Why it's "I love you," or "Je t'aime"—but not both:

Language Identity Perception in Adult Survivors of Childhood Trauma in Multilingual Contexts

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Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to write this master's thesis without the support of the many kind and generous helpful people around me, to only some of whom it is possible to give particular mention here.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks and gratitude to my two co-supervisors. To Dr. Mela Sarkar, *Associate Professor*, *Faculty of Education McGill University,* for taking on my thesis topic with enthusiasm, and for her generosity with her invaluable assistance. To Dr. Tina Montreuil, *Assistant Professor*, *Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology McGill University*, for her comprehensive clinical advice and contributions to the completion of this thesis which were essential to its success.

I would like to extend my extreme sincere gratitude and appreciation for Dr. Kathleen Saint-Onge, author of *Bilingual Being: My Life as a Hyphen* (2013), for her encouragement and guidance throughout this study. Furthermore, to all the men and women who participated in this study, thank you for your time and personal stories, without which this research could have never come to fruition.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the support and love of my family. Thank you in particular to my mother, Johanne, and my Uncle Jimmy who supported my work and believed in its value since the very beginning. And finally, thank you to my amazing husband, Benoît, who not only supported me in this research, but was a source of inspiration for me in the most difficult of moments: my champion who blessed me with the ability to see beyond the pain of my past and into the beauty that our future holds.

Abstract

This study examines the experiences of adult multilingual individuals who had experienced traumatic situations caused by a parent or community in the context one of their first languages as children. Six individuals who had experienced trauma in at least one of their early-acquired languages while growing up were interviewed. Through a phenomenological analysis, five themes emerged which provided a description of their lived experiences: (1) The sense that trauma negatively affected language identity as a whole; (2) Conflicted or dissonant multilingual identity; (3) Aversion from the traumatic language; (4) Refuge in the less traumatic language; and (5) A move towards reconciling multilingual identity. The specific circumstances associated with these themes were different for each participant, but the themes were experienced by most. Although not exhaustive in scope, the identified themes were reported to be a part of the experience surrounding the language identity perception of adult survivors of childhood trauma in multilingual contexts. This phenomenon, which the author refers to as multilingual identity dissonance after trauma (MIDAT), is explored in great detail. The development of resources that can be used by psychologists, social workers, and educators to help adult survivors of abuse resulting from these linguistic conditions in childhood is recommended.

Keywords: **multilingualism, trauma, phenomenology, qualitative methods, attachment, multilingual identity dissonance after trauma**

Résumé

Cette étude examine les expériences de personnes adultes multilingues ayant été victimes de traumatisme auprès d'un parent ou d'une communauté s'exprimant dans l'une de leurs premières langues en tant qu'enfants. Six personnes qui ont subi un traumatisme dans au moins une de leurs premières langues pendant leur enfance ont été interviewées. Par l'entremise d'analyses phénoménologiques, cinq thèmes auront émergé afin de fournir une description de l'expérience conséquente chez la victime du traumatisme: (1) le sentiment que le traumatisme aura négativement affecté l'identité dans son ensemble, (2) l'identité multilingue conflictuelle ou dissonante, (3) l'aversion à la langue première du malfaiteur, (4) le refuge vers une langue autre que celle du malfaiteur, et (5) le cheminement vers la réconciliation de l'identité multilingue. Les circonstances entourant l'expérience traumatique, quoique différentes pour chaque participant, relevaient de ces diverses thématiques pour la plupart des participants. Bien qu'elles ne soient pas exhaustives, les thématiques identifiées semblent être intégrées à la perception de l'identité linguistique des victimes ayant vécu une expérience traumatique durant leur enfance, et ce, dans un contexte plurilingue. Ce phénomène, dont l'auteur qualifie d'identité plurilingue dissonante après un trauma (IPDAT), est décrit de manière très détaillée. Les présents résultats de recherche contribueront au développement de ressources pouvant être utiles pour les cliniciens tels que les psychologues, les travailleurs sociaux et les éducateurs afin de venir en aide aux adultes ayant été victimes de traumatismes relevant d'un contexte plurilingue durant l'enfance.

Mots-clés: **plurilingue, trauma, étude phénoménologique, méthodes qualitatives, identité plurilingue dissonante après un trauma**

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CHAPTER ONE

In Canada, we know that there are more and more bilingual and multilingual households. In a 2016 Statistics Canada Census, 19.4% of Canadians reported speaking more than one language at home, up from the 17.5% reported five years earlier. In a city like Montreal, where English/French bilingualism is valued by families, as well as often another, "heritage" (immigrant-origin) language as well, we also find increasing numbers of mixed language households. On the other hand, an alarming reality is that 32% of Canadian adults reported that they had experienced some form of abuse before the age of 16 (Canadian Community Health Survey- Mental Health, 2012). It is therefore inevitable that there will be mixed-language households or multilingual community contexts in which there are incidences of trauma that occur for the most part in a single one of these languages. My own life experience can attest to this fact. After reading the autobiography of another person who lived through this experience (Saint-Onge, 2013), I believe there is reason to study this phenomenon further. This is an "invisible" problem that, to the best of my knowledge, has not yet been explored through systematic research.

The research I conducted draws on the fields of multilingual language acquisition research and of research with adult survivors of child abuse, to map out territory that may be new. I looked into language identity by interviewing adult survivors of abuse in multilingual contexts. Specifically, I planned to examine whether we could find an association between childhood trauma, from an abuser within a multilingual household practising One Parent, One Language (OPOL) (Döpke, 1992) style child-raising or Minority Home Language (MHL), and that child's later multilingual language identity. For example, has the individual's multiple languages in terms of identity, domains of use, or in other ways, been impacted in relation to the

language identity of the abusive caregiver; and if so, how did the language identity and practices of the abuser influence the child's life trajectory? The consequences of child abuse and neglect on multilingual language identity and emotional development cannot be predicted. However, exploratory work that would lay out some guidelines for looking into this problem has now been conducted, as I believe I have done here.

Motivations and Rationale

My motivation for pursuing this research topic is fueled by my own personal history, because I came from a bilingual household where I experienced abuse and trauma. Growing up, I had always disliked the French language. When peers and adults described it as the sensuous and poetic language of love and romance, I would strongly disagree. I had to ask myself, why is this? As I came to learn that language is so deeply tied to identity, why would I dislike it, purposefully refuse to use it at home, with others, and neglect studying it at school? I reflexively responded to people in English instead of French, in situations where I felt insecure, threatened or scared, even though French-speaking interlocutors couldn't understand me. I would switch to English without even being aware of it, at first. I would then consciously switch back to French, a language that made me feel much more vulnerable, but that was necessary in the situation. It's especially interesting when you take into consideration that, in my case, this never happened the other way around: switching from English to French in situations of stress or vulnerability. Were these attitudes and behaviours vestiges of my feelings toward my French-speaking abusive parent in childhood? It wasn't until I read that someone else felt the same way that I began to realize that this experience might extend beyond just my own.

Reading the autobiographical book by Dr. Kathleen Saint-Onge (2013), *Bilingual Being: My Life as a Hyphen*, further cemented my suspicions that abuse and trauma in childhood can

have repercussions on language identity. Saint-Onge's narrative shares how, for ten years of her childhood, she was the victim of abusers in her family who were francophone. She developed a negative association with her mother's family's language, French, and sought refuge in her father's family's language, English. She forwent the use of French for the use of English, as English became a type of "protective shell," or "safe harbour." According to her life story, this attitude and reluctance to use French is a direct consequence of the abuse and trauma. I became very interested in looking deeper into this type of lived experience because Saint-Onge's memoir revealed that there may exist a deeper, yet unrevealed connection between childhood trauma and language identity as an adult. Her experience closely reflects my own personal childhood experience of violence and adult self-perception of language use.

My overarching goal in researching the two topics of (a) multilingual acquisition, and (b) situations where abuse has accrued in multilingual settings in chiefly a single language, is to contribute to the existing literature to better help health practitioners and educators become aware of how to provide more suitable education, resources or treatment depending on the need and severity of each case. I hope this research may lead to better policies and medical or therapeutic practices by considering language as a part of the diagnosis and treatment process, in order to help people living with, or recovering from, abuse in multilingual families. With the goal of better understanding how we can move forward in researching this important issue, I will extrapolate from firsthand accounts of survivors of abuse, beyond my own and that of Saint-Onge, so that future research can go further and look at intervention, prevention, and other elements clinicians look for when they are dealing with families.

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the thesis. The next chapter, Chapter Two, is the literature review where the fields of self-identity and language

identity, and child abuse and trauma are explored. Chapter Three lays out the methodology and methods of this phenomenological research, and Chapter Four discusses the process of analysis. Chapter Five displays the resulting themes identified within the six interviews, which are then discussed in Chapter Six. Finally, Chapter Seven concludes the thesis by laying out the limitations of this study as well as its implications for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

There are two main bodies of literature I will draw upon for my research in order to determine what is known and what is relevant for this study. The first will be from the fields of bilingual and multilingual child-raising literature, such as the development of language identity, multilingual child-raising methods, and so on. The second will be on the studied effects of surviving child abuse, and how it can be detrimental to self-esteem and identity in the long-term. As I aim to uncover more about participants' self-identity, it is necessary to first define identity.

Self-Identity and Language Identity

From a sociocultural linguistic perspective intersecting language, culture and society, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) define identity as the social positioning of self and other (p. 586). They go on to propose five principles by which researchers can approach the question of identity. Hall (2012) explains how identity is not seen as singular, fixed, and intrinsic to a person, but as a "socially constituted, reflexive, and dynamic product of social, historical and political contexts of an individual's lived experiences" (p.31). When it comes to using language, people do so as individuals with social and family histories, taking root from where they are born, their gender, their social class, their religion, their ethnicity, and so on (Hall, 2012). Moreover, trauma caused by child abuse can also be a factor that could shape their identity, as it will be explored further on in this chapter.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) describe the traditional view of a person's self-concept as the sum of the person's "self-knowledge related to how the person views him/herself at the present" (p.11). Moreover, while self-concept is usually thought to be the result of an individual's past experiences, Markus and Nurius (1986) also include the idea of possible selves

as people imagine their as-of-now unrealised potential, including concepts such as hopes, dreams, and wishes. Overall, a person's self-concept created from past experiences interplays with their possible selves to continuously impact the choices they make throughout their lives.

In the case of language identity, social factors within a larger community can also affect how a person learns a language. For example, social dynamics and power relationships between languages may affect how a person successfully learns a language, as highlighted by Lightbown and Spada (2013). These are factors that are necessary to keep in mind when questioning a person's reasons for choosing certain paths in life. As Hall (2012) describes, our self-identity and language identity can influence which social spheres we choose to adhere to, such as social institutions, workplace, churches, and so forth. Our constructive and perceived identities as children within our families follow us into adulthood and play a role in our chosen relationships, with our family members, supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates, as well as our built environment choices, such the companies for which we work or the products we buy (Hall, 2012).

Bilingual language acquisition

Bilingualism can be defined as the ability to use two languages. However, Grosjean's (2010) definition is more encompassing as, "those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives" (p. 4). The word itself does not specify the degree or proficiency in either language, therefore there can be a wide spectrum of language proficiency amongst bilinguals speaking the same two native tongues according to Cenoz, Genesee, and the International Congress for the Study of Child Language (2001). Children who learn both languages at the same time during their early childhood are called *simultaneous bilinguals*, as opposed to those who acquire one language later in their childhood, called *sequential bilinguals*, as defined by

Aronin and Singleton (2012). Genesee (2008) reviews evidence on how the literature once considered children at a very young age as mixing both languages as they speak, or code-mixing, which was thought to indicate a lack of mastery of the languages, or even as being confused. More recently, researchers such as Romaine (1995) and Döpke (1998) consider that code-mixing demonstrates more "linguistic and communicative competence" (Genesee, 2008, p. 9), as opposed to delays or incomplete language developments as some older research suggests (Volterra and Taeschner, 1978, as cited in Taeschner, 1983).

Jim Cummins (2000) highlights how bilingual or multilingual children who begin their school life with lower levels of the school's main language are often wrongly labelled as having language delays or disorders. More often than not, this would relate to children from immigrant families or those speaking a minority language different from the one spoken at school (Cummins, 2000). Often these children are placed in special education classes for remedial reasons, when there isn't anything to remedy in the first place. If we look at this reality through the lens of the topic explored in this study, we can ask many important questions. Could it be that bilingual or multilingual children who are victims of abuse or neglect at home may experience reluctance to speak or learn the school's target language? Could they also be misdiagnosed with a learning disorder or delay, when the problem lies elsewhere? There are no clear answers to these questions. Currently, researchers such as Paradis, Genesee, and Crago (2011) have been making significant strides in providing guidelines that can help professionals in the fields of education better see the difference between disability and diversity. However, there is still much that needs to be addressed and researched before children with different language needs can find an educational model or environment that best suits them, for both their cognitive and linguistic needs (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

In cases like the one studied by Wong Fillmore (2000), where first generation Chinese immigrants had their first language replaced with English, rather than becoming bilingual, the development of the language spoken by their family or caregivers can be forgotten by being "submerged" into a different language culture for too long. It could be possible that, if neglect and abuse are at play, the child could stop speaking the family language, which could lead to social and psychological issues, as was the case in the study by Wong Fillmore (2000): the parent-child relationship can become more difficult and anxious, with communication difficulties because there are few common words known by both child and parent, as well as the child's shyness (p. 206).

This type of language loss has been associated with negative consequences in many aspects of a child's life. As coined by Lambert (1987), this type of *subtractive bilingualism*, the loss of a language induced by learning another can affect a child's identity, their self-esteem and their family relationships. In a study of how trauma has affected a person's language identity and life choices, it would be important to be able to differentiate participants that have dissonance with their identity in one of their native languages for reasons other than subtractive bilingualism caused by submersion in a different language environment, such as in daycares for example.

Growth of self-identity through language.

For the reasons mentioned previously, and many others, the successful raising of children as simultaneously bilingual or multilingual comes with its challenges. Family language policy literature, as described in Macalister and Mirvahedi (2017), discusses different approaches that tend to be used in homes for raising multilingual children. For example, one extensively researched approach is when there are two parents who each speak a different language, and they each speak their first language to their child. The term for this approach was coined in 1992 as

One Parent, One Language (OPOL) by Döpke. Another approach, described below, is Minority

Language at Home (MLH).

Minority language at home.

 MLH is usually the natural default for immigrant families. In most cases, all caregivers

speak the same language at home, which is not the dominant language in the surrounding

community. A German study by Klieme (2006) suggests how, after controlling for background

factors such as socio-economic factors, bilingual students in Germany living under the MLH

system outperformed their non-immigrant background monolingual peers in general cognitive

abilities (as cited in Maluch, Kempert, Neumann, & Stanat, 2015). This is seemingly an effective

method for raising bilingual children and maintaining a heritage language, and for the purpose of

this research, it is important to include this type of family linguistic system.

One parent, one language.

Unlike the MLH context, the OPOL approach is more commonly used in already

bilingual families. Many researchers, including García and Baetens Beardsmore (2009), believe

in its success for the model's tendency to promote *additive bilingualism*, where a "second

language is added to the person's repertoire and the two languages are maintained" (p. 52).

Since the early 20th century, there have been multiple studies that demonstrate the success of

establishing bilingualism through OPOL (Ronjat, 1913, as cited in Spolsky, 2012; Esch & Riley,

1986; Döpke, 1992; Barron-Hauwaert, 2004).

However, OPOL can be less than effective when certain circumstances arise, such as a

majority environment that overpowers the minority language, leading to a failure to raise a

bilingual child. For example, in a French dominant environment, where the parents have an

OPOL policy and French is a language spoken by one parent, while the other speaks a minority

language in Canada, such as Japanese, the majority language (French) can overpower the minority language (Japanese), discouraging the child from using it, and leading to his never developing fluent bilingualism the way the family intended. Overall, many factors influence how effective this approach can be. The extent of expected bilingualism, how strictly the OPOL approach was enforced, schooling, peer influence and many other aspects of their lives can influence children's language development, as every family is different. It can be a pertinent question to ask: could it be that one of those factors could be abuse in one of the spoken languages? Though it is difficult to say for sure if the development has been influenced, it is possible that children's self-identity in regards to that language may have been affected. This study will not attempt to address development as it is not possible to retroactively measure, nor is it ethical in these circumstances of abuse and neglect.

In the end, there are cases where families adapted the method used to transfer languages so as to provide maximum benefit for their child's or children's needs (Spolsky, 2012). For example, a family can start using the OPOL approach and change to the MLH one later on, as in the case of one French-speaking family living in Quebec and Louisiana: "the reason for the change in approach in the family resulted from the fact that [their] son was exposed to too much English in his daily routine outside the family" (Caldas, as cited in Spolsky, 2012, p. 355). In the end, outside factors could influence how long parents choose to implement the OPOL approach as opposed to the MLH approach.

Both MHL and OPOL are valid.

For the purpose of this study, we will look at families who were in an OPOL bilingual child-raising context for most of the child's early years, as well as those where the children grew up in MLH conditions. Altogether, there can be either both languages in the home in the case of

OPOL, or only one if the community speaks another and the child was exposed to it enough to learn it. Therefore, I will be looking at the experiences of survivors of abuse from multiple different multilingual upbringing backgrounds: multilingual individuals who spoke only one language in their household, and those who have experienced the abuse from a parent who spoke chiefly in one of the two or more spoken home languages. In this way, a distinction can be made between a language that was learned in situations involving trauma and a language that was less involved during traumatic experiences. For the purpose of this research, the languages in which the trauma took place will be labelled as traumatic languages (TL) and the others will be labeled as less traumatic languages (LTL), as there is no way to completely rule them out as having being trauma-free, nor is it likely that they were.

Child abuse and trauma

The autobiographical book by Dr. Kathleen Saint-Onge (2013), *Bilingual being: My Life as a Hyphen*, addressed the idea that abuse and trauma in childhood can have repercussions on language identity. Saint-Onge expresses how she perceives her language use and reluctance to use French as a direct consequence of her adverse childhood experiences. If this is indeed an experience that can be revealed as a pattern in many individuals and their respective languages, an examination of the nature of the effects of child abuse, neglect and trauma is pertinent.

Looking into the definition of child abuse, we learn that there is not yet a consensus on the definition and classification of the term. Zigler (Feerick, 2006, Foreword) highlights how the field needs to focus on reaching a clear consensus on the definition, because our inability to do so as a field can be a leading factor in the failure of our society to demonstrably reduce the incidence of child abuse. Here begins one of the many challenges that come with exploring the

field of first language developmental discrepancies within a field that lacks standardization: the definitions for abuse and neglect.

Child neglect fits within the realm of child abuse and, incidentally, also lacks a specific definition. Solnit (1980) describes how there has been an agreement to include definitions of neglect pertaining to maltreatment. Uviller (1980) states how "child neglect, as distinguished from actual child abuse, is one of the most subjective and amorphous concepts known to law" (p.151). This means that knowing when to class a child as suffering from neglect, rather than in connection with another issue, such as poverty, is a challenge. This also has direct implications on how governmental agencies in this field, like the Canadian Child Welfare Systems (CCWS), which also include Aboriginal Child Welfare Systems, label these cases for societal intervention through Child Protection Services (CPS).

Some ways in which defining abuse can be confounding is the cultural context in which certain choices take place. As the World Health Organisation (2002), *World report on violence and health* puts it, "there are different standards and expectations for parenting behaviours across the range of cultures around the world" (p.59). In other words, different cultures have different rules on what constitutes good parenting. For instance, Korbin (1981) describes that certain situations are almost certainly recognized as abusive (e.g., scalding hot baths, severe beatings, and food or sleep deprivation), whereas other situations are more ambiguous (e.g., isolating children on their own at night and allowing them to cry without immediate attention).

