REALITIES AND ANXIETIES TO LIVE WITH: AN IN-DEPTH INQUIRY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONALS IN THE BRIDGING PROGRAMS AT UNIVERSITIES IN ONTARIO

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN EDUCATION
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, CANADA

DECEMBER 2015

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Abstract

Researchers have identified a trend of 'brain waste', 'brain abuse' and 'brain drain' on the part of internationally educated professionals (IEPs) after they immigrate to Canada. University-based bridging programs have been implemented in the past decade to meet the need of this population to integrate to the new society. My dissertation attempts to inquire into the experiences, emotional experiences in particular, of the IEPs who studied in the university-based bridging programs in Ontario. I raised four questions: *First, how do the IEPs perceive their new realities? Second, what are the anxieties of the IEPs? Third, what realities lead them to those anxieties and how do their anxieties affect their perception of the challenges they face*? *Fourth, what role does higher education play in mirroring and shaping the way the IEPs perceive and feel the realities?* Using in-depth interviewing as the research method, I had three one-hour interviews with each of the five research participants who volunteered in this study. When analyzing the five cases, I focused on the conflicts, contentions and contradictions that the interview transcripts revealed of the participants' experiences in relation to others. I resorted to theories in psychoanalysis in order to understand the IEPs' anxieties when they encountered various challenges both internally and externally. I find that the IEPs' anxieties are partly inherent in the process of immigration, partly reflective of their own modes of learning and the need of external support and partly the side effect of higher education which, questionably, attempts to reproduce the correlation between knowledge and privileges. I argue that the bridging programs and the IEPs need to learn from their anxieties and the social anxieties and engage in a critical exploration of the difficult knowledge of the-self-in-the-changing-world.

Acknowledgements

The Faculty of Education at York University has been home to my intellectual growth, professional development and social integration in Canada for many years. Thanks therefore go to all the academics who have shared so generously what they valued with me: Paul Axelrod, Khaled Barkaoui, Sarah Barrett, Deborah Britzman, Chloë Brushwood Rose, Warren Crichlow, Lisa Farley, Jen Gilbert, , Alison Griffith, Celia Haig-Brown, John Ippolito, Didi Khayatt, Karen Krasny, Heather Lotherington, Razika Sanaoui, Roopa Desai Trilokekar, Carol Anne Wien, and Qiang Zha. I took their courses or worked with them as a GA/RA/TA.

I would like to extend special gratitude to my supervisory committee consisting of Dr. Deborah Britzman, Dr. Qiang Zha and Dr. Warren Crichlow for their incredible support throughout the study. My dissertation could not have been completed without their caring presence. I want to say “thank you” to Dr. Britzman, my supervisor, who rendered psychoanalysis readable to me. In our doctoral seminars, she impressed me so deeply with her deconstructive approaches to thinking and with the novel light that her psychoanalytic works shed on the lived experiences of teaching and learning. It was an enlightening experience to write my dissertation under Dr. Britzman’s supervision. She helped create a precious containing environment, where I could keep thinking and writing. I also want to say “thank you” to Dr. Zha and Dr. Crichlow, who were members of my supervisory committee. Their courses helped broaden my horizons on issues challenging the globe and develop my interest in conducting a research involving people from different countries. I am very thankful for their hard work, penetrating feedback and generous support.

Thanks also go to each of the other committee members for my dissertation oral defense: Dr. Roopa Desai Trilokekar, the Chair; Dr. Brenda Spotton Visano, the internal examiner; and Dr. Antoinette Antoinette Gagné, the external examiner, who offered valuable comments and questions for me to think about in the future. I'm especially grateful for Dr. Antoinette Gagné, who helped me edit my dissertation with so impressive earnestness and attentiveness.

I also feel thankful for my family, who championed me throughout my pursuit of the doctoral study. It is difficult for me to imagine how I could have sustained my cause had it not been for their unwavering support. Yuan, my husband, has not only been my trustworthy companion, who has shared a large portion of familial duties and created a cheerful life journey with my son and me, but also my favorite computer expert at any time of need. Franklin, my beloved son, has always reminded me of the pleasure and hope of life and the importance of warmth and growth. I appreciate my parents so much for their benevolent understanding and generous support in various ways. They made it possible for me to realize my dream and feel fortunate in this world.

Last but not least, I am grateful for the internationally educated professionals who volunteered to participate in my study. They shared with me their readings of the world and contributed substantially to the completion of this study.

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Introduction

I was born in a small town of North-eastern China in the 1970s, when the Cultural Revolution drew to a close in the country, raised and educated there when the opening-up policy and the modernization drive were implemented in the 1980s and the 1990s. I left home to attend a provincially prestigious high school, which was located in the center of the capital city of the province. Three years later, I succeeded in passing the college entrance examination with a high score so that I could attend a key university in China. When I was an undergraduate, I studied Scientific English and Accounting. In the graduate school, I specialized in Applied Linguistics and Foreign Linguistics. In China, I made a living by teaching English in the university where I graduated and was promoted to the position of Assistant Professor two years before I immigrated to Canada.

I was deeply impressed by the cultural monotonousness, which characterized China in the 1970s and the 1980s, and Chinese people's growing interest in developed countries in the past two decades. Since the 1990s, international education and immigration have gradually become hot topics for the ordinary Chinese people. Indeed, it was in such wider social context that my curiosity about English and Canada was engendered and cultivated. I immigrated to Canada in 2007 and pursued my doctoral study in the program of Language, Culture and Teaching at York University in 2010. I viewed it as an opportunity to explore the construction and representation of human experience. To narrow down such exploration, I ultimately devoted my dissertation to understanding the experience of internationally educated professionals who attended the university-based bridging programs in Ontario.

Immigration is not a new phenomenon. Like our predecessors, contemporary immigrants are imagining and pursuing ways of living a better life, where we could have more sense of security, prosperity and freedom. Choosing to immigrate "always involves a complex balancing of costs and benefits carried out by individuals, families, and communities" and entails "thoughts about the present and the future" (Livi-Bacci & Ipsen, 2012, p. 55). However, unlike our nomadic ancestors, we contemporaries are affected by economic and informational globalization. The host countries, while they are speculating on how to take advantage of globalization and restructure their human capitals, always aim for wealthy, healthy and educated human targets. Globalization also hoists the prospective immigrants' confidence in their capacity to know, belong and change. For many internationally educated immigrants, their knowledge, skills and capacity for learning are expected to be the intangible capital that they can always count on for a better life. Moreover, unlike our nomadic predecessors, we contemporaries must go through institutional evaluations and inspections to legitimize our identification and immigration. Here arises a problem. While material wealth and physical health can be measured, we could hardly find incontrovertible approaches to measuring individuals' education, the intangible wealth, and emotion, the elusive health. Although the host country could free themselves momentarily from concerns by checking the doctors' notes and the banking accounts balance submitted to them, their deeply harbored suspicion could hardly be relieved, for instance, by the certifications and licenses that immigrants achieved out of the host country. As a result, after the immigrants pass the preliminary check and step on the host land, the hosts' suspicion still prevails in the public sphere and could be detected from the public discourses.

In the first chapter of my dissertation, I explore the socio-institutional discourses about internationally educated professionals and the university-based bridging programs. In the process of my literature review, I identified a lack of close attention to and profound analysis of the lived experience of people who were involved in the bridging programs. Researchers who studied immigrants' integration such as Jeffrey Reitz, Phil Schalm, and Jian Guan were mostly concerned about the trend of immigration and immigrants' integration and the cause and effect of relevant policies. Researchers who were interested in the IEPs' experience such as Hieu Ngo, David Este and Izumi Sakamoto mostly studied the general experience of the IEPs from particular communities, not experience specifically contextualized by the bridging programs. In the working reports of the Office of Fairness Commissioner, the Public Policy Forum and CERIS, researchers mentioned the IEPs' experience in the bridging programs but didn't elaborate upon it. That is something missing in the literature. This study aims to fill the gap. As the title indicates, I brought an affect to light as well in this study. It's anxiety. I believe that qualitative studies can help readers comprehend the complexities of human experience in more depth and can yield more concrete implications for rethinking about and reconstructing human practice.

In this study, I attempt to understand the internationally educated professionals' experience, their emotional experience in particular, in the context of university-based bridging programs. I explore their voices. In order to comprehend the contentions, the conflicts, and the controversies in their experience, I turn to psychoanalysts to facilitate my understanding and my analysis. In Chapter Two, I provide a framework of relevant concepts in psychoanalysis including reality, states of mind, anxiety, defense mechanism,

learning, education, identity and immigration. In Chapter Three, I explicate the methodology of this study by discussing the participants, the research questions, the method of collecting, analyzing and maintaining the data and the relationship between the participants and me. I reflect upon my thoughts about research issues such as confidentiality, equity and integrity in the process of in-depth inquiry.

In Chapter Four and Chapter Five, I analyze five cases in relation to the socio-institutional discourses in Chapter One and the conceptual framework in Chapter Two. I concentrate upon the complication of people's struggles with the adverse living circumstances. I interpret their narratives and analyze their emotional responses to difference, uncertainty, exploration and negotiation. Based on the case analysis, I discuss the findings of this study and elaborate upon its implications for both the bridging programs and the internationally educated professionals in Chapter Six. I conclude this study by reflecting upon the benefits and the problems of inquiring into human being's emotional experience with a psychoanalytic lens and then describe the limitations of this study as a whole.

Chapter One Socio-institutional Discourse

Research literature on internationally educated professionals (IEPs) and university-based bridging programs for IEPs is mostly policy-oriented based on statistics or surveys and develops mostly within the theoretical framework of social inclusion and integration. According to Schalm and Guan (2009), social inclusion refers to "the mobilization of resources and the development of solutions to address issues of social exclusion" (p. 28). Omidvar and Richmond (2003) analyzed immigrants' integration and stated,

> Social inclusion involves the basic notions of belonging, acceptance and recognition. For immigrants and refugees, social inclusion would be represented by the realization of full and equal participation in the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of life in their new country. (p. 1)

Researchers studying immigration in Canada commonly uphold the ideal of building up a multi-cultural democratic Canada, where people could have social justice and equity and where the institutional capacity to repair unjust or inequitable social practices could be implemented (Saloojee, 2003). The reality of systematic exclusion and the consequent anxiety of 'brain waste' have become the focus of the socio-institutional discourse (Bourgeault, Neiterman, LeBrun, Viers, & Winkup, 2010).

1.1 On Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs)

Researchers analyzed data from Statistics Canada and longitudinal surveys to provide an overview of the situation and make suggestions for immigration and settlement policies. They mainly addressed the following questions. How much do immigrants contribute to demographic change (Edmonston & Fong, 2011; Schalm &

Guan, 2009)? What are the education and skill sets of immigrants (Schalm & Guan, 2009)? How well do immigrants, visible minorities in particular, perform in Canadian society (Edmonston & Fong, 2011; Office of Fairness Commissioner, 2015; Shields & Türegün, 2014)? If they underperform, what might be the causes and effects (Reitz, 2007a, 2007b; Sakamoto, Chin, & Young, 2010)? If Canada depends on immigration policy to solve its problem of 'low birth-rate', 'aging population' and labor shortage (Anisef, Sweet & Frempong, 2003; Edmonston & Fong, 2011), what ethical issues, such as 'brain abuse' and 'workplace racism' should the government and the institutions also look into (Bauder, 2003; Office of Fairness Commissioner, 2010)?

Researchers identified some trends with immigration. Using the data that they obtained from the Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Statistics Canada, Schalm and Guan (2009) outlined six trends: increased number of immigrants to Canada, increased rates of skilled immigrants, increased level of education, increased proportion of visible minorities, increased concern of labor shortage, decreased value of foreign credentials among visible minority immigrants. Guan, Yap and Hannan (2008) analyzed the Employment Survey in 2007[1] and found that visible minorities with international education revealed lower earnings and higher dissatisfaction with career development compared with their Canadian white counterparts in the same rank and industry. Other researchers derived similar findings. They suggested that internationally educated professionals underperform (Basran & Zong, 1999; Calleja & Alnwick, 2000; Ngo & Este, 2006) and tend to express more discontent than people of other categories (Guan et al., 2008). Schalm and Guan (2009) analyzed the Educational Portrait of Canada in 2008

[1] According to Schalm and Guan (2009), a total of 17,908 individuals among managers, professionals, and executives from the FP500 companies, top Canadian law firms and Catalyst Canada member organizations participated in the survey.

and found that over 51 percent of immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006 have a university degree, more than twice the proportion of degree holders among the Canadian-born population (20 percent) and much higher than the proportion of 28 percent among immigrants who arrived before 2001. They attributed it to Canadian immigration policy, which awarded more points to immigration applicants with higher levels of education. In a sense, the immigration policy brought about underestimated challenges to Canada's capacity and the IEPs' capacity for such common discontent.

Other researchers provided positive findings about how IEPs could succeed in integrating into their professions in Canada. They believed that IEPs would gradually achieve economic assimilation into the Canadian labor market as they gain experience, acquire skills, improve their English, build up their social networks and learn strategies to deal with prejudices (Ngo & Este, 2006; Samuel & Woloski, 1985).

However, the positive findings could hardly outweigh the tremendous difficulties that IEPs face in engaging in "meaningful careers commensurate with their education and experience" (Schalm & Guan, 2009, p. 122). Researchers identified and well documented multiple barriers that recent immigrants face in the labor market in terms of career development (Alboim, Finnie & Meng, 2005; Alboim & Mclsaac, 2007; Basran & Zong, 1998; Bauder, 2003; Ngo & Este, 2006; Reitz 2007a, 2007b; Schellenberg & Maheux, 2007). Employers, professional regulators and immigrants all contributed to the researchers' study about the challenges. For instance, in the Canadian HR Report Survey (Humber, 2005), employers were asked to foresee the challenges if they would hire IEPs. "82 percent of employers identified language issues, 36 percent identified lack of Canadian experience and 34 percent identified the difficulty associated with properly

assessing foreign obtained credentials" (Schalm & Guan, 2009, p. 24). Employers expressed their hesitance to hire an IEP without Canadian experience. They would "not consider foreign work experience equivalent to a similar level of Canadian obtained labor market experience" (Public Policy Forum 2004, cited in Schalm & Guan, 2009, p. 24). As to the professional regulators, some researchers suggested that they act as 'labor market shelters' and, through their foreign credential adjudication processes, come to function as "inequitable gatekeepers to particular professional labor markets" (Bambrah, 2005). However, according to Ontario Human Rights Commission, employers, representatives of employers and regulatory bodies should not "require applicants to have prior work experience in Canada to be eligible for a particular job" or "assume that an applicant will not succeed in a particular job because he or she lacks Canadian experience" (2013).

Researchers also discussed the challenges that the regulatory bodies would face if they try improving the IEPs' access to their professions. In *Research Report and Compendium of Promising Practices (2003)*, the Ontario Regulators for Access identified six categories of gaps and challenges (Office of Fairness Commissioner, 2010, p. 98).

- *Resources* (limited resources for regulators to provide individualized feedback for international candidates and implement new best practices)
- *Information* (international candidates lack information or have misinformation about Canadian professional context; difficulties for regulators to maintain correct information on country-of-origin education, training, and practices)
- *Role of Regulator* (challenge for regulators to help international candidates understand regulatory role; complex balance of promoting access for international candidates while protecting the public)

- *Barriers for International Candidates* (lack of Bridging Programs; lack of networking opportunities; lack of occupation-specific language skills; requirements of Canadian work experience; costly licensing process given that regulators operate on a cost recovery basis)
- *National Standards* (some regulators accept the strict standards of national body's assessment of international candidates)
- *Legislation and Regulation* (governing acts and legislation of some professions have narrowly defined or strict entry requirements)

The employers and regulatory bodies are the most important institutions that control the access of IEPs into the labor market. Their inaction reflects the regional and professional protectionism (Guan et al., 2008; Li, 2005; Reitz, 2007a, 2007b). Schalm and Guan (2009) stated, "Both nationally and globally, what makes Canada's situation unique is that it attracted many IEPs to Canada, but did not use them in the right fields due to regulatory bodies' protectionism" (p. 25).

According to a study of the Conference Board (2004), the visible minority IEPs have difficulty not only in entering the industry but also fitting into the culture of a Canadian organization. The researchers believed that "systemic discrimination underlies the concept of person-organization fit" and employers prefer hiring people of fewer differences (Conference Board, 2004, cited in Schalm & Guan, 2009, p. 26). In another study conducted by Guan et al. (2008), researchers analyzed the Employee Survey among managers, professionals and executives from corporate Canada[2]. They were shocked with the pay inequality between immigrants of visible minority groups and white men

[2] This survey was designed by Catalyst and Diversity Institute of Ryerson University.

groups, both Canadian born and immigrants, as well as the level of difference. They found that "the pay inequality and devaluation of human capital not only exist at entry level jobs and non-professional jobs for new immigrants, but also at established managerial positions across industry in corporate Canada" (p. 27). Researchers attributed social exclusion and social marginality to a system of mutually overlapping oppression that constitutes such categories as gender, race, ethnicity, class and immigration status. Accordingly, they attributed the deterioration of the IEPs' financial situation and impairment of their emotional well-being to the systematic oppression (Bauder, 2003; Bourgeault et al., 2010; Ngo & Este, 2006; Reitz, 2007a, 2007b; Saloojee, 2003; Sakamoto, 2007; Sakamoto, Ku & Wei., 2009; Sakamoto, Wei & Truong, 2008; Sakamoto, 2005).

Researchers found that IEPs tend to become more mobile with globalization. Some informed the government of the risk of losing skilled professionals to other countries where economies are booming and skilled labors are demanded (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005; Klie, 2006). They pointed out that Australia and America are Canada's rivals, but the list of its competitors has extended because of globalization. For instance, in the past ten years, Mainland China and India have ranked top as the source countries of immigration to Canada. They both have provided many incentives to attract people overseas back home. In China, they are provided with free housing, children's education funds, and research and development grants. In India, a program was set up to grant India-born or those with India-born parents or grandparents lifelong visas to make it easier for them to live and work in India (Klie, 2006).

1.2 On University-based Bridging Programs

Studies about bridging programs reflect researchers' common interest in designing successful program models. For instance, according to Alboim et al. (2005), bridging programs should be designed to fill the gaps identified by the appropriate assessments between IEPs' existing skills and what is required by the license issue authorities and the job market. As a report by the Office of Fairness Commissioner (2010) suggested, the bridging programs should provide the IEPs with higher-level language courses and professional courses that could help the IEPs succeed in integrating to their professions. Researchers also contended that effective bridging programs should "include input from multiple stakeholders, accurate and comprehensive assessment of participants, and financial solvency that allows for continued operation" (Public Policy Forum, 2008, p. 1). Besides, researchers discussed the accessibility of the programs to the IEPs. They found that if qualified students had no loans or scholarships, these bridging programs could be so expensive that they represented financial barriers themselves (Alboim & Mclsaac, 2007; Office of Fairness Commissioner, 2010).

University-based bridging programs are not mature establishments (Public Policy Forum, 2008, p. 36) in Canada. They are relatively new initiatives compared with bridging programs which originally were implemented at school boards, colleges or private institutes. Because universities have more resources and higher academic standards, university-based bridging programs are expected to be in a better position to support the IEPs who aspire to overcome the systematic barriers and bring about long-term effects on the IEPs' professional development as opposed to serving merely as the expedient measure.

Researchers found that there were more bridging programs in Ontario than any of the other provinces (Office of Fairness Commissioner, 2010). For instance, in 2009, there were twenty-one bridging programs funded by the government of Ontario at eight universities in Ontario (Schalm & Guan, 2009). In 2015, twenty bridging programs in five universities in Ontario were approved by the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade to receive Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program bursary assistance in the year 2015-16 (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2015). As we can see from the program descriptions at the websites of the universities, the programs usually blend the regular undergraduate courses and university-wide services with extra components, such as information sessions, mentoring support, prerequisite courses and exam-focused courses, specifically added to meet the IEPs' special needs. The courses consist of selective components and compulsory components. Participants need to complete prerequisite courses in order to take professional courses. After they complete a specified number of courses and pass the required exams within the specified time, the participants would be granted a certificate by their universities.

In Ontario, university-based bridging programs have proved to be an effective vehicle in some professions to improve the IEPs' access to regulated professions. Institutions and people concerned tend to use immediate outcome such as success rate in licensing exams or employment rate as major criteria to evaluate these programs. Preliminary evaluation of some bridging programs found very positive results. However, the literature is short of studies about the learning experience of the participants in the bridging programs although such qualitative studies could help not only the IEPs, the

faculty and the staff working in the bridging programs but also all the other stakeholders concerned to understand the IEPs and the issues involved and consider how they could collaborate to ameliorate the situation.

Researchers have developed a series of studies about immigrants and refugees and documented various institutional initiatives to address the issues of long-existing inequality and exclusion of immigrants. For instance, some researchers studied the IEP's experience in certain occupations such as engineering, education and health-related fields (Bambrah, 2005; Bourgeault et al., 2010; Chassels, 2010; Faez, 2010; Kerekes, Chow, Lemark & Perhan, 2013; Walton-Roberts, Guo, Williams & Hennebry, 2014); others explored the experience of IEPs from particular geographic areas such as East Asia, South Asia or East Europe (Agrawal, 2015; Bauder, 2003; Ngo & Este, 2006; Noh, Kim & Noh, 2012; Poy, 2013; Sakamoto, Jeyapal, Bhuyan, Ku, Fang, Zhang et. al., 2013; Sakamoto & Zhou, 2005; Samuel, 2009). These studies altogether provide multiple perspectives of looking into and interpreting immigrants' life difficulties in Canada and exploring various ways of addressing the immigrants' needs. In this study, I inquire into the learning experience of immigrants who have studied in the bridging programs at universities in Ontario. The participants in my study represent diversity in terms of country of origin, first language, gender, age, status of marriage, highest level of education and occupation. I focus on their emotional experience and attempt to analyze their learning with a psychoanalytic lens. I hope to shed a new light on understanding the experience of internationally educated professionals, who are subject to emotional turmoil and have to learn from the new living conditions in the process of transition.

Chapter Two Theoretic Framework

My dissertation is a phenomenological study[3]. The phenomenon concerned is that contemporary educated immigrants are striving to integrate by studying in the bridging programs at universities in Ontario. As the title of my dissertation indicates, I brought an affect to light in this study. It is anxiety. While the socio-institutional discourse influences my understanding of the controversial external reality, it is psychoanalysis that equips me with the overall theoretic framework to look into the reactive and connective play of the internal and external realities.

Educated people are associated with the capacity for knowledge and reason. To understand the experience of migrant professionals, we need to know what knowledge they have about the realities of migrating, how they reason them and what anxieties their reasoning might reveal. In this chapter, I explore the following key concepts: 'reality', 'states of mind', 'anxiety and defense mechanism', 'learning and education', 'identity and immigration'.

2.1 Reality

We tend to interpret reality using dualism. We may regard it as the opposite of imagination, fantasy or dreams and argue that reality is more than thought, involving real objects and existential relations. Thus we are inclined to equate reality with external reality.

[3] When discussing Consciousness and Experience in his book *Phenomenological Research Methods*, Clark Moustakas (1994) remarked that "all science and scholarship is empirical but all experience is originally connected, and given validity, by our consciousness… it is impossible to go beyond consciousness, to see, as it were, without eyes or to direct a cognitive gaze behind the eye itself… From this point of view our picture of the whole of nature stands revealed as a shadow cast by a hidden reality" (p. 161). I'm not sure if Moustakas was referring to the unconscious when he wrote "a hidden reality". But for me, it is part of the internal reality.

However, psychoanalysts broaden our understanding of the play of reality. Freud brought the concept of 'psychical reality' to life. According to DeMasi (2006), Freud's purpose was to contend that there is a difference between what is real and what is imagined or believed. But more importantly, Freud contended that psychical reality, which comprises "internal objects, agencies, fantasies, and trains of thoughts", has relations within and without and feels real, even though what it comprises might be "ephemeral" (Britzman, 2011, p. 2).

Psychical reality is "a blend of facts and purposes" and of affects and emotions (Friedman, 1995, p. 25). Freud found that the memories which are responsible for symptoms are "often partly fashioned by children's wishes" and the affects accompanying the wishes (Friedman, 1995, p. 25). Friedman contended that adults "don't just carry around the memory of a childhood psychical reality"; rather, their "psychical reality mixes facts and purposes" both in childhood and "in adulthood as transference demonstrated"; that is to say, their purposes "go right on arranging current experience and helping to define [their] contemporary world" (Friedman, 1995, p. 25).

Psychical reality exists simultaneously with external reality but does not coincide with it (Britzman, 2011). The mental apparatus may disable its correspondence to the external reality, for instance, cancelling it, denying it or transforming it (DeMasi, 2006). Freud suggested that "what is imagined can become real" for a person and "goes on to make up his psychical reality" (DeMasi, 2006, p. 790). What is relevant here is that those things work in all of us and "the process of recovery coincide with the acquisition of [the unconscious] truth about ourselves" (DeMasi, 2006, p. 791). When analyzing psychical reality, we have to remind ourselves that the true psychical reality is "the unconscious"

and “in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs” (Freud, 1900, p. 613, cited in Britton, 1995, p. 19).

External reality essentially involves everything in the external world. According to Grinberg, “‘psychical reality’ and its relation to ‘objective or material reality’ is one of the central issues that, in a sense, define psychoanalysis” (1995, p. 1). Freud argued that there are two principles that structure the psychic apparatus: pleasure principle and reality principle. External reality is one of them. There are four polarities in psychoanalysis: Subject (ego) – Object (external world), Pleasure – Unpleasure, Active – Passive, and Ego – Others (“all fellow creatures making up the community” (Freud, 1915, p. 120, cited in Puget, 1995, p. 31)). External reality concerns two of them. It encompasses Object and Others and subsumes not only the material world but also the social relations (Cohen, 1995, p. 35). Its relation to the ego defines it ‘external’ since “it is outside the ego and inhabited by people as well as institutions, cultural norms, laws” (Berenstein, 1995, p. 3).

The apparent celebration of diversity and globalization are external realities that tempt people into migrating and living a life beyond prediction. Wars, natural disasters, corrupted governments and intense competition for resources are external realities as well that drive people to leave their native land behind. However, the psychical reality that one lives with is more personal to individuals. How do one’s wishes, dreams and fears affect him/her when he/she perceives the external reality and himself/herself? How does

education influence his/her perception of the external world in relation to the psychical world?

2.2 States of Mind

Such notions as growth and development seem to suggest "a linear progression" in accordance with the chronological passage of time. But some psychoanalysts identified something of the mind, which although it manifests itself at present, could "be founded in the past" and "encompasses a possible future"; they call it "states of mind" (Bion, 1963; Klein, 1935, 1946a; Waddell, 2002).

According to Waddell (2002), "in Klein's work there is a sense of life-long fluctuations between a predominantly selfish and self-serving attitude to the world and an attitude of generosity and concern, albeit one which is always inflected by a concern for the self" (p. 8). The former state of mind, or position as Klein designated, is called "paranoid-schizoid" and the latter "depressive".

Lapping (2011) reviewed Klein's narrative of the development of the ego and the two positions. She stated,

> This narrative constructs an account of human infancy that prioritizes an intensely affective primary encounter with both internal drives and the external world. Klein's narration of this encounter suggests that experiences of the drives and the external world are internalized, gradually building up a parallel world of inner objects. However, this inner world is, in Klein's words, 'inaccessible to the child's accurate observation and judgment', and 'phantastic'– the product of unconscious fantasy – giving rise to an

> overwhelming sense of doubt and anxiety (1940, p. 149). This anxiety, for Klein, is related to the death drive, the infant's own destructive impulses, and also to the painful experience of bodily needs and functions, all of which are felt as persecuting and attributing to 'objects' over which the infant has no control. (Lapping, 2011, p. 145)

The term of paranoid-schizoid describes "both the nature of the predominant anxiety, that is the fear of persecution, and the nature of the defense against such fears" (Waddell, 2002, p. 6). In such state of mind, the infant suffers from pain and distress, becomes exclusively concerned about his self- preservation. According to Klein (1946a), the sources of anxiety include "the trauma of birth (separation anxiety) and frustration of bodily needs"; but all these experiences and the fear of the destructive impulse seem to be felt as being caused by "an uncontrollable overpowering object" or internal objects (1946a, p. 179) .

