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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature: _____

This is dedicated

to my Dad, Alasdair,
who never got the chance to see this finished

and

Todd, TJ and Ellie
who will finally have the chance to see this finished!
Thank you.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

Most quota refugees arrive in New Zealand with little knowledge of the country, culture or language and are often without personal possessions, money, friends or family members. Within six weeks of arrival, refugees are placed in a new home in order to rebuild their lives and begin the process of resettlement.

During this early stage of resettlement there will be concerns about housing, physical and mental health, unemployment, education, money and social and cultural differences. These issues are more problematic for families who have little or no knowledge of the English language. Without a clear understanding of the dominant language the simplest of responsibilities becomes complicated. It is a challenge to perform routine tasks such as reading and filling in forms, complying with rules and regulations or communicating with the neighbours when knowledge of the language is limited. Without a command of English it can be difficult for refugees to take part effectively in New Zealand society.

1.2 Aim

The goal of this project was to design and develop a language learning programme on CD-rom that would provide refugees with an extra tool for learning a second language while offering an insight into the New Zealand way of life. This programme was designed to complement, rather than be a substitute for, the current language and education courses run for refugees. Additionally because of the perceived shortage of English classes and the inability of some to attend, the CD could be used independently at home. This extra material may give refugees further opportunity to practice and revise their language skills. By providing them with effective language learning resources, refugees may be assisted in developing the skills required to become better integrated into New Zealand society.

Because of the diverse educational and cultural backgrounds of refugees a ‘one size fits all’ type of programme for the CD was not considered suitable. The idea was for a

modular approach so that particular sections, themes, activities and learning levels could be added to CDs to suit the individual needs of refugee students.

Once a prototype was completed it was posted to Second Language teachers, people who work for the Refugee and Migrant Services and refugee students who were studying at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) at the time of the study. Feedback and suggestions were gathered using an informal set of questions attached to a copy of the prototype. Once the CD had been trialed and the questionnaires returned comments regarding the effectiveness of the programme were examined. A summary of the main points of the feedback can be found in the final chapter.

1.3 Outline of the study

In Chapter Two, the current provision for refugees in New Zealand is explained and the difficulties they face during the resettlement process are identified. Chapter Three deals with the issues and challenges involved in learning a second language while Chapter Four outlines the history of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and why it is considered beneficial in second language learning. The development of the CD-rom is detailed in Chapter Five and the evaluation and future direction of possible extension work on the programme is discussed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

The Refugee Situation

2.1 What is a Refugee?

A refugee is defined as any person who, "owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country" (UNHCR, 1996, p.16).

In response to Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" (Human Rights Commission, n.d), New Zealand is committed to providing an annual resettlement programme for 750 quota refugees. Of the 750 places, 75 are given to women at risk and 75 are reserved for those with medical problems or disabilities.

New Zealand is one of 18 countries that presently offer a third country resettlement for a specific number of quota refugees. These people, who are referred by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), originate from countries that tend to reflect the international situation of the time (Refugee and Migrant Services, n.d). In recent years priority has been given to groups from Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Burma/Myanmar (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). During the last twenty years, 16,556 people have been resettled in New Zealand under the Refugee Quota Programme (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004) and an estimated 35,000 have settled here since the Second World War (Ministry of Health, 2001).

2.2 Consequences of becoming a Refugee

The needs of refugees are different from those of migrants in that refugees do not choose to leave their home and are often forced to leave hastily, without the chance to say goodbye. They often leave with very few or no personal possessions, or close family members; they seldom have much knowledge of where they will go. Refugees are frequently traumatised and unprepared for their new life (Ministry of Health, 2001).

"On arrival in New Zealand refugees are severely disadvantaged. Many are traumatised, have language difficulties, have little or no material possessions, (are) homeless, culturally and socially bewildered, (are) suffering the loss of some or all members of their family" (Refugee and Migrant Services, n.d).

It is common for refugees to experience emotional problems associated with past stressful situations or the strain of moving to a new country away from familiar surroundings and people (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). Many suffer from psychological symptoms that develop following a disturbing event such as war and destruction, witnessing a death, or being a victim of violence or rape (Refugees as Survivors, n.d). Those suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can experience depression, anxiety, insomnia, intrusive thoughts or withdrawal from others. For acute cases these symptoms could last up to six months while those with a severe case of PTSD can suffer for longer periods. An emotional or mental health problem can greatly affect the behaviour, actions or concentration level of a new refugee (Ministry of Health, 2001).

2.3 Arrival procedures

On arrival in the country, quota refugees are transferred to the Mangere Refugee Reception Centre in Auckland where they spend six weeks acclimatising to their new environment. During this time they receive medical attention, attend English language classes, are introduced to the New Zealand culture; they meet representatives from the Police, Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), Housing New Zealand and a variety of other support agencies (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). The relevant agencies ensure that essential facilities and services are organised and in place before the refugees leave Mangere. They are likely to be provided with subsidised Housing New Zealand homes in main centres such as Auckland, Hamilton or Wellington (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004).

The Ministry of Education funds AUT Centre for Refugee Education, to run the education component at Mangere. The centre is responsible for providing the six week language and orientation classes for all levels of English ability from early childhood to tertiary. Students are placed in one of nine levels depending on their level of literacy (Strauss & Hayward, 2005). Each individual is assessed by bilingual tutors before

placement into the New Zealand education system (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). On completion of the six week 'on arrival' programme, adult refugees are offered a number of educational options including some fully subsidised English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) places, Adult and Community Education classes and the Home Tutor scheme (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). All refugees who are eligible for employment can apply for further classes on Training Opportunity Programmes (TOP), which are funded through the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). Children under the age of 18 will automatically receive additional tuition at school.

The programme for adult refugees at Mangere consists of two main parts, ESOL and 'Orientation to life in New Zealand'. The students are placed in to groups based on their initial assessment results, are given the opportunity to improve their level of English and provided with information about New Zealand (Strauss and Hayward, 2005). The refugees are introduced to many areas of New Zealand life including a brief history of the country, the Maori culture, the Treaty of Waitangi, the education system, health services, the law, taxation, housing and employment. There are also classes on individual rights and responsibilities, issues concerning residency and citizenship, human rights and the political system. Students have opportunities for practical learning such as cooking, budgeting, hygiene and safety (Centre for Refugee Education, 2004).

Due to the short length of stay at Mangere, refugees are only offered a 'superficial' overview of these topics as it may be impossible for a teacher to provide any in depth information (Strauss and Hayward, 2005). As discussed previously, those suffering from trauma or other psychological problem may find they are unable to concentrate or absorb the facts anyway. Some service providers feel that six weeks is not enough time for refugees to learn about New Zealand before moving into the community (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004).

This may be a real concern as only 6 in 10 recently arrived refugees have any knowledge of New Zealand prior to arrival. This is unfortunate as "(i)nformation and knowledge about a country prior to arrival is important as it builds a sense of belonging, community and familiarity that can contribute to resettlement" (New Zealand

Immigration Service, 2004, p.95). The type of knowledge refugees tend to have is related to New Zealand's physical environment, the people and that it is a safe place to live, rather than knowing about the economic, political and welfare structures of the country.

