The heart, the spiRitual, the material, & the home: Centering translingual practices of three Montreal-based artists embedded in song

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Abstract

This study is about the language practices embedded within the cultural production of three Montreal-based singer-songwriters, musicians, and women who write, sing, and perform in more than one language. More specifically, this project brings to light how music production and cross-cultural processes of creativity made space for organic dimensions of language practice, particularly when one's language has been minoritized. This study was guided by the theoretical framework of *critical-creative writing* to center the creative, intersectional, translingual components of these women's writings and cultural production. This project was carried out using an ethnographic multiple-case study methodology, was bounded by the context of Montreal's community of musical cultural producers, and looked to the cases of three non-blinded knowledge holders and artists: *Willows*, *Noé Lira*, and *Ultra K*. The main findings of this study center affective, spiritual, and material dimensions of these women's language practices. This includes intergenerational, embodied, emotive, land-based, and organic dimensions of language engagement. By bringing to light these rich, often-overlooked modes of communication, this project demonstrates ways in which we can learn from the loving and transformational meaning-making and language practices being mobilized by three women of our local creative community.

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur les pratiques de langage ancrés dans la production culturelle de trois auteures-compositrices-interprètes et musiciennes montréalaises qui écrivent, chantent et joue en public dans plus d'une langue. Plus précisément, ce projet met en lumière la façon dont la production musicale et les processus de créativité ont fait de la place pour des dimensions organiques de la pratique de langage. En particulier lorsque sa langue a été minorisé. Cette étude a été guidée par le cadre théorique de *l'écriture critique-créative* pour centrer les dimensions créatives, intersectionnelles et translinguistiques des écrits et de la production culturelle de ces femmes. Ce projet a été réalisé à l'aide d'une méthodologie ethnographique d'étude de cas multiples, a été délimité par le contexte de la communauté montréalaise des producteurs culturels musicaux, et s'est penché sur les cas de trois artistes non aveuglés : *Willows, Noé Lira et Ultra K.* Les principales conclusions de cette étude portent sur les dimensions affectives, spirituelles et matérielles des pratiques de langage de ces femmes. Il s'agit notamment des dimensions intergénérationnelles, incarnées, culturelles, *land-based* et organiques de l'engagement de langue. En mettant en lumière ces modes de communication riches et souvent négligés, ce projet montre comment nous pouvons apprendre des pratiques de langage affectueuses et transformationnelles mobilisées par trois femmes de notre communauté créative locale.

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To my partner, Seba, whose unconditional love and support contributed greatly to the sense of peace and stability I needed to get through a challenging and creative project like this. To my family and friends near and far, whose energy and laughter I try to keep with me no matter the distance or the language. To my mom and my dad, I never thought I'd say this but, thank you for not teaching me your languages when I was a kid. It has resulted in an unbounded source of passion, fascination, and wonder. And I know you did it with love.

Dedication

Este texto está dedicado a mi Nana, me siento muy afortunada de ser parte de tu descendencia.

This text is also dedicated to my mother, mon plus bel exemple d'amour et de résilience.

Chapter One: Introduction

When I started this research journey in September 2021, it had been a couple of years since I had regularly connected with one of my creative outlets, be that writing, poetry, photography, music, or journaling. Throughout the process of this project, I have been reminded of just how central writing, creativity, language, and community have been on my life journey. This project has made it clear to me the importance of continuing to move closer to these practices and processes, despite dominant cultures' attempt to distance us from our intuition, creativity, and spiritualities.

In addition to creative practice and writing, language has also always been a central component on my journey. I, like many children of immigrant and 1st generation families in the U.S., did not learn my families' languages (Spanish from the side of my Mexican American family and French on the side of my Franco-Ontarian family) despite being basked in these languages and cultures in my neighborhood in Montebello, California and summer family gatherings in Quebec, Canada. These experiences led me to embody feelings of belonging and otherness, curiosity, and shame with regards to language, identity, and culture from a young age.

While I have had the privilege to learn these two, let's not forget, colonial languages in and out of schools, in my neighborhood, abroad, around the dinner table with my grandparents, and at home now with friends and family, I continue to draw inspiration and want to learn more about language and the sociocultural and power-relational dimensions that lie there within. Over that past six years, Tio'tia:ke | Montreal's community of multilingual creatives has been my closest source of inspiration. It is within this community that I developed this project at the crossroads of language, cultural production, and womanhood to better understand and the rich ways in which our local artists mobilize their languages critically and creatively.

Focus of the Project

This study is about the language practices embedded within the cultural production of three Montreal-based singer-songwriters and musicians. This project brings to light how processes of cultural production made space for the three women of this study to engage with translingual dimensions of their language practice that historically have been excluded from dominant educational spaces. Rooted in the work of women of color feminism, the theoretical framework of *critical-creative writing* (Anzaldúa, 1999; Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002; Dowling, 2018; Fagan, 2017; Garcia & Delgado, 2021; hooks, 1994; Marcoux, 2017; Simpson, 2014) guided this study by highlighting how writing and cultural production can create space to bring often silenced languages, stories, and modes of knowing from the "margins" and "borderlands" to the center. This study was particularly interested in translingual and transcultural dimensions embedded within cultural production to further highlight how woman-identifying cultural workers and singers mobilize their language practices to make meaning, tell stories, negotiate challenges, and potentially resolve differences, ambiguities, or contradictions in relation to language and identity.

Given the positionality of the knowledge holders of this study as published singer-songwriters, musicians, artists and the potential this project to bring light to these women's work, the knowledge holders of this study agreed to be non-blinded: Geneviève Toupin (Willows, she/her), who is Métis from Red River and Franco-Manitoban and writes and sings in French, English, and Michif-French; Noé Lira (Noé Lira, she/her/they/them), who is first generation Mexicaine-Québecoise and writes and sings in Spanish, French, and English; and Karina Marquez Caballero (Ultra K, she/her), who is Mexican-Canadian who writes and sings in Spanish, English, and French. I drew on embodied knowledge, observations, interviews,

published texts, music, cultural products, and artful inquiry to reveal themes, make meaning, and tell stories of these women's complex translingual practices. Data was transcribed, manually coded, and analyzed through four phases of qualitative analysis. Three major themes that were revealed during data analysis centered the affective, spiritual, and material dimensions of the three women's translingual practices and demonstrated loving ways in which these dimensions made space for them to navigate dominant cultural and linguistic contexts.

Context

The city of Montreal | Tio'tia:ke | Moonyilang is located on un-ceded territories of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation. Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabeg peoples have inhabited these lands, often nomadically, for centuries prior to colonial settlement. Iroquoian and Algonquian languages, such as but not limited to Kanien'kéha and Anishnaabemowin, are native to this territory. The systematic dismantling of the original linguistic diversity of this territory is part and parcel the larger ongoing colonial project (Pennycook, 2000; Phillipson, 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas & May, 2007; Tuck & Yang, 2021). Montreal's linguistic landscape and soundscape have notably been impacted by the Charter for the French Language, Bill 101 (1977) and more recently Bill 95 (2021) which are two language legislations that work to ensure the protection of the French language and the Québécois national identity through regulation of the use of French language in in public and private spheres of life (Lamarre, 2014; Langevin, 2022). Given the Indigenous realities of this territory, centuries French and English colonial settlement, various waves of migration to this land, and current language legislation, Montreal | Tio'tia:ke | Moonyilang is a site of complex sociolinguistic realities. Today, Montreal | Tio'tia:ke | Moonyilang is the largest metropole in the province of Quebec, the second largest city in Canada, and arguably the most trilingual city of Canada according to Statistics Canada (2017).

For most Montrealers, this diverse linguistic soundscape is something experienced and heard regularly (Galante & Dela Cruz, 2021). In addition to this linguistic diversity, Montreal has historically been recognized as a cultural and artistic hub of Canada and has been regarded as home to a wide range of multilingual cultural producers (Ballico & Mouillot, 2021; Sarkar, 2008; Sarkar & Low, 2014). It is within this urban, creative, cross-cultural and plurilingual community of cultural workers that I am in connection with that this project was designed to center the experiences and language practices of three woman-identifying singers-songwriters and musicians.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions by focusing on the language practices of three woman-identifying, translingual singers:

1. What are the language practices embedded within the cultural production and songs of the three artists of this study?

2. How do these language practices demonstrate the ways in which these artists perceive, navigate, and challenge dominant, often monolingual, artistic, educational, and linguistic cultures?

This project designed as an ethnographic multiple case study (Baxter, 2008; Creswell, 2016; Hancock; 2021; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 2018). Case study research can be characterized as "an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Schoch, 2020, p. 245). A multiple case study methodology was well suited for this project as it allowed me to explore, describe, and understand bounded phenomena by analyzing multiple sources of data and doing cross case analysis and comparisons (Creswell, 2013; Gustafsson, 2017). My specific phenomena of interest were the language practices embedded within the cultural

production of *three* woman-identifying cultural producers who write, sing, and perform in more than one named language, including at least one language that is not recognized an "official" language of Canada. This investigation was bounded by the context of Montreal's community of musical cultural producers. An ethnographic approach to this study guided this project by highlighting my positionality as an insider within the same culture sharing group as the knowledge holders in this study (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Harris, 1968). Three knowledge holders who agreed to participate in this study were invited using purposeful sampling (Maxwell, 2013). Methods of data collection included making meaning of a) observations and field notes conducted during live concerts and other encounters; b) in-depth, 190 minutes, semi-structured individual interviews, and c) artful elicitation, and d) a collection of publicly available information located online i.e., songs, lyrics, music videos, recorded interviews, articles, biographies. Data was transcribed, manually coded, and analyzed through multiple qualitative phases that are in line with multi-case study traditions (Creswell, 2007): 1) Descriptive phase, 2) Interpretive phase, 3) Comparative phase and 4) Significance phase. Gaztambide-Fernández's (2020) symbolic, material, spatio-temporal, relational, and affective orders of cultural production were also used as my data analysis protocol.

To help unpack the research questions that anchor this study, I have contextualised and defined key terms found in the questions that are found throughout the thesis: This study was designed to look beyond purely linguistic and text-based modes of communication and was interested in language practices that are embedded within the writings and cultural production of the three women of this study. The term *language practice* was used to refer to the broad range of semiotic, multimodal, cultural, embodied, affective, land-based, and spiritual modes that one uses to make meaning and communicate in and across cultures (Bernal, 2001; Bucholtz, 2014;

Li, 2018; Ortheguy et al., 2015; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Rymes, 2014; Simpson, 2014).

Moreover, I used the concept of *named languages* to highlight how act of assigning names to languages (and subcategories of dialect to others) is a relatively recent, socially constructed phenomenon that coincides with invention of nation states and monolingual ideologies that view one named language as equivalent to one national identity (Li, 2018; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Otheguy et al., 2015; Piller, 2016). In a similar vein, this study looked beyond what has historically been deemed as "art" or who has been deemed an "artist" by dominant, hierarchical, colonial standards (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). Thus, a *rhetoric of cultural production* was mobilized in this study to better understand music as *practices* and *processes* of symbolic creativity that are embedded within particular social, cultural, material, affective, spatio-temporal, and power-relational contexts, as opposed to being concerned with what music *is* or the *effect* it can have on the actors involved (DeNora, 2000, 2003; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, 2020; Tabi, 2021). Furthermore, guided by the theoretical framework of *critical-creative writing* and the legacy of women of color and queer theorists, writers, and poets, this study was designed to explore the language practices of woman-identifying or queer singers. The term *woman* or *woman-identifying* is used in this study to refer to these singers' gender identity while simultaneously recognizing gender identity as fluid and on a spectrum rather than static, binary, or naturalized at birth (Domínguez-Ruvalcaba, 2011; Riley, 1988; Sullivan, 2003). Drawing on First Nation literature, I referred to the three women who participated in this study as *knowledge holders* rather than 'participants' to further recognize and acknowledge the wide range of lived experiences and embodied knowledge that one holds as well as their agency and power to share knowledge on their own terms (Simpson, 2014; Travis & Haskins, 2021).

Theoretical Framework: Critical-Creative Writing

Intersectional feminist perspectives of languaging have been discussed within the fields of feminism, gender studies, and education "[making] explicit the role of language in shaping, reproducing and challenging power relations" (Bucholtz, 2014, p. 267; Garcia & Delgado, 2021; hooks, 1994). *Critical-creative writing*, located in relation to a larger body of work of women of color intersectional feminism, highlights how women and queer folks, through their often translingual writings and cultural production, center issues of language difference, identity, race, and bring often silenced voices, languages, identities, and modes of knowing from the "margins" or "borderlands" to the center (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1981; Anzaldúa, 2007; Dowling, 2018; Fagan, 2017; Garcia & Delgado, 2021; hooks, 1994; Marcoux, 2017; Simpson, 2014). Translanguaging, a concept that has relatively recently gained traction in Western academia within the fields of applied linguistics and second language acquisition (Canagarajah, 2020; Garcia, 2019; Li, 2019), has been practiced by women of color writers prior to it becoming an academic trend (Anzaldúa, 2007; hooks, 1994). This study was particularly interested in highlighting translingual components embedded within critical-creative writing and cultural productions to see how lexical and structural components of named languages are mobilized as an organic and necessary means of writing one's personhood. *Translingual* practices are referred to in this study to highlight how language learners and multilinguals can embody or become aware of the social, political, and power-relational dimensions of named languages (Li, 2018). Furthermore, analyzing translingual practices guides this study in understanding how language learners and multilinguals use their varying degrees of lexical and syntactic knowledge of their named languages to communicate, enrich semiotics modes, negotiate, and potentially resolve the challenges, dilemmas, contradictions, and boundaries that come with speaking amongst various named languages and nation-states (Canagarajah, 2020; Kalan 2022; Li, 2019). This project

centers the creative, intersectional, translingual components of these women's writings, cultural

production and language practices.

Significance

This project is significant as it has the potential to contribute to current conversations

within the field particularly with regards to 1) further investigation of non-linguistic components

of one's repertoire such as but not limited to spatial, sensorial, cultural, emotional, and embodied

components that manifest while engaging in symbolic creativity; 2) The need to center, better

understand, and make space for organic language and literacy practices of raciolinguistically

minoritized populations whose practices have long been pushed to the sidelines of dominant

educational and artistic cultures; 3) The significance of and connections between cultural

production, particularly music production, and translingual language practice amongst cultural

workers who find their work on the outskirts of traditionally recognized and investigated musical

genres, and 4) centering perspectives and language practices of a small group of ethnically and

linguistically diverse women who are embedded within Montreal's larger male-dominated

community of musical cultural workers.

As this first introductory chapter ends, a literature review will follow discussing

relatively current empirical research that has investigated similar dimensions and themes that this

project was interested in,. i.e., language practices at the crossroads of cultural production, music,

gender, and translanguaging. Chapter Three will then explain my methodology, methods,

recruitment process, data collection, and data analysis processes. Chapter Four will discuss in

depth the findings of this project highlighting affective, spiritual, and material dimensions of

these women's language practice. In the closing discussion chapter of this thesis, I use the

symbolism of a home to further demonstrate the significance of this project and begin to create

theoretical solidarity with others. Finally, I conclude with few concrete implications this project

can have for educators, curriculum, policy makers, and community.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This literature review sought to understand how and why researchers in the fields of education, language education, and literacy studies have empirically investigated translingual practices that are embedded within cultural production, symbolic creativity, or arts-based activities. I was particularly interested in studies grounded in critical perspectives and methodologies. Thus, most of the studies highlighted in this review have drawn upon various critical theories including but not limited to critical race theory, women of color feminism, Chicana feminism, critical literacy theory, plurilingualism, translingualism, and raciolinguistics. This literature review is organized in four main sections corresponding to the major themes that came to light during my review of relevant literature: 1) Arts-based projects & language engagement, 2) Music & language: Legacy of hip-hop & spoken word, 3) Centering translingual dimensions of cultural and text production, and 4) Womanhood & languaging. Within each section, I highlight significant research trends and discuss contexts, methodological approaches, and findings of specific studies. I conclude with my reflections on how these studies have spoken to my project design and describe my contribution to the conversation.

Arts-based Projects & Language Engagement

Within the field of education, there has been much arts-based research conducted highlighting the significance of using audio, visual, musical, poetic, theatrical mediums at various stages of almost any qualitative methodology, i.e. as a method, as data, and mode of analysis (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2018; Smithbell, 2010). Gaztambide-Fernandez (2020) offers a critical perspective to arts-based research in education by proposing a rhetoric of cultural production. This lens orients researchers away from a focusing on *outcomes*, *effects,* or *power* of the arts and arts-based education and towards "understanding

that the lives of all students are always-already imbued with creativity and symbolic work, whether it involves something called 'the arts' or not" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, P.227). Contrary to broader conceptions of arts-based research, Gaztambide-Fernández highlights that a rhetoric of cultural production calls for ethnographic analyses to be able to understand the richness of symbolic creativity as situated in specific sociocultural and historical contexts (2013, 2020).

Looking to the fields of language education and applied linguistics, we see that researchers have mobilized arts-based projects alongside a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the extent to which the arts can improve students' involvement in various dimensions of language learning (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008; Chappel & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013; Chamcharatsri & Iida, 2022). For example, Angelica Galante has mobilized case studies and mixed methods to understand how drama can contribute language learners' oral fluency, vocabulary enhancement, pronunciation, intonation, language embodiment, and decrease of speaking anxiety (Galante & Thomson, 2017; Galante, 2018; Galante, 2022). Most recently, drawing on theory of repertoire, translanguaging, and Vygotsky's (1994) concept of *perezhivanie* Galante (2022) mobilized a multiple case study methodology in two diverse adult English language classrooms in Canada. This study examined the potential of *translanguaging drama* as pedagogy to make space for a diverse group of English language learners to use non-linguistic components of their repertoire intentionally and emotionally. Methods included observation notes and analysis of student diary entries. This study concluded with a call for further theorization and investigation of non-linguistic components of one's repertoire such as but not limited to spatial, sensorial, cultural, emotional, and embodied components that manifest while engaging in arts-based projects and pedagogies (Galante, 2022).

Research in fields of literacy studies and have also used arts-based projects to better understand the language and literacy practices of their students and how they engage with texts (Fawcett, 2019; Gibbs, 2020; Patrick, 2016; Simon et al., 2016; Whitelaw, 2017). We can see literacy scholars have mobilized arts-based projects to uncover organic language and literacy practices of raciolinguistically marginalized students whose literacies, often multilingual or translingual, have long been deemed "non-academic" by dominant educational structures and standardization practices (de los Ríos, 2019, 2020; Dutton & Rushton, 2021; Garcia & Ortega, 2020; Gibbs, 2020; Ortega, 2018). For example, De los Ríos (2019, 2020) carried out two ethnographic studies to investigate the rich language practices of Chicanx and Latinx bilingual and multilingual youth in the U.S. while they engaged with arts-based projects such as podcast and music making. Methods included observations of a purposefully selected course that mobilized translingual pedagogies with a focus on Latinx literary genres. In this context, de los Ríos (2020) explored the language practices that manifested while bi/multilingual youth engaged with a 3-week podcast project. The podcast unit guided students' engagement with "translingual mentor texts", including poems and narratives authored by Chicana and Latinx poets and writers; Students responded to open-ended writing prompts designed to encourage translingual creativity of form, voice, and genre; Finally, students collaborated in small groups to record and edit their podcasts sessions based on these materials. Ethnographic methods were shown to be effective methodologies that allowed de los Ríos (2020), who had previously worked in that school, to observe student participation, analyze their cultural production and engage in effective semi-structured interviews. Findings highlighted how engagement with arts-based projects made space for students to use their full repertoires, translanguage, and develop critical perspectives to

dominant language ideologies via creative and collaborative mediums of sound, writing, and music.