In sum, it is not exactly clear at which point normative or accepted behaviour, such as corporal or verbal punishment, becomes child abuse. The measurement and assessment of abuse such as neglect and emotional maltreatment, as opposed to physical or sexual abuse, currently lack standard levels of validity and reliability (Zigler, 2006). I will maintain an awareness of

these problems stemming from discrepancies in definition for the same phenomenon throughout this thesis project.

An exhaustive list of what has already been defined in the context of child abuse has been detailed in the chapter by Corby, Shemmings, and Wilkins (2012) titled, *Defining Child Abuse.* They go into more detail about the current different definitions that exist for the multiple forms of abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

The CCWS also provides a compilation of resources for each Canadian province and territory when it comes to how each government defines what constitutes a child and how to define different types of abuse through their official website. The Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal redirects to each region's set of definitions and the reach of their system`s government responsibility for the funding and provision of social services.

Definitions of child abuse

Child abuse and neglect has been defined by different systems in order to make sense of the reality of its incidence. Different contexts demand different definitions.

One of the more prevalent definitions for child abuse is one drafted by the WHO Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention as:

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power (WHO, 1999, as cited in WHO 2002, p.59).

Another definition is by the Canadian Child Research Portal, which defines child abuse and neglect as:

Acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that result in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. The five primary forms of maltreatment are physical abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, emotional maltreatment and exposure to domestic violence (2018).

In Canada, each province and territory has its own unique legislation to define and describe abuse and neglect. In the context of Quebec where this study takes place, child protection services are extended to individuals defined as children from ages 0 to 18. Although the definitions are not clear in absolute terms, the Youth Protection Act in Quebec offers guidelines to define abuse and neglect necessitating intervention in the eyes of the law by stipulating that a child's security and development are considered compromised if:

- the child has been abandoned by a parent or guardian;

- the child has suffered or is likely to suffer from physical, health-related or educational neglect;

- the child has suffered or is likely to suffer from physical harm or injury;

- the child has suffered from emotional maltreatment, including exposure to intimate partner violence or family violence;

- the child has suffered or is likely to suffer from sexual abuse, including sexual exploitation; and

- the child has been exhibiting behavioural problems and the parents have failed to take necessary steps to correct the situation, or the child 14 years old or over objects to such steps (Youth Protection Act, Section 38).

Child physical abuse.

If a caregiver causes actual physical harm or commits an act that has the potential for harm towards a child, the WHO (2002) calls this "child physical abuse." Physical abuse includes "any non-accidental action that causes, or could cause physical harm to a child such as hitting, shaking, or the unreasonable use of force to restrain a child" (Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal, 2018).

One of the many challenges of defining abuse is its preciseness. Aspects of the ethical comprehensiveness of definitions are still up for debate, such as what exactly constitutes 'reasonable force,' or reasonable corrective force. Durrant, Fallon, Lefebvre, and Allan (2017) question whether the Canadian Supreme Court's set limits on punitive acts (such as spanking and other corporal punishment) are valid and reasonable under law. Their study concluded that in more than one out of every four cases where physical abuse was substantiated, the Supreme Court's limits weren't exceeded. They propose that if Canada abolished physical punishment towards children rather than creating limits, like the other fifty-two countries that have done so already, children would be better protected under the law. The reality of setting limits for "reasonable corrective force" is one of the many hurdles in defining physical abuse in the Quebec context under the Youth Protection Act.

Child emotional abuse or maltreatment.

If a caregiver fails to provide adequate support in their family environment, or commits acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of a child, this is called emotional abuse or maltreatment (WHO, 2002, p. 60). Examples of acts of emotional abuse could include body shaming, ridicule, discrimination, putdowns, humiliation, rejection, and any other nonphysical forms of antagonistic treatment (p.60).

In the Canadian context, emotional maltreatment is defined by the Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal (2018) as including "behaviours that harm a child's development or sense of self-worth, such as humiliation, rejection, or withholding love or support. Witnessing or exposure to domestic violence is considered a form of emotional maltreatment under some legislation" (para. 1).

Child neglect.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, neglect is the largest primary category of substantiated child abuse investigation, representing over a third (34%) of all substantiated investigations (2010). When a parent or caregiver fails to provide adequate support for the child, and the parent is in a position of being able to do so, in areas concerning health, education, nutrition, shelter, and so on, the WHO (2002) deems this as neglect. The Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal (2018) expands on this definition by stating that the assessment of neglect requires a consideration of poverty as well as other family and community factors that can influence the extent of the definitions of neglect. They define neglect as including "the failure of a parent or guardian to provide a child's basic needs such as for food, education, healthcare or supervision" (para. 1).

With the case of neglect, there are many challenges in terms of its assessment. Once again, incomplete definitions such as "failure to provide minimum care" are not defined through objective standards. Formally assessing physical neglect, emotional neglect, medical neglect, or educational neglect varies according to the community legislation and their definitions, standards and set limits (Trocmé, 1992). Moreover, it becomes difficult for Child Protection Services (CPS) coordinators to assess neglect in itself as the harm caused by the omission of care is not always obvious or apparent (English et al., 2005).

There are numerous examined long-term effects of neglect. Some of these are explored in a study by Thibodeau, Lavoie, Hébert, and Blais (2017), which demonstrates how children with a history of neglect and sexual abuse are at risk for adolescent and adult sexual risk behaviours (SRBs), and how attachment security plays a role. I will expand on the concept of attachment security further below.

Child sexual abuse.

According to Hélie and the Centre Jeunesse de Montréal, sexual abuse is the smallest primary category of substantiated child abuse investigation, representing approximately 6% of all substantiated investigations of maltreatment in Quebec (2012). Sexual abuse is defined as acts of physical abuse but with the specification that the caregiver receives sexual gratification through the abuse. According to Dukett (2015), most research categorises child sexual abuse (CSA) into three main types: noncontact abuse, contact abuse, and intercourse or penetration. The World Health Organization (2003) defines CSA as

 the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully

comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not

developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or

social taboos of society (WHO, 2003, p.75).

Corby, Shemmings, and Wilkins (2012) explain some of the consequences that arise from being a victim of these types of child abuse. Not only are there many short- and long-term physical and psychological developmental impacts to being a victim of abuse and neglect, but there is also a chance that children who are abused can grow up to become abusers as well. The list of health consequences, ranging from physical, sexual and reproductive, psychological and

behavioural, and other long-term health consequences is extensive, as can be seen in the WHO (2002) report.

Child sexual abuse identity development.

Research by Dukett (2015) summarizes well the impact that child abuse, more specifically, child sexual abuse, has on children's identity development. The research details how, in both the short and the long term (Bhandari, Winter, Messer, & Metcalfe, 2011), there can be significant psychosocial outcomes such as dissociative symptoms (Hall & Hall, 2011), emotional disturbances, self-esteem issues (Walker, Holman, & Busby, 2009), and problems with interpersonal relationships (Dimitrova, Pierrehumbert, Glatz, Torrisi, Heinrichs, Halfon, & Chouchena, 2010). Each of these factors influences the expression of the formation of identity development. Moreover, multiple factors can determine how the child's development could be affected.

As explained in Tsola and Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous (2006), child abuse can affect childhood development into adolescence, depending on the child's developmental stages at the time of abuse. Children may be particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of sexual abuse depending on their dependency on caregivers, their powerlessness, and their cognitive and emotional developmental level (Tsola & Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous, 2006). When a caregiver is the one inflicting abuse, the "child's sense of trust is violated" (Whestsell-Mitchell, 1995, as cited in Tsola & Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous, 2006). The child comes to view the caregiver as "punitive, rejecting, dangerous, and deceitful" (Tsola and Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous, 2006, p.1304). Could this indicate the possibility that the abusive caregiver's language might also become associated with these pejorative views? There is currently no research addressing this question.

In order to learn more about how identity is experienced and constructed by women dealing with the after-effects of sexual abuse, a qualitative study by Phillips and Daniluk (2004) uses a phenomenological approach to analyze the interviews of seven women to come up with common themes stemming from the implications of their childhood trauma. For Phillips and Daniluk (2004), five themes emerged from the interviews: "1. An increased sense of visibility; 2. An emerging sense of self-definition and self-acceptance; 3. A shift in worldview; 4. A sense of regret over what has been lost; and 5. A sense of resiliency or growth" (pp. 179-182). When they went over those themes with the participants, these themes resonated with the women. This has inspired me to use a similar methodology in the study I propose here, and to expand the participant pool to include both men and women. See *Methods* and *Methodology* below.

Attachment relationships.

Attachment theory was pioneered in the research conducted by Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1989). Dukett (2015) defines attachment as "the bond or emotional connection between an infant and a caregiver" which allows children to trust and thrive. (p.12). According to Karakurt and Silver (2014, as cited in Dukett, 2015), there are four attachment styles in children (secure, avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, and disorganized) which become the framework that the child carries on into later life. Securely attached children have a trusting relationship toward their caregiver, whereas children in all other categories, or insecurely attached children, feel mistrust. These are the children who receive inconsistent nurturing from their caregiver(s) and learn that communicating their needs to caregivers does not mean the needs will be met (Dukett, 2015). Perhaps this could in part account for why, in my experience, as well as in Saint-Onge's, we associated French-speaking with feelings of anger, disappointment, and fear. It seems possible others will feel the same way.

Some studies have concluded how negative relationships with parents and teachers lead to poorer language development and acquisition. For example, a study by Oades-Sese and Li (2011) looks at children's attachment to their parent(s) and teachers as predictors of their English and Spanish oral language skills in a Hispanic-American preschool context. According to the study, abuse can lead to a neglect of children's first language and a lower quality teacher-child relationship, as well as less developed verbal language skills overall. Oades-Sese & Li (2011) explain how children from immigrant families who were highly acculturated had higher English language abilities than children from families who were bicultural or had low acculturation. This study also found that children's attachment to their mothers and warm and affectionate relationships with their teachers were related to higher English language abilities. In fact, children's relationships with their teachers contributed to higher language abilities above and beyond parental attachment (Oades-Sese & Li, 2011).

Therefore, this brings up a valid question: is the converse true? Could negative relationships with parents or teachers lead to a dissociation from the language identity they represent? The three-year longitudinal study's results showed that the type of relationship with their caregiver (either the parent(s) or the teacher) was indeed a contributor to children's bilingual language skills (Oades-Sese & Li, 2011). A "higher-quality" teacher-child relationship was an indicator of more advanced levels of verbal language skills, more so than quality parental attachment. The combination of nurturing children's native language and access to close teacher–child relationships has the potential to advance children's language skills toward bilingualism (Oades-Sese & Li, 2011).

Furthermore, IJzendoorn, Dijkstra and Bus (1995) report on the results of studies pertaining to the global hypothesis of an association between attachment and cognitive

development. They compare the secure *versus* the insecure attachment dichotomy. Insecure

attachment is viewed in two categories: insecure-ambivalent and insecure-avoidant. It is

proposed that insecurely attached children are cognitively delayed in intelligence and language

competence (IJzendoorn, Dijkstra & Bus, 1995).

The study concluded that the quality of the attachment between infant and parent is

strongly associated with language development in the infant. Moreover, in samples with

relatively many insecure-ambivalent attached infants, insecure attachment seems to be related to

a lower level of cognitive performance (IJzendoorn, Dijkstra & Bus, 1995). There is some

support for the hypothesis of a causal influence of attachment on language and cognitive

development. This may be because securely attached children may be more willing to interact

and communicate with their caregivers or attachment figures, and might have higher motivations

to explore the language, whereas insecurely attached children may not engage in prolonged

verbal exchanges with their parents. The consequence of this may be less exposure to adult

language competence due to a less rich language environment within the family and within their

social network (IJzendoorn, Dijkstra & Bus, 1995).

One short-term (six-month) longitudinal study that looked at children's characteristics as

well as the role of acculturation and children's attachment relationships was conducted by

Strand, Pula, Parks and Cerna (2011). The context of this study was taken primarily from

English- and Spanish- speaking homes. The children were educationally at-risk due primarily to

poverty. The measure used to assess receptive language skills was an English-language version

of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, which uses a picture-pointing format to assess receptive

vocabulary, thus making verbal expression unnecessary, a method viewed as valid and reliable

(Pae, Greenberg, & Morris, 2012).

Overall, the results of this study suggest that a unidirectional or predictor relationship between shyness-anxiousness and receptive language skills emerges in preschool (Strand, Pula, Parks & Cerna, 2011). This finding is consistent with the notion that shyness-anxiousness might lead to the development of deficits in receptive language ability (Evans, 2010). If there is a relationship between affective factors like shyness and language ability, it may be possible that when a child grows up in an abusive environment, they might experience similar developmental challenges. However, as previously mentioned, we must take great care as researchers not to confound children who are at a disadvantage due to poverty with victims of abuse.

Child abuse and attachment.

According to Dukett's 2015 study, there are two specific outcomes to CSA, and by extension child abuse: there is a reverse correlation between betrayal and self-esteem (p. 11). Since attachment involves trust between the caregiver and infant, betrayal creates discord in the trust bond needed for appropriate development. Overall, CSA can disrupt functioning and development when the child is at a later psychological stage, past adolescence, and well into adulthood with its own variation of attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful (Dukett, 2015). This type of attachment as psychological baggage is an example of how child abuse and insecure feelings can transcend into adulthood. Based on this premise, it is speculated that language could become permeated by "traumatic" emotional memories which, in turn, could interfere with the development of self-identity in childhood and long into adult life.

The study by Thibodeau, Lavoie, Hébert, and Blais (2017) investigating sexual risk behaviours (SRBs) looked into what role of attachment security played in the behaviours of 1900 sexually active adolescents attending Quebec high schools. Their analyses determined that youths with a history of neglect represented a vulnerable population that were likely to engage in

SRBs, and that anxious attachment and avoidant attachment mediated the relations between neglect and SRBs. This is an example of how insecure attachment stemming from abuse and neglect can negatively impact the ability to form healthy relationships in the long term. This study by Thibodeau et al. (2017) highlights the need for interventions that can help address the issues in attachment security brought on by the trauma.

Another researcher who explores the reality of trauma during childhood is Judith Herman. Her concept of a "double self" (1992, p. 103) explains how, in moments of abuse, some children have the ability to separate their identity in two: one contaminated and stigmatized, which often stays with the survivors until adulthood, as well as another more positive identity. Herman highlights how "by developing a contaminated, stigmatized identity, the child victim takes the evil of the abuser into herself and thereby preserves her primary attachments to her parents," becoming a "stable part of the child's personality structure" (p.105). Will we see traces of this "evil" (p. 105), or one should rather say "negative" or "shaming", *valence of self* in the self-perceived identity of the participants of this research study? I would like to emphasis that the word "evil" unfortunately reinforces the stereotype that the abused child is unavoidably to become an abuser themselves in the future, when something altogether different is at issue. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to use the alternatives of either "negative" of shameful" in this context.

Theoretical Framework

I intend to bring together the many concepts I have expanded upon within the wide array of literature reviewed to conduct this study. I will do so by extrapolating from essential concepts that I believe to be valid and essential to furthering the understanding of the underlying issues surrounding this burgeoning research topic.

The phenomenological study conducted by Phillips and Daniluk (2004) captured the essence of how participants experienced identity. I would like to emulate this study's procedure, but add some consideration for language identity, or language self-concept, as defined by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) in multilingual settings. I would also like to consider whether or not past abuse had any impact on the language choices or behaviours that occurred throughout the participants' lives, or that may occur with their possible selves, as explained in Markus and Nurius (1986)—see the *Self-identity and language identity* section, pp.13-19.

Philips and Daniluk (2004) used Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method of phenomenological analysis. Similarly, I will use a comparable approach to interpreting the qualitative research data in order to identify meaningful information and organize it into themes. More detail about the approach can be found in the *Methodology* chapter.

Finally, it has been clear from this literature review that there are many issues surrounding the definitions of varying types of abuse and neglect. It became apparent to me that the most reliable way in the context of this study to assess whether a potential adult participant was subjected to such traumatic events was to have them self-identify as having been children with lived-experiences of abuse and neglect, without projecting onto them any circumscribed legalistic definition.

Research Objectives

To my knowledge, research on this topic is very scant. Having explored the existing related research findings and theories on the language and identity development and acquisition of children in multilingual settings has helped shed light on important factors to remain aware of during the research process. Furthermore, in the context where one of the caregivers is abusive and speaks predominantly one language, the focus of the study narrows even more.

Overall, I aim to learn more about how multilingual language identity is experienced by adults after the child abuse has ended. I will investigate whether there is a relationship between language acquisition and identity in children raised in bilingual or multilingual families where one of the caregivers is abusive or neglectful. I am particularly interested in the relation between all of the participant's languages in a context where an abusive caregiver speaks predominantly one language, in a "One Parent, One Language" setting (Döpke, 1992), or in a MHL setting, and whether or not this can affect a child's later perceptions or use of the abusive caregiver's language.

The central research questions I aim to answer about child abuse and survivor's language identity development and formation are: *How is multilingual language identity experienced by adult survivors of child abuse, when abuse was inflicted by a caregiver in one language? Is there a relationship between an abusive caregiver's spoken language and a survivor's perceived language identity in a bilingual or multilingual setting?*

These questions can then be broken down into sub-questions. I will attempt to answer as many of these as possible with the data collected from this research: Is childhood trauma in "One Parent, One Language" or "Home Minority Language" situations associated with predictable outcomes of language use? Can certain attitudes and behaviour regarding language and identity be related to abuse, in a multilingual family? Was trauma in a language an important factor in their decisions? What are their current feelings of identity and belonging, their comfort levels in certain linguistic situations? If these questions can be answered, we could be well on our way to creating and providing support and resources for victims in the future.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The main goal for the current study was to look into how adults experienced their identity through time after having experienced trauma and abuse in childhood in multilingual settings. I conducted phenomenological interviews using open-ended questions, with the intention of exploring participants' lived experiences. The interview questions were developed in advance based on topics and issues highlighted in Saint-Onge's (2013) autobiography. Finally, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analyzed. All interviews took place from September, 2017, to January, 2018, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Data Collection

The thesis research is based on a phenomenological approach inspired by two studies. The first study was conducted by Phillips and Daniluk (2004) titled, *Beyond "Survivor": How Childhood Sexual Abuse Informs the Identity of Adult Women at the End of the Therapeutic Process*. The second study, by Palmieri (1990), was an investigation titled, *The Experience of Adults Abused as Children*. A phenomenological study can be defined as a type of numerically aided qualitative research. There is no statistical analysis involved in phenomenological studies to make sense of people's collective experiences. I chose this approach because phenomenological inquiry seeks to answer epistemological questions that focus on people's experiences (MacLeod, 1964; van Kaam, 1966). It therefore presents as a useful way to collect narratives from people about subject matter that has not been previously studied.

In the words of Van Manen (1997), human science "studies *persons*, or beings that have *consciousness* and that act *purposefully* in and on the world by creating objects of *meaning* that are *expressions* of how human beings exist in the world" (p.4). In other words, human sciences

rely on descriptions, interpretations, and self-reflective or critical analysis (Van Manen, 1997). The human sciences aim at elucidating the meaning of human phenomena and "understanding the lived structures of meaning" (p.4), such as in phenomenological research. As such, phenomena, from the Greek word *phaenesthai,* which means to shine light upon something, become "the building blocks of human science and the basis for all knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). For the purpose of this study, by interviewing adults about memories of their childhood and adolescent experiences, we can learn more about how their history of abuse might correlate with their language attitudes and behaviours throughout time.