2.4 Differences between refugees

Quota refugees of varying ages, arrive in New Zealand from many countries and cultures, with differing experiences, skills, languages and education. Some refugees may already speak more than one language, particularly if they have spent time in refugee camps overseas. There will be those who have had previous educational experience in their homeland and those who have had very little. Research on recently arrived refugees indicates that as many as 1 in 10 refugees (mainly women and those who have spent time in refugee camps) are not able to read or write in their own language (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). It is suggested that out of 40 refugees 18 women have no prior educational experience compared to 4 men within the same sample (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). This could have serious implications for the refugee students when learning English as a second language.

A goal of The New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs is to create "a climate so that people from ethnic communities can fully participate in and contribute to all aspects of New Zealand life" (The New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs, n.d) However, refugees cannot become full participants without English language training and presently adult refugees are the "most marginalized group in terms of access to ESOL and educational provision". New immigrants are required to obtain a specific level of English before being accepted into New Zealand while refugees arrive with little or no language and are not financially able to pay for their tuition (Altinkaya, n.d). The provision of ESOL classes is poor in New Zealand when compared to other countries such as Canada (unlimited class hours) or Australia (up to 520 hours of English classes) (Rees, 2001). Norway provides 2,250 hours of language tuition to refugees with the aim of including new refugees into the Norwegian society and work force as quickly as possible. In the Netherlands, refugees are entitled to 900 free hours and are expected to pass an exam on completion (Strauss and Hayward, 2004).

Without the language of the new country, refugees may continue experiencing hardship. These points are echoed in the New Zealand 1996 Census where "particular concern may be felt over the situations of former refugees…. evidence of persisting disadvantage, many unemployed and few in high-income professions" (Thomson, B, 1999, p.3). There is a concern that there could be the creation of a discriminated against "underclass of refugees" (Altinkaya 1995, cited Gray & Elliott, 2001, p.34; see also p.58). To avoid this, language programmes need to be developed that fit the needs of refugees (Altinkaya, n.d).

2.5 Needs of female refugees

Women refugees have additional needs to be met on arrival in New Zealand. Many women, particularly those whose husbands have been killed, disappeared or are away fighting, have often faced extreme abuse during conflict in their homeland (Ministry of Health, 2001). These women are likely to require extra medical and emotional support to adjust to their new lives.

On leaving Mangere, women may become physically isolated, due to housekeeping roles and cultural attitudes restricting them from taking part as fully as their male counterparts in work or language classes. "Adult women may have a special need for help in learning English; in several groups fewer women than men were able to converse in English" (Thomson, 1999, p.170). Crosland (1991) suggests that high numbers of refugees suffering from mental health concerns and anxiety could be helped through appropriate services and language training. Crosland's work highlighted the need for on-going language support. She implies the group in greatest need is women with young children and other family commitments, who are unable to leave the home for work or for language classes. In contrast Findley and Reynolds (1987) state that older refugee women have additional difficulties as they face 'triple jeopardy' in terms of their age, gender and ethnicity.

McDermott (1997) found similar problems faced by a group of female Somali refugees. She highlighted the hardships that many refugees encounter including a lack of money, transport difficulties and limited support. She concluded that being unprepared educationally was the main barrier. The women wanted to "be helped financially and educationally so (they) can have the skills to find jobs and have the language to solve

the problems (they) encounter" (p.29). Rather than becoming dependant on welfare, their wish was to support themselves and their families. McDermott feels that it is "apparent that for all, the most significant aspect for achieving the self sufficiency all strive for, is fluency in English" (p.29).

The common problems faced by refugees trying to learn English are expense, lack of transport and childcare and family commitments. 38% of women compared to 18% of men faced problems mainly because of lack or expense of childcare, housekeeping roles and not being allowed out on their own (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004).

Refugee women can become "increasingly socially isolated due to language barriers as their families become more proficient in English" (Ministry of Health, 2001, p.81). Women's Affairs Minister Ruth Dyson has identified refugee women with limited English, from a more traditional or religious background, as a high risk group for social isolation and mental illness (Dyson, 2004).

2.6 Conclusion

The most consistent underlying problem faced by refugees is the language barrier. "Proficiency in English language is critical to both the economic and social aspects of resettlement and integration" (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004, p.187). One of the most significant factors in the resettlement process is the need to be proficient in English (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004) and "those with poorer English language ability need more help" (p33).

The difficulties faced by refugees in New Zealand when learning English as a second language are considered in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE

English Language Learning

3.1 Learning a Second Language

According to Emmitt, Pollock and Limbrick (1996) the process required when learning a first or second language is similar and whether "it occurs in a naturalistic or an instructed context, is a slow and laborious process" (Ellis, 2005, p.9). Lightbrown (2000, p.450) notes that "learners need a great deal of time, as well as opportunities for exposure to language in a variety of contexts before they can master its many subtleties".

It is suggested that a number of factors, both internal and external, may affect the way a student develops the necessary skills to learn a new language. These include the social and educational contexts of the learning, the age of the learner; the learner's attitude to the new language and culture; the individual reasons for learning; the amount of exposure to the new language and the type of support offered (Emmitt, Pollock and Limbrick, 1996; Mitchell and Myles, 1998; Ellis, 2001).

3.2 Learners' Attitude to the Language and the Culture

The attitude of the learner can be a factor in the success or failure of second language learning. For adults, in particular, negative attitudes toward the native speakers can have a detrimental effect in the learning process (Emmitt, Pollock and Limbrick, 1996, Mitchell and Myles, 1998). Positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning (Ellis, 2001; Oxford, 2001; Gardner, 1985). Self motivation may be greater if the need to speak is a necessary skill, for example if employment is a goal. Not all learners have the same desire to fulfil this requirement as the idea of learning and acquiring a new language can also mean accepting another culture. For learners who harbour a dislike of the native culture or people, the time span for learning the dominant language will be much longer. Depending on an individual point of view, emotional or mental state, language learning could be seen as "a source of enrichment or a source of resentment" (Lightbrown and Spada, 1999, p.56).

3.3 Learners' Reason for Learning

The reasons given by refugees for wanting to improve their English are to get jobs, to survive, for everyday use, for study, to communicate and integrate into New Zealand society (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). The experience of interacting with others socially and professionally is important when wishing to become accepted into a new community and to feel comfortable within it. Not to understand those around you would make it more difficult to function and to relate to people. Dummett (2001, p.18) remarks that "(w)e each need to be able to feel at home somewhere; not just in some locality but within the institutions and among the groups we are bound to".

3.4 Learners' Exposure to the Language

Richards (2001, p.214) notes that, "learning is facilitated by exposure to authentic language and through using language for genuine communication". Clearly in this regard, refugees who have regular and meaningful exposure to English are at a great advantage. Unfortunately many adults may not have this opportunity and as a result, struggle to communicate in everyday situations, for example, when shopping, at their child's school or with the doctor.

