

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN
SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS, LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE, AND INTERGRATION
AMONGST CHINESE IMMIGRANT NEWCOMERS

by

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To Sara and Nana, thank you both.

If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it
even if I may not have it at the beginning.

Mahatma Gandhi

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Having spent many years in Taiwan as an English teacher, I was excited to move to Vancouver, one of the most ethnically diverse cities in North America with Chinese comprising a large percentage of its minority population. Having chosen to move to a largely Chinese neighborhood, I anticipated feeling right at home. Upon arrival, I immediately noticed the marked lack of integration within the city, however. It certainly was not the blend of East and West that I had imagined, and as I became more acquainted with my neighbors, they shared stories that depicted how difficult it was for them to break into life in Vancouver. Over coffee and using Mandarin as our mode of communication, I listened to one neighbor describe her family's experiences as immigrant newcomers. She recounted how her husband once held a "good job in a good bank in China," and she was able to "go shopping and buy the things that she wanted." Despite their university educations and previous professional job experience, she stated that she now has little hope that they will ever move beyond their current jobs – washing dishes in a Chinese restaurant. Through the words she chose, she painted a poignant picture of her life in Canada - a life full of *can't*, *won't*, and *it's not possible*. "We won't ever speak English well enough to make friends with Canadians"; "My husband wants to pass the TOEFL and improve his job, but he can't"; "Although we want our son to be educated in Canada, it's not possible that he has a quality life here"; and "Maybe we should just return to China," are the sentiments that she expressed. Seven years after emigrating from mainland China, this family has yet to integrate into Vancouver's economic or social realms, nor do they believe that they ever will.

The above is but one single family, and if they were an anomaly, certainly not worth researching. However, this immigrant family's experiences are not unique among the families in my neighborhood or across Vancouver. In fact, studies show that almost all immigrants from China experience a drop in their standard of living despite the fact that the majority have immigrated under the economic-class designation (Sin, 2007). This designation implies that prior to arrival these individuals have been selected based on their "education, work experience, knowledge of English or French and other abilities that will help them establish themselves successfully as permanent residents in Canada" (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2008). Why then does the marked lack of integration and successful transference of these skills to a Canadian context exist? What does this mean for these individuals, for Canada, and for Vancouver?

Immigration to Canada

Immigration is a crucial issue for Canada due to its shortage of skilled labor. The Canadian government's current focus regarding immigration is to further expand immigration levels with the hopes of supplementing its labor shortage (CIC, 2008). Notably, immigration is projected to become the only source of population growth by 2030 (Immigration critical to Canadian population growth: census, 2007). Since Chinese in Canada comprise the country's largest visible minority group, surpassing one million individuals, the government should look specifically to this group as it works toward solving issues related to its lack of population growth and labor shortage. This is even more relevant for Vancouver, whose minority population is 44% Chinese, and is one of the top three destinations for Chinese immigrants.

Chinese immigrants in Vancouver

Of the Chinese individuals who make their new lives in Canada, 2.5% have post-secondary education, among which 26.76% have either a master's or doctoral degree. Similar to the sentiments shared by my neighbor, previous education seems to matter little, however, with over 60% indicating that their employment situation here is worse than in China (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006). In fact, 44% of these highly skilled families report income levels of below \$20,000, which is less than the average for refugees in Canada (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005). Based on these findings, it is of no surprise that many Chinese immigrants express deep dissatisfaction with Canada, and researchers predict that Vancouver will witness a large scale emigration of Chinese immigrants (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006).

Ensuring that immigrants are able to integrate into Canada's social, political, and socio-economic realms has significant implications for all Canadians. Successful integration affects Canada's economic performance, the cohesion of Canadian society, and most importantly directly affects the welfare of Canada's newest citizens, individuals like my neighbors who hope to create a life for themselves here.

Barriers to integration

As stated above, prior to being accepted as permanent residents, immigrants who come to Canada as skilled workers have been assessed by the government and are believed to possess the skills necessary to facilitate a smooth transition into Canadian society. The reality of the situation would suggest otherwise, however. Although the issue of immigration and integration is too complex and dynamic to be examined in terms of any single aspect, the issue of English language proficiency is the feature that is cited more than any other as an impediment to successful integration (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006;

Hu, 2005). English language proficiency is the necessary precursor to employment commensurate with previous educational and work experience as well as participation in cultural and political realms. Since this is what will ultimately enable immigrants to create a life for themselves and chose to remain here, efforts should be devoted to examining the variety of factors that could affect both the English language performance of Chinese immigrant newcomers as well as their abilities to integrate. Is it possible that self-efficacy beliefs, our belief in our ability to succeed in certain situations, play a role in immigrants' English language performance, which, in turn, affects their integration? I will examine the answer to this question in the following section.

Self-Efficacy

Besides self-efficacy beliefs, it is now widely accepted that other psychological factors including motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence can significantly shape language learning (Dörnyei, 1994, 2001; Gardner, 2001). Through my own experiences as a language teacher and language student, I am keenly aware of how affective factors influence the language acquisition process. Returning to experiences of my neighbor, one can easily identify that although this family has the motivation and desire to succeed evidenced by her comments - "My husband *wants* to pass TOEFL", and "We *want* our son to be educated in Canada" - they fail to believe that they possess the ability to make these things happen as indicated by, "We *won't* ever speak English well enough", and "My husband *can't* get a better job." In other words, these individuals possess low self-efficacy beliefs.

Social cognitive theorist, Albert Bandura, defines self-efficacy as "people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain

designated types of performances” (1986, p 391). According to Bandura, when people *believe* they are capable of achieving a certain task, they are more likely to be confidently involved in related activities. Since Bandura’s seminal self-efficacy work in 1986, innumerable studies have shown a positive correlation between high self-efficacy beliefs and performance; in fact, self-efficacy beliefs are often cited as the *greatest* predictor of subsequent performances (Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Nicholls 1979; Pajares, 1997). While extensively applied to explain performances in other fields, self-efficacy beliefs have only recently been used in the field of English language learning and to my knowledge never with an adult immigrant population. The implications of understanding the role that self-efficacy assumes in the language-learning process of immigrants should not be understated. One important aspect of the relationship between self-efficacy and performance is that changes in self-efficacy can be brought about through instruction (Gore, 2006). Therefore, if self-efficacy beliefs have a direct correlation with subsequent language performance, and language performance is one of the greatest barriers to successful integration for Chinese immigrants, pedagogical and curricular approaches can be used to diminish this affective barrier and better support these newcomers as they establish new lives here in Canada.

As an English teacher who hopes to work more with immigrant newcomers, I am, thus, interested in better understanding how English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correlate with English speaking and listening performance amongst Chinese immigrants. Specifically, I seek to explore whether or not high levels of English speaking and listening self-efficacy correlate with more advanced English speaking and listening performances. Further, given the fact that English language performance has been cited

as a barrier to immigrant integration, I will also explore whether or not there is a correlation between the English speaking and listening performances of the study participants and their instances of integration into Canadian society.

Research Goals

In light of Bandura's self-efficacy theory, this study extends previous research by applying self-efficacy to the field of ESL and specifically to an adult immigrant population. The primary purpose of this study is to examine the correlation between English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and the English speaking and listening performances amongst Chinese immigrants. Specifically, this study seeks to determine whether or not high speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correspond with more advanced speaking and listening proficiency. The decision to examine English speaking and listening skills was made because these are the two language skills that Chinese immigrants have typically had the least previous exposure to and the two skills that are often regarded as being difficult for Chinese English language learners to master (Yang, 1993), yet both are necessary for a job of any level in Vancouver. In addition, this study examines the relationship between language performance and participants' levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres.

To accomplish the above goals, this study employs both quantitative and qualitative research methods. A survey questionnaire was administered and used to gather information regarding Chinese immigrants' beliefs regarding their abilities to perform specific English speaking and listening tasks. These individuals then partook in an English speaking and listening performance assessment which was administered by the participants' English language teacher. This term-end assessment closely mirrors

information elicited in the survey questionnaire. For example, the survey questionnaire asked questions such as “How confident are you that you can listen to and understand the main ideas of a short daily conversation about parenting between two English speakers?” Study participants were evaluated on their ability to successfully perform this exact task in the speaking and listening assessment. It is also worth noting that the assessment is aligned with the Canadian Language Benchmark system. The Canadian Language Benchmarks is a descriptive scale of communicative proficiency and is used by the government to assess the language proficiency of skilled immigrants prior to their acceptance into Canada and also for English class placement once here.

Acknowledging that "integration" is a process that can literally extend over generations and, thus, methodologically problematic to measure, this study will look for specific indicators of integration. Indicators are based on features that the Canadian government cites as evidence of integration (“The current state of multiculturalism in Canada and research themes on Canadian multiculturalism 2008-2010” n.d.) and will be gathered using semi-guided interviews. Features that will be examined include economic integration into the labor market; political integration into the electoral process and other forms of political participation; and social integration into the networks and spaces of civil society, from informal networks of friends and neighbors to membership in more formal organizations. In an examination of these features, the researcher will look for specific indicators of integration such as participation in political parties, neighborhood associations, religious institutions and/or community groups, voting behavior, and labor force participation.

Significance of the Study

As indicated above, the role that self-efficacy assumes in the language-learning process has not yet been adequately explored. However, the studies that have been conducted resoundingly suggest the existence of a strong and positive correlation between self-efficacy and performance. This study will, therefore, widen the theoretical scope of the self-efficacy paradigm. The application of this theory to an adult immigrant population will hopefully lead to a better understanding of the difficulties associated with English speaking and listening performance and how that relates to newcomer integration. Research findings may help shape the ways in which instruction that promotes self-efficacy may be integrated in adult ESL curricula. In turn, these changes may help to facilitate a successful transition into Canadian society for Chinese immigrants.

Conclusion

In this chapter, background information regarding the Chinese immigrant experience in Vancouver was provided. In addition to discussing barriers to integration, I provided an overview as to why the issue of immigration is of great importance to Canada, especially Vancouver, now and why it will continue to be more so in the future.

In the chapter that follows, the Literature Review, I will provide a more thorough discussion of Bandura's self-efficacy framework and examine other studies that have employed this theory. I will also provide an overview of the motivational research that has been conducted in the field of second language acquisition, discuss some of the gaps that I see in other second language and self-efficacy studies, and explain how this study intends to fill those gaps. Chapter Three will explain the methodological aspects of the study, including the participants, the setting, instruments utilized, and the methodological

procedures used. Chapter Four will discuss the data and research findings. Finally, Chapter Five will include overall conclusions, implications of this study and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter, I discussed how immigration is currently a crucial issue for Canada due to its shortage of skilled labor. Since Chinese comprise the largest visible minority, this group assumes an especially vital role in Canada's future population and economic growth. Consequently, their successful integration has significant implications for all Canadians. I further suggested that English self-efficacy beliefs may directly correlate with levels of English language performance, and English language performance, in turn, affects an immigrant's ability to integrate into Canadian society. As such, this study primarily seeks to establish whether or not English speaking and listening self-efficacy correlates with English speaking and listening performance. Additionally, it will explore the relationship between English speaking and listening performance and the level of participation in various aspects of Canadian society amongst Chinese immigrants.

This chapter will begin with a general overview of Bandura's self-efficacy framework and discuss how self-efficacy has been used to predict performance across a variety of domains. I will then review studies which explore the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance. Finally, I will review studies which examine the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and second language acquisition.

The Self-Efficacy Construct

A discussion of self-efficacy should first begin with a discussion of social cognitive theory. Understanding this larger framework allows one to better understand the placement and role that self-efficacy assumes within its parameters. Introduced in the

1960's, social cognitive theory provides a general framework for understanding and predicting human behavior. Central components of this theory include Bandura's triadic reciprocity and reciprocal determinism which suggest that 1) human behavior is influenced by multiple determinants including personal, behavioral, and environmental factors, and 2) these three factors all have an interactive effect on one another and together influence one's course of action. In essence, "what people think, believe and feel affects how they behave" (1986, p. 5). Therefore, social cognitive theory views individuals as agents who are actively engaged in and able to exercise control over their own development as opposed to behaviorists who believe that human functioning is influenced by external stimuli. Accordingly, an individual's inner belief system is believed to convey versus cause behavior according to behaviorists and, therefore, assumes little role in the cause and effect process of behavior. For Bandura, however, self-beliefs are much more important and are, in fact, regarded as an essential component of human functioning (1986). Consequently, he posits self-efficacy beliefs as a key element of social cognitive theory.

Bandura defines self-efficacy as "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations," (Bandura, 1995, p. 2) or stated another way, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. For example, the statement, "We won't ever speak English well enough to make friends with Canadians," illustrates that the speaker has low English speaking self-efficacy beliefs. In contrast to a more general measurement of self-esteem, self-efficacy beliefs are measured against a specific task (Bandura, 1997). In the above example, the "task" is making friends with Canadians, and the "belief" is

only in regard to the speakers' English speaking ability. Similarly, self-efficacy in math is not a general self-recognition of being good in math but rather explicit judgments of having the skills for doing a specific kind of mathematical problem, such as 2-digit subtraction (Schunk, 1991). In the field of ESL, self-efficacy questions are often representative of each of the four language domains: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. "I can read and comprehend the specific details of a travel brochure" (self-efficacy beliefs related to English reading proficiency) or "I can listen to a phone dialog between two English speakers and understand the main details" (English listening self-efficacy beliefs) are two examples that one might find in an English self-efficacy survey.

Self-efficacy is not intended to measure one's actual abilities but, rather, the *beliefs* that an individual holds regarding specific capabilities although, as we will see in the following sections, self-efficacy beliefs directly affect an individual's efforts and actions and, therefore, serve as an excellent predictor of one's future performance (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1997). Performance, for research purposes, simply refers to one's ability to perform a specified task at a designated level. As self-efficacy has been broadly applied across a variety of domains, "performances" range from completing specific academic tasks to athletic tasks to smoking cessation.

