Stakeholders' Inquiries About the Systemic Inclusion of Late Adolescent Newcomers to Canada: Moving From Questions to Understandings

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on data collected during a larger, year-long ethnographic study of a pilot program designed to serve late adolescent newcomers to Canada, this paper uses notions of the phenomenological approach to consider the "inclusion" of late adolescent newcomers in Canada's education system. The present consideration seeks to frame how some stakeholders implicated in a pilot program to help this particular learner population came to understand the forces that seemingly perpetuated the students' oppression within the education system. In particular, issues of the parameters of language education, federal and provincial education policies, and funding were identified as the key influences within the phenomenon.

Between the ages of 15 and 24, there are numerous key milestones that often come to shape the life of a person in Canada—the departure from secondary education, possible entry into post-secondary education, entry into the workforce, the development and/or creation of long-term partnerships, establishing an independent household, and even having children of one's own. Sometimes referred to as "Generation 1.5," these adolescent and emerging adults who arrive in Canada at that point in their life often delay or otherwise compromise these milestones because of their transition to their new country, culture, language, and often, educational need (Crossman & Pinchbeck, 2012). While some students arriving at 15 have been able to develop the requisite English proficiency needed to find academic success and even move on to post-secondary education (Roessingh, 2008; Roessingh & Kover, 2002, 2003;

Roessingh, Kover, & Watt, 2005), Corak (2011) has discovered newcomers who enter the Canadian school system after the age of 13 are the least likely group to complete high school and earn a full diploma. The difficulty is attributed to the challenge of developing sufficient proficiency in English or French in the time period needed to earn the requisite academic credits to graduate (i.e., before they turn 21); consequently, between 20 and 25% of the newcomer population entering school after the age of 13 will not graduate (Corak, 2011; Watt & Roessingh, 2001).

Much of the research about newcomers between 15 and 24 has largely considered students enrolled in traditional high school programs or post-secondary programs (e.g., Crossman & Pinchbeck, 2012; Derwing, DeCorby, Ichikawa, & Jamieson, 1999; Roessingh, 2004; Watt & Roessingh, 2001); these students seemingly arrived before the age of 17 and had the requisite time to establish the language and educational credentials to move forward in most circumstances, but there is little known about students for whom a more traditional high school program is not considered a viable option because of their older age of arrival (e.g., 18 to 21), such as the students in the program featured in this paper. Though these students are technically eligible for adult and/or post-secondary education by virtue of their age and also simultaneously fall in the accepted age window for traditional high school, these contexts may not be suitable either; they either require language proficiency or educational credentials the students do not have or provide access to a very basic English language education that limits their job and later educational options. Quite simply, it appears that the educational system may not be certain as to where to "include" these students, and by virtue of competing educational networks, unclear policies, and in the case of this paper, limited previous experience with newcomers in a community, these older teens and younger adults may be one of the most vulnerable group of newcomers arriving in Canada.

The purpose of this article is to draw on data collected during a study initially deemed as a critical ethnography: a year-long study of a pilot program[1] created to respond to the unique needs of late adolescent newcomers to an area in New Brunswick. Yet, as data were transcribed and analyzed, approaches more typical to phenomenological research were required, and it is with that approach the present paper is presented. Over the course of the year, many of the participants in the study and observers of the program under study considered the juxtaposition of "inclusion" and "exclusion" within the lives of these students, as they sought to unravel the systemic forces that converged to make these students' learning experiences the most difficult they had ever encountered. Thus, this paper explores the following questions:

1. How are newcomers between the ages of 18-21 included within the language education systems?
2. How do policies (either federal or provincial) foster or limit such inclusion?
3. How does money encourage or discourage inclusion of newcomer language learners?