Spolsky (1989) believes that exposure is the most prominent factor in second language learning and being exposed to the second language is beneficial to learning as "learners gradually build up their knowledge through exposure" (p.42). He states that even with previous knowledge, proficiency and positive attitudes "the outcome of language learning depends in large measure on the amount and kind of exposure to the target language". Ellis (2005, p.9) agrees if learners "do not receive exposure to the target language they cannot acquire it…the more exposure they receive, the more and faster they will learn".

3.5 Age and Educational Experience of the Learner

It is often the children of refugee families who acquire the language before their parents resulting in a child acting as an interpreter for a parent. This is not ideal but often commonplace (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). Lightbrown and Spada (1999) state that second language acquisition in young people can still be a long process taking several years for children to know the language well enough for school use and to the same standard as a native speaker.

A Canadian study (Watt and Lake, 2004) of over 1300 adult immigrants involved in an array of language instruction programmes was carried out to measure adult rates of second language acquisition and integration. It found that the primary factor that predicts changes in rates of adult second language acquisition is the previous educational attainment of the participant.

Therefore refugees who have little knowledge of reading and writing in their first language are likely to face difficulties when learning a second language. Some refugee students may have never experienced a classroom environment because of social or economic background, cultural beliefs or simply where they lived. People from rural communities may have less access to school than those living in the larger cities so each individual has specific needs (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). It is suggested that between 1995 and 2000, 80% of adult quota refugees had not completed a primary education, with half of those described as pre-literate (Martin-Blaker and Hardman, 2001).

3.6 Feedback and Interaction

It is important that students are given the opportunity to interact with each other in group activities because "acquisition-rich discourse is more likely to come" when students can discuss their progress and assist each other (Ellis, 2005, p.12). Ellis (1999) suggests it may be beneficial for language acquisition to allow the students to take control of the discourse topic. One of the challenges would be to ensure students refrain from using their first language when working together. During the early stages of learning, it may be more appropriate for the teacher to initiate the discourse and give feedback (Ellis, 2005). Supportive feedback from the language teacher is necessary in order to promote learner confidence (Ellis, 1994). By providing corrective feedback, a teacher enables a student to modify his/her own learning and take some responsibility for his/her own progress.

3.7 Individual Differences in Learners

An awareness of individual learning styles is important when teaching. Experienced teachers recognise that people work towards the same goal at varying paces, with more or less instruction or assistance, with more or fewer visual aids, with more or less group

activity. Varying content and matching interests may help students acquire the new language more successfully.

Ellis (2001, p.499) quotes Keefe's definition of a learning style as "the characteristic cognitive, affective and physiological behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment. Learning style is a consistent way of functioning that reflects underlying causes of behaviour". The learning style of an individual will depend on the educational, cultural background, psychological and cognitive type. It is not always a simple task to test these variables, (see Wesche, 1981) as they will differ drastically from one set of students to another and from one personality to another. Students with teachers who are aware of learning styles, have a respect for different cultures and understand that these differences *will* affect the way people learn, tend to be more successful learners (Willing, 1993; Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

By providing a range of different learning activities and increasing the range of learning strategies along with a more flexible approach to teaching, a diverse group of students such as quota refugees, could be catered for. "Good language learner studies suggest that successful language learning requires a flexible approach to learning" (Ellis, 2005, p.12). Such an approach should make certain that each individual works at their own optimum level for learning.

It seems probable that to increase the likelihood of 'quota refugees' successfully acquiring adequate English, they need to be to exposed more regularly to the language outside of the classroom, be provided with constructive feedback, have additional chances to interact with others and be able to complete activities in a way that matches their learning style. Ellis (2005) states it is important to "create opportunities for students to receive input *outside* the classroom" because if he/she relies solely on weekly classes, the second language learner is unlikely to succeed (p.10). One flexible approach to this requirement may be the introduction of a relevant 'Computer Assisted Language Learning' (CALL) programme to extend the opportunities for learning. This would enable refugees to feel more 'immersed' in the language and be able to practise in between structured classes.

Fitzpatrick and Davies (2003) discuss the advantages of using new technology with language learners. They state that by using appropriate software a learner can increase his/her exposure to 'authentic' language, can access wider sources of information through the use of the World Wide Web and can obtain teacher feedback and contact with other students through email. The new technologies allow for a learner-centred approach to learning and the development of learner autonomy as the student takes responsibility for his/her own learning outside the classroom. A learner-centred approach may be particularly important for refugees, as they can be "very teacher dependant" and need to develop more independence (Strauss and Hayward, 2005, p.25).

In the following chapter, a brief history of computer use in language learning is outlined together with a discussion of its increasing value in this area of teaching and learning.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Use of Computers in Language Learning

4.1 Computer Assisted Language Learning

The term 'Computer Assisted Language Learning' (CALL) became common during the 1980's and 1990's with the increased use of computers in mainstream education (Fitzpatrick and Davies, 2003). The way computers have been used to aid language learning has changed over the last twenty years with developments in technology as well as the changing attitude of teachers and students to their use (Chapelle, 2004). Although used in language learning since the 1960's, computers tended to be used as a stand alone tool in language labs. Today computers are frequently found in classrooms and teachers are beginning to integrate computer programmes within the language curriculum (Bax, 2003).

Bax (2003) argues that the historical development of CALL can be categorised into three approaches:

1. **Restricted CALL** – The fifties and sixties were important years in the development of computers and it has been said that the first CALL programme was created in this period (Delcloque, 2000). However during these early stages of CALL, the software, activities, the role of the teacher and other aspects of CALL could be described as 'restricted'. The programmes on offer tended to be repetitive drills, with little interaction between students and were not integrated (Bax, 2003). The computers were incapable of playing or recording sound and had limited graphic capability. The lack of sound for learning a language caused teachers to criticise the programmes (Davies, 2000).

2. **Open CALL** – The 80s are regarded as the most "important decade in the development in computing and perhaps even in the development of computers as a tool for learning" (Delcloque, 2000, p.23). Delcloque states that with the introduction of the first IBM Personal Computer in 1981, computers and CALL were no longer the property of the privileged few and became more accessible to everyone. The 1980s brought about the invention of the World Wide Web and computers with some speech recognition and translation capabilities. The

term ‘Open CALL’ is used to identify the difference from the more ‘restricted’ approach (Bax, 2003). Although Bax accepts that this approach is not completely open, there were improvements during this period of time. Bax (2003) explains this approach as ‘open’ because the CALL system allows for simulations, games, greater interaction with the computer and flexible feedback. However the programmes were still not integrated within the curriculum and were viewed as an ‘extra’ or a ‘toy’ rather than an extension of the language syllabus (p.21).

3. **Integrated CALL** – This approach is said to follow ‘Open CALL’ during the 90’s. Bax considers this approach represents “an aim towards which we should be working” (p.22). ‘Integrated CALL’ should allow for greater interaction with the computer as well as with other students. It should be viewed as a ‘normal’ tool for learning and teaching and should provide stimulating and thought provoking feedback. Teachers are working towards ‘Integrated CALL’ and computers and new technologies need to be ‘normalised’ and “embedded in everyday practice”. We need to reach the stage where “technology is invisible” (p.23) and accepted as an everyday process. Until then CALL will never be truly integrated.