Sources of Self-Efficacy

People's beliefs about their efficacy are developed through four main sources of influence according to Bandura. These include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and somatic and emotional states. How people experience and interpret these four sources provides the basis for their self-efficacy beliefs (1994).

Bandura suggests that mastery experiences, one's previous successes or failures, have the most influence of the four sources (1997). Using the example of my neighbor, if she had previously been successful using English speaking and listening skills in a job interview, she could be expected to have a heightened sense of self-efficacy in these domains and put forth further effort in these areas thus creating a positive feedback loop. Similarly, previous failures (i.e. her inability to find desired employment) undermine her self-efficacy and further reinforce her belief that she "can't speak English well enough to get a job". In an educational domain, learners' previous performances on various academic tasks allow learners to self-appraise, and these serve as mastery experiences.

In addition to mastery experiences, one can also self-appraise through vicarious or "observational" experiences which Bandura cites as the second most influential source of self-efficacy (1977). Seeing other individuals succeed or fail in a task can either raise or lower one's self-efficacy in his/her own abilities. The power of vicarious experiences lies in how similar or dissimilar the observed individual is to the observer. For example, a student who sees a student similar to himself perform well on an exam can be expected to have a heightened sense of self-efficacy that he, too, can do well on this task. In the realm of immigrant newcomers, vicarious experience occurs through individuals' identification of the successes or failures of immigrants before them. The longitudinal study "*Vancouver's Newest Diaspora: Settler's or Immigrant Prisoners?*" includes the case of one Chinese immigrant, Evelyn, and her shared experiences with other immigrants. In this study she, along with other immigrants from China, say that their time in Vancouver is like "shangshanxiang," which the author explains refers to a movement during the Cultural Revolution in which individuals were sent to "labor and

reform” in the countryside. She states, “We joke that skilled immigrants are like those Sichuanese seasonal migrant workers coming to Guangdong to do very laborious work. They have poor meals and live in very bad conditions... very, very bad ones” (p.8). Through vicarious experiences, this individual’s self-efficacy regarding her ability to successfully integrate into Vancouver is presumably diminished as she observes other immigrants in similar situations fail.

Social persuasion is a third way of strengthening people’s self-efficacy beliefs and refers to the feedback that individuals receive from others (Bandura, 1977). Whereas mastery experiences refer to an individual looking at his own past experiences and vicarious experiences refer to an individual looking toward others’ experiences in order to self-appraise, social persuasion is, in effect, others’ assessment of the individual. A professor who receives positive feedback on a class evaluation from his students may experience a heightened sense of self-efficacy regarding his ability to instruct, for example.

The effect of this kind of feedback on self-efficacy is influenced by both the credibility of the speaker and the perceived genuineness of the praise (Oettigin, 2007). While Bandura includes this as a lesser source of self-efficacy, it has since been suggested that the strength of these sources may be culturally specific (Oettigin, 1995). For Chinese, social persuasion is believed to have a greater effect on self-efficacy due to the collective nature of Chinese culture (Chen, 2007). The Chen study, which examined English performance and self-efficacy in Taiwanese learners, finds that social persuasion from the study participants’ English instructor, in the form of English language evaluations, played a crucial role in the students’ English self-efficacy. This suggests that

in the case of Chinese immigrants, language teachers could similarly raise their learners' English self-efficacy beliefs through the use of positive and meaningful verbal feedback.

In addition to the above three sources, people also rely partly on their somatic and emotional states in judging their capabilities. This involves people's interpretations of their moods, stress levels, physical reactions, and emotional states. For example, if a person becomes nervous in an interview situation and has difficulty articulating, he/she may develop a weakened sense of self-efficacy in this area. Bandura notes, however, that the effect on self-efficacy lies more in how the individual perceives these reactions versus the physical reactions themselves (1977). In general, a positive mood enhances perceived self-efficacy; negative moods diminish it. Therefore, the minimization of negative emotional states and stress can be used to help to strengthen self-efficacy beliefs.

The Role of Self-Efficacy in Performance

Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people think, behave, and feel (Bandura, 1994). Therefore, individuals will have the incentive and motivation to produce a certain action if they *believe* that they can actually produce the intended outcome. Self-beliefs influence the activities that individuals choose to participate in, the effort that they put forth, and how they persist when faced with difficulties (Bandura, 1986; Pajares, 1997; Schunk, 1991). High success in tasks results in higher self-efficacy beliefs which result in increased efforts and even higher performance outcomes. Highly self-efficacious individuals are people who view challenging problems as tasks to be mastered; develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate; form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and activities; and recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments. Likewise, people with a weak sense of self-efficacy avoid challenging

tasks; believe that difficult tasks and situations are beyond their capabilities; focus on personal failings and negative outcomes; and quickly lose confidence in personal abilities (Bandura, 1994). Because self-efficacy beliefs directly influence subsequent behaviors, they have been shown to be a better predictor of performance than factors such as actual ability or previous accomplishments.

As previously stated, “performance” refers to one’s ability to successfully perform a specific task at a designated level (Bandura, 1977). In this study English speaking and listening performances will be assessed by asking participants to complete tasks such as listening to a phone dialog between two native English speakers. Performance, however, can refer to myriad of activities spanning across a wide variety of domains. Rankin, Bruning and Timme (1994), for example, sought to explore the relationship between self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, attributions for good spelling, previous accomplishments, and spelling performance as measured by a 30-item grade level spelling test. This study included 687 public school students in grades 4, 7, and 10, and found that self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of performance at all grade levels. Additional studies which further corroborate the positive correlation between performance and self-efficacy beliefs will be discussed in the Academic Performance and Second Language Research sections to follow.

Self-efficacy and Academic Performance

As discussed above, self-efficacy refers to beliefs that an individual holds in regard to his/her ability to perform a specific task. These beliefs influence an individual’s task choice, the effort exerted in the attainment of a task, the amount of resilience and persistence one experiences, and lastly, one’s achievement (Bandura, 1997). Due to the

predictive relationship between self-efficacy and performance, self-efficacy theory has been applied across a range of domains including mental health, depression, social skills, assertiveness, and athletic performance (Pajares, 1996). The link between self-efficacy and performance as well as the fact that self-efficacy beliefs are dynamic and can be changed (refer to Sources of Self-Efficacy information above) has led to the recent application of self-efficacy theory to academic settings. Within the educational domain, research has been centered largely on three broad areas: the link between self-efficacy beliefs and university major/career choice; how teachers affect learners' self-efficacy beliefs through their instructional practices; and how self-efficacy intersects with other motivational constructs and academic achievement (Pajares, as cited in Maehr & Pintrich, 1997). Similar to self-efficacy studies in other domains, research in the educational domain has established the existence of a positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievements. In fact, through their analysis of over a decade's worth of published self-efficacy research, Multon et al. (1991) established that not only does a positive relationship exist between self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement, it accounts for approximately 14% of the variance found in academic performance.

Mathematics is an area which has received substantial research attention. Various researchers (Cooper & Robinson, 1991; Pajares & Graham, 1999; Pajares & Miller, 1995) have established that individuals' judgments regarding their ability to solve mathematics problems (math self-efficacy beliefs) are predictive of their ability to solve those problems. Pajares and Graham's (1999) one-year longitudinal study examined the affects of self-concept, anxiety, self-efficacy, and self-regulation on math performance. 273 sixth-grade students completed various surveys which measured the above variables

against the participants' math performance which was garnered from the participants' math test scores. Study findings yield similar results to what has been established in other domains; math self-efficacy is more predictive of performance than other variables.

Self-efficacy has similarly been linked to L1 writing performance. Pajares and Johnson (1996) tested the influence of self-efficacy, self-concept, apprehension, and aptitude on 181 ninth-grade students' essay-writing performance. Participants completed survey questionnaires in which they self-reported their self-efficacy beliefs, apprehension levels, and self-concept. Although somewhat similar, self-concept is not measured to the same level of specificity as self-efficacy. Whereas a self-efficacy questionnaire asks very context specific questions (i.e. "How confident are you that you can correctly punctuate a one page passage?"), self-concept asks global questions (i.e. "At school my friends come to me for help in writing.") In addition to the three variables above, learners' writing aptitude was also assessed through teacher ratings of the students' writing as well as statewide standardized writing assessment scores. Following completion of the survey instrument, participants wrote a 30-minute essay that was later scored by researchers using a holistic 6-point scale. Results of the study are consistent with those of previous researchers; self-efficacy beliefs have a direct effect on performance.

Self-Efficacy in Second Language Research

The studies referenced in the sections above present clear correlations between self-efficacy beliefs and subsequent performance levels. Despite self-efficacy theory's wide application within the field of education and these findings, there remains a dearth

of self-efficacy research in regard to second language learning. This is surprising given the fact that second language research has long considered the role that attitudinal and motivational factors play in the second language learning. The following section provides a brief overview of the relationship between motivational constructs and second language learning. Although this relationship is well established and accepted within the field, researchers have recently called for an expansion of the motivational construct (Crookes & Schmidt 1991; Dörnyei, 1994). Incorporating self-efficacy into existing models will widen the theoretical scope and help deepen our understanding of the second language learning process. Following this discussion, relevant self-efficacy and second language research will be reviewed.

Role of Attitudinal and Motivational Factors in Second Language Learning

Gardner's socio-educational model has become a permanent fixture in the field of second language learning. This model identifies how certain factors (social and cultural milieu, individual learner differences, and learning contexts/settings) affect second language acquisition (1968). Within the category of "individual differences," four variables are believed to be influential. These include intelligence, language aptitude, learner anxiety, and learner motivation. Of these, motivation has assumed an especially prominent role within educational research (Dörnyei, 2001).

Motivation research generally differentiates between integrative and instrumental motivations and suggests that the more motivated the individual, the greater the success in second language acquisition. Integrative motivation is used to describe a learner's orientation toward learning the target language. It implies that acquisition is augmented by the learners' willingness or desire to be like members of the target language community (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). Instrumental motivation, on the other hand,

refers to the desire for a learner to obtain some benefit from the acquisition of the target language (Hudson, 2000). Largely, this benefit occurs in the form of some social or economic reward.

While Gardner and subsequent researchers' work has done much to explain why some learners seem to be more or less successful than their counterparts in acquiring language when other variables are controlled (i.e. aptitude, age, intelligence), the integrative/instrumental motivational framework alone fails to capture all of the nuances associated with language learning. As Gardner himself states, "I would not be at all surprised if it turned out that a number of variables, hitherto not considered important, are found to be implicated in learning a second language" (2001, p. 1). Not surprisingly, the motivation framework has been expanded in recent years with the goal of gaining a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between motivation and second language learning.

In a critique of Gardner's "old" model, Crookes and Schmidt called for a new research agenda involving L2 learning motivation (1991). Dörnyei, (1994), adopting the model put forth by Crookes and Schmidt, separated L2 motivation into three smaller categories based on his premise that motivation is multifaceted and comprised of many levels. Within the second of the three categories that he cites - 1) the language level, 2) the learner level, and 3) the learning situation level - Dörnyei includes self-efficacy.

A brief examination of sentiments shared by Chinese immigrants in one study (Sin, 2007) provides further evidence that broad integrative and instrumental motivation categories fail to adequately predict the success of L2 learning, and in this case, participants' subsequent integration in Vancouver. One participant in the study, "Philip"

tells the researcher that upon arrival in 2000 he sent “maybe up to a hundred resumes to companies.” Following less than a handful of replies – all rejections – he began work at a supermarket and later worked at a factory while concurrently enrolled at a local college. Philip certainly appears to have ample instrumental motivation, the desire to find work commensurate with his Master’s degree qualification. Similarly, the statements of another participant suggest that he has strong integrative motivation to be accepted into the target culture. He states, “Actually, how much we earn is not the main thing. We feel that we have been here for such a long time, but we have not entered the society. Even though we are in Canada, we are circling outside their circle. We have not entered it at all. This is in fact...how should I say it...we feel....this is the greatest failure.” Even those who consider themselves worse off in Vancouver, still seem to exhibit a willingness to try as evidenced by this comment, “For us, although our conditions were superior, the past is already in the past. You are standing on a new starting line. You should have a new kind of thinking to face the new problem” (Sin, 2007).

As stated in this study’s introduction, the English language is the most commonly cited barrier to integration amongst Chinese immigrants. The participants cited here all appear to have both adequate instrumental and integrative motivations to learn English; yet, this group’s motivation levels seem ill-matched with their actual performance outcomes.

Role of Psychological Factors in Performance of Chinese Immigrants

Examining the relationship between psychological factors and second language performance may produce insights into the Chinese immigrant experience in Vancouver that more general motivational frameworks have been unable to explain. Indeed, one study established that it was not motivation that was the key to success for Chinese

immigrants – it was volition (Amundson as cited in Hansen, 2010). The study looked at twenty Chinese immigrants in Vancouver – ten men and ten women between 20 and 45 years old. All were professionally employed within the Metro Vancouver area and considered themselves to be successful. 95 per cent of the study participants stated that the key ingredient and starting point for any newcomer is having a strong drive to succeed. Whereas motivation is the desire to do something (such as find a job), volition is the absolute commitment to achieving something. Amundson suggests that the commitment aspect is necessary in establishing oneself in a new country. Motivation is often triggered by external stimuli or expectation of reward, and as such, susceptible to change. An immigrant who is engaged in job-hunting and met with rejection can lose self-confidence, energy and motivation to continue in as little as three to six months according to Amundson (as cited in Hansen, 2010). The internal drive to succeed in spite of barriers (volition) is crucial to a positive outcome for Chinese immigrants.

