

'The same, but different: An exploratory study of English as Second Learners in the context of their information behaviour related to recreational reading.'

by

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Abstract

Research problem

This research was a localised (Wellington-based) exploration of the information behaviour of adult immigrant English as Second Language (ESL) Learners in relation to their recreational reading. It explored the context of their everyday lives and the individual experiences of ESL Learners. It contributes to the development of our understanding of immigrant information behaviour in the Library and Information Studies field.

Methodology

A qualitative methodology was used. This was in the form of semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the five participants and qualitative data analysis techniques. A purposive sample was drawn from adult, immigrant members of the Wellington ESL community.

Results:

The information behaviour of the participants interviewed was found to be wide ranging and often specific to the individual's needs. Some similarities in the participant's experiences were found. The participant's information behaviour was found to be influenced by a number of social and cultural factors. Language was found to significantly impact the participant's information behavior.

Implications:

This research implies that there is a continuing need for ongoing investigation into the information behaviour of ESL learners and immigrants within the Library and Information Studies community. This will have ongoing implication for public libraries as they continue to find new and better ways to meet the needs of this group.

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1. Problem statement and Rationale for the Study

1.1 Problem Statement

This research is a qualitative exploration of the information behaviour of immigrant English as Second Language (ESL) learners. The research is particularly focused on the information behaviour exhibited by immigrant ESL learners in relation to recreational reading and the pursuit of information about leisure activities. This area of information behaviour is identified in the literature review as developing area of investigation in the Library and Information Studies (LIS) field, and one worthy of consideration in the field of immigrant information behaviour. Furthermore, the diversity of the immigrant group mandates localised and context driven investigation that considers immigrants both as community members and as individuals. This means that an appropriate method of furthering our understanding of the information behaviour of immigrants is through the study of the experiences of individuals in the context of local communities. This research addresses this problem by investigating the experiences of members of the Wellington immigrant community within the context of their everyday life information behaviours. Furthermore, there is a need to relate the international and domestic research and literature to localised contexts such as this.

1.2 Rationale for conducting the study

The information behaviour of immigrant and ESL communities has been well explored in the Library and Information Studies (LIS) literature and has been approached from a number of perspectives. Research in this field has investigated immigrant information needs, information seeking behaviour, information sharing, information sources and non-use of information. Studies have been conducted from both the perspective of information providers and the immigrant communities themselves.

However, it is well noted that the study of immigrant information behaviour is fraught with difficulty. There are considerable issues, for example, related to

defining the group being studied. The term 'immigrant' can be applied to a wide variety of people who could each be from very diverse backgrounds, with little in common other than the fact that they have migrated from one country to another. Nevertheless, the ongoing interest in studying the information behaviour of the group termed 'immigrants' indicates that despite these difficulties there is enough commonality in the experience of immigration, and in the needs of immigrants, to warrant continued exploration.

As the literature review demonstrates, there is a developing thread of study on immigrant information behaviour that looks beyond the initial requirements of immigrants in the early stages of immigration. This thread attempts to broaden our understanding of the information needs, and information seeking behaviour of immigrants. It has included investigation of immigrant reading habits, how immigrants utilise information and communication technologies (ICT's), the role of language (both original and secondary), use of public libraries by immigrants, as well as investigating the various social and cultural factors that influence immigrant information behaviour. This research aims to continue in this tradition, while exploring a local context.

1.3 Definitions

Immigrant

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term immigrant as: "One who or that which immigrates; a person who migrates into a country as a settler." There are a multitude of reasons for emigrating, ranging from those seeking refuge from some form of social or political turmoil, to those who have migrated of their own accord for lifestyle reasons. This study does not consider the reason for migration to be the defining aspect of the term immigrant; rather it is simply the act of migration that defines the term. Refugees are therefore, in this study, included as members of the immigrant group. The literature around immigration mentions many synonymous terms, including 'migrant', 'newcomer' and 'settler'. This study considers the term 'immigrant' to encompass these closely related terms.

English as Second Language (ESL) Learner

For the purposes of this study, an ESL Learner is a person engaged in the act of learning English as a second language either through formal education (e.g. a polytechnic or University course) or through informal means, such as free, community-based language classes. The participants of this study are all in the latter category. In New Zealand, ESL Learners are usually members of immigrant communities.

Information behaviour

Information behaviour refers to the behaviours of information users in relation to the information that they use. It includes the concepts of information needs, information seeking, and information use, including the barriers to information use. As Wilson defines it, information behaviour is "the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking and information use" (2000, pg. 49).

Recreational Reading

Recreational reading refers to reading done by a person in their own time, for the pleasure derived from the activity, as opposed to reading for work or study purposes. The defining characteristic of recreational reading is that it is an activity undertaken by the reader on a voluntary basis. See Literature review for further discussion.

2. Research Objectives and Research Questions

2.1 Research Objectives

The overall objective of this research is collect, analyse and interpret data that contributes to the understanding of immigrant information behaviour within the Library and Information Science community.

More specifically, this objective includes the following objectives:

1. To collect, analyse and interpret data that relates to the recreational reading behaviours of adult immigrant ESL Learners and their use of information about leisure activities, including the role of public libraries in relation to this behaviour.
2. To explore the experiences of adult immigrant ESL Learners in relation to their information use in their everyday lives. This objective refers to the information needs of adult immigrant ESL Learners related to recreational reading and leisure information, as well as the channels through which they seek and use this information. It includes the types of materials used, the influence of ICT's, the frequency of use of this kind of information, the role of public libraries and the relevance of these to their everyday lives.
3. To explore the social and cultural factors which influence the information behaviour examined by the second objective. This includes the importance of, or value place on, recreational reading and leisure information by adult immigrant ESL Learners, the role of friends, family and community, the influence of experiences of using information sources before arriving in New Zealand, and the ways that recreational reading and leisure information have been used to learn about New Zealand culture.
4. To explore the role of language in the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL Learners, especially in relation to recreational reading and leisure information. This includes the role of both original language and English, and the role of public libraries.
5. To discuss and relate the data collected to the literature in the field of immigrant information behaviour and LIS literature on recreational reading.

2.2 Research Questions

2.2.1 Central Research Question

What can be learned about the information behaviours of adult immigrant ESL learners from their experiences of reading 'recreationally' and from their experiences of using public libraries for the purpose of recreational reading, or for obtaining information about leisure activities?

2.2.2 Theme One: Immigrant Information behaviour in 'everyday life'.

Research Question One

What are the experiences of adult immigrant ESL learners in relation to recreational reading and leisure information in their everyday lives?

- What materials are used?
- How are ICT's utilised, if they are utilised?
- How are recreational reading and leisure information materials related to the everyday lives of adult immigrant ESL learners?

2.2.3 Theme Two: Social & Cultural Influences.

Research Question Two

How do social and cultural factors influence the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL learners in relation to recreational reading and leisure information?

- How are recreational reading and leisure information valued by adult immigrant ESL learners?

- How do friends, family and community influence the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL learners in relation to recreational reading and leisure information?
- How is the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL learners influenced by their experiences with seeking and using recreational reading materials and leisure information in the country from which they emigrated?
- How is the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL learners influenced by their experiences with using recreational reading materials and leisure information to learn about New Zealand culture?

2.2.4 Theme Three: Language

Research Question Three

How is language related to the recreational reading or use of leisure information by adult immigrant ESL learners, in their experience?

- Do adult immigrant ESL learners have language preferences for recreational reading or leisure information?
- How do adult immigrant ESL learners utilise recreational reading and leisure information to help with their English language learning?

3. Literature Review

3.1 Immigrant Information Behaviour: An Introduction

Caidi, Allard and Quirke (2010) identify that the information behaviour of immigrants is varied, but that one particularly useful means of assessing this behaviour is by

considering the stage of settlement that the immigrant has reached. For Caidi, Allard and Quirke there are four stages of settlement:

- Pre-migration stage

This stage occurs before the individual immigrates to the new country. Information is often sourced from government agencies and family and friends.

- Immediate stage

Occurs on, or shortly after, arrival in the new country. Information needs are related to 'survival' and orientation to their new environment.

- Intermediate stage

Occurs after arrival and after basic 'survival' needs have been met. Includes information about long term housing, health and employment opportunities.

- Integrative stage

Begins to occur as immigrants become more accustomed to their new country. Information needs are more diverse and may encompass the desire for increased political and civic participation.

(2010, pg. 506)

Similarly, other studies have differentiated between stages of settlement. Flythe, for example, in her 2001 study of the information needs of Hispanic/Latino immigrants to North Carolina, defined newly arrived immigrants as "those who have been living in the United States less than five years" (2001, pg. 2). Her review of the literature indicated a need to distinguish between the information needs of new arrivals and more settled immigrants. She states that "newly arrived Hispanics have more basic, survival related information needs, while settled Hispanics have more needs in areas such as leisure and pleasure reading" (2001, pg. 5).

Caidi, Allard and Quirke further indicate that immigrant information needs fall into two categories, 'Orienting Information' and 'Problem-Specific Information'.

Orienting information is information that allows an individual to monitor everyday events through various information sources. It can include information about current events, and cultural or religious events and activities. It is information that allows an immigrant to orientate themselves to the environment, culture and life of their new country (2010, pg 503-504).