However, the advancements in technology and multimedia have meant that the use of text, sound, images and video can be combined to create CALL software. This software is able to offer some degree of interactivity and can integrate the necessary skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Davies (2000, 1.1) believes that with computers capable of integrating these four basic skills, multimedia has become of “considerable interest to the language teacher”.

CALL teachers can use multimedia to ensure that they “integrate authentic activity” into the students learning environment (Driscoll, 2000 cited Gruba, 2004, p.74). Emphasis has been placed on project based activities and language use in authentic situations (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). Teaching thematically is a popular form of teaching second language students because “organising instruction around themes ensures the learner’s interest and motivation because these topics are related directly to their lives” (McKay and Tom, 1999, p.17). This results in learning with meaning as the

teaching material is more likely to be based on situations they will encounter. A theme based programme offers further opportunities for reinforcing vocabulary, relevant phrases and grammar through repetition, leading to the recognition of specific words or phrases and the strengthening of language skills. A refugee would have the chance of learning the language required for a particular task, for example visiting the doctor, as well as developing the skills and the understanding of how to carry out that task correctly. Ellis (2005, p.3) agrees that it is crucial to "attend to and perform pragmatic meaning, a task based approach to language teaching" so that students can make sense of their learning.

Another issue to consider when developing a CALL programme is to include the opportunity for students to work collaboratively with other students (Gruba, 2004). A collaborative activity can be designed for authentic situations and should "(a) relate to real-life activities; (b) avoid predetermined outcomes; and (c) vary in levels of complexity" (Gruba, 2004, p.76; also Chapelle, 1999). To work on language programmes in isolation would not bring about the interaction, the feedback and conversation required for second language acquisition. A computer programme needs to complement the teacher-managed learning activities. The new technologies should not be seen as "a replacement for present models of language learning" but "must be integrated into present, proven and successful practice" in order to fully benefit the learner (Fitzpatrick and Davies, 2003, p.10).

A CALL programme can provide the learner with the option of revising often and regularly with the use of quizzes and specific question-answers sessions "to ensure the learner gains practise in a given area" (Davis, 1982, p.10). It is important a student has the "occasion for rehearsal" as it is viewed as a factor that promotes learning (Faerch & Kasper, 1986, p.207). However Ellis (1992, p.120) stresses that "practice may only facilitate acquisition directly if it is communicative i.e.: meaning focused in nature" This again signifies the importance of focusing on 'real' life situations through the learning process.

Appropriate CALL activities can be created to suit a variety of learning styles and levels. In order to achieve this, tasks would need to involve seeing; hearing; saying; doing; thinking; feeling and interacting (McKay and Tom, 1999). Computer

programmes can allow for the viewing of graphics, videos and photographs; listening to music, text and dialogue; the use of the keyboard and mouse to interact with the computer and produce articles and assignments and the use of the microphone to repeat and answer. As with any traditional language class the balance of reading, writing, speaking and listening can be added to the programme. With the development of multimedia software 'real' life scenarios, could be simulated and reviewed at home, giving a student the chance to revise everyday activities and their related vocabulary at home.

4.2 Multimedia and CALL Software

Language learning software is meant to provide an "integrated teaching solution" (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.31, 57-71). They suggest that software is bought in the belief that it will:

- provide realistic, native-speaker models of the language
- offer a language learning curriculum
- do a needs assessment
- determine the needs of a student
- record and evaluate student progress
- be conveniently available at all times.

Although a number of language learning packages take some of these points into consideration, each programme has been produced for a particular set of students (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). This suggests that the available software would not be appropriate for all language students. These programmes rarely allow for teacher-customisation and therefore can not be integrated into the lesson.

As has been previously discussed, a computer is not a substitute teacher and should not replace them, but a customised CALL programme could be used in conjunction with classroom lessons. As the integration of classroom lessons and CALL programmes is said to be beneficial to language learning, there should be a move towards more teachers or institutions creating their own custom made software. This would mean that each unique group of learners would be catered for specifically. Fitzpatrick and Davies (2003, p.5) state there will be "a shift from passive consumption of ready made programmes to independent building of content, tailor made for specific groups or

individuals”. As refugees have distinctly different needs from other learners, the production of a programme specifically for this group could be justified.

The next chapter examines the reasons for, and the development of, the software programme specifically designed for refugee language learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Project

5.1 Benefits for Refugees

The production of a CD-rom language programme for refugees would allow them greater opportunity for flexible and convenient learning at home and around their other obligations. With access to a computer, refugee students can make more choices with regards to where and when they learn, the activity they choose and the time they want to spend on it. Through this flexibility they have the choice of learning at home without compromising their work or family situation. A computer would enable refugee students to work at specific levels and at a pace that best suits them. However, for the programme to be effective, it would firstly be necessary for teachers to introduce the students to the appropriate computer skills required to work independently on the activities. Teachers would need to train the students who felt uneasy about technology and provide initial assistance (Toyoda; Burston & Monville-Burston, as cited Jones, 2001).

Once students were confident about using the technology involved, a customised programme based on that currently being used in Mangere could be reproduced on to a CD-rom. This could be used at home, in between classes or while on the waiting list for English classes. Rather than become a stand alone programme, it would work in conjunction with the more traditional way of teaching already on offer. All students regardless of age, gender or ability could use the programme. It would provide refugees with an extra tool to learn and practice the language while promoting their self-confidence.

5.2 Design Considerations

It was decided that an educational language learning tool combined with activities that taught useful skills, such as form filling would be developed. The practical aspects of presenting the material as a CD-rom rather than web based would mean that Internet access would not be an issue and could be used at various locations, for instance at libraries and community centres. Ideally the student would also use the Internet for communication and research if available.

The programme is designed to be straightforward and uncluttered so as not to confuse a user with limited experience of computers and software packages. To assist the user using the CD-rom, the programme will start automatically and a simple dictionary, glossary and instructions are offered for easy access. Throughout the programme a specially designed character acts as a 'Helper' allowing the user instant assistance.

The opening page is uncomplicated and has few distractions. The design of the buttons needed to be clear and self-explanatory to ensure refugees with no understanding of English could recognise the symbols and icons. The use of New Zealand icons and graphics in the programme is to highlight the idea that this is a specifically designed programme for newcomers to the country. The content, information and resources included in the software are

