Friendship, exclusion and power: A study of two South Australian schools with New Arrivals Programmes

Damien W. Riggs

School of Social Work

Flinders University

Clemence Due

School of Psychology

The University of Adelaide

Abstract

Young people who have recently arrived in Australia face considerable challenges in making connections to their new community. Whilst starting school can provide opportunities to make such connections, it may in reality also serve to reinforce perceptions or experiences of social exclusion perpetuated within the broader Australian society. Drawing upon focus group data collected from two South Australian primary schools that have a New Arrivals Programme, this paper outlines the relative infrequency with which friendships between Australian-born and refugee or migrant children occur, and explores some of the reasons behind this. The findings also highlight the different attributions that the two groups of students make for forming friendships, and explores the implications of this for social inclusion. The paper concludes by suggesting the need for ongoing examinations of how newly arrived students are engaged within primary schools, and the ways by which terms for inclusion are framed.

Introduction

For young children who arrive in Australia seeking asylum (either with their families or alone), the task of becoming part of a new community may seem almost insurmountable. Not only will children who arrive as refugees (and indeed those who arrive as part of a planned migration) likely have faced considerable hardship in their birth country (which may be accompanied by significant trauma), but this hardship will likely not end upon their arrival in Australia. Children who arrive through channels deemed 'illegal' (i.e., not via humanitarian visas) face long periods of uncertainty about their future, and most who arrive in this way will experience mandatory detention for at least some period of time. Such a 'welcome' to Australia thus does little to begin the work of supporting them in connecting to a new community. For those who hold humanitarian visas or who arrive as part of planned migration, the process of establishing a place in a new community (with values and practices different to those of their birth country) is equally likely to be experienced as challenging.

One of the key opportunites where most young people have the possibility of developing connections to their community occurs when they start attending school. Yet whilst school for many Australian-born children presents such opportunities to grow and develop friendships, for children who arrive in Australia seeking asylum or through planned migration (and who do not speak English), school can be a site of further exclusion. For example, Australian research on friendship and refugee children suggests that the ongoing effects of trauma can significantly undermine trust or certainty in other people, which can prohibit children forming meaningful relationships (Sims, Hayden, Palmer, & Hutchins, 2000). Furthermore, friendships are often formed via shared interests or histories, and are often reliant upon the ability to share with friends one's home or to invite another into one's own space. Children who have recently arrived in Australia may have little sense of 'home' within Australia, and may struggle to understand the rules for engagement that shape friendship patterns in the specific context of Australia (Anderson, 2001).

Of course any difficulties in forming friendships in Australia for children who have recently arrived are not simply the product of such children's 'lack' of cultural skills. Ongoing debates within Australia over our treatment of refugees, in addition to ongoing

incidences of xenophobia against all migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB), means that Australian-born children will potentially hold a range of views or stereotypes that will prohibit the formation of friendships with children who have recently arrived in the country. Yet despite the fact that difficulties in developing friendships across cultural backgrounds is always the product of all parties involved, it is often the case that attribution of fault is placed primarily with children from NESB. Closs, Stead, Arshad, and Norris (2001) found this to be the case in their research on the experiences of refugee children in Scotland, where they suggest that "most reasons given for difficulties in peer relationships – by teachers, parents and even by some children themselves – still cited in-child differences in the minority groups. Difference was thus perceived as one-sided, rather than two-sided" (p. 145).

Exclusionary practices both at the level of individuals and as a part of the wider Australian society thus function to undermine any attempts that refugee or migrant children make in forming friendships with Australian-born children. In their Australian research on the successful practices of one kindergarten with a high population of Indigenous children, Imtoual, Kameniar and Bradley (2009) suggest that when hospitality is offered to marginalised groups solely on terms set by the dominant group, this perpetuates unequal power relations whereby it is typically the case that those in positions of power will determine whether or not marginalised groups are made welcome. For refugee or migrant children, the potential lack of genuine hospitality (as evidenced by mandatory detention or xenophobia for example) will likely impact upon their willingness to attempt to build friendships with Australian-born children. Certainly Anderson (2001) suggests this to be the case for refugee children in Germany, who may choose friendships with other refugee children (even if from other countries) through a shared sense of exclusion. Mosselman (2006) further suggests that refugee children in the US may display 'masks of achievement', whereby they succeed at school in their studies, but experience a high level of social isolation. We would further suggest that the physical and emotional effort required to learn a new language and new routines (in addition to ongoing familial responsibilities) may leave little energy to build friendships. This of course begs the question as to what is the purpose of children from NESB being pushed to learn English if this is not adequately accompanied by social inclusion or connection to the wider community.

