Beyond Words:
English as a Second Language and Social Inclusion

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Introduction –Integration, Diversity and Security

With the number of people living outside their country of origin doubling in the last 50 years to reach 213 million in 2010, the implications of immigration have become a central concern of states.[1] While a substantial amount of migration occurs between neighbouring states, the flow of people across borders is increasingly global in nature. It is these global flows of people in particular that have resulted in drastic and sometimes rapid changes in the ethnic and racial make-up of receiving countries. For example, while a traditional country of immigration, policy reforms in late 1960's and 1970's in Canada resulted in a dramatic shift in source countries of immigrants. Whereas in the 1971, 61.6 per cent of immigrants were from Europe and only 12.1 per cent from Asia, by the late 1980s more than one-half (50.9 per cent) of newcomers were born in Asia[2]. As a result of this shift, immigration has become associated with the increasing proportion of visible minorities in Canada. By 1996 three quarters of immigrants were persons with visible-minority status.[3] As such, Statistics Canada reports that by 2031, between 29 to 32 per cent of Canadians could be visible minorities based on current immigration and birth outlooks. Moreover, Statistics Canada estimates that 25 to 28 per cent of the population will be foreign born, surpassing for the first time the highest proportion of 22 per cent observed between 1911 and 1931. [4]

The economic benefits of migration, particularly for countries dealing with declining birthrates and labour shortages, are well established. However, the implications of increased ethnic and racial diversity that come along with immigration remain a contentious issue. On the one hand, diversity is presented as enriching the lives of community members, both culturally and economically. In their book, *Selling Diversity*, Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel argue that the ethnic diversity of Canada's workforce and entrepreneurial class is now portrayed as a source of competitive advantage for facing the challenges of globalization. [5] Similarly, Richard Florida and Saskia Sassen emphasize the important role that immigrants play in positioning cities competitively within the global economy. While Sassen's work focuses on how immigrants provide the necessary labour force for the functioning of a truly global city[6], Florida he argues that ethnic diversity itself is an extremely valuable asset on the global market.[7] For Florida, the so-called 'creative class' fosters an open,

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[1] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revisio,* (New York: United Nations, 2008).
[2] F. Hou, *The initial destinations and redistribution of Canada's major immigrant groups: Changes over the past two decades*, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2005) 9.
[3] Roderic Beaujot, "Effects of Immigration of Demographic Structure" in *Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century*, eds. Charles Beach, Alan Green and Jeffery Reitz (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003) 69.
[4] Statistics Canada, "Study: Projections of the diversity of the Canadian population," http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100309/dq100309a-eng.htmStatistics Canada, (accessed May 25, 2010)
[5] Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel, *Selling Diversity* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2002)
[6] Saskia Sassen, *The global city : New York*, *London*, *Tokyo* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2001)
[7] Florida, Richard, *Cities and the Creative Class* (London: Routledge, 2005)

dynamic, personal and professional environment, which in turn attracts business and capital. He argues that diversity of all sorts – ethnic, racial, sexual orientation – and tolerance are key elements of a city's character that underpin the creative class. Similarly, Courchene argues that globalization has resulted in the ascendancy of knowledge-based economies and what he calls global city-regions.[8] These city-regions require large concentrations of human capital and research and development, which allow them to become integrated into the global economy as nodes of high economic growth. Courchene argues that tolerance and accessibility are key features of a global city.[9] However, for Courchene, immigration and diversity also presents a risk to the social cohesion and stability required by global cities. Therefore, he argues that effective settlement programs for immigrants are crucial to fostering the integration of newcomers into the local economy.

However, this focus on settlement and integration points to a different understanding of diversity. The salience of the issue of immigrant integration is not simply a function of the growing number of foreign-born permanent residents, but rather should be considered in relation to the general shift in post-9/11 discourse on security and risk management. In this view, diversity is seen as a threat, as it encourages the segregation of newcomers from the mainstream, thus can become a breeding ground of inter-group conflict and social disruption. More critical scholars point to the process of securitization - the construction of problems as issues of national security - as a deliberate process perpetrated by states in an attempt to keep relevant the authority of the state. Bigo writes, "The securitization of migration is, thus, a transversal political technology, used as a mode of governmentality by diverse institutions to play with the unease, or to encourage it if it does not yet exist, so as to affirm their role as providers of protection and security and to mask some of their failures."[10] Notwithstanding this, the problem with constructing diversity as a threat is that it requires the state to respond in paradoxical ways. One the one hand, the most obvious solution is to introduce restrictive changes to immigration and citizenship, making it more difficult for foreigners to enter into the physical space of the nation. On the other hand, the irony of such policies is that they act to undermine social cohesion, by reinforcing the exclusion of ethnic and racial minorities already living within state borders. At the same time, governments remain sensitive to the economic benefits of immigration and even diversity. Thus, it is within this paradoxical context that governments have become interested in mechanisms through which to facilitate the integration of newcomers.