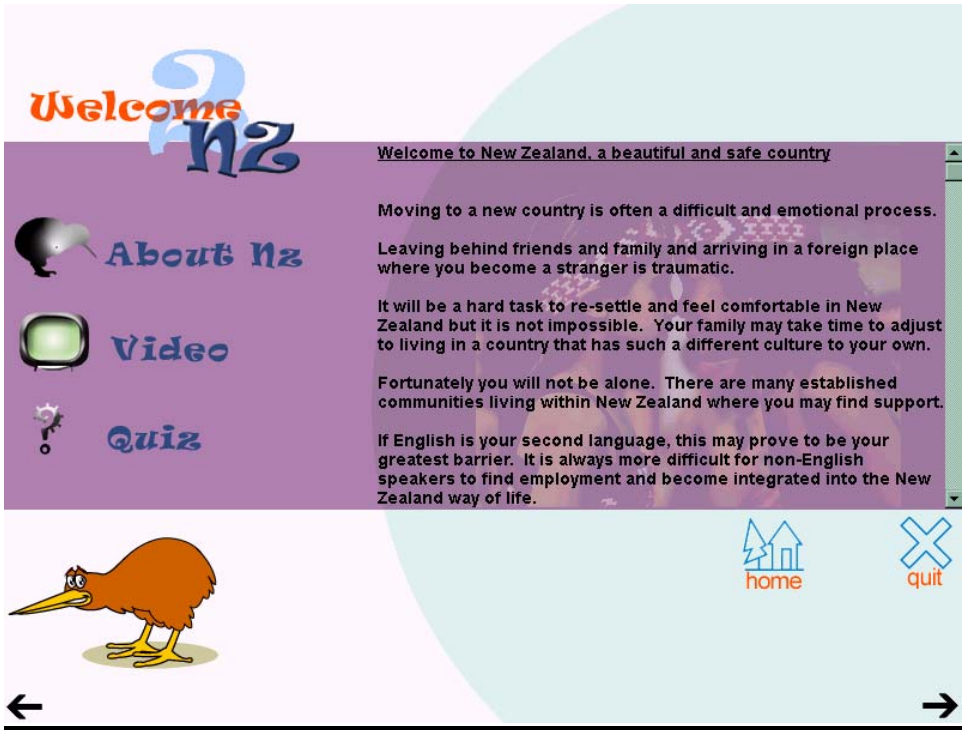

Figure 1 – The introduction page

relevant to those arriving in New Zealand strengthening the goal of providing an individual, learner-specific programme. In an improved version, an interactive character that follows the user through each task providing help and tips will replace the static kiwi bird.

The amount of text and the complexity of the language are also considerations. It is necessary to use appropriate language without confusing the user with an unnecessary amount of information. It needs to be basic and informative and simple yet not condescending. Gallois and Callan (1997) suggest low context language can be used when there is no inside knowledge on the part of the learner. This means that the language used will be kept simple so that a second language speaker can understand. Using low context language ensures that the instructions for the activities are explained clearly and ordered logically so that the programme can be easily followed and understood.

The programme is designed to provide interactivity that maintains the interest of the user, encourages them to use it again and again as well as offering them opportunities for learning. It was important to consider the different media type for each learning mode (McKay and Tom, 1999):

Seeing - The design incorporates still photographs with small amounts of text. In each section there is a short video to watch.

Hearing - A voice over was used so that the user can listen to as well as read the text. There is the option of listening to music.

Saying - The long-term goal is to provide the user with the opportunity to repeat words or phrases into a microphone.

Doing and Interacting - Interactive activities and a quiz at the end of each section provide the user the chance to test their knowledge. There are activities involving filling in missing words or phrases and plans to develop activities that include writing lists, letters or stories.

Thinking - The user needs to concentrate and focus on the question and answers within the programme. The computer informs the user whether answers are correct providing the student with the opportunity to self correct and improve their score.

Following each video the student will complete a quiz and interactive activities based on the particular theme. The game 'Matching body parts with the words' (Figure 2) follows 'Visiting the Doctors' section (Figure 4) and the 'Words and Letters' (Figure 3) activity follows the 'School' video. The modified version will include a number of activities all based on the theme and will cover the seven different learning modes of McKay and Tom, 1999 as discussed previously.

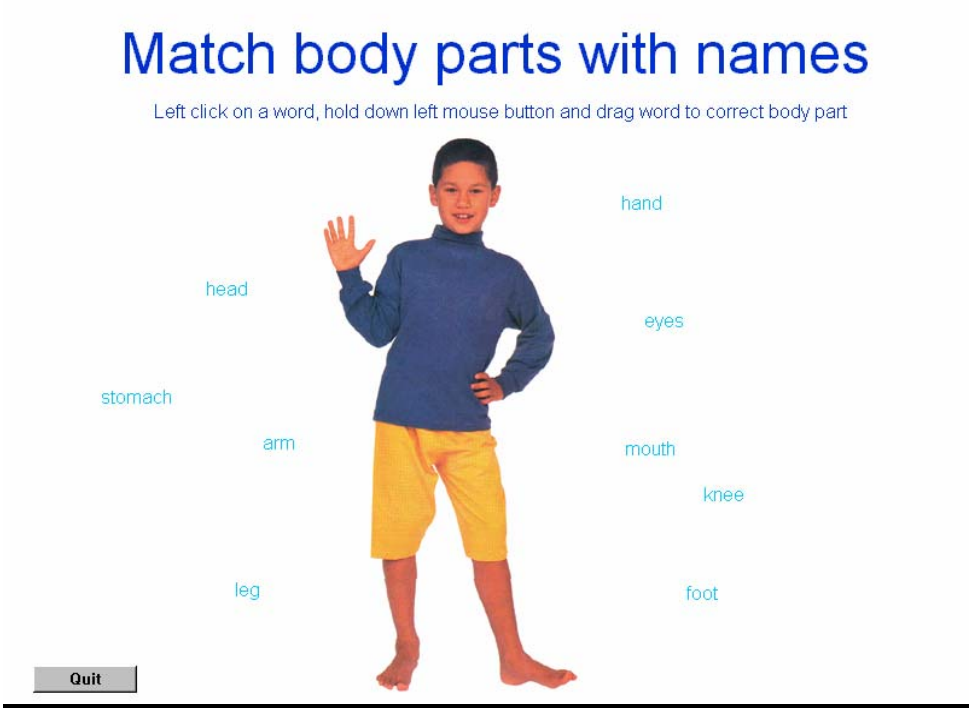

Figure 2 - Matching body parts with names

The two example activities in the programme both require the user to click on the correct answer and drag and drop the word into position. A 'correct' or a 'try again' signal will flash up depending on the outcome. The programme will automatically keep score so the user can have progress reports and certificates based on their results. This type of system was designed to ensure the student will return to improve on the final score. The choice of the phrase 'try again' rather than 'wrong' should help to avoid the feeling of failure if the user chooses an incorrect answer.

The two activities on the prototype disk are straightforward and possibly more suitable for beginners. The full-scale version of the software will incorporate themes with appropriate activities that correspond to the levels specified by AUT. Refugees could work on theme-based activities at an ability specific level and this would continue through their learning. The students will become accustomed to the layout of the programme and are more likely to experience a smooth transition from one level to the next. This process should also be beneficial for the teaching staff as they are able to alter the number and type of section as their students complete a level.

