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Some Immigrant Language Lessons from Canada and Germany*

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Abstract: Germany and Canada stand at polar ends of the linguistic debate over language integration and ascension to citizenship. German naturalization, as of January 2000, contains an explicit language criterion for naturalization. Canada, in effect, does not base immigrant entry or citizenship on knowledge of either of its official languages. Acquisition of a second language in Canada is voluntary and largely dependent on labour market incentives. Which system of second language acquisition — the statist German system or the *laissez faire* Canadian model — provides the best milieu for immigrant second language acquisition? This paper makes a comparative review of Canadian and German legal and educational programs to answer this question.

Introduction

With almost 7.5 million foreigners currently residing in Germany and comprising 10 percent of the German population, Germany could be classified as a country shaped by immigration. This influx into the Federal Republic increased greatly during the late 1980s and early 1990s as two immigrant streams — non-German foreigners and ethnic Germans — immigrated to Germany. Even though these two arrival groups — *Ausländer* (foreigners) and *Aussiedler* (ethnic Germans) — are treated very differently under German law, ultimately their integration problems are similar. In particular, there often exists a substantial language barrier between native Germans and both *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer*. These linguistic problems have, in turn, created social as well as economic tensions between German nationals and Germany's immigrant population.

In recognition of this problem, a language test was instituted in 1996 for ethnic Germans applying for the status of *Spätaussiedler*.⁵ The discussion, which arose over assessing *Spätaussiedler*, in turn has been extended to a possible universal language test for all foreigners prior to applying for German citizenship. This has resulted in a reformed German naturalization law (circa January 1, 2000), which now for the first time includes a language criterion for naturalization.

Many issues arose at the first stage of the debate given the disparate goals of the pre-1999 fragmentary German language policy. In the case of *Aussiedler*, a language test initially established their German ethnic status and later was mainly employed as a gate-keeping tool. Recently, government financing of language and integration courses after *Aussiedler* arrival in Germany has been reduced. Nevertheless, circa 2000, language is still seen by German policymakers as a means of integrating previous *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer* arrivals into German society and the labour market.

The implementation of this language test leads to several key questions. For example, should a uniform German language standard be applied to both *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer*?

⁵ After 1992, the term *Aussiedler* was changed to *Spätaussiedler*.

Furthermore, should this possibly uniform standard be made obligatory for every adult immigrant, regardless of age, or should there be exemptions for older family members? Moreover, should the test be applied at the point of entry or later - during the process of social integration or prior to naturalization? Also, how much language is enough? Should the standard be uniform or responsive to individuals needs? And what about labour market issues? Should the language standard match the entry point in the labour market? Finally, how can a language policy applicable to either established immigrants or “newcomers” be implemented without causing new social tension?

German politicians and society in general have only now (circa 2000) begun to pose these crucial questions. To date, it has been acknowledged that some German language skills are essential at all levels of society, but no comprehensive strategy has been developed which addresses these issues.

Any discussion of the outlined issues must recognize that German policy precludes certain answers to our posed questions. For example, given that Germany does not officially recruit immigrants (*"Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland."*), then a selection process with prior language assessment is not possible. Thus, the current linguistic debate is intrinsically tied to the more fundamental discussion over the need for German immigration legislation.

In contrast, Canada has been actively recruiting immigrants for over a century, and since 1911 under explicit immigration legislation. Canada's modern immigration policy, which dates from 1967, selects immigrants regardless of their linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, ascension to Canadian citizenship only requires a limited knowledge of one of Canada's two official languages. Thus, given Canada's immigrant model, which does not emphasize language, we ask: “what lessons does Canada's laissez-faire immigrant language policy yield?” The answer to this question is the primary focus of this study. We next turn to our comparative analysis beginning with an historical overview.

A. Canadian Immigration Policy – Post 1945³

Canada has traditionally used immigration as an engine of economic and population growth. Between the 1890s and 1920s, Canada actively recruited farmers and farm workers to help settle the western part of the country. To maintain a homogeneous culture, Canada's immigration policy targeted immigrants from Britain, the United States and later north-western Europe, and limited the need for language training.

This rather exclusive and racist immigration policy was maintained until after WWII when labour shortages increased the demand for foreign labour. As immigration from Britain and the United States began to decrease, Canada sought immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. Despite this change in focus, restrictions against Asian immigrants remained.³⁴ A major shift in this attitude occurred in 1951, when the Canadian government introduced “small but symbolically important quotas for its non-white Asian Commonwealth partners, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon.” The 1911 Immigration Act was officially revised in 1952, placing a greater emphasis on family reunification by widening the provisions for sponsorship rights.⁵ The result of this policy revision was a large increase in the pool of skilled and semi-skilled labour, which supplied the resource, construction, and manufacturing sectors (Green 1996, 16). This large new immigrant inflow in conjunction with an economic downturn in the 1960s led to a major immigration policy shift in 1962 when all independent applicants were evaluated “on the basis of individual skills, or, more precisely, Canadian market needs” (Chiswick 1992, 33). Again, language skills were not an issue; however, it was not specified which skills were needed, and the vagueness of the directive left discretionary power in the hands of immigration officers, including informal language assessment.

³ This section provides only a rudimentary review of Canada's immigration policy. For a more detailed account, see Green and Green (1996) or Chiswick (1992).

⁴ This can be seen in a statement given by Prime Minister Mackenzie King before the House of Commons in 1947: “...*There will, I am sure, be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population. Large-scale immigration from the Orient would change the fundamental composition of the Canadian population...*” (Green 1996, 13).

⁵ Restrictions on Asian immigrants even in the family reunification category remained in place though. These and all other racist features of the 1952 Immigration Act were not removed until 1967.

This vagueness in assessment led to the introduction of the “points system” in 1967. This “points system” assessed applicants according to objective criteria such as age, education, work experience, and language. This was the first explicit use of language skills as a selection criterion. Applicants now had to obtain a total of at least 50 points, of which a maximum of 10 points could be earned by knowledge of one or both of the official languages. This emphasis on human capital characteristics, including language, now biased immigration selection towards highly trained immigrants and effectively eliminated all preferences for specific national groups.

The result was a “new immigration wave” (Simmons 1990, 141) and after 1968, Canada’s immigrant origin composition changed drastically (cf. Table 1). Prior to 1968, immigrants from Europe and the United States to Canada comprised almost three-quarters of all Canadian immigrants. By 1991–96 the immigrant inflow from Europe and the United States had dwindled to less than one-quarter. In contrast, immigrant levels from Asia, Africa and Latin America increased dramatically. Immigration levels from Asia grew from 13 percent (1968) to 57 percent (1996). Immigration levels from the Caribbean increased from 5.5 percent to over 13 percent of the total between 1968 and 1986, but then declined back to their original levels in the 1990s. Latin American immigrants constituted less than 1 percent of all immigrants in 1968, but in 1986 they had jumped to almost 9 percent. Lastly, Africa sent less than 4 percent of all immigrants in 1968, but by 1996 the proportion had almost doubled to 7.3 percent.

Table 1: Distribution of New Immigrants by Source Region

SOURCE REGION	1968 (% of total immigration)	1986 (% of total immigration)	1991-1996 (% of total immigration)
Europe & USA	73.7	29.4	21.8
<i>Asia</i>	13.2	41.8	57
<i>Caribbean</i>	5.5	13.5	5.5
<i>Latin America</i>	0.9	8.8	7.3
<i>Africa</i>	3.8	5.4	7.3
<i>Other</i>	2.9	1.3	1

Source: Computed from Canadian Census data, various editions (get catalogue numbers - CHIEKO)

The 1978 Immigration Act introduced for the first time a yearly quota and defined specific goals for immigration including meeting Canadian economic and demographic needs, family reunification, and honouring Canada's humanitarian refugee obligations. It has been argued that "the 1978 Immigration Act substantially altered the entry gateways to Canada since during the 1968–76 period (under the 1953 Immigration Act) over 70 percent of immigrants were screened in the economic or independent class. This percent dropped under the 1978 Immigration Act at first below 30 percent (1975–82) and then to about 14 percent of the total flow by the mid-1980s."⁶ This rapid decline in the economic entry class was in no small part due to the fact that the yearly quota was an overall quota that did not distinguish between the different types of immigrants (family, refugee, or economic class). Thus, when economic immigrants were not available, Canadian officials simply expanded the number of family class entrants.

The system was once again revised in the 1990s to increase the number of economic immigrants and their qualifications. Thus, circa 2000, to enter Canada as an economic immigrant, one had to accumulate at least 70 points out of a total of 107. The points were

distributed as follows. A maximum of 15 points is given for language — a maximum of 9 points for knowledge of one of the official languages, and a maximum of 6 points for knowledge of the other official language. Thus, if an individual speaks and writes both English and French fluently, 15 points will be awarded. The language knowledge is self-assessed by the applicant. It is important to note that it is not mandatory to score any points in this language category in order to qualify for landed immigrant status, but it facilitates the achievement of the required number of points. In addition, a number of applicants are interviewed to test their claim of language ability. These interviews are conducted in English or French by locally hired staff.⁷ Moreover, language also indirectly enters the assessment process as a secondary criterion when language is again used as a measure to assess the applicants' ability to integrate into Canada.

Examiners assess an applicant's language ability according to an assessment guide, which ensures a level of nominal consistency across interviews. Table 2 reproduces the main features of this guide.

Table 2: Language Assessment Guide

Skill/Level	Speak	Read	Write
Fluently:	The applicant speaks and understands oral communication with approximately the same ease as that of an articulate native speaker.	The applicant reads and understands texts of a general or job specific nature, including technical instructions.	The applicant writes proficiently in any context.
Well:	The applicant is able to comprehend and to communicate effectively on a range of general topics.	The applicant is able to comprehend almost all documents of a general, non-abstract nature.	The applicant is able to write a basic report or summary relevant to their education, work, or social situation.
With Difficulty:	The applicant is able to communicate only in a very limited way.	The applicant is able to read and comprehend only short, familiar, or memorized text.	The applicant is able to write only a few learned words or sentences of a familiar nature.

⁶ DeVoretz and Laryea (1997), *Canadian Immigration Experience: Any Lessons for Europe?*, IZA Discussion Paper No. 59, p.8.

⁷ Personal interview by Don DeVoretz with Lynda Joyce, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, May 24, 1999.

Not at all:	The applicant is unable to understand and respond appropriately to spoken communication.	The applicant shows no understanding of the written word.	The applicant is unable to express any message in writing.
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Source: CIC Overseas Processing Manual, Internal Document, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The Citizenship and Immigration (hereafter CIC) publication, *Canada's Overseas Processing Manual* furthermore states that “[while] language ability would normally have been assessed during an interview, other factors may be considered, including: study or work experience in an English or French speaking country; work experience with an English or French organization; and evidence of language courses. The potential to function in the intended occupation should be part of the assessment.” Currently, about 95 percent of successful applicants in the skilled worker category possess knowledge of an official language. Dissatisfaction with this procedure has led to a proposed alternative method of testing language ability. Under this proposal, rather than waiting for an interview, applicants could take an officially recognized language test, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), in their home country and send in the results with their application. The interview would be waived if the test score were satisfactory. The cost of the TOEFL would be borne by the applicant and will vary by country due to local operating expenses. For example, Germany currently has four permanent TOEFL test centres (Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich) and two temporary test centres (Düsseldorf and Freiburg). The cost of the TOEFL generally is US\$100 or the equivalent in local currency.⁸

In sum, Canada's immigration policy has changed dramatically over the last thirty years from primarily a points-based economic assessment program (1967–73) to a family reunification admission policy (1980s) to a current balanced economic and family admissions immigration policy. As Canada has been changed by both the type and country source of immigrants, its language component in the selection process has increased in importance. It is

⁸ To find out more details about the TOEFL, contact your nearest centre or go to <http://www.toefl.org>

now recognized by Canadian policy that immigrants fluent in one (or both) of the official languages facilitates social integration and insures a more successful economic outcome.

