

Members of a language class in a Toronto public school. Instruction is given to children in small groups, often comprised of several nationalities. Learning a new language is not nearly so difficult for children as for their parents and with a little help they quickly catch up to the others in their classes.

New Accents in the Class Room

By Helen Champion



IN CANADA a boy can be the Prime Minister or a super star in the National Hockey League," an immigrant father explained, adding confidently: "There are great opportunities here for my children."

His view epitomizes a salient feature of Canadian immigration: that a strong motivating force is the desire of parents to ensure a better future for their children.

In many cases parental dreams are coming true. Immigrant children are making the best of their opportunities.

Three years ago, Dutch-born Betty Kragten couldn't speak a word of English. This year she won the gold medal in an Ontario public speaking contest. Hers was not an isolated triumph. She was following in the footsteps of fellow-countrymen, Thomas Kuiper, who won an oratorical championship in 1959, and Wybe Bylsma who had won a trophy and cash award in a public speaking contest in 1958.

At the Ottawa Technical School, in June, 1961, John Bormanis, a Latvian immigrant, led his grade XII class.

Two winners of the 1961 "Adventure in Citizenship" contest, sponsored by the Rotary Clubs across Canada, were Italian-born Frank Bucciarelli and Dutch-born Matthias Sikkes.

In Nova Scotia, Billy Wong, a Chinese New Canadian who knew no English when he arrived in Canada seven years ago, was invested this year as a Queen's Scout.

Nor is 1961 an exceptional year.

A Flemish-Canadian, Silvere Brochez, was named Canada's top Sea Cadet for 1959; a Dutch-Canadian, Jack Heynen, won the Boy-

of-the-Month award in Lethbridge in 1958.

Many others have achieved enviable scholastic records and won valuable scholarships and bursaries: German-born Helmut Hesse in Newfoundland, Uve von Harpe and Marlene Schick in Ontario are examples.

Immigrant students have had similarly high records in institutions of higher learning. A Polish-born student, Joseph Schatzker, who couldn't speak English twelve years ago, was the top medical graduate at the University of Toronto in 1960.

Another Polish-Canadian student, Mark Jablonski, made his mark — musically. He was a consistent winner of scholarships and festivals in Canada, and in 1960 won the \$1,000 Lhevinne Award at the Julliard School of Music in New York. This year he won top prize for piano in a competition sponsored by Les Jeunesses Musicales du Canada.

A Dutch-Canadian, Henk van Oene of Alberta last year won a valuable post-graduate fellowship from the Shell Oil Company of Canada, Limited, while another Dutch-born compatriot, Franciscus Johannes van Oss, won the Governor-General's medal and four university student awards when he graduated from Saint Francis Xavier University in 1959.

A German-born immigrant, Ernest Zwerg, who earned a B.A. degree with honors, led the class of 1961 at the Ontario College of Education.

Many of these students achieved their records in the face of formidable obstacles. Not only were the majority handicapped in the beginning by language barriers, many were also