mediated through human agency by various forms of resistance and accommodation” (Anderson, 1989, p. 255). Anderson asserts that the designation of “critical” ethnography arose out of the field of ethnography more generally because it strives to critically address and assess the relations of power that inform social and cultural reproduction with a view to the possibility of transforming them (see, for example, Collins, 1996).

The effort to examine not only the dominant institutional ideologies and practices of the professionals in an educational institution, but also the responses to these discourses by the students/clients and junior staff, is very important in representing how institutions work to regulate, contain, and resolve internal ideological conflicts and contradictions. Heller’s (1994) work does just that, to explore how a French language school in Ontario produces and reproduces Francophone linguistic norms, to value certain forms of French over others. The interests of the different groups in the school, represented by the parents, the teachers, and the students, vary according to their relation to the linguistic, cultural,

and educational objectives of the school, and are shaped by class and ethnic membership. The different groups and individuals and their relation to the authoritative ideology of the school creates conflicts and contradictions that emerge in differing ideologies of the value and form of the French language, and manifest themselves in different forms of language choice and use in the linguistic interactions that take place at the school. More recently, Heller (1999) examines the language ideology of a Franco-Ontarian high school to explore how the ideal and ideology of the school as a monolingual zone of standard French language produces language norms that must be ideologically “managed” by the teachers. Certain contradictions arise in the maintenance of language norms and language “quality,” and the teachers employ “strategies of ambiguity” to avoid such contradictions (p. 131). Heller then describes how the students, who form various groupings according to ethnicity, class, and/or gender identifications, take up the school’s language ideology to actively comply with and/or resist the social order of the school.

The examination of ideologies of language in minority language, bilingual, or multilingual institutional settings is particularly fruitful, because, as Woolard (1993) asserts, “language ideology is a mediating link between social structures and forms of talk” (p. 235). Goldstein (1997), for example, explores the relationship between social processes and language choice in a multicultural/multilingual workplace in her investigation of the language practices of production line workers at “Stone Specialties,” a Toronto factory. Goldstein’s investigation is geared toward uncovering why the female employees of the factory were not participating in a workplace English language training program. The workplace viewed the program as an opportunity for the workers to gain access to a valuable linguistic resource that would improve the conditions of the women’s

lives in the workplace and beyond. By examining the ideologies of language revealed in the linguistic practices of the Portuguese women in the workplace, Goldstein establishes that language choice and use are shaped by the social processes of gender and class and the history of Portuguese immigration to and settlement in Toronto. For my purposes, the salience of Goldstein's study rests in its ability to establish the differential values attributed to Portuguese and English linguistic practices by the workers in a bilingual institutional setting. English and Portuguese are valued differently for both economic and social reasons which helps to explain how and why language boundaries are maintained or not, and for what reasons.

Many Portuguese immigrants have made a living without learning English in factories such as Stone Specialties. In this sense the minority language has not just symbolic value, but material value as well since it is associated with economic survival and gain (p. 61). Speaking Portuguese is not just a social activity associated with maintaining community networks, but it is also "a strategy for managing conditions of economic subordination" (p. 175). The study shows how the mandate of a workplace ESL program, which is to increase the access that the employees have to English-speaking networks to improve their economic conditions, is at odds with the already-established values associated with minority language use. Goldstein's work is a close examination of the costs associated with learning English for one immigrant community in Toronto to reveal how different interests in and ideologies of learning English converge in an ESL workplace training program. Because the study shows how a minority language is used to manage conditions of subordination, it challenges basic assumptions about language

training for adult immigrants by considering how learning a second language can be a serious and potentially risky venture for minority language speakers.

The institutional ethnographies reviewed here have provided me with the methodological and theoretical tools to conduct this study. The work by Mehan (1987, 1996), Cicourel (1987), Heller (1994, 1999), and Goldstein (1997) supplied me with the methodological considerations necessary to attend to how linguistic interactions are shaped by institutional and social constraints to understand the ways that power relations work in institutional settings. The work of those cited above, plus that of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) draw attention to how ideologies of language mediate the relationship between talk and social structure, and this is both the theoretical and methodological focus of this study.

Institutional Ethnography and This Project

In many institutional ethnographies, there is particular attention given to the ambiguities, contradictions, and even conflicts that are contained within the ideologies and practices of the institution. In this respect, social institutions embody and enact social relations and relations of power in specific ways that are intricately linked to relations of power outside of the institution. The workings of the institution regulate and contain the ambiguities, contradictions, and conflicts that surface in interactions between individuals that are expressions of relations of power between different groups. Institutions, most importantly, work to control and monitor the distribution of valuable symbolic and material resources. Institutions mirror social structure, and therefore often represent social divisions based on majority-minority relations. Understood in this way, institutions are sites of struggle over power and resources.

The institution of the LINC program provides access to the valuable resource of linguistic competence in English, which is believed to lead to greater symbolic and material reward. The focus of this thesis is to explore the relationship between the ideologies and practices of LINC and the conditions of its implementation in one particular context, at the Somali Centre, a community-based immigrant serving organization in Toronto.¹ My proposition is that the instantiation of LINC in any local context will produce contradictions, conflicts, and struggles over power and resources because the program itself is a resource that must be regulated and distributed according to certain conditions that arise in its implementation. My interest is in exploring what the specific nature of these conflicts are as they manifest themselves in material and ideological conflicts. How, then, does the institution work to contain these various contradictions?

A second line of inquiry follows the proposition that the intention of LINC programs is to provide English language learning instruction to facilitate immigrant integration. The LINC program serves to teach immigrants and refugees the English language as an institutionally and culturally determined “relation to language” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 116). As Bourdieu and Passeron assert, education is the promulgation of a “type of relation to language and culture” (p. 114). The LINC program is a form of education where a relation to language and culture is explicitly taught. The policies and practices of the LINC are shaped by the program’s mandate that Canadian values and beliefs be taught through the English language. Bourdieu and Passeron note that “no one acquires a language without thereby acquiring a relation to language. In cultural matters the manner of acquiring perpetuates itself in what is acquired” (p. 115). Here, the education system as a site of cultural reproduction is the issue, where the

acquisition of language and culture is learned in a “manner” that reproduces the way that it is being taught.

The relation to language “is the product of the social conditions of the acquisition and use of language” (p. 117). In other words, language and culture are taught as a certain kind of relation that is shaped by the social relations inside and outside of the institution. The “relation to language” established in and by the LINC program is not created by the program alone, but, importantly, is reproduced within the program because of the larger processes of social relations that structure differential access to linguistic and material resources. One’s position within social relations is hierarchically organized by class, race, gender and ethnic membership. The “relation to language” that the LINC program asserts can be transmitted to immigrants and refugees via language training is in fact a social relation to Anglo-Canadian English language and culture that, when undertaken by the Somali immigrants and refugees at the LINC program in this study, is not so direct or easy a relation to acquire as it is assumed to be. How, then, do the LINC students negotiate the relation to the English language that the LINC program proposes?

To address these queries, in Chapter Two this thesis considers the dominant historical and sociological discourses that shape the field of English language teaching and learning for adult immigrants in Canada and Ontario. The chapter establishes how the LINC program has come to be formed, organized, and managed as it currently is, identifying along the way the histories of the institutions that merge in LINC, such as ESL for adult immigrants and immigration policy. The secondary consideration of the chapter is the ideologies that are contained in and by these institutions and how they are linked to

larger sociological discourses about the management of immigrant integration, language ideology and the hegemony of the English language. Phillipson (1992), for example, traces the global spread of English Language Teaching to show how it is historically linked to British colonialism and Anglocentricity. As a form of linguistic imperialism, English Language Teaching serves to reinforce the hegemony of the English language. The dominance of English is reproduced and maintained through the “continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (p. 47). Phillipson’s work helps to link current ESL practices to the realm of global English dominance. But his work does not link ESL practices at the level of the institution to the larger policies, where both the students and the teachers are subject to the mandates of the organization where they work and learn, and to the mandates of the ESL program and the governmental policies of which they are a part. The next sections of the thesis attempt to do just that.

After the ideological domain of ESL for adult immigrants has been established in Chapter Two, Chapter Three moves into the actual research site to reflect on how the policy and mandate of the LINC program is put into practice at a community-based immigrant serving organization. The point here is to show that LINC policies become practiced in specific ways because the organization of the program is mediated and constrained by the commingling of local and extra-local institutional ideologies and practices. The chapter explores the ways that the ideologies and practices of the program are taken up by various groups that animate the LINC program in the site (the teachers, the students, the cultural interpreters, the Program Coordinator, and the staff of the community-based agency). The dominant institutional discourses are established as the

rules and regulations that govern the institution to see “how they function ideologically to make specific courses of action accountable to the wider institution and . . . justify institutional decisions about the allocation of scarce resources” (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). Once the order of the institution has been described, Chapter Three ends with an example of a conflict that disrupts the order of the institution to reveal how conflict and contradiction is institutionally managed.

The conflict is taken up again in Chapter Four as an instance of social interaction to show how the dominant discourses of the institution manifest themselves in daily interactions. The moment of conflict functions as a focal point which, when explored and discussed with the program participants, points to and opens up further contradictions, ambiguities, and negotiations that are occurring in the program between the program staff and the students. The chapter has a second area of concern, motivated by an assertion made by Mehan (1987) over a decade ago:

If, in fact, schooling is the acquisition and transmission of specific cultural practices as Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Collins (1977) suggest, then we must begin to examine both “what counts as knowledge” in the school system, and also how specific institutions of schooling (including the workings of curriculum) are organized to transmit this “cultural capital” across generations. (p. 299)

A morning of classroom interaction in the LINC program is considered to see what gets produced as knowledge. The forms of knowledge that are authorized in the classroom are, not surprisingly, shaped by dominant ideologies of gender, nation, and education. The knowledge that is produced in the classroom serves to reinforce the order and authority of the institution, but not without the production, also, of a certain amount of contestation.

This project attempts to account for the workings of the institution by considering the dominant discourses of the local and extra-local ideologies and practices that inform the site. It is, however, constrained by this focus on the dominant discourses. What is produced and reproduced in LINC is a “relation to language” that is culturally constructed and socially stratified. It means that there is little accommodation for other ways that the relation could be taken up. What is interesting, though, is the negotiations that take place in the spaces created by the relations between the institution and the participants, and between the discourses and the practices. This is somewhat shaky ground that has to be fixed for a moment in order to talk about it. In the last section of this chapter I will discuss how I went about it--the methodology of the study.

Methodology

In seeking a site in which to conduct an institutional ethnography of a LINC program, I began to gather information about a variety of immigrant serving organizations that offer the program in Toronto to assess which one I might approach. I then heard about the LINC program at the Somali Centre from an acquaintance of mine who worked in the field of ESL in Toronto. I met to talk with the Coordinator and the staff of the program about my project and sought administrative consent (see Appendix A). I asked permission to observe and note the goings-on of the institution for two to three days a week for two months, and I asked to interview one-third of the 30 students in attendance, as well as conduct two group interviews with the students. I also requested permission to interview the LINC program staff consisting of the Coordinator, the three teachers, the two cultural interpreters, one of the three child minders, and the Executive Director of the

Somali Centre. For all of the interviews I supplied a letter of consent that explained the research project (see Appendix B).

I visited the Centre two or three times a week for two and a half months, from January to March, 1999. During that time, there were approximately 25-30 students in attendance, roughly divided between the three levels of the LINC program that were offered there. The program capacity was a little bit below average, thus the Coordinator was actively recruiting new students throughout the time that I was there. There were three LINC classes at the Centre: a Level One literacy class taught by Lucy, a split Level One/Two class taught by Gail, and a split Level Two/Three class taught by Sarah. All of the classes used the help of a cultural interpreter, who worked full time for the LINC program. Hajia was the cultural interpreter when I began my research the Centre, and an month or so later Dunia returned from a maternity leave and replaced Hajia. Rebecca, the Coordinator, organized and administered the program.

The Somali Centre is a community-based immigrant serving organization located in Toronto, and most of the students that I met there were female Somali refugees, some of whom had managed to obtain landed immigrant status. Somali refugees have been emigrating to Canada in large numbers over the last decade because of the outbreak of civil war in that country. To clarify my use of the terms “Somalia” and “Somali,” it is necessary to provide a summary of the historical situation that has brought Somalis to Canada. In 1960, Somalia became independent from the dual colonizing powers of Italy and Britain which occupied the country for decades. At that time, the country functioned as a parliamentary democracy for ten years. During the 1969 election, however, there was a military coup and General Said Barre assumed control of the country. The coup initiated

an era of Marxist Socialism in Somalia. In 1988, the Barre regime was challenged by the Somali National Movement, and civil war ensued. The northern region of Somalia, which was the region colonized by Britain, broke away from the post-colonial Socialist Republic soon after the civil war to form the Somaliland Republic. In the southern region formerly colonized by Italy, Barre's regime collapsed, but civil war continued and still continues (see Abdi, 1998; Kahin, 1997).

The war in Somalia is a struggle over access to the country's resources located in the south, consisting of rich farmlands and export centres along the coast. The southern region was populated mostly by minority groups, and these people were apparently the targets of Barre's regime (Kahin, p. 8). The northern region of the country has established a government and is rebuilding some infrastructure. The southern region, however, is divided into "minifiefdoms" where war civil continues (Kahin, p. 26). This brief rendering of the political and historical situation in Somalia was provided here to indicate that the terms "Somali" (the people and nationhood) and "Somalia" (the country) used throughout this thesis are categories that gloss over the details of Somali history and the minority-majority relations between Somali people. The term "Somali" is even more complex than this, because it also refers to Somali people who have lived outside of Somalia for decades, in Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. The tendency to elide the complexities of the socio-historical situation that brings Somali people to Canada and the specificity of the personal histories of the women students prior to their arrival in Canada become salient issues in this study. This section is an attempt to acknowledge how categories of nationhood and belongingness are homogenized and simplified to be made intelligible and known. In the process, the intricate histories and knowledges of cultures and nations are

reified and essentialized. This process characterizes the ways that cultural, social, and linguistic differences are understood, and I will return to examine it further in Chapter Four.

The majority of the students in the LINC program at the Somali Centre are immigrants and refugees from the southern region of Somalia where the war continues. All but three of the students were women ranging in age from early 20s to early 60s. There were, however, two elderly Somali men in attendance, as well as a young man in his 20s from Ghana. There were only three students in the LINC program who were not Somali: a middle-aged woman from Colombia, the young man from Ghana, and a woman from Albania in her mid 30s. In February, four more students joined the program: a young woman from Afghanistan, and three Somali women in the late 20s. I must note here that I took the opportunity presented by the apparent near-homogeneity of the student body to focus this research on the relationship between the Somali women students and the LINC staff and program. The LINC staff also represented an apparently homogeneous group, since they were all White English-speaking middle-class women. In the process of shaping the research in this way, the non-Somali students and the male Somali students were marginalized by my research interests, which reflects, also, their position of marginalization within the institution. In many instances, including my research, there was a tendency to see the students as a group of Somali women, and to gear the talk and the practices of the institution to this group alone.

There were a number of constraints on my data collection, the first of which I note above, where the research “groupings” were consciously made homogeneous. Secondly, and most obviously, I cannot speak Somali. Somali takes up a fair amount of discursive

space at the Centre. Indeed, the teachers made repeated efforts in class to ask that Somali not be spoken between the students. Outside of the classroom, however, Somali was the language of communication for the students. For the bilingual Somali staff, Somali was the primary language of communication, but there was frequent codeswitching between Somali and English as well. Much communication took place in English and Somali, or in Somali alone, so the access that I had to what was going on before me was limited by what I could see but not understand.

My understanding of the linguistic interactions that took place in the institution is shaped by the social relations that position me as a member of the dominant majority - a middle-class White English-speaking Canadian woman. The way I am positioned outside of the institution worked in concert with the social relations within the institution because I “fit in” with the middle-class White female staff of the LINC program. While I frequently defined what I was doing at the Somali Centre as “doing research,” I was often referred to by the students as “teacher,” and I did help out in the classrooms. The alignment between myself and the teachers is not so far off, however, since I have taught English language and English literature for a number of years. My interest in language ideology stems from this, particularly in the way that we teachers tend to ignore the politics of language in the classroom in the effort to get across the lesson of the day. Finally, in the same way that my position as a monolingual English speaker prohibits me from understanding what is happening in Somali, my class, gender, and ethnic membership influences what it is possible for me to know in the whole research process. This study, as a result, is really an examination of the dominant discourses of LINC. These are the conditions of constraint and possibility that shape the study.

Interviewing the students presented more constraints for a number of reasons. Under the advisement of Kajia, one of the cultural interpreters, I did not tape-record the interviews with the women students because she asserted that being tape-recorded might reproduce a semblance of the conditions of interrogation that some of the women experienced in Somalia under its military dictatorship. In these interviews, then, I recorded their comments on paper. The English language skills of the women students varied enormously, so that for seven of the interviews we did not need a linguistic interpreter, but three of the interviews were conducted with the assistance of Dunia.

The assistance of cultural interpreters was integral to my research not just because of Dunia's assistance in the three interviews, but because both Dunia and Kajia gave constant input to my research throughout my interviews and observations at the Centre. Prior to interviewing the students, I asked Dunia and Kajia to look at the student interview transcript to ensure that the questions were appropriate and clear (see Appendix C). Goldstein (1995) recommends this practice when one is interviewing people with whom one does not share cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Furthermore, when working with cultural and linguistic interpreters, Edwards (1998) suggests that the researcher should not attempt to "make invisible" the participation of the interpreter in the interview, but to recognize how the interview works as a complex three-way process (p. 202). The effect of making the interpreter "visible" makes for very interesting data about linguistic interactions. Edwards also recommends that the interpreters be interviewed, because in that way they become a "form of key informant" in the research process (p. 203). Certainly, Dunia and Kajia were, in this way, key informants in my work, and invaluable to me as linguistic and cultural interpreters.

The interview data is highly mediated by all of these practices. Three of the student interviews were translated, and all of the student interviews were recorded with only pen and paper. Interestingly, the three teachers refused to be tape-recorded for their interviews. I spoke with the teachers as a group about interviewing them, and it was at that time that Sarah, the senior teacher in age, experience, and authority, refused to be tape-recorded. Gail and Lucy, the two other teachers, followed suit. All of the other staff interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed (see Appendix D). All of the interviews were semi-structured; they ranged in duration from half an hour to over two hours.

For the interviews that were not tape recorded, those of the students and the teachers, the speaker's talk may appear more fragmented and staid than it would be if captured on tape. The important pauses, emphases, and interruptions that are part of speech are virtually lost in note-taking. In transcribing all of the interviews, I had to make certain choices about how to represent the talk (see Roberts, 1997). The transcription of my jotted notes of the student interviews may contribute to the appearance of their talk as uniformly disjointed and fragmentary; the transcriptions don't reflect the various levels of proficiency that the students certainly had in speaking English. For the interviews that were transcribed from tape, I attempted to reproduce the talk as strictly as possible. For the interviews where I took notes, I chose to stick to my notes, and not "fill in" parts of speech or sentence structure. I wanted to acknowledge the integrity of the students' talk in its nonstandard forms. In representing transcript excerpts in the thesis, I chose to include lengthy excerpts of talk instead of shorter fragments of talk, so that the meaning I am making of the talk is open to the interpretation of the reader as well. The transcripts are,

nevertheless, my representation of the interviewing event, and a transcript must be recognized as a “partial representation” at best (Green, Franquiz & Dixon, 1997, p. 173).

Every part of data collection is a partial representation, and what counts is being able to make links between the various methods of data collection and the different types of data. Thus the interview data, and the questions I asked in the interviews, were shaped by my observation of and participation in the goings-on at the LINC program, which I recorded at length in field notes. I gathered data from interviews, from the field notes and from researching secondary sources. The process of the research is best understood by me as constant movement. One moves recursively over and back across the different forms of data, checking for consistencies and inconsistencies, because both are fruitful to explore. The scope of the research necessarily narrowed as time went on, and other areas of import were left behind and ignored. In this way, my research is entirely partial, and it is important to acknowledge it as such. What I discuss here is a short and particular story that is, as I see it, one strand in a large and complicated web of social and institutional relations, practices, and ideologies.

Conclusion

In what follows, I will explore the manifestation of one LINC program. Taking into consideration the historical and sociological discourses that inform the field of English language training for adult immigrants, I consider how the organization of the LINC program at the Centre mediates these discourses. Furthermore, I look to identify how the larger discourses and the institution’s mediations of them surface in interaction. These lines of inquiry reveal certain conflicts and contradictions in the social relations in this setting, and I want to see what they reveal about how the institution of LINC is taken up

by the participants in the program. Finally, what can we know about English language training and education as a result?

Endnotes

¹ The name of the immigrant serving organization that delivers the LINC program has been changed to preserve anonymity, as have the names of all of the participants in this study.

Chapter Two

Federally-Funded Language Training for Adult Immigrants: Institutional Histories and Language Ideologies

My dad didn't take ESL classes, he always worked, and got by.
I think it's more difficult now. There are more conditions put on newcomers, more expectations.

Interview with Lucy, ESL literacy instructor.

Introduction

Lucy notes that, in comparison to her father's generation, there are greater "conditions" and "expectations" placed on immigrants and refugees today. She says that her father worked and "got by" without the benefit of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Lucy's comment raises questions about the investment of the state and other players in the provision of English as a second language training for adult immigrants. It is the nature of these investments--how the federal government has funded and formed ESL programs for adult immigrants--and the conditions and expectations that go along with it, that are the focus of this chapter. The chapter will consider the history of language training for adult immigrants, and the way it has been organized federally and provincially to arrive at the implementation of LINC. I will then consider how LINC was received by community groups and scholars involved in the field of ESL for adult immigrants.

Advocacy groups for immigrants, ESL scholars, and teachers all have various interests in ESL, and among them are many ideas about the place and purpose of English language learning and its relationship to the settlement and integration of adult immigrants. Some of these positions will be examined with respect to the present

structure of federal language training policy to explore the conflicts and contestations that are taking place in the field of ESL for adult immigrants. Finally, I am interested in how the federal organization of ESL for adult immigrants reveals dominant ideologies about learning the English language and immigrant integration.

This chapter will outline the discourses about language and immigration that make up the field of ESL for adult immigrants. The ESL programming that is provided by the federal government is shaped by nationalist objectives. The program is a form of language policy where the goal is the linguistic integration of non-official language speaker. The history of how these language policies have changed over time will be explored to see that who language training is for, and for what purposes, has changed over time and now shapes the current program in interesting ways. The mandates of the federal programs have, over time, shifted from a focus on training for citizenship and employment purposes to a more generalized function of language training for the purposes of settlement and integration. This chapter considers the larger social processes and ideologies that inform the LINC program, and sets the stage for the next chapter, which will look at how the discourses that make the LINC program manifest themselves in a local setting.

A History of Canadian Federal Language Training Programs

The Canadian government has been interested in providing basic training in English for immigrants for the past fifty years. Federally-funded English language training was introduced in 1947, at the same time as the Citizenship Act. In the decade after the Second World War, Canada accepted large numbers of immigrants and refugees. At that time, language training was established as part of a basic course in citizenship for new immigrants arriving in Canada. Ciccarelli (1997) argues that the introduction of both an

immigrant language training programs and the Citizenship Act at the same moment points to the nation's interest in creating national unity in the post-war era, in an effort to encourage assimilation and keep Canada white, Anglo-Saxon, and English-speaking.

In spite of the 1867 British North America Act that recognized the English and the French as Canada's "two founding peoples," Canada's postwar immigration policy worked to bolster the anglophone population of the country. Although 20 percent of the immigrants arriving to Canada to the 1950s settled in Quebec, very few of them were francophones, and in general, newcomers identified with and assimilated to anglophone culture rather than that of francophone Quebec (Wayland, 1997, p. 43). With the advent of the Quiet Revolution in Quebec in the 1960s and 1970s, the province implemented a series of social, political, and institutional reforms. In the late 1960s, for example, the province began to negotiate with the federal government to control the selection and integration of immigrants. In this way, the Quebec government began to utilize immigration as a means of increasing its francophone population. Prior to Quebec's control over immigration beginning in the 1960s, however, language training for adult immigrants was English only. Federal English as a Second Language classes were intended for basic level preparation for citizenship; the curriculum focussed on Canadian "habits and attitudes," giving the program a strong Anglo-Canadian assimilationist thrust (Ciccarelli, 1997, p. 22).

Since the focus of the first federal language training programs for immigrants was on citizenship, it was the Department of Citizenship and Immigration that was responsible for funding the classes. Under the federal government, the financial responsibility for language training has expanded from one department to two over the past 50 years, and

the administration of ESL training has linked up to different areas in the process. In 1965, the Department of Manpower and Immigration assumed the costs of language training only for those in the labour force; immigrants who were not destined for the labour force were ineligible. Given the booming economy and the high levels of immigration at this time, the federal government wanted a say in training immigrants for the labour force. The Department of the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Citizenship Branch, was responsible for the smaller portion of the language classes under the Citizenship Act for persons not destined for the labour force.

By the mid-1980s, the provision of language training in two streams had continued with the majority of funding still going toward the classes linked to the labour market. In 1985, under the auspices of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, the Canadian Jobs Strategy Program was introduced. It received 90% of federal funding for labour market training, but it also introduced the Settlement Language Program, for general orientation, with 10% of its funding. In 1990 the Secretary of State's agreement with the provinces to provide language training for citizenship preparation was cancelled, leaving the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission the only provider of federal language training classes for either general orientation or labour market language training. From this point, language training was no longer linked up with citizenship preparation.

The federal programs for ESL over the past 50 years show that the state is concerned with at least two reasons for promoting ESL for immigrants. First, the greater distribution of funds to language training for labour market purposes since the mid-1960s indicates that the state at that time was most interested in preparing immigrants for work. The common sense term, language training, as it is referred to most frequently, points to

an important distinction. The term “training” distinguishes these ESL programs from “education” for a few reasons. Until the implementation of the LINC program, the majority of language training programs had been administered by the federal departments responsible for labour and immigration. It is only by linking ESL for adult immigrants with the labour market, through the provision of “training,” that the federal government can maneuver around the fact that constitutionally education is under the jurisdiction of the provinces (Burnaby, 1998, p. 249). If learning English is understood as “training,” the acquisition of English is understood as a skill that is presumably required in order to work. The distinction of ESL as “training” rather than as “education” has further ideological implications as well, because this way ESL falls under social welfare provision for refugees and immigrants, rather than part of the broader “education” system for Canada’s citizens.

Historically, the government’s secondary interest in providing ESL programs has been language training in preparation for citizenship. Language training in this case is taught as “orientation” to Canada, where the immigrant is taught what he or she needs to know about Canada in order to pass a citizenship test. The test requires that the immigrant relay his or her knowledge about Canada in an oral or written test, as well as demonstrate some proficiency in one of the country’s official languages. Once again, the federal government can maintain that this is “training” because learning English as a second language is instrumental to preparing for citizenship. While demonstration of linguistic proficiency in one of the official languages is still a requirement of citizenship, the federal government has since abandoned the provision of language training for that particular end, as mentioned above. The need for language training for general orientation and the labour

market won out over the rather hopeful proposition that linguistic competence in English and declaring one's allegiance to the nation could be accomplished in one easy step. In both of these rationales for the provision of language training, whether ESL programs are funded by the government for purposes of citizenship or labour market training, the acquisition of the English language is seen as a tool that is necessary to attain the goal at hand, be it a job or citizenship.