Research Findings on Self-Efficacy in Second Language Acquisition

Similar to volition, the psychological construct of self-efficacy, a factor largely unexplored, may also provide insights into the second language performance and process of integration experienced by Chinese immigrant newcomers. Of the research that has been conducted, three main themes have been explored: the relationship between self-efficacy and language performance; sources of learners' self-efficacy beliefs; and the relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulated learning strategies. The research findings within the first two of these three research areas have yielded somewhat mixed results. As such, studies which have pertained specifically to self-efficacy and language

performance and the sources of self-efficacy beliefs among language learners will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow.

Four university-aged learners' English self-efficacy beliefs and their relationship to achievement are explored in Huang and Chang's (1996) mixed methods study. Using questionnaires and interviews, the researchers explored what influenced learners' self efficacy; how self-efficacy influenced achievement; and how, in turn, achievement influenced self-efficacy. The study produced mixed results: learners' self-efficacy did not correlate with learning achievements correspondingly; achievements did correlate with ability perception; interest in topics influenced self-efficacy; and the teacher played a large part in learners' self-efficacy. One possible explanation for the mixed results is a lack of task criterion correspondence. Accurate elicitation of self-efficacy beliefs is wholly dependent on theoretically sound assessment tools, and, as Pajares (1996) explains, researchers often fail to identify a criterial task in their self-efficacy scales and instead simply explore the relationships between motivational variables in the absence of performance attainments.

In the Huang and Chang study, a lack of criterial task correspondence is illustrated in the following survey statement: "I think I am good at writing work." Similarly, "I feel confident reading." was a statement elicited through a participant interview. Statements such as these are too general to accurately capture the specificity of the academic tasks with which they are compared. For example, if I were to complete a self-efficacy questionnaire rating my own Mandarin reading abilities, I would report a fairly high level of confidence in my ability to read a menu in a restaurant. My confidence regarding my ability to read a medical journal in Mandarin would be nil,

however. As such, general questions such as the above (I feel confident reading) fail to capture the nuances in self-efficacy beliefs in regard to varying levels of task difficulty and the strength of confidence associated with these levels and, as Bandura argues, create problems of predictive relevance (1997).

Similarly, Wang and Pape (2007) examine Chinese boys' English self-efficacy beliefs in various situations. In regard to one boy, the authors state that the participant reports "high self-efficacy to speak English in public and to answer teacher's questions." Again, the varying levels of difficulty across both of these tasks are not captured by this general domain. This is illustrated when the authors later describe how the boy exhibits high self-efficacy when speaking English about a science concept but exhibits low self-efficacy when on the playground discussing soccer with his friends. While both are included under the broad topic "speaking English in public," the participant's self-efficacy beliefs differ based on the tasks. In response to these empirical and methodological limitations, this study will aim to adhere to Bandura's self-efficacy assessment guidelines as closely as possible.

Mills (2007) explored self-efficacy and language achievement in her quantitative study of self-efficacy and French language performance amongst American college students. She specifically examined the areas of French listening and reading and found mixed results. French reading self-efficacy beliefs were found to correlate with French reading performance; however, French listening self-efficacy beliefs failed to correlate with French listening performance. As with the Huang and Chang study discussed above, psychometric flaws may explain differences in the research findings. The author herself suggests that the listening performance aspect of the study was problematic in that the

test items had low reliability. The results of the research conducted in this area suggest that additional studies which use more carefully developed self-efficacy measures are necessary for a more thorough understanding of the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and language learning outcomes.

Another omission in current self-efficacy and second language learning research is the lack of differentiation between self-efficacy for learning and self-efficacy for performance. This is similar to the problems with criterial task correspondence in that delineation between the two impacts research data collection methods and, ultimately, study results. Schunk (2006) provides clear descriptions for both self-efficacy for learning and self-efficacy for performance. Self-efficacy for learning, according to him, refers to situations in which participants are asked to judge their capabilities for *learning* to solve different research tasks and not their capabilities to perform a task; this is highly relevant in research regarding schooling as it is an important aspect of student motivation and learning. For example, in the case of language learners with low levels of English proficiency, an English self-efficacy questionnaire may ask them to rate their confidence regarding their ability to *learn* the present simple verb tense. The differentiation between self-efficacy for learning and self-efficacy for performance is so relevant in academic settings because learners who have not yet learned a skill can not be reasonably expected to hold high self-efficacy beliefs regarding their capabilities to perform that skill. As Schunk explains, when skill is lacking, no amount of self-efficacy will result in a high performance. Therefore, using the above example, asking learners who have not yet learned the present simple verb tense how confident they are in their ability to use this

tense accurately while describing a family member is ineffectual in establishing content validity between self-efficacy beliefs and performance.

Self-efficacy for performance, on the other hand, refers to one's beliefs regarding their abilities to perform tasks with which the learners are already familiar (Schunk, 2006). This guideline is not always adhered to, however, such as in the study "Email Dialogue Journaling: Attitudes and Impact on L2 Reading Performance" (Shang, 2005). In this study the researcher examines learners' self-efficacy and reading performance through the use of e-mail. In addition to eliciting general participant attitudes under the guise of self-efficacy, a problem discussed above, this study also asks learners to rate their beliefs regarding the effectiveness of computer electronic integration on their English reading skills prior to having any real experience with this format. Therefore, while this author cited a positive correlation between the variables under study, the predictive value of the learners' self-efficacy could be enhanced if the study truly measured performance instead of self-efficacy for learning.

This researcher will attempt to yield accurate academic achievement measurements through a careful consideration of Schunk's recommendation that researchers both differentiate between self-efficacy for learning and self-efficacy for performance and utilize appropriate data collection methods. Briefly, this researcher will measure performance by ensuring that the participants rate their self-efficacy beliefs to complete tasks with which they are already familiar. This is further detailed in the Methodology section.

More research is also needed to understand how learners' self-efficacy beliefs in regard to language are developed. Through qualitative studies, Wang and Pape (2007)

and Wang (2004) investigate what influences Chinese boys' English self-efficacy beliefs. In addition to discovering many of the factors that affected the self-efficacy beliefs of the participants (task difficulty level, social persuasion, physiological state, and attitude and interest), these studies also find that learners' persistence was based on their self-efficacy beliefs. Participants persisted when they believed they could do well on a task but gave up easily or avoided performing tasks that they did not think they could do very well on. This echoes Bandura's description of mastery experiences (how previous successes or failures impact self-efficacy) and suggests that through increasing learners' self-efficacy, learners will be motivated to make the effort needed to master difficult tasks. The task specific and dynamic nature of self-efficacy also suggests that learners can be taught to change their beliefs. If, through changing self-efficacy beliefs, learners are encouraged to persist and master tasks that they previously believed they could not master, the implications are immense. Further investigations are therefore warranted, especially amongst populations such as the Chinese immigrant population, as this could ultimately contribute to their successful integration.

Role of Culture in Self-efficacy Beliefs

Also highlighted through these studies is the need for a deeper understanding of the role that culture plays in self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura conducted his research within a Western paradigm, but it has since been suggested that culture affects the development of individuals' self-efficacy beliefs. Persons from Western or individualistic cultures are thought to value themselves and their families' needs above the larger group's needs whereas individuals from Eastern or collectivist cultures are believed to value the group's needs over individual needs (Oettigen 1995). These differences are thought to affect both

the strength and source of self-efficacy beliefs. Consequently, studies which examine the self-efficacy beliefs of individuals from collectivist cultures merit further investigation.

Correlation between Language Performance and Integration

As discussed above, this study examines the correlations between self-efficacy beliefs and language performance. In addition, it also explores the relationship between English speaking and listening performance and levels of participation in social, political, and socio-economic spheres amongst immigrant newcomers. Previous research studies have confirmed what most people would intuitively guess to be true – proficiency in the English language is an important form of human capital for immigrant newcomers. This form of human capital assists immigrants in their integration into Canadian society.

While this researcher is aware of no studies which have looked specifically at the correlations between social or economic integration and English language performance, several studies have looked at the correlations between economic integration and English language performance. These studies have confirmed that low English language proficiency is associated with reduced labor force participation, increased vulnerability to unemployment, the allocation of workers to linguistic enclaves, and depressed earnings (Boyd, 1999; Boyd & Cao, 2009, Statistics Canada, 2007).

A longitudinal survey of approximately 12,000 immigrant newcomers highlights the importance of English language skills for integration purposes. Study participants were interviewed about six months after their arrival. Over 70% reported difficulties finding employment, and language difficulties were cited as one of the top three reasons (Statistics Canada, 2007). These participants were interviewed again 2 and 4 years later and asked what had been the greatest difficulty for them. Again, participants cited finding

suitable employment and developing the English skills necessary to find suitable employment as the greatest challenges. The study found that immigrants with self-reported high English language skills were more likely to have a high-skill job, a job similar to one held before immigrating, or a job related to previous education or training. Interestingly, this remained the case 6 months, 2 years, and 4 years after arrival (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Chiswick and Miller (2002) delved into the link between language performance and economic integration even further in an examination of immigrants from several countries (USA, Canada, Australia, and Bolivia). They established that language performance affects integration in a few different ways. First, English language skills increase productivity and, therefore, earnings because it facilitates necessary oral and written communication with customers, suppliers, supervisors, and co-workers. Secondly, English language performance complements education; knowing English increases the utilization of English in the workplace. Thirdly, English language performance increases job opportunities. In an empirical study of immigrant newcomers, Boyd (1999) observed that immigrants with low levels of English proficiency tended to stay in jobs in which English language skills were not a requisite even though they were overqualified for these jobs in terms of previous work experience or educational levels.

Summary and Gaps in Research

This chapter began with a review of social-cognitive theory and Bandura's self-efficacy construct. As discussed above, self-efficacy beliefs have been widely applied to numerous domains including the educational realm, and research findings have largely

established the predictive power of self-efficacy on performance. The field of second language learning has yet to corroborate these findings, however. First, the general lack of self-efficacy and second language learning research suggests that more studies are needed to fully understand the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and second language performance. Secondly, of the research that has been conducted, many theoretical and methodological flaws have been cited. Research gaps include a general absence of self-efficacy research in the field of foreign language acquisition, a lack of attention to accuracy in the assessment of self-efficacy, and a failure to differentiate between self-efficacy for learning and self-efficacy for performance. Further, there is a need to apply self-efficacy research across cultural groups to discern how one's culture affects their beliefs and subsequent language performance.

In addition to the self-efficacy and performance gaps cited above, there are also gaps in the research that has been conducted on the correlation between language performance and integration. Previous studies have specifically examined the link between English language proficiency and economic integration. This study is wider in scope and will examine the link between English language proficiency and integration into all major spheres – political, social, and socio-economic. In addition, previous research has examined Canada as a whole and immigrant newcomers as a bloc as opposed to examining each visible minority separately or looking at instances of integration in various parts of Canada. As Chinese comprise the largest visible minority group in Canada, I feel it worthwhile to examine this population independently in an effort to identify whether or not any patterns emerge in their efforts to integrate.

On a whole, this study seeks to extend previous self-efficacy research through its close adherence to sound methodological practices as well as through its examination of the Chinese immigrant population, a group that has, hitherto, received little self-efficacy research attention. The aim of this study is to better understand the relationships between Chinese immigrants' English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and their English speaking and listening performance. Therefore, all language teachers, who want to work toward increasing their learners' communicative competence, should have a better understanding of how to achieve that goal. For immigrants, the stakes associated with developing communicative competence is especially high; it can mean the difference between their success and failure in the target culture. If self-efficacy beliefs influence language performance in the same way that they have been shown to do in other realms, a better understanding of this relationship can be immensely beneficial to all the governments that fund language programs, the teachers who instruct, and the learners themselves.

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the motivational research that has been conducted in the field of second language acquisition, discussed some of the gaps that I see in other second language and self-efficacy studies, and explained how this study intends to fill those gaps. In addition, I discussed how English language performance has been shown to affect immigrants' integration, particularly in the economic realm. Chapter Three will explain the methodological aspects of the present study, including the participants, the setting, instruments utilized, and the methodological procedures used.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to examine the relationship between the English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and English speaking and listening performances of Chinese immigrant newcomers in Vancouver, Canada. In addition, in light of the fact that language proficiency is cited as the primary barrier to integration for Chinese immigrants, the study also explores the relationship between English speaking and listening performance and integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres. Specifically, this research seeks to answer the following:

1) Do high levels of English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correlate with high English speaking and listening performance as measured by study participants' formal end-of-term language assessment? Conversely, does a low degree of English speaking and listening self-efficacy correlate with low English speaking and listening performance?

2) Does high performance on end-of-term English speaking and listening assessments correlate with increased levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres?

Divided into five sections, this chapter will provide a description of the study setting and participant group, an explanation of the study's research design and instrumentation, a description of the field study used, a discussion regarding how the data was analyzed, and a conclusion of this chapter.

Setting

This study was conducted at a multi-service non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and

integration into Canadian society. This organization is located in Vancouver, British Columbia. While it aims to serve all immigrant and refugee communities, its Vancouver location primarily provides services to Asian (predominately mainland Chinese) immigrants. In addition to English classes, the organization also delivers social, employment, business and economic, and health services. The English classes at here fall under the English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) designation. ELSA classes provide basic and intermediate level language training for adult newcomers to Canada. ELSA classes are funded by the Canadian government and are free to participants. Participants graduate from the program after completing Level 5 or after their allotted hours have been completed. The maximum hours of study are dependant upon participants' levels when they enter the program.

