What does language have to do with it? Exploring the ethno-cultural identity attainment and maintenance of adult heritage language learners in post-secondary language programs

Sumanthra Govender

Department of Integrated Studies in Education

McGill University, Montréal, Québec

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I start these acknowledgements with two prayers that have grounded me in my life:

Gayatri Mantra	Ulagelaam
ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥ *om bhūr bhuvaḥ suvaḥ* *tat savitur vareṇyaṃ* *bhargo devasya dhīmahi* *dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt*	உலகெலாம் உணர்ந்து ஓதற்கு அரியவன் நிலவு உலாவிய நீர்மலி வேணியன் அலகில் சோதியன் அம்பலத்து ஆடுவான் மலர் சிலம்படி வாழ்த்தி வணங்குவாம். *ulagelaam uṅarndhu ōdhatku ariyavan* *nilavulaaviya nerrmail vēṅiyan* *alagil sōdhiyan ambalath thaaduvaan* *malarch-silmabadi vaazhththi vaṅanggu-vaam*

When I completed my Higher Diploma in Theoretical Linguistics at University College Dublin in Ireland, the head of the Department of Linguistics, Dr. Vera Čapkova, pulled me aside and told me that one day I would complete a doctoral dissertation. Here I am more than 20 years later. Thank you for believing, very early on, that this was the path I should follow.

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Abstract

There is an "assumed and/or attributed relationship between one's sense of self and a means of communication which might be known as a language" (Block, 2009, p. 40). There is a belief that an individual needs to know a language in order to be a member or claim membership of that particular ethno-cultural group. For *heritage language* (HL) speakers, their ethno-linguistic identities are realised through the language(s) they use and how and with whom they use language. However, there are many *heritage language learners* (HLLs) who claim their ethnic identity without knowing their HL. For various reasons, they never fully learned the language while growing up, but they have decided to do so as adults. These adult HLLs turn to university *foreign language classes* (FLCs) where they are not the target learners. In this qualitative study, I draw upon socio-cultural ideologies and post-structural perspectives about language socialisation (Duff, 2007, 2010) and identity formation (Norton, 2000, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978; Watson-Gegeo, 2004) to conduct an exploratory study about the link between language and identity. The purpose of the study was to garner different perspectives about the language identity conundrum that many visible minority heritage speakers face. I investigate ethnic identity affiliation and language knowledge of eleven (N=11) adult HLLs who are learning their different HL in a non-HL learning context. Through the use of autobiographical writing and interview-based narrative methodology, HLLs offer their thoughts about their linguistic gains, ethno-linguistic identity formation, and their imagined outcomes. The intention of the methodology protocol was to engage in the research with the HLLs, rather than about them. As language classrooms become more linguistically, ethnically, and racially diverse, critical language awareness of HLLs and their understandings about the relationship between language and identity is a key implication for foreign language instructors. The findings of this study can inform instructors about who

HLLs are and what they hope to gain from their foreign language learning experience. This awareness might give instructors the foresight to be more inclusive of diverse ethno-cultural language learners and their realities. The thesis closes with a discussion of the interpretative understandings of the HLLs' language and identity construction experiences.

Résumé

Il existe un « lien présumé ou allégué entre perception de soi et moyen de communication, que d'aucuns appelleraient langue » (Block, 2009, p. 40). Il est courant de penser qu'une personne doit « connaître » une langue pour « être » membre ou « revendiquer » son appartenance à un groupe ethnoculturel donné. Pour les locuteurs d'une langue patrimoniale (*heritage language speakers* (HL)), leurs identités ethnolinguistiques se manifestent à travers la ou les langues qu'ils utilisent, ainsi que par la manière dont ils utilisent cette ou ces langues, sans oublier les personnes avec lesquelles ils l'utilisent. Cependant, de nombreux apprenants de langues patrimoniales (*heritage language learners* (HLL)) revendiquent leur identité ethnique sans connaître leur langue d'origine (HL). Pour diverses raisons, ils n'ont jamais appris cette langue pendant leur enfance, mais décident de le faire à l'âge adulte. Ces HLL se tournent alors vers des cours de langues étrangères à l'université où ils ne constituent pas les apprenants cibles. Dans cette étude qualitative, je m'appuie sur des approches socioculturelles et des perspectives post-structurelles concernant la socialisation linguistique (Duff, 2007, 2010) et la construction identitaire (Norton, 2000, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978; Watson-Gegeo, 2004) afin de mener une étude exploratoire portant sur le lien entre langue et identité. L'étude visait à recueillir différents points de vue sur le problème de l'identité linguistique auquel sont confrontés de nombreux locuteurs d'une minorité visible. J'étudie l'appartenance à une identité ethnique et les connaissances linguistiques de onze (N=11) adultes HLL qui apprennent leur HL dans un contexte d'apprentissage non-HL. Par le biais de l'écriture autobiographique et de la méthodologie de l'entretien narratif, ces HLL partagent leurs réflexions sur leurs gains linguistiques, leurs constructions identitaires et ethnolinguistiques et sur les impacts envisagés. La visée du protocole méthodologique était de mener cette recherche en collaboration avec les HLL, plutôt

que sur eux. Les cours de langues étant de plus en plus diversifiés sur le plan linguistique, ethnique et racial, la connaissance critique de la langue des HLLs et de leur compréhension de la relation entre langue et identité est une implication clé pour les professeurs de langues étrangères. Les enseignants doivent connaitre qui sont les HLL et ce qu'ils espèrent retirer de leur expérience d'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère. Cette sensibilisation pourrait ainsi permettre aux formateurs d’avoir une approche plus inclusive à l’égard des divers apprenants de langues ethnoculturelles et de leurs réalités. La thèse se termine par une discussion sur les interprétations des expériences de construction linguistique et identitaire des participants HLL.

Land Acknowledgement

McGill University is located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. McGill honours, recognises, and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

L'Université McGill est sur un emplacement qui a longtemps servi de lieu de rencontre et d'échange entre les peuples autochtones, y compris les nations Haudenosaunee et Anishinabeg. McGill honore, reconnaît, et respecte ces nations à titre d'intendant traditionnel des terres et de l'eau sur lesquelles nous nous réunissions aujourd'hui.

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Contribution to Original Knowledge

This dissertation contributes to the field of language education in three ways. First, it offers a view of adult heritage language learning experiences. It focuses on the link between language identity, specifically how studying a heritage language in a non-heritage language learning context affects identity claims. This study gave a platform for adult heritage language learners to express their desires, challenges, and efforts in becoming or claiming their heritage identity.

First, with growing multiculturalism and plurilingualism, this study offers language educators information about the relationship between knowing a language and claiming and ethnolinguistic identity. In addition, this knowledge offers language educators opportunities to expand their understandings about language learner identity when they develop the foundations and/or philosophy of language education. Furthermore, it encourages adult heritage language learners to share their voice and linguistic experience so that pre-service and in-service post-secondary language educators can 1) develop a greater awareness about multilingual learner identities, and 2) reflect on how their curriculum and teaching meet the needs of the diverse language learners in the classroom.

Second, at a methodological level, this study supported the social constructivist approach to learners' identity construction and reinforced a post-structuralist perspective to language education. Third, this study supported the social constructivist view that identity formation is a co-constructed and that the relationship between language and identity is dialogical. A qualitative interview protocol was used in this study to garner learner voices. The findings of this study thus suggest greater awareness in language identity is needed in language education discussions. This is one step in exploring heritage language maintenance for adults so that the

field of language education has a deeper understanding of who these voices are in the space of language education.

Contributions of the Author

As the author of this dissertation, I proposed and designed the research topic and questions. I conducted the literature search, developed the research design for this study, sought ethics approval from the University Research Ethics Board, recruited the research participants, conducted the data collection and analysis, and wrote the dissertation based on the analysis. During the process, I asked for and received constructive feedback and guidance from my supervisor, Dr. Mela Sarkar, and my supervisory committee members, Dr. Angelica Galante and Dr. Martin Guardado.

List of Abbreviations

CAL: critical applied linguistics

CLA: critical language awareness

HL: heritage language

HLE: heritage language education

HLL(s): heritage language learner(s)

HS(s): heritage speaker(s)

FL: foreign language

FLC: foreign language class

L1: first language

L2: second language

MHI(s): mixed heritage individual(s)

Glossary of Key Terms

critical language awareness: an awareness of how language conventions and language practices are invested with power relations and ideological processes.

discourse: a performative act of communication in which people and/or communities express and constitute a sense of belonging.

ethnicity: a sense of being or identity that is associated with a cultural community.

ethno-linguistic identity: assumed and/or attributed relationship between one's sense of self and a means of communication which might be known as a language.

heritage language: an ethnic, cultural, or ancestral language of a minority language community that is often a "less commonly taught" language.

heritage language socialisation: how speakers' identities are realised through the HL they use, and how and with whom they use their HL.

language ideologies: sets of beliefs and attitudes that shape speakers' relationships to their own and others' languages.

language use: the act of using language.

languaging: a process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language.

race[1]: a dimension of identity in relation to language and identity; a social and cultural construction in which linguistic behaviour and social categories are linked.

[1] There are two opposing ways of understanding race, a biological view and a social construct. Within post-structuralists and social constructivist conceptions of language and identity, I examine race as social construct to understand a fluidity in the link between language and identity (Anderson, T., 2008; Omoniyi, 2016).

Chapter 1: The Starting Point

Locating the Inquiry

In this dissertation, I explore the link between language and identity. Specifically, I want to understand the relationship between knowing a heritage language (hereafter, HL) and claiming a heritage identity, and I venture into this understanding by looking at HL and identity in tertiary language education in multilingual/multicultural Canada. More specifically, this study took place in multilingual/intercultural Montréal, Québec. Within this context, I endeavour to understand how adult heritage language learners (hereafter, HLLs) are socialised to know their HL and to gain a sense of heritage identity in a context that is not linked to their ethno-linguistic community, the foreign language class (hereafter, FLC) which is intended for foreign language (hereafter, FL) learners. Insights from this study will provide language educators with points of reflection to consider in terms of the link between language and identity in language education. In other words, the story I wish to tell in this dissertation is one where an awareness about the relationship between language and identity can foster a greater understanding of the role identity plays in language education. I do this by offering the reader the stories of adult HLLs, and I begin with one of my own stories.

How a Personal Experience led me to This Project

Where are you from? People from all walks of life have been asked this question. It is a seemingly simple and innocent enough question. However, an answer to this question can be multi-dimensional, based on who is asking it and what information they are looking for.

My earliest recollection of being asked this question was when I was 13 years old. The question came from a complete stranger in a restaurant:

Woman: Where are you from?

Me: I'm from Edmonton.

Woman: No dear, where are you really from?

Me: Um… Edmonton. [I said it a little bit louder the second time just in case she didn't hear me the first time]

Woman: No, where were you born?

Me: Edmonton, Alberta. [Now I'm starting to wonder "why is she not believing me?"]

Eventually, my father stepped in and ended the interrogation. I remember being completely confused by what had just transpired. I gave her an honest answer, and I was polite when doing so. However, I could not understand what she was expecting from me. For some reason, she would not or could not believe me; I was not giving her the answer *she* wanted. I cannot recall many other instances from my youth where I was asked this question again. However, I have been asked this question on numerous occasions as an adult. As a visible minority, I wear an assumed answer. I am brown and look Indian; therefore, I must be from India because for many people this is "visibly understandable" (Govender, 2015). However, is this assumption accurate? This assumption about my identity and/or place of origin is packed with stereotypical ideas about the way I should sound, act, and what language I should speak (Crump, 2014; Flores, 2016). As a result, this assumption can reinforce an overarching belief that Canadians *should* look like, sound like, and be like Canada's White majority. Thus, it supports an ideology that any visible minorities *have to* come from somewhere else, act differently from others, and speak a language other than English and French. In theory, Canada's multicultural stance challenges these assumptions. Canada's population is a mosaic of cultures and languages, and within this mosaic, individuals' identities can push stereotypical understandings of identity. For example, my complete answer to the question *"where are you from?"* would reveal that my

identity is not so straightforward or stereotypical as some people would assume. Like that of many others today, my identity is colourfully complex.

Intention of the Question

In her TED Talk, *Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local*, Taiye Selasi critically analysed the intention behind the *"where are you from?"* question: "What are we really seeking, though, when we ask where someone comes from, and what are we really seeking when we hear an answer?" (Selasi, 2014, minute 13:17). While there are many people who ask this question with a sincere intention of knowing someone's story, there are many others who use this question to enforce or reinforce an us versus them rhetoric. This rhetoric highlights those who belong and those who do not belong, in a society or to a community, but this is from the perspective of only one side. As a result, the power of this rhetoric can leave people questioning the legitimacy of their claimed identity and/or their claim to other identities (Mahtani, 2002, 2014). This entails that an answer to this question is not only about geography, but it is also about identity, *who you are.* However, claiming or sketching out an identity is not necessarily a process, and it is not straightforward. Identity formation is dependent upon who or what is doing the defining (Gee, 2000; Lee & Anderson, 2009; Noro, 2009; Norton, 1997; Pao et al., 1997; Shin, 2010). Therefore, the question "Where are you from?" is also a reflection of what others want you to be.