To those familiar with the educational and life experiences of newcomers to Canada, the shared results will echo what has already been found in the previous literature, both scholarly and applied (e.g., Coehlo, 2012; Gunderson, D'Silva, & Odo, 2012). Yet, this study is being shared because it endeavours to capture some of the philosophical and political questions the participants negotiated while they were in the process of solving a practical problem that emerged in their community. In so doing, it is the goal of the present paper to demonstrate how such questions become key to understanding systems of oppression at work within an educational system; though this realization is not novel for many in the scholarly community, it was novel for the participants here. If social change is to be expected, such transformation in views is essential, and this paper offers a path for raising such awareness.

Research Approach and Theoretical Lens

The phenomenological approach to research facilitates explorations of shared experiences within a group typically ranging in size from five to 25 (Creswell, 2013). The present study draws lightly, but mostly on the ideas of hermeneutical phenomenology (van Manen, 1990), in that the role of the researcher has been to seek out ideas that intersect and interplay off of one another within an experience without necessarily extricating him/herself from the construct under consideration. In this study, the experience is framed as the "inclusion of late adolescent newcomers in schooling," and finds some sort of convergence within differing perceptions offered by the five stakeholders. Phenomenological research tends to deploy interviews and conversations as the most common data collection method.

From the outset of the larger initial study, a critical theory lens was applied to the inquiry (Willis et al., 2008), even though the traditional attributes often considered in these inquiries—race, class, gender—were not the driving forces (Fay, 1987). Social class was certainly a factor, but language was the central issue here; critical theory has been previously applied in considerations of language teaching and learning, as one's ability to access language education becomes markers of progress and status within a community (e.g., Arnett & Mady, 2010).

Methodology

The data were collected in an urban area of New Brunswick during the 2012-2013 academic year. For the present study, data from multiple semi-structured interviews and conversations with the five individuals identified as the "Stakeholders" were used. Again, these data were collected as part of the larger critical ethnography of the pilot program in which I held the role of a participant-observer. I transcribed the interviews, while notes about the conversations were maintained in a field note log not long after they happened. In the present paper, the quotes and excerpts from the interviews are used to give context to the more formal inquiries and explorations of the research literature that these conversations inspired; the selected quotes often provide the most representative positioning of the idea. As the questions and notions emerged within the interviews and conversations, it was often my role to provide and/or seek information to respond to or clarify their conceptions or misconceptions presented by the stakeholders. In that way, I was mediating the phenomenon as it occurred.

Participants

Five of the stakeholders implicated in the pilot project drive the exploration here. The Stakeholders are presented in Figure 1. Some identifying details are omitted to ensure confidentiality of the informants; many informants were concerned about how their comments would be perceived, given the often political nature of working with newcomers to Canada. With the exception of one (Stakeholder 3), the others were largely unaware of the theoretical and empirical literature about this student population.

During the time of the study, I also spoke regularly with other members of the local and educational community who had knowledge of the school and/or the needs of newcomers in the local area. These details will often be used to help give additional context to the ideas being shared by the Stakeholders or explain some of the observations I had made while visiting or working with the students in the program. Along with a few other individuals who were not official participants in the study, Stakeholders 1, 2, 3, and 5 were some of the compelling forces behind the creation of the pilot program.

Stakeholder 1:	Member of school leadership team; regularly involved in enrollment of new students to the school (no formal training for work with newcomers).
Stakeholder 2:	School-based individual who worked for a local community organization. This individual would often serve as a bridge between the school and many newcomer families; had personal family experiences with immigration to Canada, but no formal training.
Stakeholder 3:	Member of school community, but in and out of context regularly due to changing job demands. Previous experience teaching English as a Second Language, but no formal training.
Stakeholder 4:	New member of school community who had daily contact with students in the pilot program. Previous experience teaching English as a Second Language; also had personal family experience with immigration to Canada, but no formal training.
Stakeholder 5:	Member of school leadership team; regularly involved in enrollment of new students to the school.