Similarly, Garcia & Ortega (2020) mobilized an ethnographic case study observing orchestra rehearsals, mentoring sessions, group lessons, and performances of minoritized bilingual Latinx youth in the U.S. within the context of a music education program designed for social change based on "El Sistema". "El Sistema" is a youth symphony program that combines musical achievement with social change founded in 1975 in Venezuela by José Antonio Abreu, a Venezuelan educator, activist, and musician. Abreu worded alongside a group of Chilean musicians and educators who fled Chile during Pinochet's dictatorship for related activities. Notably, Jorge Peña, a Chilean musician and educator who founded Latin America's first youth symphony with the goal of democratizing Western music and performance in Chile was targeted and killed by the Pinochet regime was one of their colleagues (Carlson, 2016). Today, there are publicly funded music programs using pedagogies and methodologies of "El Sistema" in many parts of the world. With a translingual theoretical approach, Garcia and Ortega's study investigated the relationship between music making, social justice and translanguaging when this kind of program is taken up by minoritized bilingual youth. Methods that were mobilized included observations in and out of classrooms, interviews with students and parents, and analysis of work done by students in the program. Findings highlighted how the processes of engaging with critical music production made space for minoritized students to "position themselves as agentive actors, and users, producers, and analysts of all text, as they build a firm terrain for their many literacy performances" (Garcia & Ortega, 2020, p. 61). The study concluded highlighting how critical arts-based projects such as a music making are integral to translingual practices yet understudied.

Music & Language: Legacy of Hip-hop & Spoken Word

An additional theme that came to light during the literature review was music, particularly the genres of hip-hop and spoken word, have been considerably investigated in relation to language and literacy practices and their pedagogical implications have been discussed (Alim, 2011; Alim, Ibrahim & Pennycook, 2008; Campbell, 2005; Fisher, 2007). Alim (2011) brought together a significant collection of diverse, qualitative, majorly ethnographic, out-of-school studies in the fields of education, literacy, and sociolinguistics to theorize "global ill-literacies" which "explore[ed] how youth challenge the sociopolitical arrangement of the relations between languages, identities, and power through their engagement with Hip-Hop" (p.129). In this collection, Alim (2011) unpacked how research at the crossroads of Hip-hop, language and literacy in various sociocultural and linguistic contexts around the world "demonstrate the dual focus of language as both a source of creative pleasure and counterhegemonic politics both of which routinely escape the attention of educators" (p.129). Alim (2011) closed with a call for researchers and teachers to further center and investigate the processes (not only products) through which youth and students make Hip Hop and poetic texts to describe and make sense of their lived experiences.

Fisher (2003) mobilized ethnographic methods to investigate the literacy practices of "African Diaspora Participatory Literacy Communities" (ADPLCs) in public community spaces. Fisher (2003) observed and participated in two regular open mic nights where spoken word was performed in Sacramento and Oakland California over a 6-month period. Methods included observations, field notes, film documentation of the public spoken word events, as well as interviews with participants including poets and community organizers. Fisher analyzed data coded transcripts of interviews, field notes and video footage in three phases related to original

research questions; Findings highlighted how out-of-school ADPLCs became motivational and inspirational "sites of teaching, learning, community-building, and networking" which can serve as models for teachers, educators, and community members (2003, p.386). This approach exemplified how ethnographic approaches are well suited to uncovering rich, organic, local, literacy practices embedded within public spheres of cultural production and in particular spoken word of Afrodiasporic communities.

Another study was Sarkar and colleagues' work investigating language practices and ideologies embedded within Quebec Hip Hop (Low, Sarkar, & Winer, 2009; Sarkar & Winer, 2006; Sarkar & Allen, 2007; Sarkar, 2009). Drawing on qualitative interviews and analysis of pragmatics, poetics and performance of multiple identities embedded within lyrics of a diverse group of Afrodiasporic Montreal-based rappers, Sarkar and Winer (2006) brought to light complex strategies multilingual Quebecois youth mobilized to challenge official monolingual language policies and dominant language ideologies via their hip-hop productions. Low and Sarkar (2014), also explored the pedagogical implications that Montreal's multilingual hip-hop could have for multiethnic classrooms in Quebec by drawing upon data from interviews with local rappers and analysis of their lyrics through a lens of Eduard Glissant's poetics of creolization. Low and Sarkar (2014) encouraged teachers to take seriously local and organic multilingual poetics of our communities as they can be great sources for teaching critical language awareness and inciting linguistic creativity amongst students.

In a more recent study within the context of Toronto, Canada, Tabi (2021) mobilized a narrative multiple case study methodology to investigate why and how four 4 young Black men used spoken word poetry as a form of activism, education, and medium to express their lived experiences. Grounded in critical race theory (Ladson-Billiings, 1998; Yosso, 2005; Baszile,

2009) and the rhetoric of cultural production (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013), Tabi (2021) designed his study taking in consideration his positionality as a cultural producer himself in connection with Toronto's community of Black spoken word poets and rappers to better make sense of the experiences of the young men of his study. As with case study tradition, multiple methods of data collection were mobilized including attendance of the young men's poetry readings, shows, rap contexts, in-depth interviews, focus groups, field notes, and researcher journaling. Tabi (2021) highlighted the role that transcription, in particular listening and relistening to data, played in research validity and best reflecting the stories that were shared to the best of his ability. Given Tabi's organic connection with the community, the participants and the length of the study, Tabi was able to meet participants multiple times, modify questions, and organize focus groups (2021). Findings brought to light how language and literacy practices embedded within spoken word "created a 'new' form of education that supports the healing of racialized children and youths in urban communities, as alternatives to formal educational institution that often marginalize Black children and youths" (Tabi, 2021, p.iii). Implications of this study, in particular for researchers, highlighted the responsibility of scholars to approach researcher with historical minoritized communities through ethical, sensitive, and reflexive ways. One gap highlighted by this study was the limited range of perspectives with regards to gender-identity and ethnic background.

Centering Translingual Dimensions of Cultural and Text Production

The role that colonialism and linguistic imperialism has played in disrupting the native diverse linguistic make up of Indigenous lands and territories in various parts of the world prior to the invention of nation states has been well-documented (Phillipson, 1992, 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas & May, 2007). The role that dominant educational, academic, and professional cultures

have played in systematically excluding rich language and literacy practices of minoritized communities has also been discussed (Garcia & Alvis, 2019; Kalan, 2021b; Piller, 2016). Linguistic diversity, multimodal, semiotic, embodied, and translingual use of language is thus nothing new despite these dimensions becoming a relatively recent trend in Western academic circles. Scholars working to center organic bilingual, multilingual, plurilingual, and translingual dimensions of language and literacy practices of historically minoritized communities have looked to critical and creative communities of writers, poets, and cultural producers (Bradley & Atkinson, 2020; de los Ríos, 2022; Hua & Wei, 2022; Kalan, 2022; Wei, 2011).

For example, Wei (2011) mobilized a study using what he proposed as a "Moment Analysis" methodological approach designed to "highlight the spontaneous performances of the multilingual language users, and the consequences of the spontaneous performances for the individuals concerned and for the translanguaging space" (p. 1223). This methodology, similar to ethnographic approaches to the case study tradition, used multiple sources of data including observations, semi-structured interviews, group interviews, recordings of organic occurrences of languaging and metalanguaging data (Wei, 2011). Participants in this study were three young Chinese men in their first year of undergraduate studies in London (Wei, 2011). Findings centered the how participants, through organic, critical, and creative moments of languaging, engaged in multilingual play, negotiated identity, and created spaces for translanguaging in face of monolingual ideologies that had excluded their language practices from schools. Wei (2011) concluded highlighting the significance of analyzing spontaneous, creative, and critical components of multilingual language use, as it highlights overlooked dimensions of the political, sociocultural, and historical situatedness of translingual spaces. Wei (2011) also highlighted that while creativity and criticality are intrinsic to multilingual and translingual language use, they are

relatively underexplored dimensions of language and literacy research: "Multilingualism by the very nature of the phenomenon is a rich source of creativity and criticality, as it entails tension, conflict, competition, difference, change in a number of spheres, ranging from ideologies, policies and practices to historical and current contexts" (p.1224).

In another study, Kalan (2022) drew upon findings from an ethnographic multiple case study (Kalan, 2018) to highlight overlooked translingual dimensions of three women's writing practices from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds living in Toronto Canada. Methods used included purposive sampling, semi-structured individual interviews, group interviews, observations, and analysis of the participants' publications, writings, and literacy artifacts (Kalan, 2018). Data was pooled in a case study database, coded by *vivo codes,* and analyzed in accordance with Creswell's (2007) spiral model allowing for data collection and analysis to inform each other (Kalan, 2018). Findings highlighted how the three writers' multidimensional, translingual processes enriched their semiotic engagements and allowed the writers to maintain and develop their artistic, intellectual, cultural, and writing identities (Kalan, 2022). Kalan (2022) concluded encouraging educators to embrace more nuanced understandings of translingual practices that go beyond mere physical manifestations of multiple named languages in texts; the women's writings exemplified lexical, syntactical, rhetorical, conceptual, and presentational dimensions of translanguaging. Doing so can make space for educators and learners to see that students' texts and writing identities have sociocultural, political, ideological and cultural dimensions embedded within them (Kalan, 2022).

In another study, de los Ríos (2022) drew upon an extensive 25-month ethnographic study carried out at a public high school in California to examine the language and literacy practices of a sierreño band of translingual Mexican-origin youth. Methods included

observations during weekly school visits, three audio-recorded semi-structure interviews, three

audio-recorded semi-structures focus groups, photos taken during rehearsals, performances, field

notes, and analysis of publicly available texts and images the youth had posted on Instagram and

Youtube (de los Ríos, 2022). De los Ríos (2022) used inductive and deductive approaches to a

three-step data analysis process to find recurring themes in the transcribed data. Findings

highlighted the youth's "inventive, relational, resourceful, and clever" *translingual ingenuity* that

manifested in their organic literacy and cultural practices in three central ways: "(1) their creative

translanguaging practices that often included extralinguistic resources, (2) their deployment of

norteño sonic literacies as solace and diasporic aural connectivity, and (3) their codesigning of

new social futures through sierreño ensembles" (de los Ríos, 2022, p. 697). Implications

suggested that centering the musical lives of minoritized, translingual youth of color can help

educators support the literate and cultural lives of students bringing emotional, sociocultural,

political, and historical dimensions to center.

Womanhood & Languaging

There has been much theoretical scholarship and published anthologies that have

centered the language and literacy practices of women, women of color, queer, and feminist

thinkers exemplifying how their writings and cultural productions, many of which translingual,

have been powerful mediums through which they write their personhood and life stories at the

intersection of multiple forms of oppression (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1984; Dowling, 2018; García,

2014; Guy-Sheftall, 1995; Homans, 1989; hooks, 1994; Monture, 2008; Morrison, 2022;

Quintana, 1996). However, when looking for empirical research projects that have critically

investigated the language practices embedded within the cultural productions of women, I found

references were relatively limited, particularly within the realms of music production. Much of

the empirical research that I have located has mobilized critical discourse analysis to analyze women's poetry, texts, music videos, lyrics without direct contact with the creators themselves and even less have centered the translingual practices of women (Allagbé & Amoussou, 2020; Helland, K. I., 2018; Ohito & Nyachae, 2019; Parveen & Qadir, 2019). Empirical research that I did locate that has highlighted translingual or multilingual dimensions of women's language practices have investigated community-based practices without a particular focus on cultural production. I will discuss a project in this line of study that speaks to my project for its ethnographic approach, critical theoretical perspectives, and centering of minoritized women's language practices.

Bernal (2001) carried out an ethnographic research project examining the language and learning practices of Chicana college students in the United States. The project was theoretically grounded in the work of Anzaldúa (1987) and particularly the concept of *mestiza consciousness* to center "the way a student balances, negotiates, and draws from her biculturalism, bilingualism, commitment to communities, and spiritualities in relationship to her education" (Bernal, 2001, p.623). To explore the participants educational, personal, and familial experiences, Bernal (2001) was grounded by a Chicana feminist epistemology (Bernal, 1998) and collected data via interviews with 32 Chicana college students, and three focus-groups in which the participants took part of the data-analysis process. Findings highlighted that these Chicana college students carry with them household literacy practices, transmitted intergenerationally, and that they carry with them outside the home "to engage in subtle acts of resistance by negotiating, struggling, or embracing their bilingualism, biculturalism, commitment to communities, and spiritualities" (Bernal, 2001, p.625). This study was recently revisited (Delgado & Garcia, 2021), this time the data collection process, also informed by Chicana feminist epistemology, was conducted

amongst four Chicana/o parent-child dyads who were co-collaborators during different stages of the research process. Eight oral histories of the parent-child dyads were analyzed following a six-step elaborative coding process (C. Querback & Silverstein, 2003). Findings highlighted how four main dimensions of the women's "pedagogies of the home" were embraced and used to successfully navigate higher educational institutions where their language and literacy practices were historically excluded. These dimensions were the (re)making of home, (re)covering tensions, and (re)claiming and (re)learning of cultural knowledge. These two studies have exemplified how focusing on the language practices of women in their community, overlooked dimensions of translingual language practices can be centered such as household, spiritual, and intergenerational dimensions which have been critical to young women's navigation of dominant educational institutions. I hope my project can contribute to this conversation by investigating the language practice of three women cultural producers and make connections between these practices and the way they navigate dominant monolingual educational and artistic cultures.

Conclusion

In this thematic literature review I have looked at a broad range of empirical projects in the fields of education, language education, and literacy studies to see how scholars have critically conducted research centering themes of cultural production, arts-based practices, music, translingual language practice, and womanhood. The themes that have manifested within the literature are 1) Arts-based projects & language engagement, 2) Music & language: Legacy of hip-hop & spoken word**,** 3) Centering translingual dimensions of cultural and text production, and 4) Womanhood & languaging. This review has demonstrated that arts-based projects are not new to the fields of education, language education, and literacy studies, and they have been mobilized using various methodological approaches. However, one trend is that projects that

have investigated the connections between critical arts-based inquiry and minoritized translingual practices of local communities have opted for ethnographic approaches to qualitative methodologies in that they have guided researchers in making sense of the minoritized language and literacy practices of those with whom they are in community. One gap that I have noticed that overlaps with my project is that of context as many of these studies, particularly in the field of language education, have taken place inside traditional educational institutions and many amongst Latinx youth in the United States. Furthermore, this literature review has highlighted the conversations, approaches, and knowledge uncovered when scholars have carried out qualitative, mostly ethnographic research amongst musical communities, particularly within the genres of spoken word and Hip-hop. We can see that Hip-hop, spoken word, and rap are rich genres of cultural production through which racialized youth create alternative and oppositional spaces for community, expression, language, and literacy practices in face of dominant educational and artistic cultures and that have pushed their practices and identities to the sidelines. Some limitations that can be highlighted and that my project speaks within this portion of the review are that of gender identity and music genre. That is, more research is needed that center the experiences and practices of women, queer, and transgender people. Furthermore, more research is needed examining the language practices of those who create music and lyrics within the realms of less studied genres of music production or those whose who productions do not fit into one genre and thus are located on the outskirts of musical cultures and research trends. My literature review also highlighted the approaches and knowledge uncovered when scholars have centered translingual components of different forms of text and cultural production. Ethnographic approaches with a small number of participants and organic connection to participants have been mobilized effectively. These projects have also demonstrated the

importance of collecting and analyzing multiple sources of data such as observations, interviews, and analysis of cultural products and documents that writers and cultural producers have published. Scholars whose studies have been at the crossroads of translingual language practice, text production, and cultural production have highlighted that this realm remains largely on the outskirts of the field and deserves further investigation. These themes and studies have helped explain the reasoning of my project design by highlighting what has been done in the field, the methodological approaches that have been mobilized and why, as well as gaps in the literature. This review helped me map out research traditions that my project speaks to. I have thus designed an ethnographic multiple case study methodology to investigate the language practices embedded within the musical cultural productions of three translingual women from diverse ethnic and linguistic background currently located within Montreal's community of cultural producers.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Ethnographic Multiple Case Study

This project was carried out using ethnographic multiple case study methodology

(Baxter, 2008; Creswell, 2016; Hancock, 2021; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 2018). Case study research

was well suited for this inquiry as it "explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case)

or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection

involving multiple sources of information…and reports a case description and case themes"

(Creswell, 2013, p. 97). The specific phenomena of interest (cases) for this project were the

language practices and cultural productions of *three* women who write, sing, and perform in

multiple named languages, including at least one language that is not recognized as an "official"

language of Canada. This investigation was bounded by the context of Montreal's community of

musical cultural producers. A multiple case study methodology was advantageous for this

inquiry as it made space for me to "understand the differences and the similarities between

cases…analyze the data both within each situation and across situations… [and creates] a more

convincing theory when the suggestions are more intensely grounded in several empirical

evidence" (Gustafsson, 2017). I will now explain why this multiple case study has an

ethnographic character.

While case studies typically examine bounded "activities" or "programs" (Hancock &

Algozzine, 2006, p.17), an ethnographic approach made space for this study to center

sociocultural dimensions within which the cases are embedded (Hancock, 2021; Harrison, 2018).

The musical culture that was explored in this study can be characterized as creative, musical,

translingual practices such as lyric writing, composing, singing, storytelling, playing instruments,

joining musical communities, and sharing musical cultural products in public space via the use of

more than one named language. Thus, the three knowledge holders can be described as part of a culture-sharing group (Harris, 1968) with regards to musical cultures that we live and experience in Montreal. Another reason that this study has an ethnographic character is due to my positionality as a researcher with shared experiences similar to that of the knowledge holders (Herr & Anderson, 2014; Parker-Jenkins, 2018). While I do not currently compose music, I have engaged in the practices and processes of writing and performing slam poetry and rhythmic poetry in the past. For more than 10 years I have gravitated within and around various creative, musical and multilingual cultures. For the past six years since I moved to Montreal, I regularly participate in local musical productions via concerts, community, listening to local musical products, and being witness to and part of its translingual soundscapes. Also, through my work as a funding and partnerships advisor with Wapikoni Mobile, an Indigenous audiovisual production organization, I regularly learn from and engage with sovereign Indigenous musical and audiovisual cultural productions. My positionality thus allowed me to have shared experiences with the knowledge holders and have an insider perspective to this research that is not completely detached from the knowledge holders (Herr & Anderson, 2014).

Knowledge Holders (Participants)

When considering the purpose of this study, its scope, data management, and common practices within case study traditions (Creswell, 2007), it became clear that choosing three knowledge holders was a good number for this project to explore meaningful yet manageable data. In line with case study approaches, the three knowledge holders were invited to participate in this study using a purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell, 2016). With purposeful sampling, "the goal is to find individuals or cases that provide insights into the specific situation under study, regardless of the general population" (Schoch, 2020, p. 249). My positionality also

allowed me to identify potential musical cultural producers that could be interested and that fit the criteria of this study. The criteria that were used during the recruitment process were **A) Published singer:** Knowledge holders were identified as singers that have published their cultural production online and that can be found within the public domain e.g., recorded songs, lyrics, albums, music videos, articles, websites, biographies. **B) Named languages:** knowledge holders were identified by their use of i) more than one named language in their cultural production and ii) the use of at least one named language that has historically been minoritized within the context of Montreal, Quebec i.e. categorized as a "non-official" named language by provincial and national governments and dominant educational institutions of Quebec and Canada. **D) Gender identity:** Given that this study was grounded with theoretical framework of *critical-creative writing* which is located within a larger body of work of women of color feminists, knowledge holders were approached if they identify as a woman, non-binary, two-spirit, or queer. **C) Current geographical location & community:** Knowledge holders were approached if they currently reside in and are active within the musical community of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Furthermore, given the ethnographic approach to this study, knowledge holders were also, to various degrees, identified through being in connection to the same community of cultural producers that the author is in connection with.

Given that the knowledge holders of this project have generously agreed to participate and *not* to have their names blinded, I will briefly introduce these three women in line with the criteria mentioned above but also reflecting a glimpse of the stories that were shared with me while discussing their linguistic and cultural practices.