B. Canada's Citizenship Act and Language Requirements

Although immigration to Canada is not a new phenomenon, becoming a Canadian citizen is. Even though Canada came into existence in 1867, its inhabitants were still regarded as British subjects until 1947. Furthermore, before 1914, the "Naturalization Act," also known as the "Local Act," required all male foreigners to "apply to a court of competent jurisdiction in the area of their residence and to satisfy the court that they possessed all the qualifications necessary for the acquisition of British subject status."⁹ However, this status was retained only while staying within Canada. Once outside the country, the British subject status would be lost. Women, until 1932, automatically took on the nationality of their husbands regardless of their original nationality, i.e.; a female British subject became a foreigner if she married a foreigner. The geographic restriction was eliminated in 1915. Now, once a person acquired British subject status, s/he would retain it even after leaving Canada.

On January 1, 1947, the first Canadian Citizenship Act was enacted. It was the first nationality statute that explicitly defined a British subject residing in Canada as a "Canadian citizen." Citizenship under the first Canadian Citizenship Act was deemed a "privilege granted at ministerial discretion."¹⁰ It was not until the second Citizenship Act, effective February 15, 1977, that citizenship became a right of anyone meeting the requirements set out in the law. All discriminatory undertones regarding ethnicity, sex, marital status, or nationality were removed. The 1977 Citizenship Act is in effect today, although major changes were made in 1999. To become a Canadian citizen, circa 2000, a person must be of legal age (18 years or older) and must have been physically present in Canada for three of the previous six years.¹¹ The new residency requirement, which requires physical presence in Canada, has the potential indirect effect of improving the immigrants' language skills prior to citizenship.

⁹ Citizenship and Immigration, internal documents.

¹⁰ CIC, internal documents

In addition to the age and residency requirements, applicants for citizenship must have a minimum of English (or French) oral language skill, and possess an adequate knowledge of Canada and of the associated responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.¹² The latter two are tested by means of a written — in an official language — multiple choice citizenship test. It is important to note that the citizenship tests are developed outside of Government by the Centre for Applied Language Studies at Carleton University and are based on a study guide called *A Look at Canada*. A copy of this study guide is sent to all applicants with their application acknowledgement letter. All of the questions and answers on the citizenship tests are taken from *A Look at Canada*. The questions are phrased in plain and simple English (or French) and use vocabulary and key words from that document.

The rationale underlying this test is the development of minimum language skills and a working knowledge of Canada in order to facilitate integration and identification with Canadian values. To meet the language requirement, applicants must demonstrate an understanding of basic spoken statements/questions in either official language and be able to respond orally or in writing. To demonstrate a knowledge of Canada, applicants must have a general understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as well as Canadian history, geography, culture and government structure.” This requirement is waived for applicants 60 years of age and older.

Presently, a citizenship judge evaluates the results of the citizenship test to determine whether an applicant meets the language and knowledge requirements. If an applicant is unable to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of one of the official languages or of Canada through this written assessment test, applicants are normally invited to an oral interview with a citizenship judge. This opportunity is provided because literacy is not an official requirement of citizenship, and therefore applicants cannot be punished for possible literacy deficiencies.

After the residency requirement of three years is met, applications for citizenship are permitted and then take 10–12 months to process from the time of application to acceptance

¹¹ Prior to November 25, 1999, residency was satisfied by owning residential property or a business.

¹² CIC, *A Look at Canada*, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1999, p. 4.

or rejection. The citizenship test is administered approximately 8 to 9 months after receipt of an application. The applicant is given at least two weeks advance notice of the test date. Immediately prior to the test, CIC staff will verify information on the applicant's file by asking the applicant questions to corroborate the basic personal information indicated on the application form, e.g., *What is your address? How long have you been in Canada? Show me your driver's licence.* This initial interview is meant to both verify the applicant's identity and carry out a preliminary assessment of the applicant's listening and speaking skills. After the interview, the applicant takes the written test in one of the official languages.¹³ If the interview indicates that the applicant does not comprehend basic questions and/or has not received a pass mark on the written citizenship test following the interview, this information is relayed to the citizenship judge for consideration and the applicant is referred to the judge for a formal hearing.

The judge will then further assess the applicant for official language and/or knowledge proficiency. The knowledge-related questions are based on *A Look at Canada*. Questions regarding language proficiency are based on everyday occurrences. For example, the applicant must answer questions such as: *"What kind of work do you do? Are you married? Do you have any children?"*¹⁴

According to CIC officials, "approximately 95 percent of applicants meet the language and knowledge requirements. Ninety percent pass the written test (without the assistance of an interpreter) and a further five percent pass the oral interview with a citizenship judge"¹⁵ with the help of an interpreter.¹⁶ If the applicant is successful, the application is approved and the applicant is notified by mail about the ceremony date, usually after two-four weeks. If,

¹³ Applicants are given 30 minutes to complete the test, but usually complete it in less time.

¹⁴ The applicant is not required to speak in grammatically correct fashion; s/he only must demonstrate comprehension of the questions asked.

¹⁵ Personal communication with Susan Nicholson, CIC, Ottawa. September 22, 1999.

¹⁶ However, the interpreter can only be used for the knowledge assessment, *not* the language assessment. An interpreter is allowed since some applicants may not possess enough language skills to adequately respond to the more complicated knowledge questions.

however, the applicant fails the interview, his application is rejected. The applicant then has the right to appeal the judge's decision.

The delays in processing citizenship applications and the cost of the process under large immigration numbers in the 1990s has led CIC to a process of “ looking at a number of longer-term initiatives with the goal of improving the way CIC assesses applicants for language. In addition to developing a separate language test, the department is considering the use of core competency certificates as a mechanism for meeting both language and knowledge requirements without a test. Essentially, this would mean that clients would be able to submit, with a citizenship application, a document establishing that the person has already met the language and/or knowledge requirements.”¹⁷

C. Historical Development of Germany's Immigration Policy

As noted earlier, Germany, unlike Canada, does not officially consider itself an immigrant receiver. Therefore, Germany does not currently have an immigration act to regulate its immigration flows. Ironically though, Germany — due to its economic strength, social benefits and central location in Europe — has experienced a large influx of foreigners, especially during the first half of the last decade when up to 1.2 million foreigners entered Germany annually.

Still, these numbers represent only one portion of Germany's migrant inflow. Not included in this *Ausländer* or foreign entrant count is the increasing influx of ethnic Germans, or *Aussiedler*. *Aussiedler* are defined as ethnic Germans whose families lived in east or south-eastern Europe for generations (Russia, Romania) or were resettled to Poland during the Third Reich.

The history of the *Aussiedler* begins in the 18th century when a large number of Germans emigrated to Eastern Europe.¹⁸ These ethnic minorities became German citizens by

¹⁷ Personal communication with Susan Nicholson, CIC, Ottawa. September 22, 1999.

¹⁸ The following is based on Zimmermann, K. (1999). Ethnic German Migration Since 1989: Results and Perspectives. IZA Discussion Paper No. 50, p. 2-8.

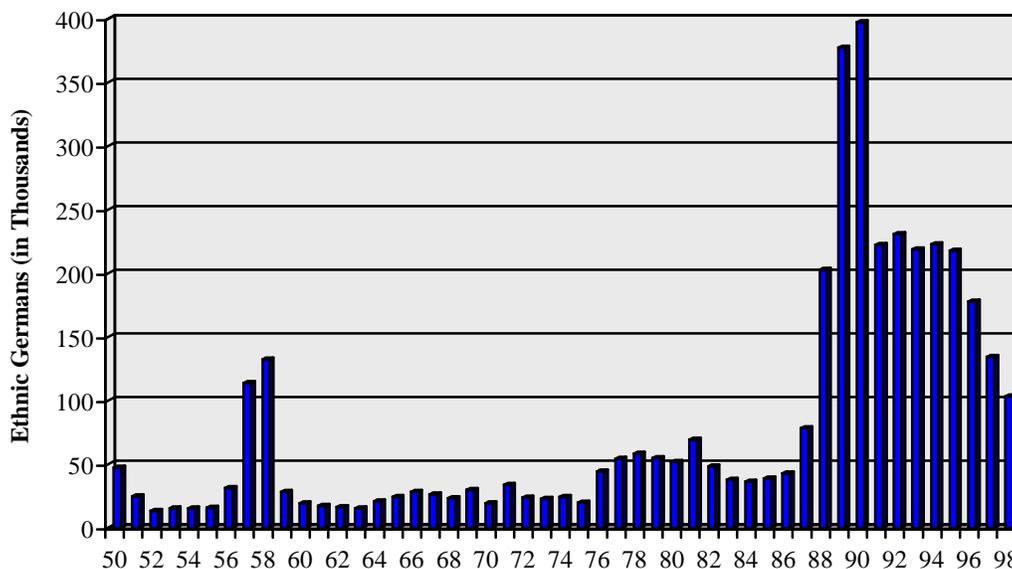
virtue of “Germanization” laws that originated under Bismarck in the late 19th century. After Germany’s defeat in World War I and territorial losses, many of those Germans became foreigners. Finally, Germany under the Third Reich expatriated Germans to its conquered eastern territories. At the end of World War II about 15 million German citizens became refugees or expellees. The first West German post-war census in 1950 revealed that almost 10 million expellees from the former German eastern territories now lived in Germany and made up nearly 20 percent of the population. From the 1950s on, Germany negotiated treaties with several of the applicable countries to allow a proportion of remaining ethnic Germans to migrate to Germany. As of circa 2000, however, hundreds of thousands of German natives and their descendants continue to live outside of reunified Germany. Their precise number can only be estimated and depends on the exact recognition criteria used. Article 116 of the German Constitution (*Grundgesetz*) still continues to award *Aussiedler* German citizenship after immigration to Germany (see Appendix A). The German expellee legislation, entitled *Bundesvertriebenen- und Flüchtlingsgesetz* (BVFG) covers the details for the recognition and admission of these immigrants. In general, it requires proof that the applicant has maintained a degree of “Germanness” via descent, language, and culture. The same law deals with government programs to support integration for ethnic Germans, such as low-interest loans and language courses.¹⁹

In the early 1990s, ethnic Germans became increasingly ghettoized in Germany. Newly arrived *Aussiedler* settled with earlier *Aussiedler*, among whom were friends or relatives. Although German policymakers recognized the short-term gains of forming networks among ethnic Germans, they also recognized the negative integration signal produced and the social tensions between *Aussiedler* and resident Germans. The legislative response to this development was the *Wohnortzuweisungsgesetz*, or “Assigned Place of Residence Act.” This law tied welfare payments to a particular place of residence that was assigned to every

¹⁹ The legal and social equalization of *Aussiedler* is regulated mainly by the following legislation, *Lastenausgleichsgesetz* (LAG, 1952), the *BVFG* (1953), and the *Garantiefond* (1954)

Aussiedler and this law resulted in a decentralization of ethnic Germans at the cost of their mobility.²⁰

Figure 1 Influx of *Aussiedler* into Germany 1950 - 1998



Sources: Statistisches Bundesamt, Bundesanstalt für Arbeit

In the absence of an official immigration act to control the number of new arrivals, *Aussiedler* numbers have fluctuated widely over the last twenty years (see Figure 1). On average, only 50,000 *Aussiedler* immigrated into the Federal Republic yearly prior to 1989. This yearly average rose to almost 400,000 in 1989 and 1990 as mobility restrictions were abandoned and the economic collapse of Eastern Europe occurred. By the mid-1990s, these numbers stabilized to 200,000 *Aussiedler* arrivals per year and by 1999, the numbers fell to less than 100,000. Three main reasons account for this decline in the *Aussiedler* flow. First, the screening practice has become stricter. Second, the German Parliament introduced a quota for ethnic Germans at the end of 1992. No more than 200,000 ethnic Germans (+/- 10%)

²⁰ The law may be removed in the near future if the influx of ethnic Germans remains at the same low level of some 100,000.

were allowed to arrive in Germany annually. This quota has been effective, although it is not formally recognized in law. Third, a qualifying language test was introduced in 1996 and is administered in the “home” country prior to arrival in Germany. This prior screening allowed a new de facto quota, which reduced the yearly allowable inflow to 100,000 *Spätaussiedler* in 1998.