Anxiety is "natural and necessary" for an infant, because he/she has to "manage emotional experiences" which he/she "does not yet have the capacity psychically to digest" by himself/herself (Waddell, 2002, p. 7). According to Klein (1946a), in controlling the persecuting objects, the infant develops such interrelated defensive mechanisms as splitting (the object and the self), projection and introjection so that the persecutory anxiety could be relieved to some extent.

According to Klein (1935), the position opposite to paranoid schizoid position is the depressive position. She stated,

> When it comes to know its mother as a whole person and when it progresses from the introjections of part objects to the introjections of the whole object,

> the infant experiences some of the feelings of guilt and remorse, some of the pain which results from the conflict between love and uncontrollable hatred, some of the anxieties of the impending death of the loved internalized and external objects. (p. 142)

Bion (1963) formulated a diagram of Ps<—>D to suggest a notion of "continuous movement between the two poles" (p. 102). In Waddell' words, "every move forward in (emotional) development entails a degree of internal disruption and anxiety which temporarily throws the personality into disarray, that is, back into a more chaotic state of mind. The turbulence stirred up by internal change is intrinsic to emotional growth" (2002, P. 8).

2.3 Anxiety and Defense Mechanisms

Psychoanalysts use the concept of anxiety to refer to fear of things in response to or in anticipation of loss or separation. It can be as concrete as fear of an animal or as abstract as dread of an idea or an affect. It arises originally as a reaction to a state of danger and is reproduced whenever the ego perceives a state of that kind. Anxiety is met and managed by the ego's defensive mechanisms and signals for actions.

Freud expounded the concept of anxiety in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*. He claimed that anxiety is an affect and is "accompanied by fairly definite sensations which can be referred to particular organs of the body" such as the heart or the respiratory organs (1949, p. 97). Moreover, anxiety is "a special state of unpleasure with acts of discharge along particular channels" (p. 98). According to Freud, anxiety is "the reproduction of some experience which contains the necessary conditions for such an

increase of excitation and a discharge along particular channels" (p. 98). He claimed that the initial anxiety at time of infancy is determined by the loss of object. Then anxiety is transformed to castration anxiety, moral anxiety, social anxiety and finally death anxiety.

The ego employs anxiety for self-defense for particular motives. Anna Freud (1986) analyzed the motives in terms of four types of anxiety: superego anxiety, objective anxiety, instinctual anxiety and anxiety due to the ego's need for synthesis. Superego anxiety refers to the ego's fear of the authority of superego. Here "the ego itself does not regard the impulse" fighting for gratification as "the least dangerous"; but it is the superego, which "prohibits its gratification" and "will certainly stir up trouble between the ego and the superego" "if the instinct achieves its aim", that is more dangerous (A. Freud, 1986, p. 55). Objective anxiety refers to the ego's fear of what is dangerous in the external world. These two types of anxiety are fear of external reality involving the objective world and the social relations. The third type, instinctual anxiety, refers to the dread of the strength of the instinct. In this state, the ego feels itself "overwhelmed or annihilated" by the excessive "demands of the instinctual impulses" (A. Freud, 1986, p. 59). The fourth type "springs from the ego's need for synthesis", since "the adult ego requires some sort of harmony between its impulses" when conflicts arise between opposite tendencies such as "passivity and activity" (A. Freud, 1986, p. 60). These two types of anxiety are mainly fear of psychical reality.

The ego tries to avoid conflict with the id, the superego and the outside world and achieve a balanced state of pleasure as reality principle allows for. As Anna Freud (1986) suggested,

> If the instinct could achieve gratification in spite of opposition by the superego or the outside world, the result would, indeed, be primarily pleasure but secondarily unpleasure, either as a consequence of the sense of guilt emanating from the unconscious or of the punishments inflicted by the outside world. Hence, when instinctual gratification is warded off from these two motives, the defense is undertaken in accordance with the reality principle. Its main purpose is to avoid this secondary pain. (p. 61)

According to Claudia Lapping (2011), Melanie Klein's account of 'projection', 'projective identification' and 'introjection' represented another aspect of the notion of defensive mechanism. According to Klein (1946b), the infant, at early stage of development, has a sense of persecution, which gives rise to great anxiety of annihilation, but does not have a sense of differentiation between himself and the external world and therefore feels the objects are attacking him and consequently attempts to control them "by the interrelated processes of splitting, projection and introjection" (p. 182, cited in Lapping, 2011, p. 146).

'Introjection' or internationalization suggests there being "the sense of separate elements within the psyche" and there being "some reference to an external source for these elements" (Lapping, 2011, p. 147). 'Introjection' could be "internalization of external prohibitions and regulations"; it could also be "internalization of aggression, the turning of aggressive impulses inwards" (Sandler, 1988, p. 7, cited in Lapping, 2011, p. 148). 'Projection' suggests "the attribution of one's own feelings or aspects of one's character to an external object" while projective identification suggests "the way in which this process has effects that go beyond the subject's image of the object, into the object

itself: i.e. the object of the projection will in some way either respond to, or take on the elements attributed to them" (Lapping, 2011, pp. 147-149). Betty Joseph (1988) summarized Klein's analysis of 'projective identification' (Lapping, 2011, p. 149):

> She discussed the manifold aims of different types of projective identification, for example, splitting off and getting rid of unwanted parts of the self that cause anxiety or pain; projecting the self or parts of the self into an object to dominate and control it and thus avoid any feelings of being separate; getting into an object to take over its capacities and make them its own; invading in order to damage or destroy the object. Thus the infant, or adult who goes on using such mechanisms powerfully, can avoid the concomitant sense of loss, anger, envy, etc. but it sets up persecutory anxieties, claustrophobia, panics and the like (Joseph, 1988, pp. 65-66; see also Klein, 1946b, p. 183). (Lapping, 2011, p. 149)

2.4 Learning and Education

More than "narrow educational attainment", what psychoanalysts and progressive educationalists have been advocated is "the children's capacity to learn" in a way associated with "the enrichment of a person's creative potential" (Waddell, 2002, p. 112). Such capacity involves curiosity and desire. According to Margot Waddell (2002), Melanie Klein introduced a key difference "between intrusive curiosity, stimulated by a voyeuristic need to 'know' in order to master and control, and a more enlightened desire to understand; something more akin to a thirst for knowledge, in the interests of growth rather than mastery" (p. 113). Similarly, Bion (1962a) "designated the distinction

between different modes of mental functioning as that between K, a thirst for knowledge, and –K, the mental state in which experience is stripped of its true meaning and knowledge is treated as a commodity" (p. 113). He pointed out that learning was an emotional experience in relation to "the kinds of identificatory mode which have established" between the baby and the mother in "a prototype for learning" (Waddell, 2002, pp. 113-114). He observed,

> Learning depends on the capacity for [the growing container] to remain integrated and yet lose rigidity. This is the foundation of the state of mind of the individual who can retain his knowledge and experience and yet be prepared to reconstrue past experiences in a manner that enables him to be receptive of a new idea (1962b, p. 86). (Waddell, 2002, p. 114)

In contrast, if the baby "has neither a dispositional capacity to bear frustration, nor the experience of adequate maternal reverie", he will attempt, all the more forcefully, to get rid of whatever it is that the physical/emotional system feels unable to digest or metabolize" (Waddell, 2002, p. 116).

According to Waddell (2002), Bion's analysis of the early interactions between baby and mother served as models for thinking and learning process (p. 116). She stated,

> The individual's capacity to learn is determined both by the kinds of internal dynamic already discussed and by the modes of learning dominant in a particular family and culture at any specific time. Indeed, in any situation, qualities of learning will be significantly influenced by the attitudes of the teaching group, that is, by whether that group promotes or discourages honesty in the individual. Especially in an educational setting, creative thought may be

> undermined by the stirring of feelings of inferiority and defensiveness, by the push towards certainty which obscures further penetration into the area of the unknown. (Waddell, 2002, p. 117)

According to Deborah Britzman (1998), psychoanalysis offers a view of the difficulty and fragility of education. She represented learning in relation to three extremes named by Michael Balint, who considered the human as "an intimate mixture of extremes": "extreme dependence" [upon others]; "extreme bliss —the satisfied child is still the prototype of happiness"; and "extreme swings of emotion from love to hate, from complete confidence to dire suspicion or paralyzing fear" (Brizman, 1998, p. 4). Britzman pointed out that they are also "the extremes of leaning", which repeated in the "epistemology in the very construction and use of knowledge" (p. 4). In contrast to the prevalent educational interventions of good teachers, good curriculum and good pedagogy, Britzman offered an alternative. She stated,

> We have changed the directionality of interference: from interference that bears down upon the learner to those within the learner. Learning is a problem, but it has to do with something other than the material of pedagogy. We might begin to pry apart the conditions of learning from that which conditions the desire to learn and the desire to ignore. We might wonder how one comes to be susceptible to the call of ideas. Within this other space, we might think of learning as a dynamic psychical event, made from our capacity for extremes. What seems lost in these very different discussions on pedagogy is the sense that learning is a relearning of one's history of learning—new editions of old conflicts—and that it is precisely this unconscious force that renders the work

> of learning so difficult in intimacy and in public. If learning is a relearning and hence an unlearning of old strategies (as opposed to a repetition of one's own history of learning in the guise of new strategies), then the questions at stake in educational efforts are simultaneously those that can think the force of history within the force of learning. (1998, p. 5)

In *Freud and Education*, Britzman (2011) observed that the preconceptions of the work of education and that of psychoanalysis are "so emotionally charged that they come in the form of obstacles to learning along with a refusal to entertain incompatible thoughts" (p. 19). Freud identified the memory problems of education by which he stretched the concept of education to "the mismatch of how the world is disclosed, received, and psychologically ingested" (Britzman, 2011, p. 14). Britzman reflected upon Freud's approach to education, how he "made education his construction site, presenting its inheritance as relics buried yet preserved in archeological ruins, themselves revenants of a prehistory of natality and its utter helplessness and dependency" (pp. 14-15). With this approach, Britzman also became aware of the association between education and the "unsolved problems of learning, as emerging from the unconscious, sexuality, and the drives; as susceptible to ignorance and memory; and as caught in the dynamics of love" (2011, p. 15).

Similar to the relics, the experience of learning often feels fragmented, "situated in time" and felt "both timely and transitory". In *Practice Makes Practice* (2003), Britzman suggested extending experience "through interpretation and risk", because "without this active side, our capacity to participate in the shaping of experience is diminished" (p. 51).

Meanwhile, she critiqued fragmented experience, the result of “shattering of experience into discrete and arbitrary units”. She stated,

> In academic life, knowledge and experience are typically fragmented by tradition and design. There is a disjunction between the authoritative discourse required by the academy and the internally persuasive discourse that can extend the understandings and meanings one already possesses. The fragmentation of knowledge from experience, however, is so pervasive that we come to expect personal exclusion. (p. 51)

2.5 Identity and Immigration

According to Salman Akhtar (1999), the concept of identity was coined by Victor Tausk in 1919 and has “occupied an ambiguous place in psychoanalysis” (p. 45). He found that the concept was resurrected by Erik Erikson, who “used the term ego identity to denote ‘both a persistent sameness within oneself (selfsameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others’” (Akhtar, 1999, p. 48). Akhtar (1999) remarked,

> Erikson (1956) emphasized that identity could have many connotations and could refer at one time to “*a conscious sense of individual identity*; at another to an unconscious striving for *a continuity of personal character*; at a third, as a criterion for the silent doings of *ego synthesis*; and finally, as a maintenance of an inner *solidarity* with [the] group’s ideals and identity” (p. 102, original italics). (p. 48)

In *Identity and Life Cycle* (1994), Erikson pointed out that identity "permits the individual to forgo excessive self-repudiation and the diffused repudiation of otherness" and "such freedom provides a necessary condition for the ego's power to integrate matured sexuality, ripened capacities, and adult commitments" (p. 175).

In *Immigration and Identity* (1999), Akhtar analyzed what are revealed in the "scattered" psychoanalytic literature on the topic of identity. He discovered that the concept was reconsidered as a psychic structure in the context of focus on borderline personality and of the recent interest in working with immigrants, refugees, and culturally diverse populations in general. He observed,

> Identity emanates within the earliest interplay of the infant's temperament with the maternal attitude, gains structure from primitive introjections, refines itself through later selective identifications, acquires [af]filiation and generational continuity in passage through the Oedipus complex, and arrives at its more or less final shape through synthesis of contradictory identifications and greater individuation during adolescence, though this too remains subject to further refinements through young adulthood, midlife, and even old age….A cohesive identity is composed of a realistic body image, subjective self-sameness, consistent attitudes, temporality, gender clarity, authenticity, and ethnicity. (pp. 73-74)

In contemporary society, the formation and sustenance of one's identity are seriously challenged by globalization, migration and the concomitant 'cultural nostalgia', and 'cultural ambiguity' (Akhtar, 2009). In the process of migration, people not only pay

the direct costs incurred but also tolerate the indirect costs of losing what they usually do not consider so important until after they migrate. According to Livi-Bacci (2012),

> There appears to be an exponential increase in the indirect costs of migration as the well-being of the sending country improves. Higher levels of education in particular amplify the perceived costs – social, psychological, and of affection – associated with separation from one's family, culture, and home. (p. 93)

Akhtar analyzed the emotional and psychological cost of immigration. He proposed a 'psychology of migration' (1999), which is formed by the anxieties, the defensive mechanisms and the symptoms that they may cause. Despite their particular anxieties in their home countries, the process of immigration "triggers" in immigrants some common types of anxieties such as 'separation anxiety', 'persecutory anxieties', 'depressive anxieties' and 'confusional anxieties'. Immigrants have persecutory anxieties while they are confronting the new and unknown; they have depressive anxieties which give rise to mourning for objects left behind and for the lost parts of the self"; they have confusional anxieties when they have "ambivalence about their identification with the home country or the host country" (Akhtar, 1999, pp. 155-161). Similarly, Grinberg & Grinberg (1989) studied four types of anxiety: (1) paranoid anxiety, which "escalates into true panic when the demands the immigrant perceives as overwhelming become too intense"; (2) disorienting anxiety, which "arises from problems in differentiating one's feelings about two subjects of interest and conflicts"; (3) confusional anxiety, which "increases when culture, language, place, points of reference, memories, and experiences become mixed up and superimposed on one another"; and (4) depressive anxiety, which is "created by experiences of great loss together with the fear of never being able to recover all that has

been left behind" (pp. 87-88).Those anxieties are viewed as "a constant feature" characterizing any migratory process, but "vary greatly in intensity, duration, and evolution" (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 87; Akhtar, 1999, p. 161). And "the course taken will depend on the individual's capacity for working through the anxieties, the feelings of being uprooted and the feelings of loss" (Akhtar, 1999, p.155).

Both Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) and Akhtar (1999) addressed "the unconscious process activated in the individual" as he/she encounters the challenges of "leaving" and "adapting". As they suggested, the newly arrived immigrant has insecure feelings not only because of "uncertainty and anxiety in the face of the unknown" but also because of "the inevitable regression that goes hand in hand with these anxieties" (Ginberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 75). He/she needs to "understand and tolerate" his/her "regressive state as a necessary moratorium" until he/she could adjust to the change in his/her life (Ginberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 85).

Ginberg and Grinberg (1989) compared immigrants to "new idea-contained" and the new environment to "the container-receptor group" (p. 82). They observed that whether migration is a catastrophic change "depends in great part on the interaction between the contained and the container" (p. 82). Even with catastrophic change, if the immigrant can work through the "periods of pain, disorganization, and frustration", the changes could "offer the possibility of true growth and enriched development of the personality" (p. 82). However, they still cautioned,

> One must allow for the possibility that the immigrant's presence in some cases will increase the paranoid anxieties of the receptor group. The newcomer may be viewed persecutingly as an intruder who is trying to deprive the locals of

> their inalienable rights to enjoy the fruits of their labor, their possessions and property. In extreme cases, intense xenophobic reactions with marked hostility may result. … Often the abilities and powers attributed to the "invader" reinforce the natives' rivalry, jealousy, and envy fantasies. This may set in motion complex vicious circles with increased persecution on the one side and hate on the other in the mind of the immigrant, who does not find the reception he had hoped for and needs. (pp. 83-84)

This study is about the experience of internationally educated professionals. The purpose involves two levels of understanding. At the first level, it attempts to understand the IEPs' experiences from their narratives; at the second level, it aims to analyze the IEPs' emotional experience from socio-psychoanalytic perspectives. Therefore, in Chapter One and Chapter Two, I provided a review of the socio-institutional discourse and the framework of relevant psychoanalytic thinking. In the next chapter, Chapter Three, I introduce the methodology that I adopted and discuss how psychoanalysis influenced my research process.

Chapter Three Research Methodology

I start this chapter with an introduction to the participants in this study. Then I outline the major research questions to be addressed. After that, I elaborate upon the research method — in-depth interviewing — and reflect on how psychoanalysis influenced my inquiry and my relationship with the participants. In the end, I discuss data maintenance.

3.1 Research Participants

In my study, I directed my attention to internationally educated professionals who had participated or were participating in the university-based bridging programs in Ontario. The size of this population is small because of the short history and low capacity of contemporary university-based bridging programs. Implementing such programs is a relatively new experiment by the Ontario government, who funds the programs, and the universities, who accommodate the qualified applicants[4].

Education, as a social abstraction, is "best understood through the experiences of the individuals whose work and lives are the stuff upon which the abstractions are built" (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). While conceptualizing this study, I was wondering what the participants' experience is like and how "being educated" affects contemporary immigrants' ways of thinking, action taking and meaning making at a time of turbulent changes inherent in immigration. I assume that an in-depth inquiry into their subjective experience could shed light on ways in which education affects people's existential angst in changing living conditions in modern societies.

[4] See Chapter One for more details about the organization model of the university-based bridging programs IEPs in Ontario.

In order to reach the potential research participants, I sent emails to the coordinators of all the university-based bridging programs in Ontario, asking them to help circulate an attached invitation letter (see Appendix A) to participants in their email lists. Ultimately, nine volunteers contacted me. We kept contact with each other mostly via emails in order to set up specific times and locations for the interviews. Before we started our first interview, each of the volunteers signed an informed consent letter (Appendix B), which explained my responsibilities as the researcher and their rights as research participants. Ultimately, five volunteers managed to find time for our interviews (see Appendix C for their demographic information). We met each other at public libraries, in the classrooms and occasionally in the hallways or inside a car, depending on the circumstances. For those who were still studying in the bridging programs, I tried to schedule our appointments on campus. For those who had completed their study in the bridging programs, I made every endeavor to meet them close to where they lived or worked. In those three months when I collected data, I travelled to different cities in Ontario to listen to the internationally educated professionals narrate their experiences.

3.2 Research Questions

I am interested in human's lived experience. With this study, I attempt to know what it is like for the internationally educated professionals to study in the bridging programs, what their experience is, and what meaning they make out of that experience. I intend to understand how their subjectivity is connected to the social and historical contexts (Elliott, 1992).

My conceptualization of the problematic of experience was influenced by the sociological discourses about the external reality of immigration, immigrants' integration and bridging programs as well as the psychoanalytic accounts of psychical reality, anxiety and learning. The sociological discourses about educational programs suggest serving the participants' needs, with the basic tone set up in accordance with consumerism, where the consumers deserve commodities for which they pay, egalitarianism, where the disabled and the marginalized individuals should be proffered with more care by the social structures so as to promote political integrity and social stability, and nationalism, where the production of better-educated "human capitals" would contribute to the common good of the nation, promoting economic vitality and cultural prosperity. I doubt nothing about the ethical righteousness and pragmatic sensibility inherent in such discourses, but I wonder about the meanings of "needs" and the institutional capacity to meet them. My question is who knows about the participants' needs? What conflicts might exist between the needs identified by the self and others? What might the needs and the conflicts imply about learning and education? Psychoanalytic theories about immigration, learning and anxieties provide food for me to keep wondering in such direction and thinking more critically. By critical thinking, I mean something more than exposing the external systematic barriers to human integration or depicting the ensuing emotional disturbances. Psychoanalysis renders it possible to analyze individuals' modes of learning and their reactions to otherness and strangeness in relation to the socio-cultural contexts from a psychoanalytic perspective.

In this study, I mainly addressed four major questions. *First, how do internationally educated professionals perceive their new realities?* By raising this question, I attempted

to understand migrant professionals' perception of the new reality they encounter. In order to be able to address this major question, I broke it into more specific questions and brought them to the interviews. For instance, what motivated them to attend the university- based programs when there are faster-track bridging programs at colleges and private institutes? What do they do every day while attending the programs? As the literature review in Chapter One indicates, the institutional purpose of the bridging programs is mainly to fill the gap between the professional requirements in Canada and the immigrants' previous educational and professional qualifications. What do the internationally educated professionals think of the so called "gap"? Having studied at university and, in some cases, having obtained a Master's degree or a PhD, how do they perceive of the renewed higher education in Canada? What gaps do they think the bridging programs can and cannot bridge? What ruling relations do they identify when they think about the gaps? By exploring these questions, I hope to shed light on the following questions: Could the reality of 'being educated' melt down the tensions created by race, gender and first language? Or might the reality of 'being educated elsewhere only complicate further these tensions?

The second major question that I addressed is: *What are the anxieties of internationally educated professionals?* At time of transition, immigrants have to go through a state of chaos in terms of values, belonging and loyalty. Do the internationally educated professionals fear the loss of something? Do they perceive some dangers? Different from other types of immigrants, they rely mostly on their education to be able to immigrate to Canada. How do they think of their educational aspirations and professional dreams after immigration? As Britzman (2003, 2011) suggested, education is

a site with much affect. What is education's role in shaping and reshaping individuals' affect and anxiety in particular? Why do IEPs accept the reality of returning to university to study again? By dissembling the second major question into a series of sub questions, I hope that I can shed light on the anxieties that internationally educated professionals have been struggling or living with consciously or unconsciously.

The third major question that I addressed is *what realities lead them to those anxieties and how do their anxieties affect their perception of the challenges they face*? Research in psychoanalysis suggests that the ego is an eye for perceiving external reality and a heart for feeling the psychical reality. Whenever the ego perceives or imagines dangers to come, it will resort to anxiety as a defensive mechanism, signaling a conflict, either between various instincts, the id and the ego, the ego and superego, or the ego and the outside world. In this sense, the sociological discourses mainly revolve around the contentions between egos and the external social conditions. By raising this question, I attempt to analyze my findings about the preceding two questions, questioning the relationship between reality and anxiety and examining the underlying dynamics of the experience. As Makkreel (1975) remarked,

> This interrelationship — the direct conscious description of experience and the underlying dynamics or structures that account for the experience – provide a central meaning and unity that enable one to understand the substance and essence of the experience (p. 267, cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 8).

Using the psychoanalytic language, I hope that we can understand individual's anxieties more profoundly, not considering it merely as the result of the threatening external reality but as the interaction of the ego with both the psychical reality and the

external reality. In this way, we can hope for ways of working through unnecessary anxieties and ameliorate our own emotional well being.

A fourth question that I addressed is: *What role does higher education play in mirroring and shaping the way internationally educated professionals perceive and feel the realities?* It is important to learn about the bridging programs' responsiveness to the emotional world. What might the conflicts that the internationally educated professionals perceive in their experience imply about the limitations of the bridging programs? What can higher education, university-based bridging programs in particular, do to promote enlightenment about the complications of education and immigration among internationally educated professionals?

This study has some implications for the university. When they make attempt to impart knowledge about the professional theories and practices in Canada, they might be able to get more engaged with the participants' experiential conflicts. For instance, after studying in the bridging program, could the participants, the faculty and the staff have a better understanding of the relationship between education and cultural shock, cultural conflict and cultural adaptation? What other languages could we have if it's not "Do as Romans do in Rome"? When bridging programs are implemented, what components might benefit the participants, helping them read their realities more reflectively and critically and face up more realistically and resiliently to diversity, uncertainty and inconsistence?

3.3 Research Method

I used in-depth interviewing as my research method. The purpose of this method is "not to get answers to questions, nor test hypotheses, and not to 'evaluate' as the term is normally used" (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). Rather, it is to understand the context of people's behavior and to see how "the meanings that people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). As Seidman (2006) claimed,

> Because hypotheses are not being tested, the issue is not whether the researcher can generalize the findings of an interview study to a broader population. Instead the researcher's task is to present the experience of the people he or she interviews in compelling enough detail and in sufficient depth that those who read the study can connect to the experience, learn how it is constituted, and deepen their understanding of the issues it reflects. (p. 51)

I used in-depth interviewing as the research method mainly for two reasons. First, I am interested in the lived experience of well-educated people of international backgrounds and I would like to understand the issues that are reflected by their sense of their experience. Unlike survey, structured interviews or one-shot interviews, the three-interview structure of in-depth interviewing, which I will elaborate later in this chapter, allows for more openness towards experience and more profound reflection by the participants when they reconstruct their narratives. As Bertaux (1981) contends, "If given a chance to talk freely, people appear to know a lot about what is going on" (p. 39, cited in Seidman, 2006, p. 8). I would add that if given adequate chances, people appear to know better what is going on. Second, I am interested in the lived experience of conducting an empirical study as the major investigator: from conceptualizing the

questions to submitting an informed consent form to the local institutional review board, from devising invitation letters to communicating with the potential research participants, from scheduling our interviews to developing my interview skills, from transcribing the interview recordings to interpreting the transcripts, from identifying the participants' experiential tendencies to highlighting the compelling details of their experience and later to being engaged with the surprises and the conflicts.

In-depth phenomenologically based interviewing is a method of narrative inquiry. It "combines life-history interviewing (see Bertaux, 1981) and focused, in-depth interviewing informed by assumptions drawn from phenomenology and especially from Alfred Schutz (1967)" (Seidman, 2006, p. 15). According to Seidman (2006),

> Dolbeare and Schuman (Schuman, 1982) designed the series of three interviews that characterizes this approach and allows the interviewer and participant to plumb the experience and to place it in context. The first interview establishes the context of the participants' experience. The second interview allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs. And the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them. (p. 17)

Researchers consider the 90-minute format as appropriate to have the participants reconstruct their experiences and reflect upon their meanings (Schuman, 1982; Seidman, 2006). It is viewed as neither too long nor two short. As to the spacing of interviews, Seidman, based on his experience, found it best to space each interview from three days to a week apart, because it "allows time for the participant to mull over the preceding interview but not enough time to lose the connection between the two" (2006, p. 21).

Despite the considerate intentions, Seidman reminded researchers that life is not ideal and we have reasons for alternatives so long as we do not go to extremes and thus could not benefit from the intent of the structure.

In devising the structure of my interviews, I considered both the optimal structure and spacing of interviews and the prospects of the participants' availability and comfort. For most of the potential volunteers, English is either their foreign language or second language, and interviews were to be held after their class or work hours. Therefore, in order to avoid the risk of exhausting them, we had 60-minute interviews; and in order to complete all the three interviews, I tried to accommodate their schedule changes no matter how short the notice was. In this way, we managed to complete three one-hour interviews with proper intervals between the interviews. I recorded and transcribed all of interview recordings myself and used the transcripts of over five hundred pages as the data of my analysis.