Fig. 1: Stakeholders participating in the study of the pilot program

Results

How Newcomers Between 18-21 Are Included Within the Language Education System

Inclusion in the local community's language education system. The city in which the pilot program was based did have many English language classes offered through the taxpayer-supported "Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada" (LINC) program. The Government of Canada (2013b) touts that 60,000 newcomers a year, on average, attend LINC classes; this is about one third of the immigrant population ages 15 and older that arrives in Canada each year. The LINC classes are mapped to the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB). As shared on the homepage of its website,

> The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks is the centre of expertise in support of the national standards in English and French for describing, measuring and recognizing second language proficiency of adult immigrants and prospective immigrants for living and working in Canada. (2013)

A key word in this description is "adult"; though newcomers as of 18 are welcome to join LINC classes in most areas (settlement.org, 2012), several of the students in the pilot program (who were 17[2]-21) reported that they did not feel comfortable or like the classes. They saw them as the classes to help their parents with lower proficiency in English get better in the language.

In this particular city, the older teens and young adults often pursued the LINC classes if they opted against enrolling at the high school or aged out of the secondary system, as shared by Stakeholder 2. Yet, as several of the stakeholders pointed out, the LINC classes were not the best fit, either. In one of our conversations Stakeholder 3 pointed out that:

> LINC isn't equipped to help with the fact that some of the students just [have] huge holes in their education. It also isn't equipped to help the teens who come here having finished schools in their home country but can't get their credits.

Our conversation at that point in time was reflecting on the possible reasons for which the students in the pilot program may not have taken the LINC program seriously (almost half had tried the LINC courses). Though nearly all of the students in the program were refugees, a few had arrived in Canada with evidence of "school completion in their home countries," but limited to non-existent English and an inability to have those credentials validated. The rest of the students (all of them refugees) recounted in interviews of incomplete educations, despite the presence of schools in the refugee camps where many of them had lived since birth. Refugee students are often considered within the same political and pedagogical frameworks as more "voluntary" English Learners (ELs), thereby perhaps minimizing the influence of their previous school experiences, psychosocial adjustments, and previous traumas on their learning (Roy-Campbell, 2012; Stermac, Elgie, Clark, & Dunlap, 2012; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012), despite evidence to the contrary. One of my colleagues had strong connections to the LINC program in the area and knew many of the instructors to be aware of the more unique needs of refugee learners, but there was a sense that the teachers were not as well educated as they could have been to help these students.

A local university offered language classes as well, but these classes were more difficult to access. The students for these classes had to demonstrate a certain level of English proficiency and credentials to be admitted, as the program was often viewed as a bridge for the newcomer students into a more traditional post-secondary program. Further, there was the cost factor, which proved to be an additional barrier for nearly all of the students who found themselves in the pilot program; 11 of the 12 students who first enrolled in the program were refugees from Nepal/Bhutan, resettled as part of an agreement between Canada and Bhutan, with support from the United Nations (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2013). As refugees, their "money thoughts" were always on the fact they needed to repay loans from the Canadian government for their medical exams and travel costs to Canada, which was always described to me as "many thousand dollars" by the students. Several of the program participants spoke of their interest in going on to higher education, but regularly questioned how to pay for it in relation to the demands to repay the Canadian government. As documented by the Canadian Council for Refugees (2008), these costs are often incredible burdens to give to someone with refugee status.

Language education within Canada. In the world of language education, Canada enjoys a very positive reputation, largely because of the success of the French immersion programs that first launched in the 1960s (Arnett & Mady, 2013). The French immersion programs helped to establish Canada's commitment to promoting proficiency in both of the country's official languages within the traditional Anglophone and Francophone populations.

The aforementioned Canadian Language Benchmarks were created to help *adult* learners of either French or English frame the progress in their proficiency; their creation was made possible through extensive support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). However, to date, there is no comparable set of standards for helping to monitor English- or French-language development in newcomers in the K-12 system. Though standards can often create their own set of problems in education, three of the five Stakeholders regularly mentioned the need to have a better grasp on what they could and should expect of newcomer students' growing English proficiency at the high school level. The phrase "best guess" often permeated through most conversations with Stakeholders 1 and 3 about when they felt newcomer students could be expected to have enough proficiency in English to do well in content classes.