Phenomenological method procedure.

The four main methodological phases followed to conduct this phenomenological study were taken from those defined by von Eckartsberg (1986), Palmieri (1990), and Moustakas (1994): Epoche, Phenomenological Reduction, Imaginative Variation, and Synthesis. I tailored the methods from these sources to fit the shorter timeframe of my study.

Epoche phase.

The first phase is to formulate the question underlying the problem: the "phenomenon." It also requires me, as the researcher, to examine my own biases, feelings, and prejudices relevant to adults abused as children in multilingual settings. This process, known as the *epoche,* aims to clear myself, the researcher, of preconceived ideas so as not to confuse the true meaning of what the participant is saying with what is in my own consciousness, as well as having a receptive presence during the dialogue (Palmieri, 1990, p. 35; Moustakas, 1994). I undertook this step by writing down and labeling my prejudgments and contemplating this list until I felt I had faced and let go of these biases, as recommended by Moustakas (1994).

Phenomenological reduction phase.

The second phase is to generate data by prompting a "descriptive narrative provided by subjects who are viewed as coresearchers" for the purpose of data analysis, where the data that has been collected and transcribed verbatim, and it is "scrutinized so as to reveal [its] structure, meaning, configuration, coherence, and the circumstances of their occurrence and clustering" (von Eckartsberg, 1986, p. 27). This pertains to a combination of asking questions of the person being interviewed while taking part in the dialogue presented during the interview. This can be achieved through *phenomenological reduction*, as defined by Palmieri (1990): a systematic approach to examining the experiences of these adults having been abused as children in multilingual settings, aimed at illuminating the essential nature of the phenomenon.

There are many steps in the phenomenologically reducing phase. The first step is to bracket the topic or the question so that it is the focus of the inquiry. This is also a reinforcement of the epoche step (Palmieri, 1990, p. 35). The second step in the phase is called *horizontalization*, where every statement has equal value (Moustakas, 1994) and every relevant statement uttered by the participant is listed without judgment. In such a way, I can attempt to view the described experience in its whole. The third step is the *delimited horizons* step, where only invariant horizons or factors that stand out as significant from the participant's narrated experience are kept. The fourth step is to extract *invariant themes* from the delimited horizons. These themes are nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping components clustered into their own themes (Palmieri, 1990; Moustakas, 1994). The final step in this process is to organize these themes into a *coherent textural description* of the phenomenon, which Moustakas describes as:

Each experience is considered in its singularity, and for itself. Within the brackets, the phenomenon is perceived and described in its totality, in a fresh and open way, a graded

series of reductions coming from a transcendental state, a total differentiated description of the most essential constituents of the phenomenon (1986, p. 16, as cited in Moustakas, 1994).

Imaginative variation phase.

This reflective phase aims at bringing to light clues and symbols of the essence of the experience (Palmieri, 1990). This assembling of possible meanings of experience is where the analysis process of this phenomenological study begins. This analysis allows me to "derive structural themes from textural descriptions that have been obtained through Phenomenological Reduction" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 99). Each of the expressions highlighted after the previous *reduction* are reduced further by being tested in two dimensions according to van Kaam:

1. Does this concrete, colorful formulation by the subject contain a moment of experience that might be a necessary and sufficient constituent of the experience of really feeling understood?

2. If so, is it possible to abstract this moment of experience and to label the extraction briefly and precisely without violating the formulation presented by the subject? (1966, p. 323)

The statements that do not meet these two requirements are removed. This includes vague or repetitive statements.

 The next step is the tentative identification of the descriptive constituents where all statements which relate to each other are clustered into a singular group and labeled. Afterwards, I was able to proceed with the final identification of the descriptive constituents by application, that had been up until now, only hypothetically identified as necessary (van Kaam, 1966). As Palmieri (1990) explains it, in this step, "each descriptive constituent is randomly checked to

determine that it is expressed in a majority of the explications and examined to determine if it is

compatible even when not explicitly stated" (p. 38). If it does not fulfill this requirement, it is

removed. Finally, for each participant, I created an individual structural description, that is, I

integrated the structural qualities and themes into an individual structural description in order to

create a composite structural description. This composite is an "integration of all of the

individual structural descriptions into a group of universal structural descriptions of the

experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 181), and it is the final step of the *imaginative variation*.

Synthesis of composite textural and composite structural descriptions.

The last step in the phenomenological method procedure requires an integration of

textures and structures into the meanings and essences of the phenomenon. From the textural

descriptions, structural descriptions and are constructed in the form of a "unified statement of the

essences of the experience of the phenomenon as a whole" (Moustakas, 1994, pp. 100).

In the *methods* and *analysis* sections below, I will go into more detail about how I

conducted the four phases: Epoche, Phenomenological Reduction, Imaginative Variation, and

Synthesis.

Methods

For this research, I found a small sample (n=6) of individuals who fit the criteria

enumerated below. There were six main criteria that individuals had to fulfill to be eligible to

participate.

Thematic Essence

As Van Manen (2014) emphasizes in *Phenomenology of Practice*, phenomenological

reflection and analysis proceeds by way of examples (p. 257). As such, the thematic essence or

core themes of the research will be presented through quotes as phenomenological examples of

thematic units taken from the interviews which are also enumerated in greater detail in Appendix G for further context and reference. These anecdotes and quotes of evidential significance will serve as support for the texts' inner meaning and themes. Below are the inclusion and exclusion criteria needed to take part in the phenomenological research.

Criteria

Inclusion criteria:

1-   18 years and over;

2-   From a One Parent, One Language (OPOL) family, where each caregiver consistently spoke in a different language; and/or from a multilingual context where the parent(s) or caregiver(s) spoke one language within the home, and the community used a different language.

3-   A history of traumatic experiences with a parent or main caregiver who spoke predominantly one of the two languages spoken in the OPOL home or the multilingual community (though a disclosure of the nature of that trauma was not be required by this study; only self-identification was required);

4-   Openness to self-disclose as a survivor of traumatic childhood experiences, although details about the nature of the trauma were not prompted unless they were explored voluntarily and willingly by the participant.

Exclusion criteria:

1-   Limited language proficiency (English or French);

2-   Poor social functioning at the time of the experimentation (see Appendix A).

With the aim of eliciting rich descriptions from many different lived experiences, first, participants were recruited from different environments and were eligible so long as they fit the

selection criteria. Second, they were asked about their experience living as bilinguals or multilinguals. Third, they explored questions regarding the nature of their self- identity and life choices in relation to the abuse lived in childhood.

Interview Process

The phenomenological approach of this study has as its objective to help give insights as to whether or not a history of child abuse has an impact on the perceived language identity and other aspects of the participants' lives. After analyzing the transcripts of the interviews, I found larger units of meaning that emerged as themes across multiple interviews. These themes ultimately helped address my statement of inquiry and provided insight into future research.

In total for the study, I interviewed six self-identified survivors of abuse in multilingual settings. I conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with participants, in person, and individually. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes each. This type of open-ended interview allowed for flexibility because every participant's experience is different. It allowed me to collect information that expanded tangentially from the list of provisional interview questions I had constructed, providing substantial additional information addressing the research questions. Overall, the method for gathering data during interview session for each participant progressed in three steps.

Step 1: Interview questions.

Open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted in private with each participant for 45 to 60 minutes in length and audiorecorded in order to be transcribed verbatim. See Interview Protocol in Appendix B.

Step 2: *Field Notes* during the interview.

Informal field notes were taken during the interviews for non-verbal information such as gestures, facial expressions, and so on. Timestamps were included on these notes so as I could trace back the note to the exact moment I took it during the interview

Step 3: *Reflective Memos* after the interview.

After each interview session and throughout the research, I logged in reflective memos. These reflective memos recorded my impressions, thoughts, and connections made throughout the research process from what I had observed during interviews, before the transcription task. I used the same digital voice recorder to record the reflective memos as the interviews, for a few minutes after each interview session, to preserve my immediate impressions.

Interview Questions

Listed in Appendix B are the 17 questions I brought up with each participant. In many circumstances, this set of questions prompted unscripted follow-up questions, clarification requests, and reformulations of the participants' statements in order to elaborate and confirm certain points that they had mentioned that could be interpreted in many different ways. These questions included demographic ones that explored the participants' age, place of birth, community language, and so on. They subsequently included questions about their multilingual language identity perception in multilingual settings, such as "do you feel like the language in which the childhood trauma(s) occurred helped shape your language identity, in any way? Why would you say so?"

Throughout the interviews, I used probes to elicit richer responses. I also took field notes during the interviews and reflective memos throughout the research, particularly after the interview sessions. These reflective memos helped reveal my impressions, thoughts, and

connections made throughout the research process, based on what I observed during interviews, and as I proceeded with the task of transcription. For details on the structure of the interviews, see Appendix B, the *Semi-Structured, Open-Ended Interview Protocol*.

Participants and Access

Since there is currently no consensus in the field on a definition for abuse and neglect, and perceptions of abuse can differ greatly culturally (Zigler, 2006), I called upon participants who self-identified as having been victims of abuse in childhood and in multilingual settings. Being located in Montreal, a nexus of multilingual and multicultural experiences, was conducive to finding participants that fit the criteria.

There are a few places from which where sample populations were recruited. Private mental health (not governmental) clinics in Montreal were contacted for recruitment opportunities. These included institutions such as with the Edgewood Health Network, the Centre Médical Privé en Psychiatrie, and the AMI-Québec centers. Community support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and shelters for battered women were contacted for recruitment purposes as well. Moreover, Facebook pages and online blogs, which offer support to people fitting the research criteria, were also targeted for recruitment opportunities. For these, the moderators were contacted prior to recruitment, to ask permission to post on their forums.

The confidentiality of both the participants and of the researcher was also rigorously ensured. Any identifying information that could reveal personal identity, address, or phone number was not used. This way, those wishing to contact me, the researcher, about the study could do so with full confidentiality. The participants were also recruited using online flyers and social media, such as through Facebook research group posts. They could communicate with me

through an institutional email that was obtained temporarily through McGill IT for the duration of the study and data collection. See Appendix C for the content of the posters and flyers.

Participants who eventually answered the call for recruitment were then vetted to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria and that there were no restrictions to participation based on the exclusion criteria. After confirming that they met the study's criteria, they were screened by means of a short telephone conversation using the Social Functioning Questionnaire (Tyrer al., 2005) before they were considered eligible to participate (see Appendix A). They were then asked to participate in a single interview conducted with one interviewer, myself, lasting 45 minutes to an hour in length.

In order to provide the most relaxed and trusting atmosphere possible to allow for a climate conducive for comfort, participants determined the location of the interview. I let them choose the place in which they were most comfortable, a location where they felt they could respond to questions honestly and comprehensively. Four participants preferred a chosen private location where it was quiet and uninterrupted. One chose a doctor's office, with a health professional as their witness. One preferred the private research office at McGill that was made available to all participants as a possible option.

Once on location, there was a preliminary conversation aimed at relaxing the participant, off the topic of the interview. Once the preliminary casual conversation concluded and the participants appeared relaxed and ready to begin, they were presented with the consent form. After the reading and signing of the consent form, I started the interview with the demographic questions and then the eleven questions aimed at evoking rich lived experiences to be shared, ready to be experienced fully by both parties.

Ethical Considerations

In a study that touches sensitive topics such as this one, elaborating the ethical considerations that were taken in order to protect the participants' privacy and dignity is essential. One of the main challenges so far in the field of studying child abuse is the fact that definitions and classification remain inadequate. There is currently no consent within the field about what constitutes abuse. What's more, special attention needed to be given so as to not include racial or socioeconomic bias within the reported incidences. It is a fact that abusive behaviour or neglect is not yet clearly defined because of the many different definitions given to abuse depending on cultural contexts (Zigler, 2006). This was a concern for me when I was looking to collect data from individuals coming from multilingual settings. It also made finding participants for this study a greater challenge.

Moreover, it was apparent that including people living in a long-term situation where the abuse is ongoing was not ethically a viable possibility. This is why I concluded that looking into historical interpretations of victims' lived experiences through a phenomenological approach was most appropriate at this stage. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, the study can look into a victim's recalled lived experiences and interpretations of the events that took place and shaped their identity and language. The issue here is the reliability of these subjective interpretations and the willingness of the subjects to explore traumas and memories. If the victims have had a chance to grow older since their abuse, their recollection of these events having taken place years earlier could lack accuracy. At the other end of the spectrum, it may be difficult to be certain that the accounts of their experiences will be truthful, representative, or accurate if they are still feeling fear in regards to speaking out, or have been repressing traumatic memories. One way around this was explaining to the participants that their identity would be

kept anonymous for the study. In order to ensure anonymity and the participants' protection, pseudonyms are used. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study or refuse to answer questions whenever they pleased, and that without penalty.

In terms of providing support as part of my research process, in order to make sure that all participants concluded the study in good mental health, they were informed about local resources, such as counseling services and crisis hotlines available to them should they have felt the need to speak to someone once the interview had ended. In this study, none of the participants felt the need to contact any support system during the interview process.

It is important to note that I am not a trained clinical psychologist. Before beginning the interview process, I made sure that I knew what were appropriate measures to be taken should a participant have an adverse reaction during the interview session. With the help of my co-supervisor, a McGill clinical psychologist, I created the *Participant Reaction Protocol*. It is a three-level protocol aimed at guiding me during an interview on how to assess the participant's reaction and best react under such circumstances. See Appendix D for the Participant Reaction Protocol in full.

To thank participants for their time, a small compensation was offered: a $10.00 gift card at their preferred store at the end of the interview. Even though no interview was cut short, had the participants chosen to stop the interview at any point, they would have received the gift card nonetheless.

Since it was likely that I would be interviewing men and women that would still be at risk of violence, I used the approaches proposed by the research published by Sullivan and Cain (2004) to navigate the interview process with care. It highlights practical strategies and protocols that have been successfully used when gathering information from and about individuals who

may still be living with abusive partners. I have addressed these concerns and made sure to

prepare in order to ensure the safety of these participants, as well as their confidentiality, by

putting protections in place to minimize revictimization risks.

      Finally, the terminology I used when I spoke with participants was chosen carefully, so as

not to inadvertently revictimize or trigger them. As Phillips and Daniluk (2004) highlight,

referring to adults who have lived through traumatic incidences as *survivors* or *victims* may send

them the message that they are perceived and defined by what was done to them in childhood as

opposed to the many other facets of their existence. For the sake of clarity, this paper contains

many references to participants as *survivors* or *victims*, but I did not use this word to refer to

participants themselves or others at any time during the recruitment or interview process.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis

As recommended by Patton (1990), the size of the interview sample was chosen intentionally based on the time allotted for the interview process, the resources available to the principal investigator, and the objectives of the study. Guidelines are rather fluid when it comes to assessing an appropriate sample size for phenomenological studies. Creswell (1998) recommends that five to 25 people be interviewed, while Morse (1994) suggests at least six participants should be sampled. Based on these findings, a total of six participants were recruited as part of the present phenomenological study.

Once the interviews had ended, common themes and various experiences were drawn from the combined lived experiences of the six participants who took part in the study. After careful review of the data and taking the principal investigator's own hypothesis into account, the study would attempt to identify patterns that depicted tendencies for victims of child abuse to avert, show disdain, or disassociate with their abuser's language identity, or reveal behaviours that indicate a reluctance to being present or involved in that particular language environment.

More than six hours of audiorecorded interviews ($n = 6$, $M_{length} = 60.5$ minutes) were transcribed to perform a phenomenological analysis of the material verbatim. Overall, the process was intensive and required rigorous reading and rereading of the interviews and the field notes. These field notes contained nonverbal cues such as gestures, voice affects, facial expressions, and impromptu yet relevant comments that were mentioned after the recording had ended.

Moustakas' (1994) modification of van Kaam's (1959, 1966) method of analysis is appropriate for examining the lived experiences explored in this study. The aim of this analysis

method is to be able to identify elements of the lived experience, or phenomenon, and sort them

into themes which "must be explicitly expressed by some of the sample, be implicitly or

explicitly expressed by the majority, and be compatible with the whole" as outlined in Anderson

and Eppard (1998). The modified van Kaam analysis can be outlined in two stages, modified

from those defined in the previous *methodology* section (Table 1). It is important to highlight that

the *epoche* is not mentioned in the stages below, because I regard the suspension of judgment

and the viewing of the phenomena with openness and novelty as a necessary practice

continuously throughout all stages of the study.

Table 1

Van Kaam's Modified Method of Phenomenological Analysis of Data

First Stage: Phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation phases
  1. Listing and preliminary grouping
  2. Reduction and elimination of redundancies
  3. Clustering and thematizing the invariant constituents
  4. Final identification of the invariant constituents and themes by application (validation)

Second Stage: Synthesis of composite textural and composite structural descriptions phase
  5. Individual textural description
  6. Individual structural description
  7. Construction of a textural-structural description
  8. Development of a composite description of means and essences of experience

First Stage: Phenomenological Reduction and Imaginative Variation Phases

  1. Listing and Preliminary Grouping

After being immersed in the content of the interview data, and contemplating the

transcripts multiple times, the analysis began with the *horizontalization* process, where

every statement is of equal value and every relevant statement uttered by the participant

is listed without judgment in order to view the described experience in its entirety. The

early impression was that there were similarities in the participants' aversion to the

language in which trauma occurred, as well as a tendency to embrace the language in

which less trauma occurred. The participants regard the language in which trauma

occurred negatively, describing it as "*problematic*," "*loser*," "*unpliable*," "*fearful*,"

"*uncomfortable*," "*restrictive*," "*aggressive*," "*crude*," "*irritating*," "*insecure*,"

"*emotional*," and so on. At the same time, they would describe the language in which the

trauma occurred less as "*preferred*," "*good*," "*strong*," "*powerful*," "*safe*," "*comfortable*,"

"*freedom*," "*educated*," "u*nderstanding*," "*straightforward*," "*accessible*," "*chosen*,"

"*default*," and so on. There were more prominent statements such as these that came up in

many interviews, and these were grouped into themes. For instance, statements were

grouped together from participants that were concerning their conflicted multilingual

identity. Similar statements or redundancies were trimmed out of coded script from each

participant interview.

2. Reduction and Elimination of Redundancies

To hold on to only the essential of the statements put forth by the participants, we

needed to determine the invariant constituents. This could be ascertained by testing each

statement for two requirements:

a) The statement contains a moment of the experience that is a necessary and sufficient

constituent for understanding it.

b) It is possible to extract and label it. Also, it is a horizon of the experience: an element

that stands out as significant from the participant's narrated experience. The

statements that did not meet these two requirements were eliminated. Furthermore,

statements that were overlapping, repetitive, and/or vague were also eliminated or

were presented in more exact descriptive terms. Once the reduction process was

completed, the remaining horizons were the invariant constituents of the experience.

3. **Clustering and Thematizing the Invariant Constituents**

Once clustered, the invariant constituents of the experience, which were related, could

be labeled thematically. The statements in this research made it possible to bring forth a

total of five themes which were mostly present in all combined interviews. These five

clustered and labelled constituents became the core themes of the experience and are

detailed in the *Results* chapter.

4. **Final Identification of the Invariant Constituents and Themes by Application**

   (Validation)

After having outlined the themes, the invariant constituents and their accompanying

theme with the complete record of the statements provided by the participants needed to

cross-referenced and validated. While checking back with each invariable constituent

along with their corresponding core theme, it was necessary to confirm two points: (1)

They are expressed explicitly in the complete transcription; and (2) They are compatible

if not explicitly expressed. If the invariable constituent and its theme were not explicit or

compatible, they were deemed not relevant to the participant's experience and deleted.