In both cases outlined above, English language training is viewed as a resource that provides access to either the symbolic value of citizenship or the material value of labour. Language training programs associated with citizenship preparation were eventually abandoned, which signals an interesting shift in how language is figured as a resource. A 1996 federal document about provincial and federal consultations on settlement and integration services discussed whether citizenship should be a "shared principle" of newcomer integration. The majority of participants in the consultation did not feel that becoming a Canadian citizen was a priority in the settlement and integration process (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996c). The symbolic value of becoming a citizen has become less of a priority for immigrant integration, and the funding for language training specifically for the purposes of a citizenship test was found to be better spent on programs with a focus on the labour force or general orientation. General orientation does prepare for citizenship as well, in that it is believed that increased English language skills will result in social, civic, and economic participation in Canadian society. But the general orientation programs focus on citizenship in a much less instrumental way than the previous citizenship preparation program, where the goal of the program is the citizenship test itself.

While citizenship preparation was the impetus for language training in 1947, the change reflects how a federal objective inspired by nationalism is not nearly as highly valued by the immigrants and refugees themselves, nor by those working in the settlement and integration sector. The federal decision to drop language training for purposes of citizenship has, most likely, economic interests as well. In the 1990s, the federal government was designing the next language training programs for adult immigrants focusing on training for the labour market and general orientation in an effort to centralize where the money for training was going. The various rationales for language training programs suggested here will be explored later in the chapter in relation to how linguistic competence is understood to facilitate “integration” as a measure of economic, civic, and/or social participation with the dominant culture. Next, however, it is important to outline the changing relationship between the federal government and the provinces to see how the responsibility for language training for adult immigrants is shared.

Provincial and federal responsibility

Since the British North America Act in 1867, immigration was pronounced a joint responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. While the federal government has taken some responsibility for language training over the last half century, the provinces had been responsible for the administration of broader settlement services until settlement was recognized as a federal responsibility in the 1970s. Prior to federal sponsorship of these programs, settlement services were provided by voluntary organizations such as community centres, ethnic organizations, church groups, and women’s organizations. In 1973 the federal department of Manpower and Immigration initiated a study of settlement needs to establish a settlement policy. The policy came to fruition in 1979 when the

department began the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), which provided funding for settlement services.

ISAP and LINC remain the two sources of federal funding for settlement services today. Provincially, Ontario offered the Ontario Settlement and Integration Program which provided funding for general settlement assistance (counseling, translation), and language training, as well as training for settlement workers and volunteers. In 1997, however, the program was replaced by the Newcomer Settlement Program which provides general assistance, orientation, and referral, but no longer funds ESL training. The federal government has only provided funding for settlement since 1978, and it was, until the LINC program, always seen as a set of services separate from language training. With the introduction of the LINC program, however, a shift occurred where language training began to be considered more broadly as a component of settlement, rather than purely for the purposes of vocational training or citizenship preparation. This shift cements ESL for adult immigrants to the realm of social welfare--it is now directly linked to settlement and integration services.

The provision of provincial and federal ESL programs have always operated as separate entities. The provinces run their own ESL programs under provincial ministries, the names and configurations of which change with the frequent changes in provincial and federal governance. In the late 1980s in Ontario, for example, provincial ESL programs were available through the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Ministry of Citizenship, and the Ministry of Skills Development. Now, the latter department is no more, and ESL is provided by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. In Ontario in the 1960s and

beyond, the community colleges profited well from the provincial ESL programs, as well as from the federal interest in language training for labour market preparation.¹ The federal department responsible for the training purchased courses from the provincially-run colleges. As a result, college ESL programs developed substantially, as did the ESL profession and teacher training. The provincial provision of ESL is housed most commonly within educational institutions, and so apparently would be linked to the realm of education, while the federal provision of it (a much smaller program by comparison) is linked up to immigration. In this way, ESL is understood as “training” and deemed one in a number of services that is part of settlement and integration. The provision of ESL is organized provincially and federally, but in all cases each ministry or federal department works separately and independently from the others. While other provinces, such as Manitoba and British Columbia, have managed to coordinate their provincial and federal programs to work together, Ontario has not. This means that there is more possibility of overlap and duplication in services; more importantly, it also means that there is more possibility of gaps and absences where services are needed.

Changing immigration

The federal government’s provision of ESL for adult immigrants solely for the purposes of citizenship and the labour market preparation has generally fallen short of the need for ESL according to advocacy groups for immigrants and refugees, and practitioners and scholars in the field of ESL. The more detailed reasons for these critiques will be explored shortly, but one of main reasons is simply a matter of demand, due to the changes in the management of Canada’s immigration policy. Canada has seen large numbers of migrants arrive in Canada after the World Wars and at other times in the last

century: in the 1920s mainly Eastern European immigrants settled here, and there were peaks in immigration in the late 1950s and the mid-1970s due in part to large numbers of refugees, where the annual levels went above 200, 000 arrivals (Elliot & Fleras, 1990, p. 60). In the last decade, the government has responded to the drop in the nation's birth rates, out-migration, and labour shortages by augmenting immigration levels from an annual rate of approximately 125 000 immigrants and refugees per year in the 1980s to arrivals of approximately 225 000 immigrants and refugees each year in the 1990s (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996a). The actual numbers of immigrants and refugees settling in Canada frequently fall short of the proposed targets, perhaps due to bureaucratic backlogs.

Changes in the management of immigration policy resulted in the introduction of the "points system" in 1967, further modified in 1976. This was an attempt to change Canada's ethnocentric and racist immigration policies that operated by selecting immigrants from "preferred" countries and prohibited the acceptance of immigrants and refugees who were "undesirable" for one reason or another, be it because of their nationality, ethnicity, race, or area of origin (Elliot & Fleras, 1990, p. 56). The "points system" is based on criteria such as education, occupation, and language skills. Three classes of immigrants were also established at this time (family, economic [business or skilled worker], and refugee). The recognition of a refugee class was an important part of the Immigration Act that was passed in 1976 and implemented in 1978. Prior to this, Canada accepted refugees only on an ad hoc basis (Hawkins, 1991, p. 174). These changes to immigration policies and regulations all contributed to increased migration from "Third World" countries and historically "non-conventional countries of origin"

(Elliot & Fleras, p. 57). By 1987, 70% of immigrants and refugees came from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin and South America, while 30% derived from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe (Boyd & Taylor, 1989). The source countries of immigrant and refugees arriving to Canada now are very similar to those of a decade ago. In 1998, 46% of the immigrants to Canada were from Asia and the Pacific; 22% from Africa and the Middle East; 22% from the United States and Europe, and 8.1% from South and Central America (CIC, 1998b).

Since these changes to immigration policy and regulations, Canada's policy has demanded greater numbers of economic immigrants (skilled workers and business class comprising investors and entrepreneurs), and there has been a decrease in the numbers of family class migrants and in the demand for unskilled workers. Canada, along with other "first world" nations, has played a large role as a refugee-receiving nation. This is the third group of migrants in Canada's policy, people who may be fleeing from political instability, civil war, or similar effects of colonization and globalization. The result is that "third world" countries are mined for the benefits of the "first world," leaving them resource poor and struggling with poverty and violence. While significant numbers of European refugees entered Canada following the Second World War, the country accepted an average of only 10 000 refugees per year until the late 1980s, when global political and economic conditions contributed to regular and more numerous flows of people seeking asylum and refuge. Since then, the refugee class accounts for approximately 10% of total annual immigration to Canada, that is, 20 000 - 28 000 refugees per year in the 1990s (Richmond, 1994, p. 256). Citizenship and Immigration Canada states that the number of refugee claimants has increased from 500 in 1977 to 24 000 in 1997 (CIC; 1998a).

With the increases in immigration levels and changes to immigration policy and regulations, the late 1980s and 1990s saw more migrants coming to Canada from Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa. The linguistic repertoires of the “newcomers” to Canada vary greatly, as do their levels of education and literacy. Each year the federal government publishes annual immigration overviews that tabulate the numbers of immigrants and refugees (adults and children) arriving in Canada by “language ability.” The numbers show that in the refugee class, about 45% of the refugees arriving to Canada from 1994 - 1998 speak neither official language. The averages are a little bit higher in the family class, at an average of 55% of family class applicants speaking neither official language. The most interesting result of these tabulations reveals that in the business class the percentages are very much the same. When tabulated for the principal applicant’s language ability, the percentages per year hover around 50%, and when the language ability of the principal applicant is assessed to include that of his or her dependents, the averages rise to show that 60% of the immigrants in the business class do not know either official language (CIC, 1996d; CIC, 1998c).

The CIC Immigration Overviews reveal that approximately half of all immigrants and refugees arriving in Canada since 1994 - 1998 do not speak English or French. Notable too, is the fact that the other half, about 40%, do speak English, with only 10% or less speaking French (CIC, 1996d; CIC, 1998c). The English language ability of the business class, however, is of little concern because the economic status of these immigrants takes care of the “problem” of integration. The business class of immigrants, however, is certainly not the target group of the LINC program. Their status as business immigrants ensures their labour market participation, and I argue, also ensures that they

will be deemed “integrated” on the basis of their economic contribution, regardless of their official language skills. It is the family and refugee classes who are the targets and recipients of ESL programs for adult immigrants because their immigrant status does not secure economic integration as the status of the business class does. For the adult immigrants in the refugee and family classes, the “problem” of integration is not solved by labour force participation. Indeed, the labour force participation of this group is not guaranteed, thus other measures of and systems for integration are considered necessary. “Language ability” emerges as a major focus and factor of immigrant integration that, for the family and refugee classes, will be the first step toward the goal of economic integration.

LINC: The Reorganization of Federal Language Training Programs

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, then, the labour-force orientation of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) ESL programs was deemed too narrowly focussed for the increasing numbers of family and refugee class migrants who were arriving in Canada. Advocacy groups for immigrants and refugees, teachers of ESL, and scholars in the field critiqued the language programs offered by Canada Employment and Immigration Commission on the grounds of exclusion. The labour force bias of the programs prevented many immigrant women from participating in ESL programs. Paredes (1987) and Giles (1988) argue that the CEIC sponsored language program of the 1980s systematically discriminated against immigrant women. The Settlement Language Program, devised as a precursor to the LINC program and introduced in 1985 by Employment and Immigration Canada, was a response to these challenges and was designed specifically for immigrant women (Burnaby, 1998, p. 250). Because it was a

pilot program, the funding for it was a meager 10%; the other 90% went to the Canadian Jobs Strategy program. Criticisms of the CEIC language training program continued, however, to focus on the labour force bias of the programs (Boyd, 1992) and on the gendered and raced discriminatory practices of CEIC employees who controlled access to the program (Doherty, 1992).

The introduction of LINC, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada, in 1991 was not just a response to the pressures put on the government by advocacy groups, it was also a convenient opportunity to restructure the organization and funding of language training for adult immigrants. The LINC program signals a major shift in the provision of ESL because for the first time the majority of the funding is designated for general “instruction,” not labour-market orientation or citizenship classes. The Immigration Plan for 1991 - 1995 introduced changes to federal language training that would alter the balance of funding to favour general orientation over labour-oriented language classes. When the program was implemented in June 1992 by Employment and Immigration Canada, LINC received 80% of the funding dollars and 20% went to corresponding Labour Market Language Training (LMLT) program. With the change in federal governance from the Conservative party to the Liberals in October 1993, the department responsible for immigration was renamed to become the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. LINC and LMLT moved from the department responsible for employment to that of immigration under the direction of the Settlement Branch, the department which funds the programs today.

A 1992 framework study of LINC issued by Employment and Immigration Canada acknowledges that previous language programs were for market purposes only, hence the

need for language training “for broader settlement and integration objectives” (Shane, 1992, p.1). The principle objective of the LINC program is “to provide language training in order to facilitate [newcomers’] social, cultural, economic, and political integration into Canada so that they may become participatory members of Canadian society as quickly as possible” (p.1). The goal of the program was to increase participation of immigrants in federal language training programs from 28% in 1991-1992 to 45% by 1995. The government wanted to devise a language training program that would reach more newly-arrived immigrants and refugees more quickly; at the same time, the program had to be “cost-effective” in this period of severe federal cut-backs.

The plan for LINC was carried on by the new Liberal government in 1993. As mentioned above, the colleges were benefiting financially from both federal and provincial ESL programs. The government saw that some of the federal expenditures on language training could be cut if the program were opened up to competition on the market. The shift here from “public” service to “private” service is part of the larger trend of privatization of services in Canada in the early 1990s, and also signals the dissolution of the welfare state. The federal language training program was offered on a contract basis, open for application by businesses, non-profit groups, NGOs, community groups, and educational institutions. The federal government characterizes the devolution of responsibility for federal programs to the provinces as “partnerships.” The LINC program is an example of this, where the funds come from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, but the administration and development of the program is the responsibility of the province. The devolution of federal responsibility for language training is part of a larger project of “Settlement Renewal” initiated in 1994, with the aim of transferring direct administration

for settlement services for integration back to the provinces. The rationale is that this arrangement allows for “partners” to administer services who are “more closely connected to the communities where these services are delivered” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996c, p.2). LINC was an early step in the development of this settlement partnership in Ontario, which is effectively the devolution of federal responsibility and administration of another branch of social services and welfare provision that was under federal jurisdiction. Interestingly, the “Settlement Renewal” process in Ontario has been at a standstill for a number of years. It appears that Ontario and Ottawa have reached a stalemate in negotiations to indicate that the planned devolution is creating some problems between the federal and provincial governments. With the LINC program structured as it is, however, language training remains to be the primary settlement service provided by the federal government.

With the introduction of LINC the government declared a renewed commitment to federal language training, with increases of \$200 million dollars in funding from 1991 - 1995, and a corresponding increase in training seats for immigrants (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1991b). The LINC program was introduced to make more training available for more immigrants and refugees as quickly as possible. The early LINC documents say that it is the government’s intention to get immigrants and refugees into the program within the first year of their arrival in Canada. The focus on immediate training for immigrants means that the program is only open to Convention Refugees and landed immigrants/permanent residents; Canadian citizens (francophone, allophone, the Aboriginal population), and refugee claimants are not eligible. The strict guidelines that dictate who may enter the program delimits the government definition of “immigrant” to

the most recently arrived, so that language training for immigrants who have become citizens is the responsibility of the provincial ESL system. The government has opened up the program to be accessible by those without labour market intentions, but at the same time restricts the definition of who an immigrant is by defining those eligible for training as “newcomers.”

The word “newcomer” first appeared as a term to refer to immigrants after the Second World War. The previous terms that were used in public and political discourse, such as “foreigner,” “alien,” and “DP” (displaced person), were replaced by “newcomer” at this time (Ciccarelli, 1997, p. 3) The shift in terminology signals a shift in ideology. The explicit threat posed by “aliens” and “foreigners” who must be assimilated is softened. The term “newcomer” emphasizes the newly-arrived status of immigrants, and seems to imply that they are not threatening but “new” and perhaps a bit naïve about Canadian ways. The “newcomer” moniker suggests that the immigrant is a blank slate ready to begin the process of integration. The discursive construction of “newcomers” as such puts a friendlier face on immigration, and follows in line with Canada’s more recent attempts to erase overt racist discourse from its immigration policy. Simmons asserts that the effects of the effort to remove racist discourse from immigration policy is twofold: while it promotes some tolerance, it can also produce covert racist discourse couched in economic terms (1998, p. 98). In LINC policy, the term “newcomer” is used to categorize who is eligible for language training, and carries with it ideological implications that paint a positive picture of the ideal new-to-Canada immigrant subject.

The “newcomer” arriving in Canada has the option of attending a LINC program, but they are offered only in English, and only outside of Quebec. There are no LINC

programs in French or English in Quebec, although there are ESL classes in Quebec intended for the non-immigrant population. According to the Canada-Quebec accord, completed in 1991, Quebec manages its own immigration policies, and is not under federal jurisdiction. The province receives direct financial compensation from the federal government. Quebec selects its own immigrants, and is entirely responsible for linguistic and cultural settlement services. Immigrant populations are provided with FSL classes. The English-only focus of the LINC program means that for those populations outside of Quebec who might want access to French as a Second Language classes there are just a few provincial FSL programs.² The distribution of federal funds to language training programs does not recognize the second of Canada's two official languages outside of the province of Quebec. This may be the result of a lack of demand for FSL programs outside of Quebec, but this explanation suggests that consumer demand is the only contingency that determines the provision of services. It is possible that the relationship between the provision and organization of ESL and FSL services in Canada is structured by elements that are more complicated than this.

While the federal English language training program is not available to any Canadian citizens (francophone or allophone), or refugee claimants, a 1991 document explains that the new immigrant language training policy "will make a range of more flexible options accessible to a greater number of immigrants, regardless of their labour market intentions" (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1991b, p.3). The LINC program recognizes and makes provisions for women and single parents by including childminding services as part of the program, and the policy specifically acknowledges the necessity to provide support for childminding and transportation so that more women can

access the program (p.3). A training allowance, however, is not provided, as in the previous CEIC program. Instead, immigrants and refugees can continue to receive social assistance, employment insurance, and adjustment assistance (for refugees) while in the program. In a study of Level 3 LINC classes in Ontario, the researchers found that the provision of child minding services is increasing the participation of women and single parents, thus they assert that LINC program has improved the exclusion of women and single parents from federal language training on this basis (Hart & Cumming, 1997).

The ESL profession and standardization

One of the major effects of the move to make LINC a contract-based program was that it broke down the unionized status and income security of ESL teachers who were somewhat protected by the (public) college system. Under the LINC program, each "SPO" (Service Provider Organization) creates its own budget. The organization can choose to hire full time or part time teachers, and can determine, within a range, what the teachers get paid. There is no job security when the contracts are only on a yearly basis, when the twelve month contract includes two months of unpaid holidays, and when full time work is difficult to obtain. LINC has contributed to the destabilization of the working conditions of ESL instructors. The impact of LINC severely challenges the status of the ESL profession, and similar moves have resulted in the loss of job security for ESL teachers in the provincial system as well. In the provincial college system, for example, ESL is now offered both as "credit" and "non-credit" courses. As a result, non-certified teachers can be employed at less cost to the institution.

The conditions of work of ESL teachers in both provincial and federal programs in Ontario are seriously at odds with comparable positions held by teachers of for-credit

programs in the school and college systems. A survey of ESL and LINC programs in Ontario notes that teachers at schools and colleges have long-term stability, reasonable pay, good benefits, and union protection. The same is not true for ESL and LINC teachers. Only a third of the teachers surveyed have permanent status, only half were in unions, and 40% had no benefits (Power Analysis, Inc., 1998, p. 62-66). The status of ESL and LINC teachers is so much lower than that of other teachers because, for one reason, ESL is regarded as a form of social welfare provision for immigrants and refugees, and is not valued as “education.” There is a relationship here between the status of the students of immigrant language training programs and that of the people who teach them that is ideological in nature. Both the students and the teachers of ESL for adult immigrants occupy marginalized positions within the social hierarchies that structure ESL as a form of education and work. The field is occupied mostly by women, which suggests that the larger social processes of gender discrimination might work in concert with the “social services” status of the program to devalue the work of the staff and the educational pursuits of the students, as I will explore in the next chapter.

In spite of the blows that the ESL teaching profession has received as a result of the negative changes in the conditions of employment over the past decade, various regulatory bodies have been developed to increase the status and legitimacy of the profession. A number of provincial, national, and international professional organizations, such as TESL Ontario (Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario) and TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) are interested in and working on the standardization of certification of ESL teachers. In fact, by the year 2000, TESL Ontario intends to function as a certification body for adult ESL instructors

(Sanaoui, 1998, p, 10). The latter initiative is not an independent one on the part of TESL Ontario, however, as it was the provincial government that instigated the development of the certification project. The interest of the government in doing so is to assert “quality control” over the field of ESL, regardless of the rather miserable conditions of employment and remuneration of ESL professionals (B. Burnaby, personal communication, October 19, 1999). While professional standards are increasing, the competition for jobs and the working conditions of those jobs are not seeing a comparable increase in standards. The LINC program, however, seems to have established a good reputation and status among ESL teachers. A number of teachers told me that it is high in the hierarchy of programs to teach in the ESL profession. A good reputation is accorded to LINC because it is one ESL program where it is possible to obtain year-long full-time work. There may also be symbolic value attributed to LINC because of its association with government efforts to standardize certain aspects of the profession and develop “quality” ESL, which might lend legitimacy and authority to the LINC program.

The efforts to standardize the professional requirements of ESL instructors are accompanied by efforts to create a standardized measure of ESL proficiency. Part of the mandate of the LINC program was to standardize an ESL client assessment “tool” and develop a standard set of ESL proficiency criteria. In 1996, the department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) consulted with an advisory group of experts to create the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), a set of task-based descriptive levels in three areas: reading, writing and speaking/listening. The advisory group developed a benchmark assessment tool which is used to place clients in the appropriate level of LINC. There is also a set of benchmarks for literacy learners. In 1998, Citizenship and Immigration

Canada formed the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks in Ottawa. The Centre works to promote the CLB system to other ESL providers, and sponsors research projects on adult language training. The Canadian Language Benchmarks are intended to provide “consistency of outcome, assessment, and competencies” (CIC, 1996b).

Issues of access and control

The government’s interest in developing ESL teacher certification, the language benchmarks, the assessment tool, and the Centre is an interest in becoming a regulatory body to manage and control the assessment of and access to federal ESL programs. Perhaps the most contested aspect of the LINC program by workers and scholars in the field at its inception was the insistence of CIC to maintain centralized control of the assessment and referral of LINC clients. Since the program was introduced, groups and individuals involved with LINC have argued that the centralized assessment and referral system hinders delivery of the program for a number of reasons. One of the most frequent complaints was that the service providers often found the assessors’ ranking of the clients did not match the levels present in their classrooms (see Baril, 1993; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants [OCASI], 1993). There have been improvements in this area. When LINC was implemented quickly, poorly, and unpreparedly, there simply was no uniform assessment tool, hence the development of the Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment. But CIC has refused to rescind any control of the assessment and referral procedures.

The government control of access to the program is convenient: LINC was designed to increase the number of immigrants and refugees in language training program,

and the centralized referral system ensures that CIC regulates access to the program. By opening up the federal program to community based organizations, school boards, colleges, private businesses, and others, the service providers perform the function of outreach to the local community. The client makes contact with the local centre, then he or she must be assessed at a CIC LINC Assessment Centre (A-LINC), which may or may not be in the client's community, and is referred to an appropriate service provider. The A-LINC assessors do make fairly frequent visits to the local service providers for assessment as well. What this system does, then, is incite competition for clients among the service providers, who are competing to market their services to the CLBA raters. The competition for clients extends to the bids for the LINC program, where the competition between providers creates budget proposals that try to squeeze in "the most students at the lowest price" (Baril, 1993, p. 24).

A further critique has been leveled at this form of administration of the LINC program. Contrary to the policy statements of LINC that ensure an increase in language training opportunities for immigrants and refugees, the contract-based organization of the program has resulted in school boards and colleges replacing their ESL programs with LINC. The provincial service providers have jumped on the federal bandwagon, which means that there are fewer programs for citizens. The Director of an immigrant serving organization in Scarborough, notes that it is the issue of incrementality, the failure to increase in the number of language training seats, that is the greatest concern to herself and her colleagues in the field of language training for adult immigrants (personal

communication, January 27, 1998). She asserts that LINC contracts to school boards and colleges outnumber those for community-based organizations in Toronto.

The LINC program offers language training for basic communication, with hopes that it will prepare immigrants for the next step, be it Labour Market Language Training (LMLT), further education, or employment. The strongest critique of the LINC program, voiced immediately at its inception, is that the program falls short of the primary goals stated above. When the program began, there were three levels of classes offered. Joan Baril, in her province-wide study of the program in 16 sites and 10 cities in 1992, argues that the language level where LINC leaves off is too low: “[t]his is not enough English to take an apprenticeship . . . go on to college or university, arrange schooling for one’s children, or in fact, take any meaningful role in Canadian society” (1993, p. 13). The language program offers “very little - perhaps access to a menial job” (p. 13). Similarly, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants published a report on the program that surveyed 44 community-based immigrant serving organizations; 75% of the agencies deemed LINC language levels “too low for integration” (OCASI, 1993, p.8). Since 1993, LINC has developed to include levels 4 and 5, and a computer skills component. But not all agencies deliver or get funding for all levels. Hart and Cumming (1997) found that Level Three “may not have been adequate to prepare these people for training or other educational courses in English” (p.54). These findings confirm assertions made over a decade ago that state-funded language training programs marginalize its clients, particularly women, and serve the needs of capital by creating and maintaining an unequal

distribution of linguistic resources to immigrants and refugees who, as a result, can only acquire unskilled, low wage jobs (Paredes, 1987; Ng & Das Gupta, 1981).

The advent of LINC created many changes in the organization of federal language training for adult immigrants. It shifted the focus of the goal of the programs from labour market and citizenship preparation to a focus on “integration”-- the implications of which will be explored below. The focus on integration means that the program did become available to women refugees and immigrants who were denied access to the majority of the programming because of the labour force orientation. The exclusion of immigrants who cannot be defined as a “newcomer,” and the goal of the program to provide the most basic language skills, are two aspects that are argued to be insufficient to achieve the goal of “integration” by those working in the field of ESL and settlement services (see Baril, 1993; OCASI, 1993; Hart & Cumming, 1997). Finally, the move to put the language training program up for contract has had deleterious effects, such as the destabilization of the working conditions of ESL teachers, increased competition among service providers, and the placement of CIC as the centralized regulator and distributor of LINC program referral and assessment, to the consternation of service provider organizations. In what follows, I will conclude this chapter with an analysis of the broader ideological concerns that underpin the current manifestation of language training for adult immigrants.

Ideologies of Language and Immigrant Integration

The policies of the LINC program reveal certain ideologies about language, the politics of immigration, and nationalism. What remains constant throughout the history of federal language training programs is the belief that language acquisition is the first step

toward integration. Learning English in the LINC program, where the course content is supposed to be “about” Canada, is understood in an instrumental way as a “skill” that is possible to acquire. But it is a very complex process: learning the language is a primary means of integrating into Canadian society. Integration, described in a federal document on settlement and integration, is a process of “adapting [to the] principles, traditions, and values that are inherent in Canadian society” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996c, p. 9). The status of the LINC program as a settlement language training program means that integration is one of its goals.

There is great value attributed to English to accomplish the goal of assimilation. Language is understood to be deeply connected to ethnic identity: it is about becoming (more) Anglo-Canadian. It “is still commonly understood to be the central pillar of ethnic identity” (Edwards cited in Billig, 1995, emphasis in original). In the realm of language planning and policy, language and ethnicity are “an almost fixed collocation,” Blommaert (1996) asserts. In the relationship between language and ethnic identity, there is little room for a conceptualization of an individual who might speak more than one language, or have ties to more than one ethnic group, hence to more than one nation. The solution to the nation’s problem of linguistic, racial, and ethnic heterogeneity presented by the immigrant population is linguistic homogeneity.