In the recently published "Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages, 2013-2018," there is attention paid to the opportunities of language education for newcomers:

> Every year, 250,000 immigrants come to Canada. The Government of Canada will promote the benefits of Canada's official languages and invest in official language training for newcomers. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada **language training programs for economic immigrants** will help newcomers who are beyond school age acquire the official language skills they need to live and find work in Canada. (Government of Canada, 2013b, p. 13) [Note: bold is copied from the original source]

The programs mentioned in the above quote are the aforementioned LINC classes. What is notable about this quote are the phrases "newcomers who are beyond school age" and "language skills they need to live and work in Canada." Students can technically remain in high school until age 21 to complete the requirements for a diploma. As explained to me by Stakeholders 1, 2, and 5, at various points, this was regularly interpreted to support the enrollment of older teens—17, 18, 19, 20—even though in the best-case scenario, the students at a pilot program's school exited with a "completion certificate" that held no value. At that point, they could turn to LINC.

The above quote could also be viewed as possible evidence of a flawed assumption of the government because of the singular consideration of language education beyond school age. The government may be of the opinion that students who are in K-12 schools do not need specialized language programming, resources, or teacher training (beyond the provided funds to support the language tutor) to learn the language of their new community. It is a common belief that by virtue of being "immersed" in a new language, an individual will develop skills in a language. Thus, it could be the case that current policies and funding priorities are assuming that the "immersion" being experienced by newcomer students—with some support for school settlement and some aspects of language—will sufficiently provide for their language development needs. However, what is happening to these students is technically not "immersion" in the language education sense; these students are experiencing "submersion." Language "immersion" is said to occur when learners of a new language are being taught by someone mindful of the fact that these students will need extra support and different mechanisms to help build meaning and understanding in the language (Wright, 2010). Teachers "immersing" students (like in the French immersion program) are working diligently to help the students build both their language and content knowledge; the teachers' pedagogy is conscious of the reality that the students are learning the new language. Conversely, in a "submersive" setting, the students working to develop new language are not directly supported in this process; teachers typically will not engage in practices or use resources to help the student access the language and content under study to the same extent seen in a traditional immersion classroom, largely because these classes also contain native speakers of the language. The student is essentially left to figure it

out on his/her own (Wright, 2010). Thus, despite a rich tradition of language immersion education, Canada is possibly not transferring that knowledge to the K-12 classrooms in which newcomer students learning the community language are enrolled.

How Policies Foster or Limit Inclusion

Local policies. Early in the year, I reviewed a recently published report in New Brunswick (Porter & AuCoin, 2012) that considered the state of inclusive education within the province; I sought out this report based on the recommendation of a school board administrator who said the report alluded to newcomer students as part of the inclusive education construct. The report was being used in the province to shape many of the plans for professional development and teacher resources for the coming few years.

In the report, there was an overall acknowledgment that inclusive education in the province should respond to the need of the language-learner newcomers. Upon sharing this with Stakeholders 1, 3, and 4, they all independently started revisiting the websites accessible to school personnel to see if they could find more resources to help respond to their queries, thinking that because inclusive education was such a push that academic year, and the benchmark report had acknowledged the newcomers, teacher resources would start increasing. Their searches came up empty for new resources and continued to do so throughout the year. At the end of the school year, a conversation revealed that Stakeholder 5, who had the best access of all stakeholders to school board administration, decided to take this call for inclusive education for newcomers in the Porter and AuCoin report and perpetual lack of resources in any of the teacher portals to more aggressively push for the resources needed at his/her school. As Stakeholder 5 viewed it, he/she had started to see where the disconnects were happening between policy and practice and wanted to start asking more direct questions.