Introducing Karina (Ultra K)

Karina Marquez Caballero, also known as Ultra K, is a Mexican Canadian singer, songwriter, composer who was born and raised in Mexico and immigrated to Montreal, Quebec approximately 20 years ago. She writes and produces music in Spanish, French, and English. While Spanish was the language of the home and of her community growing up in Mexico City, Karina was exposed to anglophone music of the 1970s that her parents would listen to, such as The Beatles, Earth Wind and Fire, and Janis Joplin. Karina grew up in a family of musicians and artists on her mother's side. Karina's mother, Teresa Caballero, and her aunt, Beatriz Caballero were two of the founders of Mexico's first women-led rock bands formed in the end of the 1960s, *Las Panteras Rosas*. Karina's grandmother was also a fashion designer who designed clothing for vedettes in the 1970s, including *Las Panteras Rosas*. In parallel to organically being in touch with artistic and expressive lifestyles thanks to her family, Karina recalls simultaneous memories of learning English at British school, writing in English, and feeling emotionally connected to the language. Karina later was exposed to singing in other languages such as Italian and Portuguese during singing classes. When Karina immigrated to Quebec, Canada more than 20 years ago, she learned French upon arriving and made a conscious effort to integrate French into her songs. Karina has purposefully released a large repertoire of singles over the past 20 years. She released her first full-length album entitled *Heart in a Box* on November 2nd, 2022.

I met Karina thanks to my cousin with whom she has been friends for more than 10 years in Montreal and who are both artists. My cousin, Samuel Guertin, who is a beader & glassblower here in Montreal had introduced Karina to my partner, Sebastián Riquelme Chandia, back in 2018 when we first moved to Montreal as they are both musicians from Latin America. However, it was not until 2022 while talking with my cousin about this research project that he put Karina and I in contact with one another. He had also started working as Karina's manager in

2022 and was looking for different opportunities for her to perform and have her work showcased. In December 2022, I wrote Karina an email and recorded a video of me explaining the project for her and inviting her to participate. She quickly responded to me with much enthusiasm. We soon spoke on video call soon thereafter and set up a date to meet and have the interview.

Introducing Noé (Noé Lira)

Noé Lira is a first-generation Quebecoise Mexicaine singer-songwriter, actress, and dancer who was born and raised in Montreal and composes music in Spanish, French, and English. As a young child, Noé spoke mostly Spanish at home with her mother and father. Her education and socialization within the Montreal school system was mostly in French. Noé also has family from Outaouais region where she became accustomed to hearing and speaking in English. Noé describes music as becoming a part of her life when she was around 14-15 years old. While reminiscing on this period of her life, she remembers questioning herself regarding what language she should write and sing in. As a teenager, she enjoyed writing plays and in her early twenties Noé studied and lived abroad in Spain where she learned Valencien at University but mostly while working with a musical theatre organization. Around 25 years old, after 2 years of pursuing musical theatre, Noé shifted her focus to making music full-time in Montreal. According to Noé, music, in comparison with her other cultural practices, particularly made space for her to writing in Spanish. Noé's her first album, *Latiendo la Tierra* co-directed by Rachel Therrien was released on August 27th, 2021, and explores themes the challenges that come with being a woman, being uprooted, and embodying a transnational identity.

I first saw Noé Lira perform in August 2021 when I joined friends for a communal event and concert at Village au Pied du Courant. I did not previously know of Noé Lira prior to this

event but I remember being delighted by the performance intertwining music, dance, storytelling, and singing in three named languages, Spanish, English, and French. I also recall Noé highlighting the role that approximately 40 women played in making the album come to fruition and her attempt to contribute to making space for women to collaborate together. Later in December 2021, a friend of mine and film director, Marion Chuniaud who had recently made the move to pursue filmmaking independently, shared a music video on social media that she had directed in collaboration with Noé Lira for the song "Blanca Nieve". A little more than a year later, I met Noé through my partner, Sebastián Riquelme, who was invited to be a replacement guitar player for a couple of shows. When it came time to reach out to musicians for this project, I decided to invite Noé as I had organically been in connection with her music in Montreal. I wrote to Noé on Facebook and shared with her a video explaining the project. We spoke on the phone to discuss in more detail and she then agreed to participate in the project.

Introducing Geneviève (Willows)

Geneviève Toupin is a Métis from Red River-Treaty 1, Franco-Manitoban singer-songwriter born and raised in Manitoba who currently resides in Montreal, Quebec. Geneviève composes music in French, English, and more recently Michif-French. Michif-French is one of the multiple variations of Michif, the language of the Métis Nation. Michif has been described as a contact language that was developed by Métis peoples drawing majorly on the ancestral language of Cree / Nehiyawak and French (Iseke, 2013). Geneviève is on what she humbly describes as a "lifelong language learning journey" and lovingly integrates Michif-French into select songs thanks to knowledge learned on her journey, connection to her grandmother and ancestors, the guidance of knowledge keepers, and Lina Le Gal, a translator cited in her songs that have Michif-French. Geneviève described her love of music as being transmitted through her

family lineage; Particularly through her grandmother with whom she has early memories of seeing her fingers playing upon the keys of the piano and basking in the sounds of her vibrato. In addition to these melodic sounds that connect her to her love of music, Geneviève also has memories of the sounds of her grandmother speaking Michif-French at home. In 2009, Geneviève released her first self-titled francophone album *Geneviève Toupin*. In 2012, she released with an English folk-pop album entitled *The Ocean Pictures Project* in which she explores themes of places and feelings of being in-between. In 2020, she released her English Indie-folk EP entitled *The Hills* under the name Willows. In March 2023, she released her latest album "Maison Vent", a magnificent ensemble of songs that invite us to listen to the wind that carries the voices of her ancestors and the women in her life in French, English, and Michif-French.

I first heard Geneviève's music in October 2022 while I was listening to music on Nikamowin (music in Atikamekw language), a music streaming platform curated by Musique Nomade, a Montreal-based Indigenous organization that works for the development and recognition of Indigenous talents, identities, and languages in music. Musique Nomade is often referred to as the "sister" organization of Wapikoni (flower in Atikamekw language), the organization where I currently work that has a similar mission but through the medium of audiovisual creations. I was listening to "Remember your Name, Pt. 1", a plurilingual song that was the result of a particular context: a three-day collaboration between Innu singer, Soleil Launière, Métis singer, Geneviève Toupin (Willows), and Sami singers, Hildá Länsman and Viivi Maria Saarenkylä (VILDÁ) who had never met before and who had the mission of creating a song collaboratively. Through this piece that was sung in Innu, Michif, Sami, and English, I then started listening to Willow's music that is in French, English and Michif-French. One month

later, the event "Micro Ouvert Autochtone" curated and hosted by Melissa Mollen Dupuis as part of "The L'Art en soi Festival" that was shared amongst our team at Wapikoni Mobile. The event proposed various activities such as a screening of short films from Wapikoni's collection, a mini craft and book fair of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit literature and cultural products, a slam poetry performance by Réal Junior Leblanc, a discussion with Sipi Flamand, and a live musical performance of Willows. There I observed how her music, lyrics and intermittent stories touched upon themes of language, identity, ancestry, animals, land, and the role these elements played in the creation of her songs. I spoke to her after the show to thank her for the performance and to share with her a bit about my project and passion for learning from artists, such as herself, about the connection between music and language. One month later, thanks to a mutual connection, I was able to write to Geneviève to explain more in detail the dimensions of my project and to invite her to participate. When scheduled a call to speak more in detail. We then set up a date to meet and have the interview.

Data Collection

In line with case-study traditions, this inquiry mobilized multiple sources of data collection to observe and examine in order to answer the research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2021; Schoch, 2020; Yin, 2009). The methods that were mobilized include **A) Observations & Field notes:** I attended a minimum of 2 live concerts of each knowledge holder and took field notes of their performance and observable reactions from audience members in order to keep and ethnographic account of what was observed (Berg, 2004). In chronological order, on August 27th, 2021, I was present at Noé Lira's first live performance and album launch of "Latiendo la Tierra" at the Village au Pied-du-Courant. On September 8th, 2022, I accompanied my partner who was invited to fill-in as a

guitarist with Noé Lira at Park De l'Esplanade de la Pointe-Nord in Ile des Soeurs. On

November 13th, 2022, I saw a live performance of Willows at the event "Indigenous Open Mic"

hosted by Melissa Mollen Dupuis within the context of the Montreal Festival "L'Art en Soi". On

Marth 18th 2023 I saw Ultra K open for the Festival Art Souterrain with her interactive

performance of "Building worlds without minorities" intertwining live musical performance, and

interactive virtual reality and augmented reality filters that she produced. On March 30th 2023, I

saw Ultra K hour long performance of "Building worlds without minorities" within the context

of Festival Art Souterrain's Festive Thursdays. On March 23rd 2023, I saw Willows' album

launch and live performance of her latest album "Maison Vent" at Maisonneuve House of

Culture. Prior to December 2022, I had not yet identified the singers that I was going to invite to

participate in this project and thus my presence at the concerts prior to this date was organic and

informed my project design. It is also interesting to note that all of these performances took place

within the context of Montreal/Tio'tia:ke/Moonyilang, with the exception of Noé Lira's

performance at Ile des Soeurs, a neighboring city to Montreal. **B) In-depth interviews:** I

conducted 1 semi-structured, in-depth interview (Weiss, 1995) with each knowledge holder of

approximately 190 minutes each. These interviews were conducted in-person and sound and

video recorded by me. **C) Artful elicitation** (Barone & Eisner, 2012): Participants were invited

to bring a significant object with them to the interview (photos, digital footage, music albums, or

any other artifact) and share a story about the significance behind their object with regards to

their language practices and cultural productions. They were then invited to have their picture

taken with their special object. I personally captured each moment with a Kodak film camera that

was later developed and further used during the data analysis process. **D) Collection of publicly**

available information: I collected and analyzed knowledge holders' published lyrics, songs,

music videos, interviews, articles, and biographies that I found online and are in the public domain.

Data Analysis

Starting in the early stages and going on throughout this study, publicly available information such as lyrics, songs, music videos, written texts, were collected and organized in excel sheets corresponding to each knowledge holder (Schoch, 2020). This allowed me to have an overview of their biographies, lyrics, the names languages used in which song, visual elements, commentary during live shows and begin to reveal potential themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Regarding interview data, they were first transcribed with the help of Microsoft Word's transcribe feature. Second, I then went through all audio recordings while following along with the automated transcriptions to correct any errors or typos. Third, this process what repeated a second time to validate the transcriptions.

All data was then analyzed through multiple qualitative phases that are in line with multi-case study traditions (Creswell, 2007): **1) Descriptive phase:** data was reviewed extensively, and small units of meaning were coded (Saldana, 2009). **2) Interpretive phase:** codes were printed, reviewed, and grouped together multiple times to reveal first set of themes. **3) Comparative phase**: Connections and relationships among codes were identified to further develop a conclusive "story line" among data (Creswell, 2007). **4) Significance phase:** Meaning making, identification of core themes, and conclusions were made through multiple phases of writing.

During my initials phases of data analysis as described above, I gravitated towards revisiting the "Orders of Cultural Production" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020) that I had read in the earlier stages of this study. I then opted to use the "Orders of Cultural Production" as my data analysis protocol as it organically guided me in analyzing and conceptualizing the themes found

within the rich cultural data. This "framework of cultural production—particularly as a descriptive/analytic concept— takes the position that all work of symbolic creativity is embedded in and is, therefore, the outcome of unequal power relations and that, as such, it is always implicated in the production, reproduction, and sometimes, the transformation of social orders" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.11). This framework identifies 5 orders to guide researchers and educators in "reframe[ing] 'the arts' as cultural production [and] to understand them as practices, processes, and products of symbolic creativity that are situated in particular *local contexts*, shaped by specific *material* circumstances and *power* relations, and driven by *relational* encounters that are themselves shaped by both conscious and unconscious *drives and desires*" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.12). Here are brief definitions of the five orders of cultural production that oriented this data analysis protocol. Please note that these orders are not-mutually exclusive and continually interact with one another.

Material Order: "Cultural production is always situated within and in dialectic relationship to material orders" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.15). By attending to the material order, cultural production "rejects the view of these materials as inert or passive and instead proposes that materials bring their own affordances and resistances. This 'new materialist' or 'posthuman' register approaches materials as taking an agentic role in a creative process of becoming that transforms both the human and material, or non-human, actors involved" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.15). This perspective guides me in making sense of the ways in which the three knowledge holders described the significance of the materials that they interacted with during their processes of cultural production and language use.

Relational Order: "Attending to the relational order of cultural production is to attend to the fact that all making is a making with and that to make is always also to connect, we never

make alone, even if we sometimes feel lonely when we make" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, P.18). This order guided data analysis in looking to understand how relationships with human, more-than-human spirits, ancestors, nature and more have shaped these women's language practices and cultural productions.

Affective Order: This order "has to do with the sensory, emotional, psychic, and embodied ways in which we, in a sense, feel our way into spaces and enter into relationships with others—human and more-than-human—through our bodies, as well as how we are *affected* by these encounters" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p. 18-19). This order called my attention to highlighting "our emotional lives and the desires that drive us into making things and creatively arranging, to the extent possible, the symbolic orders of our lives; to make out own stories about who we are" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.19).

Spatio-Temporal Order: "We cannot account for the conditions that make cultural production possible or engage cultural production responsibly unless we articulate an understanding of how histories of colonization, exploitation, and marginalization shape where and when symbolic work unfolds. This also means coming to terms with our complicity and articulating our responsibility for ongoing processes of colonization, exploitation, and marginalization" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, p.17). This order called my attention to the systems, institutions, and power-relational components embedded within the contexts of when and where symbolic creativity takes place.

Symbolic Order: "Unpacking the meaning behind…lyrics, as well as tracing how those of us singing make sense of them, is attending to the symbolic order of cultural production. This is the discursive order of signs and the order of meanings, but also the order of stories and the order through which, often, other orders become manifest and available for interpretation and

analysis" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2020, P.14). This order allowed me to unpack the significance behind lyrics, texts, and other published symbolic representations that the three knowledge holders produced and shared in public.

To conclude, looking at my data through the lens of the orders of cultural production, particularly during the 3rd and 4th phases of data analysis, helped me sift through the large amounts of themes that had manifested. The symbolic, material, relational, affective, and spatio-temporal orders guided me and inspired me to move creatively and analytically towards selecting the findings and examples that were critically relevant to my research questions while simultaneously being representative of the complex, overlapping dimensions of these three women's symbolic creativity. This data analysis protocol also helped me to present the findings in a cohesive story-telling manner.

Representation of Data

The process of writing the findings was in integral part of data analysis as I made meaning through the practice and process of writing, reporting, and representing to best of my capacities what had been learned. Given the ethnographic approach to this study that sought to tell a narrative about these three women's language practices embedded within a culture-sharing group, the findings in this study organically took on a narrative tone (Atkinson, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). My lived experiences of capturing and presenting data through creative mediums, such as with photos and narrative tones that are found in this report, are informed by my positionality as a creative that is embedded within communities of cultural producers here in Montreal. I organically integrated creative mediums and modes of expression throughout the rigorous process of research and mobilized these processes as sources of data, further reinforcing validity (Pink et al., 2004). Following ethnographic traditions (Atkinson, 2007; Harrison, 2018),

the findings in this study have been organized in themes to create a coherent story and representation of findings. The representation of data often starts with observations, embodied knowledge, then move towards interview data, while intertwining analysis, theory, and connections between themes and cases. Lyrics and other publicly available writings come in throughout the findings chapter to further back up the themes revealed. Lastly, creative data collection methods such as photos that I had taken during the interview process and during concerts are also embedded within the findings chapters when needed.

Positionality

In line with the theoretical framework and methodological design of this study, here I discuss my positionality as a researcher to highlight my multiple identities and social positions that have shaped this research design and representation of data (Collins, 2015; Reyes, 2020). My lived experiences as a child of immigrant and first generation families in the US who did not learn my families' languages due to the subordination of linguistic diversity and cultural domination (Pillar, 2016) has led me to share similar experiences with the knowledge holders of this study and hold an "insider" positionality with regards to what it feels like to lose contact with one's languages and culture or what it means to make space for or (re)appropriate marginalized languages, cultures and identities (Reyez, 2020). This positionality has very much informed my research design and subject of study. Furthermore, as a woman who has been in connection with musical, often cis-male-dominated cultural spaces, my lived experience navigating these spaces has also informed this project design. Moreover, as it has been well documented the connection that racialization has with linguistic descrimination (Alim et al., 2016; Rosa & Flores, 2017), I also acknowledge my whiteness as a visible part of my identity that has afforded me many privileges with regards to my interactions with people and institutions

and thus places me as an "outsider" with regards to the experiences of some the women of color in this study (Reyes, 2020). As a white Latina of mixed settler Canadian and Mexican American heritage, my lived experience with raciolinguistic discrimination and stereotyping is not comparable to that of the women of color and indigenous women in this study and this positionality has thus impacted my interactions with the participants in ways that I cannot fully understand or know. These visible, invisible, audible, and inaudible components of my positionality have shaped the way I view and interact with the people and contexts of this study. As a qualitative researcher navigating "insider-outsider" perspectives (Reyes, 2020), I continually engage with reflexivity in an attempt to mobilize my positionality as a tool for validity as well as a way to highlight limitations and challenges embedded within this empirical process.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter starts with a reminder of the research questions that guided this project, a brief description of how this chapter is organized, and an introduction to the three main findings of this thesis and their subthemes. The two main questions that anchored this project were: 1) What are the language practices embedded within the cultural production of the three women and singer-songwriters of this study? And 2) How do these language practices demonstrate how the three women of this study perceive, navigate, and challenge dominant, often monolingual, artistic and educational cultures? Through the process of uncovering and describing these women's language practices, organic forms of opposition to dominant artistic, educational, and linguistic cultures also came to light. Through the theme revelation and writing process of these findings it became clear the extent to which these two questions overlap and would best be addressed sequentially. Thus, the three main themes that I present in this final chapter ("Heart Connection", SpiRitual Languaging, and Languaging things) and their subthemes that are presented as subsections within each theme address both research questions by first depicting what were the language practices and second by highlighting ways in which they organically oppose dominant education and linguistic cultures that have long pushed their practices to the sidelines.

The first main theme that manifested during data analysis was that each knowledge holder located and held on to what Geneviève Toupin named a "Heart Connection" during the process of critical-creative writing. Each knowledge holder contributed different dimensions (or subthemes) of what it means to make a "Heart Connection" to language practice that are presented in the subsections. The "Heart Connection" theme highlights the role that affective, intergenerelational, embodied and intuitive components of one's repertoire plays in these

women's language practices. Furthermore, this theme also highlights how making a "Heart Connection" was an act of resistance in that, by making space for their translingual instincts during the process of critical-creative writing, these women navigated and even challenged dominant notions of "native" and "legitimate" speaker through their cultural production. The second main theme of this findings chapter is "SpiRitual Languaging". This theme highlights how each knowledge holder had a SpiRitual thread that they carried with them during their processes of critical-creative writing and cultural production. I have capitalized the R in SpiRitual to highlight the habitual, ritualistic nature of these practices. Each knowledge holder centered various dimensions (or subthemes) of these SpiRitual components which included practicing rituals, referencing deities and myths, incorporating cultural symbols, connecting with Spirits and Ancestors, learning from nature, and non-linear conceptualizations of time. Each knowledge holder's spiritual thread was communicated across multiple named languages and through various, semiotic modes, thus it made space for their translingual and transcultural practices in a predominantly monolingual cultural context. By connecting to and renewing these SpiRitual practices in their writings and performances across languages and cultures, the three women of this study make space for their ancestorial, sacred, land-based lessons that have historically been excluded from dominant educational and artistic spaces. The third main theme is "Languaging Things" which uncovers how each knowledge holder's language practices were embedded within complex engagements with non-human or more-than-human communicators such as objects, artifacts, technologies, sounds, and animals. This theme highlights the active role that objects, typically perceived as passive, played in the processes of critical-creative writing and translingual language practice. These women's critical and creative language practices

contributed to disrupting dominant perceptions of language as located in the human mind to being in complex relations among things, places, and sounds.