This point about the gap between forms of integration as traditionally understood (i.e., through 'hard work' and English language acquisition) and the actual sense of

community that refugee and migrant children feel welcomed into (or not), brings us to our own research on the experiences of such children in Australian primary schools that have a New Arrivals Programme (NAP). As we report in the remainder of this paper, and drawing upon data collected in two South Australian schools, friendships between NAP and non-NAP students appear very rare. We suggest that the reasons for this extend beyond language barriers, and incorporate very concrete practices of exclusion that occur in the two schools. After reporting our findings, we conclude this paper by exploring some of the ways in which schools with NAPs could better work to support all students in forming friendships in ways that challenge, rather than perpetuate, exclusionary practices.

Method

Data Collection

The first stage of the project involved ethnographic observations of the use of space by students in two South Australian primary schools, referred to here as Hills Primary School (HPS) and Plains Primary School (PPS). Ethics approval was granted for the project both by the University of Adelaide and the Department of Education and Children's Services. Ethnographic observations were conducted within the schoolyards by the second author. The second aspect of this first stage of the research involved questionnaires administered to teachers at both schools on which they reported their perceptions of space-use and inclusion within their school. Findings from these two aspects of the first stage of the project are reported elsewhere (Authors, in-press), but in general the findings indicate that NAP students experience considerable exclusion within schoolyard spaces, and that power dynamics between NAP and non-NAP students are often legitimated through a discourse of 'lack' on the part of NAP students (i.e., it is their responsibility to bridge differences between groups as they 'lack' English language skills).

The second stage of the research involved photo elicitation and focus groups held with small numbers of students from each school. These were held once the ethnographic observation stage of the research was complete and it was felt that the second author had built a rapport with staff and students at the primary schools. NAP vice-principals at each school were asked to work with classroom teachers to identify a representative sample of

NAP and non-NAP students from all year levels to participate in the photo elicitation and focus groups. These students were not randomly chosen due to the need for them to have the English language skills required to participate in focus groups. This meant that the NAP students participating in the research were those who had been in Australia, and at the school, for a longer period of time.

Once the sample of students was chosen, information sheets and consent forms were sent home to parents. As with the ethnographic stage of the research, this meant that consent was not gained from the students themselves, although it was assumed that parents would not ask their children to participate in the project if the child expressed a wish not to do so. Indeed, in several instances parents did not sign forms, stating that their child did not wish to be involved.

After receiving signed consent forms, the second author worked with NAP vice-principals to conduct the photo elicitation stage. Photo elicitation is a research method which involves incorporating photographs taken by participants into a focus group or interview, meaning that the discussion will be centred around the photographs (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). As Darbyshire, MacDougall and Schiller (2005) write, this means that research involving children is able to be child-driven, and to revolve around issues identified by children through their photos as important to them. There is a body of previous research conducted with children using photo elication (Darbyshire et.al., 2005; Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Newman, Woodcock & Dunham, 2006; Burke, 2005), which suggests that using photography together with other research methods adds an extra dimension and flexibility to research conducted with children.

In conjunction with the second author, each school had its own protocols for running the photo elicitation period. At HPS, photo elicitation was conducted over three different sessions, with NAP junior primary students, NAP middle and upper primary students, and non-NAP students taking their photos on separate occasions. At PPS, however, the photo elicitation was conducted on only one occasion. All photo-taking sessions were held at lunch time, meaning that students had around forty-five minutes at each school to take photos. Students were given a disposable twelve-exposure camera and were given instructions on how to use it. All students were then told to take photos of things in the school which were important to them, and that these could be either people or spaces. They were told they did not have to take all twelve photos if they did not wish to.

Once the photos were developed, the second author conducted focus groups with students in order to discuss the photos that they took. These were held as soon as possible after the photo elicitation so that the photos were fresh in participants' minds. Again, the second author worked with the schools in order to ensure that focus groups were conducted in a manner deemed appropriate to the site. At each school, NAP and non-NAP focus groups were held separately and students were split into groups of junior, middle and upper primary school students. In general, these groups contained between four and six students from a similar year level. During these sessions, the second author began a general conversation by asking students to choose the photos they liked the most, and to think about why they took each photo. The second author then spoke individually to students, asking probe questions such as why the photo was taken and what students liked or disliked about it. As such, focus groups contained a mixture of both group discussion and individuals speaking about their photos to the second author. The focus groups were tape recorded, and data was then transcribed to allow for analysis.