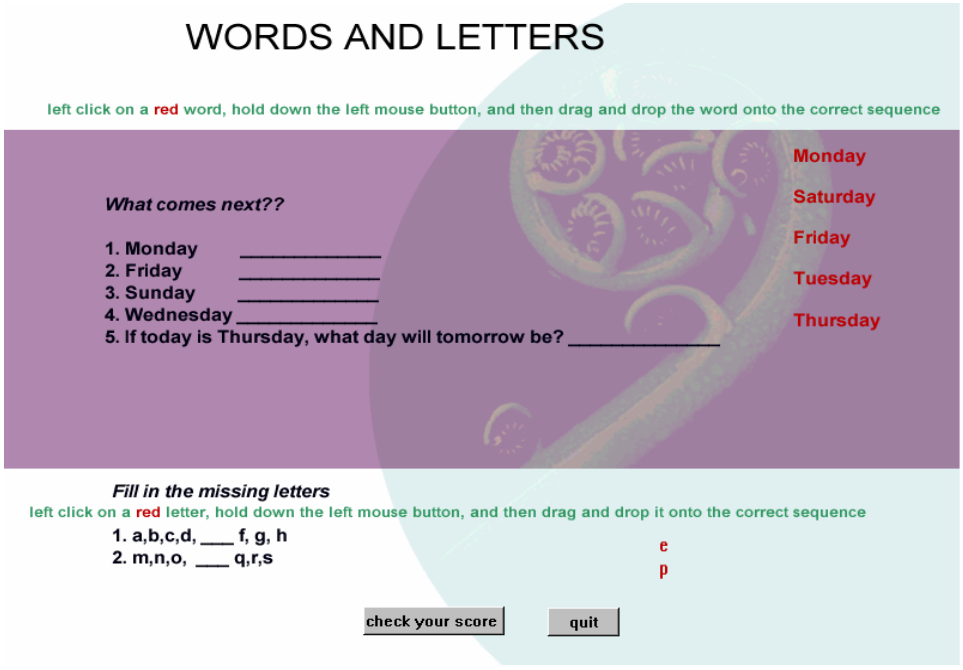

Figure 3 - Words and Letters

The programme is designed around themes that are easily understood by the user but also represent situations with which they are familiar or may become familiar. The themes decided on include school, visiting Work and Income, job interviews and visiting the doctor. Each of these sections contains a short video, a glossary of terms and useful information that is followed by a quiz and various activities based on each theme. These sections will present the opportunity for form filling by providing sample forms from WINZ, a Doctors' surgery or a school. This gives the learner a chance to practise these skills and the language associated with these activities. The learner may develop a greater sense of independence and confidence when confronted with the task in a real situation. The automatic scoring system will indicate the amount of information retained and allow the learner to measure his or her success. It also allows the teacher to keep records of attainment.

The content and themes used for all of the chosen videos represent recognisable situations. They are based on situations that many refugees will experience. The programme, whilst teaching language skills is meant to provide refugees with an overall picture of life in New Zealand. It is therefore important to include facts about Maori history and culture so refugees can have some understanding of their new environment and how they relate to others. This combination of learning is necessary otherwise they might experience a "feeling of homelessness where one feels neither bound firmly to

one's native culture nor fully adapted to the second culture" (Brown, cited Byram & Morgan, 1994, p.9). There needs to be a bridge between the cultures before "fruitful language learning takes place" (p.9).

During orientation at the Mangere Refugee Centre there are sessions that include 'Introduction to New Zealand' and 'The Maori' so it might be useful to include similar activities on the CD-rom. Although it is important to be aware of the culture of future users it must also be important to inform the user of the culture of New Zealand.

Some users may have no previous experience of life outside of their own homeland. Activities that are well-known to us may be unusual for others. While at Mangere, refugees are taught practical skills through activities such as measuring food, personal and food hygiene (Strauss and Hayward, 2005, p.9). By including ordinary scenarios, the user may become introduced more quickly to tasks they may encounter in the future.

By using common situations such as 'Visiting the Doctor' or 'Shopping' the user has the opportunity to review the sections before carrying out such a task. The idea of the 'Tips' section after each video is to provide the appropriate guidelines required for undertaking the specific tasks. Different cultures follow their own conventions when it comes to appropriate behaviour, actions and body language. The orientation programme at Mangere has a section on 'Social Customs' which deals with appropriate greetings, manners, touching and hygiene (Centre for Refugee Education, 2004).

Due to different social customs Gallois and Callan (1997) state there may be marked differences in the way people apply for jobs or attend interviews. In order to avoid discrimination by employers they need to know what is expected of them. The themes give the programme a balanced and well-organised appearance and ensure quick and straightforward movement to a specific section. The ability to visit particular sections individually will avoid the need for working through the whole programme each time. The decision to create a modular type programme should mean less time is spent searching for appropriate sections.

The optional glossary and extra text on the video page allow the user to verify the meaning of words and obtain further information. The modified version will provide

photographs and pictures in the dictionary for more emphasis. Using both aural and visual stimulation will help reinforce the vocabulary found in each section. Having this chance to listen, read, write and repeat the words will help the student with all aspects of learning and will provide a similar process to that found in the classroom.

As previously suggested, there had to be some understanding of the factors surrounding second language teaching and learning. There needed to be focus on the objectives and skills being taught and also consideration of the instructional materials that were already being used in the classroom. The learning objectives and requirements of the refugee students had to be considered as priority while the interactive games and quizzes would be built to best meet these needs. Once these issues were considered, suitable activities could be created.

5.3 Use of Video

It was decided that using video instead of still photography to demonstrate the scenarios such as visiting the doctor, would provide a more realistic version of an everyday event. It was felt that the user would have the opportunity to listen to the pronunciation, the grammar and the types of words being used in each scenario. These video clips could be discussed collaboratively and played out in class, giving the refugee the chance of practising the activity as a drama/role play exercise before carrying it out in real life.

In their comparison of refugee programmes in New Zealand, Norway and the Netherlands, Strauss and Hayward (2005, p.24) state that "the use of drama to deliver content appears to have many benefits". It was felt that drama can ease frustrations and aggression while helping students to bond with others. Although the drama classes were designed for school aged and young people, older refugees may benefit from similar activities.

5.3.1 Special Considerations

The recognition of cultural differences was important for the design of this programme. The decision to use actors from widely ranging ethnic backgrounds was in the hope that refugees would more easily relate to those in the programme. At each stage of development the feelings of the target audience were considered. Without a genuine interest or respect for refugees this programme would be ineffective. However it was

also necessary to present a true picture of New Zealand society in order to prepare the refugees for our culture and traditions. The choice of male (Figure 4) and female (Figure 5) actors to play authority roles was meant to demonstrate the responsibilities held by members of both genders in our society. Some refugees may have been brought up in male dominated societies where women are rarely seen in roles of responsibility. "Cultures higher in masculinity do tend to have sharp distinctions in the behaviour expected of men and women" (Gallois and Callan, 1997, p.31).