Sketching out an Identity to Claim an Identity

Identity formation is a dynamic and fluid process. It spans a continuum between fixed and fluid characterisations. An identity is *fixed* due to cultural and societal norms and implications, or it is *fluid* because it is co-constructed, enacted, negotiated, reinforced, and challenged in context (Gee, 2005). Thus, identity is multi-layered and multi-dimensional. In some instances, it involves privileging one characterisation over another, for example, culture

over country. In such a case, however, identity is not solely based on a singular declaration of nationhood or citizenship. Selasi (2014) notes that being multi-local best reflects multiple aspects of identity, and she characterises a multi-local identity as those who feel at home in the town there they grew up, the city they live in now, and maybe another place or two. For me, my multi-local identity encompasses India, South Africa, Ireland, and Canada. My ancestors, the most immediate of whom was my paternal grandmother, were from India. My parents were born and raised in the Indian enclaves in Durban and Umzinto, South Africa. My second home is Dublin, Ireland. I was born and raised in Canada, where I presently live. My multi-local identity is also multi-dimensional, for it is shaped by my gender, familial roles, profession, education, and language; I am a woman, a daughter, a wife, a mother, an educator, a researcher, and an English speaker. For me, and many others, these different layers intersect or overlap each other with varying degrees of fluidity. This fluidity might give way to moments of an identity crisis, yet there can be a clarity and comfort in knowing the multiplicity of selves. Nevertheless, my identity has had to face moments of negotiation, challenges, and rejections. In educational, professional, and socio-cultural environments of mainstream society, multi-dimensional identities can be hard to accept. Moreover, such diverse identities can also be challenged within one's own cultural community. When someone's own ethno-cultural community asks "Where are you from?", it can cause a person to question his or her legitimacy as a member of that ethno-cultural community. In some instances, the question is asked strictly because someone looks different; for example, someone with a mixed heritage (Mahtani, 2002; Noro, 2009; Tsai et al., 2021). In other instances, people are asked the question because of their inability to fit in with cultural norms or an inability to communicate through the cultural language. In this latter instance, language is seen as "a central feature of human identity … language is a powerful

symbol of national and ethnic identity" (Spolsky, 1999, p. 181). Thus, language and race are then inextricably linked so that language influences understandings of race and race becomes defined by language (Rosa, 2019). It is from this latter perspective that I venture into my exploration of the link between language and identity in a multilingual context.

A Multilingual Reality Within the Bilingual Framework

It is important to understand that multiculturalism and interculturalism are different ideologies of diversity that tend to co-exist in a space. Under a multicultural paradigm, cultural diversity is embraced as a source of social, cultural, and economic capital. It is a paradigm that centres on the notion that peoples' cultural heritage and identity are recognised and will be conserved in the broader diverse society (Maxwell et al., 2012; Meer, 2016). In Canada, multiculturalism is enacted as an official policy through the 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act. The intentions of the Act recognise an importance in preserving: multicultural heritage in Canada; the rights of Indigenous peoples; social equality within society regardless of origin, colour, and religion; and the rights of minority communities to celebrate their culture. All of these intentions are supported under a policy where English and French remain the only official languages (Brosseau & Dewing, 2018). While a majority of the provinces in Canada have legislated some form of a multiculturalism policy, Québec has embraced an intercultural paradigm. The intercultural policy that Québec upholds has similar notions of multiculturalism but differs from a multicultural paradigm by further emphasising the interaction of cultural diversity in a common society (Bouchard, 2011, 2012). In other words, different groups and communities co-exist under a bigger umbrella of a common community or society with a primary acknowledgment towards the culture of the majority community and an air of appreciation of the cultural contributions of other communities (Meer, 2016). However, this

same paradigm could also be interpreted as a vehicle for assimilation of minority groups and identities into the dominant Francophone white Québécois culture. Consequently, Québec's interculturalism could be seen as a mechanism for identity struggles and intolerance rather than promoting intercultural community (DesRoches, 2014; Elias & Mansouri, 2020).

In 1969, Canada's federal government passed the Official Languages Act (Bill C-13) (Government of Canada, 2023). This federal statute mandates that English and French are the official languages of Canada. Moreover, this Act opened the door to the introduction of Canada's multicultural policy two years later. In the more than five decades since its inception, Canada's official bilingualism has been transformed by unofficial socio-cultural and linguistic multiplicity (Canada Heritage, 2015; Haque, 2012; Jedwab, 2014, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2021). As a result, this Act has been amended three times in an attempt to reflect the changes in the use of Canada's official language and the country's linguistic reality (Government of Canada, 2023). In the 2011 Canadian Census, data revealed that a majority of Canadian immigrants, 96.8%, spoke one language as a first or dominant language. Specifically, English and French were reported as the mother tongue of approximately 30% of this population, whereas almost 70% of the mother tongues spoken by this group of people were other languages. As of 2017, it was reported that more than 200 languages are spoken in Canada, including approximately 70 Indigenous languages (Statistics Canada, 2017). Recent census data reveals that approximately 4.6 million people in Canada speak a language other than English or French in the home (Statistics Canada, 2021). Linguistic diversity, specifically HLs, is thriving and on the rise. Despite this growing linguistic diversity, current census data also indicates that English/French bilingualism is on the rise throughout the country. English language is dominant over French in most regions of the country other than Québec; however, the number of Canadians who speak French in the home is

growing in other regions, such as British Columbia and the Yukon (Statistics Canada, 2021). However, growing ethnic diversity is ushering in alternate unofficial bilingualism that is potentially outpacing the official English/French policy (Crump, 2017; Piccardo, 2014; Statistics Canada, 2021). In Québec, language politics about English/French bilingualism permeate many facets of everyday life. Moreover, the relationship between language and identity is continually debated through policies such as Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language, and Bill 96, An Act respecting French as the official and common language of Québec, both of which establish French as Québec's official language for work and communication (National Assembly of Québec, 2022; Couture Gagnon & Saint-Pierre, 2020; Oakes, 2004). Therefore, examining the relationship between ethnic identification, language acquisition, and home language use provides valuable information on how the link between language and identity evolves over time (Jedwab, 2014; Paquet & Levasseur, 2019).

In 1976, O'Bryan et al. investigated the patterns of language maintenance and shift among ethnic minorities in Canada and found that non-official language speakers seemed to be unable to withstand the pull of official language use, and that usually by the third generation minority languages are lost. However, in present day Canada, linguistic diversity including non-official languages, such as Spanish, Hindi, or Arabic, has seen a sharp increase. The number of people who reported a non-official mother tongue rose from 7,749,115 in 2016 to 9,033,190 in 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2021). This linguistic diversity contributes not only to Canadian ethnic vitality and identity but also to the whole society (Jedwab, 2014). Many people are of the opinion that Canada's multiculturalism and multilingualism can only be seen in its bigger metropolises, such as Vancouver, Toronto, and Montréal (Duff & Becker-Zayas, 2017). However, most cities across Canada embrace varying degrees of multicultural and multilingual realities. Alberta, for

example, is the third most diverse province in terms of visible minorities in the country, after British Columbia and Ontario. In western Canada, it has the second highest population of Francophones after Manitoba (Statistics Canada, 2016; Alberta Treasury and Finance, 2016). The most widely used language other than English in Alberta is Tagalog, followed by German and then French. The everyday language identity politics of the province centre on a need to promote Aboriginal language education, to acknowledge the right to provide services in French in addition to English, and to foster heritage language education (hereafter, HLE). For Inuit and First Nations communities in Canada, bilingual education, especially in the Yukon and Nunavut, in the dominant societal language and their Indigenous language is of critical importance to the vitality of the communities (McIvor & Ball, 2019; Taylor et al., 2008). Presently, there are complete bilingual community-governed schools in Manitoba (Cree/English) and in Nunavik (Inuttitut/English) (Ball & McIvor, 2013).

Language and Identity in Intercultural Québec. Québec is often seen as the national hotbed of linguistic duality and challenges because in Québec, Canada's official bilingualism and unofficial multilingualism are experienced in a different way. Under Québec's Charter of the French Language (Bill 101), French is recognised as the official language of use in public domains, and it is protected under policies that maintain, govern, and regulate the use of the language. This French-only language policy has helped foster and strengthen a French-Canadian identity, language, and culture (Shapiro & Stelcner, 1997). However, French also is promoted as the language under which diverse ethnicities can and should thrive. Thus, promoting French as the lingua franca of society is done to protect the French language and culture and bring people of diverse linguistic backgrounds under one language umbrella. However, there is a linguistic cost with such a prestige planning policy, and this can be seen in Québec's English and other

language communities (Bourhis, 2019). For the English-speaking community, there is limited access to English-medium schools. For other language communities, the potential cost is home language loss. To mitigate this particular linguistic loss, programs, such as the Programme d'enseignement des langues d'origine (PELO) or The Heritage Language Instruction Program, have been created within the public school system to help home language maintenance. This program is funded by the Québec Ministry of Education, but these programs are made available by only a few school boards and are highly dependent on community support.

Within Québec's French monolingual yet intercultural space, people are categorised into three distinct groups based on their linguistic background: Anglophones (English speakers), Francophones (French speakers), and Allophones (speakers of other languages) (Bourhis & Sioufi, 2017). With each of these labels, an individual's identity takes on different social meanings, opportunities, and challenges. With these markers, identity becomes an essentialised or fixed concept, with the additional baggage of reinforcing ideologies about who is an insider and outsider in the bigger social community. However, an alternative to this rhetoric can be easily seen in the province's largest metropolis, Montréal. In Montréal, alongside French monolingualism, multilingualism is thriving, and it is sustainable due to the numerous ethnic communities that live there. The reality of this ethno-linguistic diversity casts a shadow over the unilingual policies that dictate the city's linguistic stance.

In this large urban centre, and others like Québec City, growing diversity makes it possible for people with multiple languages and varying linguistic identities to interact with each other on a daily basis (Lamarre & Dagenais, 2004). As a result of this growing ethnic and linguistic diversity, Québec is home to a growing number of families where the mother tongue is a language other than French or English (Statistics Canada, 2016). However, this is not at the

expense of the French language. In fact, approximately 6.5 million people reported speaking French in the home in Québec in 2021. This is up from 6.4 million people in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2021). Moreover, French remains the first official language spoken by 90% of Québécois. Thus, English/French bilingualism is on the rise. According to Statistics Canada (2021), close to 60% of English/French bilinguals in Canada reside in the province of Québec. The city of Montréal is French, but it simply showcases Québec's linguistic diversity more openly. As recent as 2017, Montréal has been unofficially labelled Canada's largest trilingual city (Valiante, 2017). According to the 2021 Census, 58.4% people in Montréal cited French as their first official language. This only confirms that a large number of people in Montréal are bilingual or trilingual speakers, with proficiency in both official languages and/or a non-official language (Duff, 2007; Jedwab as cited in Ricento, 2013; Lamarre et al., 2002; Lamarre, 2003; Statistics Canada, 2016, 2021). According to the 2016 Census, Spanish, Arabic, and Italian were the top three non-official minority languages spoken in Québec.

As a result, greater linguistic and cultural diversity is challenging the boundaries of Québec's identity markers in terms of who can lay claim to and "look and speak the part of" each of them. Moreover, this growing diversity is ushering in numerous linguistic debates and polarising language and cultural identity issues. Most recently, the Québec government adopted Bill 96 in 2022, An Act Respecting French, the Official and Common Language of Québec (National Assembly of Québec, 2022), notably strengthening Québec's Charter of the French Language, Bill 101, which governs the use of French in education, commerce and business. The move for such a Bill was brought about by ongoing divisiveness around language use. In 2017, linguistic tensions rose with *"Bonjour/Hi"* (Bilefsky, 2017). This is the bilingual greeting commonly used by store clerks to address customers. In the Fall of 2017, Québec's National

Assembly passed a motion to cease the use of "Hi" in favour of only using "Bonjour" as a means of reinforcing the French-only language policy (Dutremble-Rivet, 2019). In such instances, the focus of concern is on the belief that French is occupying limited space in the province and that French language and culture are eroding under the shadow of English. However, another voice in this debate came from within minority communities, where "Bonjour/Hi" is openly expressed as "Hola," "Ciao," or "Salaam" among members of the community. The people who use these alternate salutations highlight another face of Québec and the province's un-official linguistic diversity. Their language is the vehicle for them to express their multi-local identities in a plurilingual reality (Galante & dela Cruz, 2021; Paquet & Levasseur, 2019; Prasad, 2012).

While the growth in linguistic diversity gives the impression that minority languages are flourishing in minority communities, it does not necessarily equate to linguistic retention or continuity within these communities. For example, across Canada, the retention rate of some European mother tongues, such as Italian, Polish, and Greek, was only at 50% in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2016) and has continued to decline according to the 2021 Census data (Statistics Canada, 2021). In Montréal, there is a "gradual shift away from European immigrant languages" (Duff & Becker-Zayas, 2017, p. 63), such as Italian, Greek, and Portuguese, and an increase in Arabic and Chinese speakers in the city. This is primarily due to changing immigration trends. While there is growing multilingualism in non-official languages and English and/or French among recent first- and second- generation immigrants, a notable concern among immigrants and subsequent-born generations who learn and live in an official language(s) is that they are achieving only limited receptive understandings of their ethno-linguistic mother tongue or losing it altogether (Duff, 2007; Fishman, 1991, 2001; Guardado, 2002; Guardado & Becker, 2014; Hornberger, 1998; Piccardo, 2014). Jedwab (2014) highlighted that some of the language loss is

due to how attached the second generation feels to the language in terms of needing it to speak to members of the family or community. Approximately "51% of allophone Canadians said they were attached to 'their' language and another 40% said they were somewhat attached" (Jedwab, 2014, p. 237). This indicates that there is still hope for mother tongue maintenance in the face of needing to learn the language of the dominant community.