Study participants were enrolled in the Level 5 (high-intermediate proficiency) ELSA class at the organization. One participant was placed in this level based on her Canadian Language Benchmark placement assessment. The remaining individuals entered Level 5 upon the successful completion of Level 4 (low-intermediate proficiency) classes. A level 5 course, which meets 25 hours per week, offers general training in English geared toward helping facilitate a smooth transition into Canadian society. Newcomers develop English speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar and pronunciation skills while learning about topics such as the following: British Columbia's Laws and Legal System, Canadian Culture, Community Services, Consumerism, Education and Learning, Employment, Family and Relationships, Health and Safety, Media and Communications, Money Matters, and Travel and Transportation.

In the Level 5 class, learner tasks routinely focus on helping learners develop practical skills.

Learners

- Read and write memos, e-mails, reports, letters, and resumes
- Use workplace vocabulary
- Practice how to speak comfortably in front of a group
- Learn Computer Skills: Introduction to Word, Excel, Internet, and email
- Practice job interview skills
- Talk with guest speakers who work in the community
- Learn about local, national, international current events through newspapers and television broadcasts

The speaking and listening skills of learners in the Level 5 class typically fall between Canadian Language Benchmark levels 6 and 7. The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) are recognized as the official Canadian standards for describing, measuring, and recognizing the English language proficiency of adult immigrants and prospective immigrants. To clarify, class levels do not necessarily directly reflect the equivalent Canadian Benchmark level, although they could at some language institutes. At the organization there are five different levels – 1-5. As noted above, Level 5 is the highest level with learners at a CLB level of 6 or 7. Level 4 students typically possess a CLB of 4-5, Level 3 students a CLB of 3-4, Level 2 students a CLB of 2-3, and Level 1 students a CLB of 1-2.

Someone at the Level 8 proficiency level is generally considered ready for postsecondary schooling in Canada, and Level 8 is similarly regarded as being necessary

for the attainment of most entry level jobs in Canada. According to the Canadian Language Benchmarks, the speaking skills of Level 8 learners are characterized as follows:

- Communicate effectively in most daily practical and social situations
- Communicate in familiar routine work situations
- Participate in conversations with confidence
- Speak on familiar topics at both concrete and abstract levels
- Provide descriptions, opinions and explanations
- Provide synthesis of abstract complex ideas
- Present a hypothesis
- Respond appropriately to formality level
- Use the phone on less familiar and some non-routine matters

According to the Canadian Language Benchmarks, the listening skills of Level 8 learners are characterized as follows:

- Understands most formal and informal general conversations, some technical, work-related discourse in own field at normal rates of speech
- Understands discourse in own field at normal rates of speech
- Understands clear, coherent extended instructional texts and directions
- Able to take clear, coherent phone messages on unfamiliar and non-routine matters

Participants

The four participants involved in this study were Chinese immigrant newcomers to Vancouver, Canada. A newcomer as defined by the Canadian government is an individual who arrived in Canada within the last three years. This designation and time frame is important as the government provides certain services (including English classes) for newcomers up to the 3-year mark. At that point, it is generally assumed that an individual will have integrated enough not to require this support. The participants all immigrated into Canada under the economic-class (also known as the skilled-worker) designation. Under this designation individuals are accepted as permanent Canadian residents based on their education, work experience, knowledge of French or English language, and other criteria that have been shown to help them become economically established in Canada (CIC, 2008). As such, the participants in this class shared features

that are common amongst other individuals arriving under this designation. As illustrated in Table 3.1 below, these features include possessing a university degree, being of the prime working-age group, and having previous professional job experience.

Table 3.1

Description of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Length of time in Vancouver	Education level	Previous work experience
Lina (F)	43	1 year 2 months	PhD	16 yrs Chinese medicine doctor
Joey (F)	35	2 years 10 months	B.A.	5 years early childhood teacher
Gloria (F)	38	6 months	MBA	10 years investment banker
Julie (F)	39	1 year 9 months	B.A.	Owned a chain of retail stores

As noted above, the participants in this study are all from the same ELSA Level 5 class. The participants were limited to one class in an effort to increase the accuracy of

prediction. According to Bandura, self-efficacy should be assessed at an optimal level of specificity which directly corresponds to the criterion task (1997). Pajares, who has conducted extensive self-efficacy research, reiterates this by stating, “Self-efficacy judgments should be consistent with and tailored to the domain of functioning and/or task under investigation. This is especially critical in studies that attempt to establish causal relations between beliefs and outcomes” (para. 6, 1996). Because course content, materials, and performance measures vary across courses and teachers, it would not have been possible to conduct a uniform study using participants from different classes. Previous self-efficacy studies have similarly limited their sample selection for this reason (Mills, 2007).

The teacher who participated in this study had been working with the organization’s ELSA program for 3 years and holds a TESOL Canada-approved teaching diploma. Participants voluntarily participated in this research, were informed that in all cases their identities would remain anonymous, and were assured that their participation would in no way affect their relationships with the ELSA program. Any identifying information was removed and destroyed at the researcher’s earliest convenience and a pseudonym assigned. The researcher is employed by the organization as an ELSA instructor in the part-time evening program.

Research Design

Based on the research questions and purposes previously discussed, this study employed a multi-strand, mixed-methods design and was conducted in two phases. Each of the following two questions constituted a different strand: the first was comprised of quantitative questions and data collection techniques and the second, qualitative

questions and data collection techniques. The rationale for using both qualitative and quantitative design is that neither method was adequately able to answer both of the stated research questions. Inferences made on the basis of the results of each strand are discussed in detail in the Results section of this study. The research design for each of the two research questions are depicted in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. Additionally, a more complete explanation of the research design follows each respective figure.

Do high levels of English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correlate with high English speaking and listening performance as measured by study participants' formal end-of-term language assessment? Conversely, does a low degree of English speaking and listening self-efficacy correlate with low levels of English speaking and listening performance as measured by study participants' formal end-of-term language assessment?

Figure 3.1. Research Question #1

This phase of the study was conducted using a survey-based correlational research design. Due to previous studies' findings which indicate a strong correlation between self-efficacy and performance, I wanted to assess the extent to which the two variables (English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and English speaking and listening performance) co-vary (Chen, 2007). Students self-reported their English speaking and

listening self-efficacy beliefs using two survey questionnaires. The first, an English Speaking Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix A) was a twenty-two question survey in which participants rated their self-efficacy beliefs regarding their English speaking abilities; the second was a twenty-four question English Listening Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix B). Similarly, this questionnaire asked learners to self-rate their beliefs regarding their abilities to listen to and comprehend spoken English. The questionnaires were developed specifically for this study by the researcher and were created according to Bandura's Guide for Constructing Self-Efficacy Scales (2006). Further information regarding the survey instruments is included in the following section.

Data for the prediction target, English speaking and listening performance, was gathered through the participants' performance on an end-of-term summative language assessment. This assessment was collaboratively created by the teachers and directors at the organization where the study took place. Assessment tasks closely reflect the curriculum outcomes set forth by the organization which in turn adheres to the Canadian Language Benchmark system. While the assessment includes speaking, listening, reading and writing tasks, only the speaking and listening tasks were evaluated by the researcher for the current study.

Does high English speaking and listening performance on end-of-term assessments correlate with increased levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres?

Figure 3.2. Research Question #2.

Self-efficacy theorists have argued that more thorough understanding of self-efficacy must come from qualitative research (Pajares, 1996; Schunk 1991). As such, and

due to the complex nature of the issue of integration, this portion of the study was conducted using semi-guided interviews. This format was chosen based on the belief that the researcher would be able to elicit information not able to be elicited simply through a survey questionnaire and establish a deeper understanding of what Chinese immigrants believe inhibits or promotes their integration into Vancouver.

Procedure

Accuracy in self-efficacy research is dependent upon the content validity of the self-efficacy measurement. To achieve this, prior to creating the English speaking and listening self-efficacy scales, I examined the organization's Level 5 topic outcomes and the curricula as well as the Level 5 final assessment. As stated above, the formal assessment is given to learners upon completion of the term and is used in part to determine if a learner has met the requirements needed to graduate and exit the ELSA system. I examined both so that I fully understood the listening and speaking tasks that the learners would be required to complete. Following an independent examination of these, and for the purpose of establishing face validity, I further collaborated with the participants' teacher and the director of the organization to ensure that the self-efficacy scale accurately reflected both the Level 5 course content and the formal assessment content. Again, this preliminary work was essential in order to create a self-efficacy scale that directly corresponded to the performance task (the end-of-term assessment). A failure to do so, according to Bandura, results in faulty theory (2006). Examples of the English Speaking and Listening Self-Efficacy Questionnaire are depicted in Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4.

Please rate how certain you are that you are able to do the things stated below by writing
--

the appropriate number.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all sure			Moderately Sure				Completely Sure			
1. Discuss things that could strengthen a parent/child relationship. _____										
2. Discuss things that could weaken a parent/child relationship. _____										
3. Discuss ways to discipline children. _____										

Figure 3.3. English Speaking Self-efficacy Questionnaire Samples

A. In terms of the topic “Family and Relationships” how sure are you that you are able to listen to and understand

1. The main ideas of a short daily conversation	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
about parenting between two English speakers	
2. The details of a short daily conversation	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
about parenting between two English speakers.	
3. A short conversation about parenting	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
between two English speakers by making inferences	

Figure 3.4. English Listening Self-efficacy Questionnaire Samples

Although the English Speaking and Listening Self-efficacy questionnaires are formatted a bit differently, the essence of both is the same. In each, questions reflecting different levels of task demands were phrased using “are able to” to ensure that learners

indicated capability versus intention. Similarly, both were graded on a 10-part scale. The use of a 10-part scale is similarly advised by Bandura who asserts that scales which employ few steps, a 1-5 scale for example, fail to capture the finer distinctions among individuals' self-efficacy beliefs. As such, a 1-10 (or 0-100 level) format is deemed to be more reliable (2006).

Instrumentation

Learners completed both survey questionnaires during a single class period during the 12th week of their 15-week class semester. The researcher explained how to complete the questionnaire and encouraged learners to ask any clarification questions. Twenty-two questions asked learners to indicate their beliefs regarding their speaking abilities, and the remaining 24 questions elicited information regarding their listening ability beliefs.

Learners rated their abilities on a scale of 1-10. A score of 10 indicates that the participant is *highly confident* that he/she is able to complete the task, and 1 indicates that the participant is *not at all confident* that he/she can complete the task. The students were given 30 minutes to complete the survey. To help ensure participants' honesty, the participants' teacher was not present during the questionnaire administration. Further, I explained the importance of their contributions to the research that I was conducting and assured them that there was no "right" or "wrong" answer. At no point was the participants' instructor given information regarding their self-efficacy belief ratings.

Information regarding the prediction target, English speaking and listening performance, was gathered primarily from the study participants' speaking and listening portions of their end-of-term language assessment which was administered Week 14 of the 15-week term. The English listening assessment involved answering 17 short answer

questions based on taped material delivered at normal speed. The listening samples included both conversations and monologues about topics including parenting, dating/marriage, the BC health care system, and language and learning. Learners were asked to identify the main ideas and details of the listening selections as well as to make inferences based on the material. Topics included in the assessment were the same topics that the participants had been introduced to over the course of the term. The test lasted one hour, and listening passages varied in length from 45 seconds to several minutes.

Participants' oral English skills were evaluated in a 30-minute interview with their English teacher where they were evaluated on the basis of pronunciation, fluency, range of vocabulary, and accuracy of language used. Similar to the listening assessment, topics for the speaking assessment reflected the content and topics that had been introduced throughout the term. Numerical scores of 0-10 were granted for each individual speaking and listening task included in the assessment. A score of 8/10 is considered to be mastery of the given task. Students are given a composite score; however, to aid me in data analysis the instructor recorded the score for each individual task and provided me with a complete scoring record for each participant.

Speaking assessment tasks include the following examples:

- 1) Give a detailed 3-7 minute story about a personal health care experience.
- 2) Verbally state your opinions regarding what makes a successful marriage.

In addition to the end-of-term assessment described above, the teacher also provided access to informal quizzes and anecdotal class notes. The use of students' grades and formal assessments has been utilized in numerous self-efficacy studies (Mills 2007; Zimmerman & Bandura 1994). In addition to formal grades and scores, the

teacher's anecdotal notes were collected for the purpose of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the learners' speaking and listening performances throughout the term.

Lastly, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the research participants for the purpose of better understanding their respective levels of integration into Vancouver's economic, social, cultural, and political realms. For purposes of my research, the term "integration" is used to describe an immigrant's participation in each of these realms and is based on the notion that integration is a continuum. Therefore, one who actively participates in a political party and votes is considered more integrated in this realm than an individual who rarely votes. Similarly, one who serves on the school's PTA board is more integrated in the social realm than an individual who refrains from participating in any community events or organizations. Interview questions were developed to elicit information related to research participants' integration into each of the four realms (economic, social, cultural, and political) (Appendix 3).

In lieu of the previous researchers' suggestions (Mackey & Gass, 2005), I made several decisions regarding how to conduct the interviews for the purpose of strengthening research validity. First, to ensure participants felt comfortable, they were given the freedom to choose both the time and location of the interview. They were also given the option of conducting the interview in Mandarin or English. Interviews were conducted during the last week of the term, Week 15. This timeline was created so that I would have the opportunity to first assess the participants' responses to the survey questionnaires and then tailor the interview questions to gain further insight into any

unexpected findings as necessary. Semi-guided questions were created with the intent of allowing participants to expand on their experiences as they felt comfortable. It further allowed me the flexibility to probe into themes raised by the participants.

Examples of interview questions are as follows (see Appendix C for all interview questions):

1. Are you currently a member of any social organization, for example, a church or community group, in which the majority of members speak English?
2. Are you currently satisfied with your place of employment? If not, what is the cause of your dissatisfaction?