Participants

At each school, consent forms were sent home to forty students (twenty NAP and twenty non-NAP students) who were selected to participate in the research. At HPS, forms were received back from twelve NAP students (6 boys and 6 girls) and thirteen non-NAP students (6 boys and 7 girls). One of the non-NAP boys was away on the day the focus groups were held, meaning that focus groups were held with 24 students at HPS. Students were evenly spread across year levels, with around four students from both NAP and non-NAP from each of the junior, middle and upper primary groups. At PPS, forms were received back from nineteen NAP students (8 boys and 11 girls) and eighteen non-NAP students (10 boys and 8 girls). One NAP boy and one NAP girl, and one non-NAP boy were away the day the focus groups were held, meaning that focus groups were held with 34 students at PPS. Again, students were evenly represented from all primary school year levels. The findings reported in this paper focus upon junior primary students from both schools, though the patterns reported were virtually identical across all year levels.

Analysis

Through thematic analysis of the focus group transcripts, the topic of friendship was identified as a key theme spoken about across all groups. Whilst this obviously was a trigger word introduced at times by the second author as interviewer, it was also a topic that students frequently introduced when explaining the images that they chose to focus on. In the analysis that follows we focus on two main areas that were evident within all of the extracts focusing on friendship: interactions between NAP and non-NAP students, and the attributions that members of each group made for forming friendships. As we discuss, these two areas of focus in relation to friendships have important implications for how NAP students in particular make friends, and how exclusion may continue to occur within the schools.

Across Group Friendship Patterns

Findings from the focus groups suggest interesting parallels with findings from our analyses of the ethnographic and teacher questionnaire data, as well as some important differences. In regards to the latter, we were interested to note that some non-NAP students reported playing with other students across classes. In our previous findings we noted that whilst NAP students tended to play across NAP classes (primarily due to cultural similarities with students in other classes), non-NAP students tended to stick with their classmates during break times. In the focus group data, however, some non-NAP students spoke of having friends from across many classes, such as in the following extract from a student at HPS:

> Interviewer: And how did you become friends with her?
> HPSNN1: ummm we play together
> Interviewer: and what classroom is she in?
> HPSNN1: ummm X classroom
> Interviewer: and what class room did you say you were in?
> HPSNN1: Y classroom
> Interviewer: and in this photo? Is this the same girl?
> HPSNN1: Yes

Interviewer: Is she in your class or different class

HPSNN1: different class

Interviewer: different class – you've got friends from all the classes!

HPSNN2: I do as well.

Here a non-NAP student identifies friends from across a range of classes, and when this is remarked upon by the second author, another student comments that he too has friends from across classes. It is important to note, however, that it was only a relative minority of non-NAP students who reported such cross-class friendships, and as we discuss in the following section, there were specific attributions for such cross-class friendships amongst non-NAP students that differed from cross-class friendships amongst NAP students.

In regards to similarities with our previous data, there were almost no reports by either NAP or non-NAP students of friendships between the groups. One non-NAP student from HPS included an older NAP student in some of her photos, but upon discussion it became evident that this was largely the case because they had been paired as part of the school's buddy system:

Interviewer: Why do you play with [the two students in the photo]?

HPSNN3: umm because I like following her and yesterday she gave me a present

Interviewer: a present? And how did you guys become friends?

HPSNN3: um because last year my friend had [the student] and then this year [the student] just wanted to be with me

Interviewer: ahhh so what did [your friend] do with her?

HPSNN3: umm she was first the little buddy then I was the little buddy

Interviewer: little buddy? So [the student is] your buddy?

HPSNN3: yeah

Here, when the second author orients the conversation to the topic of friendship, the student both accepts the category 'friend' in relation to the NAP student, but also makes it clear that there are reasons for the friendship: that they were paired as part of the buddy system, that this pairing happened upon the instigation of the NAP student ('this year the student just wanted to be with me'), and that there are benefits to being friends with the

student ('yesterday she gave me a present'). Whilst the non-NAP student speaking in the extract does state that she 'likes following' the NAP student, it is nonetheless important to note that this relationship between a NAP and non-NAP student was largely the product of the school buddy system, rather than NAP and non-NAP students seeking out friendships with one another. Across all of the interviews from both schools this was only one of two instances where any student reported any form of ongoing NAP/non-NAP relationship.

