Canada has had a long history of immigration; immigration policies, especially those pertaining to language proficiency of its official languages (English and/or French) and education, have changed over the years. Since the mid-1960s, immigration policies have changed significantly where Canada implemented the points system to screen for and draw well-educated immigrants with special skills. These immigrants had high expectations that their education and skills would be utilized. They were, however, deeply disappointed once they arrived, finding a considerable degree of occupational mismatch, limiting them from achieving their full potential. Several studies provided different reasons for this mismatch such as the large number of immigrants Canada receives every year, the local labour market condition, etc.

This study uses critical language policy as a framework to probe into the reasons why, despite the strict pre-selection criteria, educated immigrants in Canada are not realizing their potential, and tries to identify the possible reasons. First, I situate the context of the study by describing the changes in the language criteria to pre-select immigrants to Canada. Second, I analyze the rationales provided by different policy actors for the constant change in immigration criteria against empirical data from studies/research on the situation of new immigrants. Finally, a few recommendations will be made.