"Heart Connection" | "Corazón Partido" | "Corazón Inmigrante"

One of the first themes that was uncovered, with regards to the research question "*what were* the language practice of these singer-songwriters?" was how these women nurtured a "heart connection" within their language practices. That is, these women connected to and discussed affective, intergenerational, embodied, and intuitive dimensions of their language practices and directly and indirectly made theme visible and audible within various processes of symbolic creativity. Each knowledge holder articulated different dimensions (or subthemes) of a "Heart Connection" and the role they played in their language practices and symbolic creativity. This "Heart connection" "Corazón partido" "Corazon inmigrante" manifested in each woman's lyrics further demonstrating the meaning, complexities, and at times contradictions that manifest when one connects to their heart and their language. To illustrate this, I will start by unpacking affective and intergenerational dimensions of what Geneviève referred to as a "heart connection" that, for her, was the foundation needed for her to authentically engage in cultural production from a place of love, knowledge of self, intergenerational connection, and story. This subtheme will close with the lyrics of the song "Who I am" by Willows. Then, I will discuss the second sub-theme which highlights the central role that embodied engagement and embodied connection to the heart, voice, body, and place played in Noé Lira's language practices and how this made space for her to connect to her translingual intuition. This section will close with lyrics from the song "Blanca Nieve" by Noé Lira. Finally, I will describe Karina's affective, at times hurtful, dimensions of language practice that she experienced during processes of writing multilingually as a newcomer to Canada and French language learner. I will then discuss her move towards are

more intuitive, less painful processed of translingual writing and singing. This section will close with the lyrics of her song "Dos Cielos" [Two Skies] by Ultra K. In response to my second research question, I will conclude by exemplifying how all three of the knowledge holders made "heart connections" to their language practices that this allowed them to feel their intuition and write using translingual instincts. By connecting to these dimensions of their language practices, I argue that these women complexified dominant notions of mother tongue and native speaker to center love, history, and care rather than "native-ness" or "legitimacy", notions that have often pushed minoritized language practices and identities to the sidelines.

"Finding That Heart Connection and Holding On To It Throughout Whatever I Was Writing"

Affective, relational, intergenerational, and storytelling dimensions of a "heart connection" were particularly referenced when speaking with Geneviève about her language practices and cultural production. During the interview with Geneviève, our conversations gravitated around the space that musical symbolic creativity and writing made for these dimensions of one's language practice. Particularly when one or more of your named languages have been minoritized or have experienced complex layers of rupture throughout multiple generations. For Geneviève, the process of composing music, writing lyrics, and telling stories in French, English, and Michif-French, must start with what she called a "heart connection". Particularly with her latest album "Maison Vent" that integrated Michif-French, one of Geneviève's ancestral languages that she was actively (re)learning. Geneviève grew up in a francophone household with her Franco-Manitoban and Métis family in Manitoba. Manitoba, while majorly anglophone, is a province that is recognized by federal and provincial governments of Canada and Manitoba as bilingual in the languages of English and French.

Geneviève recalled going to a Fifty-Fifty school, *une école Cinquante-Cinquante*, where curriculum was to be 50% in English and 50% in French. In her experience, the school was more in English than in French. Geneviève thus grew up speaking English as well. For Geneviève, she became aware of the minoritized state of the French language in Manitoba from a young age. Particularly because educational resources at public school were more limited than their English counterparts and she observed the extra effort, intention, and care that her mother and her father had to put into keeping francophone language and culture at the heart of their household, within their community, and schools. Geneviève witnessed her parents and other community members making conscious efforts to gain access to and even develop educational resources and spaces so their children could have access to francophone language and culture. Simultaneously, Geneviève's grandmother was also present in her life as a child, and still is today, and is a speaker of Michif-French, one of the multiple variations of Michif, the language of the Métis Nation. Michif has been described as a contact language that was developed by Métis peoples drawing majorly on the ancestral language of Cree / Nehiyawak and French (Iseke, 2013). Despite containing elements of a colonial language (French), Michif "was not imposed as a colonial language upon Indigenous peoples but rather was developed by Indigenous peoples and so was not resisted by the Métis Peoples" (Iseke, 2013, p. 96). While all language is a continually negotiated and evolving practice in relation to local and global cultural and historical contexts, Indigenous language vitality struggles, hindrance to intergenerational language transmission, and language shift towards colonial languages of French and English, were not only "natural" processes but also "propelled by colonial schooling designed to 'civilize' Indigenous children and turn them into citizens conforming to 'white' standards" (Iseke, 2013, p.98). When Geneviève spoke to what the term mother tongue meant to her, she highlighted

affective dimensions of language including love, emotion, intergenerational language transmission, language rupture, and storytelling:

> Mother tongue, for me, there is a lot of love in that expression…and also because I wasn't taught the languages, *all* of the languages of my ancestors, there's a kind of...not a sadness but like there's something emotional also to knowing that, for example, my grandma who speaks Michif-French and spoke to us with bits that she remembered from when she was a child, that's her mother tongue; But she wasn't allowed to speak it past a certain age in her home so she was kind of cut off from that and when she spoke to us in French my mom asked her, you know, can you speak to the kids in French? We're trying to teach them French. [My grandmother] said 'oh my French is bad, I have bad French', and really later we realized that it was Michif-French, and she had this kind of…so there's like that kind of...had I known as a kid that this is what she was speaking to us, I wish I would have learned it, you know. I wish I would have paid more attention. But that's part of our family story and my great-grandparents, my great-grandmother, spoke Cree as a child and her grandparents, that was their mother tongue and it didn't get passed on so there's kind of a sense of mother tongue, like oh, there is so much story attached to that expression, for me you know, it's charged…it's emotional.

When speaking to the ruptures that languages have faced, particularly Indigenous languages, it has been well documented the role that that colonialism and linguistic imperialism has played in uprooting First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities from their languages, their land, and modes of knowing (Phillipson, 1992; Phillipson, 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas & May, 2007). Indigenous communities across turtle island continue to fight for the protection and enhancement of their ancestral languages that have suffered hundreds of years of dismantlement

(Iseke, 2013; Taylor et al., 2008). In the case of Geneviève, it wasn't until later in life that she was able to recognize that the language her grandmother was speaking was Michif-French and not just "bad French". Reconnecting with this language and reconnecting to the linguistic history and stories of her family through processes of symbolic creativity, for Geneviève, had to begin with this "heart connection" so that she could embark on the creation process and so her writings and cultural production held meaning:

> It comes down to the heart connection for me. I'm writing about where I am from and who I come from. I had to put…it had to be connected to my heart; It had to come from a place of meaning because otherwise it's hard to write on something that you don't have an emotion attached to it, for me anyways. So, it was always about finding that heart connection, and holding on to it throughout whatever I was writing. That's the difference because when you are learning something in a school setting you don't necessarily connect deeply with everything you're learning and if you do that's great but it's not always the case. Whereas when you are creating, for me, it has to start with that deep connection, otherwise, I can't, it doesn't happen, or it doesn't give like a result that's fun to sing after.

For Geneviève, finding a place of meaning in the process of writing and creating music, had to come from a "heart connection", that is, in connection to who she is, to the stories of her family and ancestors, and to love. Geneviève also highlighted how curriculum and learning materials could have facilitated that connection but that, in her experience, learning materials teaching Métis and language, culture, history, was lacking and excluded from dominant educational spaces that she was in. Also, resources in French were also limited in comparison to their English counterparts. Engaging in processes of symbolic creativity, often outside of

schools, such as writing, singing, making music, and performing in community were practices where she could curate her own "heart connection" to reconnect with the stories and history of her family, lovingly (re)learn and Michif-French, and carefully share bits of who she is through song: "Music, it's so connected to my heart [and so] music is a great way to connect to language because it comes from the heart and so it feels right", Geneviève said during our interview. When looking to her writings, lyrics, and performances I saw that Geneviève connected to and talked about her language practices in connection to these affective dimensions. That is, she shared with audiences a bit about her personal, familial history, linguistic background, and language journey of incorporating three languages into her latest album. Symbolic manifestations of this heart connection appeared in Geneviève's writings. It can be seen with regards to the content of her stories as well as the lexical manifestations of more than one named language. To demonstrate this, I have embedded the lyrics of her song "Who I am" from the album *Maison Vent* released by Willows on March 24th 2023, which was written in French and English:

J'ai grandi [I grew up]

Entre deux réalités [In between two realities]

Fifty-fifty, that's what it was back then

Tirée des deux bords [Pulled by two sides]

Y a une partie de mon cœur [There is a part of my heart]

Qui reste là [That stays there]

Et l'autre est avec toi [And the other is with you]

Y en a qui avancent d'un pas certain [There are those who move forward certainly]

Moi je marche entre les mondes [Me I walk between worlds]

C'est comme ça [It's like that]

J'ai cherché ma place longtemps [I long looked for my place]

Et si tu veux l'savoir [And if you want to know]

Parfois j'la cherche encore [Sometimes I'm still looking for it]

This is who I am

I'm just trying to understand

Who I am, right now

This is who I am

My friend, will you take my hand

And take me as I am, right now

J'aurais aimé connaître [I would have like to know]

Les langues de mes ancêtres [The languages of my ancestors]

Lire leurs peines, leurs victoires [Read their pains, their victories]

Dans mes livres d'histoire [In my history books]

J'aurais aimé pouvoir te dire [I would have liked to be able to tell you]

Je suis assez telle que je suis [I am enough as I am]

Mais parfois je ne l'sais pas [But sometimes I don't know]

This is who I am

I'm just trying to understand

Who I am, right now

This is who I am

My friend, will you take my hand

And take me as I am, right now

Je suis qui je suis [I am who I am]

Et j'essaie d'avancer [And I try to advance]

Being who I am right now

This is who I am

My friend will you take my hand

And take me as I am, right now

The lyrics of this song, which flows between French and English in a way that came

naturally to Geneviève, explored themes of negotiating feelings of being caught in between,

being "tirée des deux bords", feeling like her heart was split in two, knowing who she is, learning

her she is, and feeling connected. In this song we can see connections made between these

affective dimensions of language practice, the challenges of fifty-fifty school, and other harmful

educational practices such as excluding historical, cultural, and linguistic resources of

Indigenous peoples and other minoritized groups from dominant educational spaces. During our

interview, I had brought with me lyrics from this song that I had written down during her live

concert at the *Micro Ouvert Autochtone*, prior to this song being released: "J'aurais aimé

connaître les langues de mes ancêtres, lire leurs peines, leurs victoires dans mes livres d'histoire.

J'aurais aimé pouvoir te dire, je suis assez telle que je suis, mais parfois je ne l'sais pas ».

Geneviève expanded on these lyrics and shared with me once again that the processes of

(re)learning the histories and languages of the Métis nation and the process of writing about it in

her songs had come from a heart connection: a process of love and care that organically confronts the "slack on history" that she received at school.

It has been well documented that organic, often translingual, language and literacy practices of minoritized populations have long been pushed to the sidelines and rejected of dominant educational, professional, and cultural spaces (Kalan, 2021a; Kalan, 2021c; Piller, 2016). Furthermore, we know that colonizing education and neoliberal schooling have long excluded Indigenous, Black and other minoritized populations' languages, histories, stories, and cultural knowledge from dominant Western educational spaces. (Burns et al., 2016; Gagne, Kalan & Herath, 2022; Ryan, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2014). Kalan (2021a) has provided a characterization of what organic literacies and language practice mean and how they've been made invisible in dominant spaces: "By over-regulating the process of learning writing, [dominant educational structures] have cut off essential organic dimension of the act of writing such as the emotive, conative, phatic, hermeneutic, ideological, and sociocultural contexts in which writers and readers interact" (p.512). Modes of resistance to dominant educational cultures have come in different forms of textual and cultural production demonstrating the ways in which minoritized communities have (re)connected to one's mother tongue, one's organic literacies, created and shared their narratives on their own terms (Anzaldúa, 1987; Dowling, 2018; García, 2014; hooks, 1994; Kalan, 2021a; Kalan, 2021c; Kalan, 2022). Similar to the legacy of women of color and Indigenous writers (Anzaldúa, 2007; Anzaldúa, 2015; Dowling, 2018; hooks, 1994; Simpson, 2014), who have long negotiated and challenged issues of language, identity, and racialization through their, often translingual writings, Geneviève made connections to her linguistic and cultural intuition through the processes of cultural production and mobilized lexical structures of multiple languages in one text as a means to be free through her writing.

During her concert at the *Micro Ouvert Autochtone* in November 2022, during a transition to her song "Je reviens toujours", Geneviève shared with the audience: "J'ai grandi avec ma mère qui parlais français, mon père qui parlais français mais qui était plus à l'aise en anglais. Et avec ma grand-mère j'entendais le Mitchif. Alors cette prochaine chanson est un mélange des langues, parfois en anglais, parfois en français et Mitchif. Ça peut chocker le monde, mais c'est comme ça que c'est dans ma tête, c'est comme ça que je suis plus à l'aise". This quote further demonstrates that Geneviève was aware that it could be disorienting to switch between named languages in some cultural spaces, but that she chose to flow between languages as it is more representative of how language is in her mind and in her heart. Through a "heart connection" Geneviève created a space for her to piece together many parts of her sociolinguistic and emotional being and expressed herself in the way that felt true to her and negotiated feelings of being pulled apart. This phenomenon is similar to what Li (2018) refers to as a *translanguaging instinct*, that is, a fluid use of lexical features from more than one named language such that it "enables a resolution of the differences, discrepancies, inconsistencies, and ambiguities, if and when they need to be resolved, and manipulate them for strategic gains" (p.19).

For Geneviève, a "heart connection" was the starting point for engaging in many processes of musical symbolic creativity i.e. writing, translingual writing, centering Métis history and stories, connecting with her family, negotiating identity. With regards to her named languages, the "heart connection" made space for her to incorporate all of her named languages in her album in a way that felt right to her. Geneviève's "language learning journey" was also central to her symbolic creativity. This included taking online Michif-French courses, learning from and consulting with Métis knowledge keepers, elders, and translators of Michif-French. Through (re)making this heart connection during the process of cultural production that

Geneviève was able to connect to her translingual instinct navigate and even challenge what dominant educational systems had to offer. Listening to her heart allowed for Geneviève to connect with her linguistic intuition, and disregard, even of only momentarily, dominant discourses that maintain boarders between named languages and express herself organically.

Embodied Language, Intuition & Music

I had gone to see Noé Lira's performance at Ile des Soeurs in fall 2022 as my partner, Sebastián Riquelme, had been invited to play with the band for a couple of shows as a replacement guitarist. Noé picked us both up from our home and we drove there together. After Noé Lira's performance at Ile des Soeurs, I was standing near waiting to congratulate her on her performance and during that moment, I observed an audience member enthusiastically express their appreciation of the concert and ask Noé whether she feels more Quebecoise or more Mexican. Noé showed some discomfort with the question, and we later discussed on the ride home how she often received questions of the sort and we both talked about how strange it is we people ask this kind of question as though our identity and language could be split fifty-fifty or sixty-fourty. During our interview, Noé Lira further discussed how monolingual and racial ideologies had impacted her at school, in public spaces, and within different communities in Montreal and in Latin America. Noé was born and raised in Montreal with her Quebecoise mother and her father who immigrated from Mexico. As a woman of color who grew up speaking Spanish, French and English, she described how different community members and strangers had often reflected to her, based on the way they she spoke or looked, that she "isn't from here", be that Quebec or Mexico. Questions that she received in Quebec such as, "No but, where are you *really* from?" or comments amongst Latinx community members to the extent of, "oh, you can tell by your accent you're not a *real* Latina". Experiences such as these led Noé to

question where she belonged from a young age. This also impacted her symbolic creativity as she recalled asking herself in what language she should write in or perform in from a young age.

Noé also shared with me a pivotal experience learning Valencien during her years abroad in Spain. Outside of the University, she began collaborating with a Musical Theatre company where she simultaneously gained communicative competence in Valencien while practicing musical theater and building community. Noé highlighted embodied dimensions of her language practices and described how through sound, rhythm, physical connection to heartbeat, singing, creating habits, routine theatre exercises, musical repetition exercises, voice warm up exercises, playing with instruments while singing, changing characters, improvisation and more, made space for her to have an embodied connection to an additional named language. She contrasted this experience with that of traditional language learning environments where linguistic elements are transmitted through cerebral activities that are disconnected to the rest of the body. For Noé, the act of learning while sitting down in a chair already creates a disconnection with breathing, an essential element of voice and thus verbal communication. Whereas in a creative learning environment, in this case when she worked in musical theater production, breathing exercises, repetition, practice, character development, and community made space for Noé to have an embodied experience with Valencian and have an additional named language "descender dans l'intimité de son corps". To have a language descend into the intimacy of her body. Noé further described her embodied experience with Valencien, "quand ça descend tu peux être fully incarnated, les mots résonnent à travers tout ton corps…[tu peux] se sentir à la maison…et le feu, quelque chose qui brûle, un terrain de jeu qui s'ouvre, pas juste dans la résistance ». [When it descends you can be fully incarnated, words resonate throughout your entire body…[you can] feel at home…and fire, something that burns, a playing field that opens, not only resistance].

These intimate experiences of embodying language and building community led Noé to develop a sense of belonging in a place where, if following discriminatory logics that she was exposed to when she was younger, she could have perceived herself as a "foreigner".

Experiences such as these fostered conflicting feelings joy yet also confusion and contradiction, as she described having developed feelings of belonging "everywhere and nowhere at the same time", able to identify with many communities and yet knowing feelings of rejection and not fitting in. These affective experiences had impacted her language practices that are embedded within her cultural production. On one hand, it led Noé to, at times, question herself regarding in what language should she write or perform in. In this sense, it has distanced her from her translingual intuition and led her to reflect more consciously about which language to write and perform in, depending on audience members and context. She shared that at times, particularly when adapting her musical performances for audiences in Quebec, she had lots of worries and doubts, regarding what would be the best way to adapt her message to be best received. During the process of writing, she noted how she often negotiated between letting words come naturally and also being "*très exigeante avec soi même*" to meet outside expectations. On the other hand, the process of creating music and writing made space for Noé to further explore her lived experiences, her emotions, and to express herself on topics of womanhood, immigration, sexism, and develop her own sense of belonging within her symbolic creativity. To demonstrate this negotiation, I have embedded lyrics from Noé Lira's song "Blanca Nieve" from her album Latiendo la tierra, released on August 27, 2021:

Un mar de luciérnagas

Un rio de hormigas

Un fuego abuelo

El cielo y tu y tu y el cielo

Árbol dame agua

Sal y mar aviva

Yo bailo bajo la lluvia

Yo le bailo a la luna

Y si el calor

Abraza mi dolor

Vuelvo a pensarte

Vuelvo a sentirte

Blanca nieve

Blanca nieve

Corazón partido

Sin descanso ni destinación

Blanca nieve

Blanca nieve

Corazon partido

Llanto sin fin

Azulejos de colores

Naranjos, miel y flores

Vuelvo a quemarme viva en el ojo de tu mirada

Azulejos de colores

Naranjos, miel y flores

Vuelvo a perderme entera

Azulejos de colores

Naranjos, miel y flores

Vuelvo a quemarme viva en el ojo de tu mirada

Lyrics translated by author to facilitate understanding:

[A sea of fireflies

a river of ants

a grandfather fire

The sky and you and you and the sky

Tree give me water

salt and sea revive

I dance in the rain

I dance to the moon

And if the heat

embraces my pain

I think of you again

I feel you again

White snow

White snow

Broken heart

without rest nor destination

White snow

White snow

Broken heart

endless crying

colored tiles

Orange trees, honey and flowers

I burn alive again in the eye of your gaze

colored tiles

Orange trees, honey and flowers

I lose myself all over again

colored tiles

Orange trees, honey and flowers

I burn alive again in the eye of your gaze]

In this song we see descriptions of nature and landscapes of contrasting geographical contexts and feelings of being in between, not knowing exactly where you belong. Noé described this song, published on bandcamp as "focusing on the dissonance of having a transnational identity. Always in between countries, languages, cultures. Never home, and always apart. Always longing for the other side". Let's recall in Willow's song « Who I am », which was discussed in the previous section, Geneviève wrote "tirée des deux bords, il y a une partie de mon Coeur qui reste là et l'autre est avec toi" [pulled from both sides, there is a part of my heart

that stays there and the other that is with you]. Here Noé also wrote about her heart being split, "Corazón Partido, llanto sin fin/Divided heart, endless crying". This is significant as it demonstrates a connection between themes and content of both Willows and Noé Lira with regards to affective dimensions of their language practice. For Noé, as a multidisciplinary artist who has experience in theatre, TV, and music, Noé shared with me during our interview how she felt that musical cultural production, in comparison to other art forms, gave her more space to write and express herself in Spanish, particularly within the context of Quebec. During our interview, Noé shared with me how musical production allowed her to make space to "*faire confiance à ce qui l'intérpelle linguistiquement dans le processus de creation*" [to trust in what call to her linguistically in the creation process]. Once again, as was exemplified in the case of Geneviève, Noé was also able to connect to her linguistic intuition and translingual instinct within the process of creation. This sometimes manifested in the lexical manifestation of multiple languages or just one. For example with Spanish, it made space for Noé to write in that language that is close to her heart and family history although it is not recognized or valued as an "official" language of Quebec nor Canada.