In my study, the first interview focused on the participants' autobiography. I asked how they had come up with the idea of immigration, what their life was like before and after immigration. I asked them to reconstruct their early experiences at work, at school, in their countries, cities and families. They told me about their lives up until they enrolled in the bridging programs. In the second interview, I concentrated on the concrete details of the participants' experience in the bridging programs. I invited them to reconstruct a typical day of that period when they studied in the bridging program at university in Ontario from the moment they woke up to the time they fell asleep. In the third interview, I asked the participants to reflect upon the meanings of their education and their study at

university in Canada in particular. The first two interviews provided foundation for such reflection. As Seidman states (2006),

> Making sense or making meaning requires that the participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation. It also requires that they look at their present experience in detail and within the context in which it occurs. The combination of exploring the past to clarify the events that led participants to where they are now, and describing the concrete details of their present experience, established conditions for reflecting upon what they are now doing in their lives. (pp. 18-19)

In the third interview, I asked what they saw themselves doing in the future. The structure of in-depth interviewing corresponds to my intention enabled the participants to represent the past, reflected on the present and rethink about the future. Even though the present constitutes the focus of my dissertation, I reminded myself of the fact that the present state of being is an ‘expression’ of something else ‘beneath’, the sediments of the past. As a researcher, I learned from the archeologists and psychoanalysts, who identify the present puzzles, search for the artifacts and make sense of the possible meanings that connect the past and the present through linguistic representations.

During the interviews, I kept those general questions of my interest, which I discussed earlier in this chapter, in my mind, and tried to ask open-ended questions by both following up what they had narrated in the interviews and adhering to what we had to concentrate upon in each interview. As Seidman (2006) stated,

> The truly effective question flows from an interviewer’s concentrated listening, engaged interest in what is being said, and purpose in moving forward.

> Sometimes an important question will start out as an ill-defined instinct or hunch, which takes time to develop and seems risky to ask. Sometimes the effective question reflects the interviewer's own groping for coherence about what is being said and is asked in a hesitant, unsure manner. (p. 93)

During each interview, I listened to the participant's stories and tried to come back to the parts that didn't make sense to me at an appropriate time without interrupting their train of thoughts. For instance, I tried to figure out the meanings of their laughter that sounded nervous or ironic, their silence that lasted longer than normal, as well as specific words they used that I doubted only delivered vague meanings or what I suspected to be some public voices as opposed to inner voices. Sometimes, I had to wait until the next interview to clarify some of my doubts or suspicions. I put notes on the interview pages before the second and the third interviews in hope of finding clues. After the third interview, I could only speculate on issues of this type because I was not able to contact the participants any more after the planned interviews. This is part of the uncertainties that we have to tolerate as researchers and one aspect of the limits of qualitative studies.

3.4 Relationship between the Researcher and the Participants

I strived for equity in the process of my study. Seidman (2006) views equity as "a balance between means and ends, between what is sought and what is given, between process and products, and a sense of fairness and justice that pervades the relationship" (p. 109). In my study, the participants and I had been strangers initially before they read the invitation letter, which I drafted and asked their program coordinator to help forward via email. With different purposes, they contacted me, volunteering to participate in the study.

As I realized later, to different degrees, they hoped to voice the difficulties that they encountered constantly, took my research as a community activity and wanted to contribute, or participated as a symbolic support of my interest in their experience. Despite their purposes, my gratitude never eroded for their willingness to narrate their experience and allow me to use their narrations as the research data. Although some of them seemed to benefit from the interviewing process, saying that they could reflect upon their experience with less confusion and less anxiety after the three interviews, I always felt that I owed much to their openness and generosity. At the conclusion of the third interview, I presented each participant with a small gift as a symbol of my appreciation. But what is more important to maintain an equitable relation is much more than a gift. As Seidman (2006) stated,

> Equity is supported in an explicit written consent form that outlines the rights and responsibilities of the interviewer and the participant in as detailed a manner as reasonable. Equity is involved in scheduling time and place of interviews. Interviewers ask a great deal of participants. It keeps the process fair when interviewers set up times and places that are convenient to the participant and reasonable for the interviewer. (p.110)

I managed to safeguard integrity when I drafted a detailed consent form and scheduled our interviews prioritizing their convenience. In the process of the three interviews, I attempted to strike a balance between developing a rapport with them and keeping a distance from them. The purpose was to create a trustworthy relationship by getting along with each other, on the one hand, and "preserv(ing) the autonomy of the participant's words" on the other hand (Seidman, 2006, p. 96). While I was friendly to

them, I avoided becoming their friends in case a close "we" relationship should distort their stories. Therefore, I rarely shared details of my own experience and never commented on their experience and thoughts during those days of our interviews in the hope of preserving their authentic voices. I also adhered to Seidman's (2006) advice that "it is crucial for the interviewer to maintain a delicate balance between respecting what the participant is saying and taking advantage of opportunities to ask difficult questions, to go more deeply into controversial subjects" (p. 97). For instance, in order to "go more deeply", I remained sensitive to their assumptions. The participants and I had assumptions about what happened because we identified ourselves to social identities such as the immigrant status, gender, age, class, ethnicity and race. Although it was tempting to end with describing the relationship between their assumptions and their perceptions, I went further and explored the possibilities underlying their assumptions in the hope of seeing the relationship between those possibilities and their anxieties. In brief, by explicating the participants' rights before the interview began, controlling the distance with the participants and raising real questions, I hoped that I was also establishing "the condition for an equitable relationship when working with the material" (Seidman, 2006, p. 99).

The interviewing process, as a whole, went reasonably well. For instance, the consent form laid a foundation for the establishment of equitable relationship. I sent well-formulated messages to each participant to help them connect the three interviews. We managed to meet each other as scheduled and complete the interviews within the anticipated time frame. We demonstrated adequate trust and respect to each other. However, despite the overall smoothness, I was also impressed by occasions now and

then when I felt uncomfortable. During the interviews, the participants narrated various aspects of their life, some being public, some personal and others private. I tended to feel most comfortable asking questions about the public aspects of their experience such as the organization of the bridging programs and what courses they could register. It felt all right to listen to them narrating the personal aspects of their life, the expectations of significant others and their struggles with the responsibilities imposed upon them. But I felt uncomfortable when I raised questions that might push the boundaries that they tended to defend about personal and private aspects such as the tensions of relationship between them and their families or colleagues and the ensuing anxieties or hostilities they transferred. Because this study attempts to understand their emotional experience, I chose to tolerate such discomfort and tentatively invited them to elaborate upon the conflicts and the emotions that shaped their experience. I often put "May I ask" in front of the questions when I entered these "troubling or sensitive areas" to show my respect for their freedom to respond or not (Seidman, 2006, p. 107).

Reading psychoanalysis also helped me deal with my own discomfort in raising tough questions. The psychoanalytic conceptualization of "anxiety" and "learning" enabled me to keep my ego in check and thus monitor and prevent my own emotions from impacting the participants' narration of their experience during the interviews. By "keep my ego in check", I mean that while listening to the participants' stories with interest, I paid attention to my own responses to them as well. For instance, one participant tended to reiterate her struggle with the accreditation institute throughout the interviews. Sometimes, I thought she was straying from the topic I was planning to focus on in the second and the third interviews and was inclined to become impatient with her

reiteration. By keeping my ego in check, I cautioned myself that her reiteration showed that there must be a strong relationship between her struggle and her perception of her experience; I reminded myself that my impatience and discomfort might only reflect my own desire for more stories and fewer struggles. Instead of ignoring her repetition, I briefly told her that we had already discussed certain things related to that struggle and then followed up with questions to explore what propped her up during such a struggle and what anxieties it reflected.

It was tempting to imagine the relationship between the researcher and the participant as one similar to the psychoanalyst and the patient when the research subject is concerned about emotional experience and the research method is "open-ended" with "relatively nondirective interviewing" (Seidman, 2006, p. 107). However, according to Seidman (2006) it is critical to avoid a therapeutic relationship for researchers of any background. A researcher's goals differ from and those of a psychoanalyst. Seidman (2006) remarked,

> The researcher is there to learn, not to treat the participant. The participant did not seek out the researcher and is not a patient. The researcher will see the participant three times, after which their connection will substantially end. They will not have a continuing relationship in which the researcher takes some measure of ongoing responsibility. Researchers are unlikely to be trained therapists. They should know both their own limits and those imposed by the structure and goal of the interviewing process. Researchers must be very cautious about approaching areas of participants' private lives and personal

> complexities to which they are ill equipped to respond and for which they can take no effective responsibility. (p. 108)

While keeping my own limits in mind, I tried my best to negotiate potentially troubled waters that the study of emotional experience inevitably involved. Sometimes, the participants might find themselves emotionally disturbed by our navigation. For instance, in our first interview, one participant's eyes brimmed with tears when she recalled her sister's death. I didn't follow up with her dismay immediately in fear that she should keep crying. But her sadness impressed me deeply and made me wonder how family trauma might have affected her life in Canada. I followed up with that question later when she calmed down. As Seidman suggested, the boundary that I observed was the one that "marked where I could take effective responsibility for follow-up and where I could not" (2006, p. 108). When I found that the participant became very emotional and vulnerable, I tended to pull back from whatever was causing it and wait for opportunities to follow them up. Sometimes, the participants started reflecting upon those affects by themselves in the subsequent interviews. In this sense, the three-interview structure really helped the researcher and the participants with connection and reflection.

As a researcher, I know that I can promise nothing other than creating a respectful environment, raising open-ended questions that encourage and welcome free-associated narratives and thoughts, being sensitive to the participants' feelings and attentive to their words, and based on the interview transcripts, making representation and interpretation in a manner as authentic and critical as possible. I tended to watch for the moments when they seemed willing or anxious to communicate their inner world and considered them as the optimal time to explore their emotional experiences further. The freedom that I

respected of the participants to narrate their stories also won me respect as they sometimes asked me whether their particular talk was what I intended to know for a particular question. However, occasionally they also doubted the relevance of some questions that I asked. For instance, when I asked a participant to talk about his childhood, he looked surprised. Similarly, when I asked another participant about his marriage, he also cast a questioning gaze. I was sensitive to their reactions. While reading the transcripts, I found that although I was using psychoanalysis for my study, I made no explicit attempts to inquire into the participants' nocturnal dreams. Psychoanalysts believe that dream is the royal road to the unconscious. Because I lacked knowledge and experience of dream analysis, I felt unprepared to explore the mysterious dream world. I did hope that they would narrate their dreams so that I could follow up. But it turned out that they didn't share their nocturnal experience.

In brief, I found that within the structure of in-depth interviewing, the researcher and the participant undergo an interpersonal, intersubjective and intrapsychic process. In exploration of difficult experience they entered into a mutually reflective relationship that is influenced by transference and countertransference in the interviewing process.

3.5 Data Analysis

The research data in my study is the participants' language in the form of interview transcripts. The deference of language and the associative meanings we make of language determine the instability and the creativity that interpretation of language can entail. In my study, I assume that the experience that the participants narrated during the interviews is built on the dynamics of social relations. The socio-institutional discourse that I

reviewed in Chapter One suggests the social adversities challenging the internationally educated professionals and the complication to change the everlasting underemployment of this population in Canada. The theoretic framework that I sketched in Chapter Two helped me explore the interplay of psychic apparatuses with reference to a language enriched by psychoanalysis.

As Seidman (2006) suggested, I separated the data gathering process and the data analysis process in order to "avoid imposing meaning from one participant's interviews on the next" (p. 113). Although most of the time I had listened to the record of the previous interview before interviewing the same participant again, I did not begin in-depth analysis at that time. I only attempted to recollect what he/she had narrated so that I could frame my questions in relation to his/her experiential contexts during the next interview and show the participant that I took his/her words seriously by referring to what they had remarked. Although I didn't start analyzing the data, I could not help thinking about and speculating upon what I heard from the participants now and then. As Britzman advised at the supervision meetings, I kept worksheets with me and recorded my thoughts that I guessed might be useful later for the process of data analysis.

After interviewing all the participants, I transcribed the recordings of interviews, saved the transcripts in Word format in my own laptop and placed the documents for each participant in a folder named after his/her pseudonym. In the same folder, I saved both the interview recordings and the transcript documents for the same participant. I elaborate on data maintenance later in this chapter.

After transcribing the recordings for all the participants, I started to analyze the transcripts case by case. The analytical process can be roughly divided into five stages.

At the first stage, I read the hard copy of the transcripts in each case and developed vignettes for this participant. I read the transcripts closely line by line in search of the chronological and causal logics reflected in the participant's narration. I underlined the salient words that could be used when I summarized the participant's experience and marked the compelling passages that involved conflicts, tensions and ambivalence with Text Highlight Color. I also typed comments or questions at the margin beside the highlighted passage. The primary aim at this stage was to turn their narration in an interview into a vignette. At the second stage, I reviewed the vignettes and connected them to create a more detailed vignette with a beginning, a middle part and an end from the participant's perspective. The vignettes were useful when I was writing Chapter Four and Chapter Five because I needed to review the cases from time to time and the concise vignettes made the large volume of data more manageable. At the third stage, I went back to the original transcript and concentrated on the highlighted passages. I tried to identify and make sense of the conflicts conveyed in the passages. I read the comments and questions that I had typed on the margin as well and saw if my second reflection corresponded with my earlier reflection. I took note of the tentative analysis that I made about the conflicts and differentiated it from the passage that conveyed the conflicts by using a striking font color such as dark red for the quotes in the interview. At this stage, I spent more time rereading psychoanalytical theories as well. Sometimes, I set aside the transcripts and spent days reading theories, mulling over the conflicts that I had analyzed tentatively. I also took note of my responses to the psychoanalytic readings if I found they inspired me to analyze any problems in the cases. I indicated the cases in the notes by the pseudonyms of the participants and the specific conflicts that had impressed me.

The work at this stage yielded much, enabling me to reconsider and improve the conceptual framework in Chapter Two and becoming more prepared to address the contentions more critically in relation to certain psychoanalysts' theories in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. At the fourth stage, I read the tentative analysis and modified it in relation to the psychoanalytic readings and the notes of my reading responses. The notes were necessary. They made it possible for me to recollect what I had pondered when I was analyzing specific issues in the cases in hand. At the fifth stage, I read the improved analysis that I had typed in the context of the original transcript and the highlighted passages in hope of locating salient statements or questions by the participant concerning his/her conflicts and anxieties. At this stage, I created a new Word document to attach each segment of the highlighted passages and my analysis that I wrote immediately below them. I used a salient statement or a question that I had found in the quotes as the heading of this segment and added a brief account of the context before I quoted the highlighted segment. After all the segments were processed in this way, I obtained a rough case analysis. All the cases were analyzed in this way. In the analytical process, I consistently focused on each case as it was. But with more cases being analyzed, I identified similarities among the case at hand and some of the other cases that I had previously analyzed and started considering how to group the cases in two chapters.

Before I started transcribing the interviews, I had thought about the order of handling the cases. I scanned the notes that I kept in the process of interviewing, considered the impression that the interviews had left upon my mind and resorted to my intuition regarding the intensity and complexity of anxieties in each case. Then I decided to transcribe the women participants' interviews first because they seemed to be adept in

narrating their emotional experience in more details and depth. While comparing among the participants of the same gender and deciding on which case I would transcribe first, similarly, I turned to my instinct and interest as well. Later, I followed the same order when I was analyzing the cases.

While analyzing each case, I focused on the compelling parts of the participant's experience. Internally, I was also comparing the cases and paying attention to any associations that I made. As I analyzed more cases, I became aware of similarities in different participants' reactions towards foreignness, conflicts and uncertainties. For instance, some of them showed more of a tendency to idealize life in Canada in general and had more difficulties in accepting the perceived difference between what they aspired for themselves and what they could achieve in the new environment; some of them embodied more willingness to make new meanings of their potential identity after immigration and showed more tolerance towards adversities and uncertainties. I was also aware of the relationship between their anxieties with their age, gender, class, occupation and the meanings that they had made of themselves in terms of those categories under the influence of their education. As Britzman suggested, I wrote down my associations and my speculations in my notebook. These notes helped me group the cases in two chapters. In Chapter Four, I highlighted two cases of middle-aged women who both emphasized their role as mothers and struggled much from the losses incurred as a result of immigration. In Chapter Five, I combined three cases of relatively younger immigrants, two men and one woman. Different from the cases in Chapter Four, they were in their early-thirties and didn't have children. Their experience and anxieties demonstrated a different pattern.

In the analytical process, I not only attempted to reconstruct a coherent narrative of the participants but also attended to the incoherence and contradictions within the utterances. For instance, I paid attention to the participants' tongue slips, objections and self-contradictions and used psychoanalytic theories to help speculate on latent meanings of the social utterances and the possible working of the unconscious. For instance, a male participant often paused after I asked him questions and told me that he had to spend time remembering because that was a long time ago. He also used 'we' instead of 'I' when responding to my questions about his experience. There were latent meanings behind the manifest utterances. Besides, the interview transcripts are people's utterances in certain states of mind. Therefore, I also paid attention to the participants' non-verbal language such as their laughing, sighing and crying. There might be unknown conflicts that the participants avoided addressing consciously or unconsciously. In addition, while reading their utterances, I found myself emotionally engaged with their experience. Sometimes I sympathized with some of them for the roles that they struggled with. Sometimes, I wished that they could have accepted what they could not change. Sometimes, I was touched by their desire for achievements. I have no doubt that my emotional engagement must have left traces in my case analysis. In brief, the analytical process is a process that involves thinking, reconstructing, associating and speculating.

3.6 Data Maintenance

In this study, I used the interview transcripts as the data for analysis. In order to protect the participants' privacy, I tried to keep them unidentifiable. I didn't exhibit the names of the specific universities which provided the bridging programs for the

participants. I concealed the names of the institutions with which some of the participants had issues. I assigned each participant a pseudonym and used it consistently throughout the processes of data collecting, processing, and analysis. Besides, in order to prevent any data loss, all data— the informed consent forms, the interview recordings and the transcripts, the various copies of my notes and writings— were stored in my laptop and were backed up in my USB. I was the only one who had access to them. Moreover, all the hard copies relevant to this study were locked in a case and would be safety preserved for five years after the completion of the study. They will be systematically destroyed by shredding. The data of the participants who withdrew at any point during the research were excluded in the analysis and were systematically destroyed immediately after his/her withdrawal.

3.7 Limitations

This study has limitations. Firstly, the narratives that were constructed were not verified or verifiable. The IEPs' conflicts involved their colleagues, their teachers, their mentors and even their families. But I only invited the IEPs to participate in this study. In this way, I excluded the others' perspectives. More perspectives will very likely shed new lights in understanding their experience. Secondly, this study intends to understand people's emotional experience, which could not be observed in the same way as evidence-based activities could be. It relied mostly on my invitations and questions and the IEPs' memories and impressions about certain pieces of their experience to weave the narratives. It was affected by our mutual expectations and anticipations. I depended on my sensitivity to discern transference and counter-transference in the space of our

interviews and my imagination to speculate on the hidden conflicts and the repressed anxieties. In this way, this study is subjective in nature. It lacked the objectivity that scientific research commonly desires to achieve. Thirdly, I didn't have professional training in psychoanalysis and lacked profound insights in understanding those conflictive encounters. Indeed, this study tested my containing capacities for the uncertainties in the landscape of in-depth interviewing of the internal world, the pressure of transference and counter-transference, the high volume of experience to be digested and my own limitations in understanding the contested discourses and translating them into practice.

To summarize, this research is an in-depth inquiry into the experience of internationally educated professionals who participated in bridging programs at universities in Ontario. I focus on the participants' experience in order to understand how education affects people's ways of perceiving, feeling and reasoning at time of transition as they negotiate a new home, a new identity, and a new language. Of special interest is the role played by anxieties in the context of globalization and migration.

This study contributes to the exploration of multiple ways of improving the participants' experiences in the bridging programs and provides implications for both the internationally educated professionals and the immigration policy and immigrant settlement in Ontario. In Chapter Four and Chapter Five, I highlight five cases in my study.

Chapter Four "So Many Things on My Plate" and "I Need to Be Productive"

Chapter Four consists of three sections. In section 4.1, I provide the biography of Hasan and Maya as an overview of their experiences before they participated in the university-based bridging programs. I assumed that their perceptions and expectations about the programs have an intimate relationship with their past experience. Without adequate attention to their past, it would be hard to understand their current experience, emotional experience in particular. In section 4.2 and section 4.3, I concentrate on each of the two cases, highlighting some transcripts about their respective experience in the bridging programs and revealing some tensions opened there, which reflect how their beliefs, assumptions and expectations interacted with their perceived external realties and how their anxieties resulted from the conflicts in such interactions.

4.1 Biography

When we had the interviews in the spring of 2012, Hasan and Maya both were in their late 40s. Hasan immigrated ten years earlier than Maya. Before their immigration, Hasan was a lawyer in Bangladesh; Maya held teaching and administrative positions at a university in Dubai. In Canada, Hassan had worked in law firms as a paralegal for about two years; Maya had completed a six-month contract working as an assistant in a ministry of the government. Neither of them could find a position more acceptable to themselves before they enrolled in the bridging programs.

While studying in the bridging programs, Hasan and Maya both had to take care of their children as the single parent in Canada. Hasan was a mother of three children – one at university and two at high school. Maya was a mother of two children – both at

university. Hasan's husband had returned to Bangladesh and remarried; Maya's husband returned to Dubai, where he could continue to be a chief executive in a multi-national company. Whereas the fathers detested struggling in Canada, the mothers chose to accompany their children in Canada for the sake of their education and security.

4.1.1 Hasan: A lawyer from Bangladesh

Hasan grew up in a prosperous family; her father was a prestigious industrialist in Bangladesh, who passed away when she was a teenager. Hasan studied Law and received the LLB (Legum Baccalaureus) in the early 90s and passed the bar exam soon after graduation. In 1997, when she emigrated with her family, she was practicing as a lawyer; her husband was running a business. But for the political strife and endless demonstrations in Bangladesh --- schools and universities were closed and nobody knew when the chaos would end--- they might not have considered emigration. Her husband proposed going to Canada; they were impressed by the immigration advertisements acclaiming the superiority of Canadian life in terms of education, health care and security. Indeed, Hasan was anticipating a blessed future for her children; she was also hoping to study and become a solicitor or barrister in Canada.

After immigration, Hasan searched for the possibilities to practice law in Canada and contacted the accreditation committee for individuals applying for admission to a law society in a Canadian common law jurisdiction. The committee assigned seven subjects for her to take exams. At that time, Hasan didn't think she could handle the pressure to prepare for seven exams. The challenges already felt unprecedentedly tough: nobody helped them to take care of the three small children; problems arose one after another

when they could not make ends meet; and frustration haunted them. In fact, they had to live off their savings and loans from relatives, because they only managed to bring in a meager income by driving a taxi, delivering newspapers or serving in the gas station. Although her husband attempted to operate franchises, nothing worked out in the end.

Hasan was filled with sadness by the seemingly never-ending difficulties. She doubted the sincerity of the Canadian government to "import" internationally educated professionals, claiming bitterly that their immigration was approved only because of their children, who were what Canadian government really wanted. Being aware that it was difficult to enter her profession, she prioritized accompanying and teaching her children as she feared they would suffer trauma from being in a strange environment at such an early early age. She recoiled from her ambition and became more eager to prove her parental values by ensuring that her children were all well educated. To show her presence in their life, Hasan volunteered at their children's schools and worked as a lunch supervisor at school or in the after-school programs at a community organization. In those days of doubt and disillusionment, she found comfort in the mutual attachment between her and her children.

Nine years after her immigration, Hasan went to a community college for a Paralegal diploma training. She had given up expecting her husband to ameliorate the family's life. After graduation, she managed to find paralegal positions, but she was disappointed with them. She worked diligently for the lawyers but received only a salary as low as the wages that she could have earned at working at Tim Horton's. To her disappointment, she realized that those lawyers always took her efforts for granted and never considered paying her as much as matched her efforts and efficiency. Hasan had

expected to better the financial situation of the family by working in the law firms; now she gave up the possibility of improving her life substantially by working as a paralegal.

Around that time, her marriage was broken; her husband returned to Bangladesh. Although she insisted on staying strong and positive, Hasan's life was in trouble; "stress" became her nickname. Although she met people, she could not get out of the moods. Life had felt hopeless until a friend told her of a university-based bridging program for internationally educated lawyers. Hope, which had almost been extinguished by the harsh social realities, was reignited by the news. She had repressed the idea of becoming a lawyer. However, after various attempts, Hasan seemed to believe that only "a lawyer's license" could salvage her from the long-term concerns about dependence and relieve her from the grief about loss that she had to struggle with now and then.

As the bridging program required, Hasan went through a second assessment at the accreditation committee, more than a decade after the first one. To her confusion, now she was notified to take eight exams. Her paralegal diploma and experience seemed to give her no credit at all in the committee's assessment now that she was required to take one more exam than before. She kept wondering why. In the bridging program, Hasan chatted with lawyers from various countries. To her surprise, the lawyers from India and Pakistan were assigned only three or four exams, much less than she had to take. Hasan thought that the committee's assessment was not fair, because the law systems were essentially the same in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, which were one country before their separation. Hasan questioned the committee in hope of reducing the number of required exams and making the exam preparation more manageable. However, the committee only replied briefly that they could not make any changes without evidence. In

response to this reply, Hasan embarked on the journey of evidence collection. However, after Hasan provided the official proof that she collected in Bangladesh in her petition, the committee replied that they needed to consult their own researchers to find evidence. The process of communicating with the committee was time-consuming and nerve-wracking. Every reply took weeks; Hasan was annoyed by having to keep waiting. At the time of our interviews, Hasan was still waiting anxiously for an update about her petition.

4.1.2 Maya: A teacher and administrator at a university in Dubai

Maya grew up in a family of many doctors and professors in India and got married to a family with similar professional affiliations. At early age, Maya was a keen reader and ever since demonstrated intense academic interest. She has an MBA and a PhD. Before she immigrated to Canada, Maya had been working in teaching and administrative positions at a university in Dubai. Maya's husband was a chartered accountant in a multi-national company in Dubai. When Maya left India for Dubai, it was not hard for her to settle in. In her own words, it took her only "a month to find a position and a year to have a career". The relatively smooth migration experience in Dubai entertained her illusion that the hardship of settlement in a developed country would be tolerable at least. Although both she and her husband had siblings living or working in the United States, Maya didn't seem well informed of the problems and issues in North America.

In Canada, Maya underestimated the length of time for her to find an acceptable position. After months of fruitless efforts, she went to employment agencies such as ACCESS, YMCA and COSTI. Through the New Career Bridge Program at COSTI, she managed to receive a 6-month contract to work as an assistant in a ministry of the

government. The position involved an endless amount of data input and filled her heart with deep boredom. To meet her “intellectual demand”, Maya volunteered on committees and offered to prepare documentation and analyze data. Her initiatives were appreciated by a client of the ministry, who wrote thank-you letters and informed her of available positions. However, her active presence discomforted some of her colleagues inside the ministry. One of them even dismantled her interview for a new position by offering rancorous comment on her personality to a person who called in to check Maya’s reference. She stated that “Maya was scary”. Maya didn’t know why people tended to feel scared so easily. She attributed it to what was called government culture: people were not encouraged to be industrious in such entities. Now that she didn’t fit into such government culture, she shifted her orientation to the private sector and educational institutes. To her dismay, Maya didn’t find any other position by cold applications. During the period of the research interviews, she worked part-time in a company, where her husband had worked during his short stay in Canada. He recommended Maya to work there after he returned to Dubai. Maya took it because it at least meant that she was employed.

4.2 Hasan’ Experiences in the Bridging Program

The headings of the following subsections are brief excepts from Hasan’s interviews. They represent the major ambivalence and anxieties that I can identify from reading the transcripts of the interviews that I had with Hasan.

4.2.1 "I was very excited"

All the participants in the bridging program where Hasan registered were internationally trained lawyers, who were at various stages in the accreditation and licensing process. The program was mainly made up of two parts: approximately four months of intensive classes specifically for this cohort and another three or four months of co-op in various law firms.