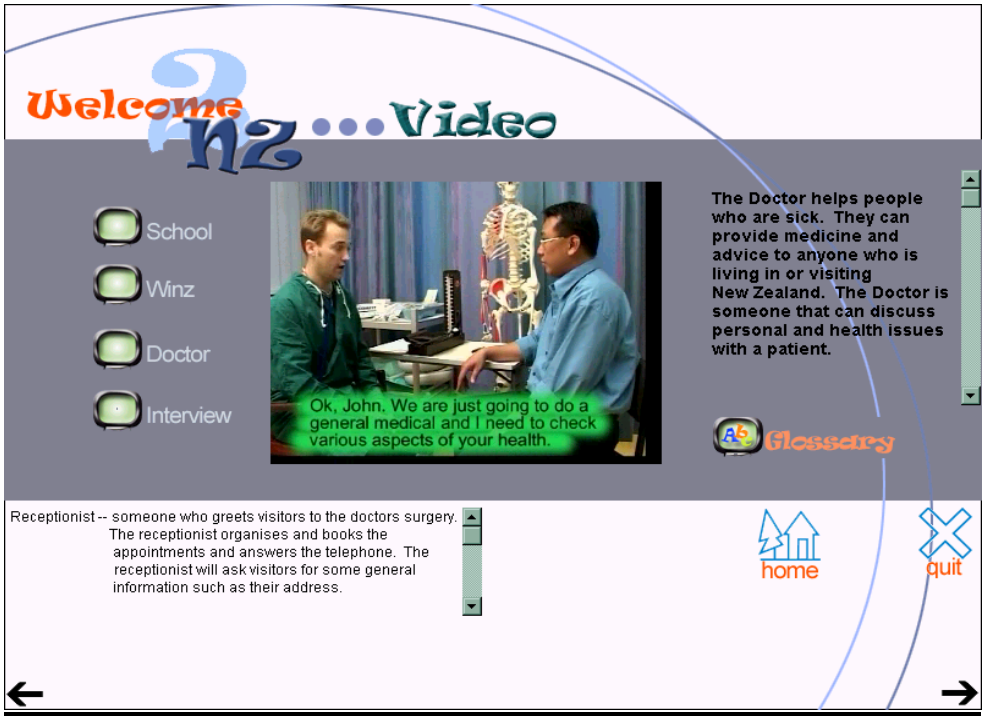

Figure 4 - 'Visiting the Doctor' video

The avoidance of stereotype positions is a useful way of combating prejudice and inequality while trying to change attitudes. Stereotypes are used to categorise others and ourselves and can be useful "in that they help us understand and predict the actions of others in our social world….They give us guidelines about people and situations." However, this in itself can present problems as people "may communicate with the stereotype….instead of the actual human being" (Gallois and Callan, 1997, p.89).

The use of images, photographs and the portrayal of people needed to be taken into account and chosen sensitively. Colours and graphics that are acceptable in New Zealand may be seen as unsuitable or offensive in other cultures. The colour red is seen to represent happiness and good luck in China (Answers.com) but is a sign of mourning

in South Africa (Fact Monster.com). The choice of symbols and shapes for the buttons needed thought because not all are universally recognised, for example a swastika in India is a symbol of all round prosperity while European countries would view that sign very differently (Indian Mirror.com).

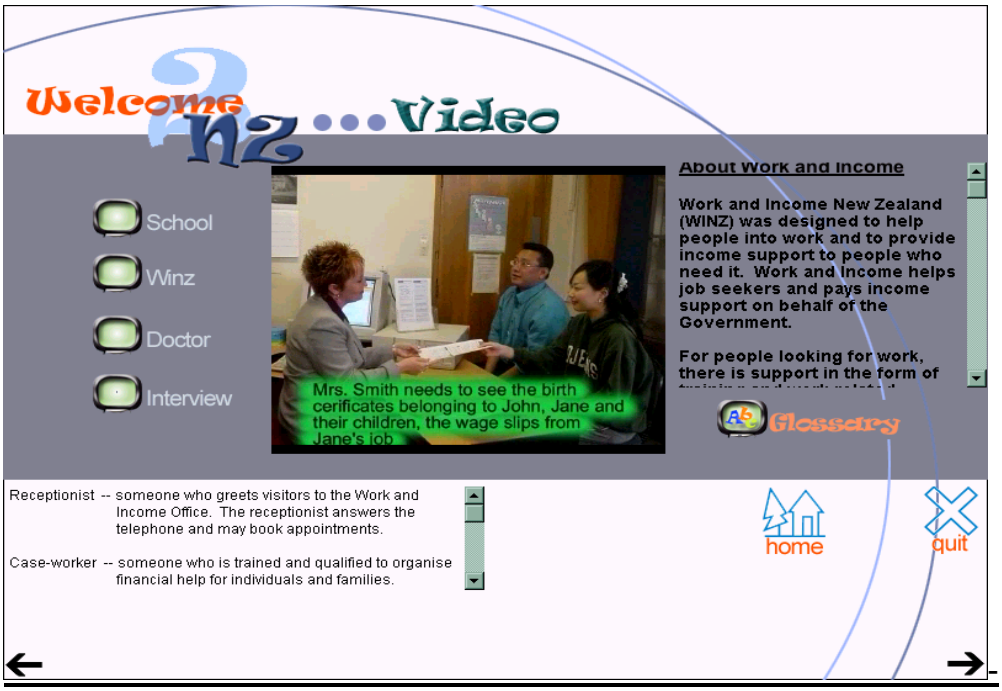

Figure 5 - 'Visiting Work and Income' video

There are many examples of words and phrase that mean "subtly different things or completely different things in one dialect and another such as "lift", "boot" or "it went down like a bomb" (Gallois and Callan, 1997, p.5). They also discuss the view that cultures differ greatly in their use of non-verbal behaviour and what is seen as appropriate. One example of different non-verbal behaviour is that in Japan smiling does not always convey happiness but it is often associated with "nervousness, social discomfort, or, in some cases, even extreme sorrow" (p.7).

While deciding which character to use as the 'Helper' it was decided that to use a New Zealand creature such as a 'Kiwi' or a 'Tuatara' would be an alternative to the use of an image of a person. People of different cultures may be offended by the use of a female as a voice of knowledge and by using a male image may simply strengthen stereotypes.

5.3.2 Actual Videos Used

Visiting the Doctor

Although recently arrived refugees undergo a medical as part of their orientation process, it is still important to prepare families for a visit to a local GP. An appointment with a doctor should be a normal task for everyone so by providing an indication of what to expect should make the refugees relaxed and confident during an actual visit.

The doctor's scene offers the user possible questions that may be asked, a list of requirements in order to register with a GP and a glossary of basic terms. The actor portraying the doctor presents him as a friendly and approachable character to ensure the refugee user again feels comfortable and unafraid of a future visit.

Enrolling at School

A school visit was chosen because it is inevitable that refugee parents will enrol their children once they have been housed. It is important that parents are aware of the documentation they will need to provide their school of choice, such as birth and medical certificates. A first school visit may be an unsettling experience for adult refugees who have had little or no educational experience themselves (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004). This may be particularly true for women refugees who are more likely to be the parent responsible for enrolling the children into school.

The New Zealand Immigration Service (2004, p.365) stated that "orientation to the school system for parents would be beneficial". Providing essential material regarding the school system within the video section will assist with this need. The school scene provides a list of requirements, possible questions and a glossary of terms. The school scene was filmed to create a friendly environment to put the user at ease.