Recent arrivals and departures of *Ausländer* or non-ethnic foreigners also dramatically fluctuated in the 1990s (See Table 3). In 1991–92 over 1 million net arrivals of *Ausländer* appeared in Germany largely from Yugoslavia, Poland and Romania. By 1997, *Ausländer* arrivals receded and more foreigners actually left Germany than entered. Several ad hoc reasons account for this net outflow of foreigners. First, the *Ausländer* law regulating the limited rights of foreigners in Germany was tightened. Also, new restrictions on the *Asylrecht* law (or right to asylum) within the German *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) reduced the entry rights of *Ausländer*.²¹ Finally, improved economic conditions in eastern and central European reduced the number of potential immigrants.

²¹ The policy toward asylum seekers underwent a sharp change in 1993. Refugees could no longer apply for asylum if they could have applied for asylum in a neighbouring country. At the same time, welfare support for asylum seekers was reduced.

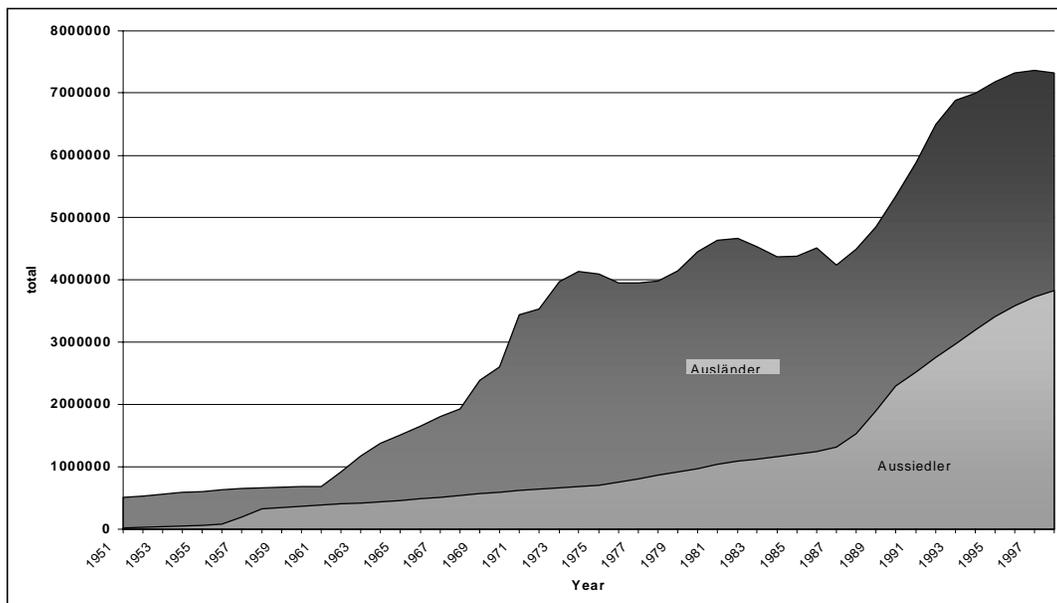
Table 3: Migration into and out of Germany 1991 to 1997

Country of Origin	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Inflow							
1. Greece	28,305	23,631	18,267	18,902	20,263	18,829	16,439
2. Italy	35,441	30,055	31,658	38,678	47,998	45,821	38,996
3. Yugoslavia 1)	221,034	382,763	278,650	153,888	130,712	71,303	31,227
Poland	128,387	131,726	75,117	78,646	87,238	77,405	71,214
Romania	61,413	109,816	81,606	31,380	24,814	17,069	14,247
Former Soviet Union	38,973	62,372	98,521	100,949	97,928	91,236	78,023
Turkey	81,901	80,568	67,778	63,946	73,592	73,224	55,981
Other countries	325,037	386,671	335,275	287,540	310,156	313,067	309,171
All countries	920,491	1,207,602	986,872	773,929	792,701	707,954	615,298
Outflow							
1. Greece	15,443	16,234	17,519	19,155	19,343	20,060	21,758
2. Italy	36,371	32,727	30,945	32,172	33,969	36,841	37,937
3. Yugoslavia 1)	52,957	129,494	112,285	115,105	86,154	85,041	44,479
Poland	115,325	109,542	101,755	65,758	70,694	71,661	70,171
Romania	30,208	51,864	101,863	43,996	25,159	16,620	13,558
Former Soviet Union	12,095	13,252	22,946	34,410	39,349	35,092	32,285
Turkey	36,134	40,316	46,286	46,363	43,221	43,534	45,978
Other countries	198,943	221,318	276,641	264,458	249,552	250,215	370,900
All countries	497,476	614,747	710,240	621,417	567,441	559,064	637,066
Net Migration							
1. Greece	12,862	7,397	748	-253	920	-1,231	-5,319
2. Italy	-930	-2,672	713	6,506	14,029	8,980	1,059
3. Yugoslavia 1)	168,077	253,269	166,365	38,783	44,558	-13,738	-13,252
Poland	13,062	22,184	-26,638	12,888	16,544	5,744	1,043
Romania	31,205	57,952	-20,257	-12,616	-345	449	689
Former Soviet Union	26,878	49,120	75,575	66,539	58,579	56,144	45,738
Turkey	45,767	40,252	21,492	17,583	30,371	29,690	10,003
Other countries	126,094	165,353	58,634	23,082	60,604	62,852	-61,729
All countries	423,015	592,855	276,632	152,512	225,260	148,890	-21,768

¹ Serbia and Montenegro

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt

Figure 2 summarizes the long-term trends in both (*Spät*) *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer* inflows from 1951–1998, and allows for several observations about the composition of the foreign-born stock in Germany.

Figure 2: Population of (*Spät*)*Aussiedler* and *Ausländer* in Germany 1951 – 1998

Sources: Statistisches Bundesamt, Bundesanstalt für Arbeit

First, many “German” foreigners have been in the country for more than a decade. In particular, there now exist second- and third-generation families of guest workers or *Anwerbeländer* program. Even given this second- and third-generation growth of guest worker progeny, the post–1990 arrivals of *Ausländer* and *Aussiedler* are now the majority of the foreign-born. Thus, the integration of foreigners will once again prove to be an important issue.

D. Confirmation of German Citizenship

Naturalization of foreigners

Unlike the absence of immigration legislation, Germany, in contrast, has a substantial legal history on rules for citizenship. The *Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz (RuStAG)* legislation initially regulated German citizenship status. Implemented in 1914, these statutes have undergone many changes, with crucial elements added in 2000. As of 1999, German citizenship could be obtained through birth (if one parent is German), through legitimization

(for offspring of unmarried parents) or through marriage to a German citizen. In addition under a legal statute named *Ausländergesetz*, claims for naturalization could be made after 15 years of residence if certain additional conditions (*Anspruchseinbürgerungen*) were met. As an adult applicant, these naturalization conditions included: an ability to conduct business in an unconstrained manner, no criminal record, stable accommodations, and the ability to be self-sustaining (including dependants). In addition, foreign youth could file a legal citizenship claim if they had stayed in Germany for at least eight years, six of them enrolled in a German school.

Until January 2000, German language skills were not a prerequisite for naturalization. Foreigners applying for expedited naturalization prior to 2000, (i.e. in some cases after ten years) were subject to a vaguely defined language assessment.

As noted earlier, the debate and political pressure generated by the post-1991 immigrant arrivals led to an amendment of the citizenship and naturalization law in 1999. The required minimum period of residence was now shortened from 15 to 8 years. Even more important, in addition to the descending principle (*jus sanguinis*) for citizenship, a place-of-birth principle (*jus soli*) was added. Now, children of foreign parents automatically qualify for German citizenship if one parent is born in Germany or has established permanent residence status in Germany (after 8 years). The parents' foreign citizenship can still be kept, however, descendants must give up one nationality before their twenty-third birthday to avoid permanent dual citizenship.

As for the *Anspruchseinbürgerungen*, proof of “sufficient” German language skills — together with a criterion of “loyalty to the constitution” — has been added as new criteria circa January 2000. On October 18, 2000, the formal language assessment criteria were published under § 86 in the *Verwaltungsvorschriften* (VwV). Essentially, proof of linguistic proficiency is either the acquisition of the Certificate in German (*Zertifikat Deutsch*), or equivalent language diplomas, attendance at a German school for at least four years, or the acquisition of a German school degree. The full text can be found in Appendix A.

Entry Application and granting of citizenship for Aussiedler

As noted earlier, during the Second World War “collective naturalizations” (*Sammeleinbürgerungen*) were undertaken in the occupied states, giving German citizenship status to “ethnic Germans” living in these regions. After the war, many ethnic Germans were subjected to discrimination, deportation, repression, and persecution. Ethnic Germans were stripped of their German citizenship status and forced to become nationals of their country of residence. This latter point gave rise to the *Bundesvertriebenengesetz* (BVFG law). Under the Federal Republic of Germany’s Grundgesetz or basic law, Article 116 (1) (see Appendix B) declared that the ethnic German population in those countries were “Germans without German citizenship.” This special status granted ethnic Germans the same rights as other German citizens, should they decide (or be allowed) to come to Germany.

To qualify as *Aussiedler* (after 1993: *Spätaussiedler*), the applicant had to provide evidence of German ethnic origin, as well as proof that s/he still identified with German culture through the continued use of the German language and by practising German traditions. If the application was approved, the applicant could apply for German citizenship without the customary waiting period of 15 years (since January 1, 2000, eight years) applicable to foreigners. The rationale for this reduced waiting period for *Aussiedler* is that they are not foreigners, but “displaced Germans.”

After 1996, a language test was instituted to verify the *Aussiedler's* ethnic affiliation. This test measured the applicant’s ability to conduct a simple conversation about familiar topics. It was a unique language test and it only applied to *Aussiedler*, not to other potential immigrants or foreigners applying for German citizenship.

The processing time from application to the issuance of the *Spätaussiedler* certification can be up to four years. The following is a chronological overview of the

procedure, which is divided into two parts: before and after the applicant's arrival in the Federal Republic of Germany.²²

Aussiedler Application Prior to Arrival

The applicant must apply either in person from his/her country of origin directly to the *Bundesverwaltungsamt (BVA)* in Cologne or through a German consulate or embassy in the country of origin. A third option open to the applicant is to apply through representatives (usually relatives) in Germany.