Second Stage: Synthesis of composite textural and composite structural descriptions phase

5. **Individual Textural Description**

To begin the second stage of phenomenological data analysis, the relevant statements

were used and invariant constituents and themes were validated to construct for each

participant an *Individual Textural Description* of the experience. The textural descriptions

brought forward a more detailed understanding of the participant's experiences about the themes surrounding their language identity in relation to their trauma.

6. **Individual Structural Description**

    Once the content and illustration of the experiences were written, it needed to be expanded upon to find the essence and deeper meaning by imaginative variation to develop the structural experience. We constructed for each participant an *Individual Structural Description* of the experience based on the individual textural description and imaginative variation. For each participant, the structural qualities and themes were integrated into an individual structural description, containing the "bones" or the intrinsic framework of the description to extract the true meanings of their experience.

7. **Construction of a Textural-Structural Description**

    To create a comprehensive description and understanding of the participant's experience of language self-identity after experiencing trauma in a language in multilingual setting, the textural descriptions were combined with the structural ones to construct for each participant a *Textural-Structural Description* of the meanings and essences of the experience incorporating the invariant constituents and themes. This integration of the invariant textural constituents and themes of each research participant allowed for the emergence of the essence of their lived experiences.

8. **Development of a Composite Description of Meanings and Essences of Experience**

    To present the many patterns and relationships, the different narratives were brought together from the Individual Textural-Structural Descriptions to develop a Composite Description of the meanings and essences of the experience. The integration of all of the

individual descriptions into a universal description of the group's experiences as a whole

was used to extract the final themes presented in the *Results* chapter. Finally, a review of

the transcripts was done to cross-reference all final themes to ensure it was indeed a

common experience of all, or most, of the participants.

Biographical and Contextual Information

Tables 2 and 3 highlight the information concerning the content in which each

participants' lived experiences took place. These tables are necessary to the complete contextual

understanding of the quotes and anecdotes chosen in the *Results* chapter. In Table 2 and Table 3,

the languages in which the trauma took place will be labelled as traumatic languages (TL) and

the others as less traumatic language (LTL), as there is no way to completely rule them out as

having being trauma free, nor is it likely that they were. In Table 2, short answers to questions

are listed to get a clear view of each participant's answer in comparison to others.

Table 2

Biographical and Contextual Information of the Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	TL in the Home or Community	[1]OPOL or MHL	LTL	Community of Origin
James	Male	58	French	OPOL	English	Montreal (French)
Vincent	Male	26	Tahitian	MHL	French English	French Polynesia
Marilyn	Female	30	French	MHL	English	Montreal (English)
Boniface	Male	29	Russian Ukrainian	MHL	French English	Ukraine
Claire	Female	32	French	OPOL	English	Montreal (English)
Shelby	Female	26	English	MHL	French	Rural Quebec (French)

[1] One Parent, One Language (OPOL) and Minority Home Language (MHL)

Table 3

Contextual Information in the Form of Short Answers

Participant	Swearing Language when Emotional	Age Identity Shift to LTL was Felt	Age TL Identity Began Moving Toward Reconciliation
James	TL and LTL	At 6 yrs	No move toward reconciliation
Vincent	TL	At 15 yrs	Not specified
Marilyn	TL	End of adolescence	Late 20's
Boniface	TL	At 13 yrs	Not specified
Claire	TL	Late adolescence	At 22 yrs
Shelby	TL	At 16 yrs	At 20 or 21 yrs

CHAPTER FIVE

Results

The purpose of this study was to shed light on the phenomena surrounding the language identity perception of adult survivors of childhood trauma in multilingual contexts. From the participants' standpoints, five essential themes emerged: (1) Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity; (2) Conflicted multilingual identity; (3) Aversion from traumatic language; (4) Refuge in less traumatic language; and (5) Move towards reconciling multilingual identity.

The following selections were chosen to represent the synthesis of the many facets of the experience of identity perception in adults having lived trauma in the form of abuse or neglect in a language while growing up in multilingual settings. All quotes taken from the interviews were italicized. The quotes that were originally in English are marked by [EN] before the utterance. The quotes that were translated from French to English[2] are preceded by [FR] as some of the participants preferred to conduct their interview in French. For the essential biographical and contextual information in regards to the six interview participants quoted below, Table 2 and Table 3 of the *Analysis* should be consulted. Additionally, Table 4 of *Appendix E* may be consulted for supplementary context.

Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity

This first theme sheds light on the phenomenon where all of the participants felt that there was an association between the language of trauma and their negative perception of identity

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[2] All translations from French (when "[FR]" precedes a quote) are by the author.

in that language. According to the participants, the language in which trauma occurred had left their identity perception in the language affected in a negative manner.

The traumatic language identity was viewed by some of the participants as problematic. For instance, James expressed: "[EN] *I would not be the same person today that I am if I did not live through those times, just like every generation someone's got a problem, my own little world was a language problem.*" Shelby also viewed her most traumatic language as a source of problems. She explains in two instances: "[EN] *I'm not that into this whole Anglo context, because it's ended up being at least family-wise problematic.*" She then specifies the roles her personal relationships had with her perception of a problem: "[EN] *I avoid relationships with Anglophone males because they just scream problems to me because all of the Anglophone males I had close to me, my brothers, my father, are problematic.*"

Some people felt that the traumatic language was associated with undesirable qualities that would have had a further impact upon them if they were to have identified to the language in their past. For example, Vincent explains how he associates his Tahitian language identity with aggression on multiple occasion. Here are three examples: "[FR] *Given the past experience I had with my father when it came to aggression, as a result, I tend to associate this language with that. And that's also why I prefer to use French*"; "[EN] *I rarely use Tahitian because, like I said, I associate these things with* [FR] *aggression*"; and "[FR] *It comes off for me a bit harsher* [to say "I love you"]*, I would say, to say it in Tahitian because as I said, again, I associate it with aggression.*" Marilyn continues this sentiment and adds: "[EN] *I just associated* [French] *to my past, pretty much. And, I just find* [it] *is kind of like a loser language*"; and

"[EN] *If I look back on it, yeah, there was trauma, we had a life well put together, but the way my parents behaved towards us was destructive, manipulative,* […] *so French was*

not just about a lack of opportunity, it was… French was used to bash many things, yeah, for me I associated French with destruction, hurt …

Marilyn repeats this sentiment many times throughout the interview, specifying that, "[EN] *It just so happens that the people that were the most controlling and bad for me in my life, hurtful, detrimental, destructive, were… Only spoke to me in French.*"

Many participants felt like they needed to avoid the traumatic language in their life due to harbouring negative associations with it. They would choose to step away from situations that involved the use of the TL of their childhood which they felt was burdened with negativity. Shelby stated that: "[EN] *the problems are in English so I found myself avoiding it, at some age, I think in my early 20s. I was avoiding things in English.*" And she later specifies this sentiment by adding: "[EN] *For my language identity, I guess, I would run away from one language if something bad happened. I mostly ran away from English.*" Claire spoke about how she distanced herself for the language of trauma which she resented:

[EN] *Because the French was really imposed on us by my father, who was our abuser, right? For a very long time, I resisted the French. So, it was kind of like a point of pride for me to not speak French with my friends. As a teenager. And I kind of internalized a lot of resentment towards it* […]

Finally, Boniface's statement regarding trauma negatively affecting language identity was not concerning the traumatic Ukrainian language that was used inside the home by a caregiver, but that of the Russian community present throughout his childhood. Nonetheless, his sentiments echo the same theme that other participants felt: a sense that he feels that the Russian language in which trauma occurred had left his Russian language identity perception negatively affected through association. One statement that supports this is:

[FR] *I still have feelings that come forth when someone speaks Russian near me. Well that's it, I'm more reluctant about it. I remember all of this* [previously mentioned past trauma in Russian] *in the background. And at the same time…I know I shouldn't be transferring this association of feelings with that person you just heard speaking Russian: it's not their fault.*

This final experience of absolving the traumatic language of past negative associations will be demonstrated in the final theme presented below.

Conflicted multilingual identity

This second essential theme refers to how each of the six participants felt like there were discrepancies within their multiple language identities, experiencing feelings of having different qualities within each language identity. Generally, the participants felt that their perception of their multilingual identity varied within itself. Within the lived experience of the research participants, this theme expressed itself in many different ways.

Some participants felt that they needed to exert control over their multilingual identity and create their new language identities to redefine themselves. James felt he had to create two identities to match the perception that others, namely the abusers, had of him: "[EN] *I've had to be someone else to avoid the consequences of other people's bad perceptions,*" and "[EN] *I was still using* [my French name] *in the bars for the people who knew me from the beginning. And* [my English moniker] *for the people who didn't know me, the bars who didn't know me. So, I had two identities. The French identity and the English identity.*" Marilyn chose to create a sort of alter ego to balance out her traumatic first language which she felt was a weakness:

[The English language] [EN] *was something that I owned, and when I would come back home, it was like my secret. My second personality. Like my second me. Like: by day I was English and back home, by night, what I was brought up to be.*

And she elaborates this sentiment in greater detail:

 [EN] *And I think, hence, that's why I choose one language over the other because I associate a language to a personality. So my personality changes using that language, and it's like chicken or the egg, which one comes first, but I do feel more powerful in English. My personality is more powerful, it's yeah, it's stronger, something I feel that I'm not— again, I grew up in French, shy person, you know, being put down, very insecure, English is kind of like my other persona, like the yang* [as in the concept of *yin and yang*] *, […], it's like putting on a role. It's also because what I associated with it, in English for me, is successful.*

The sentiment of wanting to keep identities separate also came up with Marilyn, Vincent, and Boniface. Boniface puts aside his Russian language identity by stating: "[FR] *I own speaking Russian, I master it, but I don't identify to the language and… Even though I master it, it's like it's foreign to me*"; while Vincent puts aside his Tahitian identity by saying: "[My Tahitian identity] [FR] *wasn't really an identity, because I had no real choice because I grew up in an environment that made me talk like that. It was not really a choice, it was more the result of an adaptation.*" Finally, Marilyn rejects her traumatic French identity which can be summed up in three statements: "[EN] *I'm both. But, it's like I don't want both to mingle. They are still very separate*"; "[EN] *So* [it's] *not just the language, it was definitely an identity. I didn't want the people to see that there were still traces of* [French language] *within me*"; and "[EN] *I do feel more powerful in English. My personality is more powerful, […] it's stronger.*"

Another way conflicted multilingual identity surfaced in the statements was when participants explained that heightened emotional situations caused a type of switch or a loss of control within their selves that caused them to feel an identity took over. Vincent elaborates: "[…] [EN] *it's only when I'm really mad that I can switch personality, when I switch through each language*";

[FR] *In French, I am more neutral. Tahitian, on the other hand, I said, I tend to switch personality when I speak in this language, […] I cannot start speaking in that language, generally like that, because, unless I am being aggressive, I associate this language precisely with aggression. It's enough that sometimes when I start to get upset, which is pretty rare, but when it happens it's like, something breaks. I start talking in Tahitian.*

Shelby shares a similar feeling concerning experiencing a surfacing of a different identity when emotions are high: "[EN] *My more emotional personality would probably be English. I swear in English when I'm angry with someone. But yeah I guess I'm more emotional and it's a really good way to avoid being emotional by speaking French.*" Marilyn adds: "[EN] *When I swear in French, that's when I'm really angry. It's like there's something crude, raw that comes out. Again, the other personality. So, if I'm very upset I'm going to turn to French for swearing.*" "[EN] *That's when I say, English for me is a conscious choice. And I feel more comfortable in it, […] but when I'm back to animal instincts, it's—the French takes over.*"

In the end, all the participants expressed how they felt a shift in identity at some point in their life. One example of how this created a conflict within multilingual identity can be understood through Claire's lived experience regarding how her perception of both her first language identities shifted over time:

[EN] *I feel like a different person in each language* […] *I'm not the most extroverted person, but in English I don't feel nearly as nervous about interacting with people. So I get a little more nervous in French.* [In English,] *I definitely feel more confident.* […] *It was just kind of gradual where I realized, 'Oh, I really feel much more comfortable in an Anglophone community, and when I speak to my cousins* [in French], *I feel really, really awkward.'*

Another very salient example is when Shelby explicitly states: "[EN] *Language identity for me I mean, it shifted, and it shifted emotionally"; and she adds, "I guess I'm more emotional* [in English] *and it's a really good way to avoid being emotional by speaking French.*"

Aversion from traumatic language

By far, of all the themes being presented in this research, the one that had the most supportive horizon was this one. All participants expressed varying levels of negative connotations and disdain in regards to the language in which trauma occurred in their past. There were two main facets of aversion expressed by the participants. The accounts shared expressed this aversion to the traumatic language through sentiments that illustrate the traumatic language as holding negative connotations or undertones, as well as it being manifested in avoiding social and cultural situations involving the traumatic language.

Negative connotations

The first facet of aversion of traumatic language focuses on the lived experiences concerning the traumatic language that made the participants feel like the traumatic language and its speakers are at fault for negative associations felt within their language identity. James expressed his aversion to the traumatic language by viewing it as a being stuck within a figurative "barrier": "[FR] *Québécois* [EN] *are not cosmopolitan, they are stuck in their*

language barriers and they will fight it to the death, and if you don't speak any English at all, you're like a folk hero to them." As for Vincent, the element of associations with aggressions come up once again:

> [EN] *Tahitian* [has] *really heavy connotation. I don't know how to say it in English. It's really heavy when you talk about it* […] [FR] *the Polynesian are a migratory warrior people* […]*You see the haka and all, the war songs and all that. As such, the Tahitian language is very oriented toward, how to say ... heavy, warlike, violent, aggressive.*

For Marilyn, she is reminded of the pain French caused in her past: "[EN] *I kind of associate French as kind of the, it's gonna sound bad to say that, it's very prejudiced, but for me it feels kind of a bit like a loser language. Or like a farm language*"; and, "[EN] *when I do think in French, there's always self-loathing.*"

Both Claire and Boniface explicitly state their aversion. Boniface's strong feeling of aversion are expressed as irritation in this example: "[FR] *It irritates me when the person is Ukrainian and they speak Russian,*" while Claire's aversion is expressed through avoidance: "[EN] *French was something that made me uncomfortable,* [turning to speaking English] *was more avoidant behaviour.*" Finally, Shelby states how her aversion to English is from prejudice and her fear of no longer being safe in the traumatic language context:

> [EN] *I guess because of my father. He wasn't like, the best male role model person. And he spoke English. He spoke exclusively English, so something sort of stuck with me. I guess—I don't want to call it prejudice—but I guess, in some sense, yes.*
> She adds, "[EN] *When it's English, I'm afraid of, I guess I'm probably afraid of not being safe.*"

Social and cultural avoidance

The second facet of aversion of traumatic language focuses on the lived experiences concerning the traumatic language that made the participant feel like they must keep their distance, whether physical or psychological, from the language of abuse and neglect. James distances himself from French as he feels that the traumatic language is incompatible with his identity: "[EN] *A lot of people may be racist and sexist and all that stuff, but to the day I die, I will be, which is not the right term, be a linguist. I don't speak many languages, I am just anti-many languages.*" He continues this sentiment by adding:

 [EN] *I find French,* [FR] *Québécois* [EN] *French, so unpliable, so restrictive, confining, that I wouldn't want to be the part of it* […], *I never felt a part of it, even though my biological father was French-Canadian* […] *he spoke to me in English when he wasn't angry.*

Vincent states that: "[EN] *It is true that I mostly avoided the Tahitian language. And I especially kept French and English.*" He goes on to support his statement by adding how he avoids interacting and associating with the French Polynesian community in Quebec because he feels that:

[FR] *At the political level* [in Polynesia], *the people are stupid. It's not to be mean, but the people there, for the most part, are stupid. They are not educated*"; "[FR] *There are people from my country here. They are part of an association. L'AEPF : L'association des élèves de la Polynésie française. I usually avoid to interact with them because they use that language to be like hipsters. That's how I feel. Because they want to be different, be like before. They come to live in another country, but they don't really want to blend into this country. They want to stay apart and they want us to wear specific clothes from*

French Polynesia, they want us to interact like we're from French Polynesia, and I don't

agree with that.

Just like Vincent, Marilyn has an aversion to places and people that remind her of her

painful past in the traumatic language: "[EN] *I tend to avoid most social events that are in*

French, actually. I'm not sure why I do, I just do." She elaborates on her aversion by explaining:

 [EN] *I chose to go to English CEGEP, not French. So, yet again, it has nothing to do*

with how—I can easily express myself in French, I would know which words to choose, I

just… I don't feel right in it (expression of disgust*). I don't. It's not a question that I can't*

think about the words, and I think we spoke about that earlier, it's just a comforts zone.

Finally, she justifies it by saying: "[EN] *French I kind of associated with 'you can't move*

forward with French'… That's it…I also associated guys who spoke French, just like not really

respectful, or not—it's just kind of like, not as exciting."

Claire's aversion was an avoidance through rebellion, in her words: "[EN] *I got to the*

point where it was just resisting watching French TV shows, and resisting French books was kind

of like a little rebellion against [my father], *at first.*" As for Boniface, his avoidance stemmed

more from a feeling of strong disinterest with the Russian identity altogether:

[FR] *If there is a public event, where there is a public speaker speaking in Russian, in*

Ukraine for instance, it can be like a turn-off for me. I would just fuck off"; "[FR] *It is*

clear that if there is a party where there are just Russians, I would be tempted to go as

much as going to a party where everyone—people are sniffing glue." His avoidance

spreads into his private writings as well: "*I admit that I never wrote poetry in Russian. I*

wrote in Ukrainian, and in French, and in English, but in Russian, never.

Finally, Shelby's social and cultural avoidance was expressed through an elimination of her native accent: "[EN] *When I went to University, I killed my Caribbean accent which was from my dad. I killed it. I don't want this accent. So, I killed it a lot. I killed a lot of things that reminded me of my dad.*" Marilyn also expressed during the interview how she had hired a voice coach to help eliminate "[EN] *any trace of French*" and "[EN] *pushed further to get rid of it*" when she returned to Montreal after having lived in the United States for many years.

In the end, there was a wide range of feelings of aversion for the traumatic language. This core theme enlightens the feelings of antipathy and aversion that all participants had in regards to the language in which traumatic incidences occurred. It seems as though impressions of the trauma still linger in the language culture, at the word level, of the person living the experience. Whether it was expressed through lived experiences of social and cultural avoidance as well or perceptions of negative connotations, there were many examples that made it clear that every participant felt deeply about their feelings of aversion for the language that was the context for the traumatic incidences.

Refuge in less traumatic language

This fourth core theme was the second most supported theme of the five, second to *Aversion from traumatic language.* All participants expressed how they felt like the language(s) in which there was the least trauma provided them with positive feelings such as that of comfort, safety, and empowerment. Much like the previous theme, there were two main facets of refuge that were expressed by the participants and they are the polar opposite from the previous one: a feeling that the less traumatic language was associated with positive connotations; and the social and cultural aspects of the less traumatic language that were adopted by the participants in their identity.