Data was collected during autumn term at the organization. The fifteen-week term began in September 2010 and ran until December 2010. Figure 3.5 outlines the progression and time line of data collection.

Academic Calendar/ Week	Data Collection
12	Administration of speaking/listening self-efficacy questionnaire
14	Collection of final grades, informal quizzes, anecdotal notes, and formal listening and speaking evaluations
15	Administration of interviews

Figure 3.5. Time line of data collection

Field Test

A field test of the instruments used in this study was conducted for two primary purposes: (1) to check comprehensibility of survey-questionnaire questions to determine whether or not this instrument should be translated into Mandarin and (2) to ensure that the self-efficacy beliefs questions and criterial tasks were closely aligned. As indicated in the Literature Review, the misalignment of these two is a recurring problem in educational research, and, as such, the alignment between self-efficacy beliefs and target

performance was thoroughly examined in the field test (Bandura, 2006; Pajares & Miller, 1994). In addition, the field test helped the researcher check testing time.

The English Speaking Self-Efficacy and English Listening Self-Efficacy survey questionnaires were field tested with two individuals in the class who were willing to participate in the research, yet unable to complete all aspects of the study. (One individual gave birth prior to the end of the term, and the other individual knew he would return to China on business the week that the end-of-term assessment was conducted.) As such, these individuals volunteered to complete the surveys as a field test and give relevant feedback. Surveys were administered to these individuals during their lunch break at the site, and they were instructed to complete the surveys at their own pace. It took the individuals between 20-25 minutes. Upon completion of the survey questionnaires, the researcher asked the individuals for their feedback. As a result of this discussion, some questions on the English Speaking Self-Efficacy Survey were rephrased for clarity or omitted. Notably, the field test uncovered that one participant felt as though two of the questionnaires may be culturally inappropriate for Chinese. One question was related to spanking and the other about intercultural marriage. While both of these were included in the Level 5 curricula, the individual felt as though study participants may not feel comfortable responding to their beliefs about these topics. Both individuals deemed the English version to be clear and saw no need to have the questionnaires translated into Mandarin.

Data Analysis

Data for the quantitative portion of the study was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as this tool has been utilized in numerous self-

efficacy studies (Rankin et al, 1994; Pajares, 1996). To determine the strength of the association between study participants' English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and their subsequent English speaking and listening performances, a Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted. In the qualitative portion of the study, the content of the semi-guided interview responses was analyzed and interpreted by the researcher.

In examining the information garnered through the interviews, the researcher specifically looked for indicators of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres. As explained in Chapter One, for the purposes of this paper, integration is conceptualized as a continuum – a process that can extend over a long period of time and, thus, methodologically problematic to measure. As such, as stated above, the researcher looked for specific indicators of integration. Firstly, the researcher made note of the participants' responses to a variety of yes and no questions related to their levels of participation. For example, the researcher asked participants, "Are you a member of any organization in which the majority of participants speak English?" Affirmative and negative responses were then tabulated. The researcher then asked follow-up questions as necessary to elicit additional information regarding the participants' initial responses. Participants who responded with more affirmative responses were deemed to be more integrated than those who responded with fewer affirmative responses.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the study setting, the ELSA Level 5 class, as well as the four study participants. Research questions were restated, and I explained the

quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study's research design. Both how the research tools were instrumented and how the field test was used in the research design process was also explained. Lastly, I detailed how data was analyzed. In the next chapter, I will report my research finding and draw inferences regarding the relationship among English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs, English speaking and listening performances, and integration amongst Chinese immigrant newcomers.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study sought to explore two questions. Firstly, it explored whether or not a correlation between the English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and English speaking and listening performances of Chinese immigrant newcomers could be established. Secondly, it examined the relationship between learners' performance on English speaking and listening performance assessments and their self-reported levels of participation in Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres. Divided into three sections, this chapter will begin with reporting the descriptive statistics of the research participants. In section two, the results of the statistical data analysis in answering Research Question One stated below will be given along with a discussion, accompanied by tables, of the data analysis and results associated with each question. The third section of this chapter will detail the semi-guided interviews that were conducted in answering Research Question Two.

As previously stated, the current study addresses the following questions:

- 1) Do high levels of English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correlate with high English speaking and listening performance as measured by the participants' formal end-of-term assessment? Conversely, does a low degree of English speaking and listening self-efficaciousness correlate with low speaking and listening performance as measured by the participants' formal end-of-term assessment?
- 2) Is there any correlation between study participants' performance on English speaking and listening performance assessments and their self-reported levels of participation in Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres?

Descriptive Statistics of the Participants

Participants in the current study (n=4) are all Chinese immigrant newcomers to Vancouver, Canada. They were taken from a single Level 5 English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) class conducted at a nonprofit immigrant services centre in Vancouver. The descriptive statistics of participants are presented in the succeeding section.

As previously stated, the variables investigated in the first portion of the current study were English speaking self-efficacy beliefs; English speaking performance; English listening self-efficacy beliefs; and English listening performance. Table 4.1 shows the means of the variables under investigation.

Table 4.1

Means and Standard Deviations for Self-efficacy Belief and Performance Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking SE Beliefs	88	.00	10.00	6.5568	2.18068
Speaking Performance	88	1.00	10.00	6.7273	1.77937
Listening SE Beliefs	96	3.00	9.00	5.9167	1.65858
Listening Performance	96	2.00	9.00	6.5625	1.82274

Note: 1. Means for English listening and speaking performance are based on a 0-10 point scale.

2. Means for English listening and speaking self-efficacy beliefs are based on Likert-type scales ranging from 0-10.

Prior to analyzing the data, I determined what would constitute low, medium, and high range self-efficacy beliefs. As the listening and speaking self-efficacy scales were presented on a 0-10 continuum, I decided that a range of 0-3 was low self-efficacy, 4-6

was medium self-efficacy, and 7-10 was high self-efficacy beliefs. As will be shown in the tables, this range was not spanned by study participants, however. At the onset of my research, I wrongly guessed that learners would display a range of self-efficacy beliefs. Conversely, the four research participants exhibited fairly similar degrees of self-efficacy. In both speaking and listening self-efficacy belief categories, results showed that two individuals reported a medium level of self-efficaciousness whereas two reported a high level (see Table 4.2). No subject participant reported possessing low self-efficacy beliefs. The limited range of self-efficacy beliefs is undoubtedly due in part to the small sample size included in this research study.

Table 4.2

Mean Scores for Speaking and Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs

	Mean Score for Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs	Mean Score for Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs
Lina	8.59	6.13
Gloria	6.68	7.78
Julie	5.72	5.12
Joey	4.95	4.41

As stated, results suggest that the participants' strength of English speaking and listening self-efficacy as well as their actual English speaking and listening performance were at a medium level since their mean scores fell to the medium range on a 0 to 10 scale. Both English speaking self-efficacy beliefs ($M=6.55$) and English speaking performance ($M=6.7$) were higher than their English listening counterparts. This suggests

that the Chinese immigrant newcomers under investigation have a stronger sense of English speaking self-efficacy than English listening self-efficacy. In addition, as a whole, they possess slightly higher English speaking proficiency than they do English listening proficiency. Interestingly, performance levels in both English speaking and English listening domains were slightly higher than the self-reported efficacy beliefs of this group. Evidence suggests that self-efficacy beliefs have similar effects on performance across cultures (Bandura, 1995); however, as included in Chapter Two, forming beliefs of personal efficacy is a complex process of self-appraisal. Information is integrated from various sources, and cultural identity could certainly play a role in this process as I briefly discussed in that chapter. Chinese culture is regarded as a collectivist versus individualistic system. Drawing on this theory of collectivist versus individualistic, Chinese have been identified on a cultural level of analysis as being modest (Matsumoto, 2001). While impossible to determine how much of an effect (if any) culture played in the self-reporting of these individuals, “modesty” is one plausible explanation for the margin of difference between their self-efficacy beliefs and actual performance levels. Table 4.1 shows descriptive statistics for all study participants.

Results of Statistical Data Analysis in Answering Research Question One

As stated above, the current study seeks to first address the following question: Do high levels of English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs correlate with high English speaking and listening performance among Chinese immigrant newcomers? Conversely, does a low degree of English speaking and listening self-efficaciousness correlate with low speaking and listening performance among Chinese immigrant newcomers?

Pearson Product Moment Correlation

The first step in the data analysis was to clarify general patterns of relationship between English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and English speaking and listening performance. As stated above, it is the intent of this study to specifically establish whether or not *high* levels of self-efficacy correlate with *high* performance and, conversely, whether or not *low* levels of self-efficacy correlate with *low* performance. Firstly, however, I chose to conduct Pearson product moment correlations to ascertain that relationships existed between the different variables. This is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

1. Is there a correlation between Variable 1 (English speaking self-efficacy beliefs) and Variable 2 (English speaking performance)?
2. Is there a correlation between Variable 3 (English listening self-efficacy beliefs) and Variable 4 (English listening performance)?

Figure 4.1. Variables under investigation

At this first stage of data analysis, I did not stipulate the direction (negative or positive) of the relationship between the variables and, thus, chose to use a two-tailed Pearson correlation design.

Table 4.3

Correlations between English Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Speaking Performance amongst all Study Participants

	Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs	Speaking Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.589*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	88	88

*Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.4

Correlations between English Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Listening Performance amongst all Study Participants

	Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs	Listening Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.532*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	96	96

*Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results showed that the English speaking self-efficacy beliefs ($r=.58$) held by study participants positively correlated with their English speaking performance as measured by the end-of-term language assessment administered by the Level 5 instructor at the study site. Likewise, results also show a positive correlation between participants' listening self-efficacy beliefs and their listening performances ($r=.53$). These findings support the existence of the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and performance levels as put forth by Bandura (1977). Moreover, these correlations fall within the range of $r= -/+ .50$ to $-/+ 1$ which is regarded as a strong correlation (Cohen, 1998).

After a positive correlative relationship between the variables was established, I sought to examine whether or not uniform distribution could be seen. In other words, as the Research Question asks, does the same degree of positive correlation (strength) occur

between high self-efficacy beliefs and high performance as exists between low self-efficacy beliefs and performance? Establishing this would provide a clearer picture of the role that English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs assumes in the English speaking and listening performances of Chinese immigrant newcomers. On a larger scale, this would give the self-efficacy construct more predictive power in explaining second language performance.

To this end, separate one-tailed Pearson correlation analyses were conducted for each of the study participants. Results of the one-tailed Pearson correlation analysis yielded both expected and unexpected results. Across the high and medium self-efficacy spectrum, correlations were fairly uniformly positive ranging from .089 to 1.0. Again, this gives credence to previous research findings which show that self-efficacy holds significant power for predicting subsequent academic performance (Pajares & Miller, 1996; Schunk, 1991).

In the paragraphs and tables to follow, I will examine each participant in detail. I will begin by looking at the participants who exhibited medium levels of self-efficaciousness. The first participant, “Joey,” is the participant who exhibited the lowest self-efficacy beliefs (note, however, that these were still within the medium range). She also scored the lowest amongst study participants on her speaking and listening performance assessments which are in line with how her teacher ranked her abilities when asked to describe participants’ in-class performance (D. Dahlberg, personal communication, December 15, 2010).

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics: Joey

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Speaking	22	0	8	4.95
S.E Beliefs				
Speaking	22	1.00	8.00	5.500
Performance				
Listening	24	2.00	7.00	4.4167
S.E Beliefs				
Listening	24	3.00	6.00	4.625
Performance				

In the above table, we can see that Joey displayed a wide range of self-efficacy beliefs spanning from 0 to 8. In both speaking and listening domains, her mean scores fell within the medium range, however. Looking at Joey's data on an item-by-item basis, some interesting details emerge. For example, Joey had no (0) confidence in her ability to discuss arranged marriage and very little (a score of 1) confidence in her ability to state her opinions regarding divorce. However, Joey successfully completed an in-class jigsaw activity discussing cultural views on divorce as indicated in her teacher's class notes

“Jig-saw on divorce norms in various countries. All four groups were successful in answering comprehension questions and presenting to the class.” While this in-class activity did not necessarily ask learners to state their own opinions on the topic, one can assume that through its completion, learners did develop the language to help them do so. In fact, Joey was able to state her opinions regarding divorce as indicated by her score of 7 on the actual assessment task. Despite this anomaly, overall there was a medium positive correlation between her self-efficacy beliefs and her performance on both her speaking and listening performance assessments. This is illustrated in Table 4.6 and 4.7 below.

Table 4.6

Pearson Correlation English Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:

Joey

	Speaking Self-efficacy Beliefs	Speaking Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.399*
Sig (1 tailed)		.033
N	22	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 4.7

Pearson Correlation English Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:

Joey

	Listening Self-efficacy Beliefs	Listening Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.420*
Sig (1 tailed)		.20

N

24

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

“Julie” also indicated a medium-level range of self efficaciousness. In all domains, she scored slightly higher than the previous participant examined. Julie’s descriptive statistics follow in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

Descriptive Statistics: Julie

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Speaking SE	22	5	7	5.7273
Beliefs				
Speaking	22	5	8	6.4091
Performance				
Listening SE	24	4	6	5.125
Beliefs				
Listening	24	4	6	5.125
Performance				

Similar to Joey, Julie indicated lower speaking self-efficacy beliefs than what she displayed through her performance assessment. As stated earlier in this chapter, this is true of all study participants, and “modesty” is one plausible explanation for the differences between speaking self-efficacy beliefs and actual performance levels. A moderate positive correlation existed between Julie’s speaking self-efficacy beliefs and her performance (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

*Pearson Correlation English Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:
Julie*

	Speaking Self-efficacy Beliefs	Speaking Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.089*
Sig (1 tailed)		.347
N	22	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Interestingly, in comparison to the other study participants, Julie exhibited the weakest correlation between her speaking self-efficacy beliefs and her speaking performance. She also exhibited the strongest correlation between her listening self-efficacy beliefs and her listening performance. Table 4.10 illustrates her listening beliefs and performance. There is no clear explanation why Julie exhibited a strong correlation between her listening beliefs and performance and a moderate correlation between her speaking beliefs and performance. Upon returning to her data, I noticed that of the twenty-two speaking questions and tasks, she underrated her performance abilities ten times (for example, she rated her confidence in her ability as a 6 and her actual performance was rated a 7), whereas she overrated her confidence in her abilities only three times. This was uniformly distributed across the topics included in the questionnaires so I cannot conclude that she felt “weak” in any one specific area. As mentioned before, it could be an issue of modesty in self-reporting. However, as Table

4.10 illustrates, there was a strong positive correlation, a perfect correlation, in fact, between her listening self-efficacy beliefs and her listening performance, so the issue of modesty cannot be claimed to exist in this area.