Problem specific information addresses specific tasks or problems. It includes information about language, employment, making connections in the community, housing and many other tasks. Importantly, in the context of this research, Caidi, Allard and Quirke include 'Information about recreation' in this problem-specific category. (2010, pg 503-504).

Immigrants in the immediate stage of immigration are faced with a number of barriers to the access of information that often influence their information behaviour. Fisher, Durrance & Hinton studied the Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL) immigrant client base. They found that QBPL immigrant client base represented nationalities worldwide. Despite the cultural uniqueness of individuals, their customers share a wide range of comparable needs. The researchers describe the information needs of immediate stage immigrants as "a daunting labyrinth of psychological, social and physical imperatives that immigrants must navigate" (2004, pg. 763).

Immediate stage immigrants are often described as being in a state of information poverty. As Silvio states: "Immigrants are generally perceived to be information poor, meaning they face major challenges with finding and using greatly needed everyday information" (Silvio, 2006, pg261). An example of information poverty can be found in Allen, Matthew and Boland's 2004 study in which they researched the provision of health information to immigrants. Their case study focused on the Hmong refugees living in the United States. The study concluded that "there is a tremendous need for effective health literacy programs for immigrants and minorities" (pg. 326).

One of the key issues identified by Mason and Lamain is the relationship between information and acculturation. Acculturation is the process whereby immigrants to a

new country become acclimated to the culture of the new society in which they find themselves living. Acculturation can be defined as, the “long-term process of adapting to new cultural behaviours that are different from one’s primary learned culture” which can “result in changes to the values, norms and behaviours in both the immigrants and the host society” (2007, pg. 8). Mason and Lamain state that “the timely provision of useful, accurate and current information through a variety of official and unofficial sources can positively influence the acculturation of New Zealand immigrants” (2007, pg. ii). Naidi and Allard verify this when they state that: “Information provision is a key component of social inclusion” (2005, pg. 314).

3.2 Immigrant Information needs in the early stages of settlement.

Several studies have canvassed the information needs of immigrants in the early stages of settlement. Silvio’s study of the information needs of immigrant southern Sudanese youth in London, Ontario identified five key information needs areas, based on research with this group. 40 percent responded that they had an “educational information need”. Others said they needed information on how to deal with racism (25%), employment information needs (20%), political information needs (10%), and health information needs (5%) (2006, pg. 263). The group interviewed were in the 18-25 year old age group. Similarly, an Israeli study by Shoham & Strauss identified a number of areas in which information needs of migrants were not being met- these include: “how the medical system works, how the banking system works, how to find information regarding schools and information regarding housing and personal needs such as starting up a business, special education and alternative medicine” (2008, para. 36).

Mason and Lamain found information needs along similar lines, within the context of immigrants to New Zealand. Some of the key needs highlighted included information on: cost of living, house prices and home loans, employment, visa requirements, food and New Zealand culture (2007, pg. 48-51). MacGibbon found that newcomers to Christchurch required information on: everyday needs (food shopping, household

goods, transport), housing, employment, education, healthcare, orientation to the new culture, and ESOL (2004, pg. 14).

Additionally, libraries in New Zealand have reported high usage of ESL materials. In Early's 2003 study 'An investigation into public library services for new migrants to New Zealand', for example, one respondent (a public librarian) commented that: "up to about 60% of that collection [the library's ESOL collection] is out on any given day. So it's one of hardest working pockets in the library" (pg. 28).

3.3 Immigrant information needs in the intermediate and integrative stages: broadening our understanding.

Caidi, Allard, and Quirke note that their review of literature on immigrant information behaviour "suggests that settlement information (particularly at the pre-migration and immediate stages) generally tends to include more time-sensitive and critical information...non-settlement related needs (at the intermediate and integrative stages) are broader in scope" (2010, pg. 506). Cuesta notes that a "key factor affecting the reading interests of Hispanics is how recently they have migrated..." (1990, pg. 27) Cuesta further suggests that a "definite change in reading interests becomes apparent as immigrants become settled in their new country" (1990, pg. 27).

The recognition of the influence of the multiple stages of immigration on immigrant information behaviour has led some researchers to challenge assumptions about immigrant information behaviour. Dali (2010), for example, calls the idea that the reading habits of native English speakers and non-native English speakers do not significantly overlap "divisive" and an idea that presents immigrant readers as "foreign, other and different" which contributes to "irreconcilable differences and broadening gaps between English-speaking and immigrant readers" (2010, pg. 180-181). Silvio has similar advice for the information profession, recommending that

"librarians should not assume that since these people are immigrants, they might need [only] information on ESL, welfare and the like" (2006, pg. 262).

Fisher, Durrance and Hinton also indicated that the use of the QBPL by immigrants may not be as different to that of the wider population as is sometimes assumed: "our findings revealed a picture of the immigrant client that is consistent with the traditional view of a long-term library user" (2004, pg.763). These findings surprised the researchers who had assumed this "would not be the case with immigrants since they would likely be transient and using the library/neighbourhood as a stepping stone to a different life in a different geographic area" (2004, pg.763). Eugene Estrada, in relation to the information needs of Hispanic public library users also states that: "The information and recreation needs of the Hispanic patron are basically no different than those of any other patron. Information about jobs, resources for schoolwork, a means of self-improvement, cultural enlightenment, all these traditional areas of library concern apply to Hispanics as well (1990, pg. 12).

The acknowledgement of the expansion of immigrant information needs during later stages of settlement has led some to consider the role recreation and leisure in immigrant information behaviour. In Bordanaro's study, an American academic library was found to be a place where ESL students could find "both academic and leisure material" (2006, pg. 522). In their study Shoham and Strauss focused mainly on the early stages of immigration, but they also acknowledge that the information needs of later stage settlement include a need for recreational and leisure information. As they state: "Information needs and information seeking are important factors in many aspects of life including work, school, health and recreation" (2008, para. 1).

A considerable amount of recent research on immigrant information behaviour has focused on examining the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's). According to Caidi, Allard and Quirke, ICT's "play a pivotal role in the shifts taking place within immigration by providing accessible cultural media such as online local newspapers in languages other than the official language, newsgroups, chat rooms, and home country internet sites (2010, pg. 511).

3.4 Immigrant information Behaviour: Social and Cultural influences.

3.4.1 Personal Networks: The influence of Friends, Family and Community.

Community, family and friends are identified as being of high importance to the information behaviour of immigrants. Silvio's study of the information needs and information seeking behaviour of immigrant southern Sudanese youth in London, Ontario found that, of the youth surveyed in his study, there was a high dependence on information shared within the participant's community. This is information shared between "trusted friends, relatives, co-workers and similar." (2006, pg. 262) Mason and Lamain's literature review similarly confirmed the importance of social connections to immigrant information behaviour. They found that "friends...and family...had been important sources of information both before and after arriving in New Zealand" (2007, pg. iv). For the migrants "these sources...are more reliable and authentic, although with time, they seem to develop some trust for some of the government agencies that have interacted with them for a long period" (Silvio, 2006, pg. 262). Shoham & Strauss also cite the importance of informal information channels stating that "many immigrants gather together and share knowledge without actually asking for information" (2008, para. 16). This indicates that often information is gathered in an incidental way, where information seekers gain information without actively seeking it.

Some research has indicated that one means of decreasing reliance on immediate social groups is through the use of ICT's by immigrants (Herrick & Morrison, 2010, pg. 34). However, as Caidi, Allard & Quirke note, emphasis on ICT's by information providers can also become a barrier to access (2010, pg. 512).

3.4.2 Culture of Library Use

The literature identifies concerns related to the issue of a lack of familiarity among immigrants with libraries as public institutions. If the country from which the immigrant has arrived does not have "a well-developed culture of library use" (Pulver & Clark, 2004, pg. 107) or if the model of library service with which they are familiar differs significantly, then the public library service, as it operates in the new country, may seem alien. A significant divide in knowledge of libraries and their services among immigrants was found in Canada by Dali (2004), who states that "...some immigrants will come to Canada well aware that the public library is more than just a place to lend books and they will make full use of its services. For others, Canadian public libraries will be a new thing" (2004, pg. 353).

However, the lack of use of libraries by immigrants in their previous country may not necessarily inhibit their use of libraries in their new country, or, at the least, there is indication that these barriers can be surmounted. Much of the research indicates that libraries play an important role for many immigrants. Atlestam, Brunnstrom & Myhre cite Brunnstrom's 2006 (not available in English) research which indicates that "refugees are in need of materials of use in the integration process. The majority of the participants in Brunnstrom's focus groups have come to Sweden as refugees. The library has been used, by these individuals, as a means of integration into the country" (2011, pg. 77). Dali (2004), in her study of the reading habits of immigrant 'Canadian Russians', indicates that "public libraries in Canada are an irreplaceable source of information about the history and customs of the new host country for Russian immigrants" (2004, pg. 354).

3.5 Language and immigrant information behaviour

An understanding of the issue of language is essential to understanding immigrant information behaviour. Mason and Lamain state that "the major barrier for immigrants in accessing information is proficiency with the English language" (2007, pg. v). Proficiency in English, the dominant language of information in New Zealand, has a strong effect on information behaviour. Drawing on Allen, Matthew and

Bolland, Mason and Lamain state that "Language skills play an important part in information behaviour. Not only must the migrants have an understanding of the host country's main language, it is also critical for the host country to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate information for immigrant and refugee populations" (2007, pg. 17). White, Watts and Triln (2002) found in their study of the experiences of immigrant's related to New Zealand's 'English language learning environment' that "English Language competence was perceived by the vast majority of the 248 participants as being of primary importance in settlement" (2002, pg. 150).