Positive connotations

The first facet of refuge in the less traumatic language puts emphasis on the lived experiences concerning the less traumatic language that makes the participant feel like the language and its speakers are conducive to their overall well-being due to the connotations felt within that language identity. James describes English as his symbol of victory: "[EN] *It's my little victory. Because, in a world where you're not allowed to speak English anymore, you do what you can to keep the spirits up.*" Similarly, Claire sees her English language identity as a point of pride and thinks highly of those who spoke it in her community growing up: "[EN] *I definitely preferred using English* […] *I kind of really pride myself on my English language skills*"; she adds, "[EN] *Anglophones in the West Island, everyone was very polite, very friendly, very well-to-do.*"

The positive connotations Vincent had were due to the many lived experiences and relationships he had in the least-traumatic language: "[FR] *All my good experiences are associated with the French language.* […] *I think that is why I associate more with French*"; "[FR] *my aunt was just like a mother to me, and she was a model of a strong woman and she spoke French. I admire her.*"

The concept of comfort came up in both Marilyn and Shelby's interviews. Marilyn had much to say regarding how she felt the less traumatic language was associated with a multitude of positive connotations:

[EN] *English is my comfort zone. It's not that I'm not eloquent in French* […] *but, for some reason, it's on my tongue. So, it's more accessible, I guess, to me. It is, like putting on my PJ, like that feeling. It's not so much like the capacity, but the feeling.*"

Marilyn adds,

[EN] *I said my last relationship I also used English as a kind of like a shield, or as a tool, to kind of use it as a weapon, because they were not as good in it, it was kind of like my secret thing, my secret weapon, it was kind of like my way of rebelling too* […] *towards my parents. Who would speak French to me.*

Marilyn also described English as "[EN] *powerful*," and as "[EN] *freedom*." Shelby expressed her feelings of comfort and safety in the adopted language identity as well: "[EN] *I found that comfortable to be in French all of a sudden,*" and "[EN] *I'm really safe in French. I'm safe in French,*" she would often repeat in her interview.

Social and cultural adoption

The second facet of refuge in the less traumatic language focuses on the lived experiences concerning the less traumatic language that makes the participant feel like they can embrace, whether physically or psychologically, the culture and society lived in the language(s) of least abuse and neglect.

James provides supportive evidence for this theme when he shared his experience of how he needed to adopt a new identity in English and change his name to one in that less traumatic language because of a negative experience: "[EN] *He's threatening to kill me* […] *for singing an English song, after I just spent three or four hours speaking to him in French. So, I chose to change my name* [to an English one], *because of that situation.*" As for Vincent, his adoption of a less traumatic language identity was because of the positive role models and friendships he had in his life in the language: "[I developed a more Francophone identity when] [FR] *I was 15 years old*[…] *When I started school in 2005, my two best friends were French. That is when I started losing my accent. It's also when I started speaking fluently in French.*" Finally, Vincent adds: "[If I would have to say 'I love you'], [EN] it would be more in French or in English, I would say."

Similarly to Vincent, Marilyn felt that her less traumatic language was something that could lift her out of her painful past:

[EN] *At school,* [we learned English] *with the people we associated being cool. And it kinda made us fit in, and be a part of a different family* [...]. *We were going through big challenges, my parents' divorce, so at that time for me I guess I associated English with everything that was not my life. It was kind of like something bigger, something grander, something better. There was a lot of turmoil and at home between my parents with the divorce. And, English to me was to me almost like a secret language. Because like something that was… Something that I owned, and when I would come back home, it was like my secret.*

Marilyn also made sure that she would create a community around her that reflected her adopted identity in the less traumatic language:

[When it comes to my life choices,] [EN] *most of them were in favour of English.* […] *If I go to the gym, I subscribe to the gym, if I get a gym trainer, I will want to go towards somebody that's gonna be speaking in English. I go to the doctor, and I go anywhere, and they said 'what's your preferred language' on a form, when you fill out, I always check English.*

Boniface's experience of finding refuge in less traumatic languages was expressed only through statements that supported his inclination to adopt them culturally and socially. He did not bring up any positive connotations in them: "[French and English] [FR] *are not first languages either, but I have adopted them. I learn everything there is to learn about the languages.*" Like all other participants, he generally adopted relationships and frequented schools outside his traumatic language: "[FR] *The relationships outside of my family are in*

French. With my wife, with my best friend, and with maybe three other people who speak

French"; he adds, "[FR] *For studies, I admit that I chose French* [...] *I went to the University of*

Montreal precisely because it speaks French, and it allowed me to study with my girlfriend."

When it comes to living and work environments, every participant agreed that the

preferred cultural work environment should be one where the language of the least trauma is

used. For example, Claire states: "[EN] *I always thought I should stick to English work*

environments," while Shelby elaborates a bit more and adds: "[EN] *In jobs, I never sought out*

English-speaking jobs, probably in the same way I think that's everything outside of my personal

life is so used to being in French, that it must continue. The work must be in French. Obviously!"

Another example similar to Claire's would be from Shelby's experience, as she

elaborates:

> [EN] *I think that I've purposefully chosen an area to live that was mostly French-*
>
> *speaking. Because I'm comfortable, like I said, French is my useful language, like my*
>
> *tool language. So, when I go out and order things, I tend to use French. When I am at*
>
> *home, I'm relaxed, in closer situations, and I can use English*.

Finally, another interesting way participants unconsciously embraced a less traumatic

language as a main representative of their identity is through their chosen pseudonyms. Each of

the six pseudonyms were chosen by the participants and they were all from the language in

which the least trauma was felt. This includes Shelby, who specified that the pseudonym was

inspired by a francophone friend who owned it.

Move towards reconciling multilingual identity

The final essential theme brought forward by this study is one of resolution. All but one

participant expressed having already bettered or being in the process of attempting to better their

relationship with their traumatic language identity. James did not express during the interview any statements that would lead to believing that he is moving to resolve his language identity in the language of trauma, while the other five participants have expressed their willingness or their experience in starting to amend their multilingual identity.

Vincent expressed that he has started finding aspects of Tahitian that he feels can become positive associations in his life. One way he found he could relate positively with the traumatic language is through music: "[Nowadays, while choosing what I listen to, I find the Tahitian language] [FR] *is still very beautiful also at times. Like, when you hear warrior songs or Tahitian percussion mixed with all that, it has passion. It's a language in which I really enjoy singing and I find very beautiful, even if I associate it with aggression.*"

Marilyn also feels like she has already started reconciling her multilingual identity as well, seeing it for the positives it brings her in her present life: "[EN] *I was able to take a step back and realize that it was kind of, some things were silly, and that it's actually rich to know, to speak, to be fluent in different languages.*" She continues,

> [EN] *French was like being stuck* […] *it's low class* [but I am] *embracing it a little bit more, becoming at peace with it. Use it to my advantage* […]. *So, ironically, when I thought that French would keep me from not moving forward in this sense,* […] *it brings me something.*

Although Boniface expresses feeling like he is moving to reconcile his relationship with Russian, he is much more reconciled with the language of trauma that took place in the home. For Russian he states: "[FR] *I can understand that not everyone is bad. It is not necessarily the fault of the people, even though it is that, there are still many of these people that support who support this* [Russian] *regime.*" And when it comes to his Ukrainian identity, he adds:

[FR] *At the same time, I hate my* [Ukrainian-speaking] *father, but I never had any problems with my mother who speaks the same language. I imagine you could, but you shouldn't be repeating this baggage from one language to the next, but no, my aggressor spoke to me in Ukrainian, but today, it's the language I like the most.*

Claire shares her experience about how her move toward mending her multilingual language identity is something that required courage to do. She said, "[EN] *You know what, maybe let's be a little brave and* [move] *to Longueuil*," about choosing to move to a predominantly French-speaking city. She also demonstrated courage as she described being nervous about starting to practice speaking in her traumatic language more often: "[EN] *I feel more nervous in French, I stutter more, but it's good for me to practice, right? So as an adult, I was able to rationalize like that. But when I was younger, not so much.*" She expands further: "[EN] *It's only when I became an adult that I really started to regret. Like, I felt like those* [French language] *rebellions were more counterproductive than anything else* […] *I'm still in the process of trying to train myself out of it.*" What's more, Claire started to take pride in the language she once felt aversion toward:

> [EN] *I kind of just started living in English, and it's really after I left Québec, that I realized that 'I really want to live in French again.' The threat of being kind of like insulted because of the French, is gone. I'm building a more positive relationship with language.* […] *Today I'm very accomplished. I wrote several emails to a bunch of parents in French!*

Much like Claire who stated she was building a more positive relationship with the language, Shelby feels like she has taken steps in the same direction. Shelby had expressed in the interview that she felt that her language identity shifted throughout her life from, "[EN] *one*

side to the other." She then shared how today, she feels like she no longer has a conflicting identity:

> [EN] *So now I feel 100% both* [language identities], *if that makes sense.* […] *If I had to choose, I'd be both. Because, I feel like I'm more emotional than I'd like to think. Like, I find emotional attachments to things. It would be like rejecting* […] *Now, I feel it's a whole, and it's built me a lot having both languages.*

Another strong example of Shelby making a move towards reconciling her identity is when she explains how she believes her fiancé who speaks French helped her without realizing it: "[EN] *I think it helped that my identity with French was helped and was built up a lot when I met my fiancé.*" She goes on to explicitly state:

> [EN] *I have one of my most important relationships in French, so in that sense, I guess, it sort of took away from the emotional traumas that I had earlier on in French* [...] *I reconciled with it.* [My fiancé] *helped me with that. He helped me a lot with reconciling with the French side of me, and I've come to realize that I am a lot more Francophone than I thought.*

The results discussed above have brought to light five themes from the synthesis of the varied experiences of the identity perception of adults in multilingual settings having lived with a traumatic language. In the Discussion and Implications chapter, these core themes and their supporting data will be compared to findings from previous studies and theories. Moreover, the results will be discussed in terms of the literature previously reviewed. With deeper reflection, we can pull valid and relevant conclusions from the study.

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion and Implications

I began this study with the purpose of exploring how childhood trauma in "One Parent, One Language" or "Minority Home Language" situations are experienced, and whether or not language in this context can be associated with predictable or probable outcomes of language use. Many questions guided this research, in attempting to shed light on the question of whether and how certain attitudes and behaviours regarding language and identity might be related to trauma in a multilingual context. For example, how has the participants' past trauma altered their life choices? How do they feel their history of abuse and trauma define their language identity over time, and how it is connected to their life choices? Was language an important factor? What are their current feelings of identity and belonging, and their comfort levels in certain linguistic situations, whether interpersonal or environmental?

According to the results of the analysis of the experiences shared by the research participants, five themes emerged: (1) Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity; (2) Conflicted multilingual identity; (3) Aversion from language associated to history of traumatic experience(s); (4) Refuge in less traumatic language; and (5) A move towards reconciling multilingual identity. These themes are reminiscent of those explored by Kathleen Saint-Onge in her memoir (2013), revealing indeed that it is possible to recognize patterns in language identity development in adults having experienced childhood trauma.

It appears necessary to appropriately name this lived experience, the rationale being that "traumatic syndromes cannot be properly treated if they are not diagnosed" (Herman, 1992, p. 156) or identified. Given that we are addressing a scantly studied phenomenon, it may not be

referred to as a "disorder" or "syndrome". However, in light of the fact that the phenomenon appears to be common to all participants, it may be identified as a complex. Saint-Onge suggests:

> I think it may be a complex but it is *not* a disorder or syndrome. In fact, I think and believe that the multilingualism actually prevents a disorder/syndrome rooted in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by giving you an escape [-based coping strategy]—that's something that is key […] an advantage of multilingualism (K. Saint-Onge, personal communication, August 7, 2018).

Indeed, the results show an instrumentalization of language, where languages become a coping strategy for the abuse victim, therefore permitting an appropriation of possibilities or "an outlet" from the traumatic experience(s) by which the multilingual child experiencing varying levels of PTSD may in turn better cope. However, as with any maladaptive coping strategy use, as in the case of "escaping" or "avoiding", there is a dissonance that is resultant to the multilingual identities experienced by the participants. With careful consideration of all implications and themes emanating from this study, the phenomenon was named *multilingual identity dissonance after trauma* (MIDAT).

Discussion

In a phenomenological study, the main researcher has a personal interest in the topic they wish to investigate. While the *epoche* stage of phenomenological method has for purpose to defeat bias that stems from the main researcher's unexamined assumptions, prejudices, opinions, and so on, I still needed to be knowledgeable about the topic itself to ask relevant questions over the course of the semi-structured interview. To accomplish *epoche*, throughout each phase of the research process, I had to constantly reevaluate my open-mindedness to identify and bracket my biases using the analytic process detailed in the guidelines of Moustakas' (1994) book (see Table

1 of the *Methodology* chapter). That having been said, I am convinced that the themes are a true reflection of the content of the interviews.

The purpose of this study is to help educate health practitioners, clinicians, educators, and policy makers on potential language use issues in MIDAT contexts, in order for this knowledge to contribute to better practices and policy making by considering the role of language as a part of the therapeutic process. The ultimate goal of this study is that these five themes can better our understanding of how we can move forward in further investigating this important area of research; by developing interventions and proposing policies that will promote the quality of the care and interventions available to adults and children living with the effects of trauma resulting from abuse and neglect.

When we compare the findings of this study with the literature relating to trauma and abuse, I find many possible connections. The first theme, "Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity", answers one of the research questions; that in the minds of the participants, there seems to be a perception of a causal link between trauma and language identity. From here, we can discuss in what ways this trauma may have potentially affected the participants' multilingual identities over time.

When looking back at Herman's (1992) concept of "double self," the theme of "Conflicted multilingual identity" from this study parallels the findings highlighted in her chapter on trauma and recovery from child abuse. According to Herman (1992), some children have the ability to separate their identity in two: one contaminated and stigmatized, which often stays with the survivors until adulthood, and the other a more positive identity. These contradictory identities, in the case of survivors of trauma, seem to be reflected in their language identity. The theme of "Aversion from traumatic language" may be a reflection of the stigmatized

identity, while "Refuge in less traumatic language" is their way of maintaining a hopeful and positive identity in their traumatic environment.

According to the results compared with the existing literature, there are more ways in which childhood trauma seems to have an effect on multilingual identity. One surprising connection came when several people compared their relationship to language being like a relationship with a person. They compared how they felt about their languages to the way they would feel with another human being. One notable example was Shelby's statement about, "[EN] *killing her accent*" as if it were alive itself. This makes me question: if the participants feel they have a relationship with language similar to the one they would have with a person; could *attachment theory* be applied to individuals in regards to their rapport with language as well in regards to the relationship with their caregivers?

 Attachment theory developed by John Bowlby (1969), suggests one way we can look at our relationships when we are children. As we expect love and attention from our caretakers, such as our parents, guardians, so on, the amount of love and attention we received when we are children determines how we will be in our future relationships. If those who have experienced trauma in one language relate to their language identity the same way as they do with their caregiver or community who spoke that language, could it be that attachment theory can be applied to feelings of language identity itself? According to the interviews with this study's participants, there may very well be a relationship, a bridge between language and psychology that may help guide our parenting practices and develop better clinical interventions.

If this is the case, I can make parallels from the types of attachments from childhood with the MIDAT context. For instance, the results of this study bring forth five core themes, four of which seem to be possibly linked to attachment theory. The themes of "Sense that trauma

negatively affected language identity," "Conflicted multilingual identity," "Aversion from traumatic language," and "Refuge in less traumatic language," point to the possibility that an individual's language identity is tied to their attachment to the people who spoke it to them during childhood. Language itself holds the imprint of those human interactions throughout their life.

For instance, the Less Traumatic Language (LTL) would be an example of a relationship with language that is secure. The LTL would be associated with a specific person in a given context who is regarded as more nurturing or loving. While growing up, this secure attachment to the LTL helped forge a strong, confident identity with the language. Examples in the case of the participants having secure identities include James with English (a loving English-speaking mother), Vincent with French (a loving French-speaking aunt caregiver and close friends), Marilyn with English (a relationship of admiration with members of her English community), Boniface with French (a loving relationship with his French wife), Claire with English (a loving relationship with her English mother), and Shelby with French (a loving relationship with her French husband).

In contrast, the Traumatic Language (TL) would be an example of either the avoidant, anxious, or disorganized type of relationship with language. The TL would come from one of two first different types of negative contexts of avoidant or anxious. For the first type, when the language was used in emotionally and/or physically distant, also possibly abusive, interpersonal relational contexts, the attachment to the TL would be weaker and categorized as avoidant. Having an avoidant relationship with the TL can incite the speaker to close themselves off from that language identity for fear of getting hurt, and to believing that they don't need that identity. This attachment behaviour can be understood in the case of James with French (a neglectful and

abusive French-speaking father and community), Boniface with Russian (a traumatic community life in Russian), and Vincent with Tahitian (an abusive Tahitian father and community).

The second type of negative context would be an anxious relationship with language. When the language is used alongside irregular behaviour, such as when the language in the interpersonal relational context is sometimes loving and then sometimes distant and overbearing, it can lead to an extremely insecure relationship with their language identity. This attachment behaviour can be understood in the case of Shelby and English (she wanted to "[EN] *kill*" her English identity, which reminded her of her father); Claire with French (she developed a stutter for fear of making mistakes in her mother tongue, French, due to her domineering and abusive father); and Marilyn with French (she went to a dictation coach to erase "[EN] *all traces of French"* from her identity).

Overall, it is likely that this phenomenon pertaining to the imprints or emotional scars resulting from a person (i.e., abuser), and the associations the child makes of that person's language, extends beyond the validity of Bowlby's theory, by encompassing the probable role of language identity on attachment. Although the present study cannot conclusively determine whether or not attachment theory should be revised to include language identity, it is nonetheless an interesting association to consider, and future research is warranted in order to support this hypothesis.

Implications

Whether or not there truly exists a connection between language identity and attachment theory, the themes revealed in these interviews further elaborate on how it is likely that people can identify their traumatic past with the language of trauma; greatly contributing to the scant literature on the subject matter. In this case, it is possible that people experiencing multilingual

identity dissonance after trauma (MIDAT) would avoid certain language environments, such as choosing schools or workplaces, or even personal relationships, because of their relation and identification to their personal trauma. This could potentially have direct implications for policy making.

In clinical practice, it could be beneficial to explore if there are linguistic associations to the trauma and traumatic experiences. Perhaps clinicians, social workers, educators, and other professionals in contact with individuals seeking to take part in therapy could be more educated on the implications of language preference in therapeutic interactions. As such, language preference or modality could in fact become the focus of exposure with the client. It might be relevant to explore the possibility that using the LTL early during therapy might be a source of discomfort for the individual seeking to work through their trauma. It might create a more secure and comfortable environment for individuals with MIDAT to seek interactions in the LTL until they are at a place where they feel they are making a move towards reconciling their multilingual language identity. This also suggests that relying on the LTL could represent a necessary tool to explore the complete nature of the experience of trauma. Ultimately, these steps could potentially ease the recovery process for individuals having experienced abuse and trauma in their childhood and later in life.

There may also be pedagogical implications. If students are in an environment that reminds them of their abuse in the TL, this can potentially be triggering. As it was explicitly stated in the interviews, some participants even chose to avoid schools and public locations because the language used in these environments reminded them of their trauma. How can schools, teachers, psychologists, social workers, policy makers, and counselors best overcome such barriers that emerge from negative developmental associations to language? Kathleen

Saint-Onge brings up the point that: "When we teach, do we realize the ethical implications, plus or minus? Language is not just a "subject" like science or social studies. Its content is affectively loaded from the start" (K. Saint-Onge, personal communication, August 7, 2018). Perhaps a second language might be a useful intervention in classrooms as therapy. The question remains, can resources be created to help us better understand and potentially help reconcile later language identity and behaviours associated with abuse in "One Parent, One Language" or "Minority Home Language" contexts? More research is warranted before we can provide more clear answers to these questions.