In this section I am considering that ways that the ideologies of language that surface in governmental language policies reflect upon the linguistic and cultural diversity that exists in the immigrant population. Richmond (1994) comments that “one of the more powerful features of modernity is the homogenizing influence of the state in the face of

ethnic and cultural diversity” (p. 194). Canada’s LINC program is an attempt to deal with the problem that linguistic and cultural diversity presents. The history of the institution provided on the previous pages shows that the program has changed from its blatantly assimilationist beginnings in the late 1940s. But the socio-historical process that are embedded in the ideologies and practices of a program such as LINC are deeply connected to ideas about language and nationalism that view the “differences” presented by immigrant populations as threatening, and as elements that need to be managed. These processes are larger than LINC and the people who created the program, and larger than the people who run the program.

English language training for adult immigrants is a hegemonic force that operates to manage linguistic, and hence, ethnic, difference in a monolingual/bilingual nation-state that is threatened by linguistic (and “other”) diversity. Billig (1995) discusses the rise of the modern nation-state and the corresponding rise of nationalism, where nationalism is “the ideology that creates and maintains nation-states” (p. 19). Nationalism often (but not always) relies on language to create imagined boundaries of belongingness, as Billig notes: “the creation of a national hegemony often involves a hegemony of language” (1995, p. 29). Furthermore, the notion of “a language” is itself “an invented permanency” (p. 30). Language training for adult immigrants relies on the banality, the “common-senseness,” of these inventions to provide the rationale for the program. It makes sense that immigrants and refugees receive language training to facilitate entry into the labour force, or other markets. But the symbolic values associated with learning “a language” are weighty. The path that leads to “integration” through ESL instruction is littered with issues of identity,

race and ethnicity, and assimilation that makes becoming “integrated” a much more complicated journey.

Since the first language training programs began, linguistic proficiency was understood to be the key to integration. The definition of integration, however, isn’t so clear. As part of the Settlement Renewal project begun in the early 1990s, CIC met with settlement and integration “stakeholders” across Canada to determine how the responsibility for settlement services would be shared and administered, which included the formulation of a set of “shared principles” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996c). The document that was a product of the consultations proposes a set of six “Key Elements of Integration.” The first key element defines integration as a “two-way process, which involves commitment on the part of newcomers to adapt to life in Canada and on the part of Canadians to adapt to new people and cultures” (p. 9). The second element states that “[t]he ability of newcomers to communicate in one of Canada’s official languages is key to integration” (p. 9). The next two elements emphasize the newcomers’ self-sufficiency, and the importance of shared “principles, traditions and values that are inherent in Canadian society” (p.9). The last two of the six “Key Elements of Integration” focus on the role of settlement and integration services to promote immigrant self-sufficiency, and the need for comparable services across the country (p. 10).

Throughout the document the federal government emphasizes that there are limited resources for newcomer integration. The limited resources justify the narrow definition of “newcomer” that determines who is eligible for federally-funded settlement services, and for how long: “Available funds cannot, for example, support standards to

ensure that all newcomers receive language training to a certain level of competency” (p. 13). The conveniently vague phrase “ a certain level of competency” ensures that the government cannot be held accountable for certain results from federal language training programs. Similarly, the service provider organizations (SPOs) cannot be held accountable for reaching certain levels of linguistic competence with each student. At the same time, however, accountability for integration and results standards were considered by the government as a top priority for “measuring integration results.” The document states that “CIC would work on developing integration indicators (e.g. knowledge of an official language) and results measures (e.g. number of refugees and immigrants that have increased their competency in one of the official languages)” (p. 13). The suggestion that language could serve as an “integration indicator” means that integration is measurable. The document discusses the use of employment rates as a measure for integration, but acknowledges that some immigrants, such as the elderly, will not enter the labour force. Knowledge of an official language is deemed the best measure of integration.

The government policy documents on the LINC program concur with the belief that language acts as a resource to access symbolic and material resources. The second part of the government equation, however, rests on a belief that language learning itself fosters integration, and here integration means accessing mainstream institutions and services. Thus, the objectives of the LINC program are based on the needs and demands of these majority institutions. The bureaucratization of assessment (the development of professional certification standards and standardized assessment tools described earlier) demonstrates “quality control” over the production of ESL programs and professionals.

At the same time, the accountability measures of the language training program are wholly structured to protect and legitimize the initiatives of the government. Therefore, the government cannot be held accountable for the results of the program. If the system of federal language training delivers a service that ensures quality instruction and quality assessment, then the failure to produce results that indicate successful integration is the responsibility (and failure) of the immigrants themselves. Integration may be described in policy as “a two-way process,” but integration cannot be a two-way process if the means and measures of integration are completely controlled and defined by the political elite. As Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) explain in their study of public discourse about the migrant debate in Belgium, integration is “a boundary concept” that has no definition or destination because the criteria for it and the power to define it rests with the majority. Integration, they note, is “deeply alienating, a paradox where harmony can’t be reached because inequality is inscribed in the process” (p 112).

Learning the English language removes what is considered to be the greatest barrier to integration: the inability to communicate in English. Learning English will facilitate communication in all spheres of the immigrant’s life by increasing his or her access to and participation in mainstream institutions and services. The belief that increased English language skills will result in better chances of communication and hence greater access to the mainstream does not take linguistic or social inequality into account: a person’s accent, race, gender, and culture influence the success of any interaction, thus linguistic competence does not necessarily confer guaranteed access to mainstream institutions and services. In other words, the authority of a speaker’s talk depends upon

the power relations that situate the speaker and also depends upon the context, or field, in which he or she speaks. Language is a resource, and competence in the field permits access to other symbolic and material resources. To gain access to those resources, however, the speaker has to be believed to be heard--his or her talk must be granted some measure of authority by the listener so that what is being said is understood as legitimate and "hearable" at all (Bourdieu, 1977).

As the work of Bourdieu makes clear, linguistic competence is not merely a "skill" that can be acquired in a facile process of transmission. Linguistic interaction must be recognized as a process that enacts complex social relations that are shaped by social, political, economic, and institutional constraints and possibilities. Similarly, the teaching of English as a second language most certainly brings these conditions to the fore, where the teacher and learners' identities and the institutional constraints of the learning environment form a complex field of power relations that shape and influence the interaction that takes place. In the ESL classroom, as in other educational sites, the cultural hegemony of institutional practices is rarely recognized, and student success is gauged only at the level of individual motivation, rather than regarded as a factor that must be accounted for within the social and institutional structures that contribute to its shape. In the field of second language teaching and learning, theorists and practitioners acknowledge that language planning and language policy have intense political implications both ideologically (see Tollefson, 1991, 1995) and at the level of practice (see, for example, Auerbach, 1995).

The overview provided here of the ideologies of language that surface in the discourses of ESL and federal language policies attempts to establish what English “is, has, and does,” as Phillipson (1992) puts it. In the LINC program, English is understood as a “skill” that is fairly simple to transmit to others. What it has is value as a symbolic and material resource, and what it does is permit immigrants and refugees to begin to participate in institutions and services that will enhance their productivity and encourage economic, social, and civic integration. A number of contradictions arise, however, to complicate this view. Studies of language planning, policy, and ESL reveal that learning a language is in fact “political” in that the inequalities that structure social interaction and social identities are reproduced in the teaching and learning of English. The reproduction of social and economic stratification that occurs through linguistic interaction means that access to resources is not necessarily secured once an immigrant or refugee acquires English language skills.

The reproduction of social stratification that occurs through language learning is locatable not just in the social hierarchies that structure any social interaction, but also in the discourses that shape the history of the field of ESL. The central role accorded to language and its relationship to nationalism in the modern nation-state means that teaching English is part of the hegemonic project of nation-building. The colonial history of English Language Teaching shows that a large part of ESL began in colonial education systems where the unabashed goal was assimilation, or the creation of an undereducated underclass capable of doing the menial work required to run the colony (Phillipson, 1992). These historical discourses weave in and through those of the present day, to inform how

linguistic interaction structures social relations in the practice of ESL. To cast the net even wider, however, the mode and rationality of governance that the LINC program represents deserves some attention.

Managing LINC

The proposition that language is the key indicator of immigrant integration provides a forceful rationale for the existence of the LINC program. Language is understood to be the key component to immigrant settlement and integration--this is the dominant ideology of the federal language policies.³ It is also the dominant ideology of public and political discourses about immigrant integration, and provides the rationale for immigrant lobby groups to advocate for more funding and better services for language training programs. For the government, however, the prospect of measuring immigrant integration via English language skills means that integration itself is measurable. There is a great investment on the part of the federal government in tracking and managing this population through the LINC program. Accountability and competition (the marketization of federal ESL programs), are the catchwords that underwrite the LINC program. These days, they are increasingly familiar discursive terms that define the management of arenas such as health and education, where the enterprises of the capitalist market have taken over those of the welfare state. In an attempt to account theoretically for the ways that the LINC program manages itself, I turn to Foucault's (1978/1991) notion of "governmentality." Foucault's theory of governmentality combines the individualizing and totalizing forms of power that he explored in previous works: the regulation of the body, hence the surveillance, control, and management of subjects to

create the self-regulation of apparently “free” citizens, and the idea of “biopower,” a politics concerned with the welfare of subjects as members of a population through statistics, censuses, and the control of health and reproduction: the management of the living and of life (Foucault, 1975/1977, 1976/1990).

Governmentality is, most simply, “a way of problematizing life and seeking to act upon it” (Rose, 1993, p. 288). Its focus is on how to govern most effectively to ensure the security of the state, its individuals, and the prosperity of both. The main component of governmentality’s rationale, Foucault says, is “the apparatuses of security” (1978/1991, p.102). The issue of security of the state and of individuals surfaces frequently in public and political discourses on immigration. As Hawkins (1991) notes, immigration “touches on the most fundamental of political concerns--the well-being, development, and security of the state” (p. 245). Immigration is commonly perceived to pose a threat to the privileges entitled to the “native” population that are secured by their citizenship within the nation (Richmond, 1994, p. 222). The notion of governmentality helps to account for the ever-present linking of personal security with collective (national) security, both of which are potentially threatened by the presence of immigrant “others.” The LINC program, for example, as a provision of social welfare for adult immigrants, works to manage the insecurity and risk that the population presents to the nation economically, politically, and socially.

Rose (1993), a governmentality theorist, discusses how liberalism has historically shaped Western democracy to contribute to current forms of governmentality. He notes, for example, liberalism’s reliance on a relationship between governance and knowledge

production in the social and human sciences, and a reliance on the authority of expertise to isolate and work to solve “social problems” (p. 291). Liberalism also invests great hope in its subjects, Rose argues. It “seeks to shape and regulate freedom in a social form, simultaneously specifying the subjects of rule in terms of certain norms of civilization, and effecting a division between the civilized members of society and those lacking the capacity to exercise their citizenship” (p. 219). Hence we get “devices,” such as schooling and the family, that “promise to create individuals who do not need to be governed by others, but will govern themselves, master themselves, care for themselves” (p. 291). Social work and welfare perform this function, and in doing so delineate those who are wise, healthy, and civilized from the rest. The most interesting aspect of this to me is what must take place in the “devices” of schooling or the family to produce self-regulatory citizens, and how it is that people take on the work of the nation.

Rose (1993) asserts that governmentality explains the activities of politics today because it rethinks the polarization of the private and the public spheres (political and private security; national and individual prosperity; public citizenship and private welfare) to show them as interdependent, and it offers an understanding of power that complicates a “top down” relationship between a centralized state and civil society:

The strategies of regulation that have made up our modern experience of “power” formulate complex dependencies between the forces and institutions deemed “political” and instances, sites, and apparatuses which shape and manage individual and collective conduct in relation to norms and objectives, but yet are constituted as “non-political.” (Rose, 1993, p. 286)

The relations between the “political” forces and institutions and the apparently “non-political” instances and sites of practice are not direct, but are relations that are established “between various centres of calculation and diverse projects of rule . . . such that events within the micro-spaces of bedroom, factory floor, schoolroom, medical consulting room might be aligned with aims, goals, objectives and principles established in political discourse or political programmes” (Rose, p. 287).

In the realms of health and education, for example, disparate and diverse programs, experts, policies, etc., produce knowledges and practices that are embodied by doctors and patients, teachers and learners, who accomplish the work required by the nation to improve it, to try to make it better, healthier, and more productive. The LINC program is one such “device,” and what interests me further is how the objectives and goals at the level of the nation become that of the citizen, who is engaged in a national project of which we are all a part.

Conclusion

This chapter considers the history of federal language training for adult immigrants and looks at the various discourses that filter through the LINC program, such as ESL theories and practices, governmental policies and rationales, and ideologies of language. The historical changes that have taken place in the provision of ESL services for adult immigrants reveal different configurations of what that program is for (preparation for citizenship, the labour market, or general orientation) and who the language training recipient is (male, female, newly-arrived immigrants). The changing focus of the language training programs show that integration is being conceived of in different ways as well.

The goals of the previous programs (citizenship and employment) signaled, in a rather direct way, that immigrant integration had been achieved. But these programs were not reaching enough immigrants due to various exclusions, as discussed earlier. The federal language training program had to be refigured in favour of general orientation classes where the goal of the program, linguistic competence itself, becomes the measure of immigrant integration. Interestingly, the gendered divisions of labour and education come into play here to structure the language training programs, so that now most of the recipients of ESL and LINC programs for adult immigrants are women (Power Analysis Inc., 1998, p. v).

Canada's provision of ESL for adult immigrants has always maintained itself as a function of social services, rather than education. With the advent of the LINC program, the reorganization of ESL for adult immigrants is a testament to this, with deleterious effects on the ESL teaching profession. These effects are keenly felt by the employees and the students in the LINC program that I consider in the next chapter, to suggest that there is a correlation between the marginalization of ESL teachers and the social positioning of the students that they teach.

The final section above encapsulates some of the ways that ESL training for adult immigrants functions to reproduce and regulate the conduct of its employees and its students in the service of the goals and objectives of the nation. Language training for adult immigrants is, I argue, the management of the economic and social risks presented by the immigrant population. The form that this social relation takes is not a product of the language training programs, or of the government that implements them, but is a

reflection of the ways that the modern nation-state functions to grapple with linguistic and cultural differences. The rationality of governmentality as such is an ideological legacy embedded in socio-historical processes that, while taken up by and through us, is also greater than us.

A closer look at these processes is now in order to consider the particular constraints that emerge when the extra-local discourses of the LINC program discussed here meet the people in the program in a local context. In the chapter that follows, I will address the institutional organization of one LINC program. Following that, in Chapter Four I will look at the ways that specific linguistic interactions and practices shape and are shaped by the combined institutional and discursive constraints and possibilities that are produced in one particular and local instance of a LINC program.

Endnotes

¹In Ontario and Canada, community colleges provide diplomas and certificates in post-secondary education and training in professional and technical trades, while the universities grant degrees in higher education.

²In a 1998 report titled Study of ESL/FSL Services in Ontario (Power Analysis, Inc), only 11 out of 1500 teachers surveyed taught FSL in Ontario. Despite the title of the report, the number of FSL service providers were so few that all data for FSL was subsumed under that of ESL services in the entire report (p. 2).

³On the front page of the web site for the Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks (www.language.ca), the slogan reads: "Language is the key/La Langue, c'est la clef."

Chapter Three

Conditions of Institutional Constraint and Possibility: The LINC Program at the Somali Centre

Introduction

This chapter of the thesis engages with the relationship between the local discourses and practices of the institution and extra-local discourses that shape the LINC program as discussed in the previous chapter. While the main focus is on the ways that institutional ideologies determine what kinds of talk and action are possible, the title of the chapter acknowledges that these constraints are also conditions of possibility. The institution is the active site of the negotiation of the discourses that shape it. Amidst the negotiation of these discourses, the conditions of the program produce dominant institutional discourses that influence the form of social interactions in the institution. My interest here is based on institutional ethnographic methodologies that look at how ambiguities are rationalized, how decisions are made, and how problems are solved in institutions that, in their operations, produce contradictions and conflicts.

This chapter will establish the site of this research project by first, a brief foray into the development of community-based immigrant serving organizations in Toronto that serve the Somali community, to arrive at a description of the Immigrant Serving Organization (ISO) that I am studying here. Next, I will talk about the organizational structure of the agency and compare it to other LINC programs in Ontario to establish it as a “typical” LINC program. Lastly, the groups and individuals that animate these structures will be introduced to discuss their relationships to the institutional order of the

organization, their interests in the LINC program, and the constraints that they face as participants in a federally-funded ESL program that is housed in a community-based ISO.

In my attempt to represent the groups and individuals involved in this program, I am aware of being required to create groupings of people that share beliefs and practices, yet there are contradictions within these groupings that are elided to show the larger structures of social relations. At the level of the group, and within the individual, allegiances shift and change frequently, depending on the situation, and depending on the desired goal. In the next chapter, where I take a closer look at how the order of the institution is borne out in social and linguistic interaction, I will be able to account more fully for this element, for the shifting nature of power relations. First, however, the parts that make up the structure of the organization as a whole must be considered to get a sense of the everyday workings of LINC at the Centre.

Somali Immigrant Serving Organizations

Holder's (1997) study of the role of immigrant serving organizations (ISOs) in the Canadian welfare state explains that in the late 1960s immigrant services developed into a separate sector for social welfare provision. Since the 1970s, the provision of these services has been supplied by both "mainstream" and community-based immigrant serving organizations. Mainstream organizations supply services based on need, such as food, shelter, and health, not on client characteristics. Community-based immigrant serving organizations, on the other hand, provide services geared to a specific community that defines itself according to cultural, racial, and/or linguistic factors (Holder, 1997, p. 13). Holder argues that mainstream services have done little to address the issue of accessibility to services by minority groups, and it is community-based immigrant serving agencies, or

“ethnoracial” organizations, that meet the needs of specific communities and work to promote immigrant and refugee interests (p. 2).

In keeping with Holder’s analysis, the development of settlement services for African communities, and the Somali community specifically, began in response to the increasing numbers of African immigrants and refugees who settled in Canada since the 1980s, and who needed to create their own institutions to meet their interests. The increase in migration from Africa is related, of course, to changes in the nation’s immigration and refugee policies, as discussed in Chapter Two. From the 1950s to the 1970s, Canada’s system for accepting immigrants was highly selective, and favoured people from European countries. In the 1940s, immigrants from Africa accounted for only 3% of all immigrants to Canada; the numbers increased slowly in the subsequent two decades, but African migration to Canada remained slow compared to that of other countries (George & Mwarigha, 1999, p. 78). The African immigrants who were permitted entry to Canada during these decades tended to be well-educated professionals. In the 1980s there was a sudden increase of African immigration, and by the early 1990s this group comprised 7.5% of all of the immigrants to Canada; the majority of these people are members of ethnic minority groups from Sub-Sahara and Arab Africa (George & Mwarigha, 1999, p.78). Such is the story of the people who established the Somali Centre. Somali refugees began to arrive in Canada in the late 1980s when civil disturbances began in that country. Increasing numbers of Somali refugees arrived in Canada throughout the 1990s, so that Somalia ranks in the top 10 of the countries from which Canada accepted refugees from 1990-1998 (EIC, 1990, 1991a, 1992, 1993; CIC, 1996d; CIC, 1998c).

The city of Toronto receives about half of all of the refugees who arrive in Canada; that is, 7 000 - 10 000 per year over the last 5 years (CIC, 1996d; CIC, 1998c). The number of Somali immigrants and refugees in Toronto is difficult to determine and estimates vary significantly. The 1998 annual report from the Somali Centre cites 60 000 Somalis in Toronto (Somali Centre, p. 2). Opoku-Dapaah's (1995) study says there are 25 000 Somalis in Canada, and the majority of them are in Toronto (p. 1).

When the first refugees from Somalia began to settle in Toronto, a small association of Somalis began to meet together in the mid-1980s in Parkdale. The group gathered to promote awareness about the issues facing Somali refugees, and to begin to look at the specific laws and practices that affected the community's resettlement in Toronto. The association was incorporated in 1988 as a non-profit organization, and soon after opened its first office to establish itself as the first Somali immigrant serving organization in Toronto. A decade later, the Centre offers a range of settlement services: immigration counseling and advocacy, translation/interpretation services, employment related assistance, housing, welfare, and legal aid referrals, health and nutrition programs, support groups, frequent workshops, and, of course, the LINC program. The Somali Centre functions as a community centre: it supports sporting and cultural events, youth programs, and, save for the LINC program, the staff organizes and administers all of the programs and services listed above. The organization operates by means of a Board of Directors and an Executive Director, a handful of paid staff, and a host of volunteers, most of whom are members of the organization. The Centre is now one of 9 ethno-specific immigrant serving organizations that serve the Somali community in Toronto, and one of 24 African ISOs in the city (George & Mwarigha, 1999, p.3).

Opoku-Dapaah (1995) conducted a survey to profile the settlement experiences of almost 400 Somalis in Toronto. He found that 78% of this population was involved in Somali community organizations (1995, p. 63). He states that Somali community-based agencies were developed to provide the essential service of helping refugees with encounters with government institutions while in the process of settling in the city of Toronto (p. 75). Opoku-Daapah explains that Somali community organizations serve the “neediest and largest refugee community in Toronto” (p. 80).

The ethno-specific Somali immigrant serving organizations in Toronto, along with those that are designated “African” ISOs, all must compete with one another for funding at the local (private donations and membership dues), municipal, provincial, and federal levels. Provincial and federal funding for settlement services, for example, is allocated according to the number of landed arrivals from source countries, which places community-based ISOs from the same community in direct competition with one another (George & Mwarigha, 1999, p.37).

The Somali Centre receives its funding from a host of municipal, provincial, and federal sources, as well as partnerships with and support from mainstream voluntary organizations, such as the United Way. The Centre began to offer the LINC program in 1993, shortly after the program was introduced. The financial administration of LINC is organized in conjunction with a large private ESL school in Toronto. The school represents the other side of ESL--ESL as a private profit-making venture. It is a school for mostly young, university-age adults from Europe, Asia, and South America who obtain temporary visas to come to Toronto for English language training and certification. The private ESL school has nothing to do with the delivery of the LINC program at the

Centre, and operates from a location on the other side of town, but it controls the distribution of LINC finances. Most likely, this partnership was devised to legitimize the funding administration of the program by having a large reputable business “front” the Centre for the purposes of winning and securing the government contract for the LINC program. The Centre has successfully obtained federal funding for the LINC program for 6 years in a row.

LINC at the Somali Centre

The Centre is located in Toronto, housed on the second floor of a strip mall. From the street, large yellow letters plastered on the Centre’s second story windows announce the available services; they are worded both in English and Somali. Up two flights of metal stairs, the Centre shares a hallway (scuffed walls and worn carpet) with a few other businesses. At one end of the hallway is the Somali Centre lobby where a reception desk, a computer, a phone, and a photocopier are located. The lobby has a shiny tile floor, and it is the hub that connects the LINC Coordinator’s office (very small and full of files and paper), two classrooms, and a very narrow room that holds a fax machine and teaching supplies. Down the hallway is the comfy childminding room, the nicest looking room in the Centre; it has a soft carpet and is filled with children’s tables, chairs, and toys. Further down the hall is a third large classroom, and the “Office.” The “Office” consists of a meeting room that has a large wooden table and two desks separated by dividers, and a Social Services office, a tiny room which opens with a flimsy door with no handle, has no windows but a humming fluorescent light above, and can barely contain the desk and two chairs in it. Next to the Social Services room is the Executive Director’s office, a well furnished place with a computer and a large window with a view to the street.

The Centre's current LINC program offers three classes: a literacy class, a split Level One and Two class and a split Level Two and Three class. LINC supplies the wages for a program administrator, three full time teachers, a cultural interpreter, and three child minders. It covers program expenses, teaching materials, transportation costs, and some capital and overhead costs. On a typical day, there are 25 - 30 students attending the classes, which take place from 9:00 - 3:30, with a break in the morning and a 45 minute break at lunch. During the two and a half months that I visited the Centre, from January to March, 1999, the students in attendance were mostly Somali women, ranging in age from early 20s to early 60s. The cultural interpreters were Somali women as were the child minders, while the teachers and the Coordinator were all White English-speaking women who had lived in Canada all of their lives.

In comparison to other LINC programs, this program appears to be fairly "typical" of what is offered elsewhere in Toronto and throughout the province. A recent study of ESL/FSL services in Ontario commissioned by CIC confirms that the LINC program at the Centre is similarly organized and operated compared to others in the province. There are a few small differences between the program at the Centre and others in Ontario. The class sizes at the Centre tend to be smaller than average (8 - 12 students per class, as opposed to an average of 17 students in other classes) (Power Analysis, Inc, 1998, p. 34). Also, few LINC programs have split level classes as the LINC program at the Centre does (only 16% of all LINC classes in Ontario offer split level classes) (p. 39). These are minor differences. The similarities between programs are more interesting.

The study reveals, for example, how extremely gendered ESL is in Ontario; these statistics concur with the gendered make up of the program at the Centre. Eighty-six

percent of the teachers of LINC and ESL programs are women, as are 69% of the students (p. v). As for the ethnic and racial identities of the participants and staff of ESL and LINC in Ontario, the report does not explicitly venture into determinations of race and ethnicity, but instead relies on language as a marker of ethnicity by tabulating the “Native Language” spoken by students and teachers. This calculation is a bit spurious because it leaves no room for multilingual linguistic identities, and forces what might be multiple identifications into a deterministic rendering of a singularity. Thus the “Native Language” category can be interpreted to reflect ethnic and racial affiliations that are probably more complex and multiple than the statistics take into account.

I do rely, however, on these statistics as a representation of what is happening in ESL in Ontario. Forty-seven percent of LINC teachers said they spoke a first language other than English, such as French, Chinese, or Spanish (p. 56). Of the students, twenty-three percent speak Chinese as their first language. Somali figured as 2.5% of the tabulation of “languages other than English,” appearing as number eleven in a list of 20 identifiable languages spoken by LINC/ESL students. The top nine languages listed after Chinese (number one) prior to Somali (number eleven) were Spanish, Arabic, Serbian, Tamil, Russian, Polish, Persian, Korean and Farsi (p. 82). The linguistic repertoires of the students are much greater than the representation of 20 different languages, however, since 15% of the students surveyed speak “Other” languages.

A third point of interest and comparison in the survey is that according to teachers and administrators in both provincial ESL and federal LINC programs, the dearth of funding for ESL creates unstable working conditions for the staff and impoverishes the effectiveness of the programs for the students. Funding is found to be “the top issue” for

ESL in Ontario (p.71). The last relevant point that surfaces in the study is the claim that the “prevailing opinion among experts in the field who were interviewed for this study is that the typical reason for taking English training is to find a job,” but “the [students’] number one reason for taking the course [LINC or ESL] was to understand and speak with Canadians in everyday life” (p. 94). This last point unearths an ideological conflict between ESL students and ESL “experts” about the intended goal and purpose of ESL training. The economic goals of ESL are, for the students, secondary to its social and participatory function.

Establishing the “typicalness” of the LINC program at the Centre by means of comparison with a provincial study helps to highlight the everyday and ordinary issues and concerns in the field of ESL. Statistical data provides answers to simple questions about who the students of ESL are, who the teachers are, what the conditions of the programs are, and what these people’s interests are in English teaching and learning. Generalized data, however, elides and erases the complexities of these issues, and the ways in which they are figured differently in and through specific social and institutional relations. By taking a closer look at the operations of one LINC program in a particular institutional context, it is possible to find out more about why funding is deemed the most important issue to ESL, what some of the effects might be of a field that is so highly gendered, what the particular interests are in teaching and learning ESL, and given those interests, how the constraints and possibilities offered by institutional and social relations shape them. These are some interesting questions that I will explore in relation to one another, and in relation to a particular and local institutional context. The next step is to consider how these constraints surface in and shape institutional practices and social interactions, and what,

from them, is produced. But before this next step can be broached, the order of the institution needs to be established.