E. *Aussiedler* Language Tests

Given the large number of applicants and the ensuing debate over numbers, Germany introduced a language test in 1996 to more accurately assess the *Aussiedler* applicants' knowledge of German. The word *test* is slightly misleading, because it is not a test in the normal sense, but rather a hearing in which the applicant's status is assessed. The test is not repeatable since the purpose of the hearing is to assess whether the German language has been imparted to the candidate during his/her childhood (a requirement to qualify for *Aussiedler* status), not whether s/he learned German through course work. This language test is conducted locally either by employees of the *BVA* (in Russia and *Kazachstan*) or elsewhere by the German embassy or consulate.²³ After the test's introduction the *BVA* widely publicized crucial features of the language test. The importance of passing the language test for a successful application was emphasized, as was the fact that the test was mandatory for every primary applicant. The complete application procedure is, in fact, as follows. After the application is received, the *BVA* issues an invitation to take the language test to either the applicant or his/her representative in Germany. A one-month interval is allowed for the letter

²² This procedure is taken from material obtained from the *BVA* (as of July 1999) and personal interviews conducted with representatives of the *BVA* (August 9, 1999).

²³ Language tests have been conducted at the Rumanian and Polish embassies. Due to an increase in applicants from Russia and *Kazachstan*, the embassies alone could not cope with the volume of applications. Thus, representatives of the *BVA* were sent there to conduct the tests. It should be noted that the results of the language tests before 1996 were not officially recorded.

to arrive at its destination with a second one-month interval for the applicant to register with the German embassy.

Even given this seemingly inflexible application procedure, flexibility does arise in the form of alternative tests. There are, in fact, two types of tests: basic and qualified. The basic test is for only the primary applicant. However, other family members can take an optional so-called “qualified” test. The rationale behind this qualified test is simple. It is felt that language proficiency is an important ingredient in the integration process of *Aussiedler* and their families into German society. If the family as a whole speaks German well (i.e., better than required under the basic test), then the whole family can take the language test. If they pass the qualified test, the application procedure will be fast-tracked. Since the average processing period of an application is four years, the incentive to take and pass the qualified test is high. However, as Table 4 shows, the percentage of families passing the qualified test is not very high.

Table 4: Results of Language Tests for Spätaussiedler

	Basic Test	Qualified Test	Passed Basic Test, but Failed Qualified Test	Total
<u>1996</u>				
Tests conducted	5,629	2,567		8,196
Passed				
Number	3,901	1,386	+ 688	5,975
<i>in %</i>	69.3	54.0		72.9
Failed				
Number	1,728	1,181	- 688	2,221
<i>in %</i>	30.7	46.0		27.1
<u>1997</u>				
Tests conducted	46,727	10,583		57,236
Passed				
Number	29,610	4,176	+ 2,772	36,558
<i>in %</i>	62.9	39.5		63.9
Failed				
Number	17,043	6,407	- 2,772	21,678
<i>in %</i>	36.5	60.5		36.1
<u>1998</u>				
Tests conducted	51,607	7,322		58,929
Passed				
Number	30,064	1,888	+ 2,088	34,040
<i>in %</i>	58.3	25.8		57.8
Failed				
Number	21,543	5,434	- 2,088	24,889
<i>in %</i>	41.7	74.2		42.2
<u>1999 (as of 31.07.)</u>				
Tests conducted	12,918	2,017		14,935
Passed				
Number	7,141	431	+ 613	8,185
<i>in %</i>	55.3	21.4		54.8
Failed				
Number	5,777	1,586	- 613	6,750
<i>in %</i>	44.7	78.6		45.2

Source: Statistik Bundesverwaltungsamt Köln, Germany, as of 31.07.1999

The actual testing procedure is straightforward. Both tests are conducted orally. The examiner asks the applicant questions on familiar topics, taking into account that the

traditional German language is simple. Thus, the questions relate to everyday life situations (household, work, leisure, etc.) not to complex political or economic events. Since the applicants often speak an old German dialect, the applicant can choose to conduct the interview in this dialect. The examiners are specially trained in these old dialects.

The aim of the test is to assess whether simple communication is possible between the examiner and the applicant. The questions and their answers are recorded on standard forms. If communication is possible, the interview is cut short and the applicant immediately passes. If communication problems arise, the interview will be transcribed word by word. At this point, the test is divided into two parts. In the first part, the interview is recorded by the examiner and the form is then signed by the applicant. In the second part, the examiner comments on the interview and evaluates the applicant's language ability. This sheet is then signed only by the examiner and the interpreter, if the latter was necessary. If communication was possible, even if there were faults in the grammar, syntax and language flow, the applicant is given a passing grade. If no communication was possible and the applicant did not seem to understand much of what was asked, the result is a failing grade. If, however, the applicant was not able to speak coherently, but nonetheless seemed to understand the questions asked, the examiner would then ask questions about German customs observed in the applicant's home. This part of the interview would be conducted in a language that the applicant understood. If the examiner felt that German customs and traditions had been sufficiently upheld in the applicant's home to qualify under § 6 (2) BVFG, s/he could pass the applicant.²⁴

As Table 4 shows, the percentage of applicants passing the test has declined steadily since 1996. This, however, is most likely due to a "skimming" effect, i.e., those ethnic Germans who speak a great deal of German at home, most likely applied early and were previously processed.

²⁴ Because ethnic Germans were often severely disadvantaged or even persecuted in the countries they lived in, they were under pressure to assimilate to some degree. The most obvious sign of their origins would be their language, so parents often encouraged their children to speak the local language. In Poland, the use of German was actually forbidden for several decades after World War II. However, passive knowledge of the language often survived.

Screening the Successful Candidate

Depending on the results of the language test and the validity of documents, the *BVA* will either approve or refuse the application, or conduct a further investigation. If the *BVA* comes to a positive decision, it must still seek permission from a *Bundesland* (Province), before it can send out the final approval.

The *BVA* can only make a final decision after a *Bundesland* gives its consent (§28 (2) BVFG). Depending on family ties and the allocation key (§8 (3) BVFG), the application is forwarded to the *Bundesland* in question. The *Bundesland* then conducts its own investigation and arrives at a decision independently of the *BVA*. If both agencies agree, the final approval is sent to the candidate. If the *Bundesland* comes to a negative decision, then further investigation is required. If the second investigation does not result in a positive decision, the application is rejected. In this latter case, the applicant can appeal the decision.

After receipt of the formal approval, *Aufnahmebescheid*, applicants can use the document to obtain a visa at the embassy. With this visa, entry into Germany is secured. After the applicant's arrival in Germany, his/her documents are again examined by the initial contact agency in Germany. If the conditions are met, the applicant (and his/her accompanying family members, if applicable) is registered and has the option to "Germanize" his/her name, and is referred to the reception authority, *Landesaufnahmestelle*, in the *Bundesland* to which s/he is assigned. If the documents are found to be invalid, the applicant is deported.

After arrival at the pre-determined location, the documents are once again scrutinized and only then is the applicant finally issued the *Spätaussiedler* certificate. However, even at this last step the application can be rejected and the issuance of the *Spätaussiedler* certificate refused. In this case, the applicant can appeal the decision, but may still be deported if his/her visa is revoked.

Due to the complexity of this process, it is not surprising that only a limited number of applications can be processed every year. However, the decreasing number of applications,

which at least partly is due to the implementation of the language tests, will speed the process in the future.

F. Canada's Market-Based Language Tests and Instruction

After this detailed description of Germany's and Canada's formal state-based language assessment procedures, we now turn to Canada's informal valuation of immigrant language skills in the labour market. Table 5 provides an overview of Canadian immigrant language assessment from point of entry to citizenship in order to highlight the role of Canada's private sector in second language acquisition. This 3-by-3 matrix summarizes language assessment across linguistic attributes (linguistic, speaking, reading and writing) and by stage of integration in Canada. Upon entry as a landed immigrant, no formal language requirement is made, but language knowledge increases an applicant's chances of gaining landed immigrant status.

Table 5: Overview of Language Requirements in Different Phases of Immigrants' Residence in Canada

	Landed Immigrant*	On-the-Job (various degrees)	Citizenship
Listening/Speaking	No	Yes	No
Reading comprehension	No	Yes	Yes
Writing	No	Yes	No

* Information on language knowledge is provided through self-assessment. In most cases, the applicant is asked to a personal interview, where his claims are being tested orally. However, applicants have the option to forego the interview by writing the TOEFL test.

We will now concentrate on column 2 of Table 5 since in this category — on the job — a wide variety of more or less stringent language tests emerge. We provide case studies below which illustrate the rigour of language assessment in Canada's labour market.

It is argued here that even though minimal screening for official language skills exists at the point of entry, language knowledge is nevertheless continuously assessed throughout the individual's stay in Canada. In fact, the individual's success in the Canadian labour market is ultimately based on his/her degree of second language acquisition.

The self-regulating nature of Canada's assessment of second language acquisition is best seen in the highly qualified professions. In fact, some professions have instituted formal language tests for immigrants prior to their taking their professional qualification examinations. For example, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia requires foreign physicians to "speak, read and write English to the satisfaction of the registrar"²⁵ in order to be considered for certification in Canada. In addition, a partial requirement for licensure is the "satisfactory completion of two years of accredited and approved postgraduate training [of which one] of the two years must be in Canada if not a Canadian graduate."²⁶ Even though the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada does not have any formal language tests, "the postgraduate training positions do require English for acceptance to their programmes" some even require a minimum score of 600 on the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL).²⁷ Before international medical graduates can become a Licentiate (L.M.C.C.) s/he must pass the examinations of the Medical Council of Canada.²⁸ These licensure exams are conducted in English and French only, so that a sufficient knowledge of English and/or French is necessary to pass the tests.

Another example of the self-regulating language mechanism operating in Canada's labour market is the language skill assessment of foreign-trained nurses. In addition to meeting all professional requirements, the Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia requires all nurses, whose first language is not English, to provide evidence of fluency in English by passing both the TOEFL test with a minimum score of 550 as well as the Test of Spoken English (TSE) with a score of at least 50. Other provinces have similar regulations.

In order to practice pharmacy in Ontario, pharmacists "must have a Certificate of Registration (licence) as a Pharmacist from the Ontario College of Pharmacists." The Ontario College of Pharmacists further requires foreign-trained pharmacists to demonstrate that they

²⁵ College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (1997), *Rules Made under the Medical Practitioners Act*, Section 73. (c), p.1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Dr. D.H. Blackman, Deputy Registrar, College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia, personal correspondence, July 22, 1999.

²⁸ Being a Licentiate is a prerequisite for admission to the postgraduate training programme.

can understand, speak, and write either English or French. This can be proven by passing the TSE (50 or higher), TOEFL (580 or higher), and the Test of Written English (TWE - 5 or higher) or any other recognized test, like the CanTEST (at least 5 on each section - listening, reading, writing, speaking). For French language proficiency, the requirements are either the CanTEST (same minimum scores as English) or the Test of Business French (7 on oral, 2 on writing). Furthermore, applicants for the Certificate must complete “48 weeks of in-service training” and “pass the Pharmacy Examination Board of Canada (PEBC) Qualifying Examination and the Ontario College of Pharmacists Jurisprudence Examination.”²⁹ Both of these examinations are conducted in either English or French only.

In non-health related occupations, similar language requirements exist. For example, in order to practise law in Canada, the National Committee on Accreditation examines foreign-trained lawyers’ credentials and determines what further upgrading courses must be taken to obtain the Certificate of Qualification, a prerequisite for admission as a barrister or solicitor.

The Certificate testifies that the applicant has education and training equivalent to graduates from an approved Canadian law school. After obtaining the Certificate of Qualification, the applicant may proceed to a bar admission and articling program on the same basis as a graduate from an approved Canadian law school.³⁰

Depending on the language of instruction of the applicant’s law program at home, the committee may ask for evidence of demonstrated competence in English. Furthermore, the universities where the upgrades are taken always require the TOEFL test as proof of English proficiency.