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[8] Thomas Courchene, *Citystates and the state of cities [electronic resource] : political-economy and fiscal-federalism dimensions* (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2005) 1.
[9] Courchene, 4.
[10] Didier Bigo, "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 27 (2002): 65.

Integration, Language and the Nation

On a conceptual level, integration implies the incorporation of a marginalized group into mainstream society. In this sense, immigrant integration policy refers to policies and programs which facilitate newcomers in gaining access to all the rights and opportunities associated with membership in mainstream society, including employment, housing, and education, among others. However, integration is not necessarily passive. In Koopman *et al*'s pivotal typology of citizenship regimes, integration is considered as a broader concept which may include coercion and segregation. In their book*, Contested Citizenship : Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe*[11]*,* Koopman *et al* measure states based on the extent to which citizenship is open and accessible to foreign nationals, and cultural rights are granted to different ethnic minority groups. Under the second criteria, they consider multicultural rights and anti-discrimination rights, in order to categorize states on the continuum of cultural monism to cultural pluralism. Using these criteria, Koopman *et al* develop four ideal types of integration; (1) Segregationism, typified by Germany, which grants citizenship rights along ethnic lines (jus sanguinis) but does not require foreign nationals to assimilate; (2) Assimilationism, which also grants citizenship along ethnic lines, but does not tolerate cultural difference; (3) Universalism, typified by France, which conceptualizes citizenship along civic-territorial lines (jus soli), while requiring cultural monism and; (4) multiculturalism, typified by the Netherlands and Britain, which combined civic territorial citizenship with cultural pluralism.

In this sense, integration is a very distinct concept from social inclusion. Social inclusion is a concept which seeks to capture the extent to which individuals are accepted by and are able to participate fully with the community to which they belong. Furthermore, social inclusion is often framed as a requirement for peaceful societies. In fact, in Commitment 4 of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, heads of State and Government committed to:

> *"promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons"* [12]

The emphasis on equality of opportunity, voice and participation positions inclusion as a non-coercive two-way process which requires the opening up and creation of new space within the mainstream for migrants and other marginalized groups.

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[11] Ruud Koopmans, Paul Statham, Marco Giugni and Florence Passy, *Contested Citizensthip: Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
[12]Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Toward a Stable, Safe and Just Society for All* (New York: Unites Nations, 2007)

Focusing primarily on visible minorities, Li's work on social inclusion argues that the social inclusion of minorities also rests on their acceptance by and inclusion into the norms cultivated by the dominant group.[13] Social inclusion is also intrinsically linked with the provision of rights. Consequently, citizenship which constitutes the legal status as a member of a state and is a guarantee of basic rights, it is often treated as the symbolic marker of inclusion. In this sense, multicultural states are presented as the most socially inclusive, as they have the fewest restrictions in terms of legal membership, and provide political space for the expression of individual and cultural identities.

However, even for states which fall on the cultural pluralist side of Koopman *et al*'s spectrum, there are some basic characteristics of the mainstream that migrants are required to adopt; in particular this paper focuses on language. Indeed, in many industrialized states language acquisition has now become a central criterion in the naturalization processes for foreign nationals. In his comparative study of 18 European states, Van Avermaet found that 11 out of 18, or 61 per cent of cases had some language requirement for acquisition of citizenship.[14] Similarly, Canada, the United States and Australia have all adopted citizenship test, which at once test language skill and knowledge of the history and public institutions. There are two correlated rationales for introducing language requirements.