The People and the Program

To get a glimpse of the way LINC operates at this particular organization, the Somali Centre, it is imperative to have a sense of the various interests of the people that are contained in and by the LINC program, and also of the ways that this particular institution mediates how the program takes shape. The different players involved in the scene make up a constellation of individuals and groups who move in and out of the physicality of the institution itself (its physical and organizational structure, as described above), as well as in and through the discourses that make up the “invisible” structure of the institution’s ideologies and practices. Next, I intend to map out who these groups and individuals are and what the conditions are of their involvement in the LINC program.

LINC’s relationship with the Centre

The presence of LINC at the community-based immigrant serving organization brings in members of the community to join in on the activities of the organization and utilize its other services. LINC is also, however, the only program at the Centre that is wholly managed and run by people external to the membership of the organization. LINC programs at community-based ISOs are an example of one of the ways that the majority regulates the “self-organizations” of migrants, as Blommaert and Verschueren note in their study of the migrant debate in Belgium (1998, p. 192). This makes for an institutional arrangement that necessitates compromises. When I asked about the relationship between the Centre and LINC, Mohammed, the Executive Director, responded with this explanation:

LINC was only specifically one program that we felt was, ah, important to the community, was important to the agency at that time, because we wanted to recruit the community to take advantage of this because we - if you don't know the language, your chances are very slim to live here. You know, you sign documents that you don't know, don't know who you are talking to, all that stuff. And now, ah, - I feel it's still important program, and if you have got people coming into the country and so on, not saying that it isn't [?], it's like any other program, with its own challenges, its to - and market, make sure that people [?] . . . [phone bleeping] . . . like any other program, any other school, you want people to go to U of T not Ryerson, Ryerson not U of T, you know, competition like. -- Same as any other program that you have, there are different schools running it . -- That's how I studied and became successful because I went into a LINC program when I came into the country. I don't know, without LINC I wouldn't have made it to college or university. Because if you just took English for granted, 'cause you were born here, would wonder why this, you know? 'Cause they took it for granted that everyone knows, should know. And same as, we took for granted like ah, life, we took it for granted because if you're healthy, have you ever thought about health and all that stuff? No. When you get old and sick you feel that health is an issue. Same thing with the program, you, I know, because I know how difficult it is - and see how they do studies of Canada, only because they have to become ah, they are the expectations of hired teachers, they have to be good teachers, we don't have that skills for that, so we have to go with partnership of

one [?], so we partner with . . . [?] Like any other program it has its challenges, its ups and downs.

Mohammed's words reveal some ambivalence about the program. He acknowledges, in the beginning, that the program was regarded as an opportunity for the Centre to recruit members to the organization, and because he speaks of this in the past, there is a sense that this function of the program might not be important any longer. The LINC market has expanded since the Centre began to offer the program in 1992, and instead of the program acting as a draw to the community, it now has to actively recruit students to keep the program running. But Mohammed interrupts his history of the program with a pragmatic rationale of the program that justifies its relevance now: it is hard to live here if you don't speak the language, and he could not have been successful without it. Mohammed expresses some ambivalence around the content of the LINC program, where the "studies of Canada" are the "expectations of hired teachers." The community does not yet "have the skills" for "good teachers" of their own. His comments imply that he would prefer to have teachers of his "own" with more control over course content. The arrangement, as it stands, is a compromise; it has its "ups and downs."

The contact between the Centre's Board of Directors and the LINC program is minimal. The LINC staff do not attend any meetings of the Board, nor are there formal meetings between the LINC staff and the staff of the Centre. In this respect, the Centre and the LINC program live side by side but operate quite independently from one another. Mohammed's take on the relationship between LINC and the Centre reflects, I think, an ambivalence about it because of the tensions it produces as a compromised and compromising institutional arrangement. The nature of these tensions, and the ways that

the institutional arrangement necessitates compromises, will become clearer in the following sections where I discuss the relationship between the Centre and LINC with the teachers and the staff.

The Coordinator

The Coordinator's impression of the relationship between the LINC program and the Centre takes shape in more personal terms. In the past year, the Centre moved locations. The move altered the physical organization of shared space, and the Coordinator, Rebecca, says that she feels the relationship between the Centre and LINC changed as well. In the previous building, the LINC program and the Coordinator's office were located on a separate floor from the activities of the Somali Centre. In the new building, the LINC classrooms and offices share the lobby and other spaces of the building directly with the Somali Centre. Rebecca attributes the change in the layout of the shared space, and her six years of employment with the organization, as two factors that contribute to her commitment to and involvement in the community initiatives headed by the Centre. In the interview excerpt below, she describes her increased involvement in the Centre:

. . . . When we moved here, before in the other place, I was downstairs, working, in the building, and the Somali Office, all this, all the main activity was on another floor, so I was really, it was just the teachers and myself isolated. But now I have become sort of immersed in the last year and a half, immersed in the culture, in the - and I wish it had happened a lot sooner. . . . I've been able to get involved in some of the workshops that they've been offering to [the Centre] staff, so, what I'm not gaining in money I'm gaining in um, just, in opportunities to learn, to

acquire new skills. . . . we're all working together, I've gotten to know them more and we've become extremely close. Now they're like second family for me, you know.

Rebecca often mentions that the people at the Centre were like a "second family" to her. What is notable here is the ease with which she feels a part of the Centre both as the LINC Coordinator and as a member of the Centre. There isn't much ambivalence about it. I suspect that this is because of the difference in power relations that positions her as authoritative in her role as LINC Coordinator and as entitled to join in on the Centre's initiatives. Her social positioning allows her to move easily between both "worlds." Furthermore, her position in the institution necessitates that she mediate the conflicts and contradictions that arise as a result of the presence of LINC at the Centre. In this way, Rebecca is able (and indeed required) to cross a variety of institutional, cultural, and linguistic boundaries in her role as Coordinator.

Although Rebecca might feel highly valued (like family) by her involvement with the Centre, the line that separates LINC and the Centre is drawn quite clearly by the Executive Director. This separation was negatively valued by the Coordinator and the teachers, to imply that they believed the staff and members of the organization should be "more involved" with the LINC program. The sense that the LINC program is not of great value as a resource to the organization creates a source of tension, but the reason for the tension might not be explicitly recognized: the LINC program exists in a contradictory relation to the autonomous nature of the community-based immigrant serving organization. The participants of LINC feel the sense of compromise through the Centre's

“lack of involvement” with LINC staff and students. This way, they are made aware of the uncertain status of the program within the organization.

Rebecca’s involvement with the Centre goes beyond the dictates of her role as LINC Coordinator. She comments in the above excerpt that she does not get paid for the extra work she does. The work that she does get paid for as the LINC Coordinator includes organizing workshops on settlement issues, purchasing, bookkeeping, monitoring the progress of the classes, monitoring the child minding program, and preparing mid-year and year-end reports. In her own words, here is her description of one aspect of her role as Coordinator:

I act as liaison between the teachers and the students when things get a little rough, like if the teachers need to vent, I’m the person they vent to, if the students need to vent I’m the person they vent to. I have to kind of monitor the attendance and if there are problems with students coming in late so I’ve got to give them these little talks every once in a while. Just to get them back on track again.

Indeed, attendance is one of the most intense and contentious issues of the program: it produces frequent conflicts that Rebecca has to mediate, and she is bound to the “rules” about attendance since strict record-keeping is demanded by LINC. The above excerpt clearly articulates Rebecca’s complex role as negotiator and mediator of the program and the conflicts that it produces.

In her role as Coordinator, Rebecca occupies a position of authority that requires her to monitor and track the attendance and progress of the program in order to ensure its continued viability. She also, however, enjoys being “involved” and closely connected to the people that she works with. After observing the goings-on of the organization for a

few weeks, I noticed that Rebecca, the teachers, and the cultural interpreters were often very involved in helping the students sort out conflicts with landlords or creditors. They were doing the work of settlement counselors. The Centre has one part-time settlement counselor on staff, and the LINC program does not provide funding for settlement counselors. Speaking with Rebecca, I asked her about the role of settlement counselors within the organization and in relation to the LINC program:

There are supposed to be people in the organization on a regular basis that will provide counseling. When we have real problems Ahmed is a big help.

Unfortunately, he's not paid full time. He's only paid to be here 15 hours a week.

And hopefully, the government is being very generous with funding, right now, because election time is coming, so hopefully [the Centre] will get some money to have full-time counselors on staff 'cause really quite frankly we need somebody to be here. . . . Otherwise I end up doing it and I'm not supposed to be doing it.

The lack of settlement counselors is certainly due to a scarcity of funds, but it also contributes to the sense that the Centre is not providing the necessary support for the LINC program to function smoothly. As mentioned earlier, this is one of the compromises felt keenly by the LINC staff and students that create tensions in their relationship with the Centre.

The teachers

The involvement of the LINC staff in settlement service work is so wedded to their work at the Centre that all of them identified themselves, at times jokingly, as "social workers" as well as ESL teachers/instructors. Here, the ideology that aligns the provision of language training for adult immigrants with social welfare provision is made visible. If

programs like LINC are part of social welfare provision, indeed, designated as a settlement language training program, then the resources to provide the settlement aspect of the program should be adequately provided. One morning, for example, Rebecca organized a workshop on the Landlord and Tenant Act, presented by a lawyer, to let the students know about their rights as tenants. As a result of the information provided by the lawyer, many of the students realized they were being gouged by their landlords in a number of ways. The lessons planned for that afternoon were put aside to work out strategies for the students to deal with their landlords. The teachers' goals as ESL instructors are regularly interrupted because of the discovery of certain problems and crises that the students are experiencing, and the teachers want to help. There are other structural constraints, similar to this one, that impinge upon the conditions of the teachers' work.

The LINC program operates in policy on a continuous intake basis, and very often the classes are multi-level. Two of the three classes offered at the Centre are split-level classes. The classes, as a result, are very heterogeneous in terms of the students' proficiencies, and the teachers cannot maintain much continuity between classes. The students in the classes range in age and in their personal motivations and goals for the program. In all of these ways, the teachers' attempts to reach certain objectives can be extraordinarily difficult. Gail, an Anglo-Canadian woman in her late 20s, has been teaching at the Centre for less than three months, and she has been teaching ESL for two and a half years. She teaches the split Level Two/Three class. I asked Gail how she achieves her goals as a teacher given the conditions in which she works. Here is her answer:

In an ideal situation in this culture, eventually I would achieve what I want to do as an ESL instructor. I'm constantly in an uncertain stage - I don't know how many students I'll have, or who. How do students catch up? There is no catch up. It's hit and miss. It's so frustrating. Other teachers deal with that, but their students do homework and attend. There are certain aspects of your goals that you won't achieve. You have to take it on a day to day basis, rather than get upset. Each LINC program is different.

Gail says that in the "culture" in which she works, she could only achieve her goals in an ideal world. Instead, she never knows how many students she will have or who they will be, which is partly due to the structure of the program. But the problem of continuous intake and multi-level classes is linked to attendance and homework, and these she attributes to the lack of motivation and goals of the particular "group" of students that she teaches at the Centre. All of the teachers have taught ESL or LINC in other institutional contexts, and they often compared this group of students to other ESL classes to assert that these students are more of a challenge, as Gail does above.

The constraints that affect the ease with which the teachers achieve their goals depend on a combination of both the structure of the program and whether the goals and objectives of the teachers resemble in any way those of the students. Structural constraints are not considered to contribute to the construction of social relations in a particular context; instead, individuals are held responsible for actions that produce difficulties or conflict. The conditions that are produced by the structure of the LINC program at the Centre, however, are not unusual. In 1997, Ellen Cray interviewed six LINC teachers employed by Ottawa area school boards as one part of a larger study on

how teachers deal with difficult teaching situations (Cray, 1997). In her study, Cray found that continuous intake, multi-level classes, and inconsistent attendance were the most prevalent constraints on the program and the most compromising conditions of the teachers' work. The LINC programs in this study were small, managed by a single teacher in an "off-site" location such as a community centre, the basement of a primary school, and even the bedroom of an apartment in a subsidized housing complex (p. 30).¹ The teachers had to track attendance, and four of them worried that their programs would be cancelled. Because the teachers were directly responsible for the viability of their own jobs by keeping the numbers up, they felt that the records required by LINC did not take into account the complexities of the students' lives that interfere with regular attendance. Cray writes,

Learners missed classes for a variety of legitimate reasons such as illness, problems with children's school and with housing, and lack of familiarity with Canadian weather. Attendance records did not allow teachers to evaluate the legitimacy of student absences. So although the teachers felt they should maintain accurate records, they felt threatened when attendance figures were low. (p. 27)

At the Centre, the teachers do not believe that the attendance requirements are too strict. Instead, the attendance requirements for LINC are viewed as acceptable. The teachers at the Centre found the students' frequent lateness and absences unacceptable. The teachers repeatedly expressed frustration at the prospect of trying to move a class forward to learn new things when there was little consistency in the students' participation. Their goals as ESL teachers always felt interrupted. The issue of attendance affected the teachers' sense of professional identity; they perceived the students' absences

as a challenge to their authority as teachers, and hence it was often phrased as a “matter of respect,” an issue that I will return to shortly. Finally, problems in attendance threatened the security of their positions as workers. In the second month of my research at the Centre, a representative from Citizenship and Immigration Canada came to visit to inform the staff that LINC would now require 80% attendance rates from the students. The teachers turned to the Coordinator to enforce the rules on attendance, thus positioning Rebecca as the gatekeeper of the program. Rebecca required that the students only miss class if they had a legitimate appointment, and she requested that they show her appointment cards from doctors, dentists, and immigration officers. Classes were to start promptly, and if students were late they would not be permitted to join the class.

The multi-level, continuous intake structure of the LINC classes and the issue of attendance are the best examples of how the practices of the staff and students of the LINC program are shaped by LINC policy. Furthermore, the self-identification of the teachers and the Coordinator as “social workers” points to a specific institutional constraint on their attempts to get their work done as LINC employees. The implications of this set of constraints, and what they might produce, will be explored further in the next chapter by looking at specific linguistic interactions that take place during the process of teaching and learning ESL. There is one other element in the mix, however, that acts as an institutional constraint--another area of contradiction between the LINC program and the Centre that deserves mention.

Because most of students in the program are Somali, the teachers are constantly imploring the students to “speak English!” The ethno-specificity of the community-based immigrant serving organization proves to be a challenge to the teachers because “speaking

Somali” in class becomes another activity that must be monitored and controlled. The teachers know that the LINC classes offer one of the few opportunities for the students to speak English. They lament the fact that the students rarely do homework, and have few chances to practice English outside of the LINC program. In interviews with the students, I found that Somali is the dominant language in the women’s homes. The women live in Somali communities where many shops are Somali-owned, and when they do need to access mainstream services, they often ask a bilingual relative or child to accompany them. The teachers value their efforts to teach English to the students because it will allow the students to be more independent, and the students will no longer rely on others for translation. In this way, the ideology of language behind the teachers’ insistence to “speak English” is structured by this desire to “empower” the women to independence. In practice, it means that the teachers frequently quell discussions in Somali in the constant struggle to maintain English in the classroom. In Chapter Four, I will investigate the implications of this ideology in more detail. For now, however, the teachers work to create a monolingual zone of English, because there is “too much Somali” being spoken in the classroom. Ideally, Somali is only sanctioned when a translation is needed from a cultural interpreter, but in actuality the regulation of Somali and English linguistic productions is a constant activity.

The teachers’ struggle to regulate and enforce English is a product of the institutional arrangement that places LINC in a community-based ISO. The Somali Centre is, in effect, a place where Somali is highly valued and used; it is the language of communication at the community centre. I asked the teachers and the Coordinator about the advantages and disadvantages of offering LINC at a community-based ISO. While the

LINC staff are aware of the benefits of the community-based structure of the organization, the linguistic struggle that it produces was frequently noted. Gail says this about the Centre: “They are with people who can speak the language for them. This is extremely important; it is a home base.” Lucy has a more complicated view. She has been at the Centre for a year and a half, and has been teaching ESL for three or four years. She is under 30, a second generation Italian-Canadian woman, and she was hired because she speaks Italian. Lucy teaches the literacy class, and many of the women in the class are elderly Somali women who have minimal literacy skills, but speak Italian as well as Somali.² She says that offering LINC at a community-based ISO means that the students

... are in touch with their community, but they are not integrated with people who speak other languages, or with people from other backgrounds. What we can do, though, is specify workshops geared toward them, for example, we had one recently on diabetes. We are able to have a translator for them – it’s easier for them here. But we have to ask them to speak English all of the time.

Sarah teaches the split Level Two/Three class, and has thoughts similar to Lucy’s about the relationship between LINC and the Centre. Sarah was born in Montreal, and is in her 60s; she is the senior teacher in age, experience, and authority. Although she is not a certified ESL instructor, she was trained as an elementary school teacher, took time off to raise three children, and then began to volunteer as an ESL teacher until she was hired at the Centre six years ago. Sarah says that the advantages of offering language training at the Centre are that

The students are more comfortable here, they are not alone, and they have cultural interpreters to help them. But they learn slower and they revert to Somali a lot . . .

In mixed classes they have to find the words to speak to one another. It is easier not to when they speak the same language. -- They have fun here - they laugh a lot.

The Coordinator concurs with the teachers: "we wish we had more people from other groups because - and I'm going to try to do something about it - because then the students are forced to speak English in order to interact."

Rebecca's imperative to "do something about it" reveals that "too much Somali" is an ongoing concern to the LINC program. Indeed, in the everyday goings-on at the Centre, Somali occupies most of the linguistic space, with frequent crossings into English: the Somali Centre staff speak Somali to one another, the child minders speak Somali to the children, all of the brochures and signs printed by the Centre are in both English and Somali, as is the message on the answering machine. The linguistic allegiances of the Somali Centre and the LINC program are at cross-purposes, which produces contradictions that need to be managed. The solution that the LINC staff seeks to "too much Somali" is to recruit more non-Somali students. But this solution will alter the membership of the "community" that the community centre claims to represent. This issue is another example of how, in subtle ways, the autonomy of a community-based centre might find itself in conflict with the goals of a supposedly universal and uniformly applicable federal program. It is, in fact, a very complicated relationship, just as Mohammed, the Executive Director, described it above.

Finally, there is one other aspect of the teachers' work that must be mentioned, although it operates as less of a constraint than what has been outlined in the previous section. One aspect of the LINC program and policy that does not seem to impinge on the

teachers' actions is the LINC curriculum. The Revised LINC Curriculum Guidelines (1997), based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks, state that "the basic goal of LINC programmes is to help learners develop communicative competence in English in order to be able to participate more fully in Canadian society." Ontario's LINC Curriculum Guidelines are organized according to "themes" which are meant to provide the context within which the learners are expected to develop linguistic proficiency. The Curriculum Guidelines suggest twelve "themes of everyday life," such as Canadian Law, Canadian Society, Commercial Services, Employment, Family Life, Housing, Leisure, Media, and Transportation. Each theme has a set of corresponding competencies that must be achieved. The competencies are based on three areas of proficiency: reading, writing, and listening and speaking, and these areas are ranked by level of difficulty to match up with the Canadian Language Benchmarks which were developed as the guidelines by which competency is based. The LINC program also developed a literacy component for students whose reading, writing, and numeracy skills need to be improved before entering LINC Level One.

The teachers at the Centre did not follow the curriculum guidelines devoutly, but devised the curriculum of the day and the week based on similar themes as outlined above, and according to what they felt were the needs of the students. At the Centre, the teachers' perusal of LINC Curriculum Guidelines resembled that of the teachers in Ellen Cray's (1997) study of LINC teachers in Ottawa, who consulted the guidelines for "ideas of themes and topics," although they did not feel that "they were being forced or even strongly advised to use it" (p. 33). Cray notes that the LINC Curriculum Guidelines and the Canadian Language Benchmarks are quite an achievement in the development of

language policy in Ontario, but, interestingly, “the curriculum, for all its weight and authority, was of little importance to the teachers” (p. 33). This is a sure comment on the government’s efforts to standardize ESL curricula, the effectiveness of which, regardless of the development of extensive documents and materials, rests on the teachers to implement it, or not. Fleming’s (1997) thesis study of five instructors of an adult ESL settlement program came to similar conclusions. The instructors whom he interviewed did not relish the development of the Canadian Language Benchmarks, and wanted, instead, “autonomy over the choice of materials and activities” that they used in their classrooms (p. 95). The trade-off here, however, is that there is a high degree of responsibility for curriculum placed on ESL teachers (Fleming, 1997, p. 95).

The 1998 Study of ESL/FSL Services in Ontario cites much higher probabilities that ESL/LINC teachers are using standardized curricula than the above studies suggest. The LINC Curriculum Guidelines are used by 87% of the teachers surveyed, and 70% of the classes in the study used the Canadian Language Benchmarks (Power Analysis, Inc., p. ii). At the same time, however, the study says that 74% of the ESL/LINC classes “required their instructors to develop curriculum appropriate to the needs of their class” (p. ii). The curriculum guidelines are available to ESL and LINC teachers as resources, and are used as such. ESL and LINC teachers are not explicitly mandated to follow the standard curriculum nor do they feel obliged to do so, as evidenced by the studies above, and my own. The Revised LINC Literacy Component (1997c), for example, acknowledges in its introduction that “like the guidelines for LINC 1, 2, and 3, the literacy component offers a ‘way in’ for LINC teaching that instructors can refine, adapt, and personalize” (p. 5). What gets taught, and how it is taught, is up to the teachers. The

teachers' autonomy to devise the curriculum is one area where they are not so greatly constrained by LINC policy, as they are in many other aspects of their work. The teachers have a certain amount of "choice" in what they teach. There is also, in LINC, a strong "client needs" discourse that surfaces in the early policy documents, in the curriculum guidelines, and in the talk of the teachers and administrators of LINC that acknowledges the autonomy of teachers to make decisions about curriculum based on what the students want to learn.

According to the teachers and the Coordinator, the objective of the LINC program is to teach English to assist immigrants and refugees with language skills so that they can integrate into Canadian society. As Gail describes it, "with LINC, you walk with [the students] as they experience Canadian life." Rebecca spoke frequently about the program providing "basic skills," or "life skills," and Gail characterizes what she does as teaching "survival English." The teachers and the Coordinator at the Centre consider LINC to be the first opportunity that immigrants and refugees have to begin to learn English, and to learn about Canada. Indeed, language and a particular form of cultural knowledge, knowledge "about" Canada are combined, to reflect that LINC is both a settlement/integration and an ESL program. The teachers and the coordinator talked frequently about what the students "need to know," and one of the teachers said that her job is to "help people who do not know." The teachers have a fair amount of autonomy in decision-making about curriculum, and this aspect of their work will be explored in more detail in the next chapter. Now, I turn to the role of the cultural interpreters in their negotiations of the LINC program at the Somali Centre.

The cultural interpreters

Dunia and Hajia are the Centre's "cultural interpreters;" they are the negotiators and translators of the relationship between the LINC staff and the Somali students. LINC provides funding for only one interpreter: Hajia was the cultural interpreter when I began to visit the Centre, and a month or so later Dunia replaced Hajia. As the job title suggests, Dunia and Hajia negotiate the boundary between English and Somali cultures and languages; they act as bilingual brokers between the two language groups (see Heller, 1994). Hajia and Dunia were both Board Members prior to resigning to become employed as interpreters. Hajia is in her late 20s and has been in Canada since 1991. She was educated in Somalia as a pharmacist. When she came to Canada she went to night school to learn English, and is now enrolled in a college community worker program, because, as she says, "the sad one is when you come to Canada you have to start again and again." Dunia is in her 30s and completed the community worker program two years ago. When she arrived in Canada in 1990 from Somalia, Dunia already possessed English language skills. She was educated in Pakistan and Italy as a child and learned English during those years. In the early 1990s, she worked a few odd jobs in the service sector at first, and then went to college. Hajia and Dunia each speak four languages.

The cultural interpreter has a very busy job. She spends the mornings in Lucy's literacy class, where communication occurs in a constant mix of English, Somali, and Italian. The interpreter spends the afternoon with one of the other classes, helping out with small group work. She is often called upon to accompany Rebecca from class to class to make announcements, or to translate for workshops. While I was conducting my research, her time was even more in demand because she often helped me out by translating in my

interviews with the students. The job often goes beyond the bounds of its description, as Hajia explains: “I am the cultural interpreter, I am also the escort worker, the social services, I am the women’s support group here - (laughter) - I’m lots of things.”

Hajia and Dunia occupy a position in the organization that requires them to mediate the lines drawn between English and Somali languages and cultures. Because language and culture are not fixed entities, but are (re)produced in and through interactions, the cultural interpreters in a sense “make” and define those languages and cultures as they translate them. Symbolically, then, the women have a very powerful function in the organization that is in great demand, and is often a matter of contestation. For the teachers and Rebecca, for example, the interpreters are the line of communication between the students and the LINC staff. When the students break out into intense conversations in class in Somali, or when there is a special event that the students celebrate with Somali songs or readings, the teachers are constantly asking the interpreters, “What are they saying? What are they saying?” When, in class or at workshops, the students can answer questions in Somali, they argue with the interpreter over the answer that she chooses to give, as Dunia explains:

I have to give the answer but they don’t agree with the answer I give! So I have to listen this, listen to that - yeah, I deal with it, but it’s very, very - and sometimes I go home with a headache.

Because the interpreters can understand both linguistic groups, and a few others as well, they have access to a resource (different kinds of linguistic knowledge) that is in constant demand by the different groups at the Centre. It requires the interpreters to move across linguistic boundaries and cultural allegiances, to be “on side” with one group or

another: to represent the interests, or “make meaning,” of one group or individual to another. As a result, the positions that Dunia and Hajia occupy as Somali immigrant women and as LINC employees are, at times, in tension with one another. The tensions are not so contradictory that they produce great uncertainty and ambivalence, but they require careful maneuvering. Dunia and Hajia occupy positions that resemble that of Rebecca, who is the regulator of access to the LINC program, and part of the “family” at the Centre. For these three, their jobs demand that they negotiate the conflicts and contradictions of the program, and these positions inevitably produce tensions and contradictions that require deft work to reconcile, or perhaps remain unreconciled. The point here is that the interpreters have a resource that many of the people at LINC (maybe) want for themselves and certainly want access to--that is, bilingualism.

The students

The Somali students at the Centre are very familiar with the fact that bilingualism is a valued resource. All of the ten female Somali students whom I interviewed speak two, if not three languages. Arabic is the language of the Qur'an, and as children all of the women learned how to read in Arabic as part of their religious schooling. Many of the students speak Italian because it was the language of instruction during the colonial era when the southern region of Somalia was an Italian colony, and a few of the students lived in Italy as students during their youth, or later, as refugees escaping the civil war in Somalia. While the women might be highly skilled in spoken language skills, the effects of a colonial education system, the ensuing civil war, and patriarchal gender ideologies that value boys' education much more than that of girls, means that many women had their education interrupted or they never went to school in the first place.