Other examples of prior language assessment abound. The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia requires that all engineers pass the Professional Practice Examination prior to practising as professional engineers. This test is

²⁹ The above was taken from the 1997 Occupational Fact Sheet for Foreign Trained Pharmacists, <http://www.ocpharma.com/Registration/putprov.asp>

³⁰ National Committee on Accreditation, *Evaluation of Legal Credentials of Accreditation*, <http://www.flsc.ca/english/cm-nca.htm>

conducted only in English; therefore, foreign-trained engineers must possess a sufficient knowledge of English to pass the exam. Similar linguistic examination requirements are required in other Canadian provinces.

Licensing as a physiotherapist in Ontario requires, apart from professional prerequisites, fluency in either English or French. Minimum requirements are a TOEFL score of at least 585 (239 on the computer-based version), plus a TSE score of at least 45, or a minimum score of 85 on the *Michigan English Language Assessment Battery* (MELAB). Alternatively, an average score of at least 3 on the CanTEST (English or French) or at least 7 on the International Language Testing System (IELTS) can be submitted as proof of adequate language proficiency.

Finally, the College of Dietitians in Ontario requires all foreign-trained dietitians to prove English or French language fluency. The recognized testing instruments are the TOEFL test (550 or higher), or the TSE (5 or higher).

Even in occupations that do not require formal education, language proficiency is often tested. For example, to be licensed as a taxi driver in British Columbia, you must not only pass the *TaxiHost Basic Geography Test* and *TaxiHost* courses, possess a satisfactory driving record with no serious criminal record, but also “demonstrates an ability to *copy* printed information in English onto a form, present valid evidence of completing Grade 8 English or higher from any English-language school, OR pass the *TaxiHost English Proficiency Test*”³¹ with at least 78 percent on the oral communication, 71 percent on the pronunciation, and 67 percent on the reading portion of the test. The *TaxiHost English Proficiency Test* is an objective test to determine applicants’ English skills regardless of their country of origin. It was developed by Vancouver Community College for *TaxiHost* to ensure that taxi drivers possess the oral, listening, and speaking skills necessary to work proficiently in their profession.

³¹ TaxiHost Centre, *New Driver Application Procedures*, Justice Institute of B.C., last revised January 4, 1999, p.1.

In sum, even though the Canadian government does not mandate a knowledge of either official language to gain entry into Canada, the Canadian labour market imposes a rigorous language standard for many immigrants. This leads to the paradox that even though immigrant admission can be gained by the possession of skills and no language knowledge an immigrant still needs extensive language skills to practise his occupation after admission.

This myriad of language tests and the varying levels of second language competency required by individual professions has led to a debate over language standards. Canada has thus begun to develop a “benchmark” standard for levels of second language acquisition. This uniform evaluation system is an attempt to better inform the immigrant of his/her required language standard in his profession. This is a unique experiment, which we will discuss at length below.

G. Canada’s Language Benchmarks

Given the plethora of Canadian immigrants with inadequate language skills, the private sector has responded with a variety of *English (and French) as a Second Language (ESL/FSL)* teaching institutions. However, most private institutions do not follow a national standard.³² This gives rise to various problems including incomparability of graduates of different programmes and often an inaccurate assessment of an immigrant’s language ability for prospective employers.³³ Furthermore, in most ESL courses, “language assessment may be too limited in scope. . . to reflect the range and quality of language uses that are actually fundamental to participation in Canadian society.”³⁴ Finally, “while there is a general trend in education towards accountability and outcomes-based curricula, English as a second language (ESL) programs lack information and empirical validation that would provide evidence on the

³² Facilities include schools, colleges, community centres, universities, factories, offices, hotels, church basements, libraries, etc. Classes are full- or part-time and learners are very diverse in their cultural and educational backgrounds.

³³ Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Canadian Language Benchmarks: ESL for Adults and ESL for Literacy Learners, Publications*, p.1, <http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/newcomer/esl-e.html>.

³⁴ Cumming, quoted in Norton, B. and Stewart, G., *Accountability in language assessment: Challenges in a Canadian Trench*, unpublished, p.3.

standards of learning outcomes achieved.”³⁵ Keeping this observation in mind, the “development of the CLBA (Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment) can be seen as a response to the limitations of adult ESL instruction and assessment.”³⁶ The history of the development of Canadian Language Benchmarks is outlined below.

In 1991, the predecessor ministry to CIC stated in its annual report to Parliament its objective of improving language training for adult newcomers to Canada, including the improvement of language assessment methods. To achieve this goal, in 1993 the National Working Group on Language Benchmarks was established to oversee the design, field-testing and revision of a set of language benchmarks that would describe “a person’s ability to use the English language to accomplish a set of tasks.”³⁷ The National Working Group on Language Benchmarks included about 20 instructors, administrators and participants (learners) from across the country. The result of this combined effort was the development of a document called *Canadian Language Benchmarks: English as a Second Language for Adults* in 1995. The Canadian Language Benchmarks are “a set of twelve language proficiency standards, which can be used to describe the language skills of ESL students in three areas: speaking and listening, reading and writing.”³⁸ Each benchmark gives a description of competencies that a learner at that level should demonstrate. Each area outlines four competencies that are consistent across benchmarks (see Table 6).

Table 6: General Content of Canadian Language Benchmarks

Listening/Speaking	A. following and giving instructions B. social interaction C. exchanging information D. suasion (getting things done)
Reading	A. reading instructions

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Norton, B. and Stewart, G., *Accountability in language assessment: Challenges in a Canadian Trench*, unpublished, p.3

³⁷ Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Canadian Language Benchmarks: ESL for Adults and ESL for Literacy Learners, Publications*, p. 1, <http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/newcomer/esl-e.html>.

³⁸ Citizenship and Immigration Canada News Release, *Canadian Language Benchmarks unveiled*, Winnipeg, May 10, 1996 <http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca/english/press/96/9612-pre.html>

	B. reading formatted texts C. reading unformatted texts D. reading informational texts - analysis and information
Writing	A. information - copying, reproducing B. formatted text - filling out/constructing C. unformatted text describing, conveying messages D. expressing ideas - analysis and evaluation, persuasion

Source: Canadian Language Benchmarks, Introduction, and p.2. <http://language.ca/clb/intro.html>

After completion of this document, CIC contracted a Board of Education in Ontario, to develop assessment instruments consistent with the benchmark document. The project mandate was to develop:

- tasks that are benchmark compatible;
- tasks that can place learners on a continuum;
- tasks that are free from racial and cultural bias;
- tasks that are realistic and fair;
- separate instruments for listening/speaking; reading; and writing;
- both a placement and outcomes instrument;
- assessment instruments that can be administered and scored in an efficient, reliable, and cost-efficient way;
- assessment instruments that are accountable to the field of adult learning and teaching.³⁹

The resulting Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA) is a task-based test designed to “place adult language learners across the country in instructional programs appropriate for their level of proficiency in English and to assess learner progress within these programs.”⁴⁰ Test instruments were developed to place learners on benchmarks 1 to 8.⁴¹ A thorough description of the Canadian Language Benchmarks can be found on the Internet under <http://www.clba.com>.

ESL classes for children are universal in Canada’s school system and furthermore, through interaction with other children, immigrant children learn the dominant language spoken in their area — be it English or French — very quickly. This is not necessarily the case for adult immigrants. To facilitate adult immigrant social, economic, and cultural

³⁹ Norton & Steward, p.4.

⁴⁰ Op.Cit., p.2.

⁴¹ Test for Benchmarks 9 to 12 are planned.

integration into Canada, CIC implemented a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. LINC is provided by contracted service providers throughout the country. Service providers can be businesses, non-profit groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, educational institutions, individuals, or provincial, territorial or municipal governments.

To be eligible for LINC classes, the participant must be over 19, a permanent resident or a successful applicant for residency in Canada. A distinguishing feature of the LINC program from earlier government-sponsored language programs is that the individual applying for language training does not have to be in the labour market to be eligible for training. Before LINC, three main government-funded programs existed. These were the Language Training Program funded by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC), a language instruction programs funded by the Secretary of State (funding for these programs was terminated in 1989 federal budget), and the CEIC-funded Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP), a program designed to address the language needs of immigrants not destined for the labour force.

The Language Training Program, for example, was aimed only at labour force participants. To be eligible, individuals had to demonstrate that English or French language skills were essential to their employment. Individuals not destined to the labour market did not qualify under this program. The program funded by the Secretary of State was aimed at preparing immigrants for Canadian citizenship. It was taught in the total immersion approach (English or French only) by unilingual instructors. According to studies, this mode of instruction tended to make learners, in particular those with low literacy skills, uncomfortable and impeded learning. Furthermore, allegations were raised that the program was culturally insensitive and did not deal adequately with everyday situations.

The main objective of the current LINC program is to teach basic English or French language skills to adult immigrants as early as possible to facilitate integration. Language training is provided for up to three years. It is hoped that this time frame will allow the learner to meet family, employment, and other obligations that require knowledge of an official language. In order to insure access to the LINC programs, students are allowed to continue

to receive public assistance, child-minding and transportation if necessary to insure class attendance.

LINC courses employ uniform national training standards and consist of three components. First, the client's current language skill level is assessed by an individual using the benchmarks (CLBA) discussed above. In addition, the assessor recommends the language training provider that best suits the client's needs. However, this recommendation is not binding. When service providers apply for funding to CIC, they are required to inform CIC about all aspects of their operation, including related services available to the clients, like childcare, wheelchair accessibility, etc.

The second component is the language training itself. To ensure a uniform quality of language training nationally, learners' progress should be measured using the noted benchmarks (CLBA). LINC providers must be qualified to teach even learners assessed at Stage 1 of the CLB.

The third component of LINC programs is "to improve and assist with the delivery of both language training and assessment within the LINC Program."⁴² This task requires the examination of the linguistic training needs of local immigrant groups and evaluating the effectiveness of the LINC programs with recommendations on how to improve deficiencies.

After this extensive survey of Canada's private sector cum government-subsidized language training sector, we turn to the German publicly dominated language instruction system. The relative efficacy of these two models is a crucial point to consider later when evaluating the two countries' systems.

H. German Language Training

The German government funds language-training courses for both *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer*. The goals of these courses are to facilitate economic and labour market integration to improve social contacts, and to increase political and cultural participation. Funding for the two entry

⁴²Fact Sheet, *Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)*, CIC, November 1997, p.5.

groups is governed by different agencies. Language training for *Aussiedler* in Germany is funded by the Ministry of Family, Seniors, Women and Youth (*Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend - BMFSFJ*), the Ministry of Work and Social Order (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung - BMA*), and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology (*Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie - BMBF*). Furthermore, *Aussiedler* are given the opportunity to refresh or improve their German language proficiency while still residing in the former Soviet Union and *Kazachstan* through language courses funded by the Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt - AA*) and the Interior Ministry (*Bundesministerium des Innern - BMI*).

Government-funded language training for *Ausländer* is provided only in Germany and is funded by the Ministry of Work and Social Order (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung - BMA*). The following section will give a brief overview of the services provided and the perceived effectiveness of these programs.

Aussiedler language training

In 1998, the federal government spent a total of DM 450 million (ca. \$360 million Cdn.) on language training programs for *Aussiedler*. Several different funding schemes exist and are outlined below.