Table 4.10

Pearson Correlation English Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Listening

Performance: Julie

	Listening Self-efficacy Beliefs	Listening Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	1.000*
Sig (1 tailed)		.000
N	24	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Unlike the participants cited above, the following two study participants exhibited a high level of self-efficaciousness in their English speaking and listening beliefs. Table 4.11 includes descriptive statistics for Gloria. Table 4.12 and Table 4.13 illustrate her speaking and listening beliefs and performances respectively. Following Table 4.13 is a discussion of what information can be garnered from this participant's statistics.

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics: Gloria

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Speaking SE Beliefs	22	5.00	9.00	6.6818
Speaking Performance	22	4.00	9.00	7.0455
Listening SE Beliefs	24	5.00	9.00	7.78
Listening Performance	24	5.00	9.00	7.8696

Table 4.12

*Pearson Correlation English Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:**Gloria*

	<u>Speaking Self-efficacy Beliefs</u>	<u>Speaking Performance</u>
Pearson Correlation	1	.497*
Sig (1 tailed)		.009
N	22	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 4.13

Pearson Correlation English Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Listening Performance: Gloria

	<u>Listening Self-efficacy Beliefs</u>	<u>Listening Performance</u>
Pearson Correlation	1	.416*
Sig (1 tailed)		.024
N	24	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Overall, the correlations between Gloria's English listening and speaking self-efficacy beliefs and her performance on her end-of-term assessment are the strongest of the four participants. As a reminder, the relationship between Julie's listening self-efficacy beliefs and performance was the strongest of all (Table 4.10), but the correlation between her speaking self-efficacy beliefs and performance was the weakest. As a whole, Gloria seemed able to accurately rate her abilities to perform English speaking and listening tasks as evidenced by strong positive correlations in both areas. As will be discussed in greater detail in the section on integration below, a plausible reason for Gloria's accuracy in the ability to rate her own level is the fact that she is the most integrated of the four participants. Through interfacing with other's in English, she seems to have an accurate picture of what she can and cannot do.

While Gloria exhibited the highest overall correlations between self-efficacy beliefs and performance, Lina exhibited the lowest (albeit still positive) correlations. Like Gloria, Lina exhibited a high degree of self-efficaciousness as seen in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

Descriptive Statistics: Lina

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Speaking SE	22	0	10	8.5909
Beliefs				
Speaking	22	5.00	10.00	8.1818
Performance				
Listening SE	24	4	9	6.13
Beliefs				
Listening	24	5	9	7.04
Performance				

Table 4.15

*Pearson Correlation English Speaking Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:**Lina*

	Speaking Self-efficacy Beliefs	Speaking Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.088*
Sig (1 tailed)		.349
N	22	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 4.16

Pearson Correlation English Listening Self-Efficacy Beliefs and English Performance:

Lina

	Listening Self-efficacy Beliefs	Listening Performance
Pearson Correlation	1	.073*
Sig (1 tailed)		.368
N	24	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Unexpectedly, data in Table 4.15 and 4.16 shows that Lina exhibited the weakest correlations between self-efficacy beliefs and performance. A possible explanation for this lies with the fact that this individual also exhibits the lowest levels of integration. Her integration (or lack thereof) will be elaborated on in the paragraphs to follow. For now, however, it is worthwhile to revisit the topic of self-efficacy formation that was included in Chapter Two. There I explained that Bandura included four major sources of self-efficacy in his theory. In Lina's case, it could be that she is essentially lacking in both mastery experiences and social persuasion. Without interfacing in English, it is likely that she is not developing a true sense of her English speaking and listening efficacy and, thus, unable to accurately appraise her language abilities. In a comparison, Gloria and Joey had the highest correlations and as I will explain, the highest levels of integration. Again, presumably because they are involved in a variety of settings in which they use English speaking and listening skills, they receive more feedback on their language use and are better able to self-appraise what they believe they are and are not able to do. In

the same vein, the following section will explore the participants' integration in Vancouver's socio-economic, political and cultural spheres in greater detail.

Results of Data Analysis in Answering Research Question Two

The second question addressed in this study is as follows: Does high English speaking and listening performance on end-of-term assessments correlate with increased levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres? In this section, I describe my interviews with each of the four study participants and highlight information that expounds the complex issue of integration amongst Chinese immigrants in Vancouver.

Firstly, as detailed in Chapter Three, the four participants in this study share certain similarities. All have immigrated to Vancouver from Mainland China within the last three years under the economic-class designation, possess a higher education degree and relevant professional work experience, are within 35 to 43 years old, and have a high intermediate level of English speaking and listening proficiency as measured by the Canadian Language Benchmark system. In addition, albeit not planned, all of the participants are married females who reported choosing to immigrate to Canada for a lifestyle change.

In a pointed response to the research question cited above - no, this research does not bear direct evidence that high speaking and listening performance of the study participants' end-of-term assessments correlate with increased levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres. In fact, results show that the individual with the highest English *speaking* performance had the lowest level of integration. On the other hand, the individual with the highest English *listening*

performance showed the highest level of integration, and the remaining two individuals possessed medium level English proficiency and medium to low levels of integration. It is worth noting, however, that the participants in this study are all high-intermediate language learners coming from the same class. As such, when I refer to “high” or “low” proficiency levels, the margin between the highest and lowest level learner is relatively small.

Research findings do advance the notion that immigration and integration is an extremely complex and dynamic relationship. Language performance is definitely a variable in this relationship, but as I illustrate in the succeeding paragraphs, innumerable other variables impact Chinese immigrant newcomers’ integration as well.

Data Analysis of the Interviews

Through my semi-guided interviews with the participants, I specifically looked for specific indicators of integration. Indicators were based on features that the Canadian government routinely cites as evidence of integration (“The current state of multiculturalism in Canada and research themes on Canadian multiculturalism 2008-2010” n.d.). Features that were examined included economic integration into the labor market; political integration into the electoral process and other forms of political participation; and social integration into the networks and spaces of civil society, from informal networks of friends and neighbors to membership in more formal organizations. In an examination of these features, I asked a series of yes/no questions to elicit whether or not study participants participated in Vancouver’s political, economic, and socio-cultural sectors. Essentially, I tallied these yes/no responses in an effort to establish the level of integration for each participant. Participants who responded with more “yeses”

were deemed to be more integrated than participants who responded negatively to questions. I also asked follow-up questions as necessary to try to elicit more information regarding barriers to integration or how participants felt about the integration process. Further, I allowed time for the learners to share any additional information that they felt willing to share. Information regarding each participant's level of integration will be discussed below.

In addition to specific information regarding which realms study participants did and did not participate in, interviews with the study participants also revealed the use of certain "cultural bridging" strategies in their attempts to integrate. The paragraphs to follow will illustrate the detailed use (or attempt to use) certain strategies in three participants' attempts to "break into" life in Canada. Before that discussion, however, I will describe Lina, the participant with the highest level of English speaking proficiency and, as I alluded to above, the lowest level of integration. Interestingly, this is the one participant who did not identify any attempts to "bridge" cultures.

Lina

Again, as the research question specifically sought to explore the connection between participants' speaking and listening performance on their end-of-term assessments and levels of integration, I will begin with a description of Lina, the study participant with the highest level of English speaking proficiency (m=8.18) and second highest level of English listening proficiency (m=7.04). This individual also immigrated to Vancouver with the highest education level (Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine) and the most extensive previous work experience (16 years as a traditional Chinese medical doctor). In addition to her impressive professional skills, Lina also has several

years experience assessing the Mandarin pronunciation skills of foreign students at Beijing University. (This fact will become more interesting as I describe the next three participants.) Lina unequivocally answered, “No,” to all questions related to her participation in Canadian socio-economic, cultural, or political spheres. I asked questions including, “Do you participate in any social groups (i.e. church, clubs, classes) in which the majority of participants speak English?”; “Have you found employment that you deem to be satisfactory?”; “Do you participate in the political process in Vancouver (i.e. voting, attending political party meetings, etc.)”?

Upon garnering that Lina showed no signs of integration, I wrongly predicted that the reason may be related to difficulties in accessing the “right” information. For example, I thought that perhaps she did not know where to go to begin a job search in Canada. It later became clear that accessing information was not at all a determinant in her lack of integration, however, as Lina replied, “It’s easy to find information and resources here. From the beginning I could access information about programs and services such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S., MOSAIC, community centers, and volunteer jobs.” (Note: S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and MOSAIC are non-profit organizations with the purpose of providing a variety of services to immigrants.) She continued, “The government spends lots of money on different programs for immigrants. They waste money.” Lina also asserted that immigration companies in China gave misleading information about the economic conditions in Canada and that “Few people find good work here.” At this point, I turned our discussion specifically to the issue of her profession and whether or not she would attempt to become a Chinese Medical Doctor in Vancouver. “My degree won’t be recognized here. It’s a waste of time and money.”

It is again worth noting that as I explained in Chapter Two, individuals form self-efficacy beliefs in part through vicarious or “observational” experiences. In the realm of immigrant newcomers, vicarious experience occurs through individuals’ identification of the successes or failures of immigrants before them. Lina had not yet had her credentials evaluated, but through the use of her language, “My credentials won’t be recognized” seemed certain of the outcome. It is unclear whether or not she had actually encountered an individual who had failed to have his/her credentials recognized or if these beliefs were based on an illusion of the system.

When I asked Lina to reflect on her experiences as a newcomer and where the difficulties associated with integration lay, she had a clearly formulated answer. “The CIC needs to change its policy. It needs to consider age. It can’t accept older people.” (CIC refers to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the agency responsible for processing immigration applications and creating immigration policies.) This is a factor that I had hitherto not personally considered nor encountered in my research, so I asked Lina to further explain. “You know Chinese culture. We have a responsibility to take care of our parents. Canadians don’t understand that. They can’t accept that I must return home many times a year to help my mother. I am 43. My mother is old - too old to come here so I must return there.” I asked Lina, “Do you feel that your responsibilities in China prevent you from pursuing a career or establishing stronger ties here?” She replied, “Of course.” I continued, “And do you envision this changing?” “No.” I then asked the obvious question “Is there a point in which you would make the decision to return to China permanently?” “Maybe.”

Lina felt as though one of the inherent differences between Chinese and Canadian culture (the role of filial piety) was a barrier to her integration here. Through the language that she chose (using the word “home” to describe China), it is also clear that she has an acute awareness of where she stands – outside the mainstream culture.

The remaining research participants similarly identified “gaps” that exist between traditional Chinese and the mainstream culture. In juxtaposition, however, these participants were able to bridge those cultural gaps in ways that were often very methodological. I will preface the information in the remainder of the section by stating that while the next three participants appear to be satisfied with their levels of integration, none are currently working in the professional fields from whence they came. This is worth noting in light of the statistic that I reported on in Chapter One which states 60% of Chinese immigrants face employment situations that are worse here than in China (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006).

Gloria

Gloria, in particular, stands in contrast to Lina as she shows the highest level of integration. Gloria possesses the second highest English speaking proficiency (following Lina) and rated marginally higher than Lina in English listening proficiency. Gloria holds a Master’s of Business Administration and worked for 10 years as an investment banker. While showing the highest level of integration, she has also been in Vancouver the shortest amount of time. Gloria immigrated to Vancouver knowing no-one, and she stated that she had no preconceived notions that the transition into life in Canada would be easy.

As with Lina, I began by asking Gloria in what capacities she participated in various socio-economic, political, and cultural realms of Vancouver. Gloria reported participating in a number of different organizations. She is a member of a Bible study group, she participates in various groups at her daughter's school, and she is a volunteer in a large community center. In addition, she reported routinely taking fitness classes at a community center (in English) and is a regular library patron (using the library to access English books). Unlike Lina, Gloria seemed to have a well developed "plan of action" for *how* to integrate which stemmed from her initial observation of the Chinese immigrant experience in Vancouver. Gloria stated that she had been surprised at the overall lack of integration in Vancouver. Her observations, as you may recall, echo that of my own which are included in Chapter One. Gloria quickly established that it would be sink or swim for her. "There was no-one to help me, and I knew that from the beginning, making friends and getting involved would be an important part of creating a fulfilling life here." When asked whether or not she felt that participation in the larger English speaking society was a precursor to her fulfillment, she was emphatic, "It is necessary."

To this end, Gloria spent her first several weeks in Vancouver specifically seeking out groups that would enable her to straddle both Chinese and English speaking communities. For example, she reports choosing a church which holds Bible study in both Chinese and English. As she planned, she initially participated in the Chinese group and after becoming familiar with some of the members of the church community, switched to the English speaking group. She likewise chose to join a community center that has regular programs for both groups. Again, she made her initial contact as a Chinese speaking participant (Chinese dance), but later switched to English speaking

fitness classes. Within 2 months, Gloria had carved out her own niche as becoming a “cultural bridge”. Gloria first volunteered to help the community center translate materials between Chinese and English to help members of both groups access each others’ classes. Her current plan is that she will later move into the senior service portion of the community center and volunteer with the elderly (most of whom are English speaking).