The issue is a complex one, not just because of the wide variety of languages spoken by immigrants, but also because of variations in the level of second language ability and personal preferences for the language which they access information in. In Flythe's study of newly arrived Hispanics/Latinos some of the significant language issues are indicated in her findings related to her question: "Do you prefer to read materials in Spanish, in English, or in both?" Flythe found that "most respondents favored reading in Spanish. Quite a few of these respondents stated that they intended to read in both languages eventually, but that for now it took too much time or they needed to learn more English. Many also preferred to read in both Spanish and English. Some preferred to read English in order to force themselves to learn English" (2001, pg. 31-32). Other research confirms that immigrants require information in both their original language and the language of their new country. Dali's (2004) study, for example, concludes that "Russian speakers come to Canadian public libraries looking for an encounter with the literature in both their native and their second language" (2004, pg 358).

3.5.1 Original language

The benefits of access to original language resources have been well documented. In Dali's study of the reading habits of 'Canadian Russians', one persistent theme identified was the "pleasure derived from reading one's native language in a foreign-language environment" (2004, pg.351). This is because "preserving one's cultural

and historical heritage is deemed personally important” and as a means of maintaining “cultural and linguistic heritage so as to pass it on to the next generation” (2004, pg.351). Following from this “the need and desire to read in Russian becomes stronger in immigration” (2004, pg. 351). These sentiments are confirmed by Atlestam, Brunnstrom & Myhre who state that “many respondents feel respected and confirmed by finding literature in their mother tongue at the library and the mother tongue inspires a sense of joy and pride” (2011, pg. 73). These researchers also found that borrowing for reading for pleasure was popular among Russian, Thai and Chinese respondents. They state that: “borrowing figures in these languages are high. They borrow mainly fiction, especially from their own country” (2011, pg. 77).

Within the context of immigrant use of public library’s non-fiction materials, several respondents to Dali’s (2004) study indicated a desire for the Toronto Public Library (the library which is the focus of the study) to collect non-fiction materials related to leisure activities in the Russian language such as “books on knitting and other hobbies, which would include cookbooks, self-help books, memoirs and popular scientific literature” (2004, pg. 356). Berger indicates a strong demand for newspapers and magazines in the immigrant’s original language (2011, pg 73). Berger also indicates a preference among immigrants for a wide variety of non-fiction materials, including “books on cooking, childcare, sex guidance, religion, history and contemporary politics” (2002, pg. 83).). For To, non-fiction was the preferred type of book by her participants, who liked to read in the subject areas of applied science, technology, business and finance (1995, pg. 32).

Original language materials are clearly popular, but they are only one half of the story. Dali states that “although there is certainly great demand for leisure books in languages other than English on the part of immigrant clients of public libraries, it would be erroneous to assume that they only wish to read books emanating from their country of origin” (2010, pg. 180).

3.5.2 Recreational materials in English

Cho's (1998) study found that young adult collections could be utilised to encourage reading for pleasure among adult immigrants. Despite initial misgivings, the group of adults of Korean origin studied by Cho "became enthusiastic readers" (1998, pg. 115) of young adult materials. Cho's research supports the idea that reading for pleasure can improve second language acquisition. Cho finds significant "evidence that successful language students gained second language competence, especially conversational English proficiency, through free, voluntary reading for pleasure or interest" (1998, pg. 108). Following on from this, it may be interesting to examine the use of other library materials, such as graphic novels, by immigrant ESL learners.

Atlestam, Brunnstrom & Myhre's Swedish study of the needs and preferences of immigrant populations in relation to library collection development, indicates that "learning the Swedish language is crucial to the participants in the study. Practically all groups appreciate different materials that support learning" (2011, pg. 72). The researchers also indicate that these materials may not necessarily need to be restricted to language learning textbooks, but could include materials such as "easy to read books" of several types and "Swedish children's films" (2011, pg. 72).

3.6 Studies on Recreational Reading in the wider LIS Literature

Having identified an increased interest in the information behaviour of immigrants related to recreational reading and information seeking for leisure purposes, it is worth examining some of the literature on recreational reading that is not specific to immigrant information behaviour. There is a significant amount of material on this subject, particularly in the LIS and Education fields. The studies are not uniform in their use of the term 'recreational reading', but use a number of additional terms such as 'reading for pleasure' (Ross, 1999), 'pleasure reading' (Parlette and Howard, 2010), 'leisure reading' (Moyer, 2007), or 'free voluntary reading' (Krashen, 2005) or 'voluntary reading' (Richardson and Eccles, 2007). However, as Richardson and Eccles note, these are all terms for essentially the same phenomenon (2007, pg. 342). Sever and Pearl define recreational reading (they use the term 'reading for pleasure') as "something a [person] does voluntarily, in his own time, and the

selection of material rest on the individual without imposition" (1990, pg. 328).

Other studies pose similar definitions.

Many of the studies of recreational reading are concerned with finding value in recreational reading outside of the immediate entertainment value of reading. In the education field this has focused primarily on the effects of recreational reading on the ability of individuals to learn and attain literacy skills. As Krashen states "...recreational reading...is the major source of our reading competence, our vocabulary, and our ability to handle complex grammatical constructions" (2004, para. 1). Bray, Pascarella and Pierson's study of literacy development of students in college explored the effects of leisure reading on attitude to literacy activities. They found correlations between the amount of leisure reading done by individuals and their attitude to literacy activities, a finding that they state as being consistent with previous research (2004, pg. 325-326). In the LIS field, at least two studies found that recreational reading had a perceived educational value among the participants of each study. Parlette and Howard's study of pleasure reading among university students found that students recognised that "pleasure reading can play a positive role in their academic performance, enhancing their range of background knowledge as well as their active vocabulary" (2010, pg. 64). Moyer suggests, in her study of adult library patrons, that "readers value educational outcomes from leisure reading experience, even though the educational outcome is not likely to be the primary reason for choosing a particular book" (2007, pg. 75).

In the LIS field recreational reading has been examined in terms of its relation to information behaviour and the concept of 'incidental information seeking'. It has been argued by researchers such as Williamson (1998) and Ross (1999) that there is considerable merit to the idea of studying the acquisition of information that is 'discovered by chance', that is, information found without being actively sought in a structured manner. As Ross notes, information seeking is usually conceived of in terms of being an activity where the seeker recognises an information problem and is then required to "formally initiate the search process by querying one of our systems: a reference service, an online catalogue, a database, a collection of books" (199, pg. 784). Incidental information seeking is considered an alternative to this

conception of information seeking. Williamson emphasises that information can be found both through purposeful and incidental means. Both Williamson and Ross emphasise the role of 'everyday life information use' and both have been influenced by Savoleinen's work of Everyday Life Information Seeking (ELIS). Ross states that, from her study of adult pleasure readers, "a rich picture emerged that enlarges our understanding of the information encounter in the context of daily living" (1999, 72). Williamson (1998) used her study of the information seeking behaviour of adults aged over sixty to explore the role of incidental information acquisition, and to develop her Ecological Model of Information Use.

Finally, like recent research into immigrant information behaviour, researchers have also looked at the role of ICT's in recreational reading. Abdul Karim and Hasan (2007), for example, note that ICT's have introduced "a transformative shift in reading and writing" (2007, pg. 286). They suggest that there is increasing receptiveness to different forms of media and that reading patterns may be influenced by digital media (2007, pg. 286).

3.7 Literature Review: Summary

- Several studies have canvassed the 'basic' information needs of immigrants. These were found to be most appropriate to immigrants at the early (new arrival, immediate) stages of immigration. These needs included information about healthcare, housing, education and employment.
- Other studies have tried to broaden our understanding of immigrant information behaviour. These studies have done this by moving away from studying basic, point of arrival, information needs to attempting to develop a richer picture of immigrant information behaviour through looking at how immigrants settle in to and interact with their new communities. This includes the ways that they pursue recreational and leisure activities in their everyday lives. The utilisation of Public Libraries by immigrant communities has

featured strongly in this second strand of research. This strand has focused on immigrants who are in the intermediate or integrative stages of settlement.

- Immigrants in the intermediate or integrative stage of settlement be more likely to engage in the reading of recreational or leisure materials.
- There are many factors motivating and influencing the information behaviour of immigrant communities. These can include the importance of, or value placed on reading to the individual. Awareness of information sources, such as public libraries, may also motivate information behaviour. The family, friends and immediate community of immigrants are an influence. The information behaviour of an immigrant before emigration may also influence the ways they seek and access information. An example of this is lack of familiarity with library services, or lack of library culture.
- Language is identified as the most significant barrier for immigrants to accessing information. English language skills and English language material are in high demand. However, the preservation of the cultural identity of immigrants is also an important issue. This is often linked to the availability of materials in the immigrant's original language. Several key elements of immigrant information behaviour relate to the preservation and acquisition of language skills.
- Context is important to the study of immigrant information behaviour. It is not necessarily true, even in the case of substantial quantitative or empirical studies, that research findings in one location will hold true for immigrant groups in other locations. There is a need for localised research that works within the context of local communities.