On the one hand, the ability to communicate with other members of the community is a crucial skill that individuals require in order to fully engage within political and social institutions. Indeed, the focus on language education policy in this paper reflects the important role that language plays in explaining social disadvantage. The ability to communicate with other members of the community is an essential first step on the road to integration. Boyd writes,

> "Knowing the language of the host society enhances the ability to obtain information about the new society: information about schools, health care, social programs, housing and employment opportunities. Knowing the language also means the ability to participate in those labour markets where the host language is essential to the completion of tasks."[15]

In assessing the (un)successful inclusion of newcomers, Biles *et al* argue that "The spectre of social exclusion requires that we look behind the low incomes and poor employment outcomes of immigrants to the root causes of exclusion that most likely

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[13] Peter Li, "Social Inclusion of Visible Minorities and Newcomers: The Articulation of "Race" and "Racial" Difference in Canadian Society," (Paper Presented at Conference for Social Inclusion, Ottawa, Mar. 27-27, 2003) 5.

[14] Piet Van Avermaet, "Fortress Europe: Language policy regimes for immigration and citizenship," in *Discourses on Language and Integration*, eds. Gabrielle Hogan-Brun, Clare Mar-Molinero and Patrick Stevenson (Amsterdaam: John Bejaminis Publishing, 2009) 32.

[15] Monica Boyd, "Gender Issues in Immigration and Language" *in Immigration, Language and Ethnicity: Canada and the United* States, ed. Barry Chiswick (Washington: AEI Press, 1992) 307.

reside in both the individuals concerned and in the society in which they are embedded and with the interaction between individual and institutional factors."[16] Thus, it is not enough to describe the social disadvantage immigrants might face, instead scholarly work should try to uncover and explain this disadvantage. In their study of Canada, Sweetman and Warman attribute 30-40% of the declining rates of immigrant economic integration changes in language ability, region of origin and discrimination.[17] Biles *et al* also point to lower levels of English and French literacy as one of the factors contributing to lower levels of integration over time.[18] In this sense, the acquisition of official language(s) for newcomers is critical for gaining employment, accessing government services and engaging with the community at large. Accordingly, the linking of language skill and naturalization reflects an understanding of citizenship which emphasize the responsibilities and duties of citizens to fully participate in society through work and political engagement.

On the other hand, language functions as a symbolic signifier of who is and is not a member of the 'imagined' community. The link between language and the nation is well established. The identification and dissemination of an 'official' or state-sanctioned language was a central feature of the nation-building project in Europe. While Berdichesvky's extensive comparison of 19 multilingual states, including Canada, highlights that the link between language and nation building in not complete, even in these exceptional cases, multilingualism does not imply the acceptance all languages. In other words, while one language may not be the defining feature of the mainstream community, only the languages which are historically entrenched in national history are seen as 'official' and as a characteristic of the 'imagined' community. In this sense, those who cannot communicate in official languages are easily identified as outsiders. Moreover, John Joseph explains that language use is an example of banal nationalism. He argues that language is a way to "experience and perform national belonging without necessarily being away of it, such as when we use coins and currently imprinted with national symbols, or pass under the flag when entering a post office."[19] Thus, in a country like Canada, where the government explicitly states English and French as its official languages, the ability to communicate effectively in one of these languages is itself an expression of Canadian identity.

Consequently, language becomes a mechanism for the identification of foreign nationals as the outsiders and leads to further marginalization. Indeed, the linking of language acquisition with citizenship acquisition is informed by the connection

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[16] John Biles, Meyer Burstein and James Frideres, "Introduction," in *Immigration and Integration in Canada in the 21st Century*, eds. John Biles, Meyer Burstein & James Frideres (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008) 8.
[17]Arthor Sweetman, & Casey Warman, "Integration, Impact and Responsibility: An Economic Perspective on Canadian Immigration Policy," in *Immigration and Integation in Canada in the 21st Century,* eds John Biles, Meyer Burstein & James Frideres (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008) 22.
[18] Biles et al, 8.
[19] John Joseph, *Language and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006) 11.

between the nation and language. Citizenship, as a legal category, is the formal recognition of membership within a particular state. Language requirements for naturalization point to the need for newcomers to adopt characteristics of the imagined community in order to gain legal status within that community. In these sense, language requirements present a clear instance in which integration is coercive, even in multilingual and cultural pluralist states like Canada. At the same time, there is clearly a functional aspect to language acquisition which drastically improves the life chances of migrants. The purpose of this paper is to question how language can be taught in a way which fosters inclusion. In presents Canada as an interesting case through which to probe questions of integration and inclusion. As a country which a long history of immigration and well developed settlement sector, Canada presents fertile ground for investigating different approaches to language learning in particular and settlement in general.