In addition, she is heavily involved at her daughter’s high school as the head volunteer coordinator. She made her initial contacts there through The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program which provides professional settlement services to immigrants and their families. Again, she initially volunteered to translate materials and serve as a liaison between English speaking teachers and Mandarin speaking parents. She now helps to organize events on a more general level and routinely serves on committees with native English speaking parents.

Gloria is continuing to use what I have dubbed the “cultural bridge strategy” as she now turns her attention toward breaking into the socio-economic realm. She has opted to shelve her previous professional skills and is currently taking a Mandarin teacher training course. She hopes to teach Mandarin to native-English speakers in a community college setting or perhaps open her own classes.

While I cannot link Gloria’s success directly to her self-efficacy beliefs, we can assume that her successes in integrating thus far (participating in English bible group, serving as a head volunteer, etc.) are serving as mastery experiences for her. Recall that mastery experiences, one’s previous successes or failures, have the most influence of the four sources of self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). It would appear that Gloria is

experiencing a positive feedback loop. She sets a goal related to integrating into Vancouver, achieves that goal, and sets another, even bigger one. In addition to self-efficacy, other psychological factors could also play a role in Gloria's success. Her teacher described her as "very driven" and "super positive." These are the very traits that were cited as necessary for immigrants to possess in a study that linked volition to the ability to integrate (Amundson as cited in Hansen, 2010).

Joey

Similar to Gloria, Joey shared with me how she broke into Vancouver's socio-economic realm. Her plan also involved using the Chinese community in Vancouver as a stepping stone to the community at large. In fact, while there are real differences in the information provided by these two participants, they also share a striking similarity. Joey detailed how upon arriving in Vancouver she first sought employment at T&T which is a Chinese owned grocery store where Mandarin and Cantonese are regularly spoken by staff and customers. This decision was due, in part, to her needing a fairly immediate income but also because she knew that she had a chance of being hired there and that experience there would, in turn, help to build her resume such that she could later cross the bridge so to speak into an English speaking environment. Six months later she was hired at Costco. She earns nearly \$10 more per hour than she did at T&T. This income jump is important to Joey because an increase in wages has allowed her enroll in an early childhood licensure program. This is the same field in which she was employed in China. Joey's long term goal includes opening a Chinese immersion daycare for native English speaking children. When asked why she had decided to try and cater to native English

speaking families versus Chinese speaking families or even a mix, Joey responded, “I can earn more money.”

It is worth noting that besides her early childhood licensure program and place of employment, Joey has no reported contact with native English speakers. She attributes her lack of volunteering, participation in political groups, etc. not to her language proficiency but, instead, to a lack of time. “Between school, English classes, work, and my family, I have no time for anything else.” Unlike Gloria, Joey has two small children at home and also routinely cares for her husband’s elderly parents who live in Vancouver.

Julie

Julie, the owner of a chain of retail stores in China, chose to immigrate to Vancouver for her daughter’s education, for a change in lifestyle, and with the goal of replicating her business successes in China. Like Joey, she seems to be quite motivated to integrate socio-economically but reports participation in no other realms. Julie states, “I have always had the goal of having a business in another country.” Almost immediately, she learned, however, that “being an entrepreneur in China is not the same thing as it is in Canada. Everything is different, in fact. The laws. Finding a store to rent. It’s harder than I thought.” Julie has since clarified for herself where the gap between her expectation and the reality of her situation lies. Of immense insight to me, she was able to clearly articulate, “It isn’t just about the language. I need to improve my English, of course, but English isn’t enough to help me communicate.” In other words, Julie believes that better understanding the mainstream culture will help her to integrate in ways that English speaking and listening proficiency alone fail to do. Julie is now creating her own social bridge by waitressing. “I want to waitress because, although it’s hard work, I can talk to

different kinds of people all day. I work in North Vancouver because there aren't many Chinese there. I talk to Canadians, Iranians, East Indians. Lots of different people." It isn't the explicit English speaking and listening practice that Julie cited was important; it was the communication – the ability to get to know people that she felt was notable.

As previously stated, the research findings of the qualitative portion of this study did not show a direct correlation between high English speaking and listening proficiency and increased levels of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres. While language proficiency is undoubtedly a factor, research findings broadly suggest that immigrant newcomers are complex human beings who deal with settlement issues in different ways.

It could certainly be argued that if Gloria possessed higher English skills, she would rely less on her bridging strategies and could jump right into the English Bible study; perhaps if Joey had higher English self-efficacy, she would have directly applied to Costco. Lina might truly show higher instances of integration if she weren't traveling back and forth to China several times a year, and Julie may have already opened her store if she was able to better grasp business English and legalese. Then again, maybe not. I conclude that English speaking and listening performance is an important variable in facilitating the integration of Chinese immigrant newcomers, but it's certainly not the only variable.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reported the results of the statistical data analysis in answering the first two research questions of the current study. In addition, it reported the results of the qualitative research in answering the third research question of the current study.

Pearson's Product Moment correlations showed the existence of a significant positive correlation between English speaking self-efficacy beliefs and the English speaking performance of Chinese immigrant newcomers. Likewise, results showed the existence of a significant positive correlation between English listening self-efficacy beliefs and the English listening performance of Chinese immigrant newcomers. Moreover, these correlations were equally distributed among individuals who possessed medium degrees of self-efficacy as they were among individuals that possessed high degrees of self-efficaciousness. The semi-guided interviews did not depict a clear relationship between the English speaking and listening proficiency levels and integration levels of the participants. Chapter Five will include a discussion of the significant findings from both the survey questionnaires as well as the semi-guided interviews, the implications of these findings, and the limitations of this study. In addition, recommendations for further study are included.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Much research in second/foreign language acquisition has been devoted to exploring the relationship between motivation and language learning success. Certainly, most teachers, if asked to identify dominant influences on language learning, would cite motivational factors somewhere on their lists, and Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978), suggest that the most successful language learners display a host of characteristics, most of them clearly linked to motivation. The majority of this research, however, has been centered on integrative/instrumental motivations while neglecting to explore other motivational theories, such as Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1986). Despite the fact that innumerable studies across a host of fields have established a positive correlation between high self-efficacy beliefs and performance, the self-efficacy construct has received comparably little attention in the field of second language learning (Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Nicholls, 1979; Pajares, 1997).

Accordingly, this study was conducted to ascertain the correlation between English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and the English speaking and listening performance of Chinese immigrant newcomers. I sought to establish whether or not there was a correlation between high English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs and high English speaking and listening performance on end-of-term language assessments. In addition, this study explored whether or not high English speaking and listening proficiency correlated with increased instances of integration into Vancouver's socio-economic, political, and cultural realms on the part of Chinese immigrant

newcomers. The latter question was investigated, in part, because the study took place in Vancouver, Canada. Chinese immigrants currently comprise approximately 19% of the population in Vancouver, yet researchers have predicted that because of their difficulty integrating into the larger society, Vancouver will witness a large scale emigration of Chinese immigrants (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006). This, as I stated in Chapter One, has implications for Canada as a whole because immigration has been projected to be the only source of population growth by 2030. (Immigration critical to Canadian population growth: census, 2007). In addition to this practical consideration, on a more human level, I strongly believe that the newcomer experience need not be as unsatisfactory as it has been for so very many individuals.

Significant Findings from the Survey Questionnaires

Results of this study support the hypothesized role of self-efficacy in Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986). Significant positive correlations between English speaking self-efficacy beliefs and English speaking performance along with English listening self-efficacy beliefs and English performance were established. In general, participants who indicated strong beliefs in their abilities to perform certain speaking and listening tasks were subsequently able to perform those tasks to a high degree. Similarly, students who expressed medium level self-efficacy beliefs performed specified tasks to a mid-range level. Given this positive correlation, the language programs serving Chinese immigrant newcomers should employ pedagogic strategies that foster the development of high self-efficacy. I illustrate how this might be accomplished in the Implications section below.

Findings from the Semi-guided Interviews

Through the use of semi-guided interviews, this study also established that while language proficiency does seem to be a factor in an immigrant's ability to integrate into mainstream culture, it is not the only factor. Upon completion of the semi-guided interviews, I was reminded of some of the initial material that I had read on Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Although this was included in Chapter Two, it is worth mentioning again here. Basic tenets of Bandura's self-efficacy theory include triadic reciprocity and reciprocal determinism which suggest that 1) human behavior is influenced by multiple determinants including personal, behavioral, and environmental factors, and 2) these three factors all have an interactive effect on one another and together influence one's course of action. In essence, "what people think, believe and feel affects how they behave" (1986, p. 5). The interviews definitely revealed that what participants believed influenced their courses of action, but they also revealed that personal and environmental factors were equally important. For example, Julie, one of the study participants, was unable to start a business here because she felt as though she didn't understand the culture and Canadian business customs well enough. In this case, it wasn't Julie's beliefs regarding her English speaking and listening abilities that were holding her back, it was other personal and environmental factors. As such, I would say that the research participants in this study would benefit as much from a program that had an explicitly established framework for teaching and learning about culture as they would from one whose primary goal is to build proficiency in the four language skills – at least in the early stages of their transitions into Vancouver. Julie intuitively knows what

professionals in the field of ESL have long known; communicative competence is more than simply linguistic competence (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995). Language programs could attempt to build learners' self-efficacy beliefs as well as try to diminish some of the personal and environmental factors that serve as barriers to integration. The section below will detail some ways that I feel language programs could be improved.

Implications

No instructional program can provide learners with all the necessary linguistic and cultural knowledge that they need to fully function in the target culture. As such, it is unfair to place the onerous task of facilitating Chinese immigrant newcomers' integration solely on either the Canadian government or nonprofit agencies such as the site of this study. That said, certain improvements could be made to current instructional programs. Consciously working toward helping learners develop a heightened sense of English self-efficacy could, in turn, help raise learners' performance levels. In essence, as I will explain below, this could help Chinese immigrants better help themselves through the process of integration.

Recall that self-efficacy beliefs are formed by a number of factors including, for example, observational experiences and that this is primarily what Lina seemed to lack. This factor, as detailed in Chapter Two, involves learners forming beliefs about themselves based on their interactions with other individuals in similar situations. As such, one could imagine a program in which a Chinese immigrant with higher level English skills is paired with a student with lower level English skills. The lower level student's self-efficacy could be raised through his/her pairing with those who are already employed or active in various community settings. Likewise, while the study site

routinely organizes field trips for its language learners, these field trips could be more focused in their scope which would help to provide learners with the positive “mastery experiences” that Bandura also included in his self-efficacy theory. Instead of simply going to the library to see where English books are shelved, for example, learners could be required to complete a specific task such as asking the librarian for help in locating an English dictionary. If this dialogue had been practiced ahead of time, learners would have a greater chance at successful completion of the task. This “mastery experience,” as Bandura suggests, could lead to a heightened sense of self-efficacy in this domain.

The way in which raising self-efficacy beliefs specifically helps learners to help themselves is through the notion that highly self-efficacious individuals put forth more effort in the areas in which they believe that they can succeed. Drawing on the above example, if a teacher adequately prepares learners to complete a specific task at the library and then later takes the learners to the library where they experience success, learners’ self-efficacy beliefs regarding their ability to complete this task could rise. Learners will then be more apt to try again, thus creating a positive feedback loop. Through this, the learner’s self-efficacy beliefs rise, their language performance levels rise, and, presumably, so does the learners’ overall comfort level and willingness to interact with the target culture.

Realizing there is trepidation amongst immigrant newcomers to wholly jump into mainstream culture, which was disclosed through the semi-guided interview portion of this research study, government agencies and private industries could also better assist newcomers in their transition. Three of the four research subjects initially participated in Chinese-speaking groups and organizations using these as a stepping stone to English

speaking ones. In addition to bearing evidence that learners would benefit from programs that help build cultural understanding and develop socio-linguistic competencies, this also implies that the government could successfully reach more Chinese immigrants by meeting them where they are at so to speak. Funding could be appropriated to agencies and groups that routinely work with members of both the mainstream and Chinese communities. The importance of this was similarly recognized by the Lilian To, the late Chief Executive Officer of the non-profit based organization, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Guo (2004), in a paper detailing the history of S.U.C.C.E.S.S., quoted To as stating the following:

Our clients should not be focusing only on the immigrant population; our clients should also be the mainstream. We have to have the employers be willing to hire immigrants before they can even get a job. We have to work with employers and help them understand where the immigrants come from, and help them to understand they can contribute to their businesses. So our target now is not only immigrants, but also mainstream communities. I have to say that there is still a lot of work we have to do with mainstream organizations, mainstream communities, or mainstream employers. (1995 p.18)

This approach could better meet the overall and long term needs of Chinese immigrant newcomers. Organizations and places of employment that specifically adopt a multicultural identity would benefit all Vancouverites, from those who have recently arrived to those who have called Vancouver home for decades. Canada's national identity is based, in part, on a well-supported, multi-cultural social structure. In opposition to the US model of the "melting pot," Canadians have chosen the "mosaic" ideal of cultural

diversity. To truly achieve this ideal, all individuals need to become more aware and knowledgeable of the differences between cultural groups in Vancouver.

Limitations of the Current Study

This study is the first attempt to explore the role that English speaking and listening self-efficacy beliefs assumes in the English speaking and listening performance of Chinese immigrant newcomers to Vancouver, Canada. While the findings of this study are noteworthy, the following limitations should be taken into account.