- Recreational reading, as it relates to information behaviour, may encompass both purposive and non-purposive information behaviours.

4. Theoretical Framework

Because this research explored the information behaviour of immigrants related to recreational reading and leisure information, a broad, inclusive theory of information behaviour that encompassed both purposive and non-purposive information behaviour was needed to provide a conceptual framework for this study. This research followed other LIS research into recreational reading by utilising the theoretical body of work known as Everyday Life Information Seeking (ELIS). Of particular use to this study was the work of Williamson, whose concept of the 'Ecological Model of Information Use' informs this study and influenced the development of the study's research objectives, themes and research questions, as well as its focus on the experiences of the user.

An essential element of Williamson's model is its focus on the individual (or user) as the central dimension in the process of information use. This idea compliments the current research well, as this study focuses on the experiences of individuals. Furthermore the model relates the individual to the context of the information environment that they operate within when seeking, accessing or discovering information. As Williamson states: "while it is very important to focus on users in any study of information for everyday life, it is also important to study them in relation to the major systems of information provision in society" (1998, pg. 37). According to Williamson's model the context surrounding individual information use is created through the individual's relationship to several ecological elements that may affect their information use. These elements are: lifestyles, social and cultural values, socio-economic circumstances, work situation, personal/biological characteristics, affective/spiritual influences and physical environments. Influenced by these

elements, the individual, according to the model, also interacts with three broad sources of information: personal networks, media, and institutional sources.

5. Research Design

5.1. Research Paradigm

A qualitative, exploratory research design and methodology was employed in this study. The methodology utilised the characteristics of qualitative research, namely an interpretivist overall research paradigm, inductive analysis processes, and a focus on emerging theory. A qualitative approach suited the objectives of this study because the study sought to collect data on the opinions of its participants and to offer an interpretation of these. The qualitative approach also allowed for a flexible approach that allowed me to adapt my interview techniques to the individual language needs of my participants.

The research is influenced by the phenomenological approach to qualitative research. Phenomenology is “concerned with the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them” (Bryman, 2008, pg. 15). Creswell defines Phenomenological research as “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants” (2009, pg 13). According to Creswell, “Phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also seen as an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation...of the meaning of the lived experiences” (2007, pg. 59). The phenomenological approach compliments this study’s emphasis on the experiences of the participants, as they describe them.

5.2 Data Collection

5.2.1 Data Collection Method: Semi Structured Interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the data collection method in this study. The interviews were based on a series of open-ended questions that were derived from the main research questions of this study. A copy of the Interview Questions document is included in the appendices (see Appendix 3). With the permission of each participant the interviews were recorded on a portable audio device. The interviews were conducted with the understanding that they would be strictly confidential and anonymous.

5.2.2 Benefits of Semi-Structured Interviews this Study

There are several reasons why semi-structured interviews were chosen as the data collection method for this study.

Firstly, the study focuses on the experiences of its participants. Pickard states that “interviews allow people to respond on their own terms and within their own linguistic parameters” (2007, pg 172). I was very keen to collect data from my participants that, as closely as possible, were reflective of their own opinions and their own stories. In this respect the semi-structured interview technique allowed me to explore the central themes of the study, without using an overly structured approach that could potentially limit the responses of the participants. The participants frequently made their own interpretations of my questions and offered additional information of their own accord, about issues that were of concern to them. Some of this information was useful to the study and some was not, but the opportunity to collect this additional data could potentially have been lost if a more rigid method was employed.

The issue of language was also important to the method of data collection. Because the participants were all speakers of English as a secondary language, I felt interviews would be the most appropriate method of data collection because interviewing participants allowed them the opportunity to clarify aspects of the study and the interview questions that they were uncertain about. This was important to this study because the meanings of some of the concepts (for example ‘recreational reading’) were not necessarily immediately apparent to the participants. As part of the interview, the participants were able to discuss the meaning of such concepts

with me, and thereby give informed answers. This ability would be lost in, for example, a quantitative survey, in which the participant would have no contact with the researcher and would not be able to ask directly for clarification or explanation. This is however, also contributed to the limitations of the study (see section 7 of this report).

Language was also a critical factor in opting for the use of interviews over focus groups, which are another popular qualitative data collection method. Focus groups are noted for their ability to utilise group interaction to generate discussion.

However, as Bryman notes, there are also concerns around the “problem of dealing with reticent speakers...[and]...overly prominent participants” (Bryman, 2008, pg. 489). Because confidence has been noted as a barrier to the use of English by ESL learners, I considered it likely that the issue noted by Bryman would be exacerbated in the context of this study. Therefore, in the interest of maintaining a research environment conducive to the free flow of information, I decided to avoid the use of a group situation which might place undue pressure on my participants.

5.2.3 Research Population

A purposive sample was used to recruit participants for this study.

This study aimed to explore the information behaviour of adult immigrants in the intermediate or integrative stage of settlement. Added to this ‘stage of settlement’ requirement, it was a practical requirement that the research participants had a conversational level of English, as no translation service was available to me, and I am not fluent in any other language. This was also a requirement because the study explores the recreational reading of immigrant’s in both their original language and in English. A basic level of spoken English and English comprehension was also required in order that the participants feel comfortable in the interview setting, so that they understood the questions being asked of them and felt comfortable answering them. It is for this reason that ESL learners were chosen as the particular subset of the immigrant group that would be examined by this study.

In order to find participants with these characteristics I contacted a community based voluntary organisation that runs informal community education ESL speakers (the name of this organisation is omitted here to ensure the anonymity of the participants). This organisation holds classes at several Wellington locations. The classes allow members of the community to meet once a week for the purpose of speaking conversational English with each other. The classes also offer an opportunity for members of the immigrant community to meet and socialise. Through the administrators of this organisation I contacted the facilitator of one of the groups, who ran a class in the Wellington suburb of Kilbirnie. I was then invited to join the class on a visit they made to the local public library. Here I met with members of the group, explained the nature of my research and asked for volunteers from the group. Several members of the group expressed interest in participating. They were each given an information sheet explaining the details of the research (see Appendix 1).

Following this, interview dates and times were set up with each person who expressed interest. In total seven individuals expressed interest, but for reasons related to the ethical dimensions of this research, only five were interviewed (see section 'Ethical Considerations'). The fifth participant in the study ('Participant 5') was actually not a member of this language group. She was recruited independently (through a friend of the researcher who works in volunteer organisations) after two of the intended participants withdrew. Participant 5 had been involved with a similar language group and had received home tutoring in the 12 months prior to participating in the interview. I deemed her characteristics to be sufficiently similar to other research participants for the information given by her in interview to be included in this report with that of the other participants.

The five participants had each migrated to New Zealand as adults. The duration of their settlement in New Zealand varied between three and fifteen years. The nationalities represented included Iraqi, Palestinian and Moldavian and Chilean. They were all permanent residents in Wellington. They each held a level of conversational English suitable to participate in this study.

5.2.4 Interview setting

The interviews were conducted in a branch library of the Wellington City Libraries. This venue was recommended by the administrator of the Language Learning group. The branch library was a suitably neutral venue, one in which the participants would likely feel comfortable, and one that was sufficiently quiet to conduct a recorded interview while still providing an environment in which we could freely converse. It was also conveniently located for the participants, who were able to meet me there without undue travel pressures.

5.2.5 Ethical Considerations

This research received approval from the School of Information Management Human Ethics Committee at Victoria University of Wellington. The participants took part in this study on an entirely voluntary basis. Each participant was given an information sheet (prior to participation) that outlined the nature and objectives of the study and indicated details of what the process of participating would actually involve. When I met with each participant to conduct the interviews, we went through this information sheet together to check for mutual understanding.

Each participant signed a consent form before the interview was conducted. I read through the consent form with each participant, again checking for mutual understanding. This was an important step due to the language skills of the participants. As English was not their first language, it was a concern that the participants understood their rights and the questions that were being asked of them.

Two intended participants were not interviewed on these grounds. I met with these participants prepared to conduct the interview, but when I began going over the information sheet and consent form, it became apparent that their level of understanding of the study was not appropriate (trouble understanding the elements

of the consent form, and concepts such as recreational reading). I felt that proceeding with the interviews could potentially cause unnecessary stress to the participants and that the research data could be jeopardised by an inadequate level of understanding of the subject of the interview questions. In both these cases the interviews were called off.

5.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves a “process of making sense out of text and image data” (Creswell, 2009, pg. 183). The data generated from the interview process was analysed through a form of qualitative content analysis called thematic analysis. Thematic analysis attempts to ‘draw out’ recurrent and important themes from the data. Thematic analysis includes searching for themes by examining areas of the data such as repetitions, metaphors and analogies, similarities and differences, missing data, and theory related material (Bryman, 2008, pg. 555).

The data analysis process consisted of several stages. The first stage involved repeated listening to the audio recordings of the interviews. I felt this was a necessary step to conduct before the transcription process because of the fact that my participants were speakers of English as a second language. Familiarising myself with their responses in their own voices, helped me to get a feel for the particularities of the language that they used and to interpret meaning from their statements through their use of verbal communication tools such as tone of voice.

The five interviews in this study were all then transcribed from the original recordings. The interviews were all transcribed with the idea of preserving the authenticity of the participant’s comments. At times it was necessary to add additional text for the sake of clarity and to ensure the intended meanings of the participant’s comments were conveyed. This added text was written in square brackets. Some of this text appears in the findings section of the report. This additional text was kept to a minimum, where possible. This kept in line with the study’s aims of presenting the opinions of its participants in their own words.