Also mirroring our ethnographic and questionnaire data was the finding from the focus groups and photo elicitation that very little cross-play occurred between NAP and non-NAP students. This was the case at both schools, however NAP students at PPS photographed non-NAP and vice versa more often than at HPS. Out of the seventeen NAP and seventeen non-NAP students at PPS, two non-NAP students and five NAP students took photos of students from across this division. Interestingly, all except one of these students stated that they either didn't like the student in the photo or that they used to be in a class with the student. Only one of the students at PPS (a non-NAP student) stated that they were friends with a Norwegian NAP student simply because 'they were cool'.

Similarly, our earlier findings suggested that whilst the two groups sometimes played in the same areas, there were rarely interactions between the groups in which they actually played together. This was echoed in photos that both groups took which rarely contained images of NAP and non-NAP students playing together. When this did appear, non-NAP students clearly marked this as 'just' play, rather than the play signifying friendship, such as in the following extract from a male student at PPS:

> Interviewer: ok – and what else was I going to ask you? Do you play with NAP kids much?
> PPSNN1: mmmm - just handball – and soccer

This type of statement was often made by the few non-NAP students whose photos contained pictures of NAP students – that they 'just' played in the same area. Notably, it was typically boys you took such photos and made these comments, which again reiterates our previous findings that sporting activities can result in NAP and non-NAP boys playing together, but that this play rarely if ever extended beyond the sport into friendships. This is shown by the fact that NAP and non-NAP boys appeared to play sports together at lunchtimes even when they stated that they did not like each other and were not friends.

Figure 1 shows a photo taken by a non-NAP student at HPS. The image shows a group of boys playing 4-square, one of whom is a NAP student. The non-NAP student who took the photo stated he was friends with all the boys except the NAP student, as discussed in the following extract:

Interviewer: let's have a look – these are all your friends?

HPSNN4: he's not

Interviewer: this one here? Who's he?

HPSNN4: ummm [name] who's in [a NAP class]

Interviewer: ok but he's playing handball with your friends? Why are you playing together?

HPSNN4: huh?

Interviewer: why are you playing if you're not his friend?

HPSNN4: I don't know, 'cos me and that boy that's on the other side of him

Interviewer: behind him?

HPSNN4: yeah because we were playing and then we went to them and they were playing with him

Unlike boys, however, girls were much less likely to photograph across the NAP/non-NAP boundary, and in some instances spoke explicitly about divisions between NAP and non-NAP students. This can be seen in the extract below which is taken from a focus group discussion with a group of non-NAP girls from PPS.

Interviewer: so what about NAP students do they hang out there [the oval]?

PPSNN2: no they usually play handball or basketball or soccer

Interviewer: the boys do?

PPSNN2: yeah

Interviewer: what about the girls?

PPSNN2: they play skipping and stuff

PPSNN3: yeah they usually hang out between their units – green unit and yellow unit

Interviewer: like around their classroom?

PPSNN2: yeah 'cos there's a bit of grass area

Interviewer: so how come – is there a reason you don't play with them or just 'cos you stay in your class or?

PPSNN4: umm stay in class…

PPSNN2: sometimes you just come up and say hello and yeah

PPSNN3: and the others that are next to us they usually play handball near where we sit

Interviewer: ok – cool

PPSNN4: they don't really like us

PPSNN2: yeah we don't usually talk to them the NAP kids 'cos they aren't used to like…

PPSNN3: we can't talk to them…

PPSNN2: they seem like

PPSNN3: they do like stuff that we don't like to do…

PPSNN2: yeah they – when we come up to them they stare so, it's like we ruin their game

Interviewer: like it ruins their game for you guys to turn up?

PPSNN2: yeah

This extract illustrates the fact that the 'blame' for divisions and lack of interaction between NAP and non-NAP students is frequently apportioned to NAP students, despite the relative lack of power these students may have to join the play of non-NAP students. However, the extract also suggests a possible resistance on the part of the NAP students to non-NAP students who may be encroaching on their play, a point we return to in our conclusion.

It is important to note that these few examples of NAP and non-NAP students interacting (and in the case of the 'buddy' extract potentially being in some sort of relationship, even if the non-NAP student did not label it a friendship) were reported by non-NAP students from their photos. None of the NAP students in either school reported friendships with non-NAP students. As we discuss in the following section, there may be particular reasons for this that relate primarily to issues of power as it pertains to language.