Language training offered by the German government to residents in the former Soviet Union and *Kazachstan* is primarily geared to induce ethnic Germans to stay there rather than to migrate to Germany. Furthermore, it is intended to strengthen the German language in these regions by allowing interested nationals of these countries to participate in German language courses. The hope is that this training will strengthen intercultural exchanges and improve acceptance of the remaining ethnic Germans in the former Soviet Union and *Kazachstan*. For those ethnic Germans who decide to migrate to Germany, the language courses are a means of refreshing and/or improving their German language skills, thereby facilitating integration once they arrive in Germany. It is estimated that currently about 1

million ethnic Germans and their relatives live in the former Soviet Union and about 300,000 in *Kazachstan*.⁴³

The *Auswärtige Amt* or AA sponsors several German language courses for *Aussiedler*. The three most prominent are courses provided at the German embassy in *Kazachstan*, courses and work groups of the Society for Germanness Abroad (*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* - VDA), as well as a series of other more indirect measures. The goal of these courses, according to the Council of Germans in *Kazachstan*, is to strengthen the German identity of those who remain in *Kazachstan*, provide a linguistic basis for those who leave for Germany, and aid in the decision making of those who are considering emigrating. The courses are free to participants, who may take up to three courses of 160 hours each. At the end of each course, a test is administered consisting of written and oral parts. In 1998, the AA spent about DM 2.1 million (ca. \$1.68 Cdn. million) on these courses. For 1998, 750 courses were planned with about 15,000 participants.

German courses in *Kazachstan* and the former Soviet Union are also offered through the *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (VDA). The VDA has offered “integrated language courses” in *Kazachstan* and the former Soviet Union since 1993. In these courses, participants not only attend structured language classes but also learn and improve their German through community activities like cooking, dancing, and choir practice. The main goal of these activities is to maintain the German language and culture in the former Soviet Union and *Kazachstan*. Apart from ethnic Germans, nationals of the regions can also participate, and indeed, the latter make up about 50% of all participants. Language courses are 40 hours long stretched over three months. In extreme cases, four consecutive courses (4x40 hours) can be taken. The “work groups” usually entail 32 hours a month. At the end of the language courses, a language test is administered.

Between 1993 and 1997, the AA spent about DM 1.13 million (ca. \$904,000 Cdn.) on 185 language courses in *Kazachstan*, 1,222 language courses in Russia and 2,501 work groups in both countries. Participation numbers were 16,957, 29,924, and 2,897 respectively.

⁴³ Dormann, F. et al. *Sprachförderung von Spätaussiedlern*, 1998, p.26.

Language courses in the former Soviet Union and *Kazachstan* are often hindered by a shortage of teaching materials, facilities, as well as qualified teachers. Therefore, the AA provides funding and training opportunities for teachers to address these shortages.

The *Bundesministerium des Innern (BMI)* also funds language training for family members of the ethnic German minorities in the former Soviet Union. The underlying goal is to provide an incentive to stay in the region by strengthening the German identity and unity between ethnic Germans of the region. Language courses comprise only part of the programs offered. Furthermore, the *BMI* establishes meeting centres (*Begegnungsstätten*) where ethnic Germans and interested nationals can meet and contribute to a German-Russian cultural and linguistic exchange. These measures, called *Breitenarbeitsprogramme*, have attracted about 125,000 persons since their inception in 1996. The language courses are free and generally accessible to everyone, but at least a sizeable fraction of the participants must be ethnic Germans. Up to now, the courses comprised 80 hours of instruction spread over three months, with a planned expansion to 160 hours. In contrast to the courses discussed previously, the language courses of the *Breitenarbeitsprogramme* do not require a language test at the end of the course. Rather, a certificate of participation is issued.

In sum, even though the scope of these language-training programs is extensive, there exists no information on their effectiveness. This lack of assessment is partly due to the fact that language training in the sending regions is intended to keep ethnic Germans from migrating. However, there is also no information on whether this language training aids ethnic Germans when they do apply for *Aussiedler* status.

As mentioned earlier, language training for *Aussiedler* in Germany is funded by several different federal ministries: the *Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung (BMA)*, the *Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ)*, and the *Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie (BMBF)*. They are more structured and the conditions are more stringent than in language courses conducted in the sending regions.

Language training for more mature *Aussiedler* is provided by the *Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung (BMA)* through the Ministry of Labour (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit - BA*) in their regional unemployment offices. These courses are geared to meet the needs of the local labour market. The courses are fully funded for six months, including transportation and childcare costs to a maximum of DM 120.(ca. \$96.- Cdn.). Table 7 reports enrolment relative to arrivals for the 1991-97 period. As can be seen, the percentage of arriving *Spätaussiedler* who entered language courses remained relatively steady (around 50%), which indicates a continued state commitment to this program.

Table 7: Entries of *Spätaussiedler* in German language courses 1991-1997

Year	Arriving <i>Spätaussiedler</i>	Entries	Percentage
1991	221,995	118,733	53.5 %
1992	230,565	109,359	47.4 %
1993	218,888	121,900	55.7 %
1994	222,591	120,139	54.0 %
1995	217,898	107,478	49.3 %
1996	177,751	89,774	50.5 %
1997	134,419	77,515	57.7 %
1991-1997	1,424,107	744,898	52.3 %

Source: Social Consult, 1998

The language courses sponsored by the *BMA* are full-time and require attendance 5 days a week for 35 hours per week. The standards of these courses are maintained by using qualified second-language instructors, prior assessment and regular monitoring of progress through tests, midterms, and final exams. A participant has the opportunity to leave the course early, especially to start work, if s/he has demonstrated an adequate knowledge of German. To ensure a minimum standard in the courses, service providers co-operate closely with the Ministry of Culture (responsible for education) regarding the curriculum and use of appropriate teaching aids.

The *BMFSFJ* or *Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend* provides language training to integrate young *Spätaussiedler* into German society. Funding for this purpose is provided by the *Garantiefond*, a guaranteed fund. The *Garantiefond* is

broken down into two components: High school- and Occupational sectors (*Schul- und Berufsbildungsbereich - SB*), and the University Sector (*Hochschulbereich - H*).

Language courses under *GF-SB* or *Garantiefonds Schul- und Berufsbildungsbereich* are specifically designed for young *Spätaussiedler* as well as young foreigners (under 27 years of age) with or without a high school degree, whose knowledge of the German language is deemed insufficient to pursue further education. The goal of these language courses is to provide enough language training to enable these young people to pursue further educational or occupational training, or to achieve a German high school diploma. Depending on the student's future educational aspirations, the course ranges from 10 months to 12 months, 40 hours per week. Student's progress is monitored through midterm and final exams. The funding for tuition ranges from DM 630.- (ca. \$504 Cdn.) to DM 820.- (ca. \$656 Cdn.) per month. Furthermore, in extreme cases, tutoring or boarding school may be funded if it is deemed necessary to the successful social integration of the youth. The maximum duration for funding for any individual is 30 months with a cessation in funding 60 months after arrival in Germany. In 1997, 71,886 individuals were sponsored under *GF-SB*, 96 percent of which were *Spätaussiedler*.

Refugee and language training for young (under 30) *Spätaussiedler* who want to attend University is provided by the *Garantiefonds Hochschulbereich (GF-H)*. The goal of these language courses under this scheme is to enable the participant to obtain university qualification. The duration of this course is generally 6 months, 32 hours per week. Before entering the course, participants are tested for their existing competency in German. Progress is continually assessed through midterms, assignments, and a final exam, which can only be repeated once. The course content is reflective of the socio-cultural environment in order to enable active language proficiency. Due to the "integration character" of the program, funding ceases 60 months after arrival and 30 months after starting the program. In addition to tuition and learning materials, *GF-H* funding includes transportation, and in extreme cases, housing and living expenses if the student cannot live with his parents for the duration of the program. In 1997, DM 38.7 million were spent on *GF-H* language courses for the yearly 4,000 participants.

The *BMBF* funds a program called the *Akademikerprogramm (AKP)*. It was established in 1985 to help *Spätaussiedlern* in academia with the re-entry into their profession. The goal of the program is to make up for training deficiencies of the participants due to system-specific differences in education and profession. Eligible candidates for the *AKP* are *Spätaussiedler* and *Kontingentflüchtlinge* between the ages of 30 and 50 years that have completed a university degree or equivalent education in their home country, which is not recognized in its current form. The *AKP* provides an opportunity to learn German, English, or occupation-specific German, study at a German university, and participate in professional upgrades. The courses are offered full-time (35 hours per week) for three months. At the beginning, participants take an initial language assessment test with progress later monitored through tests and a final exam. Funding under this program is not automatic and *Spätaussiedler* must apply for funding within one year after arrival to Germany. If successful, funding covers the costs of the linguistic (and occupational) training as well as living expenses, and possibly medical coverage, for the duration of the program. In 1997, DM 12.65 million was spent on 1318 participants.

Effectiveness of Spätaussiedler language training

Social Consult GmbH conducted an extensive survey to evaluate the effectiveness of language training courses for *Spätaussiedler* — how the different programs are translated from theory into practice, how they are interlocked, and what aspects of the programs could be improved. The following is a short overview of the survey results for the different programs.

This survey spans 378 service providers with a total of 14,032 program participants. Of these participants, 82.3% are *Spätaussiedler* (incl. family members), 13.4% are refugees, and 3.9% are persons having been granted asylum. A high percentage of participants are 28 years of age or younger (23.4%). As Table 8 shows, the large majority of participants entered language courses soon after their arrival, 83.7% within the first six months.

Table 8: Space of Time Between Arrival and Entry into Language Courses

	Participants	
	Absolute	In %
Up to 1 month	2,927	20.9
1 to 6 months	8,819	62.8
6 to 12 months	1,397	10.0
1 to 2 years	229	1.6
More than 2 years	130	0.9
No response	530	3.8

Source: Social Consult Survey, 1998

This early entry pattern fosters integration and demonstrates the strong motivation of the students to learn German as soon as possible.

About 85 percent of service providers evaluate their participants' existing language skills prior to entry. Of these service providers, about 80 percent have designed testing instruments. The multitude of evaluation tests precludes a common standard and hinders comparisons between the outcomes of different courses offered. There is a need for service providers to use standardized tests to evaluate these outcomes. According to the survey, service providers listed the following as their most important goals for the BMA-sponsored language courses:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Development of Communication Skills | 33.9% |
| 2. Reading/writing Skills | 31.3% |
| 3. Independent Learning | 12.2% |
| 4. Knowledge about German school-/occupational system | 11.1% |
| 5. Development of Occupation/Specific Communication Skills | 9.5% |

Almost 93 percent of the service providers determine the successful completion of the course through a final exam. The pass rates are fairly high, almost 85 percent. However, no uniform final exam exists, so that direct comparisons cannot be made. Furthermore, no information on the degree of difficulty of the tests is available.

About 5.5 percent (767 participants) took part in a German language course in their country of origin. Of these, 57 percent performed better in the BMA-sponsored language courses than the remaining participants. This leads to the belief that the completion of language courses prior to arrival in Germany is beneficial. However, the reader should be cautioned that 767 is a very small sample.

According to the perceptions of the surveyed service providers, most participants start the programs with a high level of motivation. As a general result of this high motivation, the effectiveness of the language courses in aiding the economic and social integration of *Spätaussiedler* is judged to be high by most service providers (65.8%). A possible area of improvement mentioned by the service providers is the duration of the language courses. Most service providers (77.3%) felt that increasing the duration of language courses beyond the current six months would improve their quality.⁴⁴

A survey assessing *Aussiedler* language training provided by the BMFSFJ spans 114 service providers with a total of 5,166 program participants. Of these participants, 89.3 percent are *Spätaussiedler* (incl. family members), 5.3 percent are refugees, and 1.7 percent are persons who have been granted asylum. As Table 9 shows, the rate of participation is relatively low (44.2%). However, about 75 percent of participants enter within the first year of arrival. This entry delay is a cause for concern since it delays the integration process for young *Spätaussiedler*.