History has shown that not enough has been done to promote ethno-cultural/ethno-linguistic maintenance in the society at large. This can be clearly seen with the language revitalisation struggles among Canada's First Nation and Inuit communities. A 2010 UNESCO report indicated that approximately 3,000 of the world's indigenous languages were facing the threat of extinction over this century. Of these languages, 87 are Indigenous languages in Canada (Moseley, 2010). Language revitalisation is seen as a means of "giving new life and vigor to a language that has been decreasing in use (or has ceased to be used altogether)" (Hinton et al., 2018, p. xxi). According to the 2016 Canadian Census, there are 260,550 speakers of Indigenous languages in Canada. While this is an increase of speakers by 3.1% since 2006, the number of speakers represents less than 1% of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2016). In the 2021 Census, an Indigenous mother tongue was reportedly spoken by 189,000 people (Statistics Canada, 2021). Consequently, community advisors, elders, and educators have taken it upon themselves to provide educational opportunities to revitalise and maintain their Indigenous language (Gomashie, 2019; McIvor & Ball, 2019); however, a lack of educational support or funding from the federal level, which regulates education in Indigenous communities, can make it a challenging task to achieve such goals (Cummins, 2014a; Haque, 2012). This shows that the broader ideologies, policies, and pedagogical practices tend to marginalise unofficial and minority languages and their speakers (Cummins, 2014a; Dagenais, 2013; Haque, 2012) because

their cultural and linguistic differences are not considered to be a priority or a need. However, knowing a HL offers many advantages to the learners and speakers at personal and societal levels (Guardado, 2018). Lao and Lee (2009) noted that HL retention builds bridges between family members and among co-ethnic peers. Guardado (2010) found that minority language development is a key factor in helping HLLs construct not only a sense of cultural identity but also a sense of global cosmopolitanism. HL maintenance was regarded as "a passport to a worldview that went beyond the limits posed by narrower notions of identity, such as ethnic, nation-state, or even pan-ethnic identities" (Guardado, 2010, p. 342). Furthermore, maintaining the HL potentially opens up labour market opportunities that might not be available to members of mainstream society (Cho, 2000; Locher-Lo, 2019; Pendakur & Pendakur, 2005). Regardless of these benefits, there is still room for more minority language education research and real policy implementation in Canada (Cummins, 2014a, b; Duff, 2008a).

The Study

I opened this thesis with a reflection on the seemingly innocent but at times racialising question "where are you from?" because at its core, the question is not only about nationality, but it is also about belonging and identity. In a heritage community, this question has the power to determine who can and cannot be accepted by the community. However, the intention behind the question is probably "how are you claiming to be a member of this community?" This point of inquiry asks people to qualify their membership attributes according to their immigrant status, history, and ethnic background. It asks people to qualify their language and identity.

"Talk about language is everywhere. It matters what language(s) you speak, what you say about language, and who you say it to" (Crump, 2014, p. 16). The sentiment behind this statement is not only adopted into this dissertation but is also extended to encompass identity:

Talk about identity is everywhere. It matters what identities you claim, what you say about identity, and how you convey it to others. At times, language is an umbrella term or requirement for visibly racialised identities. For example, Chinese people speak Chinese. Japanese people speak Japanese. The assumption is that an individual needs to know a language in order to be a member of or claim membership in that particular ethno-cultural group. This unilateral link between identity and language is perpetuated by members of a community (Sarkar et al., 2007), and this link is also a determinant of acceptance into a community. If members of a community cannot relate to each other through a language, then their acceptance may remain questionable and *can* or *will* be contested. However, the reality is that there are many people of various ethno-cultural backgrounds who do not have the language and still identify with the ethno-cultural group (Dagenais, 2003) because other characteristics are deemed equally important as language, such as similar religious beliefs, cultural practices, and food traditions. These understandings lay a foundation for their identity claim, without the language. This potentially pushes the assumed ethno-cultural boundaries of ethnic identity and belonging (Nagel, 1994).

Motivation for This Inquiry

Block (2009) refers to investigations into *language identity*, also termed *ethno-linguistic identity,* as "the assumed and/or attributed relationship between one's sense of self and a means of communication which might be known as a language" (p. 40). HL speakers' identities are realised through the language(s) they use and how and with whom they use language. When they make the choice to use one language over another based on their affiliation with a specific group, they engage in identity construction. Thus, HLLs use a HL to identify with the heritage community to which they belong or imagine they belong (Oriyama, 2010).

My multi-local identity encompasses my ethno-cultural identity and membership. I had an active socio-cultural life within the local South African East Indian community and with my multicultural mix of friends and peers in Edmonton. My first language (hereafter, L1) is English. In South Africa, my parents were formally educated in English, but they also learned their heritage/ethnic languages, Tamil and Telugu, from their parents and by attending Saturday schools. They needed the HL to communicate with their elders and to participate in, feel connected to, and maintain an attachment to the religious and cultural rituals of the East Indian community. Like many South African East Indians of their generation, they have a fair productive and receptive competence but limited literacy skills in their HL(s).

However, my brothers and I are part of a generation of ethno-cultural non-heritage-language-speaking community members. Our scant exposure to our HLs was limited to listening to familial stories, reciting prayers, singing temple songs, and watching subtitled movies. English was the primary language spoken in the home, at the school, and in our everyday interactions. Despite our low HL competence, we feel a strong sense of Indian-ness or cultural affinity. Maybe this is possible because we are brown, and we can easily communicate with other members of the South African East Indian community in English. However, among the members of the larger East Indian community, our limited ethno-linguistic knowledge was a marker that we were different, and at times this seemed to minimise our legitimate membership in the community. We were too westernised; therefore, how could we truly claim to be culturally or ethnically East Indian without having grown up in a traditional East Indian community and without knowing the language?

Language is the essential tie to who you are. The invisible yet defining link between language and identity is a marker of who is an outsider and who is an insider. However, I believe

that it is possible to be a member of an ethnic group without the ethno-cultural language. There are many people who look the part of their ethno-cultural community; they participate in its cultural activities and attend religious ceremonies, but their racialised identity is contradicted by their linguistic identity. This contradiction highlights the importance of the differentiation between audible and visible identity, *subject-as-heard* versus *subject-as-seen*, in shaping being and belonging (Crump, 2014; Sarkar et al., 2007).

I have spoken, informally, to many people of different ethno-cultural backgrounds who have had similar experiences to mine. They feel that they are adult misfits or imposters in their ethno-cultural community. They have varying degrees of ability in the language; consequently, they feel they cannot fully *be* or *become* the identity they want to embrace. However, if they desired to affirm their ethno-cultural identity by learning their HLs, what learning avenues would be at their disposal? The most obvious answer would be to seek language education in the ethno-cultural community. However, it is not uncommon for these communities to primarily offer language programs and resources that target child HLLs rather than adult HLLs (Duff, 2017). As a result, where can these adult learners go? Moreover, when the members of the same communities can easily communicate with each other in another language, such as English or French, why would we even want to or need to learn the HL? These questions are the foundation on which this study is built. This inquiry is motivated by the desire to listen to adult HLLs' experiences in navigating their way through a language learning space and through ethno-linguistic identity formation.

Overview of the Thesis

This dissertation is centred on the premise of *being able to reflect on one's heritage* without the HL in a Canadian context. The purpose of this dissertation is to convey the stories of

HLLs and their perspectives, reasons, and purposes for seeking out HLE. In the following chapters, I address a key point of inquiry in this study: how important is language to identity in language education? Conversely, how important is identity to language in language education? More specifically, I attempt to understand the perspectives of HLLs in a non-heritage language-learning environment. The aim is to draw attention to why heritage identity awareness and acknowledgement aid learners in the HL learning process.

In Chapter 2, I lay out the theoretical framework for this study by looking at the dialogic relationship between language and identity and what it means to have a multiple sense of self. I seek out understandings in the foundations of language socialisation ideologies. In Chapter 3, I reflect on the methodological framework needed to make a case for this inquiry. In Chapter 4, I present and discuss the data related to the link between identity affirmations and HL knowledge based on written language-autobiographical reflections. In Chapter 5, I present additional data from the participants' interviews and reflect on their perspectives about the link between identity and HL knowledge. From the picture that has emerged from the participants' responses, in Chapter 6, I present and discuss the implications of the inquiry. Chapter 7 closes the thesis with a discussion about the limitations of the study and suggestions for future direction. I also reflect on the impact of the results of this study for a greater understanding of the links between language and identity.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter Overview

In Chapter 2, I explore the link between language and identity. Specifically, I focus on perspectives and ideologies about HLs and heritage identity. I begin this chapter by briefly examining the wording that is used to describe language and ethno-linguistic identity. This provides me with an opportunity to then expand on the definition of HL that I originally presented in Chapter 1. I follow this definition with ideas and perspectives about HL socialisation and its potential impact on its speakers, the community at large, and on education and public policy. Understanding the ideologies of HL socialisation gives insight into how knowing a HL impacts identity claims. This background is the foundation for this study which garners ideas from socio-cultural perspectives of language learning within a post-structuralist framework. Finally, I examine what HLE looks like in Canada and its impact on Canada's growing minority community. By doing so, I aim to give some clarity to what it means to be called or to claim to be a HLL.

Language

"Language is more than words and sentences" (Norton, 2013, p. 53), grammatical rules and structure; it is a powerful emblem of social behaviour and activity (Bailey, 2007; Pennycook, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978). "Language is a central feature of human identity. When we hear someone speak, we immediately make guesses about their gender, educational level, age, profession, and place of origin. Beyond this individual matter, a language is a powerful symbol of national and ethnic identity" (Spolsky, 1999, p. 181). Within this understanding, language and identity tend to be viewed with a monolingual/monocultural perspective. This perspective also implies a singular identity and sense of belonging to a community. This supports normative

ideologies about languages where there is one linguistic structure or model to follow or speak. However, language should be understood beyond this monolithic notion (Otheguy et al., 2015; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015).

Language is not only a vehicle for communication where thoughts and opinions can be voiced, it is also a vehicle for "cultural values and meanings and therefore plays a key role in shaping the worldview of individuals and communities" (Guardado, 2018, p. 1). Thus, language is multi-dimensional in nature. It reflects diverse communicative competencies to embrace communicative diversity. Language studies and languaging "from bilingualism to multilingualism and (trans)languaging" (Kusters et al, 2017, p. 219), reflect diverse language repertoires that can be revitalised and strengthened. Language, as a communicative repertoire, "is the collection of the ways individuals use language and literacy and other means of communication … to function effectively in the multiple communities in which they participate" (Rymes, 2010, p. 528). This sense of linguistic diversity challenges standardised understandings of language knowledge and use, and as such language perspectives draws on ideologies around bilingualism, plurilingualism, translanguaging, and heteroglossia to name a few (Prasad, 2020). Therefore, a shift away from monolingual or monoglossic views of language use and competence (Conteh & Meier, 2014; May, 2013) leads to more flexible views where "individuals develop and use language(s) with varying degrees of proficiency across a variety of context according to needs and purpose" (Prasad, 2020, p. 902).

A language is not only linguistic structure, but also a meaning-making tool for communication (Rymes, 2010). As such, languages should be seen as dynamic and ever-changing "mobile resources" that are associated with flexible networks of language participants (Blommaert, 2010, p. 41). Moreover, the languages that comprise a person's linguistic repertoire

are categorised by when and/or how they were acquired or learned. Common categorisations for language are the following: L1, second language (hereafter, L2) or additional language. These categorisations assume a chronological or temporal order of acquisition. However, in these categorisations, languages may be further defined as being learned simultaneously or sequentially. Simultaneous bi/multilingualism means that two or more languages are learned or acquired at the same time. Sequential bi/multilingualism means that one or more additional languages are learned or acquired after the L1 has been acquired (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

Beyond the L1 and L2 distinction, a person's language can be further defined as their mother tongue, home language, or family language. Each of these terms have definitions that can overlap each other. A mother tongue, for example, has been defined as the language that is learned first or the language that is best known. A working definition of mother tongue, according to Statistics Canada (2022), is the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the person. This is different from a home language which is the language most often spoken in the home, which could also be the mother tongue. In addition, a mother tongue definition is synonymous with a native language definition. In its most literal sense, a native language is any language of a country that someone is native to. It is a language that is learned in childhood and is still spoken by the individual. It is also the language that speakers readily identify with and are identified by. Prototypical native speakers are expected to have native-like language skills and understandings, such as pronunciation, word knowledge, and grammatical structure use. The presence of such speakers indicates that the language has also not undergone attrition (Benmamoun et al., 2013). Regardless of the term used, a mother tongue is based on origin, internal identification, external identification, competences, and function (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 2023).

These working definitions for describing a language have been contested in research because much of a person's linguistic repertoire can be defined in terms of how the person is socialised into the language by their family, communities, schools, and peers. Consequently, much of the wording chosen to describe an individual language is "muddled and imprecise" (Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 274). For many people, their native language is their HL. However, for others, the HL might not be their native language. In fact, their HL might be a language they only know by name. Moreover, the term "second" as used in L2 research incorrectly implies that learners only know one other language when they may in fact be multilingual (Hall & Cook, 2012; Rampton, 1990). Thus, L2 could be a blanket term which applies to all other languages that are not the L1 or HL. Regardless of when or how it was acquired, language can provide a way to "index meanings and identities" (Canagarajah, 2019, p. 10). One such index can be seen in terms of ethno-linguistic identity.