Federal policies. The federal government remains strongly committed to policies and goals meant to facilitate the welcome of up to 250,000 newcomers to Canada each year (Mas, 2014). As has been promoted within the dialogue about immigration to Canada, newcomers are being actively sought to help sustain and expand the workforce in the country (e.g., Mas, 2014; Wingrove, 2014). In the period between 2002 and 2013, Canada welcomed nearly two million immigrants into the country (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). Of that group, 365,328 immigrants were between the ages of 15 and 24, straddling the phases of adolescence and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2004). In 2012, the last year for which statistics are available, Canada

processed the arrival of 32,364 adolescents/emerging adults; this number represents the smallest group of newcomers of this age group welcomed in the past 10 years.

In Figure 2, Stakeholder 1, in describing the trend of the newcomer populations who entered his/her school—the site of the pilot program—also described the students' needs and the challenges that created for the school. Though the response is long, he/she touches on an implicit hierarchy of immigrant students that has emerged within the student population because of how the immigration policies are structured.

Stakeholder 1: Um, probably over the last 7 years, we've seen a steady influx of international newcomers to [our urban high school]. Initially, they started coming into the school as candidates for the Provincial Nominee Program, and the majority of students that were coming, were coming from more of the Asian countries. Um, some of them had some working knowledge of English. There were others that did have some significant language challenges, but they did have for the most part, a relatively strong academic background and as candidates for the provincial nominee program, they were also coming with significant financial resources. So, when they experienced some challenges in school, um, sometimes the home would look to secure some outside tutoring to support what was happening within the school, so uh, the numbers were low. The students had pretty strong academic skills and there [were] a lot of resources to support students in that transition. Probably about four years ago, we started seeing the development of more fee-paying programs that are led by the district. And they really aim to draw more upon students who are at about the Grade 9 or 10 level and um, they're usually looking at a younger audience, so it has been if they are coming in at 14, at 15, years of age, we have quite a bit of time to work with them in order to help them with those language deficits, so I guess in response to that, we started developing various levels of EAL classes to give the newcomers some support.

Investigator: And by "we," you mean the actual school?

Stakeholder 1: The school. The school.

Fig. 2: Stakeholder 1 description of trend in newcomer population

Investigator:	This wasn't something coming from the district, but what the school decided to do, correct?
Stakeholder 1:	Just the school. And in response to that, the school itself was having challenging problems delivering the comprehensive program at the high school level and meeting the students' needs in classroom and also addressing the curriculum demands, so we responded by doing EAL[3] testing, and doing placements in EAL classes, and sometimes having them audit some courses. It really wasn't too challenging, in the sense that there was significant time for them to build the skills. Over the last few years, we've seen, um, a steady influx of more newcomer students through immigration, and we're starting to find that we're having a lot of older students—18, 19, 20—that are coming to the school looking for high school education. Obviously, they've come to Canada to better themselves, and they are looking for some type of programming to help them with that. But it is very, very challenging when our district does age-appropriate placement. So, if they're coming at 19, that means you're placing them in Grade 12, they can't handle the curriculum. Sometimes, you know, they have the intellectual ability, but the language deficits are just so great and uh, the other challenge that has happened with a lot of the refugee population that has come in, they've maybe come from war-torn countries, and there are some significant academic deficits as well as linguistic deficits because they sometimes have significant interruptions in their schooling.

Fig. 2: Stakeholder 1 description of trend in newcomer population (cont.)

Stakeholder 2 was also in the position to describe some of the teen/young adult experience upon immigration to Canada. Given his/her role as a regular conduit between the schools and home communities, because of his/her work at a community organization, he/she was particularly knowledgeable of the transition difficulties that often emerged. In our interview, Stakeholder 2 outlined the three main facets of his/her work, one of which relates to direct support of the new students, as revealed in Figure 3.