Once the transcripts were completed, I conducted several readings of the transcripts to further familiarise myself with the participant's responses. I then began to group the data tentatively into themes. A set of categories were developed and then attached to chunks of data. At the initial stage, these were broad key words derived from the research themes and questions, for example 'ICT's, reading, New Zealand Culture, language. These themes were then sub-categorised in greater detail. For example ICT's was further sub-categorised into categories such as "source of information about home country". The category 'reading' was further sub-categorised into 'reading-recreational' or 'reading-informational'. The category 'language' became 'language-reading preference' and so on. Once the data was tagged in this manner it was collated into a chart that broadly corresponded with the research questions of this study. From here the thematically arranged data was able to be reported in the research findings.

6. Research Findings and Discussion

Note on the research findings: *I have made every effort to preserve the integrity of my participant's responses. Their responses have been presented as they said them in most instances. I have added text for clarification in some instances. This additional text appears in [square brackets].*

6.1 Theme One: Immigrant Information behaviour in 'everyday life'.

6.1.1 Materials Read

As a group, the participants of this study read a wide range of materials. Several participants indicated that in the period shortly after arriving they read mainly ESL materials that were sourced from Public libraries, English language classes, home tutors or government sources. This range of materials expanded as the settlement process progressed. Participant 2, who sourced much of her recreational reading

material from public libraries explained the progression of her information seeking behaviours in this way:

"At the beginning I coming [to public libraries] because I need to improve my English...every time I came, about one hour a day, I read grammar English, ESOL books, and I take it home, listen to the CD, how to make conversation, how to listen. And [later] I came just to search. When I found any book interesting to me, I take it and read it."

Throughout the five interviews the participants mentioned reading or having read materials including, novels, comic books, children's books, newspapers and magazines (both in print and electronic format), and a wide variety of non-fiction, often related to their hobbies (see section 6.1.3).

Notable among the participants was a lack of use of DVD's or other audiovisual materials. One participant indicated that they did not have the required equipment (DVD player, CD player) to utilise these materials.

6.1.2 Role of ICT's

The participants indicated a mixed level of interest in using ICT's for recreational reading and seeking Leisure information. For Participant 2 and Participant 4, ICT's were frequently used as a means of accessing reading materials. Participant 2 was the only participant who owned her own computer. When asked if she read online, Participant 2 replied: "Yes, I every day, read online magazines and newspapers."

Participant 4 did not own his own computer, but used public library computers heavily as a source of reading materials. His use of online reading materials was to "get some newspaper in Arabic, from Middle East. Especially my country, Iraq."

Participant 1 read online "from time to time", usually to find news or current affairs information. However, she stated that she preferred to find news and current affairs information from other sources, such as television. However, like Participant 4, she expressed a belief in the usefulness of online resources for information on her home

country (Moldova, a former Soviet Republic) saying that the internet “is useful to me when I try to find what is happening in Russia.”

Participant 3 and Participant 5 indicated that they used computers rarely, if at all. Participant 4, when asked if she read online stated that she was unfamiliar with the use of computers and did not read websites: “No computer, no. I can’t use computers...no websites...no.” Participant 5 indicated a similar lack of familiarity with ICT’s, although she did indicate that on occasion, her son or another family member might search for information online on her behalf, for information such as “movie times, things like this.”

As participants 1, 2, and 4 were all avid public library users, I asked them whether they utilised library technology such as online catalogues. Each of these three participants indicated that they did and felt very confident doing so, in terms of being able to find the information that they needed.

Other forms of technology did not seem to influence the participant’s recreational reading or the seeking of leisure information. None of the participants, for example, used E-readers (portable devices for storing E-books and reading them). Several seemed unaware of the technology, or did not understand what was meant by the name ‘E-Reader’, or any of the brand names that I was able to give as examples, such as ‘Kindle’ or ‘Kobo’. Participant 1 indicated that she would be happy to own and use one, as several of her friends had them and liked them. However she did not own one “because it is not affordable”, and also because “I prefer real book”.

6.1.3 Relationship to Everyday Life

All participants indicated that recreational reading or the reading of Leisure information played a role in their everyday lives. The strongest indication of this was through the use of reading materials that supported a hobby. Participant 1 used reading materials, often borrowed from the public library, to support her hobby of drawing, painting and illustrating. She found that “the books about art [in the

library] are just excellent.” She gave a specific example of the use of these materials to aid her hobby:

“...when I started making illustration...because I have had in my mind to write a book about Kiwi. I have seen them and made couple of picture, but when I start thinking about illustration I came to library and found a couple book about Kiwi, and it was helpful because I didn’t see chicks, for example, but in these couple of book I have found what chicks look like, how eggs look like and all this stuff.”

Participant 2 also used reading to support a hobby, and also relied heavily on the public library for access to these materials:

“I use the embroidery books, or knitting books, how to do, how to learn. It’s very useful to me because my hobby is to do embroidery. They have drawings, they have how to do it, step by step...It’s helped me too much.”

Participant 3 indicated that she sometimes read books about cooking, though these were mostly recipe books. She also read books about knitting or sewing. She was unclear as to where these items were sourced from.

Participant 5 read widely around her hobbies, cooking and sewing. She indicated that she read both books and magazines. She did not visit libraries to obtain these materials, but instead purchased them, either new or second hand, or relied on a network of friends with similar interests. “We share...the books, the magazines...my friends, we give them. One to the other.”

Participant 4 did not feel that he read materials related to a specific hobby or leisure activity, although he felt that his interest in current and international affairs was like a hobby. Participant 4 visited the library “nearly every day”, for a period of “one to two hours”. His reading in this area was an important aspect of his everyday life for him. It is important to him to read “...the news around the world, all around the world. What’s going on. Who died. Who lived. What’s happening. Small things. Big things.” When asked whether this reading was done for pleasure or fun, he clearly stated the informational purpose of his reading: “No, it is for my information.”

Participant 1 and Participant 2 felt that reading in itself was a hobby, as Participant 2 stated: "My reading, it's a hobby for me."

The participants were all asked about the frequency of their recreational reading, or the reading of leisure materials. For participant 4, reading was firmly an everyday activity, although, as mentioned, he did not personally consider this activity to be recreational. Participant 1 and Participant 2 both indicated that they tried to make recreational reading an activity that they indulged in as regularly as possible. This was not necessarily on a daily basis, although Participant 1 noted that reading on a daily basis was desirable: "Every day, if I can, I will open the book and read a little bit."

Participants 1, 2 and 4 all described themselves as regular public library users. Participant 4 often used public libraries on a daily basis, and always "at least three times in a week". Participants 2 and 4 typically visited public libraries every 2-4 weeks. Participant 3 and Participant 5 were not regular users of libraries. Participant 3 expressed desire to use libraries more regularly. "I wish I come, every time I look" she commented, but in practice she was often too busy with the housework and volunteer work that formed her daily routine. Likewise, Participant 5 cited time as a contributing factor to the non-use of libraries. "I have family, no time" she said. Both participant's also indicated that the recreational time they did have was likely to be spent on activities other than reading. For Participant 3, this included activities such as watching films or television, or knitting and sewing. For Participant 5, recreational time was a time to socialise "To have friend to dinner. To sing, to dance. To laugh, to be having fun! Life!"

6.1.4 Discussion

The participants in this study were all in the intermediate or integrative stages of settlement, and some could perhaps be described as beyond even this last stage. This being the case, they exhibited information needs consistent with the literature on the subject. Judging by the materials read by the participants of this study had

the broad range of needs mentioned by Caidi (2010, pg. 506) and were certainly not simply interested in ESL materials or the types of basic immigrant information reported in section 3.2 of this report's literature review. In terms of the range of recreational reading materials utilised by this group, it would be difficult to state that from the data collected by this study that adult immigrant ESL learners required specific materials to satisfy their needs. From the responses of participants who were users of public libraries (Participants 1, 2 & 4) it is possible to concur with Fisher, Durrance and Hinton's "picture of the immigrant client that is consistent with the traditional view of a long-term library user" (2004, pg. 763).

The use of ICT's by the participants indicated clearly the importance of these technologies to immigrants who are able to utilise them. They were used both as information sources and as sources of recreational reading material. ICT's were clearly employed by the participants of this study for both orienting and problem specific information. Participant 4, in particular, used ICT's as a source of orienting information, through his close monitoring of news and current events. ICT's were also an important tool for the maintenance of a sense of contact or engagement with the countries that the participants emigrated from, as evidenced by the reports of Participant 1 and Participant 4. While there was clear indication of the value of ICT's as both informational and recreational tools, there was also indication of a lack of skills in the use of ICT's which could potentially form a barrier between the individual and the satisfaction of their information needs. This was evidenced particularly by the responses of Participant 3.

The responses of the participants in this study indicated a major relationship between recreational reading and their everyday life activities, especially hobbies. Recreational reading was done by all of the participants in support of a hobby. Much of this recreational reading was a result of a search for problem specific information, such as Participant 1's example of using non-fiction materials about Kiwi to aid her illustration hobby. There was however, also indication of information behaviours that might be termed 'incidental information seeking' by Williamson, Ross and others. Some made strong indications that recreational reading was a hobby for them, in itself. In this respect Caidi, Allard and Quirke's categorisation of immigrant

information behaviour as being either orienting information or problem-specific seems limiting, as it does not fully account for incidental information or the act of reading as a hobby in itself.