"Blanca Nieve", for example is written in Spanish and through embodied engagement with the text while performing, through dance, facial expressions, body movements, and engagement with the public and bandmates, Noé communicated with audience members despite performing within the context of Quebec where the majority of audience members did not understand lexical components of Spanish. Through an embodied dimension of her "heart connection" to language, Noé highlighted that a deep connection with an additional language is possible (Valencien) and communication with a named language that is close to your heart and family history (Spanish) is also possible even if listeners and audience members may not

understand. Through an embodied connection to language during various processes of cultural production, Noé was able to explore and negotiate feelings of belonging, connect to transcultural and translingual dimensions of her writing, connect to her linguistic intuition and share her cultural products in community.

"Hurtful but Évolutive"

Now, I will describe Karina's affective, at times hurtful, dimensions of her "heart connection" that she experienced during processes of writing multilingually as a newcomer to Canada and a French language learner. I will then discuss her move towards are more intuitive, less painful, and évolutive processes of translingual writing and singing. This section will close with the lyrics of her song "Dos Cielos" [Two Skies] by Ultra K. While Montreal has often been celebrated for being linguistically diverse and multicultural, it has been well documented how racialized and linguistically minoritized populations in Canada face numerous challenges and systemic barriers to professional, educational, cultural resources and opportunities (Piller, 2016; Lamarre, 2014; Calman, 2022). For example, for musical cultural producers based in Montreal, this means navigating funding agencies, festival organizers, radio stations, record labels, and booking agencies that are often oriented towards a monolingual francophone cultural market following by an anglophone cultural market and then the "world" or "métissée" market. For Karina, as a singer and a woman of color who immigrated to Montreal from Mexico in the early 2000s and was a speaker of Spanish and English at the time, she recalled some of the challenges that she went through while adapting to a new sociocultural, linguistic, and power-relational environment of Quebec. She particularly highlighted negative emotions, such as pain, trauma, and sadness that she experienced in the process of learning and adapting multilingual practices within her critical-creative writings and cultural production. As a process of experimentation as

well as a response to those who expected her not to be able to speak French, Karina went through a period where she felt, what she described as, an obsession and need to systematically translate her lyrics into three languages in one song, particularly in French so that she would be understood and "would not get much into trouble":

> Like I have probably struggled much, of course, with French…I would sometimes grind my French. I would show them, [show] to someone that was francophone. I was like, 'hey, what do you mean?' Or I would do my exact translation that was in Spanish, but nothing would make sense, I remember… It's complicated to want to say probably one thing with the same beautiful words in French that I'm originally feeling in Spanish. [In] the beginning like I was really hurting myself. Oh my.

When I asked Karina to expand a bit more and to describe what she meant about hurting herself she replied:

> Well…traumatized Montreal, Mexico, Mexico, Montreal. What do I do? Traumatized. Traumatized. What do I do? Do I come back? No, get there, OK? It's too much for my my my mind... I found myself, just doing it in this or that… I would do things that were not that good, and I would convince myself that they were good because they were in three languages…So, when I…washed that away from me I understood that…No, that I don't. I *didn't* need to make more effort for others; They would just take it if they wanted. So, then I started to be more fluent about it and I started to stop worrying about them. Understanding me.

Connections between cross-linguistic practices of systematically translating her lyrics in three named languages (French, Spanish, and English) and traumatic experiences linked to her transcultural and translingual existence are made apparent by Karina. As a woman of color and a

musician who had recently immigrated to Montreal and who was developing communicative competence in French, she navigated these challenges by translating her lyrics to have a trilingual song. Mobilizing primarily linguistic features to translate her ideas, Karina hoped this would allow her to be understood and that her music would be appreciated within the context of Montreal. At some points, this process was deeply hurtful when she realized that despite learning French and attempting to systematically translate her lyrics, many people would still not listen. These experiences of pain that Karina has described challenges narratives often told by dominant institutions and governmental entities that suggest learning the target language will solve all problems and will seamlessly facilitate one's integration to the host country (Pillar, 2016; Phillipson, 1992; Flores & Rosa, 2017). This is in line with what numerous studies have demonstrated with regards to how immigrant and racialized populations continue to face discrimination and racism despite learning the host country's national language (Alim, 2023; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2017). Karina also described her experience having to confront gendered and raciolinguistic stereotypes:

> Another thing that really was and it still is very uncomfortable is that you're a stereotype. To be Latina, they want Shakira and they want Cumbias and they want Vallenato, they want Dumbo beat, no matter where I go. I had issues with that from very little. I relate popular Latino music, in my mind, with the molesting girls on the street…Because I'm from a big city, like I cannot see music...Like, I cannot love salsa or cumbia or like that, like I can't. I don't know why. But then I felt really hurt when people would just want that for me here…but [now] my son was dancing it so now I had my son's cultural background completely linked to this. And so, I started doing it. With Cosmovision it took me almost 20 years, but I dared and I said 'OK, fine'.

A second major challenge Karina highlighted was having to deal with gendered violence, gendered discrimination, and raciolinguistic discrimination and both in Mexico and Canada, "no matter where [she goes]". Karina highlighted how dominant music genres in Mexico, such as cumbia, salsa, reggaeton and the Dumbo beat more have deep historical ties with machismo, sexism, and rape culture. From a young age, Karina disliked this genre of music and was really hurt when people expected her to produce that genre of music when she moved to Canada. For nearly 20 years, Karina refused to produce this genre of music. It was not until her son started appreciating this music that she decided that she wanted to produce music with the Dumbo beat but on her own terms:

> But it took a song and it took someone that I met that opened me [to] composition and how electronics could blend all these beats and not make it just like, 'let's dance salsa' like, *no*. I guess I evolved into how can I not feel aggressed by these beats and still share this with the people that's there. Because it's a very male music too…you have to dance in a couple and…things that me and my background I cannot digest very simply. But I know a lot of people loves it…I don't want this to be taken personal or that I'm judging is not absolutely that. It's more my, *mon parcours à moi, comment j'ai ressolu,* all these things of how I can still share and not feel that I'm wanting to be something I'm not. So, then I made this song not long ago, 'Dos Cielos', the very first song that I made with Dumbo with the intention to talk about living and being from one country to another…divided my spirit, divided my language, divided everything, the space, and overall, how it's something that's inevitable and eternal. I don't know for how many more generations I'm going to…but I came here to start *that* because I have no one here but my son.

One example of how Karina navigated and challenged these stereotypes, was by reappropriating beats and languages one may or may not expect her to use, while staying true to her craft, to who she was, and writing about themes that were significant to her. Rather than assimilating to what it meant to be a "Latina singer in Canada", through the process of critical-creative writing, music production, and the help of a friend, Karina resisted what was expected of her and (re)appropriated sounds and beats that are historically connected to dominant machismo and sexists cultures and manipulated the sounds to make it her own, thus to leaving an important message and legacy for her son. Similarly, she moved past pressures of needing to systematically translate her texts and drew upon her linguistic resources more fluidly using the named language(s) that she intuitively felt like writing in. Below are the lyrics of "Dos Cielos" lyrics and music by Ultra K (Karina Márquez Caballero) released by New Latam Beats from Mexico curated by Murúa on May 22, 2022:

Allá todo deje

Se me cayo la piel

La mitad de mi ser

Tuve que desprender

Acá ya me instalé

Sembré una nueva fé

La mitad de mi ser

Tuvo que pretender

Un alma al sol

Mi cuerpo al hielo

La luna sale en

mis dos cielos

A donde vaya

Programo sueños

Me sé las claves

De sus secretos

Un águila negra

Y un oso blanco

Cuentan mis cuentos

Paciencia y tacto

Sigue sonando

Sigue que sigue

Lo vas formando

Nomas pa darlo

Lo vas formando

Nomas pa darlo

Sigue soñando

Sigue bailando

Yo a ti te quiero

Seguir cantando

Ya no vas ya no regresas

La cabeza te da vueltas

Cuantas lenguas platicando

Cuánto tiempo lloras trabajando

Ay ay ay ay

Canta y no llores

Porque cantando se alegran

Cielitto lindo los corazones

Un alma al sol

Mi cuerpo al hielo

La luna sale en

mis dos cielos

Allá todo deje

Se me cayo la piel

La mitad de mi ser

Tuve que desprender

Acá ya me instalé

Sembré una nueva fé

La mitad de mi ser

Tuve que pretender

[I left everything there

my skin fell off

half of my being

I had to detach

Here I already settled

I planted a new faith

half of my being

had to pretend

a soul in the sun

my body in ice

the moon rises in

my two skies

Wherever you go

I program dreams

I know the keys

of their secrets

a black eagle

and a white bear

tell my tales

patience and touch

Keep dreaming

follow what follows

you are forming it

just to give it

you are forming it

just to give it

Keep dreaming

keep dancing

I love you

Keep singing

You don't go anymore, you don't come back

Your head is spinning

How many languages speaking

How long do you cry working

Ay, ay, ay, ay

Sing and do not cry

Because singing they get happy

Pretty little sky hearts

a soul in the sun

my body to ice

the moon rises in

my two skies

leave everything there

my skin fell off

half of me

I had to detach

Here I already settled

I planted a new faith

half of me

I had to pretend]

In this song Karina created a space where she could explore and negotiate her

experiences and feelings that come with living between two places, two skies, different

languages, perspectives, expectations. In Karina's description about this song, she also published

"La vida del corazón inmigrante / Los sueños y condenas de una mujer cantante //…La Inmigración / Una sagrada e interminable ruta hacia la esperanza, pero también a lo desconocido". [The life of an immigrant heart / the dreams and condemnations of a woman singer //…Immigration / A sacred and never-ending route to hope, but also to the unknown] (Márquez Caballero, 2022). Looking at the themes of Willow's "Who am I" , Noé Lira's "Blanca Nieve", and here with Ultra K's "Dos Cielos" , all three of these women, in their own way, centered and brought to light affective dimensions of their language practices and the role that their "heart connection" played in navigating feelings of discomfort, contradiction, belonging, and othering in face of different dimensions of discrimination and othering in one or more names language. For Geneviève, her "heart connection" centered family history, intergenerational transmission of story and language, and knowledge of self and the (re)appropriation of a mother tongue. For Noé, her "heart connection" highlighted the role that embodied knowledge played in connecting her to an additional language and writing using her linguistic intuition. For Karina, her "heart connection" highlighted how she moved from negative emotional experiences of language practice towards more transformative, évolutive experiences of singing and writing on her own terms, which allowed her to challenge raciolinguistic discrimination and stereotypes placed upon her. By connecting to their Heart, that is, to affective, intergenerational, embodied, intuitive, and transformative dimensions of their language practices, I argue that these women complexified dominant notions of mother tongue and native speaker to center love, history, care, and evolution rather than "native-ness", "legitimacy", or "perfection", notions that have often pushed minoritized language practices and identities to the sidelines. They also, within their music and writing, negotiated feelings of their heart being caught in between, being pulled by

two sides, and created a home within their cultural production where they could, even if only

momentarily, belong and exist in all their complexities and share that with others.

SpiRitual Languaging

An additional theme that came through data analysis was that each knowledge holder had

a sort of SpiRitual Backpack of SpiRitual Thread that they carried with them during their writing

and music production. I have capitalized the R in SpiRitual to highlight the habitual, ritualistic

nature of these practices. Each knowledge holder centered various dimensions (or subthemes) of

these spiritual components included practicing rituals, referencing deities and myths,

incorporating cultural symbols, listening to and dialoguing with Spirits and Ancestors,

connecting to nature, and non-linear conceptualizations of time. Each knowledge holder's

SpiRitual Backpack carried with them deep cultural references that were communicated across

multiple named languages and through various, creative semiotic modes. This is similar to

Kalan's *conceptual translanguaging* where multilingual writers reuse concepts from their home

languages in their English texts as a an "intellectual safety net" when navigating dominant

academic systems (2022, p.77). Karina, Geneviève, and Noé have, consciously and

subconsciously, sown their SpiRitual Threads in, between, and across their critical-creative

writings and cultural production as they drew upon them for inspiration, connection, meaning

and practice them during their creative, translingual practices. The three knowledge holders also

highlighted how they carried their SpiRitual Backpacks with them particularly during the process

of critical-creative writing and symbolic creativity, i.e. writing, singing, performing,

collaborating in community. To demonstrate this, I will expand on the cases of Karina,

Geneviève, and Noé. The process of putting into words this SpiRitual section of the chapter took

form by writing out observations, noting songs, and symbols that the artist made visible by hand

in my journal, a process which facilitated meaning-making and my ability to create a storyline for this SpiRitual dimension of the three women's language practices.

see Figure 1.
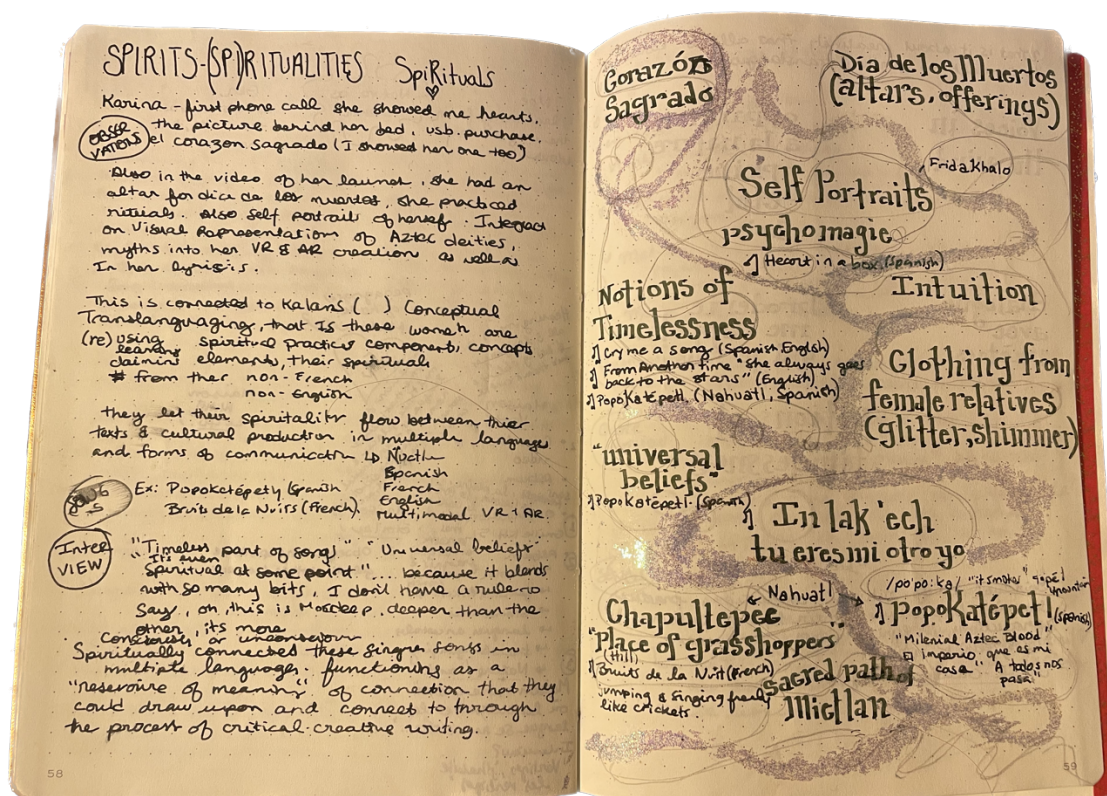
Figure 1. Brainstorming Karina's SpiRitual dimensions in my journal.

"Je Suis la Jungle et la Ville" [I Am the Jungle and the City]

I began noticing how Karina referred to and incorporated visual, textual, and sonic representations of Mexican cultural symbols, Aztec deities, and Mayan philosophical concepts in different named languages and through various semiotic modes from the first time we connected on video call in December 2022. Karina's SpiRitual dimension resembles what Chicana theorists and scholars have also discussed as spiritualities: "The spiritual practices of many Chicanas emerge from a purposeful integration of their creative inner resources and the diverse cultural influences that feed their souls and their psyches…Chicanas define and decide for themselves

what images, rituals, myths, and deities nourish and give expression to their deepest values"

(Medina, 2008, p.223). While speaking on video chat, each of us in our home, conversing in

English, French and Spanish, I began to see different symbols and representations that Karina

had in her home. For example, I asked her about a poster that was hanging on her wall behind

her and she excitedly shared with me that it was *El Sagrado Corazon de Jesus*, a popular cultural

symbol for many in Mexico. She went on to share with me many of her Sagrado Corazón-

inspired objects and their connection to Milagros [little miracles] which are small charms that

can represent animals, body parts, like the heart, and have been used for many generations in

Mexico to request miracles. Furthermore, online, I had watched a live recording of "From

another Time" by Ultra K that was recorded on November 2nd, 2022 during her album launch

party. In this video, an alter and offerings were curated and shared as part of her performance

that took place on *Día de los Muertos*, a Mexican holiday with roots in a Mesoamerican ritual

where the living celebrate and connect to the dead through rituals and offerings. These are just a

few examples of how Karina, in her personal home and in public performance spaces, curated

collections of sacred symbols and practiced rituals to stay her connected to her culture and share

them with others.

Months later, when I'd see her live performance during Montreal's Art Souterrain

Festival in March 2023, I further observed the central role that semiotic modes, particularly

Karina's Virtual Reality filters and Augmented Reality filters, played in communicating

spiRitual dimensions of her cultural production to, in this case, a majority francophone audience

that did not necessarily understand her lyrics that are in Spanish, French, and English. During her

show, Karina engaged with the audience and passer-byers by inviting them to interact with VR

and AR filters that Karina had designed and programmed to accompany four of seven songs on

her album "Heart in a Box", see *Figure 2*.

Figure 2. Karina singing live with blue cape and AR filter Azuléja

These VR and AR filters added visual representations of ancient Mexican deities, cultural

symbols, sacred places, animals and insects to her songs and performance, that communicated

with audience members regardless of their named languages. With the help of her iPad installed

on her mic stand and a projector screened on the wall behind, audience members were able to see

and use of the VR and AR filters that were projected live on the wall. Karina's spiRitual

languaging was clearly visible within Karina's use of filters as we saw visual representations of

multiple ancient Mexican deities and symbols such as the Aztec Piedra del Sol, Quetzalcoatl, the

Aztec feathered serpent deity that were referred to in her writings, the sacred volcano of

Popocatépetl, El Sagrado Corazón, and much more. These spiritual components of her critical-

creative writing and cultural production symbolically manifest in four different named

languages, Spanish, French, English, and Nahuatl.