In a group interview with Lucy's class, and with Dunia's help as translator, I asked the students why they were at the LINC program. The students in Lucy's literacy class are all in their 50s and 60s. They intend to learn enough English not to get a job or to continue their education, but to "get by." The women want to speak English to go to the doctor, to go shopping, and as one woman put it, to access "resources and information." The other students' motivations to be in the LINC program varied according to age; indeed, age figured as the factor by which everyone in the program explained differences among the students. Age split the group of students into two: young and old. It served to explain the differences in the women's ideologies of education, gender, and religion, and differences in their experiences and practices as well. Age differences figured as a factor that positioned the students in Canada, but age also functioned as something that delineated the young and old along historical lines, in that they brought with them to Canada different experiences of pre- and post-independence Somalia, and therefore they had different expectations about their lives in Canada.

For the younger women, the interest in learning English is very much about accessing resources and information, as it is for the older students, but there are other motivations as well, such as helping with their children's education, getting further education for themselves, or finding a job:

I would like to finish school. I help my children go to school full time. If I can find work; if I have trouble, I continue school. (Asha)

LINC helps language, help in translation of school meeting of teachers. Teachers speak too fast. To help, write, for my son. (Lambar)

Have to learn language. Help myself, my children. To write. To know how to read letter from the government, letters from school. Have to understand what they say. Bank, have to know to talk, to ask. I drive a car. If I have accident, I have to know to contact insurance. I can't do nothing without English. And at office, I have to fill out form; sometimes they don't say last name, first name, they don't all say it the same way. (Aisha)

My speaking English is a little bit broken. I need good education. I help myself. I can't read and write English very good. I have to go to bank, write letter, cheque; they helping me all that stuff. I plan to work, learn computer. And I have to learn English good, read good, know meaning when I write. (Damac)

The students expect that learning English will facilitate access to mainstream services and other resources. There are, however, other interests in the program because it is, in itself, a resource with symbolic and material benefits. LINC provides subsidies for child care and transportation; it is a meeting place for the women outside of their homes; there are parties, field trips, and workshops. Rebecca provides a nice analysis of the many different interests that bring the students to the program:

I think that some of them just want to learn English, some of them just want to keep welfare off their backs. But some of them really want to learn English. Some of them come here because it makes them feel less isolated, but some of the students really want to learn and get an education, and get jobs. There are different - like for the older people, they want something to do, they want to feel, they don't

want to feel helpless. And they're, I think, the bravest people. The young women that come in, they're really looking for a future. The women that are sort of older, I think some of them are kind of hoping, like even the women that are in their 30s, 40s, they're still hoping that at least they can get something, or at the very least become literate enough so that they can help their children in school. Some don't have future goals at first but after a while see that there are possibilities. So, it really depends on the individual. They all have different goals. Some of them it's just to acquire a knowledge of the language so that they can get by, you know.

There are ways, however, that the everyday business of learning the language is interrupted by the complexities of the women's lives, as in the example cited earlier where the day's lessons had to be put on hold because of the discovery of problems with housing. The majority of the women are on welfare; if they have children they are most likely single mothers. Of the ten women that I interviewed, five of them are raising children and nine of the women do not have husbands: three of the women are divorced, and many of the women's husbands had died in the war, or are still in Somalia or surrounding refugee camps. Most of the women in the LINC program are single heads of households, or, in the case of the older women, are living with other women and their families and helping to raise children. Affi (1997) notes that "single Somali women endure extreme obstacles in Canada including gender discrimination, language difficulties, and sole responsibilities for child rearing with a lack of any support system" (p. 442).

Most of the students at the Centre are Convention Refugees, and some are landed immigrants. Many are involved in the long process of obtaining landed immigrant status. In 1995, Opoku-Dapaah found that the average wait for refugee determination for Somali

refugees was two years (p. 24). In 1997, however, the Canadian government created a new category of refugees called the Undocumented Convention Refugees In Canada Class, applicable only to Somali and Afghani refugees, in an attempt to discourage migration to Canada from Somalia and Afghanistan. If refugees cannot produce legitimate identity documents, they must wait five years before applying to become permanent residents (CIC, 1997a). There is no government in Somalia, now or in the last decade, from which identity documents can be obtained. This heavy-handed regulation imposed by the federal government makes settling in Canada immensely challenging for Somali refugee women. As a refugee, it is very difficult to get a job, and impossible to get a loan; tuition fees for university or college education are that of foreign students, thus out of reach for oneself or one's children. The UCRCC regulation serves to maintain the marginalized position of refugees in the economy. As a refugee, it is impossible to sponsor family members from Somalia, or to travel outside of Canada, which means that the regulation maintains the fragmentation of family support networks that began with the civil war (see Israelite et al., 1999).

Canada's conditional acceptance of Somali refugees in Canada places many of the women in the LINC program, and their children, in a state of limbo. Their uncertain, second-rate status in Canada is an improvement on the conditions of their lives in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya that many of the women came from, but it is a sharp contrast to their status positions in Somalia prior to the war. Dunia, who, along with Hajia, often acted as "cultural interpreter" for me as well, explains the harsh contrast between the women's status in Somalia and how they are seen as refugees in Canada:

Ah yeah, some people think they [the women] don't have any education, they don't have houses, they don't have - some people think that we don't have water running, we don't have electricity, you know, they don't think we had life at home, that we had a better life than most Canadians have. Especially, these women you are seeing here, some of them were very rich, very famous - very bad - some of them they don't want to talk about it. But the thing that most of us - they always say, it's destiny, you know.

The women's faith in Islam helps them to account, somewhat, for their current lot in life. Dunia uses, at first, a detached "they" to talk about the representation of Somali women in Canada, and then moves to a collective "we" to explain how Somali women, as refugees, are regarded as disenfranchised not just in their present positions in Canada, but in a way that belies the richness and worth of their pasts as well. In speaking with the ten women I interviewed, half of them described themselves as shop owners or business women in Somalia, the others worked at home and brought up their children. A few mentioned the comfort and beauty of their lives there: large houses, cars and chauffeurs, and supportive networks of extended female family members who shared the responsibilities of looking after the home and the children.

The shift has been drastic for Somalis who, due to the effects of war and migration, have moved from the patterns of extended family that shaped social relations in Somalia to the ideology of the nuclear family of the Western world (see Kahin, 1997). This is just one of the factors that is an immense change, just one factor of "difference" that surfaces between the students and the institution of the LINC program. In many ways, the ideologies and values of the Somali women students come into conflict with

those of the program over issues such as the women's relationships to their families and to education, and their commitment to the LINC program. I will briefly outline below how one such conflict occurred, to establish how conflict is contained and how the students respond to it. But the salience of the event will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter, where I will look at the social and linguistic interactions that shape, negotiate, and produce the differing ideologies of gender, education, and nation.

A Disruption of Order

As I have already mentioned, from the first of my visits to the Centre, it appeared that attendance was a contentious issue. Attendance in classes during the month of January was hampered by holidays for Ramadan, and there were a few snow storms in January and February. Lateness was always an issue and a source of complaint by the teachers. At the beginning of February, the LINC Project Officer from Citizenship and Immigration came to visit. She spent some time talking with Rebecca, the Coordinator, and Sarah, the senior teacher, and she sat in on a class for an hour. Her visit to the Centre confirmed that strict attendance must be monitored because the LINC program now required 80% attendance from the students. The visit created some panic from the teachers and Rebecca, because many students were not attending 80% of the time.

One week later, an "incident" occurred. The reconstruction of the event is sketchy because I was not there. The students were apparently gathered in one classroom making candles (the teachers often planned activities like this for the students). One of the older students, Kunab, was not following Sarah's directions, and was taking more supplies than she was permitted. Sarah lost her temper and yelled at Kunab. The teachers separated themselves from the students, and the Coordinator went to talk with the students. Rebecca

told me that she spoke at length about the efforts that the teachers make for the students, and that elements such as repeated lateness, absences, and not doing homework all add up to the teachers feeling frustrated and unable to accomplish their goals as teachers, thereby causing conflicts. She asked the students to make more of an effort in these areas.

The problem of the disruption of order was solved in the service of the problem that was presently at issue for the Coordinator--attendance. The incident was actually a conflict over resources; Kunab wanted more materials for candles than she was allowed, and Sarah obviously felt she wanted too much. The teacher must regulate the student's access to something of value in order to accomplish her goals: there had to be enough supplies for everyone for the task to be completed as planned. But a conflict over resources and the loss of order in the classroom became an opportunity to address a pressing issue at the level of the institution and to refigure the stakes of the program. Rebecca's disciplinary measures resulted in a new set of "rules" for lateness and absences that, a week later, were presented by her and the Executive Director to each class. If students were repeatedly absent, arriving late or leaving early, then Rebecca would ask them to leave the program. Rebecca asked to see proof of appointments that required the students to miss classes. These rules would be strictly followed for all students, and were also in effect for those who required letters as proof of attendance for their Social Services workers and for day care subsidies.

The way that order is lost and regained in this event highlights the workings of power relations in the organization. There is no formal voicing of the students' point of view on all of this. With Rebecca's help, Sarah's actions are legitimized, and the authority of the program is secured and reinforced. The student's apparent transgression is utilized

to reinforce the institutional order. When the “face” of the organization is potentially threatened, broad powerful strokes are made to enforce the order of the institution. But it is at the level of everyday interactions that the nature of power is revealed as shifting, inconstant, and difficult to maintain. New rules require strict policing by the administrators of the program, and this, I found, was not performed with nearly as much conviction as was the claim that there were new rules. Immediately following the incident, there were signs of a boycott of Sarah’s class: for three days after, half of the students in her class did not show up. Over the next few weeks, one student, one of the non-Somali students, was asked to leave because she had a part-time job in the afternoon and could not attend the whole day. Damac, a Somali woman with two children, was warned that she was not attending enough. She did not appear in class for a few days, and then returned. Her status in the program was under negotiation when I finished my research there.

Conclusion: Regulating LINC

The students’ attendance at school is the contingency upon which all else rests. The survival of the LINC program and the jobs of its employees depend upon maintaining a record of 80% attendance from the students. The Coordinator must see that this requirement is met, or the future of the program is in jeopardy. In my research, access to the program is the most important concern and the most regulated activity of the organization, the dominant discourse, and the main component of the institutional order. The groups and individuals at the Centre have different understandings and expectations about what learning English will provide access to, in terms of jobs, further training, and even the resources of the LINC program itself. What everybody knows, however, is that learning English depends upon the students’ attendance in classes on a regular basis,

because then the students can move from one level of LINC to the next to eventually graduate from the program.

Notably, there is very little formal testing of the students' abilities, save for the initial assessment that each student had to undergo to be placed in the appropriate class. The students' succession through the program depends instead on the teachers' personal evaluation of the student, and the teachers determine when the students move from one class to the next. Perhaps because of the informal nature of the tests and measures of the students' progress, attendance itself is a measure of "success." It is connected to many positive and negative valuations of the students, and its presence is felt in many instances of decision-making and problem-solving, hence it is an issue of constant concern and negotiation. The rules of the institution enforce particular forms of student behaviour to meet its own interests as a body that must regulate access through a process of selection and exclusion, but the enforcement of "the rules" is shifting and uneven. The conflicts about student attendance and access to the program are about larger discourses of gender, nation, and education; different ideas come into conflict over what the responsibilities of an adult woman student are to her school, and to her family, and by extension, to the new nation that is her home.

These are the issues that will be examined in the next chapter in a closer analysis of how the ideologies and practices of language learning that are shaped by various institutional constraints (such as the regulation of student attendance) surface in linguistic interactions. I will look at how the "problem" of attendance surfaces in other instances and acts as a catalyst for unearthing the presence of other "problems" that are under negotiation in the LINC program. The ways that these problems are understood and dealt

with reveal how the institution engages with larger social processes and ideologies about language training for adult immigrants. In this complex process, I am interested in what is being produced as knowledge, to consider the particular “relation to language” that is formed in the teaching and learning of English in the LINC program at the Centre (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Endnotes

¹ Cray's (1997) piece reveals some of the truly awful conditions in which LINC teachers work, conditions that do not surface as an area of concern in the CIC commissioned study of ESL/FSL Services in Ontario (Power Analysis, Inc., 1998). On the other end of the continuum, however, are LINC programs such as the one I visited in Scarborough. The LINC program there ran out of a multi-service, multi-ethnic immigrant serving organization that offered settlement services in 29 languages. In conversation with the Director, I got a sense of her vision of how it is possible to structure an organization to lessen the impact of the LINC program's structural constraints. For example, whenever a LINC teacher becomes aware that a student is having a problem, the teacher refers the student to a settlement counselor who can speak the student's language. The differences in the provision of LINC at the SPO in Scarborough has everything to do with the management of the institution itself. With 15 years of experience in settlement services, the Director has established a financially secure, smooth-operating organization.

²The southern part of Somalia was colonized by Italy from 1893-1960. Italy established colonial schools for Somali children that taught in Italian, but the schools did not go above grade seven. The "overriding character of colonial education," Abdi explains, "ultimately fulfils the real objectives of imperialism" because it only prepared students for "administrative and low-level technical duties assigned to the natives" (1998, p. 331). The women in Nancy's class may not have made it to grade seven, or had any schooling at all, since the sexual division of labour demanded that women and girls work in the home instead of attending school.

Chapter Four

The Production of “The Problem”

Introduction

The everyday occurrences of the LINC program take place beneath the overarching organizational structure of the Centre, where the program itself is instituted and imposes conditions of constraint and possibility on the activities of the teachers, staff, and students. At the level of interaction, what happens on a daily basis at the Centre is the teaching and learning of English. The everyday practices of the teachers and students show how teaching and learning take place to produce knowledge about language and education. At the same time, the linguistic interactions of the teachers, the staff, and the students enact social relations that are informed and shaped by the particular institutional constraints, as outlined in the previous chapter, and by the larger historical and social discourses that were examined in Chapter Two. As a result, the linguistic interactions that occur in this site produce complex sets of social identities and social relations. The everyday practices of the teachers and students reveal how the order of the institution manifests itself in daily interactions, and how the larger discourses surrounding second language learning for adult immigrants inform social relations in this setting. The point of this chapter is to make the claim that this is so--to locate the discourses of the institution and the discourses surrounding LINC in interaction, and to consider, as a result, what is produced as knowledge.

At the end of the last chapter I provided an example of the disruption of order at the Centre, where a conflict emerged between a student and a teacher over access to

resources in a classroom activity. The resolution of the conflict resulted in a new set of rules for the students to follow. The new rules were a disciplinary measure and an assertion of institutional authority that altered what was expected of the students. The moment of conflict holds a few layers of meaning because, as I later found out, the difficulties that arose between the student and the teacher were about language use as well. This chapter will begin by looking again at “the incident” to explore how it was also about linguistic difference, and how this difference is made sense of by the students, staff, and teachers.

The moment of “the incident” produced a problem of communication, and this moment was framed in the service of a pressing problem, that of attendance, to refigure the authoritative and disciplinary order of the institution. After my examination of the production of a communication problem, I will take into account the students’ responses to “the rules,” as they tell their versions of the problem. What emerges in this dialogue is the construction of a “culture gap,” where the difficulty of attendance is attributed to “cultural differences.” The nature of these differences and how they are problematized is explored. With reference to a morning of classroom interactions, I consider how gender ideologies inform the notion of cultural difference as well. What follows then, is a discussion of the construction of linguistic, cultural, and gender differences, how these differences are problematized, and the implications of them for the students, staff, and teachers of the LINC program.

As discussed in Chapter One, the LINC program is a form of education where a certain “relation to language and culture” is explicitly taught (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 114). The policies and practices of the LINC are shaped by the program’s mandate that

Canadian values and beliefs are taught through the English language. In the examples of ESL teaching and learning described below, the relation to language and culture taught in and through LINC is explored as a relation of power that is based on notions of cultural difference. The students engage with the relation to language and culture in ways that both accommodate and resist it, to reveal, again, expressions of ambivalence. Their ambivalence suggests that the relation to language and culture that is taught through the LINC program is also about relations of cultural and linguistic dominance.

The “Incident” and Linguistic Difference

My narrative of “the incident” in the last chapter glossed over one important moment. The main point of contention was, in fact, about a linguistic difference. The student, wanting to take more supplies than she was permitted, was not saying the word “please.” This was deemed inappropriate by the teacher, and this, specifically, was the focus of the teacher’s anger. In my previous analysis of the incident, I wanted to show how the conflict was resolved to serve the interests of the institution--the pressing problem of attendance. Here, my interest is to note that the conflict erupted because a social convention was not being observed by the student at the level of linguistic interaction. The student’s failure to observe that convention was unacceptable to the teacher.

The teachers are continually urging the students to “Speak English!” and are thus constantly grappling with a constraint that is produced by the conditions that place LINC’s mandate in conflict within a community-based centre that highly values the Somali language and speaking Somali. The conflict is very much about an institutional arrangement that produces these contradictions that then have to be managed. The

teachers have to work hard to create a monolingual zone where English can be learned and practiced. The students codeswitch frequently, rely on the interpreters for help, and often speak Somali with one another.

The “incident” is a manifestation of this contradiction, and the way that it is managed, the outcome and interpretation of it, is determined by the power relations of the institution. The student’s failure to utter the linguistically appropriate request means that she is denied access to the resources she wanted; she is reprimanded instead, and the repercussions of the event refigure the management of the program. In this way, the event was interpreted and made meaningful by the institution. The layers of meaning contained in this moment of linguistic interaction are multiple, though, and for the Somali students and staff, the conflict has other meanings. I asked Dunia (one of the cultural interpreters) about the incident. She explained to me that there is no word in Somali for “please.” Here is what she said about this linguistic difference:

No we don’t say “please, can I do this.” It’s like you are begging the person, that’s how we see it. “Give me this,” it’s not - or, “can I take it?” But please, thank you, please, we don’t use those words. And people get angry when you say, “give me glass of water,” and they look at you ’cause you have to say “please can I have a glass of water?” For us we don’t use that. People think that we are very rude. It’s not in our language. Young people have learned that, older people they can’t --. We say “thank you,” we have that. But not “please can I do this? Please can I have?” No, we don’t have that.

Firstly, Dunia’s explanation of the complex meanings that are contained in a dominant social and linguistic convention echoes some assertions made by Blommaert and

Verschueren (1998) in their discussion of language education for adult migrants. They argue that the intentions of language policies for the purposes of integration/assimilation are often foiled because the adoption of the dominant language does not necessarily mean the concomitant adoption of the dominant “lifestyle, world view, values or culture” (p. 130). Instead, Blommaert and Verschueren suggest that when migrants learn the dominant language, “standard English may become loaded with new values, perceptions, associations and symbolic meanings in ways that delude simple beliefs in “assimilation /integration through language learning”” (p. 130). In Dunia’s opinion, the Anglo-Canadian convention of saying lots of “pleases” is distasteful, and is often simply not done. The refusal to conform to the convention, however, means that this linguistic difference is understood by Anglo-Canadians as a socio-cultural difference at the level of a personal critique: the person is judged to be “rude.”

The tendency to explain linguistic difference in terms of negative valuations of the second language learner’s personality (or more likely as an element of their class, race, ethnicity, or culture) means that the “problem” of communication breakdown is often wholly attributed to the second language learner rather than to the speaker of the first language. Linguistic difference is rarely understood as an element that is produced out of and within the linguistic and social relations between the two speakers. Consequently, the second language learner is at an immediate disadvantage and is subordinated to the field of talk that is controlled by the speaker of the dominant language. The interpretation of linguistic difference as such occurs in institutional and bureaucratic settings so often that it is, in effect, a sociolinguistic fact that is well documented in the fields of ESL, education, and sociolinguistics (see, for example, Phillipson, 1992, chap. 5; Rampton, 1997).

The institution's response to "the incident" shows how a conflict about linguistic practices goes unrecognized as such; it is read instead as insubordination. To elaborate on this point, I turn to some current theorizing about communication strategies found in Rampton's (1997) article. Rampton points to some of the limitations of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory and the controversy over the identification and understanding of second language learner (L2) communication strategies (CS). He asserts that SLA and CS often neglect the socio-cultural dimensions of second language use. When communication problems are identified in a bilingual or multilingual educational environment,

defining someone's behaviour as a "problem" often raises political issues, but there has been very little concern with this in work on L2 CS. In addition, where problematic moments can be reliably identified, it is almost invariably the L2 learner who is held responsible. (p. 283)

With examples from his own work on the linguistic strategies of a multi-racial youth community in the South Midlands, Rampton argues for a recognition of communication strategies that aren't just about difficulty with the structure of the language on the part of the speaker. There are two commonly understood communication archistrategies, "avoidance" and "achievement," and Rampton argues that a third archistrategy should be acknowledged, that of "resistance" (p. 288). Understanding resistance as a communication strategy simply means that there might be good reason for any communicative breakdown. Dunia's explanation above of the conflict over language suggests that the refusal to adopt an Anglo-Canadian linguistic convention is a form of resistance against a normative Canadian social practice. It might be a choice about what one does not want to learn. I cannot say with certainty that in "the incident" the action of

the student was a strategy of “avoidance” or “resistance.” What I can assert, however, is that uttering the word “please” has varied meanings for the two speakers and the two linguistic groups at the Centre. The conflict that emerged in this example of a single communicative moment reveals how the staff and students respond to and make sense of linguistic difference.

Dunia’s comments on linguistic difference point to a second area of import. She notes that while saying “please” is one convention that is apparently not adopted by Somali speakers of English, younger people “learn” to negotiate with some linguistic differences, such as the convention of saying “thank you.” The “older people,” however, “can’t.” As noted in the previous chapter, according to everyone at the Centre, age acts as an organizing principle that describes similarities and differences among the students in many ways, especially in terms of what can be expected of them as learners. Dunia points out that learning English is taken up differently by the different generations of students. The heterogeneity of the students in this respect presents some difficulties for the staff. Dunia’s comments reveal how “the incident” contains the seeds of this dispute as well, which broadens the base of what the conflict is about.

The Production of “Cultural Difference”

The moment of the incident was actually a moment of communicative conflict about a word that is valued differently by each of the speakers. The “incident” is recognized as a moment where cultural and linguistic differences interfere with communication. It was interpreted by the institution as emblematic of the problems with student participation in the program in general, and signaled the need for disciplinary measures that would force greater participation in the program. The student’s inability to

say “please” represents the student’s failure to learn to speak English properly, which in turn represents the instructor’s failure to teach the student. The significance of the latter is secondary to that of the former, however, and the students are the targets of the blame. Lifting the blame for a moment, we can see that the conflict is a product of a contradiction produced by the institutional arrangement. The conflict is really about the ideologies of two languages (and cultures) negotiating for discursive space, power, and meaning, and the staff and students of the program are caught in the struggle. There is a significant link between the linguistic conflict and the new rules on attendance. In both cases, the LINC staff demands complicity with their authority. Saying “please” respects a rule about linguistic practices, and attending classes regularly and on time follows the rules of the institution. To the LINC staff, both practices are extremely meaningful as proof of the students’ willingness to learn.

As I have indicated, the “incident” contains many layers of meaning. For the LINC staff, it is about insubordination; it is read as proof of the student’s resistance to learn English, which makes the teachers angry. For the students, not saying “please” is proof that English becomes loaded with new meanings that some students will negotiate and others will reject. This is something the LINC staff does not recognize. In this mix is also the age factor, as Dunia points out, which has a lot to do with how the students take up learning English. In what follows, I will explore first how this difference in the students’ age is understood by Rebecca, the Coordinator, and Lucy, who teaches the class of older students. Then, I shall consider the students’ responses to the “incident,” since I took the opportunity that it presented to ask them about their interpretation of what, exactly, the rules about attendance mean to them, and what the tensions might be that produced the

“problem” of attendance. Many of the students spoke favourably of the administration’s efforts to enforce the rules, even some of the students who participated in the boycott. Nevertheless, what was consistent in my discussions with the students was that a broad set of issues emerged -- different ideas about what the conflict was about -- in response to the actions of the administration to get tough on attendance. Most importantly, my questions about what was occurring at the Centre produced many rationales and reasons for the difficulties that were taking place between the students and the staff of the program. The linguistic difference that produced the conflict of “the incident” and the subsequent reordering of “the rules” unearths, upon my questioning, many other sources of “difference.”

Since the literacy class began in November, 1997, more older students are attending the LINC program. The development of the literacy class was a response not just to the needs of the older students; both younger and older students were in need of a class that addressed fundamental reading and writing skills. As Rebecca explains,

We were getting a lot of people coming in who could barely do anything, or couldn’t read and write at all, couldn’t speak English at all, and we didn’t know what to do with them. Sometimes we’d send them to other programs, but there are very few literacy programs. Or we would send them into the Level One class, but it was really hard on the Level One teacher. Um, so, now, we’ve set up a literacy class, now what we’re finding now is we get a lot of older women, not younger women.

L: What was the make-up of the classes in the first place?

Occasionally we'd get older and it was sort of split, but right now what we are finding is we get a lot of older women coming in, and a few older men, but the problem is, that the older students, if the weather is the least bit inclement, they don't come in. Or they, you know, they rea-, no, they're a pretty good group, the ones that come in, I gotta admire them, really. But ah, it's difficult to keep them coming on a regular basis.

The institution's response to the low literacy levels of the group has made the literacy class very popular with older students. But constant attendance is a challenge for this group of students. The offering of the literacy class has increased the number of older students but this was not, most likely, the preferred outcome that the administration had intended in instituting the new class. The older students generally take much longer than the younger students to complete the literacy class. If a younger student requires the literacy class, she tends to move through it quite quickly. Lucy teaches the literacy class and comments on the many challenges of teaching this group:

There are problems with attendance; they aren't in perfect health. Their memory isn't good, you have to repeat and go over things. They can't keep a lot of things in their heads because they have seen so much. It is hard to keep focussed.

Lucy also says, however, that they come to the classes to learn "to do things on their own" and also for "companionship." According to the students and the cultural interpreters, and as Lucy notes as well, the issue of the older students' attendance is explained with reference to health concerns, to the effects of trauma from the war in Somalia, and to the enormous upheaval that the women have experienced since settling in

Canada, such as changes in status and family organization as discussed in the previous chapter.

Zariba is in her late 50s. She has been in Canada for four years and is raising her teenaged niece. With Dunia translating, I ask Zariba what she thought of the conflicts taking place at the school. She comments on the challenges of adjusting to life in Canada after what she and her fellow students have been through in Somalia.

Her idea is, back home, people lost everything. People confused now. Back home, we would respect teacher and time, teacher was like father. Here we have problem. We cannot adopt this culture easily. Back home, women work slow, walk slow, school was close to home. Canada, work fast, school fast. . . . Here we have to respect teacher, it is hard.

Zariba mentions a few factors that make it difficult for her to “adopt this culture easily,” such as the intensified tempo of life in the Western world. Kajia, one of the interpreters, also commented on the crazy tempo of North American life when she spoke about the adjustments she had to make when she came to Canada eight years ago, and compares it to the time she spent in Italy as a student:

It’s different because here the people are more stressed in work and ah, you don’t know when you finish your day you are rushing you are doing something you know. And, in Europe, you take your time. And, the context of money, money, everywhere, that you see, you have to work, you have to survive here, its not like that. I see big difference between.