6.2 Theme Two: Social and Cultural influences

6.2.1 Value/ Importance

Participant 1 and Participant 2 placed a high personal value on recreational reading. At least one aspect of its importance for Participant 2 related to her feeling that she needed to read as often as possible to set an example for her children:

"I need to read every time because I need to learn [teach] my children to do like me. Just look at me, I'm reading. I think it's very important, how to read. Because, in our country nobody reads. Nobody. A little, but here I saw, when I came here I saw, every people read. In the bus, in the street, everywhere."

Both Participant 1 and Participant 2 similarly placed value on libraries and considered them important to themselves and others.

Participant 4 felt recreational reading was very important from an informational perspective "because otherwise I don't know what's happening." He also considered public libraries to be an important institution for the community: "the library is something good for everyone. Who knows English or he doesn't know. Because he enjoy here many activities."

Participant 5 indicated that reading was of value to her and considered it important to read but placed it alongside other activities, both as an information source and as a form of recreation:

"Yes, it is of value. But, there is other ways too. Other ways to learn, other ways to be having knowledge, other ways to be enjoying of yourself. There is talking to people, there is films and music, there is these things. These are important too."

6.2.2 Friends/Family/Community

Participant 3 and Participant 5 were quite dependent on friends, family and members of their immediate community to source and use information. Participant 3 frequently mentioned these kinds of networks throughout the interview. This included accounts of how her neighbour, a New Zealander, had often helped her read, interpret and understand documentation from government agencies, such as Work and Income New Zealand, or documentation from health providers. Similarly, she often sought information from her home tutor, who visited her on a weekly basis, or from members of her English language group. A family member, her son, seemed to be a major source of her recreational reading material. As she explained in her own words: "My son, sometimes he bring magazine. Many magazine. I read."

Participant 5 said that her friends kept her well informed about leisure activities as well as providing her with recreational reading materials. As she stated:

"My friends, they bring to me these things. Guide to film festival. Guide to concerts, opera. Women's magazines about cooking, about fashions. Books to read, mostly cooking. Mostly these things."

Participant 1 and Participant 2 indicated that friends and family were an important aspect of their information behaviour related to recreational reading, because they provided a forum for discussing the things they had been reading. Participant 1 gave the impression of being a frequent reader and of having a well developed network of friends and family with similar interests. According to this participant she regularly discussed her reading material with these friends. She said that her friends often influenced her choice of books when she visited libraries and that "...constantly we are talking about it [the books they have read or are reading].

For Participant 2 her husband was the main person with whom she discussed her reading. They were both keen readers but approached recreational reading from different perspectives, a point that was often a topic of discussion: "Me and my husband discuss what I read. He like to read fiction story, and to watch fiction movie. I like another. I like real stories."

Participant 1 also mentioned the value of community in obtaining Russian language materials. Although she sometimes got these from her local library, she also had a friend who would bring her materials from the Central library, which was not so accessible to her. For Participant 1 the Russian immigrant community also provided a valuable source of reading materials, in the form of the library held by her (Russian Orthodox) Church.

6.2.3 Culture of library use

None of the participant's indicated a history or culture of library use in their home country. For some, this was simply because public libraries were not readily available, or indeed, did not exist. For Participant 2, this marked a fundamental difference between how she would seek recreational reading materials in her original country and how she does this in New Zealand. As she stated:

"...we have a lot of libraries [in New Zealand]. In our country we haven't any libraries. Just selling books. Here, every day I can go to the library, to read books, I feel free because any books I wanted, any I am interested [in], I have it. I read it."

Because of the availability of recreational reading material at no cost from sources such as public libraries, she felt she had a lot more options in terms of what she read. In her original country her reading was limited by the fact that she would have to purchase books. When asked if she used bookshops in her home country she said: "It depends. Which book, if I really want to read it, I want to buy it."

Participant 3 did not use libraries in her original country either and indicated that, similarly, books were only available from bookshops: "No. Sometime library, but, pay money. Not like this library [the library in which the interview was conducted, Participant 3 was not a regular library user] I sit. I listen, I read. No. Just shop, in Iraq. Just bookshop." Participant 3 did indicate that she was a big user of bookshops in her original country:

"In Iraq, if I live in Iraq, I have many, many books, many stories, many everything in Arabic...You know in Iraq I have many thing I have book shelf. Big shelf I have, many, many thing. Many story."

Participant 4 also did not use, or very rarely used public libraries in his original country. For Participant 4, the workplace was a significant source of information. Participant 4 worked in a bank, where the staff were all provided with newspapers on a daily basis, and where a library was also available to staff. This library seemed, from Participant 4's description, to be largely based around the kinds of materials that might be useful to workers in an environment such as a bank. He described the use and resources available in this library in the following way:

"Because every employee would like to read, to know something about...anything, economics, trade, something affect finance. We have books for that. He can borrow it and read it. At the bank."

Although public libraries were common in her original country, Participant 1 did not use them, because she often did not enjoy the atmosphere. Participant 5 shared a similar view, though she further indicated that she would be unlikely to regularly use public libraries, even if they had a more agreeable atmosphere.

6.2.4 New Zealand culture

The participants were asked whether they had used recreational materials to learn about New Zealand culture, or to find out information about cultural and leisure activities.

Participant 1 used public libraries to get information about local cultural events or entertainment: "...here [in the library] you can find some information about what's happening, movie, film festival, concert, something like this."

She had occasionally read history books to try to learn about New Zealand culture: "...sometimes I have got couple book about history as well." She felt that these had helped her to understand the country and its people.

Participant 2 had also read New Zealand history books, as well as other non-fiction related to New Zealand culture. She explained her reading in this area in this way:

"I used to be because I want to know this country. I read Maori book, about Maori wars...a little bit. I don't understand them! I read what's the culture, what's the history, geography, the cities and something like that. To know where I am."

Participant 4 indicated a perception that sport was very important the New Zealand culture, and further indicated that he was an enthusiastic follower of several New Zealand sports teams. However, he did not read about it, other than occasionally in newspapers, and preferred to gain information about sport in New Zealand through television.

Participant 3 said that she had not read materials related to New Zealand culture. She relied on friends, family and neighbours for this kind of information. Her former neighbour, a librarian, had been helpful in explaining certain aspects of New Zealand culture, though this participant was not able to go into detail about what these aspects were.

Participant 5 indicated that cultural events were very important to her and that she regularly attended films and concerts. She gained most of her information from friends. She also mentioned that, having seen and enjoyed the film *Whale Rider*, she had been given a copy of the novel by a New Zealand friend. She said she had read the book and thought it had been helpful in providing her with some knowledge of Maori culture. She explained this reading experience in this way:

"...it was very, very good book. Very of interest to me...but, sometimes I struggle, struggle especially with the names of Maori. They were confusing. But beautiful culture. Very beautiful."

Participant 4 indicated that he had used recreational reading materials to learn about the culture of other immigrants and as a way of teaching New Zealanders about his own culture. This was through the use of cook books and shared cooking:

"Arabic cooking, to show them how to do Arabic. And there is a book it shows how to cook in every culture, in Iraq for example, and Indian and Fijian and Somalian

and so on. And from every culture there is a kind of food, how to do it. We have made a food for everyone who comes. They get benefit from it.”

6.2.5 Discussion

This theme intended to explore some of the factors that influenced the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL Learners in relation to their use of recreational reading materials and Leisure information.

The first section, on the ‘value’ of recreational reading explored the attitudes of the participants in relation to recreational reading to explore the level of personal importance this activity had for them. There seemed to be a relationship between the value placed on recreational reading and the use of public libraries. Participants 1, 2 & 4 indicated that they valued recreational reading highly as an activity and were also regular users of public libraries. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that public libraries are generally regarded as good sources of reading material, especially if individuals are not able to afford the cost of purchasing books either new or second- hand. Nevertheless, it indicates a considerable awareness among immigrant ESL Learners of public libraries and the multitude of resources that they offer.

The second section, on the influence of friends, family and community confirmed the literature on immigrant information behaviour, which generally indicated that these networks play a pivotal role in the information behaviour of immigrants. There was some indication in this study that participants with less developed English language skills and less diverse recreational reading interests were more dependent on these networks than those who read widely.

There was little evidence of a culture of library use in any of the participants prior to their arrival in New Zealand. The participants generally indicated that there were either no public libraries in the country that they emigrated from, or that, if there were, they were utilised by the participant on a very irregular basis. The major reasons for this were lack of time, poor location of the library, or dissatisfaction with the library environment. This lack of library use prior to immigration did not seem to

affect the participant's willingness to use public libraries in New Zealand, in the cases of Participants 1, 2 and 4. In the cases of Participants 3 and 5, their lack of library use in New Zealand seemed to be related to factors such as lack of time or a personal preference for other activities, rather than as a direct result of their experiences of libraries in their original countries.

The fourth section of this theme intended to explore the possibility that adult immigrant ESL Learners had learned about New Zealand culture through their recreational reading material. It was thought that this could be through a direct method or that a level of incidental information acquisition might be discernible. Both of these methods of information acquisition were evident, to a limited degree. Participant 1 and Participant 2 gave examples that indicated purposive or problem-specific behaviours. Participant 5's example of learning about Maori culture from a work of New Zealand literature could be considered an example of incidental information acquisition.