One group that could particularly benefit from LTL environments encompasses adults of the Indigenous communities that have been through residential schools up until the 1990s. This is because there was a loss of the LTL first language, effectively removing that first language identity from Indigenous students. A pedagogical implication resulting from this research would be the paramount need to teach Indigenous languages to Indigenous students, and to secure those languages' continuation by revaluing it within the communities at risk of losing them.

To further discuss the topic of repairing language issues, I was surprised and touched to see that almost every participant interviewed expressed a willingness to heal their linguistic identity with the LTL. The theme, "Move towards reconciling multilingual identity," truly highlights how it appears that there is a conscious or unconscious search on the part of the individual to move past childhood trauma through language use. This could have important implications for counsellors in terms of the identity perception of individuals who would like to continue their life on path toward healing. It can be taken into consideration during the assessment phase of therapy as well as during both short-term crisis interventions and long-term therapy treatment and strategies, as detailed in Walker (1994).

These results suggest that it is possible for some people with MIDAT to heal their relationship with the LTL, which can lead to significant shifts in identity in the later stages of their therapeutic process. As Herman (1992) expounds in her book, *Trauma and Recovery*, most of the men and women having experienced child abuse or neglect—who were interviewed feeling like they had a "contaminated, stigmatized identity" (p. 105), described by the participants as "[FR] *aggressive*," "[FR] *violent*," "[EN] *low-class*," "[EN] *irritating,*" "[EN] *unpliable*," "[EN] *restrictive*," "[EN] *confining*," "[EN] *tainted*," and so on—were progressing to appropriating a more positive view of the TL. As Josselson (1996) puts it:

> Those who have lived through serious disruptions of close relationships are those who have most sharply defined their edges and their identity. By working through change or loss in relationship, these women achieve new self-understanding that they invest in a new, richer, and more gratifying connections. The potholes and pain of relationships do seem to be, in the end, identity enhancing (p. 394).

Overall, the vast majority of participants had already begun at various stages the process of disconnecting their trauma from their language identity, now seeing it as a "[EN] *tool*," a part of their whole, "[EN] *homely*," and so on. As was outlined in Table 3 of the analysis, the age range of healing their identity also correlates with Josselson's findings that identity moved to heal from late adolescence to midlife.

In the end, researchers can ask the question: what happens to the one who suffers as a child but who has no multiple identity flexibility? Dr. Saint-Onge shared her opinion on this matter in a personal statement:

> "That would be a very, very uncomfortable state of being, with a prognosis for poor social outcomes. In my estimation, and after all of the further research I have done in

psychoanalysis, I think we must conclude that the second language is profoundly

reparative right from infancy. The second (other) language enables a complex relation

and deep psychical work (venting anxiety, divergent dream-work on words, novel

associations) that affect the very formation of identity, which then becomes vital

developmentally and socioculturally" (K. Saint-Onge, personal communication, August

7, 2018).

Finally, I hope that the results of my study will point the way towards new techniques of

helping schools, teachers, psychologists, social workers, policy makers, and counsellors

understand certain problems that they may encounter in their practice. For instance, refugees,

prisoners of war, and veterans who are reminded of their trauma while hearing the TL may

benefit from LTL environments. This may be the first step on a road leading to a better-

differentiated diagnosis of certain language problems that might occur in fluently bilingual or

multilingual settings. Perhaps educational clinicians and other related health professionals

looking to repair language issues will have to get together with early childhood trauma experts to

better understand the underlying causes of certain commonly occurring problems.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have reported on the experiences shared by the research participants on their multilingual identity perception after having experienced trauma in childhood in one of those languages. The results of the phenomenological analysis brought to light five themes: (1) Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity; (2) Conflicted multilingual identity; (3) Aversion from language associated to history of traumatic experience(s); (4) Refuge in less traumatic language; and (5) A move towards reconciling multilingual identity. In this concluding chapter, I will elaborate on the limitations of this study as well as the directions for future study of the multilingual identity dissonance after trauma (MIDAT) phenomenon.

Limitations

It is relevant to mention that inter-rater reliability might be a limitation of the present study, given that was the only person to transcribe and code the data on this project. Bound by confidentiality, I could not outsource my translations because of the risk of sharing confidential data found in this research. Although I am bilingual in both French and English, I am not a professional translator. Translation of French to English was a tedious and meticulous process that may have impacted the authenticity of the participants' accounts.

Moreover, this is a Master's thesis with a limited time span in which to complete the research, which may also have limited my ability to respect potential exclusion factors in selecting participants. Therefore, my sample size (n=6) is rather small, possibly narrowing the scope and generalizability of the data. Hence, more research will be needed to be provide more conclusive results on whether the results are representative of the population as a whole.

Additionally, this is an interview-type study that looks into the participants' lived experiences. In these situations, certain kinds of information were not available for exploration. For instance, retrospective interviews about childhood experiences may not be recalled accurately since they took place long ago. There is a possibility that the participants' accounts' may contain contaminated memories. Moreover, when combined with the fact that participants are also potentially traumatized by their childhood experiences, many childhood memories may be excluded or suppressed, which could also be why these participants were attending therapy (if this is where they were recruited) in the first place. It is therefore possible that I may have shared distorted or unrepresentative information. So, it was essential that I not probe further into the nature of the traumatic incidents in the participants' experiences when conducting the retrospective interviews of trauma survivors, so as to not potentially revictimize them.

This study reveals the experiences of six voluntary participants of various backgrounds. I have assumed that the participants were representative of individuals who were willing to disclose their experiences of multilingual identity perception as having lived traumatic events in a mostly singular linguistic context. Each person who agreed to take part in the study was motivated to share their experiences during the interview process. The data was taken directly from their testimonies which they voluntarily self-reported. Therefore, the results of this study do not extend beyond what the participants were willing to share and articulate during the approximate one-hour interview. Conducting a secondary follow-up interview may have led to the identification of other themes.

As interviews were conducted through phenomenological methodology and were exploratory in nature, the findings outlined in the results cannot be considered causal, and further research using more rigorous experimental designs would be necessary.

Future Directions

  With additional research, the essential themes brought to light in this study could be validated and further developed. Furthermore, future research can help determine the universality of these themes with others having experienced trauma in a language in multilingual settings.

  Follow-up studies might be ones in which children matching the inclusion and exclusion criteria who are undergoing therapy could be asked to share their experiences with language. Similarly, children could be asked to pass the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test using words that could be said in any of their first languages and subsequently asked if they preferred saying them in one language over another (ex: "I love you" rather than "*Je t'aime*"). Finally, it can be interesting to open further discussions of multilingual identity dissonance after trauma (MIDAT) within migrant populations, people who have experienced war, as well as with Indigenous persons.

  I believe that by exploring how languages are experienced through trauma and how they are perceived by those who experienced it, we can potentially help develop resources that can be used by psychologists and educators to help victims of this kind of abuse, inside the classroom as well as within the home. I hope to have begun a discussion that may help survivors reconcile differences within their identity, and even find resolution in their other mother tongue to build strength and resilience, as in the case with Saint-Onge (2013), most of the research participants in this study, and myself, like so many others.

  The challenge lies in the fact that there exist gaps within the literature in this area that need to be further explored. Is there a relationship between an abusive caregiver's communicated language and a child's language identity in a bilingual or multilingual "One Parent, One Language' or "Minority Home Language" context? I believe the results reported here have begun

the process of answering this question. I consider this research as the first of its kind to explore

potential psychodevelopmental ramifications of multilingual identity and learning differences in

children who have been victims of trauma and abuse.

As I reflect on the completion of this study, I believe that the entire process, from

formulating my research questions, preparing for interviews, and meeting the participants,

through to analyzing their lived experiences, has left a deep impression on my worldview and

tremendously aided in my development, not only as a researcher, but as a human being. I had the

immeasurable privilege of listening to men and women who had lived through traumatic

experiences within their multilingual communities, and who had the willingness to share their

accounts with those prepared to listen and learn. Moreover, these shared experiences and the

themes that emerged from their combined analysis brought me a feeling of validation and

confirmation for the experiences I lived through as a child. It can be inspiring to see how certain

participants were making a move towards reconciling with the language identity that had been a

medium for traumatic incidents. It could bring great relief to many to see that individuals who

had once felt negatively about their language identity are moving forward in their healing

process, at various levels of resolution, bearing hope that language identity issues stemming from

past trauma can be mended, partly or in full. I am looking forward to what comes forth from

future studies on this topic.

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Appendices

Appendix A. The Social Functioning Questionnaire (SFQ)

To determine social functioning, the researcher will perform a preliminary phone screener by validating that the potential participants meet the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the study prior to setting up a research interview. A quick and robust assessment of perceived social functioning will be determined by means of the Social Functioning Questionnaire (SFQ) (Tyrer al., 2005) that takes on average less than 4 minutes to answer. A score of 10 or more indicates poor social functioning:

1. I complete my tasks at work and home satisfactorily.
   Most of the time (0)
   Quite often (1)
   Sometimes (2)
   Not at all (3)
2. I find my tasks at work and at home very stressful.
   Most of the time (3)
   Quite often (2)
   Sometimes (1)
   Not at all (0)
3. I have no money problems.
   No problems at all (0)
   Slight worries only (1)
   Definite problems (2)
   Very severe problems (3)
4. I have difficulties in getting and keeping close relationships.
   Severe difficulties (3)
   Some problems (2)
   Occasional problems (1)
   No problems at all (0)
5. I get on well with my family and other relatives.
   Yes, I definitely (0)
   Yes, usually (1)
   No, some problems (2)
   No, severe problems (3)
6. I feel lonely and isolated from other people
   Almost all the time (3)
   Much of the time (2)
   Not usually (1)
   Not at all (0)
7. I enjoy my spare time.
   Very much (0)
   Sometimes (1)
   Not often (2)
   Not at all (3)

Reference:

Tyrer, P., Nur, U., Crawford, M., Karlsen, S., McLean, C., Rao, B., & Johnson, T. (January 01, 2005). The Social Functioning Questionnaire: a rapid and robust measure of perceived functioning. *The International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 51*, 3, 265-75.

Appendix B. Semi-Structured, Open-Ended Interview Protocol

Session Structure

- **The participant reads the consent form and signs it.**

- (~5 min) Introduction of the interviewer, they explain the research and get the participant's consent (either written or recorded). If any recording devices are being used, they point them out to the participant and make sure they're working. Explain the support system available to them if they feel it is necessary.
- (~5 min) First, demographic questions will be asked: "How old are you? Where did you grow up? What languages did you and your parents speak at home? Where did you go to school, and in what language was the education? What was the language of the community? Which caregiver spoke which language?'' Allow flexibility for dialogue, but do not ask further details about the trauma.
- (35-45 min) Then, the main questions will be asked below. The interviewer will allow flexibility to use probes when necessary (see below).
- (5 min) In conclusion, the participant is thanked for their time and provided with support should they deem that they need counselling, or other kind of care after their interview is over.

Main interview questions for multilingual language identity in multilingual settings.
1. Do you feel like you prefer talking in either one of your first languages? Can you tell me more about that?
2. Do you prefer listening to or watching media in a specific language?
3. Tell me about the type of relationships you have in each language.
4. Would you prefer a relationship or a romantic partner to speak one language over another? Can you tell me more about that?
5. Do you feel you have ever avoided certain social situations, public spaces, work environment, and so on, because of the main language used during those scenarios?
6. Tell me about life choices you have made in favour of one language, or against another (e.g. where to live, jobs, the languages of schooling for your children (if applicable), the books you read, music you listen to, films you see, etc.
7. Do you feel like you are a different person in each language? Can you tell me more about that?
8. What language do you swear in?
9. Do you feel like the language in which the childhood trauma(s) occurred helped shape your language identity, in any way? Why would you say so?
10. Have you ever noticed whether you think only in (Language X)? Or only in (Language Y)? Can you tell me how that makes you feel?
11. At what age did you first sense this (Language X) identity" (if applicable).

Probes
(Maykut & Morehouse, 1994)
Here are some different types of probes:
- **Detail oriented probes:** "When did that happen?", "Where were you during that time?"
- **Elaboration probes:** "Could you tell me more about that?" "Why exactly do you feel that way?"
- **Clarification probes:** "You said that you feel "different". What do you mean by "different"?
- **Silent probe:** Remaining silent and waiting for the participant to continue, perhaps with a simple nod.
- **Uh-Huh Probe:** Encouraging a participant to continue by making affirmative but neutral comments, like "Uh-huh," or "Yes, I see."
- **Echo probe:** Simply repeating the last thing the participant said and asking them to continue. Especially good when a process or event is being described. "I see. So first you ignored your mother. Then what did you do?"

Reference:

Maykut, P. S., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and*

   practical guide. London, UK: Falmer Press.

Appendix C. Poster and Flyer Content: McGill Study on Bilingual or Multilingual Identity

Choices after Experiencing Childhood Trauma

If your parents or caregivers each spoke a different language to you, or your household and your community spoke different languages, and you self-identify as having experienced a traumatic childhood, then you can make a difference by participating in our study.

We are working toward creating resources for school teachers and administrators, psychologists, social workers, policy makers, and counsellors to help them understand certain problems that they may be encountering in their practice: perhaps language problems encountered by children in certain kinds of situations similar to your own.

Requirements:
1- 18 years or older;

2- Willingness to talk; Openness to self-disclose as having had traumatic childhood experiences although details about the nature of the trauma will not be prompted unless explored voluntarily and willingly by the participant;

3- From a family where your parent, or caregiver, spoke to you in each a different language; *e.g. Mother spoke Spanish and Father spoke Greek, Mother spoke English and Father spoke Italian, Mother spoke French and Father spoke English.*

[AND/OR]
From a multilingual context where the parent(s) or caregiver(s) spoke one language within the home, and the community used a different language*; e.g. Vietnamese inside the home, and French outside the home,*

Note: the gender pairings of the caregivers can vary from those exemplified above. In the second situation, having grown up with a single parent can qualify.

4- The experiences of trauma lived in childhood are associated with only one language of the two (or more) languages spoken in the home and community. (However, a disclosure of the nature of that trauma will not be required by this study; only self-identification will be required);

5- Must be able to communicate their experiences and emotions in either French or English for the interview.

6- Must be socially functional (determined after a short questionnaire through the phone.)

What will you do?
- Complete a 45-minute interview (may take up to 60 minutes) at the location of your choosing.

Compensation:

- You will be given a 10$ gift card of your choosing, either for Amazon, Indigo or Chapters stores. You will receive the gift card as a compensation for your participation in the study.

To contact us: multilingualidentitystudy.dise@mcgill.ca

McGill Study on Bilingual or Multilingual Identity Choices after Experiencing Childhood Trauma

If your parents or caregivers each spoke a different language to you, or your household and your community spoke different languages, and you self-identify as having experienced a traumatic childhood, then you can make a difference by participating in our study.

We are working toward creating resources for school teachers and administrators, psychologists, social workers, policy makers, and counsellors to help them understand certain problems that they may be encountering in their practice: perhaps language problems encountered by children in certain kinds of situations similar to your own

Requirements:

1- 18 years or older;

2- Willingness to talk; Openness to self-disclose as having had traumatic childhood experiences although details about the nature of the trauma will not be prompted unless explored voluntarily and willingly by the participant;

3- From a family where your parent, or caregiver, spoke to you in each a different language; *e.g. Mother spoke Spanish and Father spoke Greek, Mother spoke English and Father spoke Italian, Mother spoke French and Father spoke English.*

[AND/OR]

From a multilingual context where the parent(s) or caregiver(s) spoke one language within the home, and the community used a different language; *e.g. Vietnamese inside the home, and French outside the home,*

Note: the gender pairings of the caregivers can vary from those exemplified above. In the second situation, having grown up with a single parent can qualify.

4- The experiences of trauma lived in childhood are associated with only one language of the two (or more) languages spoken in the home and community. (However, a disclosure of the nature of that trauma will not be required by this study; only self-identification will be required);

5- Must be able to communicate their experiences and emotions in either French or English for the interview.

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To contact us: multilingualidentitystudy.dise@mcgill.ca

Appendix D. Participant Reaction Protocol

This is a 3-level protocol created to assist the interviewer on how to assess the participant's reaction and best react under such circumstances. The 3-level protocol is described below:

Level 1

Level 1 refers to a *Mild Aversive Reaction*. The protocol would warrant that the interviewer, without the intervention of the co-supervisor, provide reassurance and support to the participant, as well as some self-help material and resources.
Examples of a *Level 1 - Mild Aversive Reaction* protocol application: Tears or expressions of sadness, outwards expression of anxiety such as increased fidgeting, pulling on his/her clothes, etc. Reaction of the interviewer: Proceed with the course of the interview with the consent of the participant.

Level 2

Level 2 refers to a *Moderate Aversive Reaction*: The protocol would warrant an immediate call to the co-supervisor, who is a registered clinical psychologist and clinical supervisor. She would determine the course of action required. The co-supervisor may intervene with the interviewee and help the client settle, followed by a wrap-up as evaluated adequately by the clinical psychologist.
Examples of a *Level 2 - Moderate Aversive Reaction* protocol application: The interview is interrupted by crying, or the interviewee is expressing the need to take a break due to the experience of distress either verbal or behavioural (i.e., standing up abruptly and unexpectedly).

Level 3

A Level 3 refers to a *Severe Aversive Reaction*. The protocol would require that an immediate call be placed to the co-supervisor and clinical psychologist (as in Level 2), but would most likely result in a referral to the hospital, a local clinic or a mental health specialist, accompanied by the interviewer.
Example of a *Level 3 - Severe Aversion Reaction* protocol application: Uncontrollable crying, outburst of anger or rage, or other signs of distress warranting worry such as self-harm, fainting, or vomiting, etc.

Appendix E. Thematic Essence with Supportive Verbatim Quotes

Table 4.

Thematic Essence with Examples of Verbatim Quotes from the Participants

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
Sense that trauma negatively affected language identity	**James:** "[EN] [3] *I would not be the same person today that I am if I did not live through those times, just like every generation someone's got a problem, my own little world was a language problem.*" "[My whole life] [EN] *is basically based on my language* […] *because of what's is language if not communication. And life is communication.*" "[EN] *I'm totally self-conscious on a regular basis. I'm just a little bit more when I'm speaking French, because of the misunderstandings I've had in my traumatic life.*" "[EN] *Every moment you live, whether it's language, whether it's sentiments, whether it's touch, influences your life. So you cannot say that language will not influence your life in either. It's the whole package. Every sense affects what you are, what you were, which will become. It's what you do with the knowledge that defines who you are.*" "[EN] *The beatings I got because of other people's beliefs prevent me from having my own individuality.*" **Vincent:** "[FR] *Given the past experience I had with my father when it came to aggression, as a result, I tend to associate this language with that. And that's also why I prefer to use French.*" "[EN] *I rarely use Tahitian because like I said I associate these things with* [FR] *aggression.*" "*I associate this language with aggression, because it is still kind of very used in that sense, in Polynesia.*"

[3] The quotes uttered in English by the participant are preceded by [EN]. All translations from French (when "[FR]" precedes a quote) are by the author.