During our interview, Karina spoke to SpiRitual components of the themes and messages that are expressed cross-lingually in her cultural production, "It's even spiritual at some point because it blends with so many bits". To further exemplify Karina's communication of SpiRitual dimensions of her language practice, in the song, "Bruits de la Nuit", Karina transfers sounds and natural elements from a sacred place, the Castillo de Chapultepec, that is located just a few steps from where Karina grew up, into her francophone song that was recorded in her basement in Montreal. Chapultepec is Nahuatl for "hill of grasshoppers". In a description of the song "Bruits de la Nuit" that was posted with the songs release on Bandcamp Karina describes:

> The song of the crickets becomes one with mine. City and jungle crickets, beautiful crickets… I could hear them underground and then those of the Jungle in the Riviera Maya that could resonate to the clouds. Day and night, they were all harmonious and vigorously constant in their singing. Life itself is going to sing for them, as well as mine, regardless of the geographical location I keep the grid…My childhood on a sacred mount. My green space in the middle of a huge city. The crickets are always singing with me as a girl and as a woman, from north to south. Those little voices that we have present to continue or sometimes to stop. The little steps we take every time we try something over and over again. Time passes differently being a singing insect. The natural act of jumping and singing freely has incredible healing properties, in addition to having the ability to vibrate harmoniously in community, just like the grasshoppers of Chapultepec…

From this description written in English, the lyrics written in French, sounds of the crickets in the audio, and her AR cricket avatar designed and programmed to accompany the song, we can see how Karina transferred concepts and sounds from this sacred place in Mexico to her writings and cultural productions cross-lingually and using various semiotic modes. The

photo below, see Figure 3, depicts Karina performing the song "Bruits de la Nuit" while simultaneously using her Cricket filter to transform into a cricket herself during the performance.

Figure *3*. Karina singing live with AR Cricket filter.

Recorded in her basement in Montreal, performed underground at Montreal's Art Souterrain Festival, Karina connected to the mystical elements of *Chapultepec* [Hill of the Grasshoppers] "regardless of geographical location" and communicated spiritual and natural dimensions of sacred place cross-lingually. Embedded below are the lyrics of Karina's song "Bruits de la Nuit" released on November 2nd, 2022 by Ultra K (Karina Márquez Caballero)

C'est le bruit de la nuit

Je suis le bruit de la nuit

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Des petits pas

Des petites marches

Des petites traces

Des petites angoisses

Des petits moments

Des petits chagrins

Des petites larmes

Des petites lueurs dans l'âme

Je suis le bruit de la nuit

Je suis le bruit de la nuit

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Des petits rêves

Des petites attentes

Des petites secondes

La folie me prendre

Des petites pensées

Pour que tu reviennes

Tu demeures bruyante

Toujours dans ma tête

C'est le bruit de la nuit

Je suis le bruit de la nuit

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Je suis la jungle et la ville

Lyrics translated to English by Bianca

[It's the noise of the night

I am the noise of the night

I am the jungle and the city

I am the jungle and the city

Small steps

Small walks

Small traces

Small anxieties

Small moments

Small sorrows

Small tears

Small glimmers in the soul

I am the noise of the night

I am the noise of the night

I am the jungle and the city

I am the jungle and the city

Small dreams

Small expectations

Small seconds

Madness takes me

Small thoughts

For you to come back

You stay loud

Always in my head

It's the noise of the night

I am the noise of the night

I am the jungle and the city

I am the jungle and the city]

The process of critical-creative writing and incorporating references and memories of ancient, sacred, Mexican places, natural elements, and myths into a Francophone song and virtual filter made space for Karina to exist in between languages and spaces, in the jungle and in the city, and to carry with her parts of her hometown in Montreal. This speaks to Anzáldua's theorization of *Nepantla, el lugar de la frontera,* [the place of the border], in which Anzáldua highlights how Chicanx writers and cultural producers living in the borderlands of the United

States with connections and ancestors from Mexico "consistently reflect back [ancient Mexican] images in revitalized and modernized versions in theatre, film, performance art, painting, dance, sculpture, and literature" (2016, p.23). Karina was also inspired by ancient Mexican concepts and symbols and renewed them in her own way through her critical-creative writing, music making, visuals, and performances. Karina made use of various semiotic modes including body movements, interactive virtual and augmented reality filters, digital drawings, multiple named languages, cultural references and more to communicate and share these spiritual dimensions with those ready to listen.

"Ein Van Parèye Ksa Souff Nô Vwè a Traverre Dju Tan" [The Same Wind Carries Our Voices Across Time]

Geneviève's SpiRitual languaging manifested in her writings, commentary, and performances and centered natural, land-based dimensions of spirituality through which she was able to hear the voices of her ancestors, particularly women ancestors in all their named languages. Connections between land and spirituality that Geneviève brought to light has long been highlighted by Indigenous knowledge holders, storytellers, and scholars from different nations on turtle island including Métis peoples (Adese, 2014; Fiola, 2015; Iseke, 2010; Salmón, 2000; Wildcat et al., 2014). Judy Iseke, a Métis artist and scholar from Alberta, highlighted the connection between land and spirituality in an article in which three elders tell stories about their relationship to spirituality: "To truly acknowledge the rich and complex understandings and relationships to land that have always existed, we need to return to spiritual traditions and to the relationships to land inherent in these spiritual traditions" (2010, p.44). Sitting in the audience at Geneviève's latest album launch concert on March 23rd, 2023, see Figure 4, Geneviève opened the evening by sharing with the audience what the "Maison Vent" is for her: "*Maison vent* est

une maison ouverte, sans frontières, c'est la plaine, la fleuve, le forêt et le vent. Dans le vent j'entends les voix de mes ancêtres en Anglais, en Français et en Mitchif". For Geneviève, the [Maison Vent is an open home, without borders, it is the plane, the river, the forest, the wind. In the wind I hear the voices of my ancestors in English, in French, and in Michif].

Figure 4. *Maison Vent* Album launch concert by Willows performed live on March 23rd, 2023.

Approximately mid-way through the concert after she performed songs that flow between French, English, and Michif-French from her latest album, her EP the Hills, and a couple of covers of Joni Mitchel, she also shared with the audience she had been in that space, the *Maison de Culture Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* during the entire week in residency. As part of that residency, she brought with her family archives, books, portraits of her family, of the children and even a rug from home with her dog's fur. The act of bringing these artifacts with her during her weeklong residency led her connect to energies of humans, spirits, and animals that were not physically present with her on stage. Geneviève particularly highlighted the space that this made for her to reflect, imagine, and connect intergenerationally with the women and ancestors of her family: "Ce qui m'a frappé, c'est comment la vie à l'aire dure, austère, sérieux, tough, les

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femmes accouchaient 10, 15 enfants. Ça a dû demander beaucoup de force. Je me demande qu'est-ce qu'on garde de ces femmes-là? Comment est-ce qu'on les ressemble aujourd'hui?" [What struck me was how hard life seemed, austere, serious, tough, the women gave birth to 10, 15 children. It must have taken a lot of strength. I wonder what do we keep from these women? How are we similar to them today?]. Through connecting with these artifacts Geneviève sought insight into their lives before and developed questions regarding the legacy they have left for her and future generations. These questions served as inspiration for Geneviève during the process writing and music production. During our interview, Geneviève further described the embodied and spiritual connections that she tapped into during processes of critical-creative writing and cultural production:

> There's a spiritual component to creativity and when I'm writing and singing…Sometimes when I am singing on stage it's not like a conscious thing but I feel sometimes like I'm tapping into something… a kind of space that is mysterious and where I can feel closer to, in this case, my ancestors, people who may not be here physically but that I can still feel close to and music is, for me, a way of connecting and connecting with those energies and being in that space…it's kind of like a path way to something invisible, a layer of existence that is always, I think, around us, and certain activities like being in nature or creating for example can, I feel, allow us to kind of touch that other world. So, for me, music is a way of doing that.

A few days after the album launch, on March 25th, 2023, Geneviève released the first part of a mini documentary series that accompanied the album. In this first part of the documentary Willows introduces us to the meanings, processes, and central questions around which the album was built: "Je viens d'un endroit où le vent parle", [I come from a place where the wind speaks],

she said. She expressed how she felt *dépaysée* when she first moved to Montreal, despite speaking the same language:

> Est-ce que je perds une partie de moi en m'enracinant ailleurs? Je me suis mise à penser aux femmes de ma famille. Celles qui ont marché sur ces terres longtemps avant moi et celles qui marchent à côté de moi aujourd'hui. J'ai eu besoin de me sentir proche d'elles de me nourrir de cette connexion afin de creuser mes racines sur deux mille kilomètres. J'ai eu besoin de créer un espace où tout en moi pouvait coexister au-delà des limites du temps et de la distance. Un endroit où les cultures et les langues se rencontrent où je peux entrer en contact avec mes ancêtres et puiser force et inspiration. La *Maison vent* est cet endroit.

> [Do I lose a part of myself by putting down roots elsewhere? I began thinking of the women of my family. Those who've walked on these lands long before me and those who walk next to me now. I needed to feel close to them, to nourished by this connection so I could dig my roots along 2000 km. I needed to create a space where all of me could coexist beyond the limits of time and distance. A place where cultures and languages meet, where I can enter in contact with my ancestors and draw strength and inspiration. The *Maison Vent* is this space.]

Here Geneviève's *Maison Vent,* "un endroit où le vent parle" [a her place where the wind speaks], symbolizes a space, a home where by connecting to and listening to natural elements, in this case the wind, she was able to connect to her ancestors, be they physically of this world or beyond, and she was able to hear to their voices in all of their ancestral languages, whether Geneviève understood those languages on a purely linguistic level or not. Natural and land-based dimensions of her SpiRitual languaging helped her navigate often contradictory feelings of

wanting to put down roots, grow, and love in a place, far from the land and the languages of your ancestors. Like Karina, Geneviève had her own SpiRitual languaging that is made visible within her cultural productions, performances, and lyrics. It consisted, in part, of making space to connect to the voices, lessons, languages, stories of her female ancestors that she hears through the wind. Geneviève also highlighted that making this SpiRitual connection was facilitated during processes of symbolic creativity such as writing and singing. To work towards being able to listen to the voices of her ancestors in their named languages and write in their named languages was a dimension that also reinforced this connection. One of the challenges that Geneviève faced was (re)learning Michif-French, the language of her grandmother and some of her ancestors that was unfortunately not transmitted at home and that was excluded from educational curriculum. Geneviève described her process of learning Michif-French as a lifelong process that entails guidance, support, and sharing with knowledge keepers, elders, her grandmother, online language classes, and translators. By describing her journey of learning Mitchif-French as lifelong, gives insight into Geneviève perceptions of language learning as a cyclical, communal process that never ends. This contrasts with what we see in dominant language learning classrooms that frame language as something static that can be acquired via purely linguistic components of syntax, phonetics, phonology etc. Furthermore, through the process of critical-creative writing and cultural production Geneviève consciously and lovingly made space to integrate Michif-French into her writing processes and lyrics even though she is in the process of learning the language. I believe that language learners and language educators can learn from Geneviève as she organically challenged notions of "legitimite speaker" to center love, care, and spiritual connection rather than perfection or language *acquisition*, notions that have often made language learners feel out-of-place to express themselves in additional or

ancestral languages. Geneviève's language learning journey also nourished Geneviève's spiRitual thread as she made intergenerational connections through the process of connecting with the language:

> For me, with Michif-French, my grandmother is still alive and so we've had a lot of discussions in the past years. I've learned a lot of things about her that I didn't know before, about her childhood, the way she experiences her identity now, how she lived it before, how she was raised… and through all of those discussions it became more and more clear to me that I wanted to have some Michif-French on my album, to honor her, to honor where a part of my family is from. My grandma's from Saint Laurent and that's a Métis community where they still speak Michif today. I wanted to honor that… and because there's a part of my family story that for about a generation was kind of hidden away, there was some shame, there was a lot of shame actually associated to being Métis, when my grandma was a little girl and growing up and now our family for the past 30 or something years has been moving out of that and very much very proud of who we are now and so this is part of that kind of, yea, I'm gonna sing this language and be proud of it and uh because of who I am.

Through the process learning Michif-French and sharing moments of storytelling with her grandmother, Geneviève reconnected to previously untold stories and navigated spiritual, intergenerational connections, and emotions of shame and rejection that were long associated to being Métis and speaking Michif. Through the process of critical-creative writing, singing, and music making, Geneviève navigated these histories and created a space the *Maison Vent* where she could hold all these complex stories, histories, emotions and send a message of being proud of being Métis and of her language.

When I saw Geneviève perform at the Micro Ouvert Autochtone on November 13th 2022, see Figure 5, while she was introducing her song "On se ressemble", Geneviève described this piece as an homage to her ancestors, particularly the women.

Figure 5. Willows performing live on November 13th, 2022.

She also highlighted that the chorus of the song is in Michif-French, and for her it is a way of making the Michif-French language shine. To further exemplify this, I have embedded the lyrics of her song, "On se ressemble" released on February 25th, 2022 by Willows written in *French* and Michif-French, and translation of the lyrics in English that I have written to facilitate understanding:

Tu regardais les vagues

Je les regarde aussi

Crasher l'une et puis l'autre

Comme on le fait, bercer le monde

De notre mieux et s'appuyer

Et toujours tout recommencer

Tu regardais la lune

Je la regarde moi aussi

Combien d'hivers passés déjà

Combien d'éclipses et de nuits blanches?

Et surtout combien de lumière

À trouver pour nous éclairer?

On se ressemble quand on y pense

On se ressemble quand on y pense

Toi tu descendais les rivières

Et tu as eu combien d'enfants?

Forte à la pluie souvent battante

Battante à force de traverser

Les heures heureuses

Et puis les autres.

Les saisons dures

La tête haute

On se ressemble quand on y pense

On se ressemble quand on y pense

Ein van parèye ksa souff nô vwè a traverre dju tan

Tu traversais les forêts

Et je les marche aussi

Je vois les trails que tu as fait

Et puis j'entends les chants aussi

Combien d'histoires à ne pas perdre

Seven Oaks, et puis Batoche

On se ressemble quand on y pense

On se ressemble quand on y pense

English translation provided by Bianca to facilitate understanding:

[You watched the waves

I watch them too

Crash one and then the other

As we do, cradle the world

The best we can and rely on each other

And always start all over again

You were looking at the moon

I look at it, me too

How many winters have already passed

How many eclipses and sleepless nights?

And above all how much light

to find to enlighten us?

We look alike when you think about it

We look alike when you think about it

You went down the rivers

And how many children have you had?

Strong in the fighting rain

Strong by dint of crossing

The happy hours

And then the others.

The hard seasons

The head high

We look alike when you think about it

We look alike when you think about it

The same wind carries our voices across time

You walked through the forests

And I walk them too

I see the trails you made

And then I hear the songs too

How many stories not to lose

Seven Oaks, and then Batoche

We look alike when you think about it

We look alike when you think about it]

In this song, we can see Geneviève's spiRitual thread manifests in French and Michif-French. Thinking back to the questions that Geneviève came to ask herself through interacting with her family artifacts and engaging in cultural production, "What do we keep of these women; How do we resemble them?", this song can be interpreted as a kind of response: "On se ressemble quand on y pense", [we are similar when you think about it]. We can also interpret that she communicated with her female ancestors through the wind and through song, telling a story of how she imagined them, that she heard their voices, that they had seen the same moon, walked the same paths on their land, felt the same wind, and that she had taken the time to learn about their language, their history, their battles, their strengths. As highlighted in her performances and in these lyrics, we can see the central role natural elements such as the wind, the moon, the rivers, trails, forests, that land play in facilitating a spiRitual and intergeneration connection to her ancestors and to the land.

"La Nature Me Ramène à Quelque Chose Plus Mystique, Plus Grand, Plus Sacré"

[Nature Brings Me Back to Something Mystical, Something Greater, Something More Sacred]

Noé Lira's spiRitual languaging is also connected to the lessons that nature brought to her processes of critical-creative writing and cultural production: "la nature me ramène à quelque chose mystique, plus grand, plus sacré. Ça me reconnecte à ça au final… la musique, c'est quelque chose de sacré de pourquoi est-ce que on, les êtres humains, on est capable de faire de la musique? Pourquoi c'est notre manière de connecter ensemble, puis de faire sens de ce qui nous habite, de ce qu'on perçoit vraiment." [Nature brings me back to something mystical, something greater, something more sacred. In the end, it reconnects me to that... music is something sacred as to why we, human beings, are capable of making music? Why is it our way of connecting together, and making sense of what's inside us, of what we really perceive]. Here Noé Lira also described how nature, similar to music, connects her to a mystical, sacred elements that guide her in making sense of her lived experiences to connect to her environment. For Noé, notions of territory and nature taught her lessons, which are then transferred to her writings and language practices : "La nature, je sens que c'est mon lieu de recueillement, puis je pense pour ça que ça m'a beaucoup beaucoup influencé dans mon écriture". [I feel that nature is my place of meditation, and I think that's why it's influenced my writing so much]. For Noé, reconnecting to nature and being in connection with different geographical locations made space for her to temporarily disregard nations of territory, boarders, nations-states, national languages that had long been sources of feeling as though she did not belong completely in one country or another: "The more I travel the more I took distance from this sense of territory and began to question more my personal territory and my personal inhabitation of my body and how the territory has structure and still structures the bodies." Noé made an analogy to a leaf that blows in the wind, saying that she learns from the beauty and movement of nature. A leaf in the wind does not ask itself questions regarding whose territory it belongs to or if it can cross over boarders, a leaf

simply lets itself be carried. These lessons from nature are visible in Noé's critical-creative writings and languages practices as she often disregards boundaries that exist between languages and draws upon her full repertoire during the process of writing. This is exemplified in many of her songs that that flow between Spanish, English, and French. For example, in her song, "Ríndete", Noé mobilized Spanish and English to send a message of the importance of connecting to our shared humanity through nature and through our roots that know no boarders. This was also reflected in her live performances, where she communicated fellow musicians with audience members via multiple named languages and embodied movements. Found in the description of the music video for "Ríndete" released on youtube by Noé Lira on June 4th 2021 is written "Un grito de esperanza, en medio de la montaña. Moverse con el viento, saborear la libertad. ¡Qué viva la danza!", [A cry of hope, in the middle of the mountain. To move with the wind, to taste freedom. Long live dance!]. Below are embedded the lyrics of "Rindete" from the album *Latiendo la tierra* released by Noé Lira on August 27th 2021:

> Pa' las que temen (For those who hurt)
>
> Pa' las que hieren (For those who hurt)
>
> Pa' las que duelen (For those who hurt)
>
> Pa' las que mueren (For those who hurt)
>
> I feel, I feel your pain
>
> Come now, join my refrain
>
> Que la música sana
>
> La música cura
>
> Escápate ya de esta locura

I know, I know your pain

With every little strength that remains

Suéltate el pelo

Suelta tu miedo y

Ríndete, ríndete al sonido

Déjalo atras

Déjalo en casa

Desmelénate

Despreocúpate

Que esta noche es pa' gozar

Esta noche pa' olvidar

Pa' volver a presenciar

Todo lo que somos

Sangre hirviendo

Tormenta pura

Hambre y alimento

Tremenda sabrosura

Ríos de amor desembocados

Fuego y hoguera

Madera y cerilla

Dónde

Dónde perdimos

Perdimos el arte

El arte del amor

Dejarnos invadir

Por tanto farol, tanto odio

Y tanto dolor

May we nurture care, love, unity

Embrace the dance, life force, energy

Surrender to the winds and bow before the waves

Be thankful for every breath that you take

Calling all hearts to seek for the light

And may in compassion be rooted the change

Cerramos corazones

Abrimos trincheras

Vestimos escudos

Y espadas

Abridnos las venas

Que salpique, pique

Que caiga la sangre

Dejándonos libres

I feel, I feel your pain

Come now, join my refrain

Que la música sana

La música cura

Escápate ya de esta locura

I know, I know your pain

With every little strength that remains

Suéltate el pelo

Suelta tu miedo y

Ríndete, ríndete al sonido

Translation of "Rindete" by the author to facilitate understanding:

For those who fear (For those who hurt)

For those who are injured (For those who hurt)

For those who hurt (For those who hurt)

For those who are dying (For those who hurt)

I feel, I feel your pain

Come now, join my saying

That music heals, music cures

Get away from this madness

I know, I know your pain

With every little strength that remains

Let your hair down, let go of your fear and surrender

surrender to the sound

Leave it behind,

leave it at home

go wild,

don't worry

That tonight is to

enjoy

Tonight, to forget

To witness again

All we are

boiling blood

pure storm

hunger and food

tremendous tastiness

rivers of love flowing

fire and bonfire

wood and match

Where

where we lost

we lost the art

the art of love

let us invade

For so much bluff, so much hate and so much pain

May we nurture love, care, unity

Embrace the dance, life force, energy

Surrender to the winds & bow before the waves

Be thankful for every breath that you take

calling all hearts

To seek for the light

and may in compassion

Be rooted the change

we close hearts

We build trenches

we wear shields

And swords (encore)

open our veins

let it splash, itch

let the blood fall

setting us free

I feel, I feel your pain

Come now, join my saying

that music heals

music cures

Get away from this madness

I know, I know your

pain

With every little

strength that remains

let your hair down

release your fear

Surrender, surrender to the sound

Languaging Things

The final main theme that was uncovered in the work of the three women and singer-songwriters of this study was how each knowledge holder's language practices were embedded within complex engagements with materials and non-human communicators such as objects, artifacts, technologies, sounds, and animals thus highlighting a multisensorial and interactive nature of their critical-creative writing and language practices. This speaks to Pennycook's (2017) semiotic assemblages which redresses dominant perceptions of language as primarily located within the human mind and "relocates repertoires in the dynamic relations among objects, places and linguistic resources" (p. 279). Similarly, Gaztambide-Fernández (2020) also

highlighted how "cultural production is always situated within and in dialectic relationship to material orders…[by rejecting] the view of these materials as inert or passive and instead [proposing] that materials bring their own affordances and resistances" (p.15). To exemplify this, I will unpack how two of the three knowledge holders made space for interactive relations with specific materials during the process of critical-creative writing. The complex engagements that the knowledge holders experienced with their materials demonstrated not only how materials are handled and utilized by them but also how the materials themselves have an agentic role in affecting these women and their language practices.