Stakeholder 2: This is a key for us, the newcomer students. There are a lot of things that are not the same. The system is different. Being in Canada is different. In the meantime, when the students come here to Canada, they're in this wonderful age, teen. You can imagine, 13, 14 years old, pulling you from your friends, your boyfriend or your girlfriend, from your friends who speak the same language and are in the same culture, and you're coming to a new environment which is completely different from yours, how are you going to adjust to that? So that is my goal, to help the student to transition to Canada. How am I going to do that? I don't speak their language, but I have to find people who do. This is a teamwork within our organization. As you can see with my work as a settlement worker, working with 14 different schools, I need to be able to work with a wonderful team from my organization. Plus, I'm working with Multicultural Champions teachers. One of my goals is to have the students, each student give a presentation about his or her country and what he or she does. I have to help them build their self-esteem, to showcase their culture, because, it's true, the language could be a barrier, but there are a lot of other ways to communicate. For example, traditional dance, traditional drumming. So this is one of the things I do.

Fig. 3: Stakeholder 2 description of work needed to support teen transitions

Stakeholder 2 was always very good at reminding colleagues that these students—even the ones chronologically adults—were very kid-like in their vulnerabilities because of their recent transition to Canada. He/she always looked to the emotional well-being of the students as the starting point for support, and the students were always going to Stakeholder 2's office for help with a problem or asking about his/her next visit to the school. As revealed in the interview, Stakeholder 2 regularly visited 14 schools, which meant he/she was always on the go and typically not around when students were seeking help. The position was funded by Citizenship & Immigration Canada, which was one indirect way the students were supported in school beyond those outlined in the next section, but the several-hundred student caseload Stakeholder 2 managed across 14 schools instead pointed out how many more resources were still needed.

Paying for the Education of Newcomers to Canada

Local solutions. In Figure 2, Stakeholder 1 makes reference to a fee-paying program that was implemented in the school district where the pilot program took place. The students coming into the schools through this program were typically international students from more affluent families who were seeking either a year in a Canadian school to improve English skills or a four-year Canadian high school experience to increase the likelihood of being accepted into a Canadian university. The families of these students (who often stayed behind in the home country) annually paid in the low five-figures for their child to attend high school in this district.

As the year progressed, it became evident how these fee-paying students had become an integral part of the program structure for supporting English as Additional Language (EAL) education in the district, not just the pilot program. As shared earlier, the school district received some funds from CIC to support the language needs of the newcomer students. In the case of the high school where the pilot program was located, the proportion of newcomer students with lower levels of English proficiency increased each year over the last five, even though the overall population of the school remained constant. The fee-paying students accounted for anywhere between 15-20% of the school's EAL population, and their funds thus helped to subsidize the cost of EAL teachers and resources within the high school. If the fee-paying students were not in the school system, it remains unclear how the classes and supports (though limited they were) would have been funded.

The year I was in the school, there were over 400 students who were identified as English Learners by the administrative team. About 25% of them had skills in English that were minimal enough to warrant daily English classes. Slightly fewer than 80 students (including some fee-payers) had shown up at the start of the school year with no prior evidence of registration at another secondary school elsewhere in Canada, meaning about $56,000 had been brought into the school from CIC. These students required the $100/head language test the school had implemented to at least try to gain some sense of their proficiency. The English classes for these newcomers were taught by teachers with certificates from Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Canada. None of these teachers held permanent contracts at the school, even though one of them had been teaching there for more than five years. Stakeholder 5, who was also involved in the creation and management of the school budget, had successfully moved around funds and in some cases, teaching positions, over the previous few years to address the growing newcomer population. Stakeholder 5 had made requests to the district for additional monies to support the needs of the newcomer students, given that both proportionally and cardinally, this high school had the largest newcomer population in

the entire district. Most of the requests were denied, save for the occasional staffing position when student numbers hit certain levels for a semester, by a certain date. Stakeholder 3 and 5 regularly pointed out how the needs of the newcomer students extended well beyond the year covered by the CIC funds.