Reasons for Friendships within Groups

In one paper reporting our previous findings (Authors, in-press), we suggested that the perception that English language acquisition will solve issues of exclusion that NAP students face fails to consider the power dynamics that exist within schools amongst students. More specifically, we suggested that NAP students, at least in some instances, may view English language as a tool used in their oppression, and may resist it in preference for their own language. Discussions amongst NAP students in the focus groups suggested that this may well be the case, such as in the following extract from a student at HPS:

> Interviewer: so you would play with other students [besides your friend] if you have to?
>
> HPSN1: yes
>
> Interviewer: but you would prefer not to? Is that kind of how it is?
>
> HPSN1: yes
>
> Interviewer: ok – any reason or just 'cos she is your friend?
>
> HPSN1: mmmm just 'cos I never really get to talk [my language] much – like I can with my friend and stuff…
>
> Interviewer: and you girls can talk [your language] together?
>
> HPSN1: yes
>
> Interviewer: ok – you miss talking [your language]?
>
> HPSN1: yes

For this student, having friendships that allow her to speak her own language is considered very important, not in small part because she misses talking her language. Of course this student's desire to have friendships with other students who speak the same language could potentially be read through the lens of dominant understanding of English language acquisition, which would depict this student's motivations to friendship with other students who speak her language as a 'failure' to integrate or do the work required to be included. Yet we would suggest, in contrast, that being supported in speaking her language may be an important experience for this student, and that the context of the school in general (where the majority of people speak English) could well be experienced as exclusionary.

Whilst many NAP students spoke of being friends with other NAP students because of a shared language (a finding that mirrors our other data), non-NAP students spoke of the reasons for their friendships in quite different ways, as is exemplified in the following extract from a students at PPS:

Interviewer: So these are friends from your class? Why do you play with them?
PPSNN5: Because I like them – they are my best friends.

This attribution of 'best friends' was made repeatedly by students in non-NAP classes, but only very rarely by students in NAP classes. As indicated in the previous extract, there was normally a pragmatic reason for NAP students forming friendships with other NAP students (i.e., language or cultural similarities). For non-NAP students, however, none mentioned any form of cultural matching in their reasons for friendships. Our point here of course is not that friendships amongst NAP students are any less genuine on the basis of their motivations for friendship with other NAP students from similar backgrounds. Rather, our point is that, in a school where the majority of people speak English, and where the customs and practices of the school are orientated to the culture of the dominant group, those who do not speak English or identify with the dominant culture will have fewer options to form friendships on the basis of a wide range of factors. Non-NAP students have the relative privilege of being able to presume that most other students will understand their speech, have similar experiences in life, and will likely not have experiences of forced migration. NAP students, by contrast, will on the whole be unable to make such presumptions, a fact that will clearly shape the friendships they form. Finally, we would note that in the few instances that NAP students *did* make an attribution of 'best friends', this was still closely connected to a shared background, as can be seen in the following extract from a student at PPS:

Interviewer: oh ok! And who's that
PPSN1: that's my friend
Interviewer: your friend?
PPSN1: my best friend
Interviewer: Your best friend! How come?

PPSN1: because she comes from [the same country as me]!

Here the attribution 'best friend' is clearly connected to a shared background. Whilst it would be fair to state that non-NAP students make friends with students from similar background (but that they don't need to state this as they live in their birth country and are thus so immersed in it that they don't see it as a point to comment on), the salience of this reason for friendship for NAP students is, we think, significant. Particularly if we are to think about friendships as closely related to the ways in which students move in school spaces, then for NAP students who feel only able to connect with a small number of students, their sense of freedom to move throughout the school may be severely curtailed. Indeed, this was found to be a common theme in the photographs students took, where NAP students frequently photographed spaces around the edges of the school rather than those spaces which could be considered 'main' (such as playgrounds or ovals). A typical example of such a photo can be seen in Figure 2, which shows two groups of NAP students at PPS playing around a tree in an area located close to their classrooms, but away from the main play areas in the school:

[INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

For non-NAP students, by comparison, the implicit presumption that they can easily be friends with most students significantly increases their ability to consider the entire school as their space. Obviously such perceptions on the part of non-NAP students will be shaped by the norms of the school and the in-group/out-group exclusions that inform all friendship groups. Nonetheless, when compared to NAP students, non-NAP students are more likely to have a wider range of options available to them when forming friendships (as a result of less barriers). As we discuss in our conclusion, we would suggest that a simplistic response to this (i.e., that if NAP students spoke English then they too would be able to form friendships with a wider group of students) fails again to recognise how culturally-based power dynamics within schools will likely continue to shape friendships groups unless issues of cultural privilege and the effects of social exclusion are addressed.