As mentioned in the methodology section, the design of this study was heavily influenced by my positionality as a woman who is in connection to and orbits around communities of musicians in Montreal. Embodied knowledge and observations that I had integrated while attending local concerts, listening, and watching musical products online, and having made music and performed spoken word poetry in the past all impacted the design of this study and my interest in better understanding the practices of translingual and transcultural women and singers. During the early stages of designing my project and through organic observations of concerts of women who sing in multiple languages, I began growing curious about the role that objects and materials played in these singers' language practices and cultural productions. My lived experiences creating music and being in connection with communities of musicians led me to organically observe the position of these singers, their voices, and their named languages as located alongside various human and non-human communicators. Be that on stage, in recordings, or in community, instruments, fellow musicians, curators, venues, seating, sound systems, lighting, garments, cultural objects and more contributed to the makeup of a communicative soundscape. This led me to develop an artful inquiry component in my interview guide where I

invited each knowledge holder to bring with them, to our interview, an object that was significant to them with regards to their language practices and identity as a musical cultural producer. I closed each interview inviting them to share with me the story and significance behind their object. I will discuss the meaning behind Geneviève's Ceinture Fléché, then unpack Karina's broader engagement with materials, and conclude with the meaning behind Karina's "Heart in a box". The cases of Geneviève and Karina demonstrated how they interacted with and were affected by their "special object" during the process of critical-creative writing and highlighted how interacting with and being affected by these objects, enriched their language practices and were resources for communication and creative expression.

"Une Longue Broderie Me Rappelle Qui Je Suis » [A Long Broderie Reminds Me of Who I Am]

Geneviève exemplified how materials have agency within her processes of critical-creative writing. Recalling the SpiRitual section of this findings chapter, I briefly described how Geneviève had brought with her photos and artifacts of her family during the process of writing and during her week residency at the *Maison de Culture Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* and how this impacted Geneviève's symbolic creativity by making space for her to connect intergenerationally and write about her women ancestors in French, English, and Michif-French. An additional example of the relations that Geneviève made with materials during the process of critical-creative writing is the story and significance behind her special object a Centure Fléché, an arrow headed sash, that is a cultural symbol and craft for both members of the Métis Nation and for Franco-Manitobans. At the end of our interview, Geneviève generously shared with me a hand stitched Centure Fléché that her Godmother had recently gifted her, see Figure 6.

Figure 6. Geneviève holding her Ceinture Fléché gifted by her Godmother during our interview.

With this gift, her godmother left a small note for Geneviève detailing the symbolism of each color, the time it took her to complete each stitch. This ceinture fléché was very significant for Geneviève:

> It's an incredible amount of work, so this symbolism of this particular ceinture
>
> fléché…first of all, la ceinture fléché, is a symbol *idéntitaire pour la nation Métisse et*
>
> *pour les Canadiens-Français*, and that's my mom and my dad, my dad is Métis and my
>
> mom is Canadienne-Française Manitobaine so for me this ceinture fléché is really, it
>
> means a lot to me. And each color, my godmother gave a significance to each color so
>
> and they are all tied to my ancestors, my grandparents, my mom, from both sides of the
>
> family, Métis, Indigenous, and Franco-Manitobaine, Canadien-Français, Québecois, so
>
> this is, especially on this album that I am putting out now, one of the reasons that I
>
> always have a *ceinture fléché* not far from me was because I like the symbolism of
>
> weaving together stories and different cultures...

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In addition to the symbolic meaning of the Ceinture Fléché, Geneviève shared with me that she physically kept this Centure Fléché close to her during the process of writing. Particularly in her *atelier de creation*, the space where she writes and composes. Through the material and symbolic presence of this sash, Geneviève connected to her Godmother and to the meaning behind this handmade Ceinture Fléché which weaved together separate yet interconnected components of her Franco-Manitobain, Métis, and Indigenous ancestry. The impact that this material connection to her ceinture fléché also is made visible in her song writing. Notably in the lyrics of her song "Lignées" released on March 24th, 2023 by Willows:

Sur les chemins de gravier

Derrière ma maison d'enfance

Je marche longtemps

Je ne suis pas seule ici

Des voix murmurent

Dans les feuilles du saule

Dans l'écho de mes pas

Et les histoires revivent

Je ne me perds pas

Je me trouve, me relie

À toutes ces lignées

Loin derrière moi

Et devant à l'infini

Je touche à l'horizon

Et je marche dans les deux sens

Les lignes du temps

S'enroulent autour de moi

Une longue broderie

Me rappelle qui je suis

Je ne me perds pas

Je me trouve, me relie

À toutes ces lignées

Je ne me perds pas

Me retrouve, me relie

À toutes ces lignées

Je retourne à l'est

Là où l'amour me traverse

Lyrics translated by authot to facilitate understanding:

[On gravel paths

Behind my childhood home

I walk a long way

I'm not alone here

Voices whisper

In the willow leaves

In the echo of my footsteps

And stories come alive

I don't lose myself

I find myself, connect

To all these lineages

Far behind me

And ahead to infinity

I touch the horizon

And I walk in both directions

The lines of time

Wrap around me

A long embroidery

Reminds me of who I am

I don't get lost

I find myself, connect

To all these lines

I don't get lost

Finds me, connects me

To all these lines

I return to the east

Where love flows through me]

"You Don't Need a Language. It's a Heart"

When I went to pick up Karina from her home on a cold winter day in February, she came outside with her winter jacket, a teddy bear textured sweater, Frida Kahlo earrings, a shiny metallic top, black winged eyeliner, and carrying a shiny blue suitcase/valise filled her special objects and the materials she would use to perform after our interview. When I asked Karina about the elements that she brings to her shows she referred to it as her "magic set up that enters all in that little valise that you see there". Her magic set up typically included her microphone and a console to have her sound system, a drum pad (Octopad from Roland), a Korg keyboard, her tablet, her computer, stands, lights and more. "I have a good relation with machines", Karina explained. From a young age, Karina had positive memories manipulating and being manipulated by machines. These experiences directly impacted Karina's perception of her voice, her experience expressing herself in multiple named languages, and the process of creation more largely.

> You know in Mexico, we get and all the crap that they don't sell in countries like this…[when I was four or five years old] there were these microphones put in the market that would syntonize with [a free] radio station…and you would have sound on your microphone, just with batteries. My father brought that one Christmas…I would record myself inventing hours of commercials, products, stories, and I would *love* to hear them after. I would make my jingles and I would start to make songs for the radio. So it was more having the *tools* to create the things that have always attracted me, not really to be

on stage…I guess that's when I knew that my voice had something in particular that I could go further because I also started to, for example, speak in English.

This memory of physically manipulating electronics and attuning her microphone to free radio stations in her home in Mexico City in the 1980s led Karina to uncover the joys of amplifying, recording, and relistening to her voice with and through these machines. This process fed her desire to create stories, commercials, products, jingles, and allowed for these "leftover" electronics to live again. These first memories developing a relationship with machines contributed to Karina recognizing that her voice was powerful and that she could "go further" with her voice; This experience coincided with her learning to express herself in an additional named language, English, which also allowed her to "be more":

I talk a lot. I was born with this urge of finding a way to find myself. Express myself. Be there. Be heard...when I started to be bilingual, I found English very simple to express certain things…I guess when I got to really have my preferences for language, it was more from [the music] I was listening. I would also write in English. In fact, I think English defines me more emotionally inside because, I don't know why to be honest, but I think it's because being Mexican, you always want more. *C'est comme un truc aspirationnel, tu es là pis tu veux être encore plus pis tu te vois tu te compares on nous met toujours comme en deuxième place*. And that made me want more and more and more and be more.

Learning an additional language, like machines, is another component which nourished Karina's desire to express herself and exercise the power of her voice. Organically, by the age of five Karina knew all the Beatles' repertoire, thanks to her father, and would sing along to their songs in English. Also, because her mother was a musician and would listen to various artists

from Mexico and abroad, Karina recalls having a vast repertoire of music she would listen to in multiple named languages. Karina also went to a British school in Mexico City. In the quote above, Karina expresses in French, that as a Mexican "they always put us second place" and learning English was, for her, a way to combat that feeling. This highlights how Karina's personal experience growing up in Mexico led her to have embodied knowledge her language being minoritized language vis-à-vis to the global dominance of English. Alongside experimentation and interaction with machines, from her first microphone to today with her *magic valise*, Karina also experiments and interacts with her growing linguistic repertoire which also fuels her critical-creative writing and cultural productions.

To further demonstrate how Karina's repertoire entailed dynamic engagements with materials I will unpack one of the two special objects that Karina shared with me at the end of the interview, her Heart in a Box. Karina confectioned an anatomical bloody red heart in a gold painted box with items that she purchased on the internet and made her own with paint, glitter, and fake blood. While explaining the significance of her Heart in a Box to me, which is also the title of her album, Karina shared that she had long been inspired by Chilean filmmaker Alejandro Joborowsky, the concept of psyschomagic in which you can transform your reality through poetic, symbolic, and material acts:

> Jodorowsy, *il croît à la base à la pyschomagie*, in which by doing acts of magic
> consciously you can give meaning to those moments and actually change your
> reality…It's related with Tarot cards and a lot of intuition. I wanted to utilize these
> concepts. And I said, what a better way to just rip out [my heart] and put it in a box?
> Because even if it's, yucky. The box is beautiful, and the box is made of gold. So, I would
> give a meaning to [the Heart in a Box] really being my thoracic cavity. My box was still

my [resonance] box, but it was not in my chest. It was in my box. And well, the voice, as always, has this connection to this cavity, because that's actually what makes your resonance and all this part of your body that takes. Psychomagic gave me this kind of symbolism to heal that part that was really dying. If I didn't do that, no one would have done that for me. So, I did it and I took it out. See Figure 7.

Figure 7. Karina sharing her bloody Heart in a Box

Through the process creating a material, symbolic representation of her heart and her emotions that, at the time, she felt were inconsolable, Karina transformed the objects and in return was transformed by them as well as she symbolically ripped her Heart out of her thoracic cavity into a protected place where she can regain a sense of control and decide to show and share it with friends and strangers during performance. With regards to the impact that these complex engagements with materials had on Karina's language practices, we can look to the impactful communicative dimension of her Heart in a Box. When I saw Karina's live concert at the Festival Art Souterrain in March 2023, Karina had printed and placed "Heart in a Box"

posters on the walls and tables with a QR code for the public to access a 3D anatomical heart on their personal electronic devices, see Figure 8.

Figure 8. Heart in a Box album cover and poster with interactive QR code.

Furthermore, during our interview, Karina shared with me some reactions that both close friends and unknown audience members had to her Heart in a Box:

I had friends that would see me recording and would say, 'I'm so sorry to see you like this. I am so sorry you're going through that. Why are you doing this? It's horrible'. And I was like, 'Oh my God, if you only knew this is so releasing to me. I am sorry you see it that way.' But then I realized that they would really see my pain. So, I was just putting it nicely.

During Karina's live performances, I also observed how Karina typically opened her set with the first song from her album which is also entitled "Heart in a Box" and how Karina physically claped open and shut the cover of the Heart in a Box to create the snare drum sound of the song, see Figure 9.

Figure 9. Karina holding closed her Heart in a Box during live performance.

She would also theatrically take out her Heart from the box to reveal it to audience members, then putting it back in its place. Occasionally, she threw her Heart to an audience member so they could catch it:

It creates compassion and understanding fully because when I do this live, I throw them my Heart in the air, and they know by instinct that they have to catch it. 'You gotta catch it it's my Heart'. You know what, I mean? So that's super fun. That's super fun cause you put their responsibility, just like life puts your responsibility or any level in your life and you just have to fucking take it. That's my Heart. You don't need a language. It's a Heart.

While the title of her song and album "Heart in a Box" is in English, the lyrics of the song are in Spanish, and while conversing with audience members during the live performances Karina expressed herself mostly in French, regardless of the named language that she mobilized to explain or name her Heart in a Box, Karina demonstrated the significant communicative role

that materials themselves played in her cultural production that is on par or in some cases more effective than purely linguistic components.

Invitations

During my participation at Geneviève's, Noé's and Karina's concerts, not only did I pay attention to the objects and materials that they had on stage, but I also collected and purchased materials that they had put at disposition for the public or that they were selling as merchandise, see Figure 10.

Figure 10. Materials and merchandise from the knowledge holders on grass.

The photo embedded above was taken in June 2023 and was one of the last photos I took with my Kodak Fun Saver that I had kept with me during the data collection process. I remember placing these pictures on the grass in my backyard, the place where I wrote most of my first draft of this thesis. Reconnecting with these objects, this picture, and the pictures I took throughout this project also helped me to learn and observe different dimensions of these women's symbolic creativity. For example, in this picture I am reminded of the handmade and interactive

components of these objects. They invited the public not only to interact with their cultural products, but they also encouraged people to engage in symbolic creativity and to write themselves. Particularly, on the top right corner of Figure 7 there is a letter set that I purchased at Willow's album launch concert: handmade paper, envelops and stamps made by a Canadian multidisciplinary artist, Jazz Aline from Treaty 1 territory in Manitoba. Below in the center is a handmade notebook with different phases of the moon painted and put together with multicolored recycled paper by Noé Lira. Ultra K's album cover with QR code is also there inviting the public to interact, directly on their phone with her anatomical heart filter and listen to her song. All three of the knowledge holders, through the process of creating, making, or sharing materials such as these have in turn invited the public to listen to their songs, to learn from their stories, and to write. I hope that this project has contributed to bringing to light the critical and creative ways that these women are engaging with language and navigating the challenges they face with regards to being able to write, perform in the languages and identities that they embody.

Circles & Spirals

The three main themes presented in this chapter, the "Heart Connection", SpiRitual Languaging, and Languaging Things, described and exemplified the rich, organic, and intimate language practices that these three singer-songwriters and musicians have critically, creatively, and lovingly made space for during various processes of cultural production, both as a personal and at times shared practice. While I have presented the three main themes and their subthemes in marked sections and subsections of this chapter to communicate knowledge uncovered as clearly as I can, it is important to note that these themes are not-mutually exclusive and that they connect to (circle) each other and continually interact with (spiral) one another.

Within the "Heart Connection" theme, first I highlighted how Geneviève (Willows) centered **affective, intergenerational, and storytelling** dimensions of her "Heart Connection" as a foundation upon which she could engage with multiple languages of her ancestors within her cultural production from a place of love, knowledge of self, family, story, and care. Second, I described how Noé (Noé Lira) centered **embodied and intuitive** dimensions of her "Heart Connection" to connect to and feel language physically with her heart, body, and place during processes of cultural production. Thirdly, I described how Karina (Ultra K) navigated **affective, at times hurtful and traumatic, dimensions** of her "Heart Connection" that she experienced during processes of writing and performing multilingually as a newcomer to Canada and French language learner. I highlight her move towards more **intuitive**, less painful, and **transformational** dimensions of writing and singing across multiple named languages and cultures. The "Heart Connection" and their subthemes exemplified by the knowledge holders exemplified how all three women, singer-songwriters, and musicians made "heart connections" to their language practices that allowed them to feel their intuition and write using translingual instincts. By connecting to these Heart dimensions of their language practices, I argue that these women complexified dominant notions of mother tongue and native speaker to center love, history, care, and intuition rather than "native-ness" or "legitimacy", notions that have often pushed minoritized language practices and identities to the sidelines.

The second main theme presented in this chapter was SpiRitual Languaging which highlighted how each knowledge holder had a SpiRitual Backpack of SpiRitual Thread that they carried with them during and sown through various processes of critical-creative writing and cultural production. I capitalized the R in SpiRitual to highlight the habitual, ritualistic nature of these practices. Each knowledge holder's SpiRitual thread was communicated across multiple

named languages and through various, semiotic modes, thus it made space for their translingual and transcultural practices in a predominantly monolingual cultural context. Within this theme, I first described Karina's SpiRitual Languaging practices which demonstrated her meaningful incorporation of visual, sonic, and textual **representations of ancient cultural symbols, deities, philosophical concepts, and rituals** into her language practice. Second, I highlight how Geneviève centered **natural and land-based dimensions** of her SpiRitual Languaging, particularly lessons from the wind, which made allowed Geneviève to connect to her ancestors that may not physically be of this world and to hear languages that may not have been transmitted to her in present day. Thirdly, I close with Noé's **natural dimensions** of her SpiRitual Languaging, particularly that of her lessons learned from the wind, and I describe how these dimensions of her spirituality allowed her to disregard, even of only temporarily, borders and limitations placed upon languages, land, and her being. By connecting to and renewing these SpiRitual practices in their writings and performances across languages and cultures, the three women of this study made space for their ancestorial, sacred, land-based lessons that have historically been excluded from dominant educational and artistic spaces.

This chapter concluded with Languaging Things; This theme exemplified how each knowledge holders' language practices were embedded within complex engagements with non-human and more-than-human communicators such as objects, photos, artifacts, technologies, sounds, instruments, animals, and insects. To exemplify this, I first described the significance behind two of the three knowledge holder's special object that they shared with me during our interview Geneviève's Ceinture Fléché and Karina's Heart in a Box. Then I discussed the interactive dimensions of the three knowledge holders' objects and merchandise that was shared with audience members at the local concerts. This theme highlighted the active role that objects,

typically perceived as passive, played in the processes of critical-creative writing and translingual language practice. I argue that these women's critical and creative language practices contributed to disrupting dominant perceptions of language as located in the human mind to being in complex relations among things, places, sounds, and animals.