Hasan was attracted by this program mostly because it was funded by the government of Ontario. The funding was used to cover the tuition. Because they had to study full-time, the participants had to finance themselves with savings and bank loans. Before she heard of the bridging program, Hasan had been struggling with the ambivalence about whether it was time to work for the lawyer's license. This bridging program became an incentive for her to act. When we met for the second interview, I inquired how she felt when she knew of this program. She said,

> At that time, I was I was I was, let's put it, I was depressed a lot; I didn't know what I should do. What I wanted to do is to get license and start practicing in Ontario. So a friend of mine recommended me this program and I enrolled in this program, and it wasn't, it wasn't that easy uh because I didn't know uh they require so many things, and uh I needed my transcript from back home and those things. But I got everything, I got enrollment. Honestly I was really happy, because I really wanted to study back home when I, back home I always wanted to study abroad and, so when I heard of this program, the X University[5], I was very excited. And it started with orientation, first week was

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[5] I used "X University" to conceal the real name of the universities in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

all about orientation; honestly it was so good, I came to know uh [raise voice] so many people from different countries, but the best part about the orientation was we were all in the same boat; our goals were the same; we were not regular students; we were all mature students, you know, with family and so many other hundred things on the plate. So we could relate to each other rather than just going to university and doing a regular program with younger students; so it was amazing week, uh we came to know each other and we talked about you know our own things about our goals.

Hasan's "depression" seemed to be relieved because the bridging program helped her retrieve a sense of orientation and relation. Even though she worked now and then, Hasan always felt that she was deprived and threatened by poverty. Before her husband departed, the family had lived on the money that they had brought with them to Canada and the financial support from Hasan's mother and siblings in Bangladesh. After getting divorced, Hasan had a strong sense of urgency to become economically independent. Although she contributed her time and attention to the children and busied herself with "hundreds of things on the plate", the emptiness caused by the loss of her profession was not filled. Indeed, while dependency rendered her vulnerable and guilty, the divorce seems to have made her feel more unsafe. Under the sway of anxiety, Hasan started to think more about the changes of her family and the possible effects they would have upon her own future life. What if her old mother and siblings were unable to support her? What if her children all grew up and left her as well? Would she get regretful when she got old and recalled her entire life? Besides, when she contrasted her life with that of others such as her children in Canada, her former husband, her siblings and schoolmates

who developed well in Bangladesh, she became aware of what the losses meant to her and what she needed for herself. Although she had lived in Canada for many years, she had not found hope of improving her life by any means accessible to her except the bridging program.

Hasan's early depressive state of mind[6] had something to do with her concerns about her children. She had constrained herself in a role of anxious mother who must sacrifice for the sake of her children. To some degree, she was identifying herself with her widowed mother, a strong loving woman in her eyes, who raised six children. Besides, she tended to think through a lens of guilt to justify the sacrifice. She anticipated her own regrets if her children didn't fare well because she had not been wholeheartedly committed to them in Canada. Hasan reiterated the conflicts between the need to take care of the family and the need to work or the urgency to study for the lawyer's license. As this case shows, without systematic support, Maya could hardly overcome the systemic barriers that made it so hard to navigate a new life that she could make peace with in a real sense. For instance, the income disparity between a lawyer and a paralegal represents a social problem that could have affected most internationally educated professionals, who tend to work in positions relevant but inferior to their internationally trained professions.

On hearing of the bridging program, Hasan was "happy" and "excited". She seemed to assume that the bridging program could fill her emptiness. The university

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[6] Klein and Bion described a life-long fluctuation between two mental positions. One is called "paranoid-schizoid" and the other called "depressive". The former "encompasses both the nature of the predominant anxiety, that is the fear of persecution, and the nature of the defence against such fears" "by a focus on self-preservation at all costs" (Waddell, 2002, pp. 6-7). The latter is "a more considerate attitude" "with a somewhat balanced, though ambivalent, relationship to the other" (Waddell, 2002, p.7). It arouses "anxiety lest the fragility of the other may also endanger the self."

transcripts, degree and license to practice Law were all symbolic objects of her identity that she had treasured and locked away for so many years. In this sense, the enrollment and the orientation represented moments of stress release for the repressed desire to be noticed and cared for in hope of becoming a more integrated self.

Hasan emphasized that the best part of the orientation was to know that many people were "on the same boat". The process of accreditation was lengthy and lonely. Joining a community of people with the same professional aspiration not only enabled her to exchange thoughts but also to inspire her confidence and determination. Hasan loved the interaction that the bridging program rendered possible better than the regular programs, where most students were young Canadians, who she assumed would not be so mutually supportive.

4.2.2 "So many things on my plate"

Although she had been a lawyer in Bangladesh and worked as a paralegal in Canada, Hasan was overwhelmed by the course readings in the first few weeks. When I enquired what the program was like in our second interview, Hasan remarked,

> After a week, the real program started, and uh I mean the first thing I was so surprised, you know, when they gave us the assignments well like hundreds of pages, they introduced us, we introduced each other, and they talked about the course and then uh they gave us homework, and I was excited that, you know, I haven't done homework for twenty years or something like that. [Raise voice] I came home and I was telling my kids, "Now you know what? Today I'm gonna study with you guys." They were excited; they were like "Oh mom we

> all study together". And then [Laugh] I just read, I couldn't even finish one page; one sentence was taking me half an hour. I was like, what's wrong with me? And then I realized that uh I finished my university you know in 1991, and after 91 you know the first day of my university. And whenever I was trying to study, back of my mind, it was like "Oh I have to make dinner; Oh I have to make sure you know what lunch they take", you know so many things, I just couldn't concentrate, and I found it, at that point, I found it so difficult to concentrate, because at the back of my mind you know so many things were going on. And just sit there with the book, and reading one page took me an hour, and I was like, I was, honestly, I was thinking "Should I? It is only me?" Then I called my friend, and they all say the same thing and then I said "Oh thank god, it wasn't just me." So and then I phoned my brothers, my sisters. They were like "That's OK, you can take time; Rome wasn't built in a day and you just started; it's your first class, just do as much as you can." You know, "Don't don't force it"; you know, "Don't try to". It will happen; it will gradually take me to the places. So the support I got from my family, my friends, it was amazing, and that's how I started. And then slowly slowly we uh started to know each other, we started to help each other.

In the first interview, Hasan had asserted that she was able to do what she observed that her bosses were doing every day. Now she described how difficult it was for her to be engaged with the readings. Hasan worked as a paralegal in Canada. Why did Hasan believe that she could do what her bosses were doing? She learned it from her paralegal experience? When she described her work, Hasan emphasized that she did almost

everything except speaking in the court; he helped the lawyers conduct interviews, searched for information and prepared the documents. On the one hand, Hasan's confidence was not blind when we consider her experience of being a lawyer in Bangladesh and being a paralegal in Canada. In a society characterized by fine division of labor in any field, we could not help suspecting that the repetitive routine practice in a narrow lane within a field might not need one to retain all the knowledge that one has been required to grasp when he/she prepares for the exams in order to have a license, and that very likely one only remembers what he/she often uses in his/her work routines and forgets the rest of what he/she used to master. Hasan's remarks about the difficulty in engaging with conceptual readings revealed something true for any professional who returns to school after passing exams many years ago in the contemporary system of professional education. Paradoxically, we might not bother to reevaluate the practicing lawyers, in contrast to the internationally educated lawyers, with extra comprehensive exams; we would rather assume that they could meet the desirable standard symbolized by passing the local examinations once and for all.

On the other hand, Hasan's desire to practice law as early as possible might have caused her to underestimate the complexity of a lawyer's work. After all, practicing law in a new country involves being alert to the differences between Canada and the countries where the IEPs come from in terms of both theories and practice. Theories are essential to help the professionals understand the complexities beneath the practices. Without theories, practice offered little insights. As Britzman (2003) suggested in *Practice Makes Practice,* we need theories to reflect upon our practice critically. Although she was referring to teacher education, Britzman's proposition is true to all professional education.

The work of a lawyer, similar to that of a teacher, not only involves knowledge about the prevalent procedures and routines, common skills of doing research and putting the concepts into use, it also involves understanding the historical and sociological complexities and the professional ethics regarding the practice of law in the ever changing Canadian contexts. More importantly, it requires people to make critical judgments about complicated situations and even create new humane possibilities.

Under the sway of anxieties, Hasan tended to take attending the bridging program and passing the exams as the same thing. She didn't seem concerned about developing her capacities for handling the local complexities as much as passing the exams as early as possible. With the strict time limit imposed on her by the accreditation committee, she could not prioritize understanding theories; instead, she constantly calculated the cost of failing the deadlines or the exams.

Hasan reiterated that she had "many things" on her plate. She sounded overwhelmed by a demanding life. We could feel her dilemma between devotion to her profession and that to her maternal duties. The study in the bridging program brought her hope, but it also challenged her accustomed ways of living. Having "so many things going on" at the back of Hasan's mind revealed the state of mind that a person usually manifests when he/she could hardly accommodate his/her new experience in relation to their past experiences. Hasan said that she never imagined that she would have to learn how to manage her life in such a hard way after immigration. Her life in Bangladesh probably was luxurious; they had a chef and a chauffeur who helped them with their everyday life. After immigrating to Canada, Hasan felt that she was obliged to do

everything. Such contrast of life is characteristic of many internationally educated professionals. It tests and challenges their old modes of being and learning.

Hasan attributed the difficulties of learning to her age and her maternal duties. But she seemed unaware of her mode of learning. Bion's work is pervaded by "a contrast between learning 'about' things and being able to learn from the experience of the-self-in-the-world" (Waddell, 2002, p. 106). Waddell suggested that merely learning about things would "encourage the mere proliferation of qualifications and expertise – the 'learning' which may measure external success without increasing internal growth" (2002, p. 106). Although she was middle-aged and had worked as a lawyer, Hasan sometimes moved away from the maturity and considerateness that were usually expected of an educated adult. For instance, before she embarked on something new, she tended to underestimate the challenges. When she encountered any challenge, she tended to seek the company of others who encountered the same challenge to get a relief. She didn't seem to find that part of herself playing the "observing" and "holding" function when her unconscious desires or anxieties outweighed her rationality or when the external barriers outweighed her ability to negotiate with them. The bridging program where she found others with similar experiences seemed to play the containing function for her doubt and ambivalence. As she said,

> Sometime I had to stay back uh to study, because I found it very helpful to study in a group, because to study, everybody is different, before, even before I studied like back when I studied at university, I studied with my friends, and I found it helpful there because that's my way of doing it, so I had to stay back and study with my friends, and then I take the train.

Waddell contended that "any one state of mind in the present, however fleeting, is founded in the past, and at the same time it encompasses a possible future" (2002, p. 5). Similar to the states of mind, it is possible to discern the "underlying predominance" of one mode of learning over another, although they shift and change (Waddell, 2002, p. 106). Waddell discussed three modes of learning: the adhesive mode, where "learning takes place by way of imitation, of a mimicking, parroting, adhesive kind"; the projective mode, where one anxiously seeks "to be someone that he or she isn't, projectively acting in role or even experiencing the self as if it *is* the other; and the introjective mode, where one resiliently seeks "understanding by engaging with his or her own experience of a secure, inner sense of self, derived from a capacity for introjective identification with good and thoughtful qualities of mind" (2002, p. 106). The bridging program was reminiscent of Hasan's mode of learning in Bangladesh. In contrast to people who were able to concentrate on their study, Hasan depended on an organized community to a great extent. Although we could not tell exactly what Hasan's mode of learning was by reading the transcripts, we could speculate upon what other possibilities might happen to an internationally educated professional if the introjective mode dominates his/her modes of learning. Unfortunately, contemporary education that overemphasizes efficiency, concrete knowledge retention and standard examinations might have been unknowingly reproducing vehemently the adhesive and projective modes of learning.

Hasan suggested other reasons why she found learning in the bridging program difficult as well. She mentioned the professors' pedagogical arrangements and expectations. She remarked,

> After doing everything, I had to do my homework because I wanted to keep up with the class, and this like bridging program, these are not like regular university program, they just teach you uh only the part that is important for you to pass the required courses; they don't have, they don't have time uh like, usually for example, the Criminal Law, they have two parts, part one and part two, and we had to finish the whole thing, I would say, in less than a month, and they had two semesters for Criminal Law, it's a huge subject, so if we didn't do our homework, next day we were all like blank, because it wasn't designed that way that. You do your homework and when you come to the class, so that when I'm talking that, like they didn't have time to go through everything, so unless we studied on our own the day before, the class would be totally useless for me, because I wasn't getting anything. But they did tell us that, "Read, do read", you know, from 17 pages to a hundred pages "so that you have the basic idea, and when I teach you again, sort of get the concept".

Hasan's remarks made me wonder: why was she feeling it so hard to read the pages if she managed to concentrate? As English was the language that Hasan used at university in Bangladesh, she should not have a language problem. Then was it because she didn't develop adequate skills of extensive readings in English? Or she forgot the concepts that she had learned so many years ago? Or those concepts were not taught at her university in Bangladesh? What does the "blankness" that Hasan mentioned imply about the contradiction between her mode of learning and the expedient mode of teaching in the program? These factors, combined with her unconscious anxieties, seemed to have made it hard for Hasan to be really engaged with the learning process.

4.2.3 "Do they really bridge the gap?"

In Hasan's case, the interview transcripts suggested the incompatibility between the bridging program, which intended to accommodate the needs of internationally lawyers to have an overview of the legal system of Canada and rendered the working environment accessible to them, and the law society and the accreditation committee, which endeavored to guarantee the quality of legal services and safeguard the public interests. The institutions had their own respective concerns. As Britzman (2003) stated,

> Typically, institutions represent themselves from their official perspectives: what should happen, goals for achieving this, and an idealized representation of its workings. Official perspectives generally govern the effort of public relations but also contain fragments of the aspiration and hopes of the community. (p. 72)

The government provided funding for each qualified participant in the bridging programs. The constraints of time and aims prevented the professors from transmitting knowledge in detail and in depth. However, Hasan had been used to the common practice at university, where "the lecture format is typically employed to dispense knowledge, and examinations are the chief means for exchanging credits leading to credentials" (Britzman, 2003, p. 56). When I asked her what the classes were like, Hasan remarked,

> Some of the professors were great, they just uh, we had a very nice environment, the classroom environment was really good, even the professors they were at one point, they were kind of like, here it shouldn't be the right word, they were feeling 'awkward', because they were not teaching like regular students, they were teaching like lawyers from different jurisdictions,

> so for them it was a little bit difficult as well, and all the time they were saying, like you know what, “Don’t think we are teaching you, we’re learning from you as well”, so that made us very comfortable. And uh of course back home like uh we didn’t have, but here like no question is stupid question; “if you don’t get it, just ask, just ask”, but back home we cannot have that thing, we were like shy, and if we didn’t understand anything, probably we had to pretend we did in front of like hundred other students. “Should I ask that question? You know, “What would other students think?” You know, “Is that a stupid question to ask?” But here I learned it the hard way, but I did it eventually, I did learn it. Of course the professor kept asking, “Did you get it? Did you have any questions?” Initially it was difficult, but later on, it helped a lot, you know asking questions to understand the concept, it helped a lot.

In the bridging program, professors mainly assigned readings and answered students’ questions, but they also tried to cultivate an inclusive and caring environment. Hasan felt more comfortable when the professors viewed the participants as lawyers and expressed their diplomatic willingness to learn from them as well. The gesture of inter-subjectivity invited the possibility for the participants to engage in what they all cared about as individuals. It recognized the necessity to collaboratively explore what accommodations and adaptations would be needed for people to know better about the unfamiliar professional encounters. Hasan’s emotional response to the pedagogy of questions reflected the tensions between the professors’ focus on the participants’ questions and her previous dependence on lectures and her acculturated “shyness” to ask questions for fear of being judged and losing face. In a sense, the caring and respectful

environment that “some professors” created helped the participants to get engaged with what they didn’t understand.

However, Hasan viewed the committee’s exams as the gap that the bridging program should have helped her bridge. When I asked her about her expectations of the program, Hasan remarked,

> My expectation was totally different, like you know the bridging program is to bridge the gap, right? The gap you have in between you have degree back home and or your license back home and then to get your license here. The whole, the main purpose is to bridge the gap, but uh I was excited because I uh [pause] I mean for us to be a student all over again, that was the hardest , we did come over that part, and but the class the course was only four (months), because the internship was four five months and the class was like four months, you cannot, like four years degree, no way you can bridge the gap in four months, it’s like uh what we learned like in a year, maybe they tried to do it in two weeks, and of course the core subjects are different, like the Criminal Law is totally different than back home, the Criminal Law in Bangladesh, the Criminal Law in Canada, and Constitution, in Bangladesh it’s totally different than the Constitutional Law in Canada, which is really like for a year here, it’s really for the class we had uh less than a month, and it wasn’t. And I think what they should do, the bridging program should be something like, I’m not saying like four years, and then you can start, you know, enrolling in a university, but the bridging program should be something like, you know, it should be longer, where they [slow down] will teach you a subject uh not in

> two weeks, it's not a diploma, it's like you're trying to go to the bar, which is like, which is, it is like it's a degree, a bachelor's degree that I got from home four years and my experience and then I enrolled in my master's and then for the bar. But here the bridging program that you know, it's very intensive, like so intensive, it's very difficult when you're not a regular student and when you have a family and sometimes you are the only bread owner of the family.

Hasan's remarks showed her anxieties about failing for not learning enough within the short span of time. She liked the environment of group learning in the bridging program, but she was troubled by the accreditation committee's "rigid" structure of having to register for the exams within certain amount of time after the credential evaluation and having very few options available to her. Although she was assigned many exams by the accreditation committee, Hasan was eager to attend the bar exam. She considered preparation for the committee's exams and preparation for the bar exam to be conflicting with each other. She admitted that in order to pass a bar exam, one needed to "know everything", but she also contended that too many exams prevented her from preparing for the bar exam well.

Besides, there was incongruence between the courses in the bridging program and the subjects to review for the committee's exams. Hasan believed that she could have retained the knowledge better if she had been allowed to take the committee's exams one by one around the time of completing the corresponding subjects in the bridging program. The courses in the bridging program were different from the university courses recognized by the accreditation committee. Hasan hoped that the professors could have spent more time teaching the specific laws unique to Canada. She thought that she could

have learned better about these laws if she had been funded to study in the regular program at university. When I asked her what could be done to improve the bridging program, Hasan said,

> I think they should offer the exam themselves, so that we could have taken the exams (at university) because like you're teacher, you know, like back you know in China, you, there you meet your student, exam is something, it's not all people do well in exam, but when you know your student, that he or she is a good student[7].

Hasan believed in her ability to learn and work as a lawyer and considered her a good student. But she lacked confidence in passing the committee's exams within the time frame that had been prescribed. Hasan suggested substituting the subject exams in the bridging program for the committee's exams. Such suggestion reflected her anxiety of failing the exams again, similar to school students' anxiety about standardized examinations. Her anxiety was intensified by the gossip that people who had passed the committee's exams failed in the bar exam.

In brief, the transcripts exposed three layers of tensions. First, Hasan could not integrate the professional part of herself and the maternal part of herself very well. The status of being a single mother in need of financial resources made it harder for her to follow her professional dream. Secondly, the arrangement of the bridging program collided with her expectations of learning in the bridging program. The examinations assigned by the committee were still barriers in terms of the quantity of exams and the

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[7] Hasan's transference here helped manifest her anxieties and her intensions to participate in this study. I felt more or less uncomfortable with her projective identification. On the one hand, I could see my inclination to disagree with her. On the other hand, I managed to not interrupt her in case her free association should be disrupted. I just looked at her attentively and let her go on.

time prescribed to prepare for them. Thirdly, she attempted to learn but often could hardly reflect upon her unlearning and the limits of her mode of learning. The anxieties formed under the pressure of conflicts were barriers to overcome as well.

4.2.4 "I'm stuck"

By the time of our interviews, Hasan had already passed four exams, half of those that the committee had assigned her. She petitioned the committee to exempt her from the other four courses because she claimed that Bangladesh, like India and Pakistan, was a common-law country and she should be assigned as many courses as lawyers from India and Pakistan. The committee disagreed. When I asked what the negotiation was like, Hasan remarked,

> At one point in their website, they put Bangladesh under the common-law country. (The committee) didn't even know that, so I pointed it to them that "OK, how about now you're saying Bangladesh is a common law country?" They came back to me. They said, "That was uh [pause] a technical error." I said, "Are you serious? At this point you said "a technical error" from your website? Do you have any idea that I had to travel back and forth two times, two thousand (dollars) for the cost, uh like two thousand dollars, and huge money (to collect the evidence)?"

Hasan's mind was preoccupied by the "struggles" with the committee. Although she looked calm, Hasan sounded angry when she was asking the questions. Hasan was determined to prove that it was not "a technical error". When we had the interviews, the registration deadlines for the other exams were approaching; Hasan was counting down

and counting on the committee's revision. She was upset with the nonchalance that characterized the attitude of the committee. In this study, I didn't check with the committee about the issue of "technical error". But it is not hard to imagine how much trouble an error or a mistake committed by an accreditation committee could have brought to the internationally educated professionals, who tend to have agency to take actions and negotiate for fair treatment.

Having lived in Canada for fifteen years, Hasan was familiar with the popular discourse about racism, prejudice and bureaucracy, and accordingly cognizant of the necessity for the individuals to claim one's rights and defend one's interest. When I asked what she did in the process of negotiation, Hasan remarked,

> I got the letter from the dean of Y University[8], from uh the Attorney General. (The committee) didn't accept it. They said that, "OK, we will do our research." I said, "When you have everything, and it's not that I'm making it up, the dean is giving you the letter, the Attorney General is sending it to you." They always want it directly from the university, directly from Bangladesh Bar Council. Again they didn't accept it. So after they reviewed, they said, "No, Bangladesh is a hybrid jurisdiction." So basically, I'm a fighter, especially I fight when I think it's there. It's, it's not something that I'm just trying to say it, you know, or I don't have any proof. I'm a lawyer, I am not saying without evidence, who knows more than a lawyer you cannot say something if you cannot prove it. So I, one day, then I appealed.

[8] To protect the participant's confidentiality, I used Y University to refer to the university where Hasan graduated in Bangladesh.

Hasan asserted that she was a “fighter”. This time she was not fighting with an individual but the committee representing the authoritarian voice of an inherited institution, where people are more likely to appreciate the prevailing “official” ideology and are usually more interested in their own “problems of control and direction” (Britzman, 2003, p. 72). Hasan must have considered the economy of “fighting”. The unaccountability of the committee’s evaluation and its “technical error” incited her resistance. The inconsistence and non-responsiveness firmed Hasan’s belief in the righteousness of her fight not only in a religious sense but also with political significance. As Hasan later remarked, the dispute elevated to one between Bangladesh and Canada in terms of the former’s legal system and the fair treatment of Bangladeshi lawyers in Canada.

The “fight” had lasted four months and led Hasan nowhere. In her eyes, the committee was pretentious and over-defensive. She suggested that it was only concerned about maintaining the status quo, although it claimed to be for the public interest. For institutions like the committee, time seemed to mean nothing more than time itself. For individuals, time was equated with life change. When I asked her what she did in response to the impasse, Hasan said,

> I didn’t uh lose my hope. I went back to Bangladesh again. I involved Bangladesh government, and the Law Minister from Bangladesh. He was here last year, and I spoke with him, I met him. And I got Bangladesh involved, I got the High Commission of Bangladesh involved, I got the Fairness Commission involved, Human Rights, Attorney General in the provincial level, Attorney General in the federal level, then the minister of citizenship and

> immigration, and the advisor to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. I got everybody involved, because initially it was my battle and now all the Bangladesh law students, back then they all joined us, because our thing is that we have proof that if you consider India, Pakistan as common law, then you should consider Bangladesh as common law too.

Under the anxiety of losing time and being treated unfairly, Hasan escalated her struggle to an international contention. By getting people involved in a collective resistance against the committee's judgment, Hasan seemed to regain a sense of "powerfulness" that was associated with the profession of lawyers.

Hasan could have spent the struggle time preparing for the extra exams that the committee had assigned her. But she chose to fight. If we look at this issue from a long distance, we could find that it was caused by the existing difference in categorizing the legal systems of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Are they all common law countries? These three countries were all British colonies and inherited its legal legacies. They have been undergoing changes since they separated as independent countries. When the committee assessed the credentials of internationally educated lawyers, they assumingly had depended on the institutional discourses about various categorizations, which was often inaccessible to the individuals. Here we could speculate upon the chaos of various discourses and the institutional attempts to stabilize and finalize its judgment. The problem here is whether the technical process of classification and exam assignment could result from prejudice and into inequality, which, if accompanied with a lack of accountability and an inefficient petition process, could lead to social resistance and even international disputes.

Now if we approach the issue closer, we will realize that when individuals and the institutions could not have a meaningful dialogic relationship, the individuals, especially those knowing the discourses of democracy and human rights, would be sensitive to such problems as authoritarian control, suppression and discrimination informed by the discourses, both professional and discursive public discourses. Besides, it is reasonable to imagine that internationally educated professionals tend to become egalitarian activists both because of their agency that their education helped develop and because of the default social defensiveness against their agency. In a country which officially advocates democracy and equity, individuals tend to have more motivation to publicize their private voices to arouse the institutional attention and seek the structural modification.

If we still look closer, we will see the individual's affective investment more clearly, as we have been doing in this study. We might keep wondering about her fights. For instance, what might be the result of the struggle? What benefit could Hasan obtain from it? What lessons would the committee learn and what adjustments would it consider making? These questions are opened up by the case of Hasan. Regardless of the possibilities of the answers, Hasan's case revealed the tenacity of resistance embodied by internationally educated professionals who were characterized by a dominant "concern with one's own interests, by a sense of persecution in the face of pain and emotional distress, and by a focus on self-preservation" (Waddell, 2002, pp. 6-7). Hasan's fight was sustained by her belief in justice and her anxiety of losing time, money and hope.

When I inquired what she was afraid of while she was attending the bridging program, she remarked,

> Time is the main thing. Because time is running, time. I just, I don't get it like uh [pause] because none of us, I mean, I'm not getting any younger, and also the money, and like, I don't, like, I don't have any job, I'm applying to places, and I'm not getting any job. I finished these courses and this job market is very bad. And time is running out, and I'm just waiting. But uh time is running out. It is, it's like we filed the petition, like right now I cannot go back, I cannot go forward, my life is on hold, because they are not letting, they are not giving the decision.

Hasan's dilemma was that the deadlines to register for the other four exams were approaching while she was anticipating not taking them. If the committee changed its decision after she had registered, she would lose the registration fees. If she didn't register by the deadlines and the committee didn't change its judgment, she would miss the deadlines and might have to not only spend more money on more evaluations but also lag behind her cohort in the bridging programs. Hasan said, "I cannot go back". It sounded somewhat regretful. Yes, she could not become young again; she could not make a different decision about immigration; she could not relive her life in Canada; she could not even change the reality of fighting with the committee. The sway between being hopefully anticipative and being hopelessly anxious characterized her emotional world. As she suggested, she was consumed by her anxieties and could not concentrate on her study. In a sense, Hasan found the uncertainties in the host country unbearable. In other words, the uncertainties that were aggravated by immigration were excessively demanding to her.

In the third interview, Hasan reflected upon her experience in the bridging program. She remarked,

> When looking back now, I wish I could have concentrated on the class more, but at that time I was thinking that, I just wanted to get over with it; I wanted to write the exams, and I wanted to pass, and I wanted to get my license and get practicing. So I couldn't even concentrate on the class, and I couldn't even decide which exam to write or whether I register in August. So it was extremely challenging, it was extremely challenging.