Firstly, the small sample size and limited scope of this research (participants were all from one single class) prevent findings from being generalized to Chinese immigrant newcomers at large. To ensure close correspondence between the self-efficacy measure and prediction targets (English speaking and listening performance), the participants were taken from a single class. Because course content, materials, and performance measures vary across courses and teachers, it would not have been possible to conduct a uniform study using participants from different classes and, as such, this limitation seems unavoidable.

On a similar vein, in Chapter Four I noted that the disparity between the “high” and “medium” proficiency levels of the research participants were minimal. Again, because I took my participants from one single class, this was unavoidable. A clearer understanding of the relationship between language proficiency and integration would be garnered through examining learners of a more expansive range, however.

Secondly, the nature of self-reporting makes it difficult to ensure complete validity. Both the survey questionnaires as well as the semi-guided interviews required participants to openly and honestly share beliefs regarding their language proficiency and

integration in Vancouver. Lastly, this study is focused on establishing the correlational relationship between the variables under study. As such, causal inferences should not be implied.

How this Study Fills Research Gaps

This study extends previous research in several ways. As mentioned in Chapter Two, there has been a general lack of self-efficacy and second language learning research, and of the research that has been conducted, I cited several theoretical and methodological flaws. In this study, I was conscientious in my concern for accuracy in the creation of self-efficacy assessments. Listening and speaking survey questionnaires closely reflected the actual listening and speaking tasks that study participants were required to complete. In addition, participants were only asked to rate themselves on their ability to perform tasks with which they were already familiar. This was an important feature of the study as it meant that only self-efficacy for performance as opposed to self-efficacy for learning was being assessed. Attention to close correspondence between self-efficacy questionnaires and tasks and ensuring that participants were already familiar with the performance tasks enhance the predictive value of learners' self-efficacy on their performance. As such, this study extends previous research findings.

In addition, this study has widened the scope of research that has been conducted on the link between language and integration amongst immigrant newcomers. This study looked specifically at Vancouver's largest visible minority – Chinese – and specifically at the two language skills that this group often struggles with – speaking and listening. Whereas previous studies (Boyd, 1999; Boyd & Cao, 2009, Statistics Canada, 2007) only

looked at economic integration, this study looked for evidence of integration into socio-cultural, socio-economic, and political realms.

Recommendations for Further Study

Self-efficacy has been shown by many to be a predictor of performance (Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Nicholls, 1979; Pajares, 1997). The findings of this study corroborate those findings; however, as included in the Limitations section, the research sample was taken from one single class. As such, replications of this research across different settings and with more participants are recommended. In addition, this study utilized a Pearson Product Moment Correlation design. A multiple regression or path analysis design could be used to establish a greater understanding of self-efficacy and the different variables associated with self-efficacy and performance. Regression analysis is often used to analyze complex problems due to its ability to capture multiple relationships simultaneously. For example, this study revealed that there was a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and language performance, but didn't clearly show that the language performance piece correlated with integration. Other studies have shown a correlation between language performance and integration, however. As such, a multiple regression analysis could be done to better assess the ways that all of these variables correlate with one another. A sample for how this could be done is illustrated in Figure 5.1.

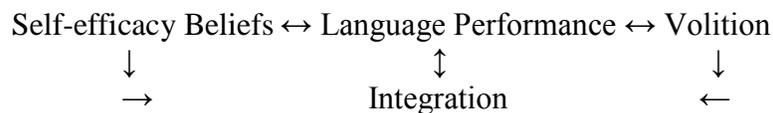


Figure 5.1. Sample for how a multiple path regression analysis could be conducted

In Figure 5.1, we see that language performance has a direct correlation with integration. (That relationship could be tested using a correlational design such as I did in the current study.) Through a multiple path regression, self-efficacy could be shown to have two effects – one on an individual’s performance, and another on his/her integration. It is worth mentioning that I believe in this case self-efficacy beliefs would actually encompass self-efficacy for *performance* as well as self-efficacy for *learning*. These differences are explained in detail in Chapter Two. Briefly, however, self-efficacy for performance refers to belief regarding the ability to complete a specific task (such as the speaking and listening tasks that were included in my questionnaires). Self-efficacy for learning refers to one’s belief in his/her capabilities to learn or do something on a more general level. A self-efficacy for learning question in this study could be stated, “Rate your beliefs regarding your ability to successfully participate in a social group with English speaking members.” I did not ask participants in this study questions related to their beliefs in their ability to integrate. However, I believe that the participants who displayed higher levels of integration would have indicated that they believed that they could do certain things prior to actually attempting them. For example, Joey approached finding employment here in a very methodological way. First, she applied for a job in Chinese grocery store because she knew that that would help her to build her resume and later allow her to transition into an English speaking work environment. That leads me to believe that if Joey had initially been asked “Do you believe that you have the ability to find work in an English speaking environment?” she would have answered in the affirmative, “Yes, I do and I have a plan for doing so.”

Conversely, through the language that Lina used in our interview, “My credentials won’t be recognized”, she would likely exhibit low self-efficacy if asked the same question. As such, this is a question worthy of future exploration. Similarly, in Figure 5.1 we see that volition could have an indirect effect on integration through its relationship with language performance as well as a direct effect. As opposed to the correlational research design that I used, a regression analysis could better explain the magnitude of the direct and indirect effects of several different variables at once.

In regard to the qualitative portion of this study and the issue of integration, a larger sample size of learners with varying degrees of English language proficiency is recommended. In addition, a longitudinal study in which learners’ integration could be tracked alongside their language improvements would be insightful. Further research on the role of volition is also recommended. Volition is somewhat similar to self-efficacy although, whereas self-efficacy refers to an “I believe I can” mentality; volition refers to an “I will” mentality (Bandura, 1997). As included in Chapter Two, another study found that “a can-do attitude is the single biggest factor in a newcomer’s ability to achieve career success in Canada – more influential than a person’s professional skills, education and previous work experience” (Amundson as cited in Hansen, 2010). As such, this is another area worthy of further exploration.

Lastly, the role that culture assumes in self-efficacy beliefs could be explored in greater depth. In Chapter Two, I discussed how culture affects the development of individuals’ self-efficacy beliefs and in Chapter Four suggested that culture could have had an effect on how the study participants rated themselves in terms of their self-efficacy beliefs. As such, studies which examine the self-efficacy beliefs of individuals

from collectivist cultures merit further investigation. Future studies could consider how cultural factors affect both the source as well as the consequences of self-efficacy beliefs.

Personal Significance

In Canada, English language services play a key role in helping Chinese immigrant newcomers transition into life here. English speaking and listening skills enhance newcomers' capacity to obtain the information needed to successfully function in society. This information could include everything from tenant rights, to social programs, to employment opportunities, and health care. As an English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) instructor, I have long known that through helping my students improve their stock of knowledge, I am increasing their likelihood of successful integration. Upon completion of this research, however, I am ever more aware of the interconnectedness and complexities associated with Canadian language and immigration policies, the instructional methods that I employ in the classroom, and what my students ultimately take with them out of my classroom and into the world. Again, while I am aware of the role that I play in my students' lives on an individual basis, I had not hitherto considered its larger implications. Now, as a resident of Canada, I have also come to view my work as an investment in the social, political, and economic spheres of Canadian society.

Conclusion

Neither Bandura's theory of self-efficacy nor this study purports that people can perform given tasks simply because they believe they can, without prerequisite skills. This study suggests, rather, that an individual's perceived confidence positively corresponds to his/her subsequent behavior. For the Chinese immigrant, these behaviors

could include the confidence to seek out additional language instruction, apply for a job in an English speaking environment, or participate in a social group – all behaviors that would aid in a more successful transition to life in Canada. Successful integration into Vancouver depends on an individual's ability to realize his/her goals. However, facilitating individuals' abilities to realize their goals is not solely amenable to Canadian policy makers. On a smaller scale, within our English language classrooms, language instructors have the ability to promote positive self-efficacy beliefs. These, in turn, can ameliorate some of the barriers encountered by Chinese immigrants as they attempt to make a new life for themselves here in Canada. As a Canadian resident, as a language teacher, and as a friend and neighbor to immigrant newcomers, I believe the benefits could be far-reaching.

APPENDIX A: ENGLISH SPEAKING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

ENGLISH SPEAKING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

Please rate how certain you are that you can do the things discussed below by writing the appropriate number. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be identified by name.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not at all sure (No Chance)				Moderately Sure				Completely Sure			

1. Discuss things that could strengthen a parent/child relationship. _____
2. Discuss things that could weaken a parent/child relationship. _____
3. Discuss ways to discipline children. _____
4. Verbally state your opinion regarding what the key features of a successful family are. _____
5. Discuss ways to find a partner (marriage partner). _____
6. Discuss the concept of arranged marriage. _____
7. Discuss the concept of intercultural marriage. _____
8. Give a 5 minute presentation on one aspect of marriage. _____
9. Verbally state your opinions regarding what makes a successful marriage. _____
10. Verbally state your opinions regarding divorce. _____
11. Tell a detailed 3-7 minute story about a personal health care experience. _____
12. Give verbal information related to how to access health care services. _____
13. Give verbal information related to when to access health care services. _____

14. Verbally make a health care related appointment. _____
15. Verbally change a health care related appointment giving an appropriate reason. _____
16. Discuss traditional versus alternative medicine. _____
17. Verbally describe an emergency in a 911 call. _____
18. Verbally relate a narrative to a listener about what happened in a health care emergency. _____
19. Verbally ask for strategies that may help you learn English. _____
20. Verbally give informal advice about English learning strategies. _____
21. Discuss differences in learning style. _____
22. Verbally describe differences between the public education system in Vancouver and that of your home country. _____

APPENDIX B: ENGLISH LISTENING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

ENGLISH LISTENING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

Please use the following scale to answer the following statements. There are no right or wrong answers. Circle the number that best describes how sure you are that you can perform each of the English listening skills below. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be identified by name.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all sure (No Chance)				Moderately Sure						Completely Sure

A. In terms of the topic “Family and Relationships” how sure are you that you can listen to and understand

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. The main ideas of a short daily conversation about parenting between two English speakers | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 2. The details of a short daily conversation about parenting between two English speakers. | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 3. A short conversation about parenting between two English speakers by making inferences | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 4. The main ideas of a short monologue about parenting given by an English speaker | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 5. The details of a short monologue about parenting given by an English speaker | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 6. A short monologue about parenting given by an English speaker | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1. The main ideas of a short daily conversation about dating and marriage between two English speakers | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 2. The details of a short daily conversation | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

about dating and marriage between two English speakers.

3. A short conversation about dating and marriage between two English speakers by making inferences 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. The main ideas of a short monologue about dating and marriage given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. The details of a short monologue about dating and marriage given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. A short monologue about dating and marriage given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

B. In terms of the topic “the BC Health Care System” how sure are you that you can listen to and understand

7. The main ideas of a short daily conversation about the BC Health Care System between two English speakers 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. The details of a short daily conversation about the BC Health Care System between two English speakers. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. A short conversation about the BC Health Care System between two English speakers by making inferences 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. The main ideas of a short monologue about personal health care experiences given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. The details of a short monologue about personal health care experiences given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. A short monologue about personal health care experiences given by an English speaker by making inferences 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

C. In terms of the topic “Education and Learning” how sure are you that you can listen to and understand

13. The main ideas of a short daily conversation about strategies for learning English between two English speakers 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. The details of a short daily conversation about strategies for learning English between two English speakers. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. A short conversation about strategies for learning English between two English speakers by making inferences 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16. The main ideas of a short monologue about education and learning given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
17. The details of a short monologue about education and learning given by an English speaker 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
18. A short monologue about education and learning given by an English speaker by making inferences 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX C
SEMI-GUIDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Semi-guided Interview Questions

Questions related to economic integration

- 1) Are you currently employed in Vancouver?
- 2) If you are not currently employed, why? Do you feel that your English language skills are a factor in your unemployment?
- 3) Was the job search in Canada what you expected it would be? Did you feel adequately prepared to find a job here?
- 4) Are you working in the same sector/field that you were in China?
- 5) If working, are you currently satisfied with your place of employment? If not, what is the cause of your dissatisfaction?
- 6) Do the majority of your co-workers speak English? Are you required to speak English at your place of employment?
- 7) Do you feel as though you are paid a salary that is commensurate with your previous educational/work experience?
- 8) What are your future plans related to working in Vancouver? Do you plan on remaining at your current place of employment? Returning to school? Seeking alternative employment opportunities?
- 9) How do you feel your place of employment affects your overall quality of life in Canada?

Questions related to social integration

- 1) Are you currently a member of any social organization, for example, a church or community group, in which the majority of members speak English? Chinese?

- 2) If you are not a member of any group in which the majority of members speak English, why?
- 3) In what capacity are you involved in these organizations?
- 4) How did you become involved in these organizations? For example, have you been introduced to any organizations through Mosaic? By friends or co-workers?
- 5) Has it been easy to find and join organizations of interest?
- 6) Would you like to participate in any social groups that you are not currently participating in?
- 7) What would facilitate your participation in this group?
- 8) Do you feel that your English language skills affect your participation in social organizations?
- 9) How do you feel your participation in social organization affects your overall quality of life in Canada?

Questions related to political integration

- 1) Are you involved in Canadian political processes? For example, do you vote or affiliate yourself with a particular political party in Canada?
- 2) Do you feel as though you understand the political process in Canada?
- 3) If you are involved, do you access political material through English or Chinese?
- 4) Do you feel that your English language skills affect your participation in the political process?
- 5) How do you feel your participation in Canadian political processes affects your overall quality of life in Canada?

Overall

- 1) Are you satisfied with your level of integration into Canadian society?
- 2) If not, can you identify anything that could help foster your integration? For example, could Mosaic help you in any capacity?
- 3) To what degree do you feel your English language skills are related to your integration?
- 4) Do you feel at home in Vancouver?

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