According to the survey, service providers listed reading/writing skills as their most important goal for the *GF-SB* language courses, followed by the development of communication skills and independent learning. Final examination scores as reported by the service providers indicate high pass rates of almost 82 percent in the intensive language courses, and 88 percent in the occupational language courses. Service providers also indicate that about 40 percent of the participants start the programs with a high level of motivation given their desire to improve their labour market prospects. However, as noted above, the

⁴⁴ It should be mentioned, however, that service providers would have a personal economic incentive for increasing the duration of language courses, thereby increasing the amount of funding received.

level of German language skills possessed by *Spätaussiedler* upon arrival has generally decreased over the past years.

As a general result, the effectiveness of the language courses in aiding the economic and social integration of *Spätaussiedler* is judged to be high by most service providers (70%). Possible areas of improvement mentioned by the service providers are more individualized and intensified programs, and smaller minimum class sizes. Furthermore, more co-operation between the different regional integration agencies is desired to better enable a fine-tuning of target activities.

The third survey reported covers all 12 service providers offering *Garantiefonds Hochschulbereich (GF-H)* courses with a total of 1,547 program participants of which 80.9 percent of these participants are *Spätaussiedler* (including family members), 15.8 percent are refugees, and 3.3 percent asylum seekers. About 72 percent of the participants enrol in the courses within twelve months of arrival, and almost all the remaining participants enrol within two years.

Entrance exams to evaluate the participants' existing language skills are used to place the participants in one of three course levels with increasing levels of difficulty. Almost 30 percent of the participants are placed in level 2 or higher, indicating that the general level of pre-existing language knowledge is fairly high.

According to the survey, service providers listed reading/writing skills as their most important goal for the *GF-H* language courses (50%), followed by knowledge of German culture, politics, and economy. Lower goals were skill development for independent learning and knowledge of the German university system.

All service providers require completion of homework assignments and midterms and determine the successful completion of the course through a final exam. The pass rates are fairly high, about 77 percent pass the final exam on their first attempt. However, about 15 percent must repeat a midterm or final exam and almost 29 percent drop the course after failing a test. The attrition rate increases with the degree of course difficulty.

Service providers judge the motivation of *Spätaussiedler* (73%) as high, again because of the desire to improve their economic prospects. Thus, the effectiveness of the language courses in aiding the economic and social integration of *Spätaussiedler* is judged to be high by most service providers (over 80%). Possible areas of improvement mentioned by the service providers are longer duration of courses, and smaller minimum class sizes.

Language training for *Ausländer* is overseen by an agency called the *Sprachverband - Deutsch für ausländische Arbeitnehmer e. V.*,⁴⁵ which targets language training for foreign workers and their families. It is financially supported by the Ministry of Work and Social Order (*BMA*), who provided DM 24.95 million (ca. \$19.96) to support 61,221 participants in 1997. The goal of these language courses is (as before) the social and economic integration of *Ausländer* into German society by means of task-oriented language training simulating real-life situations. The *Sprachverband* developed guidelines for content and quality, which are binding for the service providers. In contrast to language courses for *Spätaussiedler*, who are generally fully funded, service providers of language courses for *Ausländer* can charge tuition (up to DM 2.- per class hour) from each participant.

To be eligible for language courses funded by the *Sprachverband*, foreign workers and their families must be from the European Union (EU), or one of the former recruiting countries.⁴⁶ *Spätaussiedler*, refugees, and persons seeking asylum as well as foreign youths under the age of 15 are not eligible for these courses.

Four main types of language courses are offered, their main difference being the number of course hours. They range from basic language courses to intensive language training.

a. Basic language courses are geared towards participants who cannot partake in classes more than three days a week (no more than 9 hours per week). They consist of a set four consecutive courses (60-80 hours) for a total of 320 hours.

⁴⁵ Hereafter called *Sprachverband*.

⁴⁶ Turkey, Yugoslavia, Morocco, Tunisia, South Korea, and the Philippines, or from one of the recruiting countries of former East Germany: Angola, Mozambique, and Vietnam.

b. Courses for illiterate *Ausländer* are geared towards foreigners who cannot read and/or write sufficiently to participate in a normal language course. These courses are designed to first teach the participants how to read and write (this can be done in their mother tongue if necessary) and then to convey basic German to them. A maximum of 240 hours is financed, with classes being split into three blocks of 60 to 80 hours each. A maximum of 20 hours per week can be taught.

c. Intensified language courses are offered on a basis of 10 to 20 hours per week of intensive training. They follow a specific goal, e.g., a certificate, preparation for an apprenticeship, a job, or further occupational training. These courses consist of three consecutive courses of 60 to 240 hours for a total of no more than 640 hours.

All of these courses can also be conducted as purely female courses with more task-oriented classes and “women-specific” topics. Child minding will be funded if at least five children are present in the household. Participants cannot take more than one course type at any one time and failed courses can only be repeated once.

After participating in the basic or intensive language courses, participants can take a special course called Grundbaustein-Kurs, leading to the attainment of an internationally recognized examination (Grundbaustein-Prüfung). The duration of the course is a total of 60 hours, with a maximum of 20 hours a week.

Social Consult GmbH, Infratest Burke Sozialforschung GmbH and Fachbereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache, Universität Essen conducted an extensive survey of the *Ausländer* language courses including a survey of former and current participants of the various programs. The following is a brief description of their results.⁴⁷

The survey spans 344 service providers. Most of these service providers offer additional courses not funded by the *Sprachverband*. Overall, the dependence on funding from the *Sprachverband* is fairly low. Most service providers rely on their own funding, tuition fees, or other subsidies. The majority of courses (roughly 40%) start at a very low

⁴⁷ For an in-depth analysis, see Dorfmann et al. (1999). *Evaluation der Sprachförderung Deutsch für ausländische Arbeitnehmer*. Social consult, GmbH, Bonn.

level, which leads to the conclusion that the initial German language proficiency of most participants is low. Almost all service providers (96.4%) issue certificates of participation after completion of the course, but only 6.8 percent issue primitive transcripts or report cards. Furthermore, only 21 percent of the service providers use standardized tests to determine whether the course requirements have been met by the participants, and most service providers rely on more informal evaluation methods including course leaders assessments and simple completion of a certain chapter in the textbook.

Most service providers estimate that their courses contribute significantly to the social (72.7%) and economic (57.4%) integration of *Ausländer*. The service providers identified several areas of improvement. Service providers noted that, while strong demand for the *Sprachverband*-funded language courses exists, a large portion of potential students are not eligible. On the other hand, the number of eligible participants has declined. Therefore, most service providers would like to see a broadening of the target group and more autonomy in the allocation of funds to enable more flexibility in the range of courses offered.

A survey of current and former language course students indicated that their primary motivation for acquiring German was to better cope with everyday life. A secondary reason was to improve the chances of finding employment, closely followed by a desire to improve their contact with German citizens. Table 9 reports a detailed list of self-reported motivations for language course participation.

Table 9: *Ausländer* Motivations for Participation in a German Language Course

Main reason	Current Participants	Former Participants
To better cope with everyday life	45 %	51 %
To improve chances of finding work	22 %	11 %
To improve contact with Germans	18 %	12 %
To better cope with the Work place	11 %	5 %
To keep the current Job	1 %	0 %
Other	4 %	21 %

Source:

Furthermore, the former language course participants were asked whether the language courses did indeed help them achieve their goals. About 90 percent believed it did, either significantly or at least to some extent. When asked to judge their improvement in language proficiency, most current participants believe that their language skills have improved significantly (47%) or somewhat (49%). The same response pattern applies to former language course participants (43%: improved significantly, 48%: improved somewhat).

Only 20 percent of the participants indicated took a placement examination. Moreover, they argued that initial assessment tests would allow the service provider to better group participants according to their proficiency level. Furthermore, while almost none of the service providers administered final exams, the overwhelming majority of course participants (about 75%) believed a (voluntary) final exam should be conducted.

I. Returns from Second Language Acquisition

This review of both Canada's and Germany's language programs for immigrants raises the question: which approach is more effective? We have two distinct models of second language acquisition in the two countries. Canada, in essence, does not require the immigrant to learn either official language at any point from entry to citizenship. It relies on a market solution to achieve an optimal acquisition of a second language by immigrants. Germany, on the other hand, explicitly uses second language acquisition as a screening device for *Spätaussiedler* and a criterion for citizenship for both *Spätaussiedler* and *Auslander*. In addition, a myriad of state agencies, under a variety of programs offer subsidized language training to facilitate integration in German society. How do we measure the effectiveness of each approach?

DeVoretz and Werner (1999) offer a theoretical framework by which to measure optimal immigrant second language acquisition across a variety of activity milieus (economic, social, educational and political). The central point to be drawn from their discussion is that no one level of immigrant second language acquisition is optimal in any one sphere. Within each sphere, individuals will voluntarily acquire (in the absence of a subsidy or government compulsion) a mix of second language skills depending on their individual characteristics. We

first turn to the empirical data both in Canada and Germany to measure the relative returns from second language acquisition in the respective labour markets under these two regimes. Then, we discuss the benefits of second language acquisition in the political and social spheres.

Table 10: Rates of Return based on Second Language Proficiency in Canada

Author(s)	Data Period	Impact on Earnings (in %)				Impact on Employment (in %)	
		Bi-ling.	Engl. only		French only	Mother Tongue Only	
Chiswick and Miller (1988)	1981	+ 18	QUE + 7.8	ROC + 12.1	QUE + 4.5	ROC + 17.9	N/A
Chiswick and Miller (1992)	1981 (males only)	+ 12.2				N/A	
Boyd (1990)	1986 (females only)	+ 17.1				+ 4.6	
DeSilva (1997)	1980's	+ 25	+ 26	- 3			
Pendakur and Pendakur (1997)	Montreal	Chinese + 4	Asian Non-Chinese NA	Other European - 1		- 17	
	Toronto	+ 3		+ 6		- 16	
	Vancouver	- 1		- 2		- 9	

Table 10 provides a summary of findings of selected studies conducted in Canada over the past two decades to test the association between immigrant second language acquisition and their labour market performance. These reported studies indicate that a proficiency in one or both of Canada's official languages has a consistently positive effect on both immigrant earnings and employment opportunities. Regardless of the second language acquired (French or English), or the gender or ethnicity (Chinese, Asian, European) of the immigrant, the rates of return from second language acquisition are large. For example, for either female or male immigrants, earnings rise from 12.2 to 17.1 percent for each year after the immigrant acquires a second language. These returns are averages across all skill levels and no doubt the rates of return are even higher for skilled and professionally trained immigrants (DeVoretz and Werner 1999). Pendakur and Pendakur (1997) further argue that in Canada exclusive "mother-tongue language knowledge is correlated with poorer labour market outcomes" since they argue that

the “vast majority of the people who speak non-official languages are part of the ethnic language community.” This observation is reinforced by their findings that knowing only a non-official language in Toronto and Montreal reduces immigrant earnings by 16 to 17 percent respectively. In sum, the Canadian labour market rewards second language acquisition and penalizes unilingual mother tongue knowledge.