Kajia asserts, along with Zariba, that the pace of North American society is a big change from not only life in Somalia but in Europe as well. My discussions with the staff

and the students invariably produced comparisons with “back home,” or comparisons to other places where the women have lived. This relational and recursive activity of comparing nations and cultures is the way that “difference” is understood. This discursive meaning-making activity was the way everyone at the Centre made sense of themselves and the “others” with whom they spent each day. It is, effectively, the active construction of difference, where the features of what constitutes one nation, one culture, or what is understood to be education, or “womanhood,” are positioned in opposition to the culturally and racially different “other.” The comments provided here by Kajia and the students show how difference is discursively produced.

When difference is talked about, the “subject” of the difference might be language, nationhood, religion, patterns of social or familial organization, or ethnicity, but all of these are subsumed by and within the overarching category of “culture.” When the interpreters and students talked to me about difference, they often followed their comments with “this is our culture.” When the students were talked about by the administration, they were described as a “cultural group” with “cultural differences.” Blommaert and Verschueren assert that “‘culture’ is how difference is talked about . . . culture is an interactional phenomenon” (1998, p. 16). “Culture” is also understood as the essence of a person’s identity. As Rampton (1997) explains in his study of language sharing and exchange among multi-racial adolescents in the South Midlands in England, the current manifestation of the notion of “culture” reveals that it is understood as an “ethnic essence” (p. 8). Culture gives more weight to ethnicity than other factors such as gender or class as a determinant of a person’s identity. In this way, culture is set in a fixed collocation that equates nation with culture, and culture with ethnicity (p. 8). Ethnicity,

then, refers to elements of a person's identity such as language and religion that make up the "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983) to which the person belongs.

Nationhood is linked more strongly now to the notions of "culture" and "way of life" than to biological notions of race (Rampton, p. 8). But all of these elements can be racialized in certain ways to attribute cultural and ethnic characteristics to a biological notion of "stock" or hereditary traits that link back to a myth of national origins (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1993). The apparent "culture gap" between, for example, a minority group and the majority, is believed to occur because the minority group is culturally incompatible with the dominant group. The discourse of culture is structured by relations of power; the construction of Somali and Canadian cultures is done in binary terms, and it is Canadian culture that is the signified concept against which Somali culture, the signifier, is formed. The fact that both the staff and students engage in the discourse of culture is interesting, and my interpretation of this discourse and the way it is structured rests on the understanding of the discourse as a dominant one.

As a dominant discourse, "culture talk" relegates race to the status of a "cultural inadequacy," which "deflects attention away from the structural relations of domination and subordination." (Razack, 1995, p. 67). Culture subsumes talk about race and ethnicity; it covers it up and makes it possible for difference to be talked about in more benign terms, in terms of a "relativist rhetoric of cultural difference" (Blommaert & Verschueren, p. 4). The rhetoric of "difference" that surfaces in the comments of the students and the teachers in the LINC program is construed as cultural and/or national in character. The notion of "culture" ("theirs" and "ours") that is operationalized here equates nation with culture and culture with ethnicity, where the ethnic affiliation of the

individual rests on shared attributes such as nationhood, language, and religion which form the basis of the group's collectivity. Both groups use the discourse of cultural difference to account for the ways that they understand the "other." It is, importantly, a discourse that dominant and dominated groups employ in managing their "power-maintaining and power-acquiring purposes" (Sarangi, 1994, p. 416). The discourse of cultural difference is a form of rhetoric that provides a means of talking about relations of power in apparently benign terms. The LINC staff relegates the student's difficulties with the program to "cultural differences," as do the students. The power struggle is about whether the program can accommodate or recognize these differences or not.

To return to Zariba's comments, and another articulation of "difference," she mentions in the quotation above that "respect" for the teacher is hard to observe. The conditions that make it possible to respect a teacher's authority "back home" are a completely different set of conditions here. "Respect" figures prominently as an often-mentioned feature that is lacking in the relations between the students and the teachers. After "the incident" Rebecca asked the students to show more "respect" for the teachers by attending regularly and doing homework. In this sense, a lack of "respect" occurs when the students do not conform to the social and linguistic practices of the institution (see Heller, 1999, chap. 2). On the other hand, however, "respect" is also an element of "the incident" for the students. The student to whom Sarah raised her voice, Kunab, belongs to the grouping of older women students. It is possible that Sarah's actions betrayed a social convention that is of value to the Somali students, that is, to display respect to elders. For both the students and the staff "respect" acts a measure of the tenor of social relations at the Centre, and it is based in and valued as forms of social interaction.

In speaking with many of the students, “respect” also came up as an issue that is under negotiation among the Somali women themselves. In interviews with the younger generation, respect for the older Somali women was often discussed as a difficult issue because the values of “Canadian” society in some cases severely contradict those of Somali cultural and religious practices. Thus I saw the students arguing in class about the rights and wrongs of divorce, or wearing the hijab. I asked Dunia about the conflicts that she has to negotiate in her job as cultural interpreter. Dunia answered by reflecting on her choice to not wear the hijab, and the fact that the older women students often commented on this choice of hers.

They keep asking me, to you know, cover and - we always tell them “Okay, I will, I will.” Because they are old, and we don’t want to confront them or argue, that’s our culture. They tell you to do something, you just say, “Okay, I will.” “Inshallah, you know. You don’t say no, you can’t tell me what to do because that’s not the way. They tell you every morning, you just say inshallah.”

L: What does that mean?

It means “if God says.” You can’t argue with them, you can’t be angry with them. That’s the way we are.

Elder Somali women are to be respected, as Zariba mentioned above, and as Dunia explains. Kajia concurs with both Zariba and Dunia, and tells me that teachers as well as “old women” are the most “respected people on earth . . . that is the culture.” The value of respecting elders, and teachers, can be difficult, however, when the conditions that make respect possible are under contestation. The conditions, I think, depend on a recognition of authority. One day, I witnessed an exchange that pointed to this tension. Talaado, a

middle-aged student in Sarah's class, was mopping some tracked-in slushy snow off the floor of the lobby. Kajia and I stood in the doorway while Talaado mopped. Then Sarah busily walked across the floor from her classroom to Rebecca's office. Talaado smiled and joked in Somali to Kajia, and Kajia laughed and said to me, "She can't tell Sarah not to walk; she's the teacher. It's power don't you know." The managing of social relations in the institutional setting, as Sarangi and Roberts note, "depends on notions of exchange and reciprocity" (1999). The tensions at the Centre about the need for more "respect" between the teachers and students reveal that the conditions that establish the professional authority of the staff and the authority of the institution are under some contestation by the students.

The issue of attendance is read by the institution as disrespectful of the authority of the institution. The institution's measures to deal with the issue are read by some of the students as equally disrespectful, especially of the older students. Similarly, the institution's response to the problem places conditions of constraint on the possibility of "exchange and reciprocity" in the social relations of the institution. One day, for example, I noticed a new poster in Lucy's Literacy class. On the poster was a lesson that focussed on the uses of words such as "where, when, why, what, and how." Written on the paper were five questions that used these words, such as "What is your name?" and "Where do you live?" The third question was "Why are you late?" Here, the dominant "problem" of the institution gets inserted into the curriculum, which has the unfortunate effect, I argue, of highlighting and reproducing elements of the problem (i.e., a lack of "respect").¹

To return to the students' interpretations of the problem, I asked Lambar, a student in Sarah's class, about "the rules." To her, the new rules engage with the

difficulties of attending LINC when many of the women in the program are single mothers. Lambar is in her late 30s and has been in Canada for four years. She finished high school in Somalia and worked as a pharmacist before the war broke out. At first, she is very supportive of the enforcement of the rules, but then acknowledges her own ambivalence about attending LINC. I asked Lambar, “What do you think about the new rules on attendance?”

Why not? All the mothers have children. My child, broke finger. My children no protect. Problem for mother. Teacher is right, students wrong. Sometimes sick children. Problems of the mother. I know all teachers right. Mothers, difficult to come every morning. -- Sometimes I can't. I feel it. I can't sometimes.

While the teachers are “right” in their expectations of the students, Lambar admits that the “problems of the mother” come into conflict with the responsibilities of the mother as student.

Kajia’s opinion on the struggles at the school encompasses many of the explanations given above by the students, and raise a new element as well. I asked her about what she made of what was happening at the school.

I think so it's ah, the attendance really is too bad in the winter time. And this is connect to how they see the rules. Because they think that - I remember that the people when they were in back home, when the rainy day they never come out from the houses, they stay home. They say “Today it's raining” . . . And they go back to that I think so for the winter time and winter for them is hard. And also this LINC program is in the community centre, they think like their homes, here,

you know, that if you don't go, it's no problem, you are in the community. You know, something in their minds is connected about that.

Kajia's comments raise the important issue, again, of one of the tensions that are produced when a federally funded ESL program for adult immigrants is housed in a community-based organization. Her reasoning of why tensions are produced around attendance are based on similar grounds as Mohammed's comments in Chapter Three: there is an uneasy, compromising relationship between the Centre and the LINC program. As Kajia explains, there is an expectation on the part of the students that, as a "community centre" some accommodations will be made to recognize the profound "differences" that they are experiencing in adapting to Canadian norms and values through attending the LINC program. The teachers and Coordinator believe, I think, that the LINC program is the vehicle through which the English language and Canadian norms and values are learned, and the policies and regulations of the program advocate and enforce that position.

The students' comments above illustrate that the issue of "attendance" uncovers a number of reasons and rationales for why it might be a source of conflict. The tensions around attendance are, for the students, about the difficulties they are having in adjusting to linguistic and social differences in Canada, factors as great as how linguistic conventions of politeness differ, how time is understood, how weather is regarded, and how one's responsibility as a mother intersects with one's responsibilities as a student. With the above comments from the students in mind, I would like to suggest one way of identifying the position of the students in relation to the LINC program, although I am aware of the homogenizing impulses that accompany the making of such an assertion. There is, it seems, a great deal of ambivalence in the students' position in the school.

Ambivalence might be a response to finding oneself and one's "culture" the subject of "difference." Ambivalence might be a means of accounting for how a student might vacillate between Rampton's communication strategies of "avoidance," "achievement," and "resistance" in an educational and institutional setting. I suggest, and will explore further below, that ambivalence is a legitimate response to the contradictions inherent to the learning of a second language in the institutional context of the LINC program at the Centre.

The ambivalence that I speak of above is not a factor in every student's relationship to LINC, however, as Asha's comments below reveal. Asha, who is in her 30s and has been in Canada for six years, supports the staff's measures to enforce the rules, and feels that the students are not doing enough to respect the teachers and to recognize the chances that are offered to them through the LINC program.

Teacher respect students, but students don't respect teachers. They don't call [when they are absent]. They know how to use a phone. This is for you, you can do better, your life, when people have a chance. They know it, but I don't know why -- .

I then asked Asha why she thinks it is difficult for some students to attend.

I think it's the weather, most important things. It's difficult to come to school for people. But still, if you're at home, why not come and learn? You get depressed, stressed. I have two children, I know it's hard. You need to get out. I think the person is the most important thing to do. I ask my neighbour every day, why don't you go to school? I will show my book, I say, I can write now.

Asha is certain that some students are not doing enough to respect and take advantage of what the LINC program has to offer. She acknowledges the conditions that can make attending LINC difficult, such as the weather and the responsibilities of motherhood, but these, she feels, are negotiable in light of the benefits that come with learning English.

Thus, like Asha, not all students have ambivalent relationships to the program.

Ambivalence does nevertheless account for the contradictions and vacillations in the students' comments about their commitments to the LINC program.

Negotiating difference

It is necessary to acknowledge that the elements that are identified as constituting Somali "culture" as "different"--such as ideas about deference and respect for older people, norms and values about politeness, and social organization around time and weather--actively essentialize Somali "culture" as different from "my" culture in all of these ways, and construct Canadian culture as oppositional to Somali culture (and equally essentialized). In the process of describing how difference is produced and how othering occurs, I reinscribe and reproduce these discourses at the same time. My own investigation is affected and shaped by the dominant discourse so that the results are two sides of the same coin, the dominant discourse and responses to the dominant discourse. The students are understood and constructed as "a problem," hence they tell me why this construction appears to be so, and their own reasons for it. This is a limitation of my study that has to do with what it is possible for me to know given the constraints of the institution and of my subject position within the institution as a young, White, Anglo-Canadian woman whose ethnic affiliations place me within the dominant group.

The purpose of providing the students' and interpreters' responses to "the incident" and "the rules" was to destabilize the grounds of the institution's certain interpretation of "the problem" and its solution, to reveal that ground as more varied and complex than it first appears. And in doing so, what emerges is proof of how dominant discourses work to structure counter-discourses, so that the fundamental assumptions that form the hegemonic version of what is going on remain unchallenged. This is the main contention of Blommaert and Verschueren's study of the migrant debate in Belgium. The problem, as they see it, is that discourses about migrants construe diversity as a problem, which "[g]ives rise to some of the most efficient practices of discrimination, subtly veiled from sight by a rhetoric of tolerance which radiates the best of intentions" (1998, p. 4). That immigrants and refugees present a "problem" to the nation where they settle immediately structures the relationship between immigrants and the nation in polarized terms that position the migrant as a pathologized, abnormalized "other."

Immigration policies and official and public discourses on migration are about the "management of diversity" accompanied by a "rhetoric of tolerance," so that human diversity "is at once celebrated and qualified as dangerous, threatening, and problematic" (p. 4). In Blommaert and Verschueren's study, the public debate about migration is framed from and by the perspective of the majority: the "other" is viewed as a problem to be contained, managed, and solved. The dominant Canadian social and political discourses around immigration contribute to a similar positioning of the immigrant subject as problematic and deficient in cultural capital in numerous ways, hence the development of programs like LINC that work to increase the linguistic and cultural capital of immigrants and refugees who settle in Canada. At the Somali Centre, the students are conceived of in

a similar way; that is, they present a host of problems that the program's staff have to work to manage and solve so that the goals of the LINC program can be achieved. The construction of immigrants and refugees as a problem-to-be-solved demands the attention of the rest of this chapter in an attempt to link the ways that the management of the problem of immigration described here is discursively produced through the institution of LINC at the Centre.

The conceptualization of diversity as a "problem" brings to mind the main tenet of Foucault's notion of governmentality; it is "a way of problematizing life and seeking to act upon it" (Rose, 1993, p. 288). The "problems" of the Somali community, and how these need to be acted upon came up in my interview with Mohammed, the Executive Director of the Centre. Mohammed described the immense adjustment to life in Canada for the Somali community as a "paradigm shift." I asked him to explain this shift, and here is his response:

See the key thing is, that you don't want to lose your values . . . the things that are bad we have to change it. We have to learn from the new culture. Things that we think is of value, important, is much better than Canadian culture, we keep it. So that is the challenge . . . If one portion of society gets very sick, the disease will spread. And that's to maintain that everybody is healthy, you have to make sure the programs, put programs to assist the community. And you try to listen, seek help for the people's expertise and talent of the new culture. And we'll keep trying.

That's the only way that we feel that we can save the community.

Mohammed then mentions that the younger generation is "confused, 'cause we're telling them something and its other, the T.V. is telling them something else." He says that many

Somali teenagers cannot speak Somali, and “now they will never get that part of, that way of thinking, because the language is the way of thinking.” The need to “save the community” is to be able to balance the gains and losses of social, linguistic, and cultural integration/assimilation.

Mohammed’s depiction of the state of his community is described by a metaphor of illness and disease. The solution to the problem, and the means of containing it, are “programs to assist the community,” and listening to the “expertise” of the “new culture” to “seek help.” The way that Mohammed understands the problems of his community is a product of the mentality that governs us, structured by the project of problematizing life and seeking to act upon it. Similarly, the teachers’ propensity to see themselves as “social workers,” my interest in uncovering the “problems” of the LINC program at the Centre, and the LINC program itself, are also instances of the same mentality. All of these efforts are framed within the discourse and counter-discourse that construes diversity, and the migrants themselves, as a problem and a risk to the security of the nation, the solution to which is the continual development of programmatic initiatives.

A frequent critique leveled at the governmentality literature, and relevant here, is that since Foucault’s elaboration of the concept in 1978, subsequent studies focus primarily on the “mentality of rule” rather than engaging with “a conceptualization of politics as relations of contest or struggle which are constitutive of government rather than simply a source of programmatic failure and (later) redesign” (O’Malley, Weir, & Shearing, 1997, p. 505). The theoretical focus of governmentality literature on describing the mentalities of rulers is “a much more restricted inquiry than [that of] the institutions, procedures and practices of government found in Foucault’s earlier work” (p. 510).

O'Malley et al. argue that the political and critical implications of governmentality work are weak unless they engage with the “messy implementation” of government programs and the “messy actualities” of social relations that characterize their existence (p. 512). What is important, then, is not only to identify and explore the “mentality of rule” that governs such programs and its subjects, but also to look for the (productive) effects of rule from the view of the subjects of the program. One might consider the limits of Blommaert and Verschueren's expert analysis of the dominant discourses of the migrant debate in a similar way. Their analysis is framed by and within the voices of the majority, which they acknowledge. The effects of the discourse, and how it might be contested, is beyond the scope of their study. In what follows, then, I will pursue further how the “problem” of “difference” is construed and produced in the teaching and learning that takes place within the institutional discourses and practices of the LINC program at the Centre. I will also consider, however, the effects of this dominant discourse on the students, to show just how it reveals itself as a counter-discourse, so that contestation and even resistance might surface in response.

Teaching LINC

Once again, Kajia's comments are extremely useful in understanding pedagogy and curriculum at the Centre, and once again, she describes the students' learning needs vary according to age differences. Kajia explains that the basic curriculum content of LINC is very useful to the students. They need to learn how to communicate so that they can do their shopping, go to the doctor, or deal with immigration officials. Young people, she says, can learn English “from the beginning,” that is, they can learn the intricacies of

reading, writing, and speaking. For the older people, however, Kajia thinks that conversation skills should be the main focus of the program:

The people who are young they start from the beginning but the people who come here and are old or are in middle age they cannot learn grammar, they need a concept of conversation and they can learn the words, because they are adults, and they can learn the conversation. That becomes useful. But coming in the schools for writing and grammar, for me is, is, not - we cannot help like that . . . for me, it's better, more conversation. To teach people more conversation than structural grammar.

L: Does that happen in the classes?

Yes, they work on conversation, but the curriculum that the teachers they have to follow, is not the conversation. Because the teachers, when they see the need, they change a little bit. But it is something that comes from them, it's not something in the curriculum of the LINC program. And when they see that these people don't need grammar, they do the conversation. The teachers, they deviate the route, and say, how can we help these people?

As outlined in the previous chapter, the LINC teachers at the Centre do have the autonomy to “deviate the route” from the standard LINC Curriculum and Guidelines. The teachers are driven to develop curriculum which helps the students with what they “need to know.” This means that English language writing, reading, and speaking skills are taught to increase the students' abilities to access mainstream institutions and services. During my visits to LINC classrooms, I saw that the students were taught, for example, how to pay bills at a bank and write a cheque, how to go grocery shopping, and how to go

to a doctor's appointment. These lessons included all three area of communicative competence with exercises in reading, writing, and speaking and listening.

One month into my visits to the Centre, however, I saw how the teachers "deviate the route" from teaching the usual lessons about accessing mainstream services to provide a forum for group conversations about a film that the classes watched together. Via an article in The Toronto Star, Gail discovered an educational series developed by a Canadian communications officer working for UNICEF. The "Sara Series," created by a team of researchers, writers, and artists from Canada and Africa, is a collection of stories about a young African girl's various encounters with gender discrimination. The "Meena Series" was created by a team in Bangladesh, led by the Canadian UNICEF worker. The challenge for each team was to create in Sara and Meena, respectively, an African and a South Asian composite "girl-child" who would speak to women and girls across the countries and cultures of Africa and Asia. Each series consists of animated films, comic books and radio soap operas have been translated into English, French, Portuguese, Swahili, and Hausa and are being used in schools in Africa, South Asia, and Canada. As The Star reporter describes it, Meena and Sara's adventures have

given girls a feeling of confidence and self-reliance in facing the whole range of discrimination and abuse surrounding them . . . instead of the adolescent girl being a pitiful victim of cultural and economic barriers, Sara is spirited and smart, turning the tables on child molesters and coming up with bright ideas to help her family.

(Sanger, 1999, January 31, p. F3)

Gail was able to obtain from UNICEF a copy of a video and accompanying comic books from the "Sara series" entitled "The Special Gift." All three LINC classes gathered

together two or three times a week over a three week period to watch and discuss the film. The film tells the story of Sara, who is commanded by her uncle to drop out of school because her labour is needed by the family. There is a shortage of firewood in the region, which means that women and girls have to walk further to find wood to burn. Furthermore, the family is short of money and cannot afford to send both Sara and her brother to school. Sara's father works in the city, but has stopped sending money to the family. Being forced to leave school devastates Sara. To get herself out of this dilemma, Sara, with the help of her teacher, builds a smokeless clay oven that burns less firewood. Her family is so impressed by her initiative that they decide that she should stay in school. At school, Sara will continue with her efforts to help the community. In the end the uncle gets his comeuppance, too, as Sara's father returns home to reveal that the uncle has been pocketing the family's money.

The teachers were excited by the prospect of supplying the students with curriculum materials that were about girls' and women's issues in Africa. They told me that it was very difficult to find any materials that address the experiences of the women in their classes. Auerbach (1995) notes that much of ESL teaching is based on the model of "survival curriculum" that emphasizes "the way we do things here" to establish the learners' language needs only in relation to societal institutions (p. 18). An alternative to this, she suggests, is to use materials that reflect the experiences and voices of the students. The classes that took place around the "Sara series" operated quite differently from the other classes. Clearly, the teachers and the students enjoyed the change in routine and curriculum content, and there was a great deal of pleasure in the exercise. The control of turn-taking by the teachers was loosened up in these classes, which allowed for more

discussion between the students themselves and between the students and teachers in a frenzy of Somali and English. The topic of discussion that dominated the classes was education for women and girls in Africa, in particular in Somalia, and the students had a chance to engage the class with personal narratives about their experiences of education.

During one of these classes, Sarah asked the students about what education was like in Somalia after colonialism. A vigorous debate ensued, where the students disagreed with one another's answers, and Dunia, always caught in the middle, tried to translate the various answers to the teachers. This pattern of discussion and disagreement occurred frequently when the teacher's questions encouraged different rememberings and representations of Somalia. When one of the teachers asked a question that required a homogeneous representation of what "education was like," for example, it remained unanswered because no one answer would do. In this respect, the students' responses troubled the teachers' attempts to establish a definitive representation of "education in Somalia." In a similar instance later that week, the class talked about the figure of the evil uncle in "The Special Gift." The students told the teachers that when a father has been killed or is away, oftentimes an uncle will take his symbolic place in the family. Sarah asked, "what are uncles like?" and Madina responded, "It depends, some are good and some are bad. They are not all the same." She resisted the categorization of all Somali/African uncles with the patriarchal ogre uncle in the film, and pressed for a recognition of "African uncles" as a heterogeneous category.

In some instances, however, the students differentiated responses to a question are nevertheless interpreted to serve the interests of the dominant discourse. Sarah asked the students, "Why did some girls not go to school?" As the students offered their answers

(got married, had to look after family, no government support, no money), Lucy recorded the answers on the blackboard. In the midst of gathering the answers, Lucy wrote the word **"PROBLEMS"** at the top of the board. "Who did not go to school?" Sarah asked next. The student who sat beside me, Damac, then commented to me that the teacher should not ask such a question, because the women feel "shamed" about it, and because they would "have to have a reason" for not going to school. She asserts that the question doesn't take into account that some women were "cut off" from school for reasons beyond their control.

One student, however, answered Sarah in English, saying that she felt "sad" because she could not go to school, and there was a murmur of consent throughout the class. The teachers reassured the students that it was "Okay" not to go to school, and encouraged them not be shy or ashamed. One student responded to this by saying that it was her choice not to go to school. She was a "tomboy" and preferred to play outside, at which point the class laughed. This student managed to make room for a different kind of answer that placed the responsibility for not going to school onto herself. She was the agent that made the decision; it was not made for her. Damac then offered her own story, and said that she was pulled out of school at the age of seven to look after her aging relatives and her younger brothers and sisters: "I lived right across from the school . . . I was so sad, I cried and cried."

Damac's critique of the teacher's line of questioning and subsequent complicity with it shows how her ambivalent feelings about what is going on are negotiated. Answering the question in the right way positions her for a moment as a "good student." Damac was, not coincidentally, the student who was later asked to leave the program

because of her bad attendance record. She was known as the “bad student.” She frequently vacillated between resistance and compliance in positioning herself in relation to the authority of the school, as the example above shows, and in her inconsistent attendance of the program.

Damac’s ambivalence is well-grounded: the source of it came up in a group interview I conducted with Gail’s class. I asked the students about the frequent moments in classroom interaction when the students break into discussions in Somali that seem to be arguments about the “right” answer to give to the teacher’s line of questioning. The students laughed when I asked them, “What are you talking about?” and there was some hesitation on their part to tell me. At this point, Gail took it as a cue that their discomfort to reveal the subject of their discussions might be constrained by her presence, and she said that she would leave the room. The students all told her not to leave, and Damac turned to me then and said, “See, that is the problem.” Gail’s unwillingness to listen to the students signaled that she was not interested in what they had to say. For Damac, this is a severe issue.

The students then explained that their discussions are about differences between people’s experiences. In discussions about education, it makes a difference, they said, if you are from the country or the city, and if you are young or old. Damac said their are differences about “religion and culture . . . religion and culture are fighting.” Damac gave an example to say that one of the things the students discuss is the division of labour in the home, and some younger women want men to do more on their part. Madina disagreed, and said, “It is not about religion - it is about culture - is it? - it’s not about religion - it’s about women having to respect men.” At this point, the discussion broke into Somali.

According to Damac, the “problem” as she sees it is really about the staff’s inability to recognize and value the knowledge and experience of the students. Damac’s comments to me point to her understanding of “the problem” beyond the “relativist rhetoric of cultural difference” (Blommaert and Verschueren, p. 4). It is about the relations of power that structure Somali linguistic and cultural practices as inferior and undervalued within the institution. Damac was one of two students asked to leave the LINC program. The form and frequency of her resistance to the program could not be contained or condoned by the institution, thus she was excluded from it. It was, however, an indeterminate solution to the problem because after a few weeks absence Damac returned to negotiate her position in the program with Rebecca.

In the example above of the group interview, Gail’s move to leave the classroom is an unwillingness to know about the students’ disagreements. It is also about the way that conflict and argument, as a form of linguistic interaction, is understood and valued. In the classroom, for the most part, the teachers control the order of the interactions in patterns of sequential turn-taking. Oftentimes, though, the students will turn to discussions in Somali where everybody talks at once. In most cases, the teachers work to quell these discussions immediately to regain the order of interaction, which they must do to get the job of teaching done. The form and content of the students’ interactions are, however, devalued in the process.

To return to the morning of classroom interaction, the trepidation that Damac expressed to me about the teacher’s question, “who did not go to school?” proved to be well-grounded, as evidenced by the fact that the answers elicited from the students were framed as “problems,” and further evidenced by the ensuing events. Sarah presented the

class with some facts from UNICEF about the developments that have been made in education for girls in Africa and South Asia over the last few decades. Sarah then asked the students, “what is good about coming to English class?” The value of education was quickly linked to the value of learning English in the LINC program, and Sarah supplemented this point with narratives about two successful LINC students. She then introduced the word “independent” to the class. An older woman student repeated one of the successful student narratives, to say that now she could go to the doctor by herself and be “independent.” Sarah said, “Learning English gives women power!” Dunia, the interpreter, and some of the students in the class repeated this refrain.