When I interviewed her, Hassan impressed me as someone who was searching for channels to inform people of her experience of being wronged. When I read and reread the interview transcripts, I saw a woman overwhelmed by the lived challenges. The parental duties for this single mother were challenging; the course work in the bridging program was challenging; the committee's exams were challenging; the job market was challenging; negotiating with institutions was also challenging. Now it seemed challenging too to handle her confusion, anxiety and occasional paranoia with the uncertainty after filing the petition with the committee.

4.2.5 Will and music

Hasan's emotional responses to the challenges revealed a mixture of strong will and intense anxiety. Because the barriers and the uncertainties were beyond her capacity to control, she was liable to sway between panic and composure, excitement and depression, and hopefulness and desperation. To balance the swaying state of affects, Hasan employed "religious" will as a strategy. She said,

> I practice here uh with another lawyer, criminal law, and we used to do cases for young offenders, and I like I would like first to do uh criminal law, I want to do that field, that is my passion because I think I think I can help people, I can make a difference. I love challenges you know; if it's there, I want to stick to the end, you know. I don't want to give up, just because, you know, like I know maybe not today, it will happen tomorrow. I have that belief and I I'm very positive, and [pause] I have learned one thing that if you really work hard for it, anything happens. You believe if you have the faith.

When she said "I love challenge", "I will stick to the end" and "I'm very positive", Hasan revealed a strategy that she had been consciously or unconsciously resorted to, that is, to keep fantasizing about one's will to be a brave and positive person. An irony here was that Hasan's faith sustained her motive of struggle but failed to help her work through her anxieties and concentrate on her studies.

A second strategy that Hasan used was listening to music and songs. She compared it to something in her blood. She said,

> Music is something for me, because I started learning music when I was five years old. My father was my mentor, and my father used to tell me, because uh we were like uh eight brothers and sisters; like I have five brothers; uh my [lower voice] like he was second, he uh died in a car accident, and my father couldn't handle it. He just he just couldn't accept it, you know, he was gone. He was so much into music. I still remember he told me that, uh he's to play or sing all the time, every every single day. And I asked him, "Why do you like music so much?" And he tells me, "Try it." He sits with me, and "Just sing a

> song, and see how you feel something that you really like." So I sit with him, and then I, you know, I feel that I was in a different world, that I could I could easily like lock everything, and I could easily like going to that world, like with the tune, with the lyric and everything. I could picture myself, like if it's a love song, I could picture myself that I'm in that place and nothing can touch me, and I'm above all those things. So you know, my father taught me that, and it's it's, I believe it's going to be with me as long as I live. And I [raise voice] I like, I just go for a walk, my music, I feel like I'm on top of the world, nothing can touch me. If I listen to one good song, I feel like that, "Vow! Life, it is wonderful! Why do I even complain?"

According to Waddell (2002), one's 'present' "is imbued with the lights and shadows of his own past, and of his parents' past" (p. 6). Hasan identified with her father and inherited the same ego defensive mechanism as he used. He took flight from the pains of his loss and the hardship of his mourning by the imaginative power of music. Similarly, Hasan managed to escape from her problems by immersing herself into music and benefiting from the healing effects of arts. The imagined world of peace and love seemed to protect Hasan's ego from the pain within and without. Apparently, Hasan enjoyed standing on "the top of the world", which was associated with success, grace and salvation and might mean that it was possible to have a bird's-eye view of what happened beneath. By saying "nothing can touch me", Hasan expressed her desire for self emancipation. What might she want to liberate herself from? Was she thinking about the superego's guidance in terms of obligations, responsibilities and restrictions? Was she suggesting the significant others in her life? Was she implying the complexities and

complications that she could not accept? By insulating her, she seemed to find a secure time and space to ignore her vulnerability temporarily. It seemed as if such illusion gratified her desire for a sense of "omnipotence" in contrast to her sense of being deprived in the mundane life. Freud (2003) once wrote about hallucinatory gratification that dreams could bring. He wrote,

> In every dream, a drive-wish is supposed to be represented as fulfilled. The nocturnal closing-off of the psyche from reality and the regression to primitive mechanisms that is thereby achieved make it possible for the desired drive-gratification to be experienced in hallucinatory form as something happening now. (Freud, 2003, p. 14)

Hasan's account suggested similar regressive experience when she resorted to music and singing. As Bion suggested about the defensive mechanisms, "An alternative way of avoiding the pain of frustration is to turn to phantasies of omniscience and omnipotence, as substitutes for the dreaded experience of being starved of food for thought" (Waddell, 2002, p. 115). When her strong will failed to provide relief for the troubled mind and soul, Hasan could only evade the anguish through the "magic" power of music. In this process, Hasan was seeking the internal company of her father, who was a very influential industrialist and tender father in her memories.

4.3 Maya's Experiences in the Bridging Program

The headings of the following subsections are excerpts from Maya's interviews. They represent the major concerns and anxieties that I can identify from reading the transcripts of the interviews with Maya.

4.3.1 "Where could I find 'the little window'"?

The bridging program that Maya attended was at a university well known for its professional education. It consisted of compulsory courses targeted at the IEPs and selective courses open for all the students in the faculty. Maya heard of this bridging program from her son, a student at the same university. Because Maya had an MBA and a PhD, it was of little interest to her initially. She remarked,

> I'm having a feeling, why should I go to the bridging undergraduate certificate? So I said, in what way it can help me? And I've done so many things, I've done COSTI, I've done TRY, I've done Career Bridge, what more do I need too? If I know, this is the best, this is unique thing coming, at least it's special. I came to the (information) session; I heard what they had to say. The only question I asked, "I already had PhD. So in what way it's going to help me?" And I went, and then they called me and they said that "Dr. XX[9], the faculty chair of our department, she wants to talk to you." So she called me and she decided, "I would like to meet you", and I met her and she said, "I know you have your degree, but despite that I recommend that you do this program, because I'm telling you definitely in six months it will definitely make a difference." I said, "OK, I tried everything and let me try this." And I decided that my children will be on graduation next year, and I decided that I will any way settle for their graduation, because one will have Master's at twenty-three twenty-two years old. So I said (to myself), "OK, at that point I can leave them on their own, and I can go back to Dubai." So that's what's going on in my mind. For them, I'm not settling yet, I'm not getting a job equal to my

[9] Maya's real name is concealed here to protect her confidentiality.

qualifications, so what's the use of wasting my time? So I took the IEP program as my final chance (of getting a job that does not mean wasting my time here).

Maya stressed that she was underemployed in Canada considering her doctoral degree and her promotion to professorship in Dubai before she immigrated to Canada. She was very proud of her academic and professional achievements. She assumed that her PhD proved her academic competence and that her professional trajectory signified her excellence in undertaking professional responsibilities. Competence and excellence constituted the most important part of her identity.

Maya immigrated to Canada because she wanted to accompany her children and lead a free life. She was anticipating a freer life that she had not been able to pursue because of her parents' influence and the limitations of the cultural environment in developing countries, which I will elaborate upon later in this section. However, after immigration, Maya's dilemma was that she could hardly find a position where she could realize her dream of academic freedom while she had time to take care of her children. Maya had tried various ways to enter the job market but obtained nothing that met her expectations. The difficulties involved the lack of a "window" for people to recognize her abilities and appreciate her values. Maya had been accustomed to being industrious and ambitious in both her study and her work. The external success that she had made in the past made her believe that those values were universal and rewarded everywhere. When she searched for the "windows", she habitually followed her principle of excellence and was not cautious of any blind spots that she tended to ignore in the new environment. In

the bridging program, what Maya cared most was "being excellent" and "making a difference". When I inquired of her what she did in the bridging program, she remarked,

> I did the foundation courses, and I did my specialized courses, and I was 90%, 95% for each of the different courses, and all the six courses I got five A+, I got one A, and I was doing great. Academically, I was very happy, very satisfied. And it was like I'm an old model for my children. I want to get A+. My son is like, "Are you joking? Nobody get A+." But I'll show you, and all my children see me. OK, they want to get A-. So in that way, nothing goes to waste your life. It's a positive modeling for them. All that is fine; and I'm getting the intellectual satisfaction. When I have to work on group project, when I have to submit report, and I get 95% in the final exam, it's intellectually satisfying to me. But [pause] it's been now almost eight months, I joined in September, so four months, in fall, four months, in winter, eight months, already two months in the summer, and ten months now, and in two months I will finish. And because I was getting such a good grade, I got a chance to do a leadership program, the IEP the bridging program department selected me to do another alternate program called leadership program, which was a post-graduate certificate. So I (said to myself), "OK, fine, they're giving me; it's all free, so I'll do it." I took it up and I'm doing that, not benefit from even this course.

Maya sounded excited when she talked about the 'intellectual gratification' and 'self-pride' in receiving "A+" and being a role model for her children. She emphasized her need for intellectual excellence because this had been important to her since she was

a child. She didn't discuss whether she learned new perspectives that could help her to understand things specific to her profession in the local environment. She didn't mention anything new that helped her become a more mature thinker in the profession as a whole. Why could Maya not recognize any benefits that the various courses could potentially bring to her? She seemed to be exclusively concerned about the means to an end. Here seemed to be her logic: accepting the offers to participate in the bridging program was regarded merely as a means to the end of finding a position matching her interest and ability; not arriving at the end was equated with making no difference and similarly making no difference meant getting no benefits.

In the bridging program, Maya took initiatives to communicate with the faculty in hope of being able to work at the university. When I inquired of her what she did, Maya said,

> When I see the faculty here, I say, "I I just want to do research, I want to get into research, I want to get into teaching, I want to get into consulting." Nobody wants to give a chance. I've tapped on every faculty's door, sending them my request to help them in their research, to assist them in the consultancy, to do post-doctoral work. How do I go about it? This is really what I want to help. And they all say, "Yeah you get well with your career, don't you? You can teach, why not?" But I don't see that next step for me forward, "This is the chance, OK, we take you to teach or we give you (an opportunity)."

Nobody in the bridging program responded straightforwardly to her offer to "help". What might people think about Maya when she expressed her eagerness to give a hand?

Might they get scared by her in the same way as her former colleagues had been in the ministry, which I will elaborate in the next subsection? Might they get suspicious in the same way as the receivers of her resumes might do? Did her academic excellence mean the same to them? Maya took initiatives to contact the faculty and introduce herself to them. It showed part of her personality of being bold and candid. But she seemed uninterested in understanding how people might think and feel about her. Lack of reflection upon her relationship with others in a multi-cultural metropolitan city, Maya was the one who impressed me most for her confusion about what happened between her and others.

Maya didn't discuss how Canada might differ from Dubai and India or how different social problems might affect employment and unemployment. She was anticipating building her career on top of her past experience in Dubai and India. When I inquired of her why she had expected to find professional positions in Canada, she remarked,

> Read about advertisement, which said [raise voice] "Canadian government want doctors, want lawyers, want share accountant; all you're going to do is value here; we need your skills". And that's the illusion that we had that Canada require our professional expert, but when I came here, Canada didn't require professional expert, Canada didn't value our professional expert. And I don't understand things. When I left India to Dubai, it took me about a year to settle down in Dubai, and I had the confidence that when we came to Dubai, and my husband, we had qualification in our field, so we can find a job, we can make a life for ourselves, we can grow in our life, in our career, that hope was

there. And Dubai didn't let us down because within a month I found a job and within a year I had a career.

After immigration to Canada, Maya was shocked by what she found here "from every end". For instance, the image of Canada as a developed country melted down because of the poverty that she perceived about Canadians, who had to live on loans in contrast to people in Dubai, who lived on cash. In Canada, Maya was also shocked by the way people treated her as if she were a "housewife". She said, "I used to cry every night, because I felt I was wasting my life; I was wasting my work, like my career."

In a sense, Maya had idealized the working opportunities in developed countries. She tended to be unsuspecting in front of the immigration advertisements sweetening developed countries because she hoped that it was true. Similarly, she was inclined to idealize higher education. I was wondering, why did she assume that she could "grow" as a scholar in developed countries? Why did she believe that her qualifications in India and Dubai would bring her competitive advantages when she was applying for positions in the Canadian context? How much would she like to know about the job market in Canada?

Maya was somewhat disappointed with the bridging program. She didn't think there was any knowledge gap on her part that the program helped bridge. The knowledge covered by the courses was essentially the same as what she had learned in India except that more emphasis was put on the practical application of concepts and theories here. She thought she was mostly relearning the same thing. There were no surprises for her: she earned high marks as she had always done; she was a top student as she had always been.

Maya admitted that the courses were intellectually meaningful. But she didn't see the meanings beyond the high marks. Were the concepts interpreted in the same way in Canada as she had studied and understood before? What new perspectives had impressed her in the interactions among the professors and the students? What new meanings did she make as she tried to compare her lived experience in India, Dubai and Canada? What new practices and standards drew her interest? Maya was not excited with the courses. Did the curriculum and the pedagogy used by the professors help her get engaged in understanding an immigrant professional's life at present in Canada?

John Dewey (1997) discussed "preparation" when he tried to offer philosophical principles to differentiate educative experience from mis-educative experience. He wrote,

> The ideal of using the present simply to get ready for the future contradicts itself. It omits, and even shuts out, the very conditions by which a person can be prepared for his future. We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything (p. 49).

According to Britzman (2003), Dewey's major concern is "with the work of shaping and interpreting experience, and whether such interpretations lead to transformative knowledge about self and the social world" (p. 50). Apparently, Maya had no problem with English language and specialized knowledge. But she seemed to lack "transformative knowledge about self and the social world" at present. In the bridging program, it seemed that nobody helped her identify any gaps she needed to work on if she wanted to do research or teach at university. In Maya's mind, the gaps were external:

others might not be willing to recognize her values and potentialities in the current structure of human resource recruitment in Canada.

4.3.2 "How to prevent people from feeling upset with me?"

Maya was empowered by her academic excellence. She identified herself with successful models in her family and capable leaders in the working place. She impressed me deeply with her strong personality and tendency to adhere to and act out her ambition. When she recalled her work before she immigrated, she said,

> I was so passionate with my work. And I have very good prospect; I was going to be promoted to be a full-professor, and I was going to teach HR, undergraduate students, because they are making BBA program, and I was also going to head the institutional research department a lovely future for me.

There seems to be nothing wrong for an individual to work hard and seek external success. In fact, the discourse of success and competition has been reproduced vehemently in every corner of the world and impacted and shaped many personalities. However, if the individuals rigidly follow it, it would not benefit their internal growth or help them develop "a more benign introjective capacity with a consequent enrichment of the personality" (Waddell, 2002, p. 107). They tend to overlook their own and others' emotional investments. With such an emotional blind spot, they might have difficulty understanding people's differences. Such a tendency is more prominent in societies or cultures that emphasize external success as opposed to a combination of more values.

4.3.2.1 Maya's team leader: "(Maya) intimidated people"

Before she participated in the bridging program, Maya had managed to have a 6-month contract working as an assistant in a ministry of the government. That experience frustrated her. When I asked her to describe what she did in that position, Maya said, "Just inputting, inputting, inputting, inputting; it didn't intellectually challenge me."

The government is commonly known as the largest institution with the least initiative to make innovations inside; the positions in the government are assigned with specified responsibilities for individuals in those positions to follow. Those who represent the institution are likely to "be mainly interested in their own face to face problems of control and direction and the day to day pressures of their own survival within the inherited institution" (Willis, 1977, pp. 177-178, cited in Britzman, 2003, p. 72).

Maya didn't tell me anything about the work culture in the ministry. What was on her mind was what else she could do that could meet her intellectual and emotional needs. When I inquired of what she did, she remarked,

> In order to satisfy my intellectual needs, I started volunteering in committee, started preparing documentation, volunteering this, that, working with the data analysis, the additional deputy ministers. I want to kind of bring out my intellectuals; I want to get satisfied in some other way, maybe not the job.

Maya's extra contributions seemed to be rewarding for a while. She received praise letters from a ministry client; then she was given interviews for positions more interesting to her in another ministry of the government. However, things didn't go as well as they appeared. To her shock, one of her colleagues spoke ill of her when the call of random reference check came in after Maya passed the interviews for that new position. Maya felt

at loss as to why people would throw impediments in her way at such a critical moment. She didn't remember offending or hurting any of her colleagues. Being unable to make sense of this "tragedy", Maya consulted her team leader in the ministry. She said,

> He told me that I did not have negative relationship with them, but I intimidate people, because "You're so strong, so educated, so unique initiative. In the meeting, you're the person to talk, you are not, you feel alert, you can intimidate people, and because of that, she was intimidated.

Maya realized that her gestures of excellence might not be welcome in the ministry and any colleague in her blind spot could be detrimental to her pursuit. Apparently, Maya was not cognizant of the hidden rules that permeated through the consulting culture. Her team leader's analysis sounded strange and frustrating to her. Maya asserted, "When I came to Canada, I am a person who basically considers myself to be very dynamic, a person who takes initiative, has very strong leadership capabilities." Now, she thought the work culture in the ministry was inhibiting and repressive. She said, "They want you to be like them, they want everyone to be the same, they don't want anyone to go out of the line and do things on their own."

Maya might have crossed a latent line when she attempted to be actively engaged with the activities at the meetings or in the office work. What she considered "initiatives" could be viewed as "trespassing" by the insiders. However, the problem is that, while accommodating newcomers, the insiders could have let Maya know when her initiatives were inappropriate if they were really hospitable and benign. After all, Maya had been overworking and nobody stopped her or refused her when she offered to do extra work; they might have taken advantage of her "voluntary" contribution at no cost. Moreover,

there was something wrong with the way that reference check was made and used. What if the person who picked up the call had been someone who understood her predicament and appreciated her support? Why could we allow a random check to ruin a person's pursuit?

Maya thought that she was alienated by the work culture in the government. Although she was frustrated, Maya didn't attempt to change her way. She insisted, "I was always taught to be the best; I haven't been taught to be less than what I am." It seemed that her team leader's comment did not help Maya find alternative ways of understanding what it means to be the best of oneself in the new world. Maya still believed that there must be other institutions in Canada, where her intellectual need could be satisfied and her industriousness could be acknowledged.

4.3.2.2 Maya's teacher: "No poppy flower should be standing outside in Canada"

In the bridging program, Maya came into conflict with another participant. She and two other IEPs formed a team for a class debate in a course. One of them complained to the professor about Maya. When I inquired her of what had happened, Maya said,

> (During the debate, one teammate) was fumbling, so I had to ask him to keep quiet, "Hold on", I said, "Let me do it." When I started talking, asking, and I was giving them all the facts, because I have to defend all the other things. She (the student who complained) was not prepared, so she was not able to talk, but she got offended, and I don't know at that time. After that thing was over, she came back to the class, and she told the teacher, "It should be a completely team work; only one person shouldn't be talking." And she commented, saying

that, "She may be highly educated, she was capable, but she was trying to show off." No, I wasn't trying to show off at that point; I was just trying to certify the fact of the case as I understood it, so that we win the situation. I, nobody wanted to discourage her; nobody asked her not to talk; nobody prevented her from talking, but she got intimidated, because she didn't do her preparation. Another kind of problem I face, and I felt very bad, I felt extremely bad, because I felt that time and again I have this problem for no fault of mine.

Why was Maya's intention to do well and to win misunderstood and misinterpreted by people working with her? She suggested that she was wronged by the "silent" teammate, who took her as dominating the whole debate and giving others no opportunities to get involved. Maya seemed to have focused exclusively on the "facts" and the aim of "winning". She seemed to have done extra work because her teammates were either fumbling or unprepared. But why did the winning experience lead the members to "bad" feelings? If "fault" could not help us learn from such conflicts, we need to find other concepts to explore ways of understanding them.

Waddell (2002) wrote about people's projective mode of learning when they experienced "the self as if it *is* the other" (p. 106). Maya seemed to have been strictly following the high expectations from the significant others in her past life to "be the best" and "the winner". She showed a tendency to ignore or simplify new interactive situations mostly by projecting her assumptions and rationality upon others. She believed that things would not go awry if people worked their best. However, others might not take winning as seriously as they did their dignity. It seemed as if the complainer was proved inferior by comparison with Maya and felt humiliated by her intervention in this case.

Maya seemed to equate leading with winning. Indeed, it might be a common issue for the intelligent and competitive professionals to overlook the importance of mobilizing the team, including the less competent, to perform to their best.

The recurrence of conflicts made Maya aware of the complexity of human relationships. She started to look for strategies to prevent others from feeling upset with her. She said,

> I'm thinking, "What should I do to prevent somebody from feeling uh upset?" Then I went to my mentor. He told me only, "Just be quiet. Don't think too much about it, because she wasn't secure." So I didn't do anything to make her insecure intentionally. So this is sometimes what happened then. For example, "If you have a discussion in class", the professor said, I'm the first one to jump to the question, I'm the first one to give an explanation.

Maya had difficulty making more meanings of her conflicts with her colleagues. She considered her mentor and teachers as knowing more about the causes of the tensions at play. In a sense, she was taking their words as part of the authoritative discourse. However, such discourse collided with her internally persuasive discourse about learning at university. Maya had associated higher education in the West with intellectual freedom and speech freedom. Such expressive freedom had been one of the reasons for her to be attracted to academia in Canada. She felt restless when she had to force herself to keep quiet as her mentor suggested. When I inquired about what happened to her, she said,

> I think, "Should I keep quiet?" If I, if I want to say the answer, if I want to question, if the professor is asking a question and everyone is keeping quiet, should I also keep quiet? But I haven't been brought up in that way. I have

> been brought up to be able to be what I am truly, and fully, and independent. That's the way I've been brought up, to be strong and to be able to convey what you think, what you feel; communicate, ask, share; not to stay, not to hold back because the person next to you is holding back; that that's not the way I've been educated. But here, instead of, I was told by another teacher in the leadership class, she told me, "In Canada, not just in the public sector, even the private sector, there is a belief that the poppy, the poppy tree, the poppy flower, no poppy flower should be standing outside".

Maya reflected upon the way she was raised and educated. Being quiet was in conflict with her past values. She identified "being quiet" to "holding back" and "ignoring her true self". Apparently, suppressing one's desire to express contradicts with the public recognition of individual voices. However, it might correspond to a hidden discourse of boundary. The teacher used the metaphor of "poppy" to describe the controlled state of being in Canadian society. The responses of the knowing figures in the ministry and at the university confused Maya not just as a professional but as a human being. Her assumptions about one's identity were challenged by what she heard and observed inside the institutions. She started to think about how much change she could tolerate on earth. She remarked,

> In class, on Sunday, I keep quiet, I don't open my mouth. I was only speaking when I really have to say something very very valuable; otherwise, I will be quiet. I want to talk; I want to share my thought. I want them to say, "It's wonderful." And they very enjoy it? Maybe no, but [pause] I was not conscious about other people. I'm just quiet, keep quiet. Is there other way that

I can be? I don't think so. Maybe I can try and be like that conscious people once I try. But is that a natural thing? If I'm put in a new environment, will the natural tendency be free [pause] to be out there and get things done, take the initiative, organize, lead? That's not natural anyway.

Maybe Maya did want to show off although she denied it earlier when her teammate complained about it now that she confessed that she wanted others to consider her ideas "wonderful". Her question about "natural" ways reflected her confusion about what was acceptable in the new environment and what she had been accustomed to and considered as her way of being. When her "natural" way was challenged by an "imposed way" in the new circumstances in the process of integration, Maya started to think about whether there could be compromises for her identity to remain essentially intact. She aspired to continue to be that versatile Maya. She remarked,

> I was very very curious about my study, and very focused on my work, very comprehensive there. And I think I, as a person, have many talents. I'm, I have, I don't think of my profession, also as someone read you on Television, or performance on stage. And even here, I'm also a singer, not any song like any XX, it's the classical music; I'm a painter, I write a lot of things, I write, I've written a lot of poems and prose, which were published in X magazine, I I love philosophy.

Maya's outspokenness was impressive. She seemed to suggest that talents and excellence could entitle a person as much privilege as she had been educated to believe. However, people didn't seem to look up to her because she was educated, eloquent and strong. What might be valued more in the Canadian society? Was it "being conscious of

others"? Was the metaphor of poppy society a truth or a myth? Maya didn't talk about these issues. What occupied her mind was the tension between the authoritative discourse and her internally persuasive discourse and the approaching danger of disillusionment.

As Maya claimed, her identity had been gradually shaped by her family and her school education. It sounded as if both the family and the schools emphasized the importance of intellectual excellence and professional success. Although she took pride in being a successful professional, Maya felt sorry for having to neglect other parts of her identity in the past. For instance, in order for her to spend more time reading and drawing, her mother forbid her to do housework. Another instance that Maya mentioned was about her father, who believed in the pragmatic prospects of studying Business and dissuaded her from studying Philosophy as she desired when she went to university. When looking back, Maya felt sorry for not being able to attend to her own interests and wished that she could have the freedom to pick up her own pursuit in Canada.

4.3.3 "I can't relax"

Maya shared her concerns about becoming nothing but a "labor" or a "housewife". She feared that her talents would be wasted if she chose to stay in Canada and thus had to "hold back" and repress her ambition. Maya remarked,

> I am professional, I am I am a hyper-productive person, I can't relax. My kids said to me, "You have to relax." I tried to listen to music, I can't relax; even when I have bubble bath, and I sit there on the tab not more than ten minutes. I want to do something of utility. Every time, I want to be involved in something productive, all the time. I feel, even when I'm going to sleep; that's time when

> I started to feel painful; I don't sleep well even now. So I have this issue, I can't relax.

Maya had been frantically searching for means of remaining productive. Her insomnia reflected the harm that had been done by the tension between her obsession with "productivity" and the external reality of lacking opportunities to be involved in productive social activities. She could not achieve the sense of "being productive" by doing the school work, the housework and any other menial work in her eyes such as the part-time work that she was doing. Unlike her sister, who seemingly enjoyed being a housewife in the United States, Maya took it as the least "productive". Her restlessness and insomnia created a malicious cycle that prevented her from working through her problems. She said,

> I don't know how my life is without careers. I never imagined like this, but I'm having it like that, I can't imagine my life without productive work, without work that intellectually satisfies me. If I have a life like that, without intellectual relation, I will die, I will be very unhappy, very depressed, very sad, I will be crying. I need to, I need to put my mind to use, I need to be analytical, I need to, I need to be creative.

According to Childs (1956), "Creativity is a person's capacity to enable his or her transition from impulsive action to intelligent action, from a biological organism to a conceptually aware individual, at which time he or she is able to think and to reason" (cited in Siljander & Sutinen, 2012, p. 5). The realization of creativity was determined by one's "ability to adapt to an environment and solve problems related to acting in that

environment and to the production of new information that one can use in one's own activity and learn about different things" (cited in Siljander & Sutinen, 2012, p. 5).

In Canada, the cultural differences and the systematic barriers seemed to have barred Maya from using her agency to create possibilities for the sake of her interest. She missed the intellectual encounters that had brought her glory and wealth in the past. It seemed extremely painful for her to mourn the loss of them in the new environment. Indeed, never had Maya known more clearly about what she desired to be until after she immigrated to Canada.

I have no doubt in Maya's excellence and versatility as she had claimed. But in her case, I also see how one's education, if it overemphasized academic excellence, could prevent him/her from developing new ways of understanding problems in the new environment, where people's ideas were "built on collective symbols and controlled by a language specific to that environment" (Siljander & Sutinen, 2012, p. 5). Nel Noddings (1988) proposed the ethics of caring in education. She cautioned,

> If it is not already obvious, let me say explicitly that I think university educators and researchers are part of the problem. Our endless focus on narrow achievement goals, our obsession with sophisticated schemes of evaluation and measurement directed (naturally enough) at things that are relatively easy to measure, our reinforcement of the mad desire to be number one —to compete, to win awards, to acquire more and more of whatever is currently valued—in all these ways we contribute to the proliferation of problems and malaise.