Ethno-linguistic Identity

Ethno-linguistic identity is "the assumed and or attributed relationship between one's sense of self and a means of communication which might be known as a language" (Block, 2009, p. 40). Since the 1990s, there has been an ever-growing body of research on a sense of *language identity*. In these studies, this link between identity and language and the impact of this link have been examined in terms of learner profiles, pedagogical implications and policy development, HLE (Cummins, 2014a; Lee, 2002; Park & Sarkar, 2007; Potowski, 2004; Valdés, 2001), and in socio-cultural perspectives in language ideologies and learning (Block, 2009; Canagarajah, 2004; Cho et al., 1997; Kubota & Lin, 2009; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2010; Menard-Warwick, 2005).

However, ethno-linguistic ideologies have centred on monolithic understandings about language. In other words, there is a proliferation of a one-to-one association between language

and identity. Since I began this study, growing authorship on the link between language and identity has reflected that there are important nuances to understanding the language-identity link, as well as a new focus on multi-dimensional and multi-layered ideologies about linguistic competence and on identity being and becoming (Alim et al., 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2020; Guardado, 2020; Norton & Pavlenko, 2019). Specifically, investigations focusing on the link between language and identity have delved into an examination of race and ethnicity. Race is not understood in terms of supposed biological-scientific fact; race is, rather, a social and cultural construct. In addition, ethnicity, which is usually equated with race, is typically understood to be a one-to-one association with a culture. Often, ethnicity is believed to be centred on a sense of being that is static and homogeneous. In other words, an individual gains a singular affinity and sense of belonging to an ethnic community (Harris & Rampton, 2003). However, this would ignore the multiple sense of selves that a multilingual repertoire affords to individuals.

Therefore, in the present study, language is viewed as a multilingual communicative repertoire, and ethnicity is a flexible construct that "individuals and groups use in negotiations of social boundaries" (Harris & Rampton, 2003, p. 5) in which they can associate or dissociate with other people, communities, or spaces. This entails giving language learners and users opportunities for their cultural and linguistic repertoires to be seen as resources for learning and identity building (Cummins & Early, 2011). However, in order to better understand the multiplicity of linguistic repertoires, an understanding of the authorship that challenges static and monoglossic perspectives of language education and of the link between language and identity is needed. Therefore, I briefly turn to authorship on critical applied linguistics (hereafter CAL), LangCrit, raciolinguistics, and critical language awareness (hereafter CLA) to anchor my

understanding about language and identity in language education before moving on to defining HL.

Critical Perspectives in Language Education. As previously stated, ethno-linguistic identity focuses on the link between language and identity. The relationship between language and identity should be viewed as being multi-dimensional. Accepting this multi-dimensional perspective means accepting perspectives beyond a standardised impression of language and identity. A standardised impression of identity and language would reinforce the ideology that a singular language reflects a singular identity, for example that "Japanese people speak Japanese." Drawing on post-structuralist and socio-cultural theories, I position myself to view language as a construct with no static or fixed dimensions. In other words, defining languages and language use would reflect that people's diverse identities, and the boundaries and hierarchies created for these definitions, are flexible (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007).

With this understanding, I turn to perspectives in CAL about language education and use. CAL makes it possible to investigate diverse and evolving ideologies on language education, teaching, and identity and how these perspectives are related to broader socio-cultural and political relations (Pennycook, 2004, 2021). CAL is more than critiquing normative stances and positions about language education, teaching, and identity relationships. It sets a stage for inquiry to examine inequitable beliefs and stances that are pervasive in language education. Crump (2014) offered to the field of applied linguistics LangCrit, a critical lens to examine race and identity in English language education and beyond. More specifically, this lens opened a door to examining how language use and L2 education ideologies intersect with race, and how this impacts different understandings of identity and belonging that are linked to languaging. LangCrit has made it possible to accept the multiplicity and hybridity of identities. Moreover, it

is a construct that shows how multiple identities can be accepted, negotiated, and/or challenged through the structure of language education and/or language speakers. Under the umbrella of CAL, LangCrit offers possibilities to examine identity, belonging, and languaging on a continuum from fixed to fluid perspectives. Accepting a fluidity in identity, belonging, and languaging means that essentialised notions of what it means to be a legitimate speaker of a language and which language registers should be considered a standard or normative are challenged. Thus, through LangCrit, Crump has proposed a "framework for language studies that recognise intersections between audible and visible identity in shaping possibilities for being and becoming" (Crump, 2014, p. 219).

In line with LangCrit, authorship on raciolinguistics speaks to the central role that language plays in shaping ideas and perspectives about race and community and vice versa (Alim et al. 2016). In order to speak to the changing and ever-evolving linguistic landscape that is defining Canada and its diverse people, it is important to examine how language influences understandings of belonging and ethnicity. Raciolinguistics takes perspectives about the one-to-one stance of ethno-linguistic identity to a space that embraces and speaks to a multiplicity of identities and to the plurilingual nature of language knowledge and use (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Investigating language education through this lens makes it possible to examine language studies outside of hegemonic standardised notions of language education which tend to support and reinforce strict or defined characterisations of language knowledge, education, performance, and community acceptance, and positionings where linguistically minoritised groups continue to be marginalised (Flores, 2016).

Language has played an integral role in promoting a standardised and normative view of what a language should sound like and what speakers of a language should look like. As stated

earlier, these perspectives assert that there is a specific way to sound and look Canadian, and by extension, minoritised individuals would then "fit" a perceived idea of what language they should speak, how they should look as a speaker of the language, and more importantly, how they should sound as a speaker of the language. All these layers of conditions have a direct impact on how someone perceives their heritage or ethnic identity and how the same individual's identities are accepted by others who are deemed to be legitimate speakers and users of the language (Costa, 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Motha, 2014). One purpose of the present study is to challenge fixed ideologies of HL knowledge and identity. In my opening chapter I mentioned that *talk about identity is everywhere. It matters what identities you claim, what you say about identity, and how you convey it to others.* Thus, it is crucial to examine how multiple identities evolve through language and in language education. Raciolinguistic perspectives and critical language inquiry make it possible to examine fixed and idealistic perspectives that are present in HL ideologies.

The theoretical lens of LangCrit and the study of raciolinguistics set the stage for reflecting on CLA, an aspect of CAL which examines power relations associated with "languages, and language use along with arbitrary hierarchies that serve those in power" (Beaudrie, 2023, p. 1). In language education, static understandings about how to teach languages still prevail. These understandings result in standard methodologies that at times over-generalise who language learners are, and how they intend to use the languages they learn. For example, language learners are typically thought of as having limited cultural understandings of the language. They are assumed to have limited exposure to the language. In other words, they are "sociolinguistically dexterous … [but] linguistically inferior and in need of remediation" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 161). Consequently, they are often relegated to always being foreign to

the target language, rather than developing a sense of agency in the linguistic community. This sense of "otherness" in the classroom can also potentially set up a sense of "otherness" in the community. In other words, when the HL learned in the classroom does not match the HL that is spoken in the home or community, HLLs might be identified as being different from the familial or community norm. They are users of the language but not always members of the language community.

In this learning context, non-standard ways of speaking or teaching are seen as short-lived fads, and traditional standard monolingual ideologies are still pervasive in language practice and educational settings (Beaudrie, 2023; Beaudrie et al., 2021; Taylor & Cutler, 2016). Consequently, any alternative to the standard linguistic variety is glossed over. Heritage and dialectal varieties are discussed as a mere aside to the standard version of the language. In other words, they are talked about, for example an instructor mentioning that Swabian is a local dialect of German speakers who live by the Swabian Alb. The community is mentioned, but the nuances or dialectal vocabulary, such as saying "a muggassegele" (Swabian) instead of "ein bisschen" (High German) meaning "a little bit", are rarely integrated into a class lesson. As a result, the identity of the language learner is undermined, and multilingual practices that are espoused by plurilingual scholars (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Milroy, 2001; Rosa & Flores, 2017), and that challenge normative monolingual practices in language education, are devalued. Thus, language education and some educators are still acquiescing to a "standard." Raciolinguistic perspectives and CLA make it possible to examine fixed and idealistic perspectives that impact understandings about language variations that are present in HL ideologies. This examination begins with exploring HLs in more detail.

What is a HL? A HL is assumed to highlight the following language–place relationship: one language, one community, and one place (Baumann & Briggs, 2000; Blommaert, 2010). HLs are broadly categorised as minority languages or languages other than the dominant language(s) in a given social context (Kelleher, 2010). However, it is important to note that each context is unique in its own right in terms of its ethno-community demographics and official language status. Consequently, there are multiple definitions of HL, and there is "a formidable list of terms often positioned as synonymous with heritage: aboriginal, ancestral, autochthonous, (ex-)colonial, community, critical, diasporic, endoglossic, ethnic, foreign, geopolitical, home, immigrant, indigenous, language other than English, local, migrant, minority, mother tongue, refugee, regional, and strategic language" (Bale, 2010, p. 43) extant in the literature. This collection of terms exemplifies that a working definition for HL is not fixed or straightforward; it is ever-changing, and it varies according to country and context (Bale, 2010; Cummins, 2014a).

In the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, a HL is commonly referred to as a *community language*, the language used by minority groups or communities (Anderson, J., 2008; Bale, 2010). In the United States, a HL is any language spoken by an immigrant coming to the U.S. (Valdés, 2001, 2005). There, HLs tend to be defined further by additional terms, such as *immigrant HLs, indigenous HLs,* and *colonial HLs,* in order to reflect the different historical and social conditions for those communities (Fishman, 2001; Kelleher, 2010). In Canada, a HL, *langue d'origine* in French*,* refers to a language other than the two official languages of Canada (English and French), First Nations and Inuit languages, and sign language (Cummins, 1991, 1992, 2005, 2014a; Danesi et al, 1993; Duff, 2008a; Harrison, 2000). The Canadian Heritage Language Act of 1991, repealed by the Conservative government in 2008 (Locher-Lo, 2019), acknowledged a HL as an ethnic, cultural, or ancestral language of a minority language

community (Abdi, 2011; Kondo-Brown, 2001), and it is often a "less commonly taught" language, for example Tamil or Gaelic in Canada (Kondo-Brown, 2010). At times, Aboriginal languages have been lumped into the HL category; however, Indigenous communities have voiced their concern with this categorisation on the grounds that First Nations/Aboriginal language status is different from that of "immigrant languages" (Cummins, 2014b; Norris, 2007). Regardless of the nuances attached to the term, a common characteristic of a HL is that it is typically learned in the home or in the ethno-linguistic community, and during childhood (Cummins, 2014c; Montrul, 2008). Moreover, HL ideology implies that communities are bound together by a language that encompasses or showcases their identity, ethnicity, and heritage (Canagarajah, 2019). More current HL ideologies convey a more dynamic fluidity about what HL means. A HL has a status as a marker of a community that indexes heritage and identity (Canagarajah, 2019). When a person knows their HL, they have the ability to establish in-group relationships, family bonds, and community solidarity (Canagarajah, 2012; Guardado, 2018). Thus, it is important to see how HLs aid in building a sense of community and identity. This entails examining how heritage speakers (hereafter, HS) are socialised into their HL and community.

Language Socialisation

Before unpacking the ideologies behind HL socialisation, I want to review a broader perspective of language socialisation. Language socialisation is the foundation for L2 socialisation perspectives, which serve as a basis of understanding for HL socialisation. Language socialisation is based on two intentions: socialisation to use language, and socialisation through the use of language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). The first intention, socialisation to use language, focuses on the process people use to acquire and communicate in a

language. Conversely, the second intention, socialisation through the use of language, focuses on the practices that enable people to participate in communities. For the purposes of this study, language socialisation is an important theoretical lens that facilitates greater understandings about the flexibility of the relationship between language and identity (Guardado, 2018). It highlights the claim that language and cultural meaning are acquired in social interaction which is compatible with Bourdieu's notion of habitus, "a set of dispositions acquired through (formative) early experiences, which incline individual actors to behave in certain ways" (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 12–13). In terms of language, it acts as a means to convey ideas that then become stereotypical characterisations of the language.

Therefore, language socialisation is a process by which individuals not only internalise a particular body of knowledge but also become culturally competent members of a particular community (Bremer et al., 1996). A culturally competent member of a particular community is someone who knows the nuances of the socio-cultural customs and languaging of the ethno-linguistic community. Becoming a member of a community is dependent upon the types of interactions people have with members of the community, as all interactions are potential sites for socialisation for all parties involved. Two potential sites explored in this study are family and school.

Family. The family is a primary site for language socialisation. In the embrace of this community, people grow accustomed to the habits and traditions of their family and culture. Becoming naturally accustomed to one's culture is partially achieved by knowing and using a common language. In the home, most people are socialised into their parents' language(s) and ways of speaking. When the family language is a minority language that is different from the dominant language of society, the maintenance of this language takes on a symbolic meaning or

purposeful role of maintaining a family's history, beliefs, and practices (Dagenais & Berron, 2001). On the other hand, when the family uses the dominant language in domains such as school and work, the use of this language takes on a capital that leads to advancement in education and employment. However, through sufficient exposure to the family language, a younger generation can help maintain the L1. This maintenance could be linked to a family language policy (Tsushima & Guardado, 2019).