Federal support. Every year, considerable amounts of money are funneled from the federal government (typically through Heritage Canada) to provincial programs and organizations that are endeavouring to help Anglophone students in K-12 schools gain proficiency in French or Francophone students in K-12 schools gain proficiency in English. "English Second Language" education—and the funds allocated to it—is not about helping newcomers to an Anglophone district learn English, as is often assumed. As it was explained to me by nearly a dozen language educators from across Canada (some of whom who have been involved in writing grant requests to Heritage Canada), the funds allocated to support "French Second Language" or "English Second Language" programs have been typically envisioned as supporting students "natively" proficient in one of the two languages in the study of the other. They are not comparable funds—at least in the eyes of the Stakeholders in this pilot program—to support newcomer students learning English.

During the year I worked with the pilot program, I was regularly told by several of the stakeholders that the district received a one-time $650-$725 stipend for every newcomer student who registered in the district from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)—so there was some federal support of the language education of these newcomers. The first time I heard this detail from a Stakeholder, it was typically as a neutral point of information. Over the course of the year, though, the amount became almost a point of sarcasm or derision in conversations as they started to understand the bigger forces at play. Technically, these funds were intended to cover the cost of "tutoring" the newcomer in English; the provided amount allowed for 20-25 hours of one-on-one or small group support in the province where the pilot study was located—what it permitted in other provinces, I am not sure. If the student arrived in Canada with no English proficiency, these CIC-provided funds paid for one full day out of the 2,555 that have been identified as being needed to develop sufficient proficiency in English to succeed in academic tasks (Cummins, 1996). The remaining 2,554 of these needed days must then be funded by the province. This certainly created an additional financial strain for already strapped school districts. The Stakeholders often lamented that such limited funds for this type of language education made it that much harder for the teenage newcomers to get meaningful, ongoing language support.

Conclusion

As revealed earlier, the issues raised by the Stakeholders in this pilot program touched on themes and issues already known to the community of scholars and practitioners who work with newcomer populations—that the parameters of language education, federal and provincial policies, and funding converge to make it difficult for newcomers. The present inquiry showed how this convergence creates additional vulnerability for students between 18 and 21. The interviews, conversations, and anecdotes presented here trace how the stakeholders came to identify, acknowledge, and question these forces and perhaps offer a way for other schools and stakeholders implicated in newcomer education to come to understand the broader issues that challenge the inclusion of newcomer students. At minimum, particularly for schools who are just beginning to see waves of newcomers, there may be comfort in recognizing that the system is likely not set up in a way that best maximizes the chances of newcomer success. At maximum, there is a need to consider how federal language policy for newcomers may be compromising Generation 1.5 because it seemingly conveys that language study in K-12 is a "natural" part of Canadian education and the funding that is allocated to support the language study of newcomers, when reality is really conveying that the country known for immersion is doing a fair amount of linguistic submersion, too. Given that Canada is so intent to grow its population through immigration, it would seem that a more concerted investment in K-12 language programming, particularly for the group of students in the limbo zone of 18-21, is of critical importance in helping these individuals gain access to the kinds of higher education and jobs desired by the federal government. As Stakeholder 3 reminded me several times, "we [Canada] could do so much better."

Notes

1. I was a participant-observer of this pilot program, having been invited to do so as a visiting scholar to the area. Both my host university and the school system running the program approved the data collection. In addition to collecting data from the students, teacher, and stakeholders of the program, I would also sometimes teach lessons, support classroom instruction, and consult with some of the stakeholders about the issues they were encountering. The program targeted late adolescent newcomers to Canada who were seeking intensive English instruction with the hope of securing jobs in the community and/or advancing into post-secondary education.

2. The 17-year-old student arrived close to the point of turning 18. Because of gaps in her education stemming from her refugee experience, she was considered a better candidate for the pilot program than the traditional high school program.

3. English as an Additional Language; this term is being used more frequently to describe programs responsible for teaching English to newcomers. Previously, the term "English as a Second Language" was often used to describe such a program.

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