The relation to language that is proposed in the LINC program functions to produce ambivalence in the student’s responses because it is construed as a relation to Anglo-Canadian language and culture that devalues that of the students. The inability of educational institutions to better contend with racial and cultural difference found here is similar to Heller’s study of ethnic minority students in a Franco-Ontarian high school (1999, chap. 5). The Somali students at the high school, for example, are marginalized by the narrow focus of the curriculum and a general devaluing of their knowledge, which produces ambivalence in their social relations to the school. Some of the students strategically manage, however, to contest and challenge the stratified social order of the school by protesting against their exclusion via a strike, and by eventually incorporating their perspective into the mainstream by joining with other “multicultural” students to win a student council election. Heller argues that anti-racist and multicultural education policies provided the “discursive spaces” necessary to foster these efforts to improve the

distribution of power in the school (p. 235). In the LINC program, however, no such spaces appear to exist.

Gender, nation, and education

The examples provided here of one morning of classroom interaction about the “Sara Series” reveals that the topic of women’s education produces gendered representations of African/Somali identity and a corresponding construction of Anglo-Canadian female identity. The effects of the lesson on the students, as I could see it, produced pleasurable rememberings and tellings of their experiences, as well as some contestation and ambivalence around how this knowledge was framed. The utilization of teaching materials that, from the outset, are attempting to represent a homogenous view of African “women’s issues” through the vehicle of a generic African girl-child already reproduce the homogenizing impulses that inform the practice of othering, which the teachers reproduce further by only asking how the students’ experiences are similar to, and not possibly different from, what is represented in the film. What has value in these exchanges, as Damac’s negotiation shows, is only those answers that reinforce the teachers’ understanding of the women as unfortunately uneducated.

There are ways that articulations of “experience” in the ESL classroom can paradoxically serve to exoticize the minority culture rather than provide a means of analyzing it, or recognize the relations of power that produce it (see for example Peirce, 1993, chap. 8; Schenke, 1991). What is being produced as knowledge here is the continuation of the production of “difference” that increases and reinforces the divide between what is understood to be “Canadian” and what is understood to be

“Somali/African.” The focus is on the “difference” itself, rather than on how difference is constructed and how privilege and relations of power function to produce it.

The students’ narratives of experience are taken up so that the women’s “choices” to be educated are personalized and individualized; “they have to have a reason,” as Damac says, or else the women will be (and perhaps already are) negatively judged. The women’s answers have to line up with the dominant representation of Third World Women as terribly oppressed by the patriarchal and religious systems in their countries. In this way, Western “First World” gender ideologies and political systems are seen as liberatory, progressive, and superior. Mohanty (1991) makes the case that much Western feminist academic writing rests on the othering of a “composite” Third World Woman, rendering her a powerless victim of patriarchy, so that gender difference is the source and root of all Third World difference. Hoodfar (1993) also discusses the prevalence of this view of Muslim Middle Eastern and North African women in public and academic discourses, where Muslim religious practices, such as wearing the veil, are regarded as static and unchanging, rooted in the patriarchal oppression of women, and come to symbolize the women’s ignorance and inferiority. “This is symptomatic,” Hoodfar writes, “of ethnocentrism (if we don’t call it racism) and the lingering implicit or explicit assumption that the only way to ‘liberation’ is to follow western women’s models and strategies for change” (p. 13).

This dominant representation of Third World Muslim women figures prominently in everyday feminism as well, as what surfaces in the classroom examples above is a version of what Schenke (1991) calls “feminist orientalism,” a discourse that she asserts is familiar to the ESL classroom (p. 47). What gets produced in the classroom discussion of

women's education in Somalia are collocations of linking terms that I heard echoed in the classrooms throughout my visits to the Centre. Through LINC, the students will be educated to "Speak English," which is linked to "independence" which is linked to "power" for women. The opposite terms define a fixed and essentialized concept of Somali womanhood. The patriarchal and religious traditions of Somali society are seen to be the root cause of the women's marginalized positions both now and in the past. Those values need to be rejected so that the progressive values of Canada's culture and educational system, and ESL in particular, can "empower" the women to positions of agency.

The possibility that educational opportunities are shaped by political forces, such as colonialism and nationalism, as well as gender ideologies, was not acknowledged in the class discussions or in the film series. In speaking about women's education with one of the students, these factors emerged as equally salient to that of gender ideology in the historical forces that have shaped education for girls in Somalia. Asha gives a brief rendition of this history:

Back home, women didn't get enough education - they never went to school.

After colonial finished, we had chance to go to school. But parents still had control. They give her to a husband. She can't say anything because her life would be destroyed. After 20 years, the military comes, says women and men equal, jobs, equality. We work up. A lot of women went to work for the government. Before, you would work behind your husband, father, brother, even if he is younger.

Asha's comments emphasize that the changes in educational and occupational opportunities for girls and women in Somalia are due to changes in both political systems

and gender ideologies over the past 30 years. Indeed, in the years after independence in 1960, Somalia made great efforts to develop its education system and invented a script for the Somali language in 1972. The advancements in education for girls and rural populations and the invention of a Somali orthography were strong elements in the development of a post-colonial Somali nation-state and the driving force behind a new nationalism until the civil war broke out in 1988 (see Abdi, 1998).

The education of girls and women was a primary focus of the country's educational initiatives in the 1970s and the 1980s. At the Centre, I met Ferhat, a member and volunteer at the Somali Centre who, during the decades of educational reform, was a high ranking government official. She spoke to me about the many programs she was involved in that worked to increase the access of girls and women to educational opportunities.² Somali's history of educational developments and the development of a Somali script for the purposes of linguistic homogeneity are closely linked to nationalist objectives and initiatives. Here, this history can reflect back to that of Canada, where LINC, the current manifestation of ESL for adult immigrants, exists as a government initiative to create the grounds for linguistic homogeneity in the service of nationalism. There is more continuity here than difference between these gendered educational initiatives developed in the service of nation-building. The political efficacy of feminism has created an intriguing link between education and nation-building, so that in the LINC program and in the field of ESL generally the language work of the nation and nation-building is being performed by and undertaken by female teachers and learners.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I began with a re-examination of the disruption of order that was produced out of the constraints of the institution, as established in Chapter Three. The disruption of order was also a problem about linguistic difference, which provided me with an opportunity to show that teaching English is not a facile transmission of knowledge; it is, instead, the teaching of a relation to language and culture that is shaped by dominant Anglo-Canadian ideologies. The students take up or refuse the relation to language and culture in different ways, through resistance and accommodation. In the process, the relation to language is refigured, so that the English language is not simply “adopted” but becomes infused with different meanings, such as in the example of the conflict over the word “please.” The institution’s response to the linguistic difference, however, was to deem it as unacceptable, as a challenge to its authority and to the objectives of the LINC program. The students’ responses to the way the matter was handled by the institution revealed various rationales that broadened the base of what “the problem” of attendance is about, so that it comes to be about “cultural differences.”

The ideology of “respect” figures as an element that marks how differences about culture are negotiated between the students and the staff. One student, Aisha, believes that the students’ lack of respect for the teachers inhibits the opportunities presented to them by LINC to increase their English linguistic capital. She believes that the students should respect the authority of the school by obeying the rules. Other students have a more ambivalent relationship to the program, and have trouble “respecting” the teachers and “the rules.” The conditions of exchange and reciprocity that make respect possible are hampered by the shape of the relations of power embodied in the LINC program that

position the women students as linguistically and culturally inferior. The positioning of the women as such is discursively produced inside and outside the institution, with links to the construction of immigrants as problems-to-be-solved. The LINC program is designed as a solution to the problem, but on the route to increasing the linguistic and cultural capital of the students, the English language and Anglo-Canadian culture are idealized and figured as panaceas. Unfortunately, and paradoxically, the teachers efforts to “empower” the women students through English language teaching and learning actually serves to marginalize them further as immigrant women by reproducing discourses of “othering.”

The three parts of this chapter that look at linguistic, cultural, and gender difference reveal a pattern that encourages the female Somali students to abandon their form of “difference” in favour of Canadian standards, norms, and values. The fact that the LINC program is administered out of a community-based agency shows up again as a factor that contributes to how some of the students expect these differences to be accommodated by the institution. The mandate of the LINC program, as they are delivered to Rebecca by the CIC, does not allow for this kind of accommodation.

I have characterized the various manifestations of “the problem” as a dominant discourse that also surfaces in the talk of the students and staff of the Somali Centre as a counter-discourse. There are important moments where this discourse is contested and resisted, where the homogenizing impulses that produce knowledge about “Somali culture” are made more complex by the students. The dominant discourses of the institution reveal, however, a bounded notion of culture and language where that of the majority is supposed to replace that of the minority. The LINC program teaches the values of the new culture through language, and these are expected to replace the language and

culture of the minority. This is a rationality that rests on an equation of the addition and subtraction of culture and language, rather than the possibility of a concept of language and culture as integrative, where integration is defined by the minority language speaker. In effect, the students are negotiating the terms of linguistic and cultural integration as they move through the LINC program. The struggle, however, is in the process. This chapter is an attempt to show how the construction of the students, in a number of different instances, as the source of “the problem” produces ambivalence, resistance, and contestation which are legitimate responses to being construed this way.

Endnotes

¹ I want to acknowledge that I was not present for the production of this text, so I do not know what the conditions of its production were. It is possible that my analysis of it is wrong, and that, for example, the question, "Why are you late?" was inserted into the lesson by the students and teacher as a joke, to make light of the tensions around attendance.

² Here is an elaboration of educational reforms in Somalia after independence, gleaned from my discussions with Ferhat and other sources. The Italian and British colonial rule of Somalia ended in 1960, and the Somali republic was formed. The Republic functioned as a democratic state for nine years with two presidential terms. A military coup followed in 1969, and Somalia was declared a Socialist state. The government instituted a mass education campaign in the 1970s, began a large scale literacy program, and worked on developing a script for the Somali language. The education of Somali people and the development of a national language were integral to building the new Republic and generating a new nationalism. Ferhat was the Director General for the Ministry of Higher Education in Somalia from the 1960s until 1978. She was directly involved in Somalia's attempt to develop its education system in the 1970s with a rural literacy campaign and with various efforts to increase girls' access to primary elementary and secondary education, as well as the access of women to technical training and university. Ferhat was also directly involved in the country's orthography debates which resulted in the institution of the Latin script for the writing of the Somali language, declared by government decree in 1972. The Somali language became the country's official language used for all aspects of political, economic, and cultural life, and the language of instruction in the school system. Abdi (1998) notes that the creation of a script for the Somali language was "a core issue of national identity, social emancipation and the de-emphasizing, at least partially, of one tenet of colonialism, i.e., the colonial language . . . Language is seen as one of the most precious national resources" (p. 334). Somalia is one of the few African countries that has managed to usurp the dominance of an ex-colonial language, and "Somalia is the only country in sub-Saharan Africa in which secondary education is given in the indigenous language" (Adegbija, 1994). The invention of a script for national language and a strong education system were some of the ways that

Somalia attempted to rebuild itself after decades of colonial rule. Education and linguistic homogeneity were important steps in the creation of a new Somali nation and national prosperity. The outbreak of civil war, however, has destroyed the educational system.

Conclusion

Implications for Social Relations and Linguistic Interactions

Introduction

The continued viability of LINC is uncertain as the federal government works with each province to negotiate the transfer of responsibility for settlement and integration services. In Ontario, the process of settlement renewal is at a standstill, caught in mid-download since 1996 while the province and the federal government continue to work out the transfer of responsibility. The settlement and integration services now administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada would be phased out once the transfer of responsibilities is complete. A CIC document on settlement renewal states that while federal programs such as LINC would be discontinued, “the activities they represent, however, could continue” (1996c, p. 17). Service providers can apply for funding for language training, settlement services counselors, and other settlement and integration services. There are no further details on how federal funding of settlement services might be organized. For now, then, the LINC program remains, but its future is uncertain. The organization of language training programs are likely to alter when they are administered by the provinces alone, and it will be interesting to see the kinds of changes that will occur. Certain aspects of the programs shall remain the same, though, as settlement services providers take on the challenge of implementing the policies of language training programs for adult immigrants in a local setting.

This study of the federal language training program for adult immigrants looks at the material and ideological conditions that shape the instantiation of one LINC program in a local setting. The historical and sociological discourses of ESL teaching and learning,

immigrant integration, and ideologies of language all shape the current federal language training program for adult immigrants. Taking into account the larger discourses surrounding the formation of the program outlined in Chapter Two, in Chapter Three I looked at the social organization of one LINC program to consider how LINC policy is put into practice. The mandates of the LINC program are borne out in everyday interactions and practices that inform the social relations in the setting, which have to be negotiated and managed by all of the participants involved. By examining, in Chapter Four, the production of linguistic interactions in the classroom, I explored how the discourses of LINC are mediated by the institution and work in concert with larger sociological discourses about immigration. The teachers' efforts to empower the students through English language teaching and learning paradoxically serve to reinforce the marginalization of the students in relation to Anglo-Canadian linguistic and cultural practices.

The dominant discourses of Anglo-Canadian cultural superiority that surface in the practices of ESL teaching and learning actively position adult immigrant learners of ESL as inferior. The norms and values of the students' culture are construed as a problem, thus these attempts to educate the Somali immigrants and refugees about Canadian linguistic and cultural practices unwittingly devalue their own cultural and linguistic practices. As a result, the social relations in the educational setting serve to reproduce conditions of Anglo-Canadian cultural and linguistic dominance and the subservience of racialized "others" to it. My interest in exploring and accounting for these social practices is to show how social interactions are linked to larger social processes, both of which are mediated in and by institutional discourses. This approach is one way of understanding how the

relationship between structure and agency works, how majority/minority social relations are produced, and how dominant ideologies are reproduced. It is also a way to make sense of the social practices and interactions in the LINC program at the Centre to consider, as a result, the knowledge that is produced in this educational setting.

The LINC program provides access to symbolic and material resources for all of its participants. For the staff, the program gives them full-time employment. All of the teachers (and the Coordinator) mentioned the symbolic value of teaching English as well: the importance of “helping” the students learn the linguistic resources they need to “get by” in their lives in Canada. For the students, LINC increases their linguistic capital. The students learn some linguistic strategies they need to access mainstream English institutions and services. The LINC program at the Centre has a symbolic function for the students too; it is a place where the students meet as a community. At times, it seemed that the function of the program as a social meeting place was, for the students, the greatest value of the program. The pedagogic purpose of the program appeared to be secondary to its social value, hence the staff’s and students’ interests were, in this respect, at cross-purposes. In all of the diverse ways the program is valued, it functions as a resource in itself. The program has to be managed as an institution that distributes a variety of symbolic and material resources. The students and staff in the program have various interests in the symbolic and material resources that the institution provides, and the institution must negotiate these interests. It is, as a result, a site where struggles over power and resources take place.

Negotiations about power and resources are structured by social relations that are produced in social interactions. By looking at how social relations are linguistically

produced and practiced, and also how they are understood by the participants in the program, it is possible to better understand how social relations are structured by relations of power and by the values that are attributed to the resources of the institution. The production of social identities, social relations, and ideologies of language in the LINC program show how the institution and its participants work to manage the many layers of social and institutional relations that meet in one site. LINC policy and its practice at the Centre create ideological conflicts about culture and language that emerge in social relations. The various groups in the program work to negotiate conflict and contradiction as they engage in the interest that overwhelms all others, that is, to maintain the program and the relations within it to access the resources that each participant values. In what follows I will trace the trajectory of this study of the LINC program at the Centre to make some suggestions about what can be learned from it, and to make some recommendations for change. I will first review the particular constraints of the LINC program that shape its implementation at the Centre. I will link these constraints to the discursive practices of the teachers and students to arrive at the pedagogical and ideological implications of my thesis.

Dominant Institutional Discourses

The economic structure of LINC, as it was introduced in 1992, altered the organization of federal language training programs so that the programs became contract-based and market-driven. As a result, service providers are under great pressure to market their programs and maintain their viability by tracking student participation rates for Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The emphasis that LINC places on recording student

attendance means that attendance is the measure of each LINC program's "success," and thus attendance figures as a measure of student "success" in the program as well.

When I began my research at the Centre, the matter of attendance was already of concern to the LINC staff. A few weeks into my research, when the CIC representative visited the Centre to insist upon 80% attendance rates, student attendance and the viability of the program became even more pressing issues. These particular constraints have an enormous impact on the structure of the LINC program; they are the reasons that the issue of attendance occupied such a prominent place in the everyday occurrences at the Centre. It is not surprising, then, that the dominant institutional discourse is about student attendance.

In Chapter Three and Chapter Four I showed how decisions are made and problems are solved to serve the interests of the dominant institutional discourse. The regulation of attendance is the primary measure of gatekeeping in the program. Students are deemed to be "good" or "bad" students depending on their attendance records, thus it also serves as the primary evaluative measure of student performance. In response, the students vacillate from complicity with or contestation of the program in the ways that they take up and understand the "rules" about attendance, which positions many of them in an ambivalent relationship to the LINC program. The students' ambivalence signals the presence of larger ideological conflicts about the production of linguistic and cultural difference and dominance that is taking place in the program. In this respect, the students' ambivalence is a way of reckoning with these forms of symbolic domination and the simultaneous need to access the resources that the program offers. The students' ambivalence filters through other forms of participation in the program, such as homework

and lateness, which encourages the staff to question the students' commitment to the program and exacerbates the tensions around attendance and the social relations of the program in general.

The valuation of attendance as the only measure of success creates problems in the relations between the students and the staff because the only solution is improved attendance with no recognition of the reasons that the students might miss class. To recall Ellen Cray's (1997) work on LINC teachers, she shows that under different conditions teachers take up the issue of attendance in different ways. The teachers in her study were running small independently-organized classes, and felt that LINC did not allow for the recognition of legitimate absences (p. 27). At the Centre, however, the students were held accountable for their inability to conform to the program's mandate on attendance. This reveals how each LINC program can be instituted differently to create different sources of conflict and complicity. In Cray's study the teachers' alignment with the students on the issue of attendance creates a sense of solidarity between the students and staff, while at the Centre it produced conflicts and the development of authoritative disciplinary measures.

As a dominant institutional discourse, the issue of attendance revealed that greater conflicts and difficulties were occurring between the staff and students in the LINC program at the Centre. The nature of these difficulties focussed on the production of the notion of "cultural difference" as a means of explaining and describing why conflict was occurring, and why misunderstandings were taking place between the students and staff. Cultural differences accounted for why attendance was at times difficult for the students. Cultural difference was the source of many "problems" that were attributed by the LINC

staff to the immigrant and refugee students by virtue of their otherness. Blommaert and Verschueren note that “the cultural differences to which most benevolent versions of rhetoric reduce the ‘problems’ are utterly dangerous constructs because they feed all the (mostly negative) stereotypes they are supposed to combat” (1998, p. 192, emphasis in original).

It is important to stress here, however, that the rhetoric of cultural difference was not just a product of the discourse of the staff and teachers in the program, but was a co-constructed discourse among the students and staff. Sarangi (1994) notes that “both dominant and dominated groups often resort to the culture card in managing their power-maintaining and power-acquiring purposes” (p. 416). The discourse was utilized in powerful ways by the staff to proffer a view of English language learning as empowering. Constructing ESL in this way idealizes Anglo-Canadian culture and disguises the fact that the access to the resources that ESL instruction provides always depend upon how the speaker is socially and economically positioned in relation to the dominant language and culture. An idealized view of Anglo-Canadian language and culture consequently devalues the knowledge and experience of the students, as explored in Chapter Four. The students and Somali staff employed the discourse in a number of ways, too, primarily to offer definitions of themselves and their culture, and to define their culture against that of Canada to emphasize the serious cultural and linguistic differences that they face in settling in Canada. For the students, playing the “culture card” in this way becomes a form of resistance. It is an articulation of the need to preserve aspects of “Somaliness” as the forces around them, such as the LINC program, encourage integration/assimilation. When the discourse of cultural difference is articulated by the dominant group, however, as in

the examples provided of classroom interactions, the students resist the homogenizing and essentializing moves that accompany it to claim greater complexity and heterogeneity in the face of the teachers' universalistic categorizations of Somali social identities.

The problem of attendance unearthed a number of sources of "cultural difference" that were ideological differences about the students' relation to attending school because of the weather, their responsibilities as mothers, etc. Unfortunately, the institution's response to these issues was to reinforce the authority and the rules of the school. The institution was unable to accommodate these differences in any other way. Similarly, in linguistic interactions, the students' linguistic and cultural differences are marginalized instead of being adequately valued and recognized without being inferiorized. The conflicts in the management of the LINC program at the Somali Centre were primarily about the ways that linguistic and cultural identities and knowledges are produced, maintained, and negotiated in ways that conform, or do not conform, to the mandate of LINC.

One particularly interesting feature of this study is the near homogeneity of each of the two groups involved in the LINC program: the students and the staff. The presence of the LINC program at a Somali community-based organization structures social relations in a specific way. The raced and classed identities of the two groups in the program reflect and reproduce majority/minority social and power relations. Social alliances and solidarities are constructed and maintained according to racial/ethnic and linguistic group membership. The structure of social relations as such allowed me to explore the rather stark realities of how cultural and linguistic difference is managed in everyday interactions. The extreme positioning of the two groups in relation to global hierarchies of first

world/third world racial, cultural, and linguistic identities and relationships permits me to comment more generally on the nature of social relations between third world migrants and first world citizens. I will address this issue in the closing of this chapter when I consider the wider implications of this study.

The cultural and linguistic boundaries that form the groupings at the Centre are not completely static, but are somewhat negotiable depending on who wants to cross the boundaries and for what reasons. Dunia and Hajia, as cultural interpreters and bilingual brokers, deftly negotiated linguistic and cultural boundaries. Rebecca worked to manage them for herself as well. She was the gatekeeper of the program, but she also considered herself part of the “family” at the Somali Centre. On a personal level, Dunia, Hajia, and Rebecca managed the contradictions that broke into conflict at the level of the institution. They negotiated the relations of power that placed them in both positions of authority and under conditions of constraint to manage the contradictions and conflicts that are inevitably produced in and by the program. This is, however, the mandate of their jobs. As cultural interpreters and the Coordinator, their jobs provide them with solid rationales and positions of authority and legitimacy to negotiate linguistic and cultural boundaries. Indeed, their positions in the institution necessitate and demand that they mediate these conflicts and contradictions.

For the teachers, many institutional constraints made the goals of their jobs very difficult to achieve, and prevented them from being able to negotiate the boundaries more freely, to produce conflict instead. The students’ position of ambivalence has been discussed at length, but I want to acknowledge another element that might offer further explanation of what I have described in this study. Ogbu (1991; Ogbu & Gibson, 1991)

theorizes that the educational experiences of minority groups vary because these groups have different relationships to the dominant language and culture. Ogbu accounts for these differences by asserting that the migration histories of minority groups shape their relation to the dominant culture in different ways (1991, p. 8). The situation of the Somali refugees in this study resembles that of involuntary migrants who, Ogbu describes, develop “secondary cultural differences” in response to conditions of subordination enacted by the dominant White culture (1991, p. 9). In this way, cultural and linguistic boundaries are shored up and maintained as a means of coping with subordination. The boundaries may not be as easy to cross as they are for other groups, as for voluntary or autonomous migrants. The main point here is that different groups of migrants are received by the dominant culture in different ways according to their migrant status, economic status, race, etc. Some groups, like the Somalis in this study, are received as refugees and racialized others, and the elements that define them as “different” become the focus for an ambivalent and/or oppositional discourse that acts as a means of coping with conditions of cultural and linguistic dominance. The majority culture’s conditions for acceptance of migrants is hierarchically structured; it is classed, gendered, and raced. These structures are also present in the LINC program. LINC is intended to facilitate immigrant integration. Next I want to consider the implications of this mandate of the LINC program.

The Question of Integration

The negotiation of the relationship between a federal language training program and a community-based ISO reveals that linguistic and cultural immigrant integration cannot be wholly defined as “a two way street,” as a CIC (1996) document on settlement

services describes it. The document states that “integration is a two way process, which involves commitment on the part of newcomers to adapt to life in Canada and on the part of Canadians to adapt to new people and cultures” (p. 10). If the policies and practices of integration were really an acknowledgement of a process that works both ways, then the negotiation of difference might be better accommodated by programs like LINC. Instead, the terms of integration remain defined by the majority as simply adopting the linguistic, cultural and social practices of the majority, just as Blommaert and Verschueren contend (1998, p. 112).

The discourse of cultural differences actually increases the gap between “us” and “them,” thereby contradicting the notion of integration and turning it into an impossible feat. The rhetoric of cultural difference positions the majority language and culture as an ideal, and combines well with the rhetoric of tolerance that places immigrants in the position of needing to be educated about and toward that ideal. The popular notion that advocates “tolerance” of cultural diversity (as found in the discourse of multiculturalism) implicitly contains seeds of cultural superiority, hierarchy, and inequity. Tolerance does not create conditions of respect; instead, it disguises relations of power that structure who has the authority to determine who is deserving of respect and who is not. The tenor of the social relations in the LINC program at the Centre revealed that the conditions to create a shared sense of respect were lacking. I want to explore now what might be required to create conditions of co-investment in a program like LINC.

Looking for Change

Various economic and programmatic elements of the LINC program create constraints and difficulties that emerge in its implementation. The economic constraints of

the LINC program produce the problem of attendance, as discussed above. The program's policies of continuous intake and multi-level classes contribute to difficult working conditions for the teachers. The effects of the provincial and federal reorganization of ESL have also contributed to the devaluation of the ESL profession, which again imposes conditions of constraint on ESL teachers. These structural factors originate from outside of the institution to impose constraints on its interior workings. There are many obvious ways that the LINC program could be reorganized to improve on the conditions that produce constraints in its implementation. If language training for adult immigrants is a settlement and integration service (and now the only settlement program provided by the federal government), then the accompanying settlement services should be provided as part of the program, such as increased funding for full-time LINC settlement counselors. These are just a few examples in a long list of economic constraints that produce difficulties in the program's operations that would, ideally, be lifted, if the money were there.

The organization of federally-funded language training programs will always impose certain conditions and constraints on the service provider organizations, which the agencies must negotiate and manage. In the process, too, the participants necessarily work through difficult internal conflicts and contradictions. This is the nature of the "messy implementation" of government programs, and the struggles that take place in their instantiation provide the grounds for future changes (O'Malley, Weir, & Shearing, 1997., p. 512). I do not believe, however, that increased funding or programmatic redesign is the only solution to the difficulties presented by the "messy actualities" of social relations found in this study of a government program (p. 512). Instead, it is more productive to

focus on the ways that institutions and the people that animate them manage internal conflicts and contradictions to improve on the social relations within.