Settlement Policy, Language and Social Inclusion: The Canadian Experience

While language requirements represent a coercive element of integration, to assess the extent to which they are exclusionary, one must consider the type of support provided to newcomers by the state and other actors. Using naturalization rates as her primary indicators, Bloemraad found that immigrants to Canada had higher rates of integration regardless of visible minority status then in the United States. In her book titled, *Becoming a Citizen*, Bloemraad argues that Canada's official multicultural policy that focuses on ethnicity rather than race and the resultant investment in settlement policy is what distinguishes Canada from the United States.[20] However, more recent work calls some of Bloemraad's findings into question. While Canada might maintain a higher rate of naturalization than the United States, on other measures of integration, immigrants are doing less well than in previous years. Sweetman and Warman found that while immigrant men who arrived in Canada between 1971 and 1975 did have lower incomes then Canadian-born males, their incomes converged within six to ten years. However, new research suggests that for newcomers arriving after 1990, convergence rates are not only slower but for some groups have stagnated.[21] This is particularly troublesome as the pre-migration demographics of Canadian immigrants have shifted from low-skilled to highly-skilled and educated persons as a result of the changes to immigration policy in the late 1960's.

At the same time, the federal government in Canada has steadily increased investment into the settlement sector. For example, in 1997-98, Citizenship and Immigration Canada's ("CIC") budget for settlement related programs was $295

[20] Irene Bloemraad, *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (Berkley & Los Angeles, California University Press, 2006)
[21] Sweetman, & Warman, 21.

million[22]. Only ten years later, the budget for such programs had grown to just under $668 million.[23] While much of the comparative focus is on national policy, the reality is that newcomers live, work and engage at the local level. In recognition of this, as CIC's budget has grown, so too has the number of local partnerships. In 2005, CIC signed a series of national-provincial agreements in the area of settlement that committed Ottawa to financially support provincial initiatives. These agreements have been renewed throughout 2010. At the same time, the provinces and Ottawa, have engaged municipal governments and local actors in a series of agreements on settlement service for newcomers. In this sense, while macro-national comparisons are important, so too are studies which focus at the micro level and probe how national policy is played locally. Such an approach allows for the assessment of how national and local needs and goals are mediated by local actors. Moreover, it provides a way to assess the extent to which 'the local' provides an opportunity for new and dynamic ways to address the needs of newcomers.

There exist several policy areas which fall under the rubric of settlement services. However, the purpose of this paper is to assess one policy area in particular, Adult English as a Second Language ("AESL") education. One of the limitations of this project is the AESL is a severely understudies policy area. In her review article on AESL, Matthews-Aydinli found only 41 articles and dissertations on the topic between 2001 and 2005. More importantly, much of the literature was from the perspective of improving teaching methods. In the 41 articles Matthews-Audinli reviewed not one studies AESL from an integration or policy perspective[24]. The purpose of this paper is to assess the extent to which different approaches to AESL education can help foster spaces of inclusion for newcomers. It presents a unique program located in Hamilton, Ontario, funded through the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada ("LINC") program as a notable case through which to probe these questions.

Critical Pedagogy and Language Learning

The work on language acquisition from the socio-linguistic tradition provides additional insight into how AESL is related to integration. While much of this literature uses student motivation, cognitive abilities and personality/values to explain different rates of language acquisition, Norton emphasizes the reflective nature of language learning. Norton argues that language acquisition requires opportunities to converse with native speakers.[25] Through interviews with AESL

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[22] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *CIC Departmental Performance Report 1999-2000* (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000) 53.
[23] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *CIC Departmental Performance Report 2007-2008*. (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008) 64.
[24] Julie Matthews-Aydinli, "Overlooked and Understudies: A Survey of Current Trends in Research of Adult English Language Learners," *Adult Education Quarterly* 58.3 (2008): 198-213.
[25] Bonny Norton, "Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning," *TOELF Quarterly* 29.1 (1995) 11-12.

students, Norton found that both the traditional classroom and workplace provided few opportunities to practice English. It was not simply that the jobs did not require speaking to co-workers or customers, but rather students faced difficulties in finding receptive listeners. Thus Norton argues that language acquisition requires that the listener recognize the student is an authentic speaker of the language. Norton's work points to an important aspect of inclusion. While much of the literature focuses on how immigrants change and adapt to their new setting, inclusion is by its very nature a two-way process. A newcomer can only integrate into society so long as the community provides space to do so and recognizes the newcomer as a legitimate member of the community. Similarly, the opportunity to speak English can only be made available if native or fluent speakers are open to providing that opportunity. Thus, traditional AESL classroom which positions the teacher as the authority on language, simultaneously delegitimize the students voice and not only impedes the students ability to learn the language but also reaffirms their position on the fringe of society.