Conclusion

The findings reported here indicate several key issues at stake in the two schools where our project was conducted. First, it appears that very few NAP/non-NAP friendships occur. The data suggest that this may be partly due to language and cultural differences (which lead NAP students *and* non-NAP students to play with students from their own culture or language group, albeit for significantly different reasons), and partly due to a possible active disinterest toward cross-group friendships on the part of both groups. Second, it is plausible that NAP and non-NAP students have different motivations to form friendships, though again it should be stated that we are not placing a value upon one type of motivation over another, nor do we make this statement without being mindful of how the culture of the schools may curtail the choices of some NAP students.

Of course this (relatively negative) picture of the schools is only part of the picture. As we suggested earlier in the paper, it is possible that some NAP students actively refuse to play with non-NAP students in order to develop their own communities or to ensure that they can play with people who they feel understand their life experiences. Certainly Mosselson (2006), in her research on refugee students in the US, found that such students felt that non-refugee students were not interested in hearing about their lives prior to being in the US, and that this made them feel that their experiences were not valued. We do not have data on this topic from our project, but it is fair to suggest that some NAP students in South Australian schools may be unwilling to open themselves to friendships with non-NAP students if they perceive them to be uncaring as to their experiences. At the same time, however, and drawing on our other findings from this project (Authors, in-press), we would suggest that it is likely not always the case that NAP students play separately by choice. It is likely also the case that exclusion occurs within the schools on the part of non-NAP students, and that this hinders opportunities for NAP students to build relationships.

In regard to this latter point, Close and colleagues (2001) suggest the importance of providing learning opportunities for refugee students that place them in direct working relationships with non-refugee students. In Australia, whilst the formation of NAPs in certain schools is an important initiative that recognises the unique needs of recently arrived children, it is important also to continually assess how this may or may not provide adequate opportunities for NAP and non-NAP students to interact, and importantly, how it may at times serve to perpetuate xenophobia or at least a perception amongst non-NAP students that segregation is always the best response to cultural differences. To combat this type of possible perception, it is thus important that schools teach non-NAP students about

the effects of cultural privilege as being a corollary of disadvantage, and that all students are encouraged to place themselves in a relationship to global inequities that are often productive of forced migration (Matthews, 2008). Recognising the cultural practices of non-NAP students *as cultural practices* may help to facilitate an understanding of culture as something held by all groups, thus refusing an approach that would exoticise NAP students through a well-meaning 'focus on the other'.

Relatedly, it is important that NAP students are seen as embodied subjects, rather than simply as objects of enforced change. Whilst global power inequities mean that certain groups of people are displaced or forced to seek asylum outside their birth country due to war or other threats of violence, it is not the case that such groups are solely objects of power: they also have the capacity to act as agents in their own lives. Moving away from an approach to understanding migration that emphasises either pity or benevolence, and towards one that recognises the capacity of all children to make positive change in their lives given the opportunity, may help to counter both xenophobia amongst non-NAP students, and also to accord value to the experiences and knowledges that NAP students bring to schools as active subjects.

Of course the claims that we have made in this paper about the experiences of junior primary students across two South Australian primary schools are not generalisable to all schools with NAPs. In this regard it is important to note that the project was unable to gain insight into the experiences of NAP students who were only very recently arrived in the country and were very new to the school, as we did not have access to interpreter services. Nonetheless, we believe that the findings presented from this project offer important insight into the ways in which power functions in school settings to shape the friendships that NAP and non-NAP students form. Whilst potential resistances may be evident, and whilst it is important to recognise the agency of NAP students in making active choices about their lives, it is also necessary to acknowledge that exclusion does continue to occur, often in relatively mundane ways. As such, and regardless of the work that NAP students may put into English language acquisition, there will continue to barriers to their genuine inclusion in school spaces (and the broader community) until all dominant group members in both the school community and society more broadly consider how the terms we offer for 'hospitality' continue to limit the sense of belonging that recently arrived children and their families experience.

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