Maya's obsession with excellence was the accumulative after-effect of her education before she immigrated to Canada. In pre-industrialized countries, where

competition is open and excellence is commonly sought and rewarded, competitive people tend to take competition and excellence for granted. Internationally educated professionals influenced by such social psychology might have more difficulties in attending to people's vulnerabilities and adapting to the new environment where the ethos could differ dramatically in Canada. In this sense, the teachers and the mentors in the bridging programs could consider how the social psychology in different corners of the world could have affected the participants' integration to Canadian society and how they could help them understand their current situation more critically.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter analyzed two cases: Hasan, a lawyer from Bangladesh, who immigrated to Canada in the 1990s and had worked as a paralegal in Canada before she studied in the bridging program; Maya, an Indian woman and an administrator and teacher from Dubai, who immigrated to Canada in the 2010s and participated in the bridging program one year after her immigration. They both demonstrated the agency to follow their professional pursuit and defend their rights. They both had the capacity to learn the institutional knowledge except that Hasan struggled with too much pressure to pass exams assigned not by the bridging program but the accreditation committee. Besides, they both seemed to lack internal resources to support them when the post-immigration "danger situations" led them to psychic disorganization. They both underestimated not only the systematic barriers that would impede their integration but also their anxiety that immigration and disintegration tended to aggravate. As beneficiaries of higher education, they probably had never imagined such social problems

as poverty and prejudice in immigrant countries would befall and haunt them. They had confusional anxiety and persecutory anxiety when they perceived the external reality that they were undervalued and alienated and might become problems themselves.

Chapter Five "I Lose Nothing" and "I Will Bring Something if I Leave"

In Chapter Five, I analyze another three cases -- Aguilera, Nafisi and Li. They were all in their 30s and had worked as managers in large international or multinational companies in major cities of the world. Aguilera and Nafisi were single; Li was married, but he had no children yet. In the first section of this chapter, I provide the biographical information about each of the participants and describe how they came to study in the bridging programs. In the subsequent three sections, I focus on each case respectively, highlighting their experience and analyzing their anxieties.

5.1 Biography

5.1.1 Aguilera: A manager from a multi-national company in Mexico City

Aguilera grew up in a middle-class family in Mexico. Both her parents went to university. Her father was an engineer and ran a small business; her mother had been a teacher before she worked at the American Embassy. Aguilera had an elder sister, who was a model child for her generation in the extended family. Since she was young, Aguilera had traveled abroad with her parents and sister, and thus cultivated strong curiosity about people in different countries and cultures. She studied at private schools, where she learned three languages: English, French and Spanish, and succeeded in entering a prestigious university in Mexico, which offered international programs in partnership with a university in France. She was granted a degree by both universities and soon secured a position at a bank in India after graduation. Aguilera's parents were divorced and her elder sister passed away not long after Aguilera began working. With the broken family on her mind, Aguilera returned to Mexico City so that she could live close to her parents.

Aguilera's extended family—her grandma, aunts and cousins on her mother's side — had already immigrated to Canada. They hoped that she and her mother could start a new life in Canada. Aguilera accepted this idea and applied to immigrate. While waiting for the result of her application, Aguilera progressed in her career very well. When she received her visa, she had been promoted to a highly-paid managerial position, leading two big buyer-teams.

Aguilera immigrated to Canada in 2009. She expected to live a balanced life in terms of not only professional skills and financial independence but also a sense of emotional and spiritual maturity. She aspired to live a peaceful life as well in Canada. In Mexico, Aguilera was worried about the public insecurity, extreme hierarchy and overemphasis on financial success. She was anticipating having her own family and becoming a mother. She assumed that the environment in Canada was better for her children to grow up.

Soon after she landed, Aguilera started searching for opportunities to learn and work. She registered in a government-funded ESL program where she got an an internship. What seemed to benefit her most was not the language part but the work opportunity. She didn't think the program added anything to her English skill at that time. However, the internship led Aguilera to a full-time position as procurement, which she quit soon because "the company was small" and "the work procedure was not established". After that, Aguilera found a position of category manager in a small retailer. This time, to her dismay, she didn't pass the probation period there. She wanted to know why and requested feedback from her boss, who told her that "none of the managers had the grammar mistakes" or "cannot communicate well through email or on negotiations".

Aguilera was “hit” hard by his feedback and became doubtful about her qualifications. She became even afraid of working with similar responsibilities if she could not improve her language in case she should be embarrassed by similar criticisms. Aguilera thought that she had to learn what was expected of the managers; otherwise she would always risk being criticized and fired. In those days of self-doubt, Aguilera heard of the bridging program from a new acquaintance that she had met in the ESL program. She applied for it immediately, believing that it would be the place where she would learn what might be “common sense” among the managers. While studying in the bridging program, Aguilera found a full-time position as a buyer assistant. Around the days of our interviews, Aguilera found a managerial position similar to what she had left behind in Mexico City.

5.1.2 Nafisi: A marketing manager from a multi-national food company in Dubai

Nafisi grew up in a well-educated family in Iran. His father had been an engineer and CEO in a foreign venture in Iran before he started running his own business; his mother was a teacher at a university in Iran. His paternal grandfather was a trader and his maternal grandfather was a radiologist.

Nafisi had migration experience when he was a small boy. In the 1980s, the family took refuge in Turkey when war broke out between Iran and Iraq. His parents sent him to study in an international English-medium school in Istanbul. As a teenager, he returned to Iran with his family. He took the entrance examination and was admitted to a private university to study Civil Engineering, which was popular at that time because of the post-war reconstruction. However, Nafisi was more interested in computer science. He managed to take many computer courses at university. After graduation, Nafisi helped his

father with the computer network service in his business. Nafasi became more interested in computer science and business. Later he studied Marketing Management and E-Economy at a university in Sweden and was granted a master's degree. It helped Nafisi find managerial positions in various international companies. Before immigration to Canada, Nafisi worked in an internationally well-known food company in Dubai.

It was under the influence of his parents that Nafisi decided to immigrate to Canada. He had many uncles, who had immigrated to different "first-world" countries. His parents, his father in particular, always encouraged him to immigrate too. Although the wars were over, his parents were still worried about the economic instability. They were afraid that "things can change overnight" in Iran.

It took five years for Nafisi to go through the process of immigration to Canada. When the visa was in his hand, he hesitated. He didn't want to leave the company where he was working, because he had resources and prospects there. It was the notion of freedom and security in Canada that motivated him to have a try. Iran was a Muslim country, where people had to follow religious conventions. For instance, female teachers like her mother had to put on the hijab and children had to read the Koran at school. Nafisi hoped that his parents and his own family could live a life with religious freedom.

Although he had experience being away from home — he spent years in Turkey, Sweden and Dubai, Nafisi found it dramatically different between immigration and temporary migration. He had a strong sense of loss, especially that of his "network" after immigrating to Canada. The loneliness was something that he had never imagined would bother him so much. It was at a lonely sleepless night when he was navigating the CIC's

website that he spotted the IEP program. He enrolled in the program, hoping to rebuild his network "at school".

5.1.3 Li: A marketing manager in a multi-national pharmaceutical company in Beijing

Li was born in late 1970s in a small city in the west of China. His parents had been doctors at hospitals in Beijing before they moved to the west in response to the party's call on the youth to support the nation-building. Influenced by his parents, Li studied Medicine at university too in the 1990s. But he didn't work as a doctor. Instead, he chose to work in a foreign company, an international pharmaceutical company in Beijing. With the implementation of the policy for opening in China, many international companies set up their offices and factories in major cities of China. They attracted young people with prospects of higher income and appealing notions of personal success. Before he immigrated to Canada, Li was a national marketing manager.

Li decided to immigrate to Canada because of the intense competition in Beijing. He attributed it to the inflow of excellent young graduates from various cities in China and people who had studied or worked abroad. He took them as robust rivals who were privileged because they had better educational and professional affiliations. Working in the foreign company, Li was often pestered by a sense of inadequacy. He graduated from a medical school, so he had no degree in Marketing or Business. Although he had worked in international companies for years and become a national marketing manager, he still suspected that he lacked something that business graduates might have. Before he immigrated to Canada, his company had sent him to study Business Administration part-

time at a university in Beijing. However, he was very disappointed with it, which seemed to cover mostly foundation courses such as Mathematics and Statistics. Li thought that it could hardly improve his understanding of Marketing and Business as a field.

By immigrating to Canada, Li assumed that he could stick to his attachment to metropolitan cities and international companies, where he believed he could go on enjoying the exposure to up-to-date ideas and innovations. He also wanted to have a Canadian passport to improve his professional mobility. He found that holders of developed countries' passports were entitled to much more mobility in the competitions at foreign companies in China. He didn't want to be prejudiced against because of his Chinese passport when he was abroad either. Moreover, Li hoped that he could study for a MBA in Canada. He aspired to be like his supervisors in China, who could speak English well and articulate their experience of studying and working abroad, and have a voice in their conversations around these hot topics.

When he participated in my study, Li had lived in Canada for five years. He had worked in a Chinese association and two small companies. He also completed his study in three programs: the certificate program in Communication in a community college, a university-based bridging program in Business and ultimately the MBA program at another university in Ontario. His educational trajectory reflected his ongoing pursuit of sustainable educational and professional development and continuous striving to integrate into the mainstream society in Canada.

5.2 Aguilera's Experiences in the Bridging Program

The headings of the following subsections are excerpts from Aguilera's interviews. They represent the major concerns and anxieties that I can identify from reading the transcripts of the interviews with Aguilera.

5.2.1 "No one teaches you otherwise"

Before she studied in the bridging program, Aguilera was disillusioned by her supervisor's intolerant attitude towards her English. On hearing the authoritative voice, Aguilera attempted to understand it from their perspectives. She thought that the local companies were not comfortable with the uncertainty as to what the newcomers would bring to their business and they refused to take it as their responsibility to show them the established ways of communication. Such interaction made Aguilera fall into a state of profound self doubt about her lack in "everything" that might be expected of competent employees. A painful sense of uncertainty provoked her to look for "teachers" who would like to teach her. When she discussed why she enrolled in the program, she said,

> The way you have to structure your thoughts is different from the expectation I used to have, so, and that's something that no one no one teach you, that's why you get to this program to get to know the way it should be done.

Aguilera was confused about how to structure her thoughts in the new environment and was at a loss as to how to leverage her prior experience in such confusion. Her anxiety seemed entangled with her ambivalence about the proper use of English in Canada. She was not exaggerating the importance of the language. According to Jacque

Lacan (1953), “The definable human environment is neither biological nor social but linguistic”, because “language determines one’s knowledge of the world, of others, and of oneself” (cited in Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, pp. 108-109).

The nature of language made it difficult for immigrants to integrate in the host country. As a system, on the hand, language “generates rules and principles”, and on the other hand, it offers “finite means to reach infinite possibilities” (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 99). Besides, similar to a game, language “has the possibility of meaning something apart from what it actually says” (pp. 109-111). People generally suffer from their disabilities to locate the relationship between language and meaning, and in the case of immigrants, they tend to suffer doubly or triply.

Aguilera had been learning English since she was a school child. She used it when she worked in India. But the linguistic difference and the degrees of people’s tolerance towards difference vary from place to place. Her anxiety of having nobody “teaching her” in Canada reflected her desire to integrate to the English world through formal education. She wanted to speak and behave in others’ ways. The anxiety was essentially fear of not knowing the rules of the new games and being excluded as a result. Aguilera’s case was not one of resistance but integration.

Aguilera viewed university as the best place where she could be informed of the overall picture of the business practice in the Canadian environment. She hoped that at university she would be taught common ways of thinking and doing things under particular circumstances in Canada. Her belief in the university-based bridging program had something to do with her attachment to higher education. When I inquired about how she chose the bridging program, Aguilera said,

> I guess that's the way I functioned, and I have to go to an institution other than doing it on my own, so either the bridging program or another institution, to me that's the best way to get knowledge. And here it is a recognized university, uh it's important for me to get a degree, or certificate, or a diploma from a university like that. I was raised up to think education is the most important thing. So when I knew it was X University, it made it different, because it wasn't like the rudimental workshop or the association. To me it became relevant because it was a university.

The "relevance" that Aguilera mentioned reflected her desire to retain her identity in relation to university education. In contrast to the "rudimental workshops" at the welcome centers or the community centers, the university-based bridging program didn't make Aguilera feel that she was regressing or inferior. On the contrary, it felt familiar and soothing to go to university, where she believed she could enrich her knowledge and experience. When I inquired of her what she studied in the program, Aguilera said,

> I know business, I know finance, I have a strong background in Supply Chain Management, so marketing is the part that is missing for me in order to understand the whole product life cycle, so that's why I joined Marketing. And second, I needed a paper from a university, from here, and not for the employer but for me, 'cause I come from a private university and I have like scholarship and my parents paid a lot of money for me to be able to fill in a private university. So from a personal point of view, I couldn't stand being no one here, like no one recognize your university, because if you go to Mexico, it's like 'Oh my God' talk for your university, so I didn't want to feel behind. So

> that's another reason why I decided like I want to have a certification from a recognized university. And it was more for me than for the employer … it was more for my pride.

Aguilera was anticipating the pain of losing her pride in what had been part of her identity in relation to higher education. No one knew her affiliations such as her university and her company in Canada, and "being nobody" increased her "inner insecurity" (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 90). When she realized that her personal achievements in the past years might be disregarded by the host society, she felt somewhat disoriented. By attending the bridging program, she attempted to reorient her development in Canada. She believed that her ideal of continuous development and growth could be contained and supported at university. When she reflected upon how she had benefited from the bridging program, Aguilera said,

> I want a paper from a university I recognized, the university here. But as I went through the program, I realized that really the courses I took there helped me a lot, not only understanding the Canadian culture, but in terms of business. Or now like I'm taking leadership, it's another program. It was targeted at trying to improve my English, but now I'm like a better professional, not only for English but for the courses that I'm taking.

The leadership program was not in the curriculum of the bridging program when Aguilera enrolled in it. It was an extra program offered to successful participants, who completed the courses in the bridging program ahead of time. It seemed to be a surprise offer that had pleased Aguilera. The term "leadership" corresponded with Aguilera's

expectation of herself. She had been a manager in Mexico, but she cherished this surprise gift because she had not been trained formally in terms of leadership. Aguilera said,

> I wouldn't be able to enroll it if it wasn't the bridging program, so it was worth it all. For even if I don't get the paper, even if I finish it tomorrow, so far it's a win-win situation for me. Even if, let's say, tomorrow they say "The bridging program is done", I would still try to get the leadership program done even though I have to pay for it. Eventually I will want it to get done.

Aguilera was able to take advantage of the available resources and readjust herself to the goals that she had fantasized about before immigration. In our interviews, Aguilera excitedly told me how the leadership program helped her know about herself and think about her relationships with others. The surprise gift rendered her more grateful for the bridging program.

5.2.2 "At least I don't make a fool of myself"

Aguilera believed that if she didn't know what others knew, she would look like a fool in their eyes. She had been viewed as a smart girl and woman; in order to defend her self-esteem, Aguilera was prepared to learn.

Aguilera demonstrated rare determination to understand the proper ways of English communication in Canada. In the bridging program, the participants were required to pass two prerequisite courses — speaking and writing--- before they could take the credit courses. Aguilera even took the writing course three times. She assumed that she could learn from different instructors about English writing and that the more practice she had

and the more feedback she received from the teachers, the more improvement she would make in her English.

Aguilera embodied the spirit of perseverance and diligence. But it was not without conflict in the process of learning. She said,

> Honestly I didn't think they would send me to the speaking class. And at the beginning, it was like I shouldn't be doing this, I think I even complained, I don't know, but then it's like, I didn't have a job and it's better learning something. You can always learn something other than be at your house, right? So I decided like to take it like positive approach, and then yeah just uh take the classes. In the writing classes we have homework, and we get feedback like the next class. We had a final assignment like to write something on the computer, actually writing a letter. They teach the different ways of communication, case studies, which was very important for me, because afterwards I had an interview and they asked me to make a case study, so I took template of my writing class in order to write the a proper case study. If I didn't have that class, I wouldn't know how to present it in the way they were expecting. I didn't get the job, but at least I didn't make a fool of myself when I was interviewing. So it was good.

Aguilera made reasonable choices between resistance and acceptance and could readjust her attitudes towards the unexpected in a positive way. By looking into Aguilera's reasoning, we can identify two tensions. One tension was the limit of ESL/EFL teaching and learning in international education. Even excellent ESL/EFL learners from prestigious universities still had complex language issues. Aguilera had

experience of analyzing cases in English in Mexico, but her prior knowledge seemed to be considered inappropriate in the host society. The other tension consisted in the fact that knowledge is constructed and contextualized. Knowing the “templates” and meeting the expectations are usually associated with being “smart” and “efficient”. In contrast, not knowing has the connotations of being “stupid” or “incapable”. Aguilera’s anxiety about being a “fool” in the host’s eyes showed a tendency “in the psychical apparatus” towards “the dictates of censorship” (Freud, 2003, p.16). Aguilera seemed to be striving for “a continuity of personal character” in reference to the censorship (Erikson, 1994, p. 109).

In the bridging program, the majority of the courses were open to both the regular students and the internationally educated professionals. When I asked her about her experience of studying with the regular students, Aguilera said,

> They’re younger, and they take like something like, can be done in thirty minutes, you take a few hours. But still I I enjoy like working with them and learning from them. And yet it was tough, ‘cause then I had to come to school; also months I had to come on Saturday and Sunday to get the projects done or stay after class.

It is widely known that the academic pressure is high for students at university in North America. As Aguilera suggested, it was even more intense for the IEPs to complete their study successfully. In fact, in the bridging program, many IEPs could not complete their courses as fast as Aguilera did due to various difficulties.

5.2.3 "It was an emotional struggle"

Aguilera was still ambitious, but she seemed more patient and cautious when she pursued her ambition. The challenges rendered her more humble and more open; she always reminded her that there might be more important things than being "a tough executive". Her self-adjustment and willingness to delay her desire for satisfaction showed a tendency "in the psychical apparatus towards archaic repression" (Freud, 2003, p.16). When I inquired about what she had been struggling with, she remarked,

> I don't have to struggle uh that much to get a survival job or something like that. To me, it was emotional struggle, and uh thinking if it was the right thing, if I made the right decision. It's like a roller coaster, because [pause] you feel yourself, you have a perception of yourself for uh, I don't know, for thirty years, and overnight it changes, because you become, it's not you become another person, but you're a different person, you're something from the bottom to the top. And moving to another country is like you got erased from that place and inserted in another place. And it's in terms of identity at the beginning; it was a shock for me, like perhaps I would lose it. I mentioned that I always like, "Yeah, I'm gonna be the number one", and then it took me a while, and I thought I was gonna lose it, and I, that's my personality.

Immigration entails excitement, anxiety and mourning. Although voluntary immigrants like Aguilera don't suffer from the agony and trauma that the forced immigrants have to work through, they still suffer from the awareness of losing things important materially or symbolically that have nourished their egos and sustained their sense of themselves.

Aguilera was undergoing a dynamic mourning process "resulting from a dialectical movement between regression and progression" (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989, p. 96). In the early phase of mourning, Aguilera was mainly concerned about three things. First, she felt that she lost connections with the homeland because she seemed to be "erased" even though it was she who left it behind. Second, she felt that she lost any connection because she was "inserted" in a strange place all of a sudden. Third, she felt that she lost herself because she had to be a "different person". At this stage, Aguilera was overwhelmed by the "passivity" that seemed to characterize her life. What made the mourning more painful was her uncertainty about what could come out of the losses and how she was going to be responsible for the consequences.

Aguilera was motivated to learn well in the bridging program not only because she wanted to compensate her loss with new experiences of learning but also because of the gaze that she could receive from her family. When we had our interviews, Aguilera still lived in the shadow of her sister's death. She told me how unwillingly she became the next model for her younger cousins. Every time she mentioned her sister, Aguilera was sentimental. She said,

> Even though she is not here, what happened had a strong, very strong influence of why I am here today, even in the country, in the program, 'cause I know time is limited. And now I acknowledge we all know we're gonna die some day, but when you are so close, you're really touched and you become aware of it. So that's why I hate missing opportunities and that's why I'd like to be everywhere and to take all the programs, because I know I had such a limited amount of time, you never know (when you will die).

Aguilera's remarks reflected her anxiety of death after losing a beloved family member. Such anxiety made her rethink about how she was going to spend her life. In a sense, she was working hard in the bridging program to prove something to her family. Because her sister died, she felt that she was obliged to substitute the loss of her sister to go on influencing her cousins. Besides, being inclined to criticize herself, she was eager to prove that she could still be a better self for the sake of her family. When she reflected upon the "role" of a model, Aguilera remarked,

> I got into this situation just because of external circumstances, and I felt like I didn't ask for it. So [pause] I was, I never have to be a role model, because there was always my sister. But after the blue, they started looking up at me, because I was the one that they follow like next. So I guess when they say something like "Oh, she can do it, she never gives up", it's, I I become emotional in a positive way of saying, "I'm doing a good job", like I'm I'm kind of critical with myself, so then it's kind of relief saying, "Ok, I'm not that bad, or at least all my efforts is paying off, so it's it's emotion in terms of accomplishments and relief, saying uh "I'm not that bad". Hopefully uh I'm being the best that I can for them.

Aguilera's remarks reflected a young woman's sensitivity towards the relationship between her and her family and her sense of responsibility for the family. It also showed how such care about significant others could influence a woman to take actions to meet their expectations.

Indeed, Aguilera took education as the familial heritage. Her father always said to her, "I'm not rich and the only thing I'm gonna leave you is your education". When she

was in the bridging program, her parents always asked about her study. Aguilera seldom told them about her pressures and concerns. Sometimes when she had no good news to tell, she didn't want to call them. She said, "I'm I'm I'm angry, I'm tired also, but I'm, I don't want to disappoint them." Aguilera didn't explain why she was angry and who she was angry with. Maybe it was because sometimes she was tired of the obligations? Or maybe she was guilty for not having good news for her parents? The ambivalent emotional struggles because of frustrations and attachment could characterize the life the many internationally educated professionals in their early days or years of immigration.

5.2.4 "No, I'm not afraid"

In the interviews, Aguilera narrated the change of her sense of being and becoming and how she looked at it positively. When I inquired of her whether she was afraid of something in Canada, she denied. She said,

> No, I'm not afraid, because uh [laugh] one of my thoughts was if I survive in Mexico, in India, which is a tough country, like of course I will survive in Canada. And I guess when my sister passed away, I realized what things, what are the important things, and you can't be afraid of not being able to, being successful or getting a job, you can always get that, there are other things you cannot get back, so no, I'm not afraid.

Despite her denial, Aguilera returned to the topic of fear in our last interview when she reflected upon her experience. Around that time, she was anticipating an important job interview. She said,

> I'm not gonna lie, if I get it, I'm scared, uh I'm scared in the sense that it's a high position and more responsibility and it's getting closer to where I was. But

> again that fear haunts you. What if I don't make it? But those are the risk you have to take, and I know this time I'm more prepared, uh I had more, I don't know, I feel more confident. And yeah, I've worked for that, so if I have the opportunity, I will take it …. I don't know, like uh [pause] courageous people, and it is not he does not feel fear, but fear it and go for it.

Aguilera was trying to work through her confusions, doubts and anxieties by learning what she didn't know. She had to spend all time handling the immediate workload of courses and job responsibilities. But she mentioned a plan of reading about philosophy and religion after she finally settled down.

The learning process was stressful. Aguilera attempted to release her stress by going to gym regularly. She said, "Exercise helped, I'd like to at least release some of my stress and don't think about it". But what seemed to have helped Aguilera most was the "tangible progress" that she had made both in her study and her career. She said,

> I saw progress in my life in general, from being unemployed to becoming employed, from improving my English in general. I always ask my family, my friends, my Canadian friends, like "Oh, how have I improved like my English?", and they said, "Yeah". They see I've improved. So to me, making a progress, a tangible progress, makes me keep going. I know there're a lot of people, they don't have a job, and you can see the anger like, "I'm doing all this, but I'm still working in a survival job".

The sense of her improvement being rewarded with privilege did help Aguilera treat the difficulties in her way with more confidence. She said,

> Now I feel privileged, I know most of the managers outside, they don't know this (leadership program) and I'm not comparing with IEP students, it's like any manager. I know these courses are gonna give me like what's there in the market. I took it with a lot of regular students. Yeah, it's knowledge, but I think it's like privilege.

5.3 Nafisi's Experiences in the Bridging Program

The headings of the following subsections are excerpts from Nafisi's interviews. They represent the major concerns and anxieties that I can identify from reading the transcripts of the interviews with Nafisi.

5.3.1 "It's quite scary if you can't make connections"

Nafisi had a master's degree in Marketing Management from a university in Sweden. By participating in the bridging program, he attempted to update his academic knowledge and interact with the professional environment. When we had the interviews, he had completed most of the courses. When I inquired of him what gaps concerned him most in Canada, he remarked,

> I think the big gap is cultural, and that's why most of the friends that I've been in contact with, my friends also coming from my home country, for the first couple of years, they have this struggle to understand the society, to be able to have friends who are not Iranian, to be able to uh, it's not just to learn the language, it's learning how the society works.

Carl James (2010) discussed the complexity of the term "culture" and emphasized its "all-pervasiveness". When we use culture, we could refer to not only "the specific and

variable cultures of different nations and periods, but also the specific and variable cultures of social and economic groups within a nation" (William, 1983, p. 89, cited in James, 2010, p. 25). Besides, it is "not only embedded in everything that we do", it is also "a tool that defines our reality, worldview and purpose in life" (Kagawa-Singer & Chung, 1994, cited in James, 2010, p. 25). James (2010) explained the functions of "culture":

> Culture is what organizes our everyday lives. It gives us cues as to how we should act in given situations, it provides markers for our values, it helps organize our individual lives, as well as our families and communities. It also guides the structure of society and its institutions (government, schools, and so on). In fact, we adhere to particular ways of doing things or the rules of society or group because we place a value on them. We respond to behavior with disgust, horror, pleasure, or disdain, not only because we consider some rules useful, but because we judge them as right or wrong. And while we continually evaluate and re-invent rules, members of society are still sanctioned, punished, or rewarded on the basis of their loyalty to the rules. The result is that people are powerfully motivated to abide by society's rules and to attempt to force others to do so. (pp. 26-27)

Nafisi's concerns about the cultural difference and gap reflect a common anxiety of new immigrants about violating certain rules and getting into trouble. Without knowing the local culture, it is hard to have a sense of safety, self-worth and belonging. What disdain might their not knowing, complying and belonging incur to themselves from the local people? Meanwhile, similar to Nafisi, they tend to believe that they will be able to

understand the Canadian culture only by interacting with main stream Canadians. However, lacking opportunities to get involved in mainstream activities, they find it hard to make sense of Canadian culture beyond the surface.

After immigrating to Canada, Nafisi found that immigration meant that he had to cut a lot from his past and reestablish many things that needed much investment of money, time and emotion. He realized the he lost a valuable social network that generations of his family had built up. When I inquired of him how much that loss meant to him, he remarked,

> I saw the most important thing that I lost when I came here is the network that I have built, network of people, business relationship, friendship, yeah I built that for thirty years, then all of a sudden, you know I don't have that anymore, you're not in touch any more, just all of sudden you don't function.

What Nafisi was suggesting was a longing for connection with other people and the environment. He had thought that he could fare well in Canada, a multicultural country, because of his experience in Dubai, where he had interacted with people from various countries. However, living in Canada, he found that despite the policy of multiculturalism, Canada is a "normal country" with a dominant culture, and Canadian companies are exclusively interested in the local economy. In contrast to his eagerness to build connections with the dominant community, Nafisi found it so hard to have meaningful interactions with people who were not Iranians. When I inquired of him what connections he could make now, Nafisi said,

> Everyone says, "Hi and Bye", and that's it. But when you're working, you have to have uh [pause] that connections with other people. You cannot say

> that, "I can't bond with my boss". You have to have a connection with them, you have to be able to sit down and have dinner with your boss, or you have to be able to have a part, you know, not just delivering the business requirements, also have a business relationship with your coworkers as well. So you might find it, as an immigrant, it's quite scary [laugh] if you cannot make the connections, you know. So I think that's the biggest thing that needs to be, as the biggest challenge that needs to be addressed.