Indeed, power relations in the AESL classroom cannot be considered independently from the student's social status outside the classroom. Critical pedagogical approaches to language learning advocate for practices that acknowledge power both in and outside the classroom. Norton and Toohey write, "From this perspective, language is not simply a means of expression or communications; rather, it is a practice that constructs, and is constructed by the way language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories and the possibilities of their futures*."*[26] In her comparison of liberal multicultural and critical multicultural approaches, Kubota explains liberal approaches tend toward the essentialization of difference and assimilation. Alternatively, a critical multicultural approach focuses on empowering student's individual voice and creating space for expressing their voice.[27]

In this way, the language classrooms become a significant place for investigating social relations. More importantly, it creates a framework through which AESL policies might be evaluated in terms of the ability to create inclusive environments. On the one hand, the content of AESL programs is an important factor. The ability to speak the language of business and government is essential to finding employment and accessing services. Likewise, the ability to speak the language of everyday life, including slang and colloquialisms, is essential to conversing with the broader community and forming social networks. Additionally, AESL policies should be assessed based on how well it facilitates opportunities to interact with native speakers. On the other hand, AESL programs should also be evaluated on the basis of their inclusivity. If the goal of language education is to provide the skills for social

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[26] Bonny Norton and Kelleen Toohey, "Critical pedagogies and language learning: An introduction," in *Critical Pedagogies and Language Learning*, eds. Bonny Norton and Kelleen Toohey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 1.

[27] Ryuko Kubota, "Critical multiculturalism and second language education," in *Critical Pedagogies and Language Learning*, eds. Bonny Norton and Kelleen Toohey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 34-35.

inclusion, the classrooms themselves must be inclusive. The point here is that AESL classrooms may be able to provide different skills and opportunities depending on the organization of the course. They do not simply offer English but a whole range of crucial skills for newcomers.

ESL Education in Canada: A Brief History

AESL in Canada falls legally under the jurisdiction of the federal government as a program associated with immigration. While Canada has a long history of immigration, the federal government did not start to develop settlement policy until the 1960s. The first AESL program to be offered was through the Adult Occupational Training Act of 1967, which established basic ESL training for immigrants that were destined to the labour market[28]. The funding to the program was expanded in 1982 under the National Training Act.[29] Both of these programs conceptualized language as a necessary functional tool for job acquisition. As a result, immigrants that had arrived in Canada as dependents did not qualify for training, which was particularly problematic for women. In1986, following a Supreme Court decision which reasoned that the current AESL programs discriminated against women, pilot programs were launched under the Settlement Language Training Program to provide training for non-labour market destined immigrants through non-governmental service providers. This program was made permanent in 1989.[30] While this program indicated a move toward a more inclusive classroom in terms of gender representation among students, it received only 10% of the funding available for AESL programs at the time.[31] In 1990, the federal government added to this the Language and Work program, which provided funding for language training within the workplace. As such, the initial programs offered through CIC placed a heavy emphasis on language acquisition as the gateway to labour market integration and placed issues of social inclusion as secondary considerations, if any consideration was given at all.

As a result of several pilot projects during the 1980s, AEAL policy changed substantially in 1992 with the introduction of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada ("LINC"). LINC follows the model established by Settlement Language Training Program, by providing free language training through community service providers funded by federal grants.. Under LINC, AEAL programs are no longer linked to the labour market and as such, all landed immigrants and refugees qualify for free English classes based on their skill levels.[32] In conjunction with LINC, the federal government created a new nation-wide standard for assessing language skill, Canadian Language Benchmarks ("CBLS"), such that class assignments could be