Chapter Five: Discussion

In connection with Tio'tia:ke / Montreal's music community, this thesis explored the language practices embedded within the cultural production of three women who write, sing, and perform in more than one named language. I was particularly interested in centering the experiences and practices of women whose languages, identities, and translingual practices have historically not been centered, heard, nor supported as much as their "official" counterparts i.e. monolingual or bilingual speakers of English and/or French within the context of Quebec and Canada. Language practices of women, particularly that of women of color, Indigenous women, and transcultural women, have been overlooked in empirical literature that is at the crossroads of language and cultural production. Most of the literature that has centered the language practices of women has been theoretical, and empirical projects have tended to investigate only the textual and cultural products without direct connection nor insight from the creators and women themselves. This study was designed to center and promote the work of the three knowledge holders of this study who are published singers and musicians and who agreed to have their names non-blinded. Karina Marquez Caballero (Ultra K, she/her), who is Mexican-Canadian who writes and sings in Spanish, English, and French; Geneviève Toupin (Willows, she/her), who is Métis from Red River and Franco-Manitoban and writes and sings in French, English, and Michif-French; and Noé Lira (she/her/they/them) who is first generation Mexicaine-Québécoise and writes and sings in Spanish, French, and English. I knew of their work organically prior to designing this study through mutual connections or participation at local cultural events. Throughout this research journey, I have drawn upon embodied knowledge, observations of local concerts and events, interviews with knowledge holders, analysis of lyrics and audiovisual productions, and artful inquiry to uncover the rich, organic language practices of

these musicians. Grounded in the theoretical framework of critical-creative writing, this thesis unpacks three significant dimensions of these women's language practices. Those of the Heart, the SpiRitual and Things.

Love Languaging as Home Building

As I reflect more largely on the findings of this study, the themes presented, and the concepts and theories that this project connects to, I am reminded of the symbolism of home and how each knowledge holder voiced in varying ways how their language practices and cultural production were a way for them build a kind of home where they could exist in peace within all their languages, identities, complexities, cultures, spiritualities. In this discussion section I describe, drawing upon knowledge learned throughout this project, what the possible dimensions go into building this home.

Foundations of Love, Intimacy, & "Language as a Site of Resistance"

The foundation of this home could center themes of the love, intimacy, and liberation. This connects to Freire's foundational values of a pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire, 1970) and hooks's theorization of "language as a site of resistance" (hooks, 1994, p.170). According to Freire (1970), humanizing pedagogy in the pursuit of liberation cannot effectuate change without authentic, generous, loving and committed communication, dialogue, and acting upon your words. Freire also highlights that dialogue cannot exist without love: "The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if it is not infused with love…Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is commitment to others" (Freire, 1970, p.89). hooks (1994) also wrote about the importance of intimacy and liberation in relation to language practice:

To heal the splitting mind and body, we marginalized and oppressed people attempt to recover ourselves and our experiences in language. We seek to make a place for intimacy. Unable to find such a place in standard English, we create the ruptures, broken, unruly speech of the vernacular…We make our words a counter-hegemonic speech, liberating ourselves in language. (p.175)

While here hooks (1994) referred particularly to Black vernacular and other "unruly" language practice deemed inferior by the gatekeepers of "standard" English in the United States, the act of seeking for intimacy in our organic, often minoritized, intuitive language practices can be applied to many contexts, including the Canadian and Quebec context where minoritized languages are also pushed on the sidelines of governmental institutions and dominant educational and artistic cultures.

The Curadora's Garden

As part of this home, I also envision the Curadora's (caretaker of art) garden: a physical, imagined, or spiritual space that is carefully curated with symbols, sounds, natural elements, writings, poetries, and is cared for by rituals, processes of symbolic creativity, and engagement with community. This connects what Chicana theorists Lara Medina and Bernal Delgado have described as *spiritualities* and the role they play in making space for Chicanas, and other transcultural and translingual communities, to negotiate their place in dominant educational structures: "The spiritual practices…emerge from a purposeful integration of their creative inner resources and the diverse cultural influences that feed their souls and their psyches…Chicanas define and decide for themselves what images, rituals, myths, and deities nourish ang give expression to their deepest values" (Medina, 2008, p.189).

Non-Human and More-Than-Human Family Members

The third dimension of this imagined home is that it would be a space where one can listen to the sounds, voices, and languages of non-human and more-than-human communicators such as those that came from instruments, objects, artifacts, technologies, sounds, animals, and the wind in the cases of Geneviève, Karina, and Noé. This dimension decenters the human and highlights the active role that objects, typically perceived as passive, play in multi-semiotic communication. By decentering the human, one can disrupt notions of language as located only in the human mind to being in complex relations among things, places, and sounds. This relates to theories of post-humanism which, "unlike human-centered perspectives, which foreground individual agency and intention in explaining social outcome, a material stance is sometimes called *post-humanist* because it begins from the premise that humans never act in isolation, but rather in concert with changing networks of people, objects, histories, and institutions" (Nichols & Campano, 2017, pp.245-246).

Conclusion

This study centered the language practices and experiences of three local, translingual artists, singer-songwriters, musicians, and women. Their work, words, melodies, songs, and shared humanity have kept me motivated throughout this entire research process. The findings presented in this study have centered organic, creative, transformational language practices and described what it looks like, what it means to, and what it sounds like to engage in affective, spiritual, and materials dimensions of language through song and creativity. The three women of this study have highlighted the significance in connecting to these dimensions as it allowed them to create a home within their creations; A place where they can exist, sing, and communicate in all their complexity.

Implications for Language Educators & Curriculum

Some practical implications of this project for language educators and curriculum makers would be to look for educational resources within the work of local cultural producers and to learn from rich organic language practices and linguistic diversity of one's community. This can take form by designing curriculum that draws on the experiences and cultural products of transcultural and translingual cultural producers, for example. Incorporating published albums, songs, lyrics, cultural products crafted by local musicians, filmmakers, writers, actors and more into curriculum can encourage teachers and students to engage with and learn from local creators. Another important implication is making space for "Heart Connections" in language education and designing curriculum that welcomes students' affective, relational, and embodied dimensions of engagement with language and writing. One concrete way of facilitating this "Heart Connection", as Geneviève pointed out, is by caring about each student's sociocultural, linguistic, historical, cultural, and power-relational background that they bring to the classroom and making sure classroom resources and curriculum reflect those histories, identities, and languages. This can take form of bringing in historical and current references, texts, cultural products that can connect students and language learners to culturally relevant pedagogy and make space for them to recognize themselves in curriculum. Another concrete implication of making space for "Heart connections", intimacy, and intuition with regards to language can take shape of making space for diverse language practice in the classroom and in cultural spaces:

> It is evident that we must change conventional ways of thinking about language, creating spaces where diverse voices can speak in words other than English or in broken, vernacular speech. This means that at a lecture or even in written work there will be fragments of speech that may of may not be accessible to every individual…Shifting how we think abot language and how we use it necessarily alters how we know what we

know…I suggest that we may learn from spaces of silence as well as apaces of speech, that in the patient act of listening to another tongue we may subvert that culture of capitalist frenzy and consumption that demands all desire must be satisfied immediately, or we may disrupt that cultural imperialism that suggests one is worthy of being heard only if one speaks in standard English. (hooks, 1994, p. 173-174)

Encouraging spaces of silence and creating educational spaces that allow students to use their first language even if not everything is understood by others is an important implication. Creating spaces like this can make space for students to use their home languages and connect more intuitively to language practice. Learning about your students' "SpiRitual backpack" is another important implication. One concrete way of doing this, as demonstrated by Delgado (2001) and Garcia and Delgado (2021) would be for making space for and understanding students' *pedagogies of the home* as rich sources for learning, meaning making, and community building. Teachers can disrupt dichotomies between inside and outside of school learning and *invite* students' home, cultural, and spiritual practices inside educational spaces. For example, you can design a multi-modal project where students build a miniature home and invite them to curate this space with symbols, natural elements, cultural or historical artifacts, animals, sounds that are meaningful to them. You can invite students to write or talk about those elements, describe how often they interact with these elements, and why they chose them in all their languages. Furthermore, getting to know the material lives of your students and locating them in their social and historical context can help teachers and learners' move away from perceptions of language as only existing within the human brain to seeing communication as a complex engagement with objects, animals, places, non-human and more-than-human elements. This can take form as simply as inviting students to bring in special objects such as instruments, technologies, photos into the

classroom and making space for them to engage with these objects, share them with classmates, and research or describe where the object came from and in what context it was made. These are just a few examples of how this project can be put into practice in educational contexts.

Implications for Researchers

A future direction of study could be to further theorize what educational theories of love at the crossroads of language could look like. As this project has demonstrated, learning from organic language practices of cultural producers is an important avenue to investigate. A similar design could be carried out amongst other realms of cultural production such as dancers, actors, painters, photographers, filmmakers, and more. Further centering spiritual practices of translingual cultural producers and locating those practices in their historical, sociocultural and linguistic contexts could also be an interesting future direction of study. Furthermore, as brought to the forefront by the three knowledge holders of this study, the role that natural and land-based elements play in one's spirituality and the lessons that has for language also central and deserves more attention. Further investigating these non-human and more-than-human dimensions at play within creative and organic language practice could also be an interesting further direction of study.

Given the role that embodied knowledge and observations have played in this thesis, one important implication for researchers is to engage in cultural sensitivity and reflexivity to reduce bias and to recall and recount the experiences and perspectives shared by knowledge holders as accurately as possible. One practical way of doing this, for me, was by keeping a researcher's journal that I would actively write in during concerts, after organic interactions with the knowledge holders, and after interviews. I also kept with me a Kodak Fun saver to take document public concerts. These elements helped me to have accurate depictions of interactions, observations, as well feelings, doubts, anxieties and allowed me to reference back to these entries to further

augment research validity. Another way of practical implication for researchers can take the form of manual coding for themes. For me, this took form of printing, manually cutting out and placing codes on the table under simultaneously emerging themes in relation to the initial research questions in various phases. The act of manually reviewing, placing codes, and ultimately taping them and displaying this long banner on my wall where I write allowed me to go back to data and themes throughout the process of writing to make sure I was representing the data accurately. See Figure 9.

Figure 9: Manual coding, theme revelation, and moment of meaning-making

Implications for Policy Makers

The findings of this study can have important implications language policymakers, particularly those working within the context of Quebec. Despite the small size of knowledge holders, this study centers meaningful yet overlooked dimensions of the rich linguistic diversity that exists in Montreal and in Quebec more largely. Given the Indigenous histories and realities of this territory, centuries French and English colonial settlement, and various waves of migration to this land, Montreal/ Tio'tia:ke/ Moonyilang is a site of complex sociolinguistic realities where multilingual and plurilingual soundscape is heard regularly (Galante & Dela Cruz, 2021). Despite this linguistic diversity, dominant language policies, notably Bill 96, have recently been adopted in Quebec to ensure the protection of and use of the French language in public spheres such as

schools, universities, public health facilities, the workplace and more. It has been well documented how policies such as these minoritize and exclude the languages and identities of often racialized, immigrant, and refugee populations and other raciolinguistically marginalized groups (Piller, 2016). This study, by centering the affective, spiritual, and material dimensions of these three musicians and community members, can demonstrate why it is important to develop and implement more inclusive language policies that recognize and value our community's linguistic diversity inside classrooms and public spaces.

Implications for Community

As I continue to orbit in and around cultural events, concerts, and organizations where cultural producers, musicians, filmmakers, writers, creators share their (often translingual) music, films, and literature in public spaces, I begin to better envision the implications that this project can have for community members. By better understanding the meaning and significance of these women's language practices we can see how language is deeply connected to one's identity, cultural heritage, and history. By adapting more complex understandings of language, audience members, cultural workers, programmers, organizations, people of the music industry should recognize, value and support speakers of minoritized languages and translingual speakers. This can take shape within festival programming and radio streaming, making sure to include diverse voices and languages as part and parcel of our local community. Particularly at a time where multilingual music can be marketed for profit, tokenized or packaged as something new, the women of this project are bringing to the forefront the critical, loving, intergenerational meaning-making and communicating that happens when one connects to their language from a place of love.

Limitations and future directions

Due to timeline limitations of a MA thesis and the need to design a study with a feasible amount of data for this size project, this study did not organize a focus group amongst the three knowledge holders. A future direction for research could be, in addition to individual interviews, to bring together a group of cultural producers around to discuss the research questions and collectively share their experiences and within a group context. This could further enrich findings and better include the knowledge holders in the data analysis process. While this study centered the experiences of three ethnically and linguistically diverse women and musicians who are generally underrepresented in the field, one limitation that came from this was the extent to which I could contextualize their language practices and experiences as embedded within their social and historical contexts. A future research direction could be for to expand on these dimensions had the project been larger.

Outro

I would like to close leaving you with an invitation to listen to three songs, one be each of the artists that contributed to this project. I have selected the following songs for their themes and soundscapes: "Heart in Box" by Ultra K (2022d), "Ríndete" by Noé Lira (2021c), and "Marie-Anne" by Willows (2023c).

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Appendixes

Interview Guide

Research Title: The Heart, The SpiRitual, The Material, & The Home: Centering Translingual Practices of Three Montreal-Based Artists Embedded in Song
Principal Investigator: Bianca Gonzalez
MA Student, Second Language Education, Integrated Studies in Education
McGill University | 3700 rue McTavish, Education, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2
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REB File # 22-07-043

1- You are a published singer and artist. Could you please share with me when you started singing and/or writing lyrics? What attracted you to create music and sing as your form of creativity and expression? Are there any particular bands or musicians that have inspired you? What drew you to these artists? What role did language play in your musical discoveries and inclinations?

2- You have published songs where you sing in # of languages. Can you talk to me about your linguistic repertoire? What languages do you speak, in what context? Do you experience similar levels of comfort when composing, singing and performing in each of these languages? Can you speak to your reasoning behind choosing to sing in these languages? Is it a choice? Does it come naturally?

3- Your music has been shared publicly. Could you share with me what you know about your listening community and/or who you imagine them to be? With regards to your listening community and your imagined community, do they play a role in the linguistic choices of your music? Or vice versa?

4- What role does land, location, or where you live play in your linguistic choices as a singer? In the context of Montreal, Quebec, what challenges do you face within your community with regards to linguistic choices of your musical productions? Do you face any challenges withing music and funding industries?

5- You have released photos, videos, and artworks to accompany your music and develop a visual identity. Do you perceive any connections between your visual artist identity and your linguistic identity?

6- Can you share with me the role that live performance plays in your career as a musician? Comparatively with the stage of composing and practicing your songs, can you speak to the experience of performing your songs live in multiple named languages? Do you sense a linguistic separation when singing live?

Consent Form

Title of Project: The Heart, The SpiRitual, The Material, & The Home: Centering Translingual Practices of Three Montreal-Based Artists Embedded in Song
Researcher: Bianca Gonzalez
MA Student, Second Language Education, Integrated Studies in Education
McGill University | 3700 rue McTavish, Education, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2
Email: bianca.gonzalez@mail.mcgill.ca

Dear Participant,
My name is Bianca Gonzalez. I am currently in my second year as a Masters Student in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE) at McGill University. I am sharing this document with you in order to inform you about the major dynamics of the research project that you have been invited to participate in. With this document, I would like to share some information with you about the focus of the project, the data management, dissemination plans, your role in the project, and your rights as a research participant.

I hope this project will help me learn about the role that language plays in your musical, artistic activities and identity. I want to see what it means to write and sing in more than one named language in a city that may or may not understand the language.s in which you choose to create. I would like to learn about the role that music has played in connecting with languages and cultures that you may or may not have daily contact with. I am curious about the relationship between your linguistic identity and your visual identity that you have created as an artist / singer. I think that these experiences can teach us a lot about how singers engage with language in their creative processes.

In order to learn about your experiences, I will need to speak with you for an interview of four hours. We, however, can add other sessions if we both feel we need to continue our conversations because you want to share more. The interviews will be conducted in-person or online depending on your preference. You will be able to choose one of four options for location of the interview: your private home, McGill campus private room, a private room booked at a Cafe in Montreal, or online conducted and recorded via zoom. The interviews will be audio and video recorded. You will also be invited to have your photo taken by myself. You are certainly allowed to decide whether you want the interview to be video recorded or not. You can opt-out for the video cameras and the photo portrait. If you choose to do the interview online you can also choose to turn off the video function on your device via the platform ZOOM. My reasoning behind taking a portrait and recording the interview is because I plan on making a project website and I hope this footage can bring light to your work and serve for academic and pedagogical purposes.

We will schedule the interview at a time that is convenient for you. Together, we arrange the number of the interviews and their length in a way that best suits your circumstances. Signing this form does not mean that you are obliged to give the interviews.

You can withdraw from the interview process at any point. This is also true about your engagement with the research project in general. Your participation is entirely voluntary and can

be stopped whenever you want to and for any reason. If you choose to withdraw during or right after the study, all information obtained up until that point will be destroyed unless you specify otherwise at the time of withdrawal. Following publication, we can only remove your dataset from further analysis and from use in future publications. Identifiable data will be kept for 7 years.

All the interviews will be conducted either online or recorded with my personal audiovisual equipment and transfered to my local computer hard drive. When we complete the interviews, I will keep the recorded videos on a password protected hard drive. No one but I will have access to the interview data for processing and analyzing the data. All the data will be destroyed by reformatting the hard drive after the dissemination of the findings. By signing this form, you are consenting to the use of your data by the Principal Investigator, including words, sound files, photos and videos in the aforesaid forms. Although all reasonable precautions are taken, there is always the possibility of third-party interception when using communications through the internet.

The findings of the research will include themes that can best highlight your experiences with singing in more than one named language. Parts of the interview data will be used to illustrate the themes. The findings will be presented in 3 forms: 1) Traditional academic articles and conference papers 2) creation of a project website with portrait photos, and 3) video installations. You will NOT remain anonymous in the process of dissemination and publication of the findings because I hope the release of the project website and videos will bring more attention to your work. By signing this form, you will give me the right to use the data, including words, sound files, and videos in the aforesaid forms. I will be the person creating the project website and the video.

To ensure the study is being conducted properly, authorized individuals, such as a member of the Research Ethics Board, may have access to your information. If you have any ethical concerns or complaints about your participation in this study, and want to speak with someone not on the research team, please contact the Associate Director, Research Ethics at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca citing REB file number _____.

Thank you very much for your participation.
Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. Please keep a copy of this information for your records.

Participant's Name: (please print) _____ Participant's Signature: _____

Do you agree for the interview to be video-recorded? Yes ----- No -----
Do you agree to have your photo taken? Yes ----- No -----

Date: _____

Ethics Certificate

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

REB File Number:	22-07-043
Project Title:	In Song: A Look into the Language and Literacy Practices of Three Montreal-Based Artists
Student Principal Investigator:	Bianca Gonzalez
Department:	Integrated Studies in Education
Supervisor Name:	Professor Amir Kalan
Sponsor/Funding Agency (if applicable):	.
Research Team (if applicable):	

Name	Affiliation

Approval Period:

FROM	TO
30-Nov-2022	29-Nov-2023

The *REB-2* reviewed and approved this project by Delegated review in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans.

* Approval is granted only for the research and purposes described.
* Modifications to the approved research must be reviewed and approved by the REB before they can be implemented.
* A Request for Renewal form must be submitted before the above expiry date. Research cannot be conducted without a current ethics approval. Submit 2-3 weeks ahead of the expiry date.
* When a project has been completed or terminated, a Study Closure form must be submitted.
* Unanticipated issues that may increase the risk level to participants or that may have other ethical implications must be promptly reported to the REB. Serious adverse events experienced by a participant in conjunction with the research must be reported to the REB without delay.
* The REB must be promptly notified of any new information that may affect the welfare or consent of participants.
* The REB must be notified of any suspension or cancellation imposed by a funding agency or regulatory body that is related to this study.
* The REB must be notified of any findings that may have ethical implications or may affect the decision of the REB.