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[FR] *It comes off for me a bit harsher* [to say "I love you"], *I would say, to say it in Tahitian because as I said, again, I associate it with aggression. Even if I know it's not necessarily violent ...*"
	"[The language in which the trauma occurred help shape my identity because] [FR] *the relationship I had with my father was so-so. Basically, he did not love me. He did not want me to be born. He told me when I was 5 years old. He told me "you're a mistake". Yeah… at the slightest sign of nonsense, he would be very susceptible and jump from one extreme to the next.*"
	"[FR] *He began to speak in Tahitian and, as a result, whenever there was such* [a traumatic] *event, it was often in Tahitian.*"
	"[FR] *I would be spoken to in Tahitian when I was being bullied.*"
	Marilyn: "[EN] *I just associated* [French] *to my past, pretty much. And, I just find* [it] *is kind of like a loser language.*"
	"[EN] *We were going through big challenges, my parents' divorce, so at that time for me I guess I associated English with everything that was not my life.*"
	"[EN] *If I take my mother for example, whom I speak French to, this is a very tricky relationship, not necessarily a good one. Always very one extreme to another. My father was also the same, although I do have to say that got better over time.*"
	"[EN] *It just so happens that the people that were the most controlling and bad for me in my life, hurtful, detrimental, destructive, were… Only spoke to me in French.*"
	"[My two languages identities] [EN] *are still very separate.* […] *I've done the therapy to be told that it's a cognitive behavioural issue, over time, associations made and what not, in childhood, and all that.*"
	"[EN] *The main relationships that were kind of destructive emotionally, for me, always revolved around French. And, that made me go away from it even more. I would use English as a weapon, as a barrier, as a shield to kind of protect myself and create, also, an identity, a persona, something I felt that was stronger, better, more successful, which I felt wasn't in my childhood. If I look back on it, yeah, there was trauma, we had a life well put together, but the way my parents behaved towards us was destructive, manipulative,* […] *so French was not just about a lack of opportunity, it was— French was used*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	to bash many things, yeah, for me I associated French with destruction, hurt …" "[EN] *All of the people or situations that had a strong hold on me, it was always in French, it was always related somehow to it. Is it a coincidence? Is it, do I go back to it because I— it's a pattern?"* **Boniface:** "[EN] *I still have feelings that come forth when someone speaks Russian near me. Well that's it, I'm more reluctant about it. I remember all of this* [previously mentioned past trauma in Russian] *in the background. And at the same time…I know I shouldn't be transferring this association of feelings with that person you just heard speaking Russian: it's not their fault."* **Claire**: "[EN] *I guess, because the French was really imposed on us by my father, who was our abuser, right? For a very long time, I resisted the French. So, it was kind of like a point of pride for me to not speak French with my friends. As a teenager. And I kind of internalized a lot of resentment towards it and it took a while for me to go "you know, this is not good" like, yes I feel more nervous in French, I stutter more, but it's good for me to practice, right? So as an adult, I was able to rationalize like that. But when I was younger, not so much."* "[EN] [The catalyst for my progressive shift in identity] *was probably a combination of a lot of things, that resistance to being forced to speak French at home, right? And having English being kind of associated with friends, and books, and happy things."* "[EN] *I had a lot of negative associations with French because that was the language I got yelled at in, it was the language that, you know, was used to belittle me a lot. And so, also, when I would try and explain myself, I'd get really, really nervous. So I developed a stutter, I'd search my words, and that would also get more insults kind of thing."* **Shelby:** "[EN] *I guess because of my father. He wasn't like, the best male role model person. And he spoke English. He spoke exclusively English's, so something sort of stuck with me. I guess— I don't want to call it prejudice— but I guess, in some sense, yes. You can't really be my type, or whatever, if you speak English. There is something that bothers me, and it probably comes from that, and that I didn't have a great relationship with him and…"* "[EN] *For romantic relationships, it makes me think of my brother somehow, and it makes me think, I don't know, my mother my father didn't have a great*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	relationship and he was, in the area I grew up, I guess, the only adult male that spoke exclusively English. And he wasn't the best person at relationships, and I didn't like how he treated my mother, and for some reason all my boyfriends have always been Francophone, almost exclusively, of different races, but Francophone yet there's just something about a tall Anglo guy, that just doesn't rub me the right way." "[EN] *The trauma in English was more defining than French.*" "[EN] *I found myself on the fence of it being like "I'm not that into being Anglophone, after all" or "I'm not that into this whole Anglo context, because it's ended up being at least family-wise problematic.*" "[EN] *So, the problems are in English so I found myself avoiding it, at some age, I think in my early 20s. I was avoiding things in English.*" "[EN] *I avoid relationships with Anglophone males because they just scream problems to me because all of the Anglophone males I had close to me, my brothers, my father, are problematic.*" "[EN] *All my problems growing up that I would say were traumatic were related to my family mostly. I've had some in French. But at school despite the traumatic events, it's never been as traumatic as what happened at home. So, there's been this back and forth, and now I found a lot of comforts in French. So there's always been this emotional attachment to language, and now, like, I'm on the other side. So, I've always been bouncing between both, and I'm really safe in French. I'm safe in French. So when it's English, I'm afraid of, I guess I'm probably afraid of not being safe.*" "[EN] *For my language identity, I guess, I would run away from one language if something bad happened. I mostly ran away from English.*" "[EN] *I didn't like English for a while because of him.*"
Conflicted multilingual identity	**James:** "[EN] *I was still using* [my French name] *in the bars for the people who knew me from the beginning. And* [my English moniker] *for the people who didn't know me, the bars who didn't know me. So, I had two identities. The French identity and the English identity.*" "[EN] *I am not a different person in each language, I am perceived by others as different. Everyone has their own idea of what things should be.*" "[My identity is] [EN] *unknown. Unrespected.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *I've had to be someone else to avoid the consequences of other people's bad perceptions. You are never truly who you really are, until after you died, and then whose gonna care anyways?*" **Vincent:** "[…] [EN] *it's only when I'm really mad that I can switch personality, when I switched through each language.*" "[FR] *In French, I am more neutral. Tahitian, on the other hand, I said, I tend to switch personality when I speak in this language*, […] *I cannot start speaking in that language, generally like that, because, unless I am being aggressive, I associate this language precisely with aggression. It's enough that sometimes when I start to get upset, which is pretty rare, but when it happens it's like, something breaks. I start talking in Tahitian.*" "[My Tahitian identity] [FR] *wasn't really an identity, because I had no real choice because I grew up in an environment that made me talk like that. It was not really a choice, it was more the result of an adaptation.*" **Marilyn:** "[English] [EN] *was something that I owned, and when I would come back home, it was like my secret. My second personality. Like my second me. Like: by day I was English and back home, by night, what I was brought up to be.*" "[EN] *And I think, hence, that's why I choose one language over the other because I associate a language to a personality. So my personality changes using that language, and it's like chicken or the egg, which one comes first, but I do feel more powerful in English. My personality is more powerful, it's yeah, it's stronger, something I feel that I'm not— again, I grew up in French, shy person, you know, being put down, very insecure, English is kind of like my other persona, like the yang,* (as in *yin and yang*)[…], *it's like putting on a role. It's also because what I associated with it, in English for me, is successful, its business language, I wanted to be successful,* […] *I wanted to have a voice, I wanted people to hear me.*" "[EN] *I do become another person. I find I get very… Yeah, I find like I'm lower-class when I speak French, kind of. I'll be more, kind of almost tomboy-ish, like, let my hair loose type of thing, I feel a lot more put together when I speak English. Yeah, it makes me want to dress up, put some heels on, and go out. But, yeah, my personalities are very, very different in both languages. [In English], I think it's the person that I always wanted to be.* […] *I think I'm both* [a role who's put on and the real person I've become]*! I'm definitely both, yeah, I'm both. But, it's like I don't want both to mingle. They are still very separate. It's kind of like being, I don't know, like schizophrenic.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *When I swear in French, that's when I'm really angry. It's like there's something crude, raw that comes out. Again, the other personality. So, if I'm very upset I'm going to turn to French for swearing.*" "[EN] *So not just the language, it was definitely an identity. I didn't want the people to see that there were still traces of [French language] within me. It went even further in terms of even the culture, the humour, because the French humour is specific. So even if I used words in English, that I didn't have an accent or anything, I would still have to shape that. It's just shaping more than the language itself. It's creating an identity.*" "[EN] *That's when I say, English for me is a conscious choice. And I feel more comfortable in its, I will feel more comfortable in it, but when I'm back to animal instincts, it's— the French takes over, and I get tired.*" **Boniface:** "[FR] *I am really very slightly* [a different person in each language]. *There are sometimes phrases that go ... it's just how and where your vocabulary is developed and what style you like.* […] *it's clear you can express yourself in different ways in each language. One particular language can make a person laugh, but I can't necessarily do that in every language. Some sometimes I am swayed to be more one way in one language than the other, but I don't necessarily change my whole personality.*" "[FR] *I own speaking Russian, I master it, but I don't identify to the language and… Even though I master it, it's like it's foreign to me.*" **Claire**: "[EN] *I feel like a different person in each language* […] *I'm not the most extroverted person, but in English I don't feel early as nervous about interacting with people. So I get a little more nervous in French.* [In English,] *I definitely feel more confident.*" "[EN] *It was just kind of gradual where I realized "oh, I really feel much more comfortable in an Anglophone community, and when I speak to my cousins* [in French]*, I feel really really awkward.*" **Shelby:** "[EN] *I'm more comfortable in English in the sense that I feel more relaxed when I speak English. French has always been a utilitarian language. It's always been a use. It's always been for school, or for work. Yeah, it's like a functional language, it's not really been my 'at-home language.'*" "[EN] *Almost feel like a character of myself when I'm speaking French.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *When I speak French I feel like I sound sort of like I pieced together, you know, parts of other people's intonations and the way they spoke, it sorts of feels like it doesn't come— you know you learn the language and you learned from your parents usually. So I don't feel like I have anything that comes to my parents when is the French. So, it sort of feels like I've got a little bit of grade 2 teacher, a little bit of so-and-so friends, expressions, a little bit of this lady used to work with, so. Sometimes it doesn't feel quite myself.*" "[Am I a different person in each language?] [EN] *Yes, no, I don't know. I don't think I'm a different person in each language, I think I have, like I said, I think that I am a more relaxed person in English, but then in French, I guess, it's more social? So, in English I don't really have to think about the way in presenting myself and things like that, in French I'm more careful of my wording because, you know in French you have— it's more distinct in the way that you speak professionally, or the way you speak socially.*" "[EN] *In English you don't have to think about those social boundaries as much, so the way I go with French and English, it is a little bit of a different personality, I will say it is, it is different. But then again, in French I would say I also have two distinct personalities. So, I'll have a very professional way I speak to people, people think I'm calm and polite to and things like that. If I go with my French friends, I'm swearing and speaking slang and things like that.*" "[EN] *I think my identity, in a way, it's always been conflicted because I've always found that I hate being pointed out as the other one. So, to give you an example, whenever I'm with my Francophone friends I'm always English one. Whenever I'm with my English friends, I'm always like the more Francophone ones. I feel like the language in-betweener. I don't have* [a first language]. *I don't have a line divided in my head.*" "[EN] *When I got to CEGEP I was like 'I'm a lot more English than I thought' when I got the University, I was like 'I'm a lot more French than I thought', and now that's why I say 'I can't say that I'm Anglophone or that I'm Francophone', I can say I'm both. I do both.*" "[EN] *My more emotional personality would probably be English. I swear in English when I'm angry with someone. But yeah I guess I'm more emotional and it's a really good way to avoid being emotional by speaking French.*" "[EN] *I have always been bouncing between both* [language identities]." "[EN] *I don't think more in one language altogether, it's very muddled.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *Language identity for me I mean, it shifted, and it shifted emotionally*."
Aversion from traumatic language	**James:**
	"[EN] *I only speak the two* [languages of English and French] *and I purposefully screwed up the second to remind people that I speak the first*."
	"[EN] *I'll put in the fake French accents just to remind them,* [the French speakers,] *'hey, look, I started speaking to you in English, I am the one that's being flexible, I am the one being courteous: you really suck!'*"
	"[EN] *And the worse a person treats me, the worse I make the accent* [while speaking French]."
	"[EN] *The language* [I speak] *is pretty much* [determined by] *whoever I'm face-to-face with. I will always go out of my way to match that person on equal terms, and I have never EVER been able to understand why no one ever wants to return the courtesy*."
	"[EN] *The French, I mean* [FR] *Québécois*, [EN] *okay,* [FR] *Québecois* [EN] *are not cosmopolitan, they are stuck in their language barriers and they will fight it to the death, and if you don't speak any English at all, you're like a folk hero to them. That's my view. Because, you are living their dream because you don't want to know about any other language: you are French, you are proud, and you don't know what the hell you're talking about*."
	"[EN] *I don't know if it's physically possible but I truly believe that my brain was hotwired at conception through the DNA programming, or whatever, that I was English, and all the other things that have learned over the years that are not English interfered with the programming and, every once in a while, it goes tilt up there, if you don't know what tilt is, it's what happens to the view game machines when you get too rough with them*."
	"[…] [EN] *I've been fighting the French my entire life. So, I've got what you call a kind of a block when it comes to languages, so I can comfortably say that I think mostly in English, out of choice. Not out of an obligation. I choose to speak English because I find that my rights are not being respected*."
	"[EN] *A lot of people may be racist and sexist and all that stuff, but to the day I die, I will be, which is not the right term, be a linguist. I don't speak many languages; I am just anti-many languages*."
	"[EN] *I find French,* [FR] *Québécois* [EN] *French, so unpliable, so restrictive, confining, that I wouldn't want to be the part of it.* […], *I never felt a part of it, even though my biological father was French-Canadian* […]

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	he spoke to me in English when he wasn't angry, or I would have known more than four words in the first grade."

Vincent:

"[My father spoke] [EN] *French. And when he was angry or something like that, when he wanted to vent some frustration, it was in Tahitian.*"

"[EN] *Tahitian* [has] *really heavy connotation. I don't know how to say it in English. It's really heavy when you talk about it* […] [FR] *the Polynesian are a migratory warrior people [...] You see the haka and all, the war songs and all that. As such, the Tahitian language is very oriented toward, how to say ... heavy, warlike, violent, aggressive.*"

"[EN] *There people from my country here. They are part of an association.* [FR] *L'AEPF: L'association des élèves de la polynésie francaise.* [EN] *I usually avoid to interact with them because the use that language to be like hipsters. That's how I feel. Because they want to be different, be like before. They come to live in another country, but they don't really want to blend into this country. They want to stay apart and they want us to her specific clothes from French Polynesia, they want us to interact like were from French Polynesia, and I don't agree with that.*"

"[EN] *It is true that I mostly avoided the Tahitian language. And I especially kept French and English.*"

"[Tahitian] [FR] *is macho.*"

"[When I swear] [FR] *it's in Tahitian.*"

"[FR] *I think mostly in French* […] *except when I am insulting someone, it is generally in Tahitian.*"

"[FR] *At the political level* [in Polynesia], *the people are stupid. It's not to be mean, but the people there, for the most part, are stupid. They are not educated.*"

Marilyn:

"[EN] *I kind of associate French as kind of the, it's gonna sound bad to say that, it's very prejudiced, but for me it feels kind of a bit like a loser language. Or like a farm language.*"

"[EN] *I associated French with being kind of in a hole, not known with the world, and I wanted to be with the big crowd and because, for me, it was English. It was like the royal family, it was like Hollywood. So, with my parents I felt like that constrained me. With my parents speaking only French. Yeah, that's it, I was just held down, type of thing.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *I tend to avoid most social events that are in French, actually. I'm not sure why I do, I just do.* […] *I will avoid, like, if I have to choose a job, I will not go for the one where they spoke French, or I will not associates— funny enough, the company I work for right now is very very Francophone. And, I don't like it. It's not about that I can't express myself in it, I know how to express myself when in it, I'm actually very good in French. It's one of my strengths.*"
	"[EN] *I had to finish high school in French because of the laws. So, generally speaking when I was able to choose, I did not go to French school. Again, choosing kind of social and all that, I chose to go to English CEGEP, not French. So, yet again, it has nothing to do with how— I can easily express myself in French, I would know which words to choose, I just… I don't feel right in it (expression of disgust). I don't. It's not a question that I can't think about the words, and I think we spoke about that earlier, it's just a comforts zone.*"
	"[EN] *I feel over time French— it's like been a weird relationship, almost like a relationship with a person. Where I… I was in it because I had no choice. I had to speak it just as I had to be with my parents. It's like you have no choice: this is what it is.*"
	"[EN] *It's been an evolving relationship where I really put it aside and that I got to the point where I literally knew nothing about what was going on in the media that was in French, or even the people that were popular, or even just anything.*"
	"[EN] *I had a major accent up until college and* […] *I worked my butt off with a diction teacher.*"
	"[EN] *To not have that barrier anymore, to not just have to be stuck with French. That that is my only option.* […] *it was kind of like breaking free for me. English was about— like I felt French as 'I had no choice'. It was something I, like my parents imposed, they imposed the divorce on bus, they imposed so many things. French I kind of associated with, 'you can't move forward with French.' That's it.*"
	"[EN] *I also associated guys who spoke French, just like not really respectful, or not it's just kind of like, not as exciting. So, for me, if I was just stuck with French, then I was limited with options.*"
	"[EN] *When I swear in French, that's what I'm really angry. It's like there's something crude, raw that comes out.*"
	"[EN] *In my dreams, I cannot remember the last time I dreamed in French. I made the switch.*"
	"[EN] *At night, I end up going out, having a drink, and all that, and I'm with my Anglophone friends most of the time, and I'm trying to express myself,*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	it's like: nothing is coming, I'm stumbling, I'm thinking in French, when actually this is not me, so it feels foreign. And I get frustrated with that. I will never dream in French. Ever." "[EN] *If I feel like I'm degrading something, or in that frame of mind, I end up thinking in French."* "[EN] *When I do think in French, there's always self-loathing."* **Boniface:** "[FR] *I like hearing any language, except Russian. Because they are currently invading my country. And this for the last four to five hundred years."* "[FR] *If there is a public event, where there is a public speaker speaking in Russian, in Ukrain for instance, it can be like a turn-off for me. I would just* [EN] *fuck off."* "[FR] *I never really liked Russians. I am very aware of the history of Ukraine under the USSR regime, and they always were bastards* […]*, they continue to make pressures for it to be spoken in Russian there and everything. But they really have no fucking right. They treat Ukrainians like they're Newfies. It shouldn't be happening so I resist it. It's a bit like here, the French speakers with to the English language that is imposed, except that the indigenous people also have greater claim to language rights, but I can connect those similar sentiments to those in Ukraine."* "[FR] *I admit that I do not like it, for example at parties, at my friend's place, there were a lot of Russians. Despite that, I still ended up spending the evening with them since there were other people. But I do not like it more than that.* [If the Russian would speak French or Ukrainian to me]*, it would have been worse because to hear because of the terrible accent. So, it's fine, talk to me in whatever language you want, as long as I understand, but it irritates me when the person is Ukrainian and they speak Russian."* "[FR] *It is clear that if there is a party where there are just Russians, I would be tempted to go as much as going to a party where everyone people are sniffing glue. We don't have the same references necessarily."* "[FR] *Like with slang. Like when I am speaking with someone, and I can swear, I can say things a little more strongly with Ukrainian swears and insults."* "[FR] *In Russian, people will often have ways of speaking that will remind me of the USSR, so it's going to be like 'Mister', but it sounds a lot like 'comrade'. It had to wait associated with 'comrade, comrade' like in the army. So much more formal, like a Soviet police officer. It's polite, but like with authority."*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants

"[FR] *All alone, I swear in Ukrainian. And in a sense, in Ukrainian, the insults have a lot more punch. Ukrainians and Russians are very intense when it comes to insults.* [...] *The insults are really more violent and really less acceptable.*"

"[FR] *When I'm angry I insult everything in Ukrainian, and when I'm with other people I swear in the language they understand* [but sometimes] *when I am angry I use Ukrainian because sometimes I am so angry that I do not care that there are people with me. But it's relatively rare.*"