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[28]Burnaby, Barbara. "ESL for Adults and the Status of Those Who Teach Them," *TESL Ontario* 29.2 (2003): 13.
[29] Ibid, 13.
[30] Ibid, 14.
[31] Ibid, 14.
[32] Bettencourt, Elise. "LINC Then and Now: 10-Year Anniversary," *TESL Ontario* 29.2 (2003): 26.

based on standardized benchmark levels.[33] Initially the LINC program only funded benchmark levels 1 through 3, however currently programs with students as high as benchmark 8 qualify for funding. Another substantial change that resulted from LINC was the content of courses. While AESL classes still emphasized the link between language and labour market integration, Bettencourt notes that LINC "placed a greater emphasis on introducing newcomers to shared Canadian values, rights, and responsibilities. In addition, it was expected that LINC would teach participants the basic communication skills essential to function in Canadian society."[34] The subject matter covered in classes expanded to included, Canadian law and customs, basic vocabulary for shopping and banking, as well as orientation for local services like transportation and housing. Moreover, LINC service providers were encouraged to include field trips to key institutions in the community like banks and hospitals.[35]

The introduction of LINC was in many respects a watershed moment in the development of AESL in Canada. The new weight placed on language skills for outside the workplace represents a new conceptualization of language acquisition which acknowledges that language is a necessary skill to help combat isolation and exclusion from political and social institutions. However, while the CLBS have incorporate everyday language skills into their assessment, the emphasis remains on language for the workplace. Indeed, in 2003-2004 the federal government introduced the Enhanced Language Training ("ELT"), which is specifically designed to provide work-related language instruction. With an initially budget of $20 million dollars, ELT accounts for a small proportion of CIC budget for settlement related programs.[36] However, its introduction does indicate the emphasis that CIC places on AESL role in assisting job acquisition. .

While settlement policy is only one policy area that CIC develops and administers, its current mandate in this area explains that settlement policy should reflect the two-way process of integration 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."[37] Moreover, one of principles indicates the importance of communities providing opportunities for immigrants to " participate in and contribute to all the positive aspects of Canadian life."[38] Most importantly, language acquisition is stated as an independent principle and goal. In this way, at a conceptual level, AESL is set up as analytically separate from other programs and policy which are aimed to facilitate community change and social inclusion.

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[33] Ibid, 26.
[34] Bettencourt, 25.
[35] Ibid, 26.
[36] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Backgrounder: Enhanced Language Training." http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/backgrounders/2004/2004-05-07.asp> accessed April 7, 2009.
[37]Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Immigrant Integration in Canada: Policy Objectives, Program Delivery and Challenges* (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001) 7-8.
[38] Ibid, 8.

The separation of language and other settlement policy areas is also reflected in the funding structure for grants. LINC programs are provided a separate budget, while all other settlement programs are funded under the Immigrant Settlement and Integration Program ("ISAP), with the exception of the HOST program. ISAP covers a large range of services, including translation services, housing and employment counselling, among many others. HOST is a small volunteer based program which pairs newcomers with established members of the community. What is particularly interesting is the distribution of funds between these programs. For example, in 1997-98, the budget for LINC was $102 million, whereas ISAP was less then one fourth of that at $25.1 million.[39] By 2007-08, the budget for LINC had climbed $152 million, recovering from substantial cuts during the mid 1990s.[40] At the same time, ISAP funding has started to converge on that of LINC with an annual of $122 million.[41] While this shows a growing appreciation of the importance of other programs in terms of creating inclusive communities, AESL education at the federal level remains entrenched in its focus on labour market orientated skills development.

Moreover, this limited understanding of the role of the language classroom is again expressed through the way in which LINC programs are assessed in terms of their effectiveness. In a report commissioned by the City of London for example, best practices for LINC programs were based on qualitative surveys but did not provide information the program's impact on integration or inclusion.[42] Likewise, LINC programs in Hamilton were also assessed by CIC and were measured based on successful completion of CLBS.[43] Most importantly, neither report provided assessment of the materials used within classes, nor the models of instructions employed (classroom based versus one-to-one tutoring). While these are still important findings, the assessments of the programs indicate a lack of concern at the federal level regarding how issues of power, voice and inclusion are played out in AESL classroom.