A family language policy is the "explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within the home among family members" (King et al., 2008, p. 907). When such a policy is created and employed, families are making a conscious effort to engage with their children in a language or languages that foster a familial and ethno-cultural identity, for example the HL, or facilitate greater integration in a host community, for example the dominant language of the community (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2001; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Schwartz, 2010; Shohamy, 2006). In other words, a family language policy is focused on explicit and implicit language planning by family members in terms of language use and literacies in the home and with other family members (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). This includes "enrolment in bilingual kindergarten, negotiation of language use and roles in the home, collaboration among parents, children and teachers on language teaching and learning, as well as faith-related literacy activities and home language learning" (Aravossitas et al., 2020, p. 731). For example, a family might choose English to be the collective language of communication for all members of the family but also agree that German will be the second L1 spoken in the home with specific family members. To give a sense of stability to this policy in practice, families with more than one familial language devise a one-to-one strategy. This is when each language is spoken by a specific parent in an attempt at raising simultaneous bilingual children. Consequently, speakers are socialised to speak

a specific language with each parent and/or a common language with both parents (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; King et al., 2008; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004).

Furthermore, a family language policy should be seen as both "visible" and "invisible" language planning (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Visible language planning is based on language ideologies that are purported by an official body, such as a political body or organisation. Invisible language planning is a language that has been declared necessary to learn by the family for social and affective factors. In other words, language planning decisions will be based on "what will strengthen their families' social standing and best serve the family members' goal in life" (p. 326). In her 2009 paper on Chinese immigrant families in Québec, Curdt-Christiansen found that families were negotiating the learning and use of English, French, and Chinese in Québec. These families faced the recurring dilemma among immigrant families of either raising their children bi/multilingual or solely in the societal language. However, their decisions were based on their past educational experiences and on their beliefs about the economic value of knowing different languages in Canada. In other words, the greater the socio-political linguistic capital, the greater the chances that multilingualism was seen to be an asset to work towards.

Smith-Christmas' (2014) study on family language policy language socialisation noted that family language planning is far from a straightforward process. In her study, children were socialised into using their family language, Scottish Gaelic, through family members. However, the intention of language maintenance among family members became a source of a language shift because the children were socialised to also speak the language of the majority, in this case English. Smith-Christmas found that when a family made a conscious decision to be "pro-minority language" in the home, there were great successes in getting the children to use the

language. However, if equal effort was given to English, the children gravitated to that dominant language more because it was the language that could be used in and outside of the home.

School. Another common site of language socialisation is school. Research on L1 and L2 and multilingual socialisation in formal and non-formal educational contexts is growing (Duff et al., 2019; Duff & May, 2017; Early et al., 2005). Specifically, there has been an abundance of research examining academic discourse socialisation, especially with L2 students (Duff & Anderson, T., 2015; Leki, 2007). In this site for languaging, a student is often thought to be the only participant socialised by the verbalisation and actions of their teacher. Moreover, language competence is usually seen as having a one-to-one "correspondence between language and identity" (Figueroa & Baquedano-López, 2017, p. 5). However, there are two socialising agents in this site: the teacher and the student (Duff, 2011). As such, both the student and the teacher should also be seen as active recipients of socialisation in this relationship (Ochs, 1988; Schieffelin, 1990). In addition, the interplay between language and identity in the classroom should be seen as a multilingual performance that goes beyond a monolingual ideology (Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2020).

According to Hyland (2009), discourse (see glossary, p. xx) plays a central role in academia as "it is the way that individuals collaborate and compete with others, to create knowledge, to educate neophytes, to reveal learning and define academic allegiances" (p. 2). In one study, Waterstone (2008) presented a case study about an international undergraduate student at a Canadian university. The student was enrolled in an English as a Second Language class, and she accepted or rejected certain feedback provided by a writing consultant depending on how well she understood the consultant's suggested edits. The negotiation for accepting or rejecting the feedback created a challenging learning dynamic for the consultant because the

student chose to exercise her own sense of agency. In another study, Kim and Duff (2012), similarly, found that two Canadian-Korean university students experienced conflicts and contradictions associated with the beliefs and ideologies about language learning and use into which they were socialised. In one situation, the participant noted she was criticised for lacking Korean-ness because she spoke English. Another point of conflict for the learners was trying to figure out a sense of "being" in competing social spaces, Korean and English, and still succeed in an English academic environment. In both situations, the learners needed to evaluate their investment in their different identities, and how these ethno-linguistic identities were fostered through language programs.

Second Language Socialisation

Research on L2 socialisation is fairly recent and continuously growing with interest in bilingual and multilingual language education and opportunities (Duff, 2011). L2 socialisation focuses on the language acquisition and process by which novices or newcomers in a community or culture gain communicative competence, membership, and legitimacy in the group (Duff, 2007, 2011). It also focuses on the language acquisition and process of "people returning to the language they may have once understood or spoken, but have since lost proficiency in" (Duff, 2011, p. 566). Regardless of the learner's status, as a newcomer or a returning learner, the primary goal in L2 acquisition is mastery of linguistic conventions and pragmatics. However, a secondary goal of L2 acquisition is the adoption of appropriate identities, stances or ideologies, and other behaviours associated with the target group and its ethno-cultural practices (Duff & Hornberger, 2008; Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017; Schecter & Bayley, 1997). Moreover, L2 socialisation looks at the "complexities of children or adults with already developed repertoires of linguistic, discursive, and cultural practices as they encounter

new ones" (Duff & Talmy, 2011, p. 97). Thus, examining L2 socialisation provides "a means of foregrounding social, cultural, and linguistic knowledge, and how it is gained across a variety of language learning situations at various ages and stages of life" (Duff, 2007, p. 310).

Similar to L1 socialisation, L2 socialisation can occur at home, at school, with peers, and in workplace contexts. The results of the L2 socialisation can show that novice language learners might not experience the same level or degree of access, acceptance, or accommodation in other communities as easily as fluent speakers or L1 speakers. Therefore, different sites of language learning should be seen as providing different opportunities for social practice where learners are socialised into an identity that is linked to the L2 (Duff, 2019). For example, a closer look at L2 academic discourse socialisation will reveal that students not only attempt to acquire the specialised ways of knowing and communicating in a given field about concepts or context, but they also negotiate their multiple identities, access to and membership within their new academic communities, and social relations of power (Duff, 2003; Leki, 2001; Morita, 2000, 2004). This process is complex and dynamic. A primary purpose of this study is to gain insights into language socialisation in post-secondary language classes. Therefore, it is important to examine second language socialisation in an academic context to see how this space can inform greater understandings of HL socialisation in an academic context.

T. Anderson (2021) explored academic identity formation for L2 learners in an academic writing class at a Canadian university. He found that the type of feedback and manner in which it was delivered to the students had a formative role on how the learners saw themselves in academic contexts. In her 2007 study, Zappa-Hollman used a case study protocol to investigate discourse socialisation of six non-native English students in a Canadian university. Specifically, Zappa-Hollman's qualitative study found that L2 learners negotiate the clash of an emerging

Western academic identity with a home academic identity that has been fostered over many years. The discourse analysis showed that academic values contrast in such a significant way that even advanced language learners/speakers had difficulty with finding their footing in the academy. Her study highlighted that for some learners, language proficiency was no match for the context in which the language was being used. Morita (2009) highlighted the L2 socialisation in an academic mainstream content area for a doctoral student at a Canadian university. Utilising interviews and classroom observation, Morita found that discourses in this micro situation impacted the student's participation and sense of identity in the target language. Specifically, the student commented that his positioning in the class structure and the agency prescribed to him by others as being an international student or less-competent member of the class contributed to limited participation in the class community. Thus, the sense of identity that a learner would imagine achieving in the target language was potentially contested by the reality of the learning context. In a more recent study on French L2 learners in a primary school in Montréal, Ahooja and Ballinger (2022) found that the class environment and interactions with the teacher and peers in the classroom played a significant role in French learners' socialisation in the language. However, rather than being seen as new speakers or emergent speakers of the language, the learners were seen primarily as non-native speakers. Therefore, the classroom environment reinforced a feeling of being a different member of the language community. In this case, Ahooja and Ballinger found that language learners of migrant backgrounds were made to feel like illegitimate and deficient speakers of the language.

Collectively, these studies and other language socialisation studies conducted at various levels of schooling (Atkinson, 2003; Duff, 2003; Harklau, 2000; Pon et al., 2003; Toohey, 2000) indicated that language socialisation in multilingual/cultural educational settings offer up

numerous outcomes. This variability with language-socialised identities challenged traditional models of language socialisation which focused on monolingual populations. In these spaces, newcomers' linguistic and cultural appropriation were treated as predictable, linear, and inevitable (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004). In other words, newcomers were socialised into the language of the majority.

However, a factor that is not considered here is the critical role played by learners' agency in shaping their socialisation (Bayley & Schecter, 2003; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). Experts or more proficient members of a group play an important role in socialising novices and implicitly or explicitly teaching them to think, feel, and act in accordance with the values, ideologies, and traditions of the group. However, novices also 'teach' or convey to their more proficient interlocutors what their communicative needs are. Thus, the process of socialisation is bidirectional or multidirectional if multiple models of expertise co-exist. This can be seen in generational HL studies which highlight the demands for ethno-cultural maintenance of younger generations by their elders (Canagarajah, 2012; Park, 2013; Park & Sarkar, 2007).

This was also seen in studies of minority language learners who were trying to learn the language of the majority in public schools (Cummins, 2000, 2001, 2005). In addition, it was seen in studies where HLLs were searching for acceptance by their heritage communities (Cummins, 2001; Li, 1999). In both cases, some learners and/or speakers might have been warmly embraced and supported by their communities. Others might have been highly motivated to become socialised into the norms and practices of the communities but potentially faced resistance or opposition from those expected to nurture them. Moreover, regardless of the target community's attitudes toward them, they might not have been fully invested in becoming socialised into the ways of this group because their future goals might not have required it. This might have been

because they remained actively involved in and committed to their primary communities, or because they could not straddle both simultaneously, for practical, logistical, or ideological reasons. Han (2012) highlighted this sense of disempowerment when she followed the trajectory of one Chinese immigrant's sense of belonging to Canada over a 4-year period. In her ethnographic review of this individual's experience of negotiating his position in the minority Chinese community as well as in the Toronto host community, she concluded that the learner was able to make strides in his diasporic Chinese community because he lived a life through Chinese without having to speak English. However, when the speaker tried to converse in English, his weaknesses in the language overshadowed his attempts to seek legitimacy as a member of the community. He was no longer able to function with confidence and was simply identified as an "other."

Because this doctoral study focuses on investigating how adult HLLs could potentially be socialised in a learning context that was not intended for them, the research reviewed above offers important insights into how learners can be positioned in academic contexts when they are seeking to gain a sense of legitimacy for their language use. L2 socialisation in educational contexts is oriented toward a community of practice, the social situations into which learners are being socialised (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) tend to focus on the following factors: newcomers' participation in educational venues; the effect of being socialised into local practices on their emerging identities; the interaction with others in the community; how this impacts their expertise and membership into a community; and how practices and norms evolve over time (Morita, 2004; Norton, 2000). Norton's ethnographic study of five immigrant women in Canada who were negotiating their identities as L2 learners highlighted these factors (2000). Norton found that a learner's high levels of motivation did not necessarily result in 'good' language

learning. Moreover, unequal relations of power between language learners and target language speakers were often salient in her learners' reflections. Morita (2004) explored the academic socialisation of L2 learners in a Canadian university and found that students faced major challenges in negotiating competencies, identities, and power relations in their classes. In order to overcome these challenges, many students attempted to carve out their own agency and position in the community of practice in order to be recognised as participants and legitimate members of their classroom communities. Both studies highlighted that operationalising language socialisation is not a straightforward process. It varies across contexts and interactions. Thus, its dynamic nature makes it possible for varying degrees and kinds of socialisation which can have implications on how identity is fashioned.

Heritage Language Socialisation

I now turn my attention to HL socialisation, which falls under the umbrella of L2 socialisation. *HL socialisation* refers to how speakers' identities are realised through the HL they use, and how and with whom they use their HL. When speakers make the choice to use one language over another based on their affiliation with a specific group, they engage in identity construction. It is easy to see why HL socialisation falls under L2 socialisation because it focuses on bilingual and/or multilingual communities. However, a key difference between L2 learners and HLLs is their relationship to the language. HLLs have an ancestral link to the language and community. Thus, HSs use a HL to identify with the heritage community to which they already belong or imagine they belong (Oriyama, 2010). Like L2 socialisation, HL socialisation can be investigated at both micro, such as family and school (Park, 2006, 2008, 2013; Song, 2009) and macro, such as policy, sites of socialisation that are relevant to HLE and opportunities for learning.

Language socialisation research, and by extension HL socialisation research, also specifies that speech communities, groups of people who share a set of norms and expectations regarding the use of language, need to be evaluated on their own merit (Gumperz, 2009). Each speech community is different and has its own variable communicative repertoires and its own way of language socialisation in the community (Nicholas & Starks, 2014). Sarkar and Metallic (2009) found that Mi'gmaq speakers in the Listuguj community preferred to use culturally specific ways to encourage language revitalisation. The community wanted to develop a language teaching approach that was rooted within the Indigenous community and way of learning (Sarkar & Metallic, 2009) by using culturally relevant methods for language learning rather than borrowing methods from L2 and FL studies. For example, Metallic and her colleagues developed a structural syllabus in which Mi'gmaq vocabulary and grammar were taught gradually to learners using photographs and other images taken from community life so that the teaching was true to the structure of the language, but also relevant to the cultural nuances of the language and the community. When cultural nuances were woven into language education, the language- and identity-specific subjectivities of culturally diverse groups became more salient (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004). However, many ethnographic studies and fieldwork are commonly conducted from an outsider perspective rather than from an insider perspective. It is not unusual to come across language studies about aboriginal communities where aboriginal languages are talked about by non-aboriginal people rather than reflected on from within the community (Geertz, 1983).