"[FR] *I hate Ukrainian television since most of the time it's in Russian, for no fucking reason.*"

"[FR] *I admit that I never wrote poetry in Russian. I wrote in Ukrainian, and in French, and in English, but in Russian, never. All my poetry is to vent frustration. But, never in Russian.*"

"[FR] *My father is a real Nazi about the Ukrainian language. He says: 'use it well, don't use Russian words.' He was deeply against it.*"

Claire:
"[EN] *I felt I had a better mastery of the vocabulary* [in English]*, it was always a struggle to kind of find my words in French. Especially since I, I don't know why, I never got into the habit of reading in French. But in English I did.*"

"[On the topic of whether I prefer any French language media or activity,] [EN] *I don't think so. I would've thought there would be. But no, I can't think of anything that I do exclusively in French.*"

"[EN] *I'm not terrible at French, but I have, I'm aware they need to develop it. And, kind of become a little bit more comfortable in the language. So, I do appreciate having— being able to practice the language I'm not so comfortable in.*"

"[EN] *Whenever I'd speak French, people would correct me, my relatives would tease me for my accent, so it kind of gave me a little bit of a blow to my self-esteem. And, I don't become really ever recovered from that one. Also I get really nervous speaking French, because of those corrections. So, I felt that if it wasn't perfect, it was no point in speaking.* [...] *I was very very insecure about my French language skills.*"

"[EN] *I get such anxiety when I need to reply to emails, I run them through a grammar correcting software like you wouldn't believe.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants

"[EN] *I was like 'there's no way I'm going to study in French.'*"

"[EN] *At first it was hard for me to kinda switch my way of thinking, because I always thought 'now I have to speak French with my mother'* […] *It was to make my father happy.*"

"[I swear] [EN] *in French. It's much more cathartic. It's cathartic. Whenever I get hurt, I'd always say 'ayoye!' instead of 'ouch'.* […] *It's much more cathartic to use* [FR] *Québécois,* (*swears in French*), [EN] *and we definitely overheard it at home. But, I think it's just more fun than English swears.*"

"[EN] *French was something that made me uncomfortable,* [turning to speaking English] *was more avoidant behaviour.*"

"[We were] [EN] *speaking English at home, and my father didn't like that. I guess it probably made him think that 'oh, they like their mother more,' probably he felt like it was a rejection, or made him look bad. So, that's why he was so gung ho on the French, and I got to the point where it was just resisting watching French TV shows, and resisting French books was kind of like a little rebellion against him, at first.*"

Shelby:
"[EN] *I guess because of my father. He wasn't like, the best male role model person. And he spoke English. He spoke exclusively English, so something sort of stuck with me. I guess— I don't want to call it prejudice— but I guess, in some sense, yes.*"

"[EN] *There's just something about a tall Anglo guy that just doesn't rub me the right way.*"

"[EN] *If I'm pissed at my boyfriend, fiancé, I'll probably swear him and English: it's primal. It's primal. It's more effective to me, I don't know… It's more effective.* […] *if I'm angry at someone I would probably swear them in English*".

"[EN] *So there's always been problems in English. The problems are in English. They are in English.*"

"[EN] *I found myself on the fence of it being like 'I'm not that into being Anglophone, after all' or "I'm not that into this whole Anglo context, because it's ended up being at least family -wise problematic.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *So, the problems are in English so I found myself avoiding it, at some age, I think in my early 20s. I was avoiding things in English.*"
	"[EN] *I avoid relationships with Anglophone males because they just scream problems to me because all of the Anglophone males I had close to me, my brothers, my father, are problematic.*"
	"[EN] *Where in English, it's sort of like, it's always been emotional.*"
	"[EN] *When it's English, I'm afraid of, I guess I'm probably afraid of not being safe.*"
	"[EN] *So I guess the most personal trauma would be in English.*"
	"[EN] *When I went to University, I killed my Caribbean accent which was from my dad. I killed it. I don't want this accent. So, I killed it a lot. I killed a lot of things that reminded me of my dad.*"
Refuge in less traumatic language	**James:** "[EN] *It's my little victory. Because, in a world where you're not allowed to speak English anymore, you do what you can to keep the spirits up.*"
	"[EN] *I had to change my name because of the situation in a bar. I start singing, and all I hear is a big crash and I see a chair go sailing across the room. This guy has been sitting there for a good three hours, if not four hours, my best buddy in his whole life, is yelling, and screaming and, calling me a traitor to my language, and, all names, French names, I'm sure even given to invented some, and he's ready to kill me. He's threatening to kill me* [...] *For singing in English song, after I just spent three or four hours speaking to him in French. So, I chose to change my name* [to an English one], *because of that situation.*"
	"[EN] *I took the* [English] *name because* [...], *it eliminated a lot of problems for people who didn't know me.*"
	"[EN] *If I could live my entire life over again I would live it in an English-speaking country, where there was absolutely no French.*"
	"[EN] *Everyone has their own idea of what things should be. Just like how I have an idea of how the entire world should be English.*"
	"[...] [EN] *I would go with only English because bilingual has gotten me nothing but heartache.*"
	Vincent:

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[I have two first languages]: [EN] *French and Tahitian. But I'd rather speak in French. I prefer French instead of Tahitian.*" "[If I would have to say 'I love you'], [EN] *it would be more in French or in English, I would say.*" "[FR] *I started using Quebecois swears recently* […] *but like, only to laugh at the language a bit.*" "[FR] *I mostly think in French.*" "[FR] *All my good experiences are associated with the French language.* […] *I think that is why I associate more with French.*" "[I developed a more Francophone identity when] [FR] *I was 15 years old.* […] *When I started school in 2005, my two best friends were French. That is when I started losing my accent. It's also when I started fluently in French.*" "[FR] *My aunt was just like a mother to me, and she was a model of a strong woman and she spoke French. I admire her.*" **Marilyn:** "[EN] *In high school, that's when people around me spoke a lot more English. It was kinda like an in thing also, and the field that I wanted to go into also was just, like, English. And, for me being successful what it meant: English.*" "[EN] *I prefer speaking in English.*" "[EN] *I personally find* [English] *sounds better* […], *English for me is like classier; it has, I don't know how to express it,* […] *For me it's also more concise, straight to the point, it speaks closer to me.*" "[…][EN] *Although* [my brother and I] *are Francophone we always spoke in French with each other, but now in our days we are actually closer than ever, and our first language that seems to be natural for us is English.*" "[EN] *At school*, [we learned English] *with the people we associated being cool. And it kinda made us fit in, and be a part of a different family* [...]. *We were going through big challenges, my parents' divorce, so at that time for me I guess I associated English with everything that was not my life. It was kind of like something bigger, something grander, something better. There was a lot of turmoil and at home between my parents with the divorce. And, English to me was to me almost like a secret language. Because like*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	something that was… Something that I owned, and when I would come back home, it was like my secret."
	"[EN] *Ironically again, my father and my stepmother, when we lived in the states, we started speaking English to each other. And we grew kind of to understand each other better* […] *so most of my relationships, even the ones from the beginning of my life which was in French, they are now in English.*"
	"[EN] *If I* [speak] *in English, that's why it comes easy because it's something that I rehearsed, like, when I think in my head, I will not think in French. That's switch kind of came just a little bit before— toward the end of my adolescence. That's when I realized I was dreaming and English. I got— the switch was made. I think that's when I realized 'okay, now this is my comfort zone.'*"
	"[EN] *I never associated the French language in that sense until a bit later on, when, like, as a teenager, like it's starting, or pre-teenager, when I realized tell of the media so much and I wanted to be in that field, I would hear English and I wouldn't know how to speak it but I would want to speak it because it sounded higher.*"
	"[EN] *English is my comfort zone. It's not that I'm not eloquent in French* […] *but, for some reason, it's on my tongue. So, it's more accessible, I guess, to me. It is, like putting on my PJ, like that feeling. It's not so much like the capacity, but the feeling.*"
	"[EN] *I said my last relationship I also used English as a kind of like a shield, or as a tool, to kind of use it as a weapon, because they were not as good in it, it was kind of like my secret thing my secret weapon, it was kind of like my way of rebelling too* […] *towards my parents. Who would speak French to me.*"
	"[EN] *I think I kinda used that as a crutch as well. Because, I wasn't really choosing the career, I wasn't necessarily going for it. I think it was more, yeah the language itself.*" (She didn't pursue acting for the career itself, she pursued acting to follow that language.)
	"[EN] *I feel like often; English just always does bring me something.*"
	"[When it comes to my life choices,] [EN] most of them were in favour of English. […] *If I go to the gym, I subscribe the gym, if I get a gym trainer, I will want to go towards somebody that's goanna be speaking in English. I go to the doctor, and I go anywhere, and they said 'what's your preferred language?' on a form, when you fill out, I always check English.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *I do feel more powerful in English. My personality is more powerful, it's yeah, it's stronger.*" "[EN] *I find it's okay to swear in English, I find it's not that big of a deal.*" "[EN] *Not only had I chosen an English school to go to, even though I was coming back to Montréal which was, I could've had the opportunity to get back into the French, but no, it was, it was all about English. And, I pushed further with getting rid of my accent.*" "[EN] *Now I had freedom.*" **Boniface:** "[FR] *Most of the time, I listen to media in English.*" "[FR] *The relationships outside of my family are in French. With my wife, with my best friend, and with maybe three other people who speak French.*" "[FR] *I adapt to people. For example, my wife speaks French, so I speak to her in French.*" "[FR] *For studies, I admit that I chose French [...] I went to the University of Montreal precisely because it speaks French, and it allowed me to study with my girlfriend.*" "[French and English] [FR] *are not first languages either, but I have adopted them. I learn everything there is to learn about the languages.*" **Claire:** "[EN] *I definitely feel more comfortable in English. My English vocabulary, since I grew up reading in English, and it was the language I spoke with friends, was always— I always kind of felt more comfortable in it.*" "[EN] *Most of my friends are Anglophones, I do have a few Francophone friends. I'll make the effort to speak French with them, but if those Francophone friends do speak English at times, sometimes we do end up speaking English. I actually don't know how it ends up happening […] my default tends to be the English.*" "[EN] *I definitely preferred using English […] I kind of really pride myself on my English language skills.*" "[EN] *I always thought I should stick to English work environments.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *I'm not worried about socializing with people who speak the other language, but I do notice that even when I'm in those situations, I do kind of default to English if I can.*"
	"[EN] *Starting with the University, it was really mostly my choice, and I never considered going to a French university, so my undergrad was at McGill.*"
	"[EN] *I was interested at first in living in Anglophone neighborhoods, so I was looking in NDG.*"
	"[EN] *I thought 'it's a beautiful area' and people will probably be okay with English, so that will be a bonus.*"
	"[EN] *It's funny because growing up I always said, my first language was French, but as an adult, because I kind of like force myself into that Anglophone mold more than I had to, I guess now I would say I call myself Anglophone if somebody asks.*"
	"[EN] *I think mostly in English.*"
	"[EN] *Anglophones in the West island, everyone was very polite, very friendly, very well-to-do.*"
	Shelby: "[I prefer my romantic relationships] [EN] *in French.*"
	"[EN] *I find it very weird being friends with Francophone males, but I think that has the big to do with the fact that I find them attractive. So, I find it difficult to have a friendship with the French speaking male. So, I might feel attracted to them. So, I think in general, I feel very neutral about Francophone females.*"
	"[EN] *I think that purposefully chosen an area to live that was mostly French-speaking. Because I'm comfortable, like I said, French is my useful language, like my tool language. So, when I go out and order things, I tend to use French. When I am at home, I'm relaxed, in closer situations, and I can to use English.*"
	"[EN] *In jobs, I never sought out English-speaking jobs, probably in the same way I think that's everything outside of my personal life is so used to being in French, that it must continue. The work must be in French. Obviously!*"
	"[EN] *then I found that* [sic] *comfortable to be in French all of a sudden.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants

"[EN] *I guess that's also why I work in French ever since I graduated. It's sort of like I'm more comfortable with my personality in English, but at the same time I know French, I know— it's always been in a controlled environment, it's always been schools in French, works in French. And then my relationship made me more comfortable with it. So, it's sort of safe in a sense, working in French.*"

"[EN] *It's a really good way to avoid being emotional by speaking French.*"

"[EN] *I found a lot of comforts in French.*"

"[EN] *I'm really safe in French. I'm safe in French.*"

Move Towards amending multilingual identity

James:
James did not express during the interview any statements that would lead to believe he is moving to resolve his language identity in the language of trauma.

Vincent:
"[Nowadays, while choosing what I listen to, I find the Tahitian language] [FR] *is still very beautiful also at times. Like, when you hear warrior songs or Tahitian percussion mixed with all that, it has passion. It's a language in which I really enjoy signing and I find very beautiful, even if I associate it with aggression.*"

"[FR] *I rather prefer the side of the Tahitian language that has rhythm, not the modern stuff, but the warrior aspect. […] When it comes to dance, imagine 200 people together, in perfect timing. But to perfection. To perfection. It's just too awesome. And with that, you have the Tahitians percussion.*"

Marilyn:
"[EN] *I've grown to be a little bit more opened, and that's actually been good, I find that was kind of healing a little bit, because I associated so many things to French being like, oh, it doesn't get you anywhere, it's very closed off, so I associate very negative things, and now some people, some Francophones, who were actually successful and I have a good relationship with them, so I'm kind of like, remembering good things from my past that I had not remembered.*"

"[EN] *I was able to take a step back and realize that it was kind of, some things were silly, and that it's actually rich to know, to speak, to be fluent in different languages.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	"[EN] *There's a lack of happiness in that area. And, now I understand: There's a richness in it, and I will appreciate French. So speaking French, I tried to go back to associated with childhood. With… Okay, if English is my PJs, then French is kind of like having… It's nostalgic. A melancholy thing, probably. It's a good thing: bittersweet. It's kind of like when you take out your album photo* (photo album) *when you're a kid. You know, you look back, you feel comforts you remember, you are comfortable in this, you know this, you're back in— if you have your memory,* […] *but you've moved past from it, that's your past. So, it's there, I appreciate it, I try to learn from it, but, that's it. It's not the first thing that I go to* […] *And I'll appreciate it, for example around Christmas time, when we see the family, and we speak French. It's kind of like, I become the little girl, I go back to being a little girl. So I will enjoy it, because now I try to associate with the good things that were brought from it.*"

"[EN] *French was like being stuck* […] *it's low class* [but I am] *embracing it a little bit more, becoming at peace with it. Use it to my advantage* […]. *So, ironically, when I thought that French would keep me from not moving forward in this sense,* […] *it brings me something.*"

Boniface:
"[FR] *I can understand that not everyone is bad. It is not necessarily the fault of the people, even though it is that, there are still many of these people that support who support this* [Russian] *regime.*"

"[FR] *I was starting to speak too much in French, and I had stopped seeing my friends, and that's when I realized that even alone I had started thinking only in French. So, I give myself a slap on the wrist and I started thinking in Ukrainian again. Since I had to practice it or else I would have lost some concepts.*"

"[FR] *At the same time, I hate my* [Ukrainian-speaking] *father, but I never had any problems with my mother who speaks the same language. I imagine you could, but you shouldn't be repeating this baggage from one language to the next, but no, my aggressor spoke to me in Ukrainian, but today, it's the language I like the most.*"

"[FR] *But I don't hold any grudge for forcing Ukrainian onto me, because in any case, I try to fracture… like, even if you are a violent person, you are still not 100% a bad person. Everyone does dishonorable acts.*"

"[FR] *No matter what your home country is, it's like your dog. It might not be the most beautiful and the best in the world, but for you, it's the one you prefer anyway.*"

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	Claire: "[EN] *I do watch a lot of media in English. I mean, I watch a lot of American TV shows, listen to a lot of music, in English as well. Although I'm trying to learn more about French music, because I've got kind of the musical history in English, I'm kind of learning about French rock from the 60s and stuff.*" "[EN] *I'm not terrible at French, but I have, I'm aware that I need to develop it. And, kind of become a little bit more comfortable in the language. So, I do appreciate having— being able to practice the language I'm not so comfortable in.*" "[EN] *You know what, maybe let's be a little brave and* [move] *to Longueuil* (a predominantly French-speaking city)." "[EN] *I feel more nervous in French, I stutter more, but it's good for me to practice, right? So as an adult, I was able to rationalize like that. But when I was younger, not so much.*" "[EN] *Every once in a while, I'll start talking to my cat in French.* […] *I guess what's great about talking to my kitty in French is that there's no one to judge me!*" "[EN] *It was a bit of a wake-up call when I moved to Ontario and realize that's 'oh, no, my French identity is very much important'* […] *I met other Canadians, and Americans, and then I got super, super, Pro-Francophone, it was ridiculous. I'd forced the Americans to listen to French music when they were in the car with me. It was hilarious. I played Cowboys Fringuants in the car with my friends. So, it got to the point where I would say was from Canada, but I specify, 'I'm from Québec. It's the French-speaking province. It's the best part of Canada.'*" "[If I could choose a language identity today]*,* [EN] *it's really both. I really thought for the longest time that I was Anglophone, and that I would just live my life in English, and then I decided to teach English as a second language to Francophones students, students who are in a Francophone school, and so all of a sudden my work life became French.*" "[EN] *It's only when I became an adult that I really started to regret. Like, I felt like those* [French language] *rebellions were more counterproductive than anything else.*" "[EN] *I'm still in the process of trying to train myself out of it.*" "[EN] *I kind of just started living in English, and it's really after I left Québec, that I realized that 'I really want to live in French again'. The threat*

Thematic Essence	Verbatim Quotations from the Participants
	of being kind of like insulted because of the French, is gone. I'm building a more positive relationship with language."

"[EN] *Today I'm very accomplished. I wrote several emails to a bunch of parents in French!*"

Shelby:
"[EN] *I think it helped that my identity with French was helped and was built up a lot when I met my fiancé. So, at 16, I was like "well, French isn't going to work out, whatever," and then I met him, and then I ended up being forced to – out of him speaking French only, at that point when we were 16 and actually not really speaking English at all. Having to build this whole relationship in French which I never really, you know, put that much importance to French in the first place. So, NOW it has a place of importance because I have his family, and I have one of my most important relationships in French, so in that sense, I guess, it sort of took away from the emotional traumas that I had earlier on in French. Yeah, so it made me more comfortable with it. I reconciled with it.* [My fiancé] *helped me with that. He helped me a lot with reconciling with the French side of me, and I've come to realize that I am a lot more Francophone than I thought because where I grew up, it was so adamantly pointed out that I was Anglophone.*"

"[EN] *I'm not separatist or anything, but I understand the importance of preserving the French language because it is easy, English is easy, well, I don't mean English is easy, but it is a to learn, it's everywhere. So, you could just let its hit Québec like the tide and it would be, and French would be gone in 15 years.* […] *I used to have a strong stance that, 'why are we being so protective of French', but the more I've been with somebody that's sort of repaired that English connection to French, and make me evaluate in a different way— because I guess I value the person that is a French speaker now, I don't feel like an outsider from this person.*"

"[EN] *So now I feel 100% both [language identities], if that makes sense.* […] *If I had to choose, I'd be both. Because, I feel like I'm more emotional than I'd like to think. Like, I find emotional attachments to things. It would be like rejecting.* […] *Now, I feel it's a whole, and it's built me a lot having both languages.*"

"[EN] *And so now, I'm not the odd man out in anything I guess, I sort of come to terms that I'm both. Montréal has probably helped a lot with that.*" |