Nafisi felt scared because of the separation pain. Without a supportive network that he had been accustomed to living with, he couldn't help feeling lost, lonely and insecure. Nafisi never thought about belonging to a main stream community until he became cognizant of its loss after immigration. He seemed to believe that he or his descendants could belong to the main stream culture eventually. The immediate problem for him was how and where he was going to spend the time meaningfully rather than seeing it afloat. When I inquired about how he went to the bridging program, he said,

> It's uh, I can't, I can't see a fast solution, for it just takes time, more interaction with (the dominant culture), that's why I found school to be a good place for that, because you're put in an environment, you know, sort of have the dominant culture, which you will find in the business as well.

By going to university, Nafisi attempted to be exposed to the dominant culture and get involved in a social network of people who had a relationship with the dominant culture. He assumed that universities might be one of the few social structures accessible to him as he wanted to understand what was happening in the community.

5.3.2 "It's synergy"

Nafisi intended to integrate to the dominant culture. In the bridging program, he managed to take courses in Marketing and IT which he had not taken in Iran and Sweden. He found them very beneficial to him in that they let him know the marketing practices in Canada and North America. Besides, he attended the classes with the "normal regular students" and managed to interact with different types of people. He enjoyed having a network with the other IEPs as well. When I inquired about him what the network was like, Nafasi said,

> There are a lot of things you could learn within the group, it's synergy as well, because these people have the same situation, so they're going through interviews, and they have their connections, you have your connections, so therefore you have uh, knew each other's accomplishments uh so far. And then you see people with different backgrounds, so I had classmates in Canada for ten years, for five years, they arrived with me. So it's good to have what is happening to people, other people who have sort of the same situation. That's one thing that could be beneficial.

This network provided Nafisi a space of reference and helped him with his speculation on what possible achievements he could make. Although the IEPs didn't represent the dominant culture, the insights they had about life after immigration helped him reorient his own exploration.

In the bridging program, what interested Nafisi most was a project, where he and a few other IEPs collaborated with the office of the bridging program to deal with some

real problems that the office wanted to solve as the client. When I inquired about what they did in the project, Nafisi remarked,

> We are a group of seven or eight people in the class. We're all from the marketing stream, and we'll be working on an [stress] ACTUAL project, which is basically like our client is to be the IEP office itself, so we'll be providing them with [pause] you know a case study on their marketing efforts, how we can, you know, find, propose new things they can do for the marketing? So an actual hand-on [pause] work as I might say. It's quite nice. I begin to really like it. I think that for IEP people, if there will be, two of this, it would be very nice, it would be really good, so people will start working within the environment. The students in the IEP program are all experienced; therefore they're allowed to share and allowed to put their stuff on the table, so it's an opportunity for both the office, or anyone who would act as the client, and also the students to be able to interact in the real world situations, so not just the academy. So I think that's very good, that's pretty nice, having just one is good, and even having two courses like that [lower voice] would be even better.

In the bridging program, Nafisi found that many courses were similar to those that he had taken in Sweden in terms of the theories and the formats of lectures and assignments. His suggestion for increasing collaborative and interactive elements in the bridging programs once again reflected his concerns about lacking opportunities to be engaged with professional issues relevant to the local community. He found that such engagement could help him contemplate how he could contribute in appropriate ways.

5.3.3 "Time is not enough"

In our interviews, Nafisi never complained about what happened to him or employed terms such as "discrimination", "inequality" or "racism" in his discussion. Although I saw his agitation and tenseness from his body language, most of the time, he sounded rational and composed. He seemed to treat what he encountered as "natural" and expressed his openness to all possibilities. For instance, he had aspired for positions in international companies, where he believed that he could pursue a long career path. But gradually he realized that most companies in Canada were small or intermediate and locally focused. Then he changed his mind and shifted his attention to them, wondering if he could set up a small business. Nafisi demonstrated much flexibility in face of his displacement. In this process of adaptation, Nafisi was aware of his frustrations too. He remarked,

> It takes time and it takes quite a long time to be able to achieve all this, to put the puzzle all together, so it does get frustrating. Uh even even even if I have the money to, not require, you know, require income, I can sustain myself, but still not being able to [pause] be productive, it still frustrates you. So I have planned my way quite well, I really put aside some money, I can really, you know, sustain myself for a year or two and be able to, you know, not need to jump to a survival job or something. I can work in a place, which gives me the flexibility to go to the bridging program. And there are other things I need to do, I need to take care of, then you know, take step by step, but yet again you feel you don't have a lot of time, and time is not enough [laugh] you know. After a year, OK, I'm almost done with my program, which is good. I've

> already had have some work experience, which is good. But, right now, I'm learning how things work, beginning to learn how things work. You cannot imagine six months ago, when I didn't have any idea about how things work, it's like groping in a dark room, and you don't understand how things work. Usually it will really frustrate you, uh there were times I really couldn't decide whether this is the right thing I'm doing or not. So you start jumping in different platforms, but you don't know if it's the right thing to do or not… Spending so much time, I could have done something else, you know, is it really worth it or not? So these are the questions that are always there, so you really go through, then find it for yourself, that's hard. Because you can't really copy from what somebody else has done when it comes to your career, when it comes to planning your life, you can't really take an example, you have to experience it yourself, and it's tough. Every time you don't know what's going to happen, you go into something, when you come out of it, it might be good, it might be bad, before you do it, you don't know, for it's all questions, it's all doubt that go around you, and of course the fear, the fear of losing too much time here or running out of money, the fear of, you know, what happens afterwards? It's always with you, I think it's only natural [laugh] thing to be afraid of these circumstances as well, so yeah these thoughts are always with me.

Immigration made Nafisi become more and more conscious of the existence of uncertainties in his new free life and the hardship of groping in the darkness. He reiterated that "you feel yourself", "experience it yourself" and "plan it by yourself".

Such reiteration reflected his insights of the cost of freedom or “forced autonomy”. As he suggested, a new net woven from questions, doubts and fears replaced the intimate security blanket woven from references, role models and directions at the wake of voluntary immigration.

Nafisi’s sense of time tested his capacity to tolerate loss and confusions in the “darkness” and gaze at himself in search of light and hope. It showed how hard it was for him to “find matching co-ordinates again in a time he, like others, should be able to claim as ‘our time’” (Guha, 1998, p. 156). As an immigrant, his present impressed him and others as one of discontinuity from his past and mismatch with the present of the community’s present. Ranajit Guha (1998) analyzed temporalities. He pointed out, “There is no way for those who live in a community to make themselves intelligible to each other except by temporalizing their experience of being together” (1998, p. 156). However, he found that migrants’ present “draws itself invariably as the figure of an ambiguity” (p. 159). He wrote,

> Driven on by anxiety, he has only the future in his horizon. ‘What is going to happen to me? What should I do now? How am I to be with the others in this unfamiliar world?’ These are all cogitations oriented towards what is to come rather than ruminations about what has been so far. (Guha, 1998, 159)

Guha was analyzing literally the first migrant’s time. His analysis was concerned about “the first migrant” who had literally known nothing about the “completely strange land” which he happened to be swept to by the sea water. In contrast to the first migrant’s lived circumstances, the new media of information exchange and channels of transaction have changed people’s sense of temporality and spatiality, and the diaspora of immigrants

have constructed their communities. However, the sense of being displaced and disoriented after immigration seemed to characterize the emotional world of both the first migrant and immigrants today.

In our interviews, I didn't hear Nafisi's resistance against "the absorption of the spin" of his adopted community (Guha, 1998, p. 158). What I heard was longing for involvement and integration. Nafisi described how his emotions fluctuated in the first year of his immigration and how gradually he became more conscious of himself in the new environment. When I inquired about how that process was like, Nafisi said,

> I'm not as frustrated as back then, but it's still there as well, I'm still reaching what I want to reach, but I know, I kind of, it's a little more clear to me, so I feel much better. If I don't know everything I need to do, at least I know a couple of things I need to do, right? Not all of them are the best thing I need to do, but at least I know these are the couple of things to do. It makes me feel much easier going forward from now on. I know a lot more people, uh you know, started to interact with the society, or even knowing, having gone part of the city make you feel you're part of the city now, you know, these are the things that contribute to my feeling than before.

Interaction with people in the bridging program and in the city seemed to have made Nafisi have new perspectives to look at Canada and reflect upon his life here. He seemed to know how to prevent himself from going to extremes such as utmost hopelessness or tenacious perfectionism. Though reluctantly, he seemed to be willing to "stand the time" and accept the reality that nobody could tell him, "These are things you

can do" or "These are the people I know you can talk to". When I inquired about what he did that made him feel better, Nafisi remarked,

> You need to stretch to connect to more people, yeah [laugh] if you stretched too much, you're broken. I mean you have to do that, I mean uh it happens that I have perfect connection, in the perfect work back home, but you have to realize that I spend thirty something years making it, and my father and my mother before me, fifty something years for the same thing. So I'm just part of what they have achieved, and as well as building that, there were generations before that. So generally it's generations' work. When it comes to what I have when I come over here, you know, it's not something that happens overnight, I don't expect that to happen overnight as well, I would never ever had the quality of network that I had in Iran here in Canada, even after fifty years, because that's, you know, the work of generations for me, not just myself, but I need to have a certain minimum quality**,** and to get to that point, it takes time, I'm aware of that, it might take much longer than I anticipate, which frustrates me[laugh] but when I reach that point, fine, life will be probably fine, I should stretch [laugh] to that point, so hopefully I won't break before I reach that point.

Guha (1998) described assimilation in *The Migrant's Time*. He wrote, "The migrant, washed and fed and admitted already to his new community, awaits assimilation as either a mimic or a misfit, depending on the degree of his resistance to that always painful and often humiliating process" (p. 157). Different from Guha's narration, the stories of voluntary immigrants such as Nafisi manifested a different tone, more introspective and more sustaining.

5.4 Li's Experiences in the Bridging Program

The headings of the following subsections are excerpts from Li's interviews. They represent the major ambivalence and anxieties that I can identify from reading the transcripts of the interviews with Li.

5.4.1 "If you don't have anything in common, they don't want to talk to you"

Before he immigrated to Canada, Li was living with a sense of crisis because of the competition and other social issues in China. By immigrating, he was expecting to develop his values, accumulate experience of working and studying abroad, develop a solid network with professionals abroad and achieve better mobility by obtaining a Canadian passport. When he found that only entry-level positions were available to him, he went to study at community college and later at university. When we had the interviews, Li seemed to have obtained everything — the diploma, the certificate, the MBA and the Canadian citizenship— except a proper position.

Li had tried very hard to connect with well-established people in Canada. He considered benefiting from the social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook. When I inquired of him what he had done to interact with people in Canada, he remarked,

> So I always see a lot of people, for example, like the director of Canadian Tire I want to talk to. I sent invitation, I sent invitation, OK, "If you have some time, I'd like to come and talk with you, just ask some questions." [Whisper] They never get back, never, even when we're already "friends", I mean we're already friends, so he accepted (my invitation), he has to accept your invitation before you can send any message.

Nowadays, the Internet has become a regular medium of work for internationally educated professionals who are working in international companies in different corners of the world. It gives them a sense of openness to and connection with people living in a shared “global village”. They tend to depend on the Internet to extend their social network. Li seemed to assume that Canadians were even more open to such way of knowing each other. However, in Li’s case, why did the “director” accept the invitation to be a “friend”? What might be the difference between being friends in the virtual world and in the real world? What does his silence mean? When I inquired about what he thought of such silence, Li remarked,

> Even we are friends already, I sent my message, but nobody replied, they don’t want to meet me. I, you know, I’m not going to ask them for jobs, I just come and ask some questions. For example, I need some recommendations. And I make some friends, you know, they don’t want to get involved, because maybe they thought I ask them for jobs. They got so scared.

Li had experience of being contacted for positions when he was a manager in China. He thought that his Canadian “friends” might think of him in the same way as he had thought of others when he was in a managerial position. Despite his own experience in China, Li seemed to have expected that Canadians would be more willing and able to help others. His resort to social media also reflected his desperation because he lacked other means of connecting with people who seemed to be well established. When I inquired about how the local society had impressed him, Li remarked,

> The main stream, maybe the local society, the local community, I don’t know if they’re helping. But uh most of the time, they don’t know what you want, and

they don't know what they can offer, and they don't want to spend time (thinking about what you want and what they can offer), I don't know if you understand, most of the time, I don't know, most of the time.

Li was afraid that he could find nobody to help him in the new environment. He had attempted to develop his network by working in local companies or via social media on the Internet. But in the real world, he didn't find any gestures of hospitality on the part of his virtual "friends". Here arose some questions. How could new immigrants and those who probably forgot they were immigrants or the immigrants' descendants get to know each other more naturally and relate to each other beyond the national or ethnic boundaries in an immigrant country? If a country's operation relies so much on internal credit record and internal recommendation system, where can the immigrants find others who are adequately credible in the system and willing to trust and recommend them? If human nature determines that few individuals would like to get involved in new immigrants' integration, it is essential for the society to establish and maintain social structures to meet the new immigrants' needs.

Li's aspiration to converse with his "friends" not only reflected a significant shortage of channels for the new immigrants to connect with the community. It also reflected his anxiety of being excluded. Hanscombe (2009) suggested that the capacity for empathy is necessary to understand the immigrants' experience because of the complexity of the translation that their experience involved. In an immigrant country, how much capacity do people have to understand and include new immigrants? In a sense, the individuals' indifference to strangers reflected their lack of capacity to work through their own or their ancestors' immigration, which might be traumatic. The

presence of new immigrants might make them fall into a reminiscent mood that they dislike. Or they might have learned to mind their own business and take on a "laissez-faire" attitude because their own families had been treated in the same way and they had already taken it for granted.

Social and official interventions would be more feasible to motivate people to promote interactions and mutual understanding. The bridging program is one of them. When he enrolled in the bridging program, Li took it as an opportunity to achieve what his private effort had failed. When I inquired about how he came to the bridging program, he articulated,

> My case is so different. Even though I did marketing, but I don't know, so I have to do some courses, and IEP offered me some great opportunity, so for me that's OK, right? I didn't feel anything, and I was not PhD, I was not Master, I was not MBA, I was not, so for me it's nothing, I don't care about that, so you have to grab each opportunity, that's it, right? … I lose nothing, right? But I got something. For example, like the certificate, I got it. I don't know if that's useful, but I take the courses, so I can talk about that, and the other thing, like X University in Canada, you can still find a lot of alumni, right? So if on LinkedIn, if you look at someone's profile, and you found, "Oh, this guy graduate from X University," at least you can find something you can talk about, right?…If you don't have anything in common, they don't want to talk to you, because they don't know what to say.

Li was comparing himself with people with a Master's degree or a PhD in his field. He assumed that if he were them, he would complain about studying just for a certificate.

However, considering his own situation, he was quite satisfied with studying the concepts and principles, receiving a certificate and becoming an alumnus of X University. Most importantly, he would have a common language and references with others in Canada after graduating from the bridging program.

Li had envied his superiors in China who liked talking about their stories of studying marketing abroad. He had hoped that he could do so because people were interested in what happened in the foreign countries. In Canada, Li envied those people who had affiliations with the local institutions and knew much about the local affairs.

However, the language of the local Canadians may feel like the "father tongue" in Hanscombe's analysis (2009). It is different from the mother tongue, which is associated with "the nocturnal memory of the body" and "the sweet-sour sleep of childhood" (Kristeva, 1988; cited in Hanscombe, 2009, p. 121). Although it always feels other and demanding in Li's mind, the "father tongue" is also tempting. According to Hanscombe (2009),

> Such a voice is essential to the development of technologies, science and the humanities. It presupposes that a common language can be spoken in laboratories, in business and governments everywhere. And "those who don't know it or won't speak it are silent, or silenced, or unheard" (Le Guin, 1992, p. 148). (Hanscombe, 2009, p. 117)

Li expected not only to hear others speaking the father tongue but also speak it himself. He hoped that people could hear each other's voices with the help of the father tongue. The university-based bridging program seemed to have facilitated Li's attempt to learn it and motivated him to continue to learn more. By the time of our interviews, Li

had not only completed his study in the bridging program but also graduated from an MBA program at another university in Ontario. In this process of learning, the idea of network building was always in his mind. When I inquired about what progress he made in this regard, Li remarked,

> The IEP professors, they're, they are great, they're professors, because you can use the professor network, for example, like when I applied for MBA, we know we need three kind of reference, so I used professor at X University, when I tried to apply for Z University's School of Business, and I used a professor at X University, and I think that network works. It's a kind of network, right? And the other thing is like, the IEP, I don't know if you know who founded the IEP program, that's the professors and business people, most of them are immigrants, I mean the founder of IEP, X University IEP. [R: I don't know] The founder like who build up this program and I know one of them, which is X, [smack his tongue] I don't get her family name, but X was the managing director of [pause and think hard] Is it X? I don't remember, but it's a big Accounting Firm, she's the Managing Director there in Vancouver, but uh two years ago she was Managing Director in Canada, sort of, I think, accounting firm, and she was one of the founder of IEP at X University. So right now we're still, you know, friends because she shared with us that she was immigrant from South Africa, but she's white, and she graduated from, I think, that's Oxford University, somewhere in UK, but still I heard a lot of trouble. She's great. We have strong network.

Li spoke English very fast, and looked serious most of the time. He told me probably it was the result of having worked in those bustling offices in Beijing for so many years. Now he sounded excited when he was recalling how he was able to seek support from the professors in the bridging program to apply for the MBA program and how the founders of the program inspired him with their immigration stories. However, apart from the gratitude and excitement, Li was also suggesting that while it was difficult for white immigrants who graduated from top universities to integrate in Canada, it was more difficult for non-white immigrants who didn't graduate from the most prestigious universities in the world to integrate in this country.

5.4.2 "You just don't know what to say with the other IEPs"

In the bridging program, Li and the other IEPs had many opportunities to meet each other in the office or in the classrooms. He had expected to set up a network with them and even hoped that he could see brotherhood with them, something that he could find among classmates in China. He created new groups on Facebook and LinkedIn for the IEPs who enrolled in the bridging programs in the same year. However, he was discouraged by their disinterest. When I asked him what happened, Li remarked,

> I don't know if it's true or not. Well, number one, me the same, we like to have network, but someone we can use in the future, not just people in the same boat. We tried to find another boat, somewhere someone that can help us, because "in the same boat, you guys are the same, so you won't be able to help each other that lot". Number two, sometimes, I thought like that, I don't know whether it's true or not, but [inhale] sometimes people are like, "OK, we are all

> IEP, we're on the same boat", so they treated you like a competitor, because "one day, you guys will compete in the same job market". I don't know, but nobody talked about that, but I think sometimes I have this feeling. They don't make friends that strong, and I don't know if that's true, but you know, it's pretty common sometimes, it's pretty common. And the other thing is like language, they always are difficult to communicate with. I thought it's not the language itself, but you know sometimes, it's like you just don't know what to say with the other IEPs.

The network of classmates constitutes a very important layer of human relations in China. Classmates and schoolmates usually cultivate a mutually supportive network that they could rely on in their future work and life. Chinese people are used to the culture of relationship by exchanging information and recommending each other in need. Li had expected something similar by going to university in Canada. However, in the bridging program, the IEPs spoke different languages and all were struggling with their own life. Li attributed their alienation to not only competition and their differences but also their common loss of something that they had taken pride in. Li remarked,

> You have to understand, all the IEP, kind of people, they are smart in their home. I don't know their home country, but in their country of origin, most, you know, is quite established people, right? Maybe they're managers, they work in big companies, they have PhD, they have masters, [sigh deeply] but here they are nothing, right? So here, they start from IEP, from zero. So for a lot of people, it's not something glory, it's not something they want to talk about, about the future, Oh sorry, about the past … it's nothing, you know, so

nothing they talk about, because what you have and what you feel proud is nothing [exhale abruptly] I mean, so that's horrible.

Li's remarks reflected his own anxiety of "becoming nothing" and "losing glory forever" as well in Canada. Li seemed to be fantasizing a "horrible" future. He said "future" when he actually intended to say "past". That tongue slip revealed that his mind was occupied by the repressed concerns about his "future". Li abandoned his plan of making close friends with the other IEPs. He thought that they were suffering from regression and melancholia and could hardly help each other.

Li stayed in Canada for five years. He tried to sustain his hope by learning persistently and looking for opportunities incessantly. Although he managed to get an MBA and a Canadian passport, he didn't find a position in an international company as he had desired. Now he was afraid that his dream of moving upward would be broken if he continued to struggle in Canada. Instead of struggling or mooning about in Canada, he was considering returning to China.

5.4.3 "About China who cares? About India who cares?"

Li confessed that he was not confident in his ability to form a good work relationship with others in Canada. He had unhappy memories of supervising young people in China, who he believed lacked self-discipline and were becoming more and more self-centered. Not knowing how to get along with the young people who were born and educated in Canada, Li thought he would have trouble when communicating with them if he worked as a manager in a Canadian company.

Li motivated himself to communicate with the regular students at college and at university, believing that if he got on well with them, he could also be on good terms with the young Canadians in the work place. He did work on some team projects with the young people. Apparently, he didn't have any trouble with them and his confidence was elevated. However, the uplifted confidence was seriously challenged by his discomfort in the MBA program at a university in another city, which was not as metropolitan and multi-cultural as the one where he attended the bridging program.

Although Li's experience in the MBA program was not the focus of my dissertation, it exposed problems that challenged the IEPs and had important implications for the bridging programs. Li narrated what happened in the MBA program. He said,

> I mean I have some difficulties working with them, but that's not my fault, because everyone talk about that, because they're centre, they're self-centered, and they think they know everything and they can do anything, they [stress] THINK they can do anything. But you know, you and me, that's impossible, you can do very little thing, not everything. And if you don't agree with them, if you say, "I have different opinions", they get so angry, they think you're challenging them, I don't know, but sometimes this is my feeling, this is my feeling.

Li was agitated when he narrated how the young white MBA students showed their hostility towards his difference. He repeatedly questioned their arrogance. "They think they know everything, how do you know that?" Li assumed that MBA students could have more mature attitudes towards differences and would like to enhance their own understanding of more complicated issues by sharing different perspectives of seeing the

world. He attributed the young people's hostility towards difference to the reality that they were ill-informed and self-centered. For instance, to his shock, the young MBA students who never went to China dared to make strong claims about this country in front of Chinese. Li refuted that they knew nothing about China. He sounded angry and showed resistance against their representation of China and the Chinese. When I inquired about whether any of their remarks had offended him, Li said no, explaining that what made him angry was not their negative comments but their pretentiousness and refusal to listen to people who had experience living and working in China. Li was disappointed with the MBA program. He said,

> Business school was set up for experienced people, like managers, you work with different industries, different countries, different companies, and you share experience, this is MBA, this is business school. You're not come to business school and pay a lot of money and just listen to the professors. No, it's not undergraduate, it's not like primary school…But they don't care about anything out of Canada, they don't want to learn, they don't want to hear, they just care about their grades. I think this is pretty much like, well, the character of generation Y, because it sounds like they don't know, they don't have a whole picture. For example, you go to business school, you're not for straight As, right? That's not the purpose, but my classmates, they thought that's what they want, they just want A, A+, A, A+. They don't want to learn about anything [laugh]. About China who cares? About India who cares?

Li emphasized that by exchanging lessons or insights people could learn from their work experience and the mistakes and misunderstandings in particular. He expected to

learn from the lessons that Canadian students could share so that he would understand what happens in Canada. However, the young MBA students did not seem interested in it and the professors did not seem to advocate such discussions.

Li thought people in the MBA program were close-minded and he hated working with them. He had attempted to learn how to be able to work with people of diverse backgrounds. But his experience in the MBA program exposed him more to prejudice and misrepresentation than insights. It proved that the confidence that he had won when he graduated from the bridging program was fragile because it was not challenged by the chaos of conflicting representations.

Li hated being misrepresented. His resistance against the young white MBA students not only reflected his discomfort with their abuse of the freedom of speech but also with the power relationship between the young white MBA students who represented the dominant cultural community and the immigrant professionals who represented the marginalized minority communities.

In the third interview, Li told me that he had started searching for positions both in Canada and China. In contrast to throwing stones in the sea in Canada, he had already had serious interviews with large international companies in China. He was ready to return to China.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter focused on three cases: Aguilera, a manager from Mexico, who had a degree from a university in Mexico and another university in France, had worked in India and Mexico before she immigrated to Canada and participated in the bridging program

one or two years after immigration; Nafisi, a Iranian manager, who had a Master's degree from a university in Sweden and worked in Dubai before he immigrated to Canada and participated in the bridging program about a year after immigration; Li, a manager from China, who had worked in a foreign company in Beijing before immigration and participated in the bridging program about three years after immigration. They shared intense longings for continuous development in the international arena. They demonstrated the agency to reach for connections and showed strong determination to keep learning from and about the host. They didn't have as much separation anxiety about leaving the homeland as about having to forgo some elements of their ego sameness such as the pride to excel and the ambition to grow. The danger of not being able to succeed in the new environment made them feel guilty and shameful unconsciously.

Chapter Six Discussions, Implications and Conclusions

Chapter Six consists of three sections. In the first section, I discuss the findings of this study. In the second section, I provide the implications of this study for both the bridging programs and the IEPs. In the third section, I conclude this study by reflecting upon the benefits and the problems of inquiring into human beings' emotional experience with a psychoanalytic lens and upon the limitations of this study as a whole.

6.1 Discussions

Despite their unique educational trajectories, the participants in this study manifested common traits in their identification with the institutionalized knowledge and their belief in their entitlement to privileges because of their mastery of that knowledge. They all took pride in their pursuit of more education and belonged to a privileged class of people in their world because of their education. They shared concerns about retaining their advantageous access to resources and opportunities. They shared the intense longings for continuous development in the international arena.

Although they were highly educated, before immigration, the participants all underestimated not only the systemic barriers that would impede their integration but also their anxiety that immigration and disintegration tended to aggravate. It was after immigration that they realized that the new environment differed dramatically from their fantasies about developed countries. The images of the first world were shattered in their minds by the Gordian knots that they found perplexing all people in Canada. Indeed, as beneficiaries of higher education, they had never imagined that social problems in

immigrant countries such as poverty and prejudice would befall and haunt them after immigration.

Apparently, the IEPs were not well informed of the problems in the developed countries' social realities. Very likely, such problems were not attended to by the media or the educational institutions in developing countries now that they play an active role in producing discourses. If they are not inflicted by wars and post-colonial struggles, people in developing countries seem to be predominantly focused on science, technology and business, whereas the developed countries have taken the lead since the industrial and informational revolution. The national obsession with catching up with the developed countries very likely have deeply influenced and oriented people's attention and their overall identification.

The cases in this study showed the faltering states of mind of the internationally educated professionals after immigration, when they had to live with conflicts among the desires, the external realities and the demands of rationality. The emotional experience revealed similar tendencies towards confusions and anxieties. As Chapter Four shows, Maya and Hasan, both Asian mothers, took their children's education as the most critical thing that they should be responsible for. Without knowing the mundane life of people in Canada, they both had idealized their own immigration and assumed that their own life would be better in Canada. However, they both were disillusioned because they could not find any chance of being recognized for their values as a lawyer, an administrator or a teacher.