Looking at HL socialisation from the point of view of HLLs' realities and cultural nuances allows for greater understanding of individual cultural identity formation. Focusing on how HLLs engage in their learning experiences and opportunities allows for an examination of

the dialectical relationship between identity and HL development (Guardado, 2018). In Kheirkhah and Cekaite's (2018) study, they found that siblings, who promoted the use of the language of the majority in the home, were a key contributing factor to HL loss. This resulted in a great language shift away from the HL and towards the language of the majority. Guardado's (2020) chapter on HL socialisation and language ideologies of a Mexican-Canadian family highlighted that naturalistic linguistic interactions in a family can foster a strong sense of ethno-linguistic identity. In addition, Guardado's findings (2009) from his research into the language socialisation practices of Hispanic families in Vancouver were similar. The main goal of the Hispanic families in these studies was language and culture maintenance. He found that certain familial values and perspectives about language and its use impacted the overall maintenance of the HL. Thus, there are complexities in L1 and L2 socialisation that may complicate the cultural intricacies present in HL socialisation, which in turn makes it difficult to talk about a single approach in HL socialisation (Guardado, 2020; Guardado & Becker, 2014). Therefore, understanding HL socialisation involves having a better understanding of the people who learn and/or speak the language.

However, HL socialisation also takes place in the classroom, and this site for HL socialisation is impacted not only by other speakers/learners of the language but also by ideologies on how best to use languages in a learning context. He (2003) determined that the socialisations of learners in their HL communities tend to be different from socialisations in a mainstream class context. From her work, He (2003, 2015) asked that language socialisations in school be seen as communicative resources across multiple languages with multiple players. This required educators to look beyond static and commonplace ways of thought in terms of the relationship between language and identity. He noted that educators needed to look at the link as

a dialogical relationship where the multilingual context of the classroom influences the receptive and productive uses of the language. Abdi's study on Latino HLLs in a Vancouver school highlighted that educators were short-changing HLLs with the pervasive assumption that there is a one-to-one relationship between language and identity. She advocated that educators work beyond this ideology and acknowledge that HLLs demonstrate a communicative competence that is multi-dimensional (Abdi, 2011). Therefore, these studies implied that language socialisation ideologies need to move past the notion of expected or predicted outcomes. Based on their educator's engagement or disengagement in the course content and in the learners' language histories, learners could be engaged in the learning process but disengaged from the learning of the language (Talmy, 2008). In other words, learners are active participants in the class activities and community. However, there are times when they are passively invested in learning the language because the learning context does not meet their imagined language learning outcomes. These studies and others therefore highlighted that unpredictable linguistic outcomes are possible in a language classroom.

Profiles of HLLs. According to Wiley (2001) "the labels and definitions that we apply to HLLs are important, because they help to shape the status of the learners and the languages they are learning" (cited in Carreira, 2004, p. 2). Defining a heritage learner is just as difficult as defining a HL, for there is not a singular definition to encompass all individuals who can claim to be HLLs. One broad approach to defining a HLL is in terms of a learner's membership to a specific ethno-cultural community; the links between their cultural and linguistic heritage (Fishman, 2001; McCarthy, 2008). In this sense, HL acquisition, or mother tongue language acquisition, is symbolic, as it can offer a sense of kinship (Fishman, 1996). Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) added to this broad definition by stating that those who "have been raised with a strong

cultural connection to a particular language through family interaction" are language learners "with a heritage motivation" (p. 222). Moreover, there are three essential criteria for a person to identify as being a HLL: the learner's place in the HL community, their personal connection to the HL, and their connection to the heritage culture through their family background (Carreira, 2004). Furthermore, their knowledge of the HL can vary depending on the strength and degree of their involvement in their heritage community (Cho, 2000; Cho et al., 1997; McCarty et al., 1997; Norton, 2000; Yamauchi et al., 2000). Thus, HLLs are categorised by the strength of their heritage-ness or depth of their links to their ethno-cultural community.

Conversely, Valdés (2001) provided a narrower profile of HLLs by focusing on the trajectory of their linguistic development rather than ethno-cultural connections. HLLs who first learned their HL and then learned another dominant language are "individuals who have been exposed to a particular language in childhood but did not subsequently acquire it fully because another language usurped the original language" (Kagan, 2012, p. 72). As a result, HLLs are heterogeneous in nature with varying characteristics of identity and linguistic needs, and different historical, social, and demographic realities (Fishman, 2001; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Moreover, HLLs have varying heritage linguistic skills and can range from a true beginner or non-native speaker to a fluent native speaker (Abdi, 2009; Valdés, 2001; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). Some scholars have even gone so far as to theorise that true beginner HLLs are in fact "new speakers" to the language and have a sense of "new speakerness" (Jaffe, 2015; O'Rourke et al., 2015).

New Speakerness. Dorian's 1977 work with East Sunderland Gaelic speakers introduced the term "semi-speaker" to characterise a downward language shift that depicted a speech community's linguistic decline, attrition, or hybridisation of a minority language. While this term

spoke to a reality of speaker knowledge, it reflected on language shift from a negative perspective (Jaffe, 2015). However, the term new speaker "is an inherently more hopeful reading" (Jaffe, 2015, p. 23) because it is used to conceptualise a movement away from a downward language shift or loss and towards ideologies of language revitalisation with new minority-language speaking opportunities. In addition, the new speaker concept explicitly stresses a move away from the native/non-native speaker dichotomy on linguistic proficiency and fluency scales. Furthermore, O'Rourke et al.'s (2015) conceptualisation of the new speaker phenomenon "contradicts the ways in which both majorities and minorities have historically used language to legitimise claims to nationhood and cultural authenticity" (p. 2). It challenges the abstract and restrictive notions of nativeness that have been prevalent in linguistic theories and in the discourse about HLs in language revitalisation studies. Parallels have been drawn between new speakers and HSs "who have a long trajectory in minority language contexts where English is hegemonic" (O'Rourke et al., 2015, p. 2). Jaffe's 2015 paper examined theoretical perspectives and learning trajectories related to the new speaker concept. In her study on Corsican language learners, Jaffe noted that HLLs who did not actively use the language may "have a wide variety of levels and types of active and passive linguistic competence but few ready opportunities to use or improve their skills" (p. 24).

The definition of new speakerness is exemplified in O'Rourke and Walsh's 2015 study on new speakers of Gaeltacht Irish. O'Rourke and Walsh found that some speakers who claimed a heritage link to Irish could not position themselves as a native speaker because they were not born in Ireland. In other words, new speakers are beginner level HL speakers and are separate from the native/non-native speaker dichotomy because they have no practical ties to the heritage country by birth. New speakers of a HL are also learners "with little or no home or community

exposure to minority language but who instead acquired it through immersion or bilingual education, revitalisation projects or adult language learners" (O'Rourke et al., 2015, p. 1). This does not mean that they do not have ethnic roots in a cultural community or that they lack an ethnic connection. On the contrary, they are speakers with distant generational roots who might have "renewed their interest in the ancestral language and culture for ethnic and religious reasons" (Gambhir, 2001, p. 214). This may occur even without the direct influence of family connections to target language and culture.

HL Learner Proficiency. Even with the notion of new speakerness, HLLs have varying levels of language proficiency in the HL, which is similar to the native/non-native speaker continuum used to distinguish linguistic competence among L2 and FL learners. However, their motivation to learn the language is different from that of L2 and FL learners. HLLs are motivated and engaged in HLE because of their need for ethnic affiliation and in-group development (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007). For these learners, linguistic proficiency tends to be the determining factor for defining heritage membership. A person with a low language proficiency level could claim a high degree of heritage-ness with his or her heritage culture. Therefore, language proficiency would not prove to be a marker of heritage-ness. However, acceptance into a community based on language proficiency would have a high value from the perspective of the community. The community members could determine, accept, or confront the heritage-ness of an individual based solely on HL proficiency. In other words, some HLLs/speakers might be fully accepted while others might be perceived as not being good enough (Carreira, 2004; Dressler, 2010; He, 2008a; Valdés, 2005). Thus, it is important to look at the HLLs who potentially challenge the HL proficiency marker as the primary indicator of heritage identity.

Mixed Heritage Learners. Mixed heritage learners challenge the typical definition of heritage learners. These HLLs are discussed in passing in the literature and are lumped into a larger and supposedly homogeneous heritage community with other HLLs. However, mixed heritage learners, for example an Indo-Chinese Canadian, are different because they are at the crossroads of two or more heritage cultures. They are speakers/learners who negotiate the boundaries between their dual or multiple ancestries and heritage communities (Wallace, 2001, 2004). The ebbs and flows in identity formation result from fluctuations in their acceptance or rejection by the cultural community(s) and the host community (Shin, 2010). When their membership or acceptance into a community is challenged, it could be due to uncertain feelings about what being mixed means. "Being mixed means they face suspicion, hostility, and other marginalizing reactions within the community as their legitimacy and loyalty are tested across new contexts" (Wallace, 2001, p. 120).

There are relatively few studies that have examined HL learning by mixed HLLs; however, interest in mixed heritage HLLs is evident. As Shin pointed out in her 2010 exploratory study of traditional and standard profiles of HLLs, mixed heritage learners are left out of the conversation. Moreover, most of the time HL learning is spoken about from the perspective of a non-mixed homogeneous group of HLLs. In her own examination of mixed heritage learners, Shin focused on dual-ancestry learners, those whose linguistic heritage backgrounds were comprised of English and another language. Harris and Lee's (2021) study examined the language learning and use experiences of mixed-race Korean-Americans. They found that the non-formal language sites, such as a Korean grocery store, and formal language learning sites, such as a language class, presented various challenges to language use opportunities. In the non-formal language learning environment, the participants were racialised. In the formal learning

environment, they were positioned as the "other." Ultimately, their HL socialisation took place in social media spaces. These online spaces allowed for a greater acceptance of other mixed race Korean Americans. As a result, the spaces provided a comfortable and welcoming community that provided opportunities for using their HL with other members who share similar experiences. However, the concept of mixed heritage learners, and, for that matter, identity, gets confounded when the heritage make-up of the learner is made up of more than one ethnic background, for example an Arabic-Italian Canadian.

HLLs Inside the HL Community. The degree of a heritage learner's acceptance and membership in the heritage community is determined by the strength of their links to their family background and their levels of linguistic proficiency (Valdés, 2005). When HLLs are considered different from the norm of the minority ethno-cultural community and of the host community, they can have a sense of disempowerment in their identity formation and affiliation (Han, 2012; Shin, 2010). Not all HLLs feel this sense of disempowerment. While learning an HL may provide some learners an opportunity for greater "access and legitimacy within the ethnic group" (Shin, 2010, p. 207), others are constantly challenged because they do not fit the image of a community member. When heritage learners experience a sense of illegitimacy and lack of acceptance in the heritage community, they develop more negative self-concepts and a weakened desire to belong to the heritage culture(s) (Pao et al., 1997). Regardless of the situation, many HLLs seek out HLE in their HL community itself. They imagine that there would be no better place to learn the HL than in the heritage/cultural community where they would have greater social recognition (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Lee, 2002).

HL Learning Outside the Heritage Community. When a heritage school or program does not exist, HLLs may turn to L2 or FLCs for linguistic development (Kondo-Brown, 2010;

Norton, 1997; Shin, 2010). This happens more for adult HLLs rather than for young HLLs because existing community-based HL programs tend to be more oriented towards children and not adults (Kondo-Brown, 2010; Shin, 2010). However, it is worth questioning whether these language-learning environments are suitable learning environments for heritage learners. In these learning environments all learners may be considered equal based on a placement test result, but their individual attributes, investment, and engagement in the course highlight their differences. However, HLLs are different from L2 and FL learners. The differences between the learners can be seen in their linguistic make-ups (Bowles et al., 2014), their connection to the target community, and their imagined learning outcomes (Carreira, 2004; He, 2008b; Kagan, 2005; Kondo-Brown, 2003, 2010; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

In her study on language learners of Japanese at the university level, Kondo-Brown (2005) found that proficiency tests served more as an administrative tool for student placement in courses. Proficiency tests and self-assessment measures failed to place heritage learners in courses that accounted for their heritage background or met their linguistic investment. Next, L2 and FL learners are believed to have little or no linguistic competence when they first start learning a target language, because they may have limited contact with the target language community. At times, their knowledge of the language and its associated community is confined to the context of a classroom and/or a textbook (He, 2006; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Rossiter, 2009; Wen, 2011). HLLs, on the other hand, are assumed to have some low-level communicative competence when they first start learning the target language, because they are members of the target language community with greater access and exposure to social, linguistic, and cultural opportunities (Kelleher, 2008).