The empirical evidence on German language acquisition and earnings performance is partially documented by Dustman (1997) and Schmidt (1997). Schmidt reports that the earnings of ethnic Germans equal that of native West Germans since the *Aussiedler* and native West Germans have identical human capital endowments. However, Schmidt notes that the *Ausländer* earn substantially less than the *Aussiedler* due to the low educational attainment of the *Ausländer*. What can we infer from these findings about the effect of linguistic differences on earnings differentials between native West Germans and *Aussiedler*? First, Schmidt argues that there is no return from “country-specific human capital over time” for the *Aussiedler*. In other words, improved German language skills after arrival does not improve *Aussiedler* earnings relative to native West Germans. Even more interesting is Schmidt’s finding that if you control for education, the earnings difference between the *Ausländer* and the *Aussiedler* collapses. This finding implies that the return to second language acquisition, German, is minimal for *Ausländer* since controlling for education removes any earnings difference. However, second language acquisition and education are in fact complementary and the Schmidt findings confirm indirectly that second language acquisition when acquired jointly have substantial potential returns for *Ausländer*. Dustman (1997) confirms this latter point when he identifies that parental education positively affects the acquisition of German language skills by foreigners. In sum, these two German studies indicate that language and education are complementary human capital inputs, which together will raise substantially foreign workers wages in Germany.

Social Sphere

In the social environment, DeVoretz and Werner (1999) further argue that a knowledge of the dominant second language leads to tangible networking benefits for the

immigrant and enhances integration. This is especially true for immigrant youth that are at the crucial point of socializing and selecting a possible marriage partner. Second language acquisition increases the likelihood of social and marriage integration and reduces the likelihood of continued “chain migration” to facilitate marriage. In the Canadian context, it has been found that male immigrants with minimal second language skills will be more likely to import a bride than seek a marriage partner within the Canadian community. Similar circumstances appear to arise in Germany. First, as in other countries the larger the number of co-nationals living in the area of residence, the smaller the incentive and the need to acquire German to socialize or network. For example, in predominantly urban Turkish neighbourhoods, it is possible to interact entirely in Turkish. This linguistic isolation can lead to a “ghettoization” of different cultures, isolating the Turkish community from mainstream German culture. In this case, a subculture exists within Germany and social integration is difficult to achieve. As a result of “ghettoization” Germans who live in close proximity often shrink from contact with foreigners, so that acceptance on both sides is limited. If the need to interact with Germans should arise, it will often be done through intermediaries, or children, who in large part grew up in Germany.

Political Sphere

Canada and Germany both mandate a minimum second language knowledge for citizenship. German language acquisition for citizenship and hence admission is mandated in the case of *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer* who become citizens. For *Ausländer* who do not choose citizenship, no language competence is mandated and all degrees of language competency result. This situation also holds for Canadian immigrants who do not choose to become citizens. Political activity, however, in the form of voting or aspiring to be an elected official, requires second language acquisition. In the Canadian context, successful national political candidacy requires that ethnic candidates master one or both official languages to insure victory and effective participation in Parliament. In other words, in Canada, the political rewards from second language acquisition and thus candidacy in a mainstream party encourages a facility in one (or both) official languages. For this twinning of second language

acquisition and a successful political candidacy to occur, several prerequisites must exist. First, mainstream political parties must seek out foreign-born candidates and mainstream voters must consider the foreign-born a viable candidate. Finally, ethnic-voting blocs cannot be a decisive minority, as in Israel.⁴⁸ These prerequisites exist in Canada for several ethnic groups but not in Germany. In fact, in the 1990s the entire British Columbian parliamentary delegation for the ruling party was foreign-born. A less optimistic outcome in the political sphere would be an apathetic foreign-born population, which does not see incentives to gain the second language to either vote or run for office. In this case, what would emerge would be a quasi-political structure in which NGOs (or ethnic lobbying groups) employ multilingual workers to lobby the mainstream government. These NGO lobbyists then become the political brokers between estranged unilingual foreign-born residents and the mainstream political parties. Clearly, the foreign-born population would not be fully represented in this case.

In sum, simply requiring second language acquisition for citizenship, as in Germany, does not guarantee mainstream political participation by the foreign population. A critical mass of the foreign-born population with voting rights, coupled with an accepting mainstream population will insure the substantial reward of active political participation by foreigners with sophisticated second language skills. Otherwise, the requirement for second language acquisition for citizenship will not insure integration and may induce emigration.

I. Summary and Conclusion

Our comparative analysis leads us to two possible models to choose from for immigrant second language acquisition. The first or German statist model has formal linguistic assessment criteria at both the point of entry for *Spätaussiedler* and at the point of ascension to citizenship for *Ausländer*. The Canadian model has virtually no effective state linguistic screening; you can enter Canada and become a citizen with little oral or written knowledge of either official language. Canadian immigrant second language acquisition is voluntary and

⁴⁸ In Israel, Russian Jews have formed their own party, which reduces the pressure to learn.

depends on the social, educational and labour market incentives with only indirect government intervention via subsidies. Questions of efficacy, integration and coverage immediately arise as alternative metrics to measure the success of these two models. We first assess the Canadian model on these criteria and then the German statist approach.

Canadian voluntary and private oriented language acquisition suffers from the initial drawback first theoretically argued by DeVoretz and Werner (1999). In a voluntary system of language acquisition given an absence of subsidies, the default equilibrium second language acquisition in the labour, political and social spheres will be minimal oral second language acquisition skills. Particularly in the political sphere the level of language acquisition does not matter. For example, in Vancouver, the Chinese community is very actively involved in politics, largely conducted in their home language. Furthermore, mature immigrants tend to gravitate towards the default equilibrium in larger numbers than younger immigrants. Thus, older first-generation immigrants may never acquire functional second language skills in Canada.

This dramatic shortcoming can be overcome with a loan program for second language acquisition. Under these conditions, a skilled or professionally qualified immigrant who receives a contingent loan would obtain the amount of language that is seen by him as beneficial in the social, labour or political spheres. In particular, in the labour market this loan scheme must be sufficiently generous to enable the immigrant to acquire second language skills to pass the appropriate qualifying exams. The contingent loan scheme operates in such a fashion that the repayment (zero to 100 percent of the loan) is contingent upon the earnings after the second language skill is acquired.

Under this Canadian regime, the voluntary nature of optimal language acquisition is largely maintained with the private sector providing training under a government-subsidized program. An optimal level of second language acquisition will occur since the immigrant perceives second language acquisition as an investment that will be rewarded in the labour market. He/she will continue to acquire second language proficiency until this investment on the margin no longer is rewarding. In the event that discrimination or macro labour market conditions (unemployment) prevent the immigrant from realizing his return, then the

contingent nature of the repayment scheme removes any risk. In the absence of a risky environment, immigrant self-assessment will lead to optimal second language acquisition given his skill level. Furthermore, if the immigrant acquires more skills after arrival, further second language acquisition will also occur. Finally, a contingent loan scheme reduces the fiscal burden and possible political issue always inherent in subsidizing immigrant human capital accumulation.

What are the drawbacks of this voluntary model? First, language acquisition benchmarks must exist and be well known to potential employers or other interested parties. Certification of results, training appropriate for the task at hand and employer recognition are all essential ingredients. In the absence of any of these, individual immigrants will not make the investment in second language acquisition since their expected rewards will not be realized.

Furthermore, the language spoken at home in the immigrant's household has a significant influence over the level and speed of second language acquisition attained by first generation immigrants. If the immigrants speak their mother tongue at home, second language acquisition is slowed down and the final level of competence achieved is often lower than for immigrant households who speak English or French at home. This result, however, does not hold true for second generation immigrants or immigrants coming to Canada at a young age. Second language acquisition of these immigrants is not affected by the language spoken at home.

Another characteristic that can be mimicked from Germany is the qualifying test for families. Applications in the family reunification category could be fast-tracked if family members passed a standardized second language proficiency test. This prioritizing is an added incentive for second language acquisition in light of the long waiting list that exists in this category. In addition to faster processing, second language proficiency will facilitate integration after arrival.

In sum, a contingent loan scheme and well-known standards are the key ingredients for a successful private second language acquisition model for mature immigrants to emerge in

any context. In addition, language assessment at the point of entry will lower the costs of integration.

Would this model of contingent loans work in the German context or should Germany maintain its statist approach with compulsory standards for second language acquisition to obtain citizenship? The statist model of second language acquisition is a logical extension of a singular policy objective of insuring that all foreigners either *Aussiedler* or *Ausländer* will ascend to citizenship. However, if economic and social integration for both *Aussiedler* and *Ausländer* are additive German objectives, then a Germanized version of Canada's voluntary second language acquisition model appears appropriate.

The current strengths of the German second language assessment model and the multifaceted nature of the Canadian immigrant assessment model should be married into one seamless scheme in the context of German immigration patterns. Immigrants should be streamed upon entry according to immigrant category, with appropriate language testing for applicable categories, but only a single criterion should exist for all immigrant classes for ascension to citizenship. Furthermore, assessment of immigrants should be undertaken at the time of entry, not at the latter stage of citizenship acquisition. Given the domestic shortfall in qualified individuals in some occupations, it is only a matter of time until Germany will have to start actively recruiting foreign workers to remain competitive in the global market on a more solidified basis. First steps in this direction are already being taken with the introduction of 'Green Cards' for Indian computer specialists. The need for a directive immigration policy is clearly existent.

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Appendix A

Excerpt of the *Verwaltungsvorschriften (VwV)* pertaining to Language Requirements

§ 86 Reasons for Exclusion

86.1 Ad no. 1 (Insufficient knowledge of German)

86.1.1 Definition

Knowledge of German is sufficient if the applicant for naturalization is able to find his/her way in daily life with respect to language including usual contact with the authorities in his/her German environment, and if it is possible to communicate with him/her in accordance with his/her age and educational level. This includes also that the applicant is able to read and understand German texts of daily use and to repeat their contents orally. Ability to communicate orally in a simple way is not sufficient.

86.1.2 Proof of linguistic proficiency

The immigration authorities must investigate the reason for exclusion due to insufficient knowledge of German. As a rule, proof of linguistic proficiency is given if the applicant for naturalization

- a) acquired the Certificate in German (*Zertifikat Deutsch*) or any equivalent language diploma,
- b) attended a school with German as the teaching language successfully for four years (the end-of-year report must state that the applicant would have been put up to next class),
- c) acquired a first German school degree (*Hauptschulabschluß*) or equivalent German degree,

- d) was put up to tenth grade of a secondary school with German as the teaching language (*Realschule, Gymnasium* or *Gesamtschule*), or
- e) acquired a university degree or a diploma from a university of applied science (*Fachhochschule*) or completed German vocational training.

If required knowledge of German is not or not sufficiently proved, it is to be ordered that the applicant appear personally for an examination of his/her linguistic proficiency, compare no. 91.1. Here the requirements of the Certificate of German (*Zertifikat Deutsch*) are an appropriate standard.

Appendix B**Box 1** *Excerpts of the German Grundgesetz (as of 3.11. 1995)***Basic Law***Article 16 (Deprivation of citizenship, extradition, and right of asylum).*

(1) No one may be deprived of his German citizenship. Loss of citizenship may arise only pursuant to a law, and against the will of the person affected it may arise only if such person does not thereby become stateless.

(2) No German may be extradited to a foreign country. Persons persecuted for political reasons enjoy the right of asylum.

Article 116.

(1) Unless otherwise provided by law, a German within the meaning of this Basic Law is a person who possesses German citizenship who has been admitted to the territory of the German Reich, as it existed on December 31, 1937, as a refugee or expellee of German stock or as the spouse or descendant of such person.

(2) Former German citizens who between January 30, 1933 and May 8 1945, were deprived of their citizenship for political, racial or religious reasons, and their descendants, shall be re- granted German citizenship on application. They are considered as not having been deprived of their German citizenship if they have established their domicile in Germany after May 8, 1945 and have not expressed a contrary intention.

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