There are a number of ways that LINC could be modified in practice to minimize the effects of its constraints. In the case of LINC at the Centre, various measures could be established to improve on the conditions that shape the social relations there. Ideally, the students and the staff would take some time to refigure the current emphasis on attendance to arrive at ways that some accommodations could be made. The example of Damac's dismissal and subsequent return to the program reveals that Rebecca does want to accommodate the students around the issue of attendance. Sarah was perturbed by Rebecca's decision to allow Damac to return, and commented that there is no "system" in place to enforce and recognize the "rules." I agree with her, although the "system" has to be devised by the staff and students together to agree upon the terms and conditions of the program and to establish a basis for co-investment in the program.

The issue of attendance as an indicator of student/program performance has cropped up as a problematic element in other educational settings. At a community college in Toronto, the instructors of for-credit and non-credit courses (which would include ESL) are no longer permitted to evaluate the students on the basis of attendance; this practice was found to contravene basic human rights (A. Cleghorn, personal communication, December 17, 1999). The instructors at the college cannot credit the students for attendance; therefore, they have to find other ways to make class time and student participation "count." This is what I mean by devising alternatives in managing the institutional arrangement of LINC to create a basis for co-investment that would foster a climate of respect.

As for the LINC program's pedagogical focus at the Centre, the students should be granted more agency in deciding what and how they learn about what they "need to know." For now, the curriculum comes straight from the teachers and the students have no input in this. The larger problem in all of this is the overarching nature of the relations between the students and the teachers, where the experiences and knowledge of the students is devalued in classroom discourse. This requires a much greater ideological shift on the part of ESL teachers and programmers, which I will address below. In the effort to open up the lines of communication between the staff and students in the LINC program at the Centre, more attention needs to be focussed on improving these relations. A rotating student position could be created, a student secretary, who act as a linguistic and cultural "broker" (in addition to that of the cultural interpreter, who is employed by LINC). The student secretary could be a spokesperson for the students and report daily on feedback about the program in an effort to increase the students chances of being "heard" by the program staff.

The Politics of Language and ESL

In the field of ESL education for adult immigrants, many studies have focussed on the negative effects of teaching English that does not take into consideration the political implications of linguistic interactions (Schenke, 1991; Peirce, 1993; Auerbach, 1995; Goldstein, 1997). Proponents of a critical pedagogy of ESL urge ESL instructors to address how social power relations inform linguistic interactions so that the ESL learners can challenge the practices of marginalization that occur in communicative processes both in and outside of the ESL classroom (Peirce, 1993, p. 226). When critical pedagogical methods are not employed in the classroom, the linguistic practices that occur there

reproduce conditions of marginalization, and the opportunities to learn under these conditions can be strained: ESL becomes anything but empowering.

The proffering of English as a means of “empowerment” for ESL learners disregards the values that the students attribute to their own language and culture. Goldstein’s (1997) work, for example, shows that for Portuguese factory employees, speaking Portuguese actually served to manage conditions of subordination. Speaking Portuguese was an important coping strategy for the factory employees that was used to find and keep jobs through Portuguese social ties. The proffering of ESL classes actually placed the workers in a double-bind, where they risked losing the support of their co-workers (p. 245). The provision of a workplace ESL program presented English as empowering, and it demanded that the learners cross language boundaries that were important to maintain; the presentation of English as such provoked a resistance to the use of English (p. 229). Goldstein’s work accounts for the heavy costs associated with learning English for this group of immigrants to acknowledge some reasons why resistance might be a valid response to ESL for adult immigrants. Furthermore, Goldstein finds that the provision of ESL instruction “does not change inequitable working and social conditions in a radical way,” because it is part of the ideologies and practices that maintain English hegemony (p. 238). Goldstein asserts that “ESL should acknowledge and respect the language boundaries of people’s working and social lives” (p. 237). In this way, critical pedagogical methods can be carefully employed in the ESL classroom to provide some means and ways for ESL learners to challenge and resist the hegemony of English (p. 240).

Critical pedagogy of ESL offers ways to construct a relation to the dominant language that acknowledges how the second language speaker is positioned within relations of power, and how these relations work to undermine the authority of his or her talk. Critical pedagogy is one way of working against the reproduction of cultural, linguistic, and social inequality that can take place in ESL teaching and learning, and in the students' interactions outside of the classroom. Supplying the second language speaker with some strategies to negotiate and learn about the production of their own talk is one way that ESL could contribute to truly "empowering" speakers of English as a second language. Judging from the pedagogical practices and policies of the LINC program, however, critical pedagogy of ESL has not been taken up by the institution, but this does not mean that it is not being practiced in some sites. The work of ESL theorists and practitioners, such as that cited above, needs to be integrated into mainstream ESL pedagogical practices to take into account the social and political implications of teaching and learning English as a second language. One hopes that the result would be a corresponding shift in the ideology behind language training for adult immigrants that would supplant the assimilationist demands of learning English with a new understanding of cultural and linguistic integration through language learning.

The social relations of the students and teachers in this study mirrored that of majority/minority power relations. The curriculum of LINC posits a dominant, Anglo-Canadian relation to language that is apparently unproblematically teachable to immigrant populations. The teachers in this LINC program shared the dominant ideology of language and the relation to language that the LINC program proposes. If, however, the current statistics on LINC teachers is correct, 47% of the instructors in Ontario speak a first

language other than English (Power Analysis Inc., 1998, p.54). If the teachers of ESL have learned English as a second language, perhaps as immigrants themselves, I imagine that the social relations in the classroom could be figured quite differently. The relation to the dominant language and culture that bilingual teachers know and teach about might make for more productive interpretations and understandings of the process of language learning and immigrant integration. Furthermore, if the ESL profession becomes less dominated by Anglo-Canadians, this might improve upon the current situation where the majority is “regulating the ‘self-organizations’ of migrants” (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998, p.192). These are a few other ways that the local level relations that are produced in and through the institution of LINC might be shaped differently in other instantiations.

Linguistic Interactions and Social Relations

I have suggested above a few ways that different knowledges about second language education might serve to challenge the reproduction of linguistic, cultural, and social dominance in a language training program for adult immigrants. The practice of critical pedagogy of ESL and the presence of teachers who speak English as a second language might refigure the relation to language taught through LINC to adequately value the first languages and cultures of the students and resist a corresponding overvaluation of Anglo-Canadian norms and values. This would bring the notion of integration through language learning into the pedagogical forefront to hold it up for questioning. Questions could be raised that ask about the costs that attend learning English as a second language, or how that language gets refigured with new values and meanings by the minority language speakers. Teaching and learning about the implications of ESL in this way means that the values attributed to the students’ first language will alter as well, since it will be

acknowledged as a strategy for coping with linguistic, cultural, and economic subordination. Investing the first language with the potential for resistance has further implications that are beyond the scope of this conclusion. The value of a federal language training program, however, would be as it is now, as a program that teaches English to access mainstream resources and services, but it would work to acknowledge the symbolic and material values attached to minority language use as well.

At the root of these suggestions for pedagogical change is the reformulation of the social and linguistic relations that shape ESL programs for adult immigrants, and ultimately the ideologies of language that inform them. There are limitations to the solutions proposed above because in order to interrupt the reproduction of practices that marginalize second language speakers, both participants in a communicative event must be willing to negotiate around the relations of power that asymmetrically position them. The knowledge and experience of the second language speaker must be recognized and valued as a linguistic production to be granted authority by the listener. There is, as a result, more responsibility on ESL teachers (who are situationally and linguistically positioned in an authoritative relation to the student) to help make linguistic interaction, and learning English, a success.

Conclusion

The proposals I offer here apply to the field of ESL for adult immigrants, but also serve to comment on social relations and linguistic interactions more generally. In the broadest sense this thesis is about social and linguistic relations between majority and minority language groups, and between migrant and non-migrant populations. It is also about the ideologies of language that govern social interactions; that is, how linguistic

(and cultural) differences are understood to influence how we speak with and listen to one another. The linguistic productions of the staff and students in the LINC program centred around the discourse of cultural difference, and got mired in that discourse. As a means of accounting for linguistic and cultural differences between groups, the discourse itself becomes the problem.

In the field of intercultural communication, a number of theorists suggest that it is necessary to go beyond the notion of cultural difference as the only way to explain and account for difficulties in intercultural interactions (Meeuwis & Sarangi, 1994; Sarangi, 1994; Shea, 1994). Instead, the focus should be on how cultural differences are taken up by the speakers to inhibit or permit successful interactions. Shea (1994) states that

How utterances are interpreted is mediated by how speakers are positioned and their discourse structured: whether interactional authority is granted and referential perspective is recognized, or whether participation is reduced and neglected. It is not cultural differences in and of themselves, but the way they are taken up and negotiated, which critically determines the shape and success of intercultural interaction. (p. 379)

At the Centre, the discourse of cultural difference is institutionalized to reduce the chances of communicative success. It functions as a “power-maintaining” discourse for the program staff (Sarangi, 1994, p. 416). The dominance of the discourse in the institution is governed in part by the tenor of public and political discourses about the “problem” of cultural difference presented by immigrants and refugees. Furthermore, Canada’s public institutions manage linguistic and ethnic diversity to promote linguistic and cultural

homogeneity over any real acknowledgement of social difference that engenders an appreciation of linguistic and cultural heterogeneity.

Outside of these institutions, and even within them, the findings of Shea and other theorists of intercultural communication can be heartening. Shea insists that successful communication is a collaborative construction, and the “interpretation and outcomes of the talk are integrally shaped by the kind of speakers that are interactively constructed” (p. 377). The intelligibility of intercultural communication is ultimately negotiable in practice. Successful communication is “a function of a jointly-proposed and ratified orientation between speakers” (Shea, p. 363). This is not to deny that talk is shaped by social and institutional forces as well, but it means that linguistic interactions between majority English speakers and second language English speakers are not wholly petrified by the institutional and social processes that structure unequal social relations between the linguistic majority and linguistic minorities. Talk can be jointly produced to go one of two ways: to extend the chances of successful communication or to impede it. Linguistic interactions are highly differentiated events with multiple contingencies that affect their success. Each linguistic encounter holds the possibility of reproducing dominant social inequities or the possibility of reformulating them.

In this study of the LINC program, linguistic interactions are mediated by social and institutional ideologies and practices that place limits on the possibilities for social interactions that work to resist the ideologies that dominate them. On the other hand, however, the relationship between social and institutional constraints and linguistic interaction is mutually constitutive, which means that changes in social relations in the institution can also work to transform the shape of larger social processes.

References

- Abdi, A. A. (1998). Education in Somalia: history, destruction, and calls for reconstruction. Comparative Education, 34(3), 327-340.
- Adegbija, E. (1994). Language attitudes in Sub-Sahara Africa: A sociolinguistic overview. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Affi, L. (1997). The Somali crisis in Canada: The single mother phenomenon. In H.M. Adam & R. Ford, (Eds.), Mending rips in the sky: Options for Somali communities in the 21st century (pp. 440-451). Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press.
- Anderson, B. (1983). Imagined Communities. London: Verso.
- Anderson, G. (1989). Critical ethnography. Review of Educational Research, 59 (3), 249-270.
- Anthias, F., & Yuval-Davis, N. (1993). Racialized boundaries: Race, nation, gender, colour and class and the anti-racist struggle. London and New York: Routledge.
- Auerbach, E. R. (1995). The politics of the ESL classroom: Issues of power in pedagogical choices. In M.H. Long & J.C. Richards (Series Eds.) & J.W. Tollefson (Vol. Ed.), Power and inequality in language education: Cambridge applied linguistics series (pp. 9-29). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baril, J. (1993). Adult English as a second language in Ontario. Thunder Bay, On: Confederation College.
- Billig, M. (1995). Banal nationalism. London: Sage.
- Blommaert, J. & Verschuere, J. (1998). Debating diversity: Analysing the discourse of tolerance. London & New York: Routledge.

Blommaert, J. (1996). Language planning as a discourse on language and society: The linguistic ideology of a scholarly tradition. Language problems and language planning, 20(3), 199-222.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). The economics of linguistic exchanges. Social Science Information, 16 (6), 645-668.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1977). Reproduction in education, society, and culture (R. Nice, Trans.). London: Sage.

Boyd, M. (1992). Immigrant women: Language, socio-economic inequalities, and policy issues. In B. Burnaby & A. Cumming (Eds.), Socio-political aspects of ESL (pp. 141-151). Toronto: OISE Press.

Burnaby, B. (1998). ESL policy in Canada and the U.S.: Basis for comparison. In T. Ricento & B. Burnaby (eds.), Language and politics in the U.S. and Canada: Myths and realities (pp. 246-264). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ciccarelli, S. B. (1997). ESL for nation-building: The origins of federally-funded ESL in Canada. Unpublished master's thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto, Toronto.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1995a). A broader vision: Immigration and citizenship plan, 1995 - 2000. Ottawa, On: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1996a). Profiles: Total immigrant population. Ottawa, On: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada (1996b). Canadian language benchmarks: English as a second language for adults, English as a second language for literacy learners. Working Document. Ottawa, On: Authors.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1996c). Round II. Consultations on settlement renewal: Finding a new direction for newcomer integration. Ottawa, On: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1996d). Facts and figures 1996: immigration overview. [On-line]. Available: http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/pub/facts96/index_e.html.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1997a). News Release: Lucienne Robillard announces the introduction of the Undocumented Convention Refugees in Canada Class. Ottawa: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada (1997b). The revised LINC curriculum guidelines. Ottawa: Author

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada (1997c). The revised LINC Literacy component of the LINC curriculum guidelines. Ottawa: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1998a). New directions for immigrant and refugee policy and legislation. Ottawa, On: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1998b). Canada - a welcoming land: 1999 annual immigration plan. Ottawa, On: Author.

Citizenship and Immigration, Canada. (1998c). Facts and figures 1998: immigration overview. [On-line]. Available: <http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/pdf/files/pub/facts98e.pdf>

Collins, J. (1996). Socialization to text: Structure and contradictions in schooled literacy. In M. Silverstein & G. Urban, (Eds.,), Natural histories of discourse (pp. 203-228). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Collins, R. (1977). Conflict sociology. New York: Academic.

Cray, E. (1997). Teachers' perceptions of a language policy: "Teaching LINC." TESL Canada Journal, 15(1), 22-37.

Doherty, N. (1992). Challenging systemic sexism in the National Language Training Program. In B. Burnaby & A. Cumming (Eds.), Socio-political aspects of ESL (pp. 67-75). Toronto: OISE Press.

Edwards, R. (1998). A critical examination of the use of interpreters in the qualitative research process. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 24 (1), 197-208.

Elliot, J. L. & Fleras, A. (1990). Immigration and the Canadian ethnic mosaic. In P. S. Li (Ed.), Race and ethnic relations in Canada, (pp. 51-76). Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Employment and Immigration Canada (1990). Immigration Statistics. Ottawa, On: Author.

Employment and Immigration Canada (1991a). Immigration Statistics. Ottawa, On: Author.

Employment and Immigration Canada (1991b). New immigrant language training policy. Ottawa, On: Author.

Employment and Immigration Canada (1992). Immigration Statistics. Ottawa, On: Author.

Employment and Immigration Canada (1993). Immigration Statistics. Ottawa, On: Author.

Fleming, D. (1997). Instructor autonomy in curriculum decision making: A study of an adult ESL settlement program. Unpublished master's thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto, Toronto.

Foucault, M. (1977). Discipline and punish. (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Pantheon. (Original work published 1975)

Foucault, M. (1990). The history of sexuality: Volume 1 (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Vintage. (Original work published 1976)

Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (Eds.), The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality (pp. 87-104). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published in 1978)

George, U. & Mwarigha, M. S. (1999, March). Consultation on settlement programming for African newcomers. Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for Applied Social Research.

Giles, W. (1988). Language rights are women's rights: Discrimination against immigrant women in Canadian language training policies. RFR/DRF, 17 (3), 129-132.

Goldstein, T. (1995). Interviewing in a multicultural/multilingual setting. TESOL Quarterly, 29 (3), 587-593.

Goldstein, T. (1997). Two languages at work: Bilingual life on the production floor. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Green, J., Franquiz, M., & Dixon, C. (1997). The myth of the objective transcript: Transcribing as a situated act. TESOL Quarterly, 31 (1), 172-175.

Hart, D. & Cumming, A. (1997). Follow-up study of people in Ontario completing level 3 of the LINC program: Report to the Ontario region LINC advisory committee.

Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto.

Hawkins, F. (1991). Critical years in immigrations: Canada and Australia compared. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Heller, M. (1994). Crosswords: Language and ethnicity in French Ontario. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Heller, M. (1999). Linguistic minorities and modernity: A sociolinguistic ethnography. New York: Longman.

Holder, B. S. (1998). The role of immigrant serving organizations in the Canadian welfare state: A case study. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto, Toronto.

Hoodfar, H. (1993). The veil in their minds and on our heads: The persistence of colonial images of Muslim women. RFR/DRF, 22(3/4), 5-18.

Israelite, N. K., Herman, A., Alim, F. A., Mohamed, H. A., Khan, Y., & Caruso, L. (1999, July). Settlement experiences of Somali refugee women in Toronto. Paper presented at The Somali Diaspora: Seventh International Congress of Somali Studies, York University, Toronto.

Kahin, M. H. (1997). Educating Somali children in Britain. Staffordshire, England: Trentham Books.

Laghi, B. (1999, November 12). Not good enough for Canada. The Globe and Mail, pp. A1, A20.

Meeuwis, M. & Sarangi, S. (1994). Perspectives on intercultural communication: A critical reading. Pragmatics, 4 (3), 309-314.

Mehan, H. (1987). Language and power in organizational process. Discourse Processes 10, 291-301.

Mehan, H. (1996). The construction of an LD student: A case study in the politics of representation. In M. Silverstein & G. Urban, (Eds.,), Natural histories of discourse (pp. 253-276). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mohanty, C.T. (1991). Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In C.t. Mohanty, A. Russo & L Torres, (Eds.), Third world women and the politics of feminism (pp. 51-80). Bloomington: Indiana University.

Ng, R. & DasGupta, T. (1981). Nation builders? The captive labour force of non-English speaking immigrant women. Canadian Women's Studies, 3(1), 83-89.

Ng, R. (1997). Gendering immigration / Integration policy research. In Report from the First National Conference, Responding to Diversity in the Metropolis: Building an inclusive research agenda (pp. 14-18). Ottawa: Status of Women Canada.

Ogbu, J. U. (1991). Understanding cultural diversity and learning. Educational Researcher, 21 (8), 5-14.

Ogbu, J. U. & Gibson, M. A. (1991). Minority status and schooling: A comparative study of immigrant status and involuntary minorities. New York: Garland.

O'Malley, P., Weir, L., & Shearing, C. (1997). Governmentality, criticism and politics. Economy and Society, 26(4), 501-517.

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. (1993, March). Report on the findings of the OCASI LINC questionnaire. Toronto: Author.

Opoku-Dapaah, E. (1995). Somali refugees in Toronto: A profile. Toronto: York Lanes Press.

Paredes, M. (1987). Immigrant women and second language education: A study of unequal access to linguistic resources. RFR/DRF, 16 (1), 23-27.

Peirce, B. N. (1993). Language learning, social identity and immigrant women. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto.

Phillipson, R. (1992). Linguistic imperialism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Power Analysis, Inc. (1998, December). Study of ESL/FSL services in Ontario. London, On: Author.

Rampton, B. (1995). Crossing: Language and ethnicity among adolescents. London and new York: Longman.

Rampton, B. (1997). A sociolinguistic perspective on L2 communication strategies. In G. Kaspar & E. Kellerman, (Eds.), Communication strategies: Psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives (pp. 279-303). London and New York: Longman.

Razack, S. (1995). The perils of talking about culture: Schooling research on South Asian students. Race, Gender & Class, (2)3, 67-82.

Richmond, A. (1994). Global apartheid: Refugees, racism, and the new world order. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Roberts, C., Davies, E., & Jupp, T. (1992). A study of communication in multi-ethnic workplaces. London and New York: Longman.

Roberts, C. (1997). Transcribing talk: Issues of representation. TESOL Quarterly, 31 (1), 167-171.

- Rose, N. (1993). Government, authority and expertise in advanced liberalism. Economy and Society, 22(3), 283-299.
- Sanaoui, R. (1998). Recommendations for a protocol and uniform certification standards for non-credit adult ESL instructors in Ontario. Contact, 24 (3), 10-13.
- Sanger, C. (1999, January 31). Cartoons wage gender war. The Toronto Star, pp. F1, F3.
- Sarangi, S. (1994). Intercultural or not? Beyond celebration of cultural differences in miscommunication analysis. Pragmatics, 4 (3), 409-428.
- Sarangi, S., & Roberts, C. (1999). The dynamics of interactional and institutional orders in work related settings. In S. Sarangi & C. Roberts (Eds.), Talk, work and institutional order: Discourse in medical, mediation and management settings. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Schenke, A. (1991). The "will to reciprocity" and the work of memory: Fictioning speaking out and silence in E.S.L. and feminist pedagogy. RFR/DRF, (20) 3/4, 47-55.
- Shane, R. (1992). Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada: An evaluative framework study. Ottawa: Employment and Immigration Canada.
- Shea, D. P. (1994). Perspective and production: Structuring conversational participation across cultural borders. Pragmatics, 4 (3), 357-390.
- Simmons, A. (1998). Racism and immigration policy.. In V. Satzewich, (Ed.), Racism and social inequality in Canada: Controversies and strategies of resistance (pp. 87-114). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.
- Somali Centre (pseudonym) (1998). A decade of making a difference: 1998 annual report. Toronto, On; Author.

- Thomas, L. (1996). Language as power: a linguistic critique of U.S. English. Modern Language Journal, 80(2), 129-140.
- Tollefson, J. (1991). Planning language, planning inequality. New York: Longman.
- Tollefson, J. (1995). Language policy, power, and inequality. In M.H. Long & J.C. Richards (Series Eds.) & J.W. Tollefson (Vol. Ed.), Power and inequality in language education, Cambridge applied linguistics series (pp. 1-8). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wayland, S. (1997). Immigration, multiculturalism and national identity in Canada. International Journal on Group Rights 5, 33-58.
- Woolard, K. (1993). Language ideology: Issues and approaches. Pragmatics 2, 235-249.

Appendix A

Letter Requesting Administrative Consent

I requested that the Coordinator of the LINC program at the Centre write up a letter similar to this to secure administrative consent.

This letter is to confirm the administrative consent of (agency name)/ LINC Program. Laura Cleghorn has requested the participation of the staff and students at ----/LINC Program to conduct a thesis study about the teaching and learning of English language at an immigrant serving organization. Laura wants to gather data about the ideas that the program participants have about the values attributed to learning English in the settlement process. The thesis is entitled "Valuing English: An Ethnography of a Federal Language training Program for Adult Immigrants."

Laura has requested permission to sit in on LINC classes and to interview 3 teachers, 4-6 staff members, and 12 students. Laura will be talking to the staff, teachers, and students about the role that learning English and taking LINC classes play in the settlement process. The study is not an evaluation of the program, but rather an inquiry into the specific ways that people at this organization understand language acquisition and learning in the context of immigrant and refugee settlement services.

For those who agree to be interviewed, they will be given a consent letter to sign (or have one read to them) that explains the details of the study and the provisions for anonymity. Individuals will be able to request that any statement be kept "off the record" or that the tape recorder be turned off. They may withdraw from the study at any time. All interview transcripts and notes from Laura's visits to the organization will be kept in locked files in her private home office. They will be seen only by herself and her thesis supervisor, Monica Heller. In the thesis or any other reports that arise from the study, no individual or organization will be identified by name or any other identifying details.

This letter confirms that you have obtained the willingness of the staff and students at ----/LINC program to have Laura Cleghorn conduct the proposed research. Administrative consent is required by the University of Toronto ethical review guidelines and the study is currently undergoing approval by the Ethical Review Committee of her department at OISE.

Sincerely,

Administrator of ----/LINC Program

Date

Appendix B

Letter of Consent

Dear Participant:

My name is Laura Cleghorn and I am conducting research for my M.A. thesis at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. My thesis is called "Valuing English: An Ethnography of a Federal Language Training Program." The purpose of this letter is to introduce my research to you, and to ask your permission for an interview.

There are two aspects to my research. This first is to study how the government understands the acquisition of language skills and the process of settlement through the administration of the LINC program. The second aspect of the study is to compare the policy goals and objectives with actual data from interviews and observations that I gather here at the -----/LINC program. The purpose of the study is not to evaluate it, but to explore the experiences of the teachers and learners of LINC. I would like to ask you questions about teaching or learning English, and I want to hear your ideas and opinions about your experiences of teaching or learning English.

With your permission, I would like to tape our discussion. You can, of course, request that any statement be kept "off the record" and/or the tape recorder be turned off. You can also refuse to answer any and all questions. The interview tapes will be kept in my private home office, and only I will listen to them. I will type up our interview, but only myself and my thesis supervisor, Monica Heller, will read it. In any and all reports that come from the study, no organization or individual will be identified by name.

The University of Toronto requires that the participants of my study sign this form (see over) to show that they are willing to be interviewed by me.

Many thanks for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Cleghorn
588-9873
Graduate Student
Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Monica Heller
Professor Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto
252 Bloor St. W. Toronto, On M5S 1V5
923-6641

Consent Form - Individual Consent

I have read the letter describing the study to be conducted by Laura Cleghorn about the role of language in the process of settlement, understand the procedures and safeguards outlined, and agree to participate.

Name and signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C

Staff Interview Questions

Current Information

1. Tell me about your job at SIAO.

- how long have you been here?
- what do you do?
- have you worked with immigrant serving organizations and/or LINC before?
- what are the challenges to your job? The rewards?
- who are the “clients” that you work with?

Background Information

2. Could you tell me about your personal history (background, training, previous work experience) that brought you to this job?

- previous jobs/education
- other interests, concerns, experiences that led to current position

LINC

3. In the time that you have been working here, what are the changes that you have seen in the conditions of your work and in the clientele that you work with?

4. What are the goals of LINC, do you think? What are the goals of the students?

5. When and how is LINC a successful or unsuccessful program?

- strengths/weaknesses
- who benefits, who doesn't?

6. How possible is it for the students to learn, given the challenges they face here and given what they have been through in Somalia, or in refugee camps?

7. There have been some conflicts between students and teachers lately around redefining of the rules (attendance, time). What do you see as the main issues here?

8. What is the relationship like between (agency name) and LINC?

- advantages/disadvantages of LINC at community-based organization

Language and Settlement

9. How do you see the integration or settlement of Somalis at this point, and how do you see it taking shape in the future?

10. What does language have to do with it?

Appendix D

Student Interview Questions

Current Information

1. When did you first come to the agency/the LINC program?

- have you taken ESL before? Where/how long?
- why are you taking these classes?
- what do you want to be able to do when you are done?

Background Information

2. Before I find out more about learning English, could you tell me a bit about yourself? How long have you been in Canada?

- where were you before?
- what did you do there? school/job?
- did you go to school? For how long?
- what languages did you speak before you came here?
- what are your family and community connections in Canada?

LINC

3. How is LINC different or similar to previous experiences in school?

4. What have you liked and disliked about taking LINC classes?

5. I've noticed that there are some new rules and difficulties about attendance going on. What do you think this is about?

6. I've enjoyed sitting in on your classes, and I notice that a lot of talk is going on in Somali and I can't understand it. Can you tell me what you and the other students are talking about?

Language and Settlement

7. Why do you need to learn English?

8. When do you use English now? When and how much do you use other languages?

9. How do you think the Somali community is integrating in Canada?

10. How much does language have to do with it?