In order to integrate into their professions in the new society, Hasan and Maya both lowered their self-expectation as a temporary strategy, taking whatever positions where

available to them. They hoped that that their expertise would be recognized and rewarded in other ways. For instance, Hasan worked as a paralegal in the law office. Her experience practicing law in Bangladesh enabled her to contribute more than required. Similarly, when Maya worked as an assistant in a government ministry, her analytic skills made it possible for her to help analyze the documents. However, they found that their extra work was not treated fairly in Canada. To Hasan's frustration, her additional credits were always taken for granted by her bosses; she got no bonus and was paid as little as the workers in the fast food industry. In Maya's case, what made her upset was that her active offer to help was taken as "intimidating" by her workmates, who were not even willing to see her move forward in her career elsewhere in Canada. The message that Hasan and Maya sent to me was: however they tried, they couldn't see any turn for the better. The experience of being underemployed and underpaid was painful; they felt that they were exploited and wasted. While they were optimistic about their children's future, they were anxious about their own. Indeed, they were consumed by their faltering attempts to suppress and emancipate their desire for personal development from time to time.

Maya and Hasan viewed the bridging programs as a real welcome gesture in contrast to the sweetening immigration advertisements, the indifferent employers and the defensive employees in the Canadian market. However, they found that even the bridging programs couldn't help bridge the gaps that perplexed them most. In Maya's mind, the gap was one of values; she and people in Canada didn't seem to care about the same things. In Hasan's mind, the gap was one of discrimination and injustice.

Different from Hasan and Maya in Chapter Four, Aguilera, Nafasi and Li in Chapter Five stressed their willingness to learn from the mainstream society. When they were considering how to make a difference in their life in Canada, they tended to focus on obtaining what they found the host society demanded but they had lacked. They desired to integrate into the mainstream society by going to university and having connections with people who had knowledge about the Canadian society and its culture(s). Aguilera and Nafisi exemplified those younger immigrants who benefited from western education. They had more experience of visiting, studying and working with people from different countries and accordingly had more confidence in their capacity to change and adapt to Canadian life. Li didn't have educational experience abroad until after immigration. Although he had visited many cities in developed countries on business trips or vacation trips, he lacked confidence in working with people with diverse backgrounds. Despite their previous experiences abroad, after immigration, Aguilera, Nafisi and Li all suffered from confusion and anxieties.

By the time of our interviews, Aguilera and Nafisi sounded determined to make a living in Canada. Aguilera learned from her parents' divorce and her sister's death to be cautious against getting too desperate for career success. She anticipated that she could find things more important for her than external achievements in Canada. Besides, living close to her grandma and her cousins, she seemed to expect to heal the wounds that her family traumas had caused. In Nafisi's case, it was under his parents' influence that he was strongly motivated to settle down in Canada. For him, immigration meant a family's flight from wars and religious domination. Although they were single, Aguilera and

Nafisi, like Hasan and Maya, believed that that their children would grow up in a better environment in Canada.

In contrast, what preoccupied Li's mind were not wars, social insecurity or religious domination but competition and economic opportunities. Although he was aware of problems in China such as environmental pollution and polarization between the poor and the rich, Li did not consider them convincing enough for him to stay in Canada because he found that he could find no opportunities for his career here. Despite the welfare policies in support of Canadian citizens and permanent residents living in poverty, Li would rather tolerate the pressure of working in China than struggle to make ends meet in Canada. For him, having no opportunity for a career meant having no chances for a better life. Before immigration, Li had been anxious about how to sustain himself in the competition in China. Now he was perplexed by the reality of finding no position in international companies in Canada. After comparing his possibilities in China and in Canada for five years, Li started planning for reverse migration. He was anticipating a balanced life that he claimed immigration had taught him how to manage in China. Months before our interviews, his wife had already returned to China.

The immigrant professionals carried the loads that their past had left them with, some of which could be cast off with ease and some of which might have entered their marrows and thus could hardly be abandoned. If they have been consumed by years of struggles with the systemic barriers and could not be engaged with productive social activities, they would find the kernel of their psychic creativity torn away. Under these circumstances, for the IEPs who achieved and still have prospects of success outside Canada, they tend to feel it unreasonable and unbearable to keep experimenting with their

life in Canada. In this study, Hasan's husband, Li, Li's wife, Maya's husband and Maya were all cases that could shed light in this regard. For the IEPs who chose to stay in Canada, as we can see from the cases of Hasan, Aguilera and Nafasi, they usually aspire to have something in Canada, which they consider important and assume they will not be able to have elsewhere.

In this study, we find that although the educational levels of the immigrants have increased, the country's age-old defensive mechanism still linger and inhibit the integration of the IEPs. Canada needs to be cautious of the divisive and xenophobic tendency beneath its multicultural appearance. When the social defensive mechanisms in the form of various systemic barriers keep reproducing underemployment and unemployment and lead people to take the adverse situations for granted, Canada needs to know that the roots of many problems undermining the financial, emotional and physical well beings of people in Canada are not the IEPs, or the immigrants in general, who aspire to integrate into a constructive and productive social system, but the everlasting lack of inclusive and integrative initiatives and mechanisms in the host country. People in Canada need to reflect upon how the social defensiveness and sometimes hostility towards newcomers have also prevented themselves from honestly working against racism, sexism and classism, whose symptoms include but may not be limited to discrimination, exploitation and mutual hatred. Such persistent social ailments are caused by historical factors both within and without and the reproduced social anxieties about being victimized, if not checked, will be passed on to the future generations and undermine the country's vitality.

6.2 Implications

6.2.1 For the bridging programs

This study has implications for the bridging programs, where the participants in this study had sought new possibilities in Canada. They anticipated that the bridging programs could bring about significant changes to their life. They did make some changes, but they were not necessarily the same as they had expected. Hasan had needed to learn Canadian laws; in the bridging program, she studied with a cohort of internationally educated lawyers and finally embarked on working for the lawyer's license. In Maya's case, although she didn't find she learned anything new from the bridging program, she started to pay more attention to others' perspectives and wanted to understand what happened between her and her colleagues in Canada. Li had lacked knowledge about the field of Marketing and Business; he learned that knowledge and managed to study in an MBA program in Canada. Nafisi had wanted to know how the society worked in Canada; he learned from the experience of the other IEPs and started to stretch his potentialities. Aguilera had wanted to improve her written English in business environment; she made progress and felt much more confident.

However, based on the participants' narratives, we can also identify some problems that the bridging programs might want to consider if they attempt to improve their relevance to the internationally educated professionals. *One problem is concerned about the conflicts of relationship in Canada*. For instance, as we see in Chapter Four, Maya was considered "scary" by her colleagues. Why? Her duties as an assistant could not meet her intellectual needs and she offered to do more. Could she? And should she? She presented herself as a super-active person at the meetings and in the everyday work. Her

colleagues didn't like it, but she had not noticed that at all until their feedback wrecked her progress to a position that matched her academic and professional background. Why? What could be learned from such tensions about the work culture in Canada? Most internationally educated professionals came from developing countries, which are unanimously striving for modernism and industrialism. How might the national pursuit have influenced the ideology, the mindset of people and the work culture in different countries? How could Canada accommodate such progressive minds and turn them into sources of vitality and creativity? Based on Maya's narrative, we find that the bridging programs did not engage the students in understanding such tensions from comparative or historical perspectives. Similarly, in Li's narrative, we find that he did not realize that he and the young white students differed in their perspectives almost in an irreconcilable manner until he studied in the MBA program. Why didn't Li recognize any conflicts that he had with the white students or the young students when he was studying in the bridging program? When liberal education generally emphasizes cultivating students' capacity for critical analysis, should bridging programs emphasize it as much if not more? What might be the concerns of the staff and the faculty working in the bridging programs?

Learning from conflicts always involves emotional contact. In contrast to our passionate devotion to reason and rationality, "our instituted education, in its own passion for ignorance, more often than not, fears and even hates" the emotional contact (Britzman, 2009, p. 148). Britzman (2009) stated,

> The wager for education in the professions is whether we can stand the ideas and feelings made when ignorance takes its own novel time, not as passions for

itself, not as narcissistic defenses, and not as disclaiming affect and our impressive subjectivity. (p. 147)

I propose welcoming the emotional contact in the bridging programs and opening the learning possibilities. They could consider integrating more projects that attempt to address controversial issues in the Canadian context and adding elements of collaborative education. As Nafisi in Chapter Five suggested, they could assign the IEPs to collaborate with different institutions such as companies and agencies and lead them to discuss what problems might arise in these collaborations. The IEPs wanted and needed more exposure to various work contexts in Canada to understand the reality of working with others.

The bridging programs could also consider integrating such elements to the existing courses. For instance, most bridging programs in this study provided such courses as English Writing and Business Communication. They seemed to be more concerned about linguistic standards and practical routines and templates. As Aguilera in Chapter Five stated, the templates provided to the participants were useful. But the courses would be more beneficial in the long run if they could consider helping the IEPs think about life in a more general but deeper sense and integrate more open-ended questions and discussions in the process of language teaching and learning. Such attempts might open up more reflective and constructive conversations than the metaphor of "poppy flowers" and the advice of "just keep quiet", which we heard from Maya in Chapter Four. By attending to the public discourses and the internally persuasive discourses, the language related courses might be able to create space for understanding intercultural communication in this multicultural world.

In a similar spirit, the professors, the consultants and the mentors could reorganize their workshops and seminars about immigrants' integration in a multicultural society by analyzing intricate cases that have implications for understanding tensions and conflicts in the work places and across communities in Canada. The IEPs would benefit from learning how the environmental changes might challenge their own assumptions and expectations and rethink their choices related to immigration and their relationships with others. In the process of organizing workshops and seminars, the bridging programs could take the lead to build up new types of networks by gathering the professors, the instructors, the mentors, the established professionals, the interested alumni and the participants of the bridging programs, and create continuous opportunities for all of them to share a community.

A second problem was concerned with the bridging programs for licensed professions. According to Hasan's narrative in Chapter Four, the bridging programs had no connection with the accreditation committees. However, the IEPs' integration needs systematic support and collaborative efforts require many entities. The university-based bridging program is only one of them. Admittedly, the public, with no exception of the IEPs, need the professional associations and the accreditation committees to safeguard the quality of services provided by professionals such as lawyers, doctors and accountants. However, "safeguard" could be used as an excuse for the gate keepers not to consider the IEPs' potentialities and not to focus on how to help them adapt their potentialities to the new context. As we see in Chapter One, researchers identified systemic barriers. An intractable one is the licensing process. Indeed, to accommodate the IEPs, systematic supports need to be put into place. For instance, the accreditation

committees, like an invisible hand, need to be more visible. They need to be accountable for their evaluations; they should inform the IEPs of the criteria they adopt and respond to their questions fairly and efficiently. They need to design and implement flexible mechanism in handling individual cases. Besides, the government should take the lead to promote better partnerships between the accreditation committees and the university-based bridging programs. If they can consider the IEPs' circumstances and coordinate with each other in terms of when and where they could take the exams, for example, the IEPs' anxieties can be allayed and it would be more likely for them to focus on their studies. Moreover, official institutions such as CIC (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) should keep improving the websites and update the professional links in order to provide accurate and timely information for the IEPs. If they could have access to complete information before their immigration about what they need to do so as to work in the same professions in Canada (not just immigrate) and about what supports they could receive from the social institutions, they would be less likely to idealize life in Canada and accordingly get themselves more prepared for the work that could be done.

6.2.2 For the IEPs

This study also has implications for the IEPs. By inquiring into their anxieties, I attempt to understand what immigration means to them emotionally in the process of transition and learning. While we could see from Chapter Four and Chapter Five how the external realities, the external barriers in particular, had affected their affects, we could also see how their strivings and their desires and anxieties interrelated and determined their sense of psychic crisis, psychic survival and psychic creativity.

The experience of immigration could be a learning experience that one will never have if one doesn't separate from what he/she is familiar with and has taken for granted. The conflicts and the emotional fluctuations could help one learn about himself/herself coexisting with similar but different people in the changing world. One could see how he/she would work through or be stuck in the confusion and the sense of persecution; he/she could also see the limits and the limitations of his/her education for certainty and empowerment. As we could see from this study, many of the IEPs belong to privileged classes in various countries of the developing world. If the immigration policy does not change, the inflow of immigrants will constitute more people of similar characteristics. Like the IEPs in this study, they might admire the leading positions that developed countries have taken in industrialization, urbanization, cultural diversity and economic globalization; they might also be fascinated by the grand ideals of pursuing political democracy, religious freedom and intellectual freedom, which have sustained the public discourses in developed countries and gradually permeated into the consciousness of people all over the world through their educational exports, their dominant status in the economic, cultural and political exchanges. The IEPs' unconscious identification with the developed countries and their paradoxical desires to comply and negotiate will be challenged and tested by the social problems in Canada, which, as I suggest in the preceding section of this chapter, might be overlooked, ignored or underestimated in their past education and their own learning experience. After immigration, the IEPs will have to rethink such issues as belonging and privileges and relearn their conflicts, which they tend to take for granted as well.

The IEPs in this study were part of generations who could benefit from higher education or international education. Their experience before immigration seemed to have convinced them that there is a positive correlation between the level of their education and the degree of their professional achievements. However, immigration made them doubt about this. Before immigration, they tended to undervalue the networks that supported their growth and the cultural environment that nourished their development and underestimate the challenges that would be caused by the changes in languages and discourses.

In the process of adapting to the new system, the IEPs feel it is challenging to question their own value system that had probably fossilized in their mind, and it's even more challenging to compare the values in different cultural systems. Britzman (1998) raised an interesting question in her book *Lost subjects, contested objects,* "How do learners work through, and get stuck in, all the conflictive representations and theories of learning offered by their life in education?" (pp. 23-24). In the new environment, there coexist conflicting values that contradict not only with what the IEPs held onto in the past but also among themselves. Here, the problem is not whether one should become part of a new system. The problem is how to be part of that system without getting lost and demoralized. In this sense, the IEPs need to learn from their chaotic experience how to substitute their past adhesive or projective modes of learning for an introjective mode of learning and not to float with the chaos. They need to reflect upon their past pursuit of education in exchange for external success at the cost of authentic emotional growth. They need to understand their anxieties about poverty and backwardness and, more

importantly, explore more sustaining drives so that they could keep exploring and creating significance of life.

The IEPs need to understand various social problems that the history of Canada has left people with and the corresponding anxieties that people have in this multicultural society. For instance, how might have colonization, world wars and interracial power relations have shaped generations of people' ways of thinking and acting in Canada? These historic problems and the inherited social anxieties must have played a role in shaping the society and its culture. If the new-coming IEPs feel excluded because they could not relate to that part of Canadian history as Guha (1998) suggested, at least they could feel less confused and less persecuted if they could understand how their personal problems related to the social problems and the social anxieties.

In this study, we find that the IEPs viewed universities as a container with reverie. The bridging programs served the containing function because of the presence of people who came to this country earlier and had compassion towards the IEPs. In the process of learning, the IEPs need educational institutions which have the capacity to allow them to feel, think and narrate what happens between them and others. Britzman (2009) stated,

> Few institutions have the means to address the emotional life they both call upon and may agonize with its rules, routines, and implicit cultural life. Yet education, whether for adults or children, plays a role unlike any other institution and so lends to teachers a particular responsibility for a world students have not made yet nonetheless inherit, represent, and affect. In the space of education, the promise of knowledge and language are given their promise by teachers' relation to their work and their difference from their

> students. That we have language at all, however, means a lifelong struggle to symbolize affect into feelings and to make from that admixture self-knowledge and relation to the world. (p. 84)

Education, generally speaking, is a helping profession that inevitably involves the most complicated work of understanding and connecting self and others as well as the heritage and new possibilities. By understanding people's anxieties at time of conflictive encounters and considering what conditioned the desire to learn and the desire to ignore, we are also thinking "the force of history within the force of learning" (Britzman, 1998, p. 5). In this way, we could see the "the fragility of education", by which Britzman meant the difficulty posed by the dominant trend of education for "master and control", and by the learners molded by such trend.

Klein introduced "a distinction between intrusive curiosity, stimulated by a voyeuristic need to 'know' in order to master and control, and a more enlightened desire to understand; something more akin to a thirst for knowledge, in the interests of growth rather than mastery" (Waddell, 2002, p. 113). In this study, we find the company of defensive desire for education and defensive anxiety about "inferiority" in all of the cases to more or less extent and see how excessive anxieties not only impaired the IEPs' health but also undermined their capacities to digest their experience and come up with more creative strategies to handle the conflicts.

However, it is such capacities that are critical at times of conflictive encounters. For instance, in Chapter Four, Maya's obsession with excellence posed a challenge to her "capacity to remain integrated and yet lose rigidity" (Bion, 1962b, p. 86). Hasan's difficulty in concentrating on the exams challenged her capacity to balance her own

uncompromising desires. In Chapter Five, Li's conflict with the young white MBA students challenged his capacity to relearn his own conflict with the authority figures at a young age and his capacity for challenges posed by what he deemed as the dominant culture. What seemed to be a challenge for all IEPs was their capacity to tolerate uncertainty and the "extreme swings of emotion from love to hate, from complete confidence to dire suspicion or paralyzing fear" (Britzman, 1998, p. 4). The conflictive encounters signaled for "unlearning of old strategies (as opposed to a repetition of one's own history of learning in the guise of new strategies)" and for creative thoughts in the interests of authentic growth (Britzman, 1998, p. 5).

6.3 Conclusions

Researchers have uncovered the chronic and obstinate problems that have troubled IEPs and explored the possibilities of implementing certain models of bridging programs to bridge the gaps identified. With the same interest in IEPs' (dis)integration, my study attempts to further the contemporary literature by focusing on understanding the complexity of the IEPs' learning experience in university-based bridging programs in Ontario.

I used a qualitative research method so as to retain the textures and nuances of the IEPs' experience. I conducted in-depth interviews with five participants, who volunteered to narrate their stories and used their narratives as the data of my research. As I elaborate in Chapter Three, the three-interview structure suggested by Seidman (2006) allowed for more openness for us to (re)construct the sequence of important events in their experience and contextualize their emotional fluctuations. It also allowed for more

reflexivity on the part of both the participants and me because we could reflect upon the relationship among various events revealed in different interviews with a participant and return to certain events when necessary in the later interviews.

In the process of interviewing, we relied on consciousness and rationality to represent the experience. However, the attempt to represent the emotional world also opened us to the otherness of "consciousness" and the reality of us knowing very little. For instance, such "otherness" and "littleness" became visible when Li, Aguilera and Nafisi explicitly articulated "I don't know" or "I don't know if it's true" now and then in their narratives and when the "positive" Maya and Hasan reiterated their struggles with the "negative" reality of wasting their time. In the process of analyzing the narratives, I always felt that I could never know enough to validate my inferences or speculations. Such indeterminacy is determined by the "otherness" of internal world to consciousness and the "tentativeness" might characterize most research exploring the internal experiences.

In Chapter Two, I provide the conceptual framework of this study by looking into the following concepts: reality, states of mind, anxiety, defense mechanisms, learning, education, identity and immigration from the psychoanalytic perspectives. Britzman stated, "Learning is a relearning of one's history of learning—new editions of old conflicts" (1998, p. 5). In this study, I paid much attention to the conflicts in the narratives, which reflected the participants' history of learning in different modes of learning. While reading the transcripts and marshalling my thoughts, I mainly did two things. On the one hand, I explored the IEPs' assumptions, beliefs, desires and anxieties which interplayed with their perceptions of what happened in their life and conditioned

their learning and lack of learning in the new and often conflictive encounters. On the other hand, I translated what I learned from social equity theories and psychoanalytic theories to my practice of interpretation. I endeavored to identify how their idiosyncratic struggles in the new world might have been historically and socially contextualized and speculate upon how the barriers in the form of discrimination and exclusion might reveal the host society's counter-transference.

The conception of learning and anxiety in psychoanalysis not only provided me with the psychoanalytic language but also helped me contain my own anxieties and sustain my (re)thinking and (re)learning throughout this study. For instance, I had anxieties about not being creative or critical enough while I was composing my dissertation. As an IEP myself, sometimes I was susceptible to the participants' anxieties and couldn't help but worry about my own fate in Canada. Jenna Shim (2015) stated,

> The process of narrating the affected experience, for Freud, meant ways of putting together the pieces of one's life, however incomplete, to make a new meaning and create a new subject position so as to afford a person the capacity to interpret reality rather than to comply with it. (p. 685)

For me as a researcher, interpreting the IEPs' affective experience meant that I had to tolerate the reality that they could only offer incomplete pieces of their life and that I had to be cautious against my passion for taking the reality interpreted by the participants as it is. In order to create a new subject position that could afford me the capacity to interpret their interpretations and to make a new meaning of the meanings that the participants made, I needed to activate self-scrutiny intentionally.

The notions of transference and counter-transference in psychoanalysis contributed to my awareness of self-scrutiny and my understanding of what happened between the participants and me. Hollway and Jefferson (2008) stated,

> [Self-scrutiny] can yield information about the intellectual and emotional factors that inevitably influence the researcher's involvement and activity, and at the same time provide information about the dynamics of the individual or social system being studied. (p. 305)

By "self-scrutiny", I mean while I depended on my intuition, rationality and speculation to interact with the participants and interpret their interpretations, psychoanalysis enabled me to keep a third eye at a distance to observe our interactions and question my own interpretations. For instance, the participants showed little reluctance to respond to my questions. But sometimes when they exposed much confusion or ambivalence towards their struggles or conflicts or made strong claims about injustice and prejudice, I could see my discomfort. I would wonder what responses they might be attempting to elicit from me as a researcher. What caused my discomfort? What associations did I have when I heard and read those struggles and conflicts? Might my emotional discomfort affect my attitude towards their interpretation? Might my attitude interfere with their free association? Simon Clarke (2002) thought that the term "projective identification" could describe the psychodynamic between the researcher and the participants than transference. He stated,

> This dynamic operates on several levels. I have argued that on one level both respondent and researcher shape the research environment and data through projective communication. On another level, respondents can make the

> interviewer experience to some degree what they themselves have felt, thus evoking some empathy. Finally, I have suggested, using Bion's (1962) model of 'container' and 'contained', that the interview can be viewed as a therapeutic encounter. (2002, p. 187)

The participants in my study seemed to take me as an understanding listener and expect me to make their voices heard. I was sensitive to their transference, or in Clarke's words, projective identification. For instance, Li often said, "I don't' know if you understand me" when he was interpreting some pieces of his experience. That was his way of drawing my attention to his interpretations; but with such statements, he was also projecting his concerns about misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Wonderment about such transference later led me to the findings that "being misunderstood" constituted an important part of his anxiety. A second example is about Hasan. When she was describing how the examinations blocked her way to proceed, she mentioned my experience of teaching in China. She suggested that she was a good student and claimed that I would not fail "good students" in my class who underperformed in exams. When she made such affirmative claims about my "benevolence" towards underperforming "good students", she was very likely projecting her wishes to me.

In the process of this study, I also took cautions against my counter-transference. Sometimes, the participants' narratives and their anxieties were reminiscent of my own unresolved conflicts. Or I associated the participants with people I liked or disliked and tended to register certain emotions towards them. Sometimes, I knew that I had the impulse to share my own experience with them or disagree with their statements or even

refute their interpretations. But I tried to hold back in case my counter-transference should inhibit the IEPs' free associations.

In this study, I speculated about people and institutions that had been involved in the participants' struggles or conflicts but were not invited for the interviews. I tried to create an imaginary space to explore possibilities to effect changes for a more inclusive and integrative host society. The narratives in this study were not treated as evidence of "any crime scenes" of social inequality or injustice but as resources for people and institutions to rethink the possibilities of relearning the old conflicts and working through their old anxieties.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Invitation Letter

Hello,

My name is Xiaohui (Judy) Zhu. I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at York University. I am interested in your experience as an internationally educated professional and would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation study, which focuses on the experience of immigrants who are internationally educated.

My dissertation study has been approved by York University Research Ethics Committee, and no risk is involved. Both you and the bridging program you participate in will remain anonymous. All the information concerning you will be kept confidential. And you will have a copy of a human consent form that lists your rights.

Now, if you are an internationally educated professional, if you are enrolled in a Bridging Program at a university in Ontario, and if you are willing to meet me for a three-part interview within 2-3 weeks (each part taking 60 minutes), or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Best Wishes.

Xiaohui Zhu

Appendix B: Informed Consent Letter

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education at York University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research "*Realities and Anxieties to Live with: An In-depth Inquiry into the Experience of Internationally Educated Professionals in the Bridging Programs at Universities in Ontario*". I am interested in your experiences as an internationally educated professional, how you think the bridging programs (can) support you. I will have three interviews with you within 2-3 weeks in a private room at York University. Each interview will take 60 minutes and I will record them with an audio recorder. Interview one will focus on how you came to Canada. I want to hear you talk about your early experience with your families and friends, at college and at work before you participated in the bridging program. Interview two will focus on your daily experience in the program. I would like to hear you talk about the details of your life in this program. Interview three will focus on your vision of the future. I would like to hear your reflection on the meaning of your experience and your thoughts on and hopes for the future.

I appreciate your participation greatly and assure you that your participation is completely voluntary and that your identity will not be revealed. In the research report I will not use any names that identify you. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions and you may choose to withdrawal from this research at any time for any reason. Your decision to withdraw will not influence your relationship with me, York University or any group associated with this research. Any information that I obtain from you will be kept confidential. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately and systematically destroyed. If you have any questions regarding this research, you may contact me or my supervisor. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I, ________________________, consent to participate in the research *"Realities and Anxieties to Live with: An In-depth Inquiry into the Experience of Internationally Educated Professionals in the Bridging Programs at Universities in Ontario"* conducted by Xiaohui Zhu. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. My signature below indicates my consent. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form.

Signature________________________ **Date________________________**

Participant

Signature________________________ **Date________________________**

Principal Investigator

Appendix C: Table of Demographic Background of the Participants*

Participant's pseudonym	Aguilera	Hassan	Li	Maya	Nafasi
Age	Early 30s	Mid-40s	Mid-30s	Mid-40s	Early 30s
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male
Higher Education	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	PhD	Master
Country of Education	Mexico & France	Bangladesh	China	India	Iran & Sweden
Country of Origin	Mexico	Bangladesh	China	India	Iran
Years of Staying in Canada	2-3 years	> 15 years	5-6 years	2-3 years	1-2 years
Occupation	Business	Lawyer	Business	Business & Education	Business

*The names of the participants in this table are all pseudonyms. They correspond with the pseudonyms that I used in the case analysis in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

Appendix D: Sample of Ethical Review

Effective: November, 2009

YORK UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENT
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Student Name: Xiaohui Zhu **Date:** Nov. 8, 2011
E-mail: __________________ **Phone Number**: _______
Program: Language, Culture and Teaching **Degree:** PhD
Check one: ☐☐Thesis ☐☐Dissertation ☐☐Major Research Paper ☐☐Course
Title: Realities and Anxieties to Live with: An In-depth Inquiry of the Experience of Internationally Educated Professionals in the Bridging Programs at Universities in Ontario
Name of Supervisor (Thesis, Dissertation or MRP) or Course Director:_______

PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Is the research you are conducting funded?
No

The definition of "funded" does not include funding in the form of student OGS scholarships, SSHRC fellowships, NSERC scholarships, or CIHR studentships. These awards are intended to support students through their studies and do not require reports from students on the specific research activities conducted. The definition of "funded" does apply to grants awarded for specific research projects, whether those projects be the student's own research projects or research being conducted as part of a faculty member's funded research project. Typically, for funded research, granting agencies require reports of the research conducted.

2. Is this a revised version of a protocol previously submitted to FGS (and/or HPRC)?

No

PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL TO THE HPRC OFFICE
For Thesis or Dissertation this protocol must be submitted to the Office of the Dean, Graduate Studies accompanied by *Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Submission Form (i.e. TD1)* and your thesis/dissertation proposal.

In cases requiring preliminary research, this protocol must be submitted to the Office of the Dean, Graduate Studies accompanied by *Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Submission Form (i.e. TD1)* andyour research proposal. Please indicate on the TD1 form that your research is a pilot study, or preliminary research. Human Participants