6.3 Theme Three: Language

6.3.1 Language preferences

Throughout the interviews, it was apparent that the participants were keen to read a wide range of materials in the English language, and that they all expressed the opinion that this kind of reading was important, and often necessary in order to advance their English language skills. However, in terms of reading recreationally, for pleasure or enjoyment it appeared that most still held a preference for reading in their original language.

An example of this was Participant 1, who often enjoyed reading novels as a form of recreational reading. She had tried to read some novels in English but had found them hard going:

"I prefer reading novels in my language...because my English is not as good as you need. It's a little bit of work for me and it's not a relaxing thing. But when I read in Russian it's relaxing..."

The length of time it took to read a novel in English was an influencing factor, as was her perception that a wider range of 'difficult' words were likely to be found in novels as opposed to lighter recreational reading material, such as magazines or books about art and illustration. As she states:

"...it's because of vocabulary. My vocabulary is may be not full enough for reading something in English. I can read article in newspaper, but when I start reading novel..."

She had developed her own strategy for sourcing recreational reading material, especially novels. Her husband often read novels in English and she would ask him for recommendations:

"This is why I ask him about name of book, then I try to find the same book in Russian. So what I have found is its good reading in English language, but in my own language, it's faster. There is just something about speed."

Participant 2 similarly preferred to read in her original language if she was reading recreationally. As she stated when asked if she read in English for pleasure:

"In English not for fun. In Arabic, for fun. For example, looking for a magazine, in my language. As a second language I need to read to learn..."

Participant 2 felt very pleased that there were Arabic language materials in her local public library:

"It's good to have. When I saw Arabic I thought, oh they have Arabic books or magazines. Good!"

Participant 4 also preferred to read in his original language. He would read in English if he needed to find specific information, or utilise a resource that was only available in English. He stated his preference for original language materials in this way:

"Actually, in English, not very often. Sometimes. When I need a special subject or something, to get it, I have to get the English books."

Participant 4 had been using New Zealand public libraries for longer than Participants 1 and 2. He stated that materials in his original language had not always been available. However, the collections had improved dramatically in the time he had been using them, largely in response to demand from users such as himself.

Similar to Participant 2, he felt that English was a language that he needed to learn in order to carry out his daily activities:

"Yes, it is more easier for me to read in Arabic, even though I'm continuing learning English language, because it is the second language, but I feel that I need to learn this language. Because I have to deal with the people about everything, even the supermarkets or the income support, or the doctor, or the pharmacies. Everywhere I need this language, to learn it so I can manage my things."

Participant 5 said she read in both, but preferred reading in Spanish. For light recreational reading materials English was fine and predominantly the language that she read in, because of their availability in this country. If she were to read longer works she would read Spanish versions. As she stated:

"If I am reading magazines, woman's magazines, cooking, these things, then I am reading English, most of the time. This is the language they are published in New Zealand. This is how they are available. They are easy reading, not too much challenge. Novels, this is harder, not so easy to enjoy."

Participant 3 indicated a preference for reading in English, although this seemed to be along the lines of reading in English because she needed to learn the language, rather than because she found it enjoyable. This participant had indicated that she read recreationally a good deal in her home country. When asked if she still read in her original language in New Zealand, she replied: "No, if I came to New Zealand I read English, not Arabic." This did not seem to be an absolute position however, as she later said that she read magazines in Arabic, brought to her by her son. In many ways she resembled the other participants, in that she felt strongly that she needed

to read in English in order to acquire English language skills. She read in Arabic "...sometimes...but I need more English."

6.3.2 Aiding the learning of English

All of the participants reported reading English as Second Language materials that they had found in the English language learning sections of libraries, or had acquired them through their home tutors or English language groups. These materials included guides to grammar and guides to conversational English (often with accompanying CD's) and easy to read fiction and non-fiction designed specifically for ESL purposes.

Participant 2 used a range of recreational reading materials to aid her learning of English. Interestingly, this began with the use of children's picture books. As she explained, she read children's stories:

"...for 10-12 years [year olds] because it has small words, and the pictures. I understand what they mean with a picture...If there are words I don't understand, I saw the picture, I understand. This word meaning this picture. That's helped me, too much. In the beginning."

Participant 2 also mentioned having read comic books for the same purpose. Initially these were read by her children, but she found herself reading them also and mentioned that reading these materials had similar benefits to reading children's books. For Participant 2 there was much value in reading widely: "Every books, you get what you need from it. Everything. You learn from any book I think. Very useful for us."

Having received this information in the second interview, I decided to incorporate a question around children's literature into the remaining interviews. Participant 3 and Participant 4 had not used this as a technique for English learning. Participant 4 felt that this kind of technique was not necessary for him personally:

"No, it is something very easy. You know, it is like for the beginners, these things. You know I have some knowledge about English before I came to New Zealand. So no need to see the pictures of something."

Participant 3 had not considered the idea, but thought it might be worth trying. Participant 5 had not sought out these kinds of books for her own use, but did say that she thought that reading to her children had helped with her own language skills. As she said:

"Yes, this was surprising, this was. Book for child. Much more fun to read...after while it helped [with learning English]. We help each other, me with my children."

Many other recreational reading materials were used to aid the learning of English. Fiction material, such as novels, was not particularly popular, although three of the five participants did mention reading them. Participant 3 was a fairly typical example of this behaviour. She mentioned having acquired a novel in English from the second hand store at which she worked, and that she tried to read a section as often as possible, to help improve her English. The other materials were mostly assorted non-fiction, often related to hobbies (as reported earlier in the findings).

All of the participants reported using dictionaries; either English or Bi-lingual (for example, English-Arabic dictionaries) while reading English language materials. This was often followed by a learning practice such as writing the word and its meaning in a notebook. This practice was not limited to occasions where the participant was studying. Participant 4 explained his practices in this way:

"When I read some newspapers and some books, I find some difficult words or I have seen them for the first time, I get a dictionary to see the meaning of that word...any books, any newspaper, any...something published. If I don't know the meaning I get the dictionary to see what it says, so I can write it down."

Participant 3 made extensive use of her Bilingual dictionary and mentioned she often used it to translate English sentences into Arabic, because she found this easier to commit to memory. As she explained:

“But I go to dictionary, some sentence I don’t know. And, my letter, what I do, this sentence is English, I write it in Arabic. Because, I remember.”

6.3.3 Discussion

Language was clearly a defining element of the information behaviour of the participants interviewed here. Language was repeatedly referred to throughout each of the interviews, and was an influence on virtually all of the information behaviours reported by the participants.

The findings here corresponded with Flythe (2001) whose own participants indicated a preference for reading in their original language. This is perhaps natural enough, particularly in the case of reading for pleasure as it not difficult to imagine that the enjoyment of reading would be considerably lessened if it involved working too hard to decipher the text. Still, recreational reading in English was very prevalent and all of the participants did some reading in both languages. Dali suggested that among her participants there was a high demand for non-fiction in the Russian language. This study too found considerable demand for non-fiction materials in languages other than English. Fiction in languages other than English was less popular, but still in demand. It seems likely that Atlestam, Brunnstrom and Myre’s assertion that “many respondents feel respected and confirmed by finding literature in their mother tongue at the library” (2011, pg. 73) holds true in the context of this study.

The participant’s use of recreational reading materials also seemed to aid their learning of English. The findings of this study indicated a progression in the reading habits of the participants, who had often begun with ESL-specific materials before broadening the range of materials that they utilised. This aspect of the study had intended to explore whether recreational reading was considered a contributing factor to English ability, regardless of whether a book was chosen for this purpose or not. There seemed to be general agreement among the participant’s that this was the case, though it was difficult to collect data as to just why they thought this. It was interesting to find at least one example (Participant 2) of a person who had

read in the manner encouraged by Cho in her study. This means was the recreational reading of children's materials to build confidence in the reader and to engage them with stories. Participant 2 reported similar attitudes to many of Cho's participants, who became enthusiastic readers through this method.

7. Limitations

There are many limitations to this study and the findings reported in it. The sample was of a small size and the interviews had a very limited time frame, with none exceeding 30 minutes in duration. It was not possible, given the limited timeframe involved with a research project such as this one, to conduct follow up interviews to clarify any aspects of the participant's responses that were unclear or ambiguous. This meant that some potentially useful data was not included in the findings of this report. Given these factors, it is not possible to generalise any of the findings of this study to the wider immigrant ESL population in New Zealand, or indeed even in Wellington. However, this was anticipated. This study was not designed with generalisation in mind, indeed it was expressly designed to be context specific. It is rather better imagined as a snapshot of the information behaviour of members of a group, at a given time, in a given place.

Added to this, the participant's use of English as a second language had some limiting implications, in that there was sometimes misunderstanding related to certain concepts and ideas discussed, and there were sometimes aspects of the study that the participants were not able to answer in detail. This required a considerable degree of discussion, explanation and alternative lines of questioning within the context of the interview. This may have led to the introduction of a level of influence from the interviewer that is generally undesirable for research. However, I was consistently aware of this factor during the interviews and made every effort to remain as neutral as possible. I therefore consider that this did not have a significant effect, overall, on the study or on the findings as they are here reported.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Concluding Comments and Implications

This study explored the information behaviour of immigrant ESL learners in relation to recreational reading and in the context of their everyday lives. Five members of the Wellington immigrant ESL Learner community were interviewed.