In another study, Kondo-Brown (2010) investigated HLE in the United States and found

that the instructional practices of FLCs were not meeting the needs of the heritage learners. She noted that L2 and FL language methodologies technically worked for HL instruction, but problems occurred in the standardised form in which the language instruction was delivered and tested. Another notable difference between HLLs and L2/FL learners is their desired learning outcomes (Norton, 2000). L2 or FL learners' motivation to learn the target language could be purely for communicative ease with the target community. Conversely, HLLs, who have a high self-determined orientation to be part of their cultural community, will have an investment in learning the target language in order to have greater confidence in their identity classification as well as acceptance within and a connectedness to a cultural group (Canagarajah, 2012; Comanaru & Noels, 2009; Guardado, 2010; Norton &Toohey, 2011).

Moreover, Abdi (2011) found that HLLs were positioned as being stronger learners in the FLCs simply because the instructor had assumed these learners had greater linguistic knowledge. This led some post-secondary institutions to offer a HL stream for HLLs because the "language learning behaviours of HLLs were distinctly different from those of traditional FL learners" (Kondo-Brown, 2005, p. 564). Campbell and Rosenthal's (2000) contribution to this body of literature was a working hypothesis which indicates that bilingual typical HLLs and typical FL learners differ in terms of the phonological, grammatical, and vocabulary and socio-linguistic rules the two types of learners follow. For example, HLLs might have elementary level literacy skills, whereas FL learners have a good foundation for developing their literacy. With this understanding, it could be assumed that HLLs' linguistic skills are freer in form and looser in structure depending on their varied language exposure, whereas FL learners' linguistic skills are confined and restricted by formal linguistic boundaries due to a course design and the language learning space. While these and other differences have been acknowledged in the theoretical

literature, empirical evidence centred on these learner differences is growing and ongoing to verify these characterisations in varying language ideologies (Kondo-Brown, 2001; Montrul & Ionin, 2010).

HLLs' Agency in HLE

Agency, commonly understood as "the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112), is a key feature of language socialisation (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017). In HL studies, children have been seen as passive recipients of ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural influences rather than as active agents in their socio-cultural and socio-linguistic interactions with family and friends. However, this is a reciprocal relationship (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002; Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004; Moore, 2020), and there is a dialogic relationship with the other agents involved in the socialisation process, such as parents or teachers. In such instances, both parties have an active hand in shaping an identity (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002).

However, since HLLs are continually growing into their heritage identity, it would not be surprising for HLLs to have varying levels of communicative competence, from no knowledge of the HL to native-like communicative competence. As a result, their biographical heritage ends up being the only thread connecting them to their ancestral language and culture (Noels, 2005; Valdés, 2005; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). They are potentially multilingual, where they have the ability to use three or more languages, and one of the languages in their repertoire is their HL. They might engage in varying degrees of code-switching and translanguaging practices that allow them to access and negotiate varying levels of language agency (Flores & Rosa, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2020). Therefore, in order to have a better appreciation of who a HL learner/speaker could be, it is important to examine aspects of agency and identity in HL development (Guardado, 2020).

Language and Identity and Their Relationship in HL Development

There has been much research on the invisible link between language and identity. Norton (2000) has presented that social identity is "how people understand their relationship to the outside world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (p. 410). Identity, like language, should not be seen or investigated as a construct of being something or not being something. Instead, identity should be seen as a fluid and dynamic construct, in which being something or becoming something can change over time or evolve (Eckert, 2000; Miller, 1999; Norton, 2000; Zilles & King, 2005). Identities are multi-dimensional and multifaceted. Identities can be "fragmented or fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different … practices and positions" (Hall, 1996, p. 4). Therefore, identities are about the process of "becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from,' so much as what we might become, how we have been represented, and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (Hall, 1996, p. 4). Because HL development is socialised at both micro (individuals) and macro (communities) sites of socialisation, it can be assumed within these different sites of language use that varying identities can be fostered (Guardado, 2020). Examining the varying degrees of identity development and claims through HL development might reveal that the strongest predictor of HL and identity maintenance could be due to HL maintenance in the home versus language instruction in a scholarly setting. Since HL development and maintenance is linked to fostering a sense of unity and continuity within a community, it is important to explore the sites in which HLE is commonly sought out. This exploration could lead to a better understanding of the relationship between language learning and identity and how imagined communities (Anderson,

B., 2006; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Wenger, 1998) are factored into gaining a sense of identity through the use of a language.

Imagined Community and Imagined Learning Outcomes. B. Anderson (2006) coined the term *imagined communities* to illustrate that nations are envisioned because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 6). In other words, members of a community will feel connected to each other because they potentially share common characteristics and socio-cultural activities other than language, such as food habits, dress, cultural traditions, and ways of life. This feeling of community will happen even when the members of a community do not know each other. For example, a South African East Indian growing up in Canada and experiencing different socio-cultural realities will potentially feel a sense of affinity with other family members or community members in South Africa because of their shared commonalities. Furthermore, this is reinforced when members of a group conceptualise a community that transcends time and space. Consequently, they envision a new imagined community to which they want to be affiliated (Wenger, 1998).

Comparatively, Norton (2010) expanded on the use of imagined communities in language acquisition theory by focusing on their relationship with imagined identities. When language learners imagine an identity or community, there is a sense of connection with fellow members of that community even if the learners have not met all the members. In fact, when language learners have direct involvement and investment within the community, tangible and concrete relationships are formed with a resulting sense of "groupness." Moreover, investment in learning also involves a process of "becoming into an identity" rather than only an accumulation of linguistic knowledge and skills (Wenger, 1998). This has resulted in a body of research regarding

the purpose of imagined communities in understanding identity formation and their potential effects on learning trajectories (Anderson, B., 2006; Dagenais, 2003; Heller, 2006; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; Wenger, 1998).

Additionally, learners with a greater investment in their learning trajectories are believed to have a greater return on their cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Norton & Toohey, 2011). In this instance, investment is a social framework that reflects a language learner's desire to learn a language and the complexity of their identity formation (Norton & Toohey, 2011). As the cultural capital increases so does the learners' desire to invest and engage more in the language learning process. For HLLs, their cultural capital could be gaining a greater connection to family members, having opportunities to learn more about their heritage, or creating opportunities for identity formation and/or affiliation. When their return on investment is low, their imagined identity might not be achieved. Indeed, language learners might even find themselves adapting their imagined outcomes to match those of the rest of their classmates who are different language learners with different imagined realities (Tse, 2000). Hence, a match between HLLs' imagined community and their imagined identity in a language learning environment is essential to value of their investment, or else there will be a strong negative effect on their investment in learning the language (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Being able to imagine or create a sense of identity through language learning or languaging reflects the desire to see oneself as a participant in other communities and situations (Barkhuizen, 2016; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Kramsch, 2009; Motha & Lin, 2014; Xu, 2012). To sum up, imagined communities, with imagined learning outcomes, invite an imagined identity (Kanno, 2003).

B. Anderson's (2006) work on imagined selves is centred on the premise that becoming

into an identity is a social process that emphasises a power relation where people in positions of power impose an assumed identity or positioning on other people. For example, in a nation-state situation, the positioning of citizens as "others" or "immigrants" with certain identities can potentially make emergent identities unimaginable or unattainable. Wenger (1998) adds to B. Anderson's work by noting that imagining communities is not only a social process, but also an individual process. The individual process of imagining is a way in which "we can locate ourselves in the world and history, and include in our identities other meanings, other possibilities, other perspectives" (Wenger, 1998, p. 178). Being able to envision identities in other meanings or possibilities invites the notion that identity claiming involves a multi-dimensional sense of self. The possibility for a multiple sense of self is about "individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (Norton & Pavlenko, 2019, p. 705).

The construct of a multiple sense of self or possible identities has been linked to ideologies of L2 learning and socialisation, which by extension lends itself to understandings in HL socialisation. Darvin & Norton (2015, 2023) suggest that learners' different investments in the language learning process or with members of a community can be accepted or challenged by the people of the community. One area where a community can accept or contest identities is the school. Kanno (2008) studied the relationship between a school's imagined student identity and the individual's imagined identity. In her study of bilingual language learners, Kanno found that bilinguals have more limitations to their identity claim regardless of their language skills. For example, Kanno found that bilingual speakers are socialised into different imagined communities. This difference can be based on privilege. The least privileged bilinguals are socialised into more limited communities. With great privilege comes greater opportunities in the

community. Darvin and Norton's (2023) most recent work on investment in language learning highlighted that imagined identity is linked to a sense of capital. Capital is the value of claiming an identity (Bourdieu, 1985). The more valuable the capital or rich the learning situation, the greater the likelihood that the learner's identity is accepted and their imagined identity fostered. This sense of knowing the capital and investment needed for imagining an identity in an ethno-linguistic community is at the heart of HL development and of being considered a legitimate member of the ethno-linguistic community.

Furthermore, an individual's membership in a community links to their family background. In addition, it links to their levels of linguistic proficiency. This potentially results not only in varying degrees of association with the community but also in acceptance by the community. Therefore, some people might be fully accepted while others might be perceived as not being good enough (Carreira, 2004; Dressler, 2010; He, 2008a; Valdés, 2005). As a result, HLLs seek out language learning environments that can help them attain a level of language competence deemed acceptable by the heritage group. This is not necessarily an easy feat because identity is rarely addressed in the classroom. In fact, learner identity is rarely considered to be a point of concern for many language teachers or course designers (He, 2008b; Kondo-Brown, 2003; Kono & McGinnis, 2001). Therefore, in a second or FL learning environment, the HLL's linguistic and cultural needs in terms of language affiliation and identity formation may be lost, misplaced, or overlooked because these aspects that make HLLs different from other language learners are not acknowledged (Tse, 1998). When this happens, what is reinforced is potentially a sense of illegitimacy as a learner/speaker of the language.

HL Identity. If an individual's HL knowledge is knowing or having a sense of knowing their ancestral language, then heritage identity, also known as ethnic identity, cultural identity, or

ethno-cultural identity, is knowing or having a sense of knowing their identity within or because of their ethnic affiliations. This definition of heritage identity is supported by Giles and Johnson's ethno-linguistic identity theory (1987) which is centred on the premise that if people have a positive identity and show their appreciation for their distinct linguistic features, then they have a stronger likelihood of retaining the HL. However, the connection between ethno-linguistic identity and language can be further challenged by an individual's view of their ethnic group and how others view their group (Syed, 2001). We can think about this in terms of objective criteria and subjective criteria. Objective criteria are based on public opinions or community accepted opinions. Subjective criteria are beliefs held by an individual. When an individual's beliefs are dissimilar from mainstream bigger community beliefs, there can be a gap in acceptance. When there is a strong pull to assimilate into mainstream thoughts or society, members of ethnic minority groups might feel pressured to adhere to the majority culture (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1990; Kondo, 1998).

Motha (2014) supports this understanding but adds that ethnicity and race can have an important role in individual communities of legitimate speakers of the language. This has an impact on the native/non-native speaker dichotomy. There is a growing sense of multiplicity in identity and hybridity in identity formation and claims. There is the point that heritage identity is subject to the power relations that instill varying degrees of acceptance. In Canada, Ibrahim (1999) pointed out that African high school students in Toronto re-imagine themselves as Black, rather than, for example, Sudanese or Nigerian. Moreover, they speak a stylized vernacular of English, Black Stylized English (BSE), to better position themselves in a North American society. A similar finding was reported in Creese's 2019 study on African Canadians in Vancouver, where she asked the "where are you from?" question and examined the racialisation

of young men and women whose parents migrated from countries in sub-Saharan Africa to Canada. They are a second generation of the bigger society in Canada where they have the language and knowledge of the habits of the community, but they are still "othered" simply because of their visible identity. Therefore, these young men and women are forced to negotiate the legitimacy of their multiple identity. Takei (2004) studied the relationship between HL and sense of identity of Japanese mixed heritage youth. All 14 student participants did not speak Japanese at home; some had enrolled in Japanese classes at university. The participants expressed their identity as being half Japanese. Their "half" identity revealed their affinity to their Japanese heritage and to another heritage at the same time. This gave the participants opportunities to engage in meaning-making of their ethnicity without the expense of a prescriptive uni-identity marker. As a result, identity should not be seen as being unidirectional. Like language, the boundaries between multiple ethnicities have become less rigid in multilingual/multicultural societies. This opens the door for hybridity ideologies to reflect a less essentialised view of identity and language. Hall (1996) noted that identities should not be viewed as stable or completed; instead, "identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being" (p. 4).

The forces of globalisation and the greater mobility of people have led to greater complexities with identity in terms of thus reinforcing characteristics of identity which are less fixed and unified. Identity is plural, diverse, and multi-layered. When identity is linked to language, people can make distinct movements across social and ethnic boundaries because they know more than one language and have the ability to code-mix in their speech. This is what Rampton (1995, 1999, 2010) termed "crossings." This is something that goes beyond the functional use of language. Crossings are a space where "speakers creatively or artfully negotiate

their ethnic identities" (Takei, 2021, p. 226). It is from these understandings that studies like Harris' 2006 paper on hybrid identities of South Asian London youths stems. In Harris' paper, she notes that the lived experiences and languaging of these youths is a "densely entangled interrelationship" (p. 170). As such, specific moments and people cause the youths to switch to their HL while having a strong working knowledge and use of English. The youth are living and speaking the duality of who they are. This duality invites a sense of being an identity straddler.