Job Interview

The Job Interview scene was chosen because "(o)btaining work is *very* difficult for refugees" (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004, p.365). Although the English language barrier is a drawback, it is also recognised that cultural differences can be a disadvantage. Refugees who are unaware of the requirements, dress, attitudes or

behaviour necessary to obtain employment may become reliant on benefits. In order for refugees to successfully seek and keep a position, they need assistance with "job hunting techniques, interview skills, work place orientation, work culture and employer expectations" (p.366). The provision of this type of information in the job interview scenario will be useful to refugees.

Visiting Work and Income (NZ)

During the initial orientation process, quota refugees are registered with Work and Income and provided with information on their welfare entitlements. However, they will need to maintain contact with relevant staff while they continue to receive financial benefits and when the family situation alters such as through birth, death or a change in employment status.

Many refugees are unaware or unclear of their entitlements or the services provided by departments such as Work and Income. New Zealand Immigration Service (2004) has suggested that the orientation should include information regarding the role of Work and Income.

The Work and Income (NZ) scene includes a glossary of terms and a basic overview of services provided. This scenario was produced differently to the others in the video section. It was felt that the researcher was not knowledgeable enough in the services of Work and Income (NZ) and unaware of the exact questions and information to provide to the user. Instead the information used was gathered from the Work and Income website and the scene was played out as still photography rather than video.

In a future programme, a staff member from Work and Income (NZ) could be approached for this scene to ensure the material was relevant and appropriate for refugees. It will also be useful for further government departments or businesses to take part in similar tasks, for example, Housing New Zealand and New Zealand banks.

5.4 Benefits of a Custom Made Programme

Ideally the programme will be custom made, containing a number of skill levels that correspond with the proficiency of the student. Programmes should be created to suit individual needs by putting together the specific sections that are required. The various sections separated by ability levels could be accessible to staff through a main computer. The required sections could be selected, put together and either placed on CD-rom or used for a group of students at Mangere. This will allow for a more individualised programme for students and if continually updated and maintained it will give the staff an organised system. The time taken planning for classes and listing objectives will be reduced.

This approach is a flexible way of teaching and learning and may prove to be beneficial to the staff of language schools. Sections and themes can be chosen that are suitable for the ability, age and experience of each student and also relate to the topic that is being covered in the classroom. Once the software is complete, the teacher will easily be able to choose particular sections and copy them onto a CD-rom that an individual will take home. Games and activities can be added or removed as the student moves through each level.

The use of such a modular programme that is efficiently monitored and correctly used by language teachers should provide the student with a balanced learning environment. The teacher would promote independent study while providing constructive and supportive feedback. Any adult student who has little experience or confidence in learning may initially benefit from more teacher interaction. With the use of this technology a teacher should be able to choose activities, themes or sections to best suit a learner.

It is essential that teaching staff are consulted and their feedback incorporated into such a CD-rom. Therefore the initial programme was distributed to relevant teachers to ascertain the general opinion of the CD-rom as a learning tool. In the final chapter, the positive and negative feedback received is discussed and possible improvements are suggested for future developments.

CHAPTER SIX

Assessment of the Language Learning Programme

6.1 Informal Assessment Process

Several copies of the prototype were sent to staff from the Refugee and Migrant Services and the TOPS classes at Auckland University of Technology and informal feedback was solicited. Several refugee students, studying at AUT, also had the opportunity to trial the programme and offer an opinion or suggestion. Informal questions were asked in order to gauge the interest, personal opinions and views of members of staff, experienced with working with refugees. It was interesting to listen to and read the comments regarding the general design and the possibility of the programme becoming an effective teaching and learning tool.

6.2 Negative Feedback

The feedback received highlighted programming problems in the prototype such as difficulties with the sound button, unpopular colour of the text and the voice-over not quite matching the text. The dictionary was seen to be a useful element but the use of pictures with the words may prove more effective.

Another concern was that different learning levels were not catered for and it was difficult to decide whether the programme was designed for a beginner or more advanced learner. There were comments about the introduction being too difficult to read with complicated text and vocabulary while the quizzes were seen as too simple.

It was felt the video section played too quickly, not allowing the user time to pause and watch again. As the “Helper” had not been included in the prototype there were worries about the lack of instruction and assistance. These issues would be a challenge for a novice computer user or second language learner and may cause refugee students to become frustrated and lose interest.

To avoid misunderstanding the instructions, it was suggested that there could be the provision of first language translations so the students could move from English to a familiar language when in difficulty.

6.3 Positive Feedback

There was positive feedback with regard to the choice and use of themes and many considered the “scenarios themselves are well chosen” as they were “issues that are important to (the) audience”. The theory behind theme-based learning seemed important and worthwhile to those working in this field.

The use and quality of the video was applauded. There was a suggestion that the scenarios from the video could be used to develop role-play within a language class. The idea of providing a practical experience would offer the students a chance to learn from a real life situation was welcomed. The programme could then complement the materials and teaching while giving the “opportunity for independent study, inside and outside”.

Overall the programme was thought to have been “full of potential if some key changes (are) made”.

6.4 Response to Feedback

The comments made during the feedback are valid and many of these issues are easily rectified with further development and would not occur in the full version. Many of the comments were regarding flaws in the actual programming and can be improved with further work.

Early stages of planning had included a translation button; however the number of languages and dialects spoken by refugees would make this task problematic. Ideally, a future programme would have a translation feature.

Language learning research stresses the importance of learning levels. These levels are not well structured or evident in the trial programme. Unfortunately for this trial, time constraints meant that it was impossible to include every section and every activity that had been planned for. It was important to select example activities that can be developed to suit different abilities. It was understood that “(t)he purpose of any prototype is to test the initial implementation of your idea and improve on it based upon test results” (Vaughan, 2001, p.401).

The comments made through the feedback process were both positive and constructive and would be considered during any future development. One respondent ended with "Thanks for putting this resource together. With fine tuning it'll be excellent". The encouraging feedback outweighed the negative and the general opinion was that a custom made programme to suit refugee groups could make a positive contribution to the resettlement and education of New Zealand refugees.

6.5 Future Developments

The informal questions did offer some ideas for further research and development. The future improvement of this particular programme would be best organised with help from experts both in the field of language learning as well as those in multimedia production. The information gathered through research and from feedback has highlighted the need for additional stages of design to ensure each learning level is catered for and that the activities are more suitably structured.

The benefit of a CD-rom based programme is that people who are housebound by family, cultural commitments or lack of transport can use it at home and yet it can also be integrated into the language classroom. This whole idea of the importance of flexibility and providing a student more choices regarding his or her learning is widely accepted. Van den Brande (1993) states that flexibility ensures the needs of the learner are met. The student is able to choose when and how and what they learn which brings about successful learning. By being adaptable the CD-rom ensures that those individual needs are taken into account.

The research highlighted the particular needs of refugee women. Specific modules discussing issues including PTSD, women's health, childcare and family responsibilities could benefit an isolated female refugee. Ideally online forums, advice units and email contact may assist women who are unable to leave the home.

There are positive reasons for the introduction of user specific software; however any difficulties, the time frame and cost of production would need to be considered. The inclusion of a translation option for many different languages and the development of an individualised programme of study would be a long-term goal. Even so the

contribution a new system would make to the lives of present and future refugees should overshadow the problems associated with programming and development.

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