The data collected, in the form of interview data from the five participants, revealed a varied and layered picture of the information behaviours of these participants. These participants were found to have a wide range of information needs. They exhibited information seeking, access and use behaviours that were often unique to their individual situations, but that also reflected the similarities in their experiences as immigrants to New Zealand and as learners of English as a second language.

The participant's information behaviour related to recreational reading was found to be strongly related to their everyday day lives, especially in the aspects of their reading which supported hobbies. Their information behaviours were influenced by a number of social and cultural factors, with friends, family and community being a dominant factor. Language was shown to be crucial to our understanding of immigrant information behaviour and the importance of both English and original language materials were evidenced. Original language materials were shown to be particularly relevant to the recreational reading of the participants. Public libraries were shown to be instrumental to the information behaviours of several participants. Many key pieces of literature were shown to relate to the context of this study. The idea that our understanding of immigrant information behaviour needs to continue to broaden, especially in relation to immigrants in the later stages of settlement, was supported.

One of the major implications of this study is that it confirms that there is need for ongoing, localised research into the information behaviour of immigrants and ESL learners, both in a general sense and in relation to their recreational reading. There

was enough data generated to suggest that this will continue to be a fruitful area for ongoing research. This implication is further detailed in the following section.

For public libraries, the implication is that, although I documented a great deal of satisfaction with public libraries services amongst several of my participants, there is a need to continuously develop these services and the approach taken to them. On particular aspect for ongoing consideration are the means that libraries use to attract immigrant and ESL learners to utilise their services. This is especially pertinent in the case of library non-users. Relationships with community organisations such as language learning groups are important and highly influential for immigrant and ESL communities. Public libraries are an important resource for these communities.

8.2 Recommendations for further research

The outcomes of this study suggest several possible avenues for future research. The scope of this research was broad and it would therefore be interesting to see the results of studies which focus more specifically and in more depth on aspects of this study. Larger research populations could be examined, particular ethnic groups or specific communities could be studied, different locations could be selected and quantitative or mixed research methods might be considered. Research that utilised translation techniques might also be fruitful.

Some suggestions include:

1. The role of ICT's in the information behaviour of Immigrants.

This area could be fruitfully investigated from a number of perspectives, including the use and non-use of ICT's by immigrants, differences in usage in differing age groups or at differing stages of settlement, a more detailed analysis of the role of ICT's in relation to recreation and leisure, and the use of social media by immigrants.

2. The uses of the recreational reading of children's literature in developing English skills.

There is potential for cross-disciplinary work in this area, perhaps a partnership between Education and LIS researchers. It would be interesting to see a study that attempts to quantify the potential links observed in this study and that of Cho, between the use of these materials and the acquisition of language skills. The materials could include children's picture books, young adult books, and graphic novels.

3. Influence of community, friends and family.

This aspect of immigrant information behaviour merits closer, more detailed examination. It would be interesting to see research that documents the changes in the influence over time.

4. Immigrant information behaviour pre-migration.

The influence of the experiences of immigrants in seeking, accessing and using information prior to arriving in New Zealand could contribute a great deal to our understanding of their current behaviours. This could include the means they used to seek information about New Zealand.

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10. Appendix 1: Information Sheet for Participants.



Information Sheet

My name is Matthew Banks. I am a student in the Master of Information Studies programme at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of my degree I am conducting a research project which will look into the information behaviours of adult English as Second Language (ESL) learners.

Victoria University requires ethical approval to be obtained to conduct research. This study has been approved by the VUW Human Ethics Committee.

What is the purpose of the study?

- This study explores the experiences of adult immigrant ESL learners related to the things they read and why they read them.
- I am interested in the ways that ESL learners read recreationally or as a source of information about leisure activities.
- Recreational reading is reading that is voluntary and 'for pleasure'. It's reading that you do because you want to.
- This study explores the types of materials read by ESL learners, the use of technology by ESL Learners for recreational reading and how recreational reading can help to improve English language skills.
- The focus is not solely on the use of public libraries by ESL Learners, but this is an important aspect of the study and if you take part you will be encouraged to talk about your experiences of using libraries.

What are the criteria for participation?

I am interested in interviewing volunteers who fall in to the following categories:

- Are adults, over the age of 18.
- Are learning English as a language that is not their first language.

What will be involved in participating in this study?

- If you meet the criteria and would like to help me with this study, I would love to hear from you.
- Participation in this study is straight forward.
- You will participate in a face to face interview in which will last between 30-45 minutes.
- The interview will be recorded on an audio-device and notes will be taken on paper.
- The interview will be conducted at a Wellington location that is convenient to you and that is also a good place to make a recording (a quiet cafe for example).
- The interview questions will relate to three basic themes:

1) Recreational reading and leisure activities in 'everyday life'.

2) Social/Cultural value of recreational reading.

3) Recreational reading and language learning.

Voluntary and Confidential.

- Participation in the study is entirely voluntary; you don't have to if you don't want to!
- You don't have to answer questions that you do not understand or don't want to answer.
- You may also withdraw from the study at any stage before September 18th 2011. You don't have to give a reason.
- You will be given the opportunity to check the accuracy of the data I have collected once I have transcribed it. You can indicate on the consent form whether you would like to do this. You can check with the researcher when you sign the consent form if you are unsure what this means.
- Your name will not appear in the written report. You will be given a participant name so there is no way that you can be identified.
- All information that you give in the interviews will be destroyed six months after the date that I submit the final report to my University on October 17th 2011.

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11. Appendix 2: Consent Form



Consent Form

- I agree to participate in this research into the information behaviour of adult immigrant ESL learners.
- I have been given an information sheet outlining the nature and purpose of this research. I have understood the information outlined in the information sheet. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the research and have them answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that I can withdraw from this research at any time before September 18th 2011. Any information that I have provided can also be withdrawn at any point before this date. I understand that there is no penalty for withdrawing from this research and that I may withdraw from the research without needing to provide any reason.
- I understand that I will be participating in a face-to-face interview with the researcher, and that this interview will be recorded and that the information I give will be used in a written report.
- I understand that that any information I provide will be kept confidential and only the researcher and their supervisor will view this information.
- I understand that the information I give will be destroyed six months after the completion of the research.
- I understand that I will not be identified in the written report in any way

- I understand that a copy of the final written report may be given to the Victoria University Library in both print and electronic format.

I would like the opportunity to check the accuracy of the data given by me

(Yes/No)

I would like the researcher to provide me with a summary of this research after it has been completed **(Yes/No)**

The transcription and/or summary can be sent to the following address (email or postal):

Name:

Signed:

Date:

12. Appendix 3: Interview Questions.

Interview Questions

Introduction

- Thank participant for agreeing to be interviewed.
- Introduce myself, say a little about who I am- Librarian, MIS student etc.
- Ask participant to talk a little about themselves if they wish- background, when they arrived in New Zealand etc.
- Go through information sheet with participant. Check that they understand contents of sheet.
- Ask participant to read and sign consent form.
- Ask participants permission to begin recording the interview.

Central Question:

What can be learned about the information behaviours of adult immigrant ESL learners from their experiences of reading 'recreationally' and from their experiences of using public libraries for the purpose of recreational reading or for obtaining information about leisure activities?

Theme One: Reading in 'Everyday Life'.

What are the experiences of adult immigrant ESL learners

1. What types of materials (Examples: Novels, Magazines and Newspapers, Non-fiction related to hobbies, Graphic Novels/Comic books, blogs, websites) do you read for recreational or leisure purposes? Do you use public libraries to get these materials?
2. Do electronic/digital media feature in your recreational reading? For example, do you read online magazines/blogs/comics? If you have a computer you might use it for a number of purposes. Do you also use it for reading? Do you use E-readers, Ipads or other portable devices to read for pleasure?

3. How are the types of materials that you read related to your everyday life? (For example, do they support a hobby? Do you read them just for fun?)
4. How often do you read recreationally/ for pleasure? Is this something you try to do your daily life? How often do you visit a public library?

Theme Two: Social & Cultural Values

Do the social and cultural values of adult immigrant ESL learners who read for recreational and leisure purposes influence their information behaviours?

5. Is recreational reading important to you? Do you enjoy reading? Are public libraries important to you?
6. Do you have friends and/or family who like read for pleasure? Do they influence the types of materials you choose to read and do you discuss your reading with them?
7. What are your experiences of public libraries for recreation in the country from which you emigrated?
8. Can you think of an occasion in which you have learned about the culture and/or society of New Zealand from recreational and leisure materials? Could you please explain your experience of this (in your own words)?

Theme Three: Language

How is the personal characteristic of learning English as a second language related to recreational or leisure reading of adult immigrant ESL learners in their experience?

9. Did you read recreationally, in your first language, before immigrating to New Zealand? If so, do you still read for pleasure in your first language? Do you use public libraries to get books etc in your first language? Could you please explain some of the reasons you do or don't do these things?
10. Have you used recreational reading as a means of improving your English language ability and if so, what kind of materials did you use for this purpose? Did you use the public library for this purpose? How?
11. In what ways have these materials helped you with your language skills?

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