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[39] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *CIC Departmental Performance Report 1999-2000*. (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000) 53.
[40] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *CIC Departmental Performance Report 2007-2008*. (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008) 64.
[41] Ibid, 64.
[42] MWB Educational Consultants Inc. "Best Practice Features of Quality LINC Programs" (paper presented to Ontario Region LINC Advisory Committee 2001)
[43] Gormley, Louise & Gill Bhupinder, "A Study of Language Learner Needs and Barriers to Accessing Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Programs in Hamilton, Ontario" (paper prepared for Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2005)

AESL in Hamilton: An Inclusive Approach to Language Learning

Hamilton, Ontario provides a particularly interesting site for investigating settlement services at a grassroots level. The city has a long history of immigration, and thus has a relatively well developed settlement sector as compared to other second tier cities. [44] While large grants are increasingly available to these smaller communities, the large settlement organizations in Hamilton; Settlement and Integration Services Organization and Immigrant Women's Centre developed as a response to a perceived urgent need in the community and only once established gained access to government funding. Similarly, the program of focus for this paper, the LINC funded AESL program at Hamilton Public Library ("HPL"), developed as the demographics of the library patrons changed. The program was officially founded in 1992 and was based on a one-on-one tutoring program for high school students. The impetus for the program was not federal or provincial funding, but rather a noticeable increasing in the number of foreign speakers attending the Learning Centre for language assistance. The pilot project was championed by two librarians employed by HPL with initial funding coming from within the library's budget. Only following the introduction of LINC did the program organizers shift the funding source to government.

The program currently consists of 80 to 95 students paired individually with volunteer tutors from the community. HPL provides physical space within the Central Library at no cost and supports the development of the program through acquisition of language learning and multicultural texts. Two librarians are employed to run the program, however funding through LINC is used to support their wages. While the program itself is assessed by CIC using CBLS benchmark improvements of students and cost per student, the program itself employs a unique model for language learning. While the program organizers pair students and tutors and provide language learning material, the content of the course, course materials, the location of the classroom and the frequency and duration of classes is negotiated between the tutor and student, with direction taken mostly from the student. Tutors are encouraged to allow their students to shape their own experience. The focus of the program is to provide space for students to practice speaking with fluent speakers and to provide the opportunity to shape their own study of the language.

Lessons Learned?

While the program at HPL is relatively small and the only LINC funded program of its kind in Canada, the development of the program over time, points to important lessons on building inclusive communities. On a practical level, the program has

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[44] See Karen Bird and Jessica Merolli,) "Diversity and Inclusion in the City of Hamilton: Balancing Economic and Social Dimensions in Municipal Policy Making," in John Biles, Meyer Burstein, Vicki Esses, and Erin Tolley (eds.) *Immigration, Integration and Diversity in Ontario Cities*, (Kingston, Ont.: School of Policy Studies, forthecoming)

been successful in terms of the language acquisition outcome measures used by CIC to assess funding renewals every two years. In other words, the program successfully teaches English. More importantly, on a conceptual level, the program provides an opportunity to assess different approaches to making the classroom inclusive. The program at HPL explicitly aims to empower students in their own education through shaping their own curriculum. Moreover, it provides students with the opportunity to choose a physical space for the classroom that is non-oppressive and choose learning material that is accessible and relevant to their lives. This is not to say that power imbalances are erased between the student and teacher. Indeed, the issue of accepting the student as a legitimate speaker of the language remains problematic, especially in a model that employees volunteers over trained professionals. However, the program provides a practical example of providing language education in a more inclusive environment.

It also provides an example of the reflexive process of inclusion, with HPL responding to newcomers by changing its physical space and services to accommodate their needs. Indeed, this program points to the way in which local services providers negotiate the goals of governments with the needs of their local constituencies. The HPL libraries were clearly responding foremost to an urgent need but were able to leverage the success of their program in terms of CLBS outcomes to access government funding. In this way, they have been able to maintain the unique features of their program during times of economic constraint within the library system. At the same time, they have come under pressure during bi-annual audits because their project does not fit easily into the evaluation model. As such, while the program points to opportunities that local initiatives present for creating inclusive and responsive spaces for learning, it also points to one of the ironies the grant system employed in Canada. On the one hand, CIC encourages local programs but at the same time requires programs to withstand standardized audits that can limit the opportunity for creativity. This is particularly problematic when programs address needs which are outside the purview of CIC, as in the case of language and inclusive learning spaces. Ultimately, the program at HPL remains an interesting case study which challenges the direct line between language acquisition and coercion, by creating a more inclusive space which empowers and gives voice to the individual learners.