The construct of crossings is similar to what Canagarajah (2012) calls "self-styling." Self-styling an identity is when someone is fashioning their own in-group identity status with their varying degrees of proficiency in their HL. Canagarajah noted that while both forms of identity formation are a performative practice (Pennycook, 2003, 2004), there is a difference between Rampton's crossings and self-styling. Crossings is the styling of the other, while self-styling is the styling of the individual (Canagarajah, 2012). In his 2012 study of Sri Lankan Tamil HL speakers in Canada, Britain, and the United States, Canagarajah found that their linguistic practices married with their social practices. In other words, the Tamil speakers reflected on their limited proficiency in Tamil as a minimal barrier to claiming their ethnic identity. In their interviews, the youths indicated that English was their dominant language, but this was not at the expense of their HL. The participants' linguistic practices were skillfully woven into the way of being so that culturally accepted receptive and non-verbal practices were helpful to them in their self-styled identity claims. Makoni (2019) reflected on constructs of self-styled identities in case studies of African immigrants in South Africa. In Makoni's qualitative study, the Black African immigrants used other ways or ethnic style markers, such as wearing certain clothes or bleaching their skin, to fashion a position or in-group status in the community. As a result, their language proficiency or language use was of minimal need in claiming an

identity. Therefore, if knowing a HL is not essential for self-styling to one's heritage identity, it would be interesting to know why some people seek out HLE.

Language Education

The field of Applied Linguistics and its ideologies have been greatly impacted by globalisation. Multi/plurilingual speakers or learners (Ortega, 2013) and "plurality, multiplicity, and hybridity of language and language use" (Kubota, 2016, p. 474) need to be considered in FLCs, pedagogies, and use. Multilingualism/plurilingualism "has destabilised the codes, norms, and conventions that FL educators relied upon to help learners be successful users of the language once they had left their classrooms" (Kramsch, 2014, p. 296).

However, theoretical models of language acquisition or education still remain static, and they present an incomplete view of language acquisition or competence (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2018). With language education becoming increasingly focused on the multilingual and plurilingual contexts that better reflect the multiple realities of speakers, it is important to examine "multiple discursive practices in which multilingual speakers engage in order to make sense of their worlds" (García, 2009, cited in Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 555). This impact is far-reaching in HL acquisition; therefore, it is important to express the dynamic nature of HL development and analyse the nature of HLE. For the purposes of this study, it is of interest to examine HLE in Canada.

HLE. The origin of the term HLE has been ascribed to Canadian language programs (Baker, 2011; Duff, 2008a; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Wiley, 2005). In the early 21st century, bilingual education ideologies served as a foundation for HLE (Brinton et al., 2008). While HL studies have strong roots in Canada in terms of policies and programs that support minority and HLE and maintenance (Duff, 2008a), there is wide variability in how HLE is approached across

different countries and communities. HLE has been a thriving field of language education in places like the United States and Australia for many years, but as Baker (2011) suggested, Canadian language programs have been and continue to be a source of inspiration for HLE in general.

HLE is a flourishing and multi-dimensional field of language education. A HL is neither a second nor a FL to its speakers and learners. A HL and its educational ideologies are oriented so that the "cultural memory of entire peoples is transmitted over time from place to place, community to community, and from generation to generation" (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014, p. xiii). In a practical sense, the goal of HLE is to foster community unity through HL maintenance. As a result, language retention is seen as a key factor for minority communities to thrive. In a socio-cultural sense, HLE goes beyond structured pedagogy. HLE helps to link identity and cultural heritage so that there is a longevity to language retention that can be passed on for generations to come. HLE brings a sense of coherence and unity to pluralism in society as it supports the link between diverse communities and social, cultural, and economic stances.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, when Canada declared multiculturalism to be an essential characteristic of its democracy, opportunities for HLE were born. HLE has grown out of the L2 and multilingual research in Canada, but its reach is global. The United States, the UK, Australia, and many other nations in Asia and Africa have embraced their own versions of what HLE should look like. For example, in the United States, Spanish language education is a fast-growing site of HL instruction in both public and private schools. In Australia, HLE is part of mainstream educational programs that follow the national curriculum. The diverse language ecology of so many places has made it possible for specific forms of language education that integrate social and cultural traditions to have spaces where multiple voices can be heard and claimed.

Carreira (2014) presented a study in which three different contexts for HLE were examined: home education, HL classes, and L2 classes where HLLs were mixed with L2 learners. Specifically, Carreira examined the "institutional practices of HL teaching" (p. 20) in post-secondary environments. In her examination, Carreira found that the language educator and appropriate and relevant materials were two significant factors in the potential success of meeting the needs of HLLs. Moreover, if there was a concerted effort to offer HL programs, there would also be a concerted effort to foster their success. Aravossitas (2014) attempted to map the characteristics of HLE across Canada. Through a rich collaboration of educators, community leaders, and researchers, Aravossitas attempted to provide a model of language maintenance and vitality based on current practices and ideologies from across the country. With this information, it is believed that a great wealth of knowledge can be offered to all contributing parties of HLE in terms of language retention and support.

With Canada's growing sense of plurality, it is of great interest to explore the scope of educational practice that supports English and French, aboriginal languages, and HLE. This sets up a stronger sense of Canada's linguistic capital (Piccardo, 2014). Piccardo notes that standards for language education need to do more than simply speak about the plurality of languages. Standards for language education need to include language awareness. In Canada, there has been a healthy amount of research and initiatives on HL maintenance.

The Canadian Context for HLE. The Canadian context for HLE is not a reflection of its history, but a reflection of the growing immigrant population and the diversity of its people. Education in Canada is governed provincially. Across the country, there exists a wealth of bilingual language education programs, for example Ukrainian-English programs in Alberta, to Italian, French, or English programs in Québec. HLE in Canada has been described by various

researchers (Aravossitas et al., 2020; Cummins, 1983, 1991, 1992; Tavares, 2000) who have noted that since the 1970s a form of HLE has been offered in public schools in most parts of the country. Because of pressure from the Ukrainian community, Alberta became the first province to offer English and French education in public school, bilingual programs continue to flourish in Alberta's public school system, and HLE is offered in the form of bilingual programs. In Edmonton, for example, there are public schools which offer schooling as early as Kindergarten or Grade 1 in German-English and Chinese-English (Edmonton Public Schools, 2022). Moreover, the International Heritage Language Association (IHLA) based in Edmonton and the Southern Alberta Heritage Language Association based in Calgary are both non-profit educational organisations which promote community-based HLE and programs among their diverse cultural communities (IHLA, 2023; SAHLA, 2023). HLE also has a long history in other provinces and education systems. HLE in Manitoba has been part of its education system at the community level since the 1870s, but the province passed legislation allowing for HL instruction in public schools in 1979 (Manitoba Education, n.d.). Saskatchewan schools followed with similar legislation for Ukrainian-English. Since 1985, there has been an organisation in Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Association of International Languages (formerly, Saskatchewan Organisation of Heritage Languages) solely devoted to supporting heritage/international language schools and multilingual organisations throughout the province (SAIL, 2022). In 1977, Ontario approved a HL Program (Feuerverger, 1997), now called the International Language Program, which offers language instruction in over 100 languages within the province (ILEA, 2022). In Québec, the HL *Programme d'enseignement des langues d'origine* (PELO) was brought into public schools in 1978 to provide opportunities for students to learn a HL (Cummins, 2014a). In addition to these programs, there are many HL programs

that operate outside the sphere of public school (Duff, 2008a). These programs are offered by the ethno-linguistic communities themselves in the form of 3-hour or full-day Saturday school programs. Many of these programs were once funded under Canada's Cultural Enrichment Program, now defunct. Beyond Saturday schools, HLE can be sought out in private language schools. However, these schools offer programs that are pedagogically oriented as FLCs (Duff, 2008a). Therefore, a goal for many people who take language classes in these private institutions is educational enrichment for personal or professional gains. The goal for HLLs is educational enrichment but also cultural maintenance (Cummins, 1983; Cumming, 2014; Nagy, 2021), yet a national policy remains to be formulated that would govern the structure and financial support of HLE.

HLs in Canada are further defined in terms of *languages known and languages spoken* (Statistics Canada, 2021). *Languages known and spoken* are unofficial minority languages that are present in the home. Specifically, *languages known* means that language learners know a language when they feel they can conduct a conversation in that language. *Languages spoken at home* reflects "those who speak only one language at least *on a regular basis* at home and those who, even if they speak more than one language at home, identified one—and only one—language spoken *most often* at home" (Statistics Canada, 2021). HLE in Canada has been encouraged by educational, social, and political initiatives to help ethno-linguistic minority communities foster and maintain their linguistic and cultural knowledge and practices of their ethno-cultural communities (Duff, 2008a). This support helps to showcase Canada's rich linguistic mosaic and reflects a linguistic landscape that is multicultural and plurilingual within a bilingual framework (Duff, 2008a; Haque, 2013). Programs and policies for HLs in Canada are implemented to support and foster multilingualism, multiculturalism, and multi-ethno-linguistic

identities. These programs help in the promotion of a Canadian mosaic where "minority children gain strong L1 language and literacy skills that will in turn support their L2 schooling and provide public relations and policies to help encourage immigrants to settle in this country, knowing that their cultures and languages are valued" (Duff, 2008a, p. 74).

HL Recognition, Policies and Programs in Canada. At the provincial level, HL programs have been funded to meet the specific needs of their broader ethnic communities. Canada's promotion of linguistic diversity stands on the shoulders of community-based HL programs that strive to support its ethno-linguistic needs (Aravossitas, 2014; Cumming, 2014; Duff, 2008a; Nagy, 2021). For many HL learners and speakers, community-based language programs are the primary source for language education. They provide classes for children and sometimes adults in the form of evening and Saturday/Sunday language classes (Baker, 2011; Ballinger et al., 2022; Duff, 2008a; Nagy, 2021). Classes are typically 2 or 3 hours a week, and they act as a vehicle for maintaining language education and fostering cultural beliefs and practices. For many recent immigrants, these are a home away from home. They have an emotional tie to the heritage culture, varying levels of language proficiency, and different connections to relatives who speak the language in the home (Lee & Wright, 2014). Many of the learners who seek out HLE tend to be 1.5 or second-generation community members (Shin, J., 2016; Song, 2022).

To have a better understanding of how minority ethno-linguistic communities are supported in terms of language and identity in Canada, I will now speak about how these communities find a home in Canada's pluri-cultural, multilingual make-up within a bilingual framework. Thus Canada, and other nations, encourage programs that help children become multilingual. However, in order for this to happen, there has to be a clear stance on how a

multicultural, plurilingual reality can be supported under Canada's Official Languages Act. This Act recognises Canada as a bilingual country and promotes policies that strengthen the rights of English and French speaking minority communities, but also reflects the "contemporary linguistic needs and realities of these communities" (Canada Heritage, 2022).

Canada's Ethno-linguistic Vitality: Unofficial Minority Languages in Canada. Canada's linguistic diversity in languages other than English and French reflects strong ethno-linguistic ties to minority identities, culture, and communities. Their ethno-linguistic vitality is dependent upon three factors: status, demographics, and institutional support (Nagy, 2021).

Demographics. According to Statistics Canada's 2021 Census, a language other than English or French is spoken in the home by approximately 4.6 million Canadians. This means that 12.7% of Canada's population speak a language at home that is an unofficial minority language, for example, Tamil, German, Tagalog, Bengali, Ukrainian, and many others. As immigration grows, there are ebbs and flows to linguistic diversity in the country; for example, from 2006 to 2011, Tagalog was the fastest growing minority language in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011). More recently, South Asian languages such as Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindi, or Malayalam at home grew significantly, from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2021), while there was a decline in the number of Canadians who spoke predominantly certain European languages at home, such as Italian, Polish, and Greek. The two unofficial minority languages most widely spoken at home in Canada at the time of writing are Mandarin and Punjabi. Therefore, the status of HLs in Canada is thriving, according to the latest census. Moreover, approximately 9 million Canadians have a mother tongue other than English or French, and the number will continue to grow (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Status. Language status for unofficial minority languages in Canada is fluid. In other words, the number of speakers of languages other than French and English is growing in Canada, and the members of these different ethno-linguistic communities vary in terms of language competency and use (see glossary, p. xx). Despite this richness, research about Canada's education in minority, heritage, and Indigenous language settings, i.e., other than for French and English (Duff & Li, 2009), is still in its infancy. However, in recent years, the growth of multiculturalism/multilingualism has fuelled numerous attempts to investigate the relationship between language and identity of minoritised languages, especially the "role of identity in language education" (Dagenais et al., 2008; Duff, 2008a; Lamarre, 2013; Moore, 2019; Norton, 2000). While language is central to identity, it is an ill-defined relationship that many seek to clarify. Both language and cultural identity are complex and dynamic constructs that are "co-constructed and mutually contextualised" (Shi, 2006). Therefore, exploring this co-constructed relationship is a means to investigating how people share the realities they live and the new ones they create. Thus, languaging (see glossary, p. xx) is a means of self-expression, cultural change, and socialisation (Anderson, T., 2021; Duff & Talmy, 2011; Ochs, 1993; Wenger, 1998).

A Theoretical Framework for HLE

An assumption that is firmly fixed in the ideologies of HLE is that in order to claim an ethno-linguistic identity, learners need to know the language (Lacorte & Canabal, 2003). This gives an essentialised perspective to the relationship between language and culture in that a person cannot have claims to the culture without knowledge of the language to express the culture (Leeman, 2015). Language and identity co-exist because of the "intrinsic cultural, affective, and aesthetic value of the language" (He, 2006, p. 2). Within these ideologies is the theoretical perspective that social constructivist views of language learning speak to negotiations

of identity that focus on affiliation, participation, and belonging (Pavlenko, 2003; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). In HLE, learner identity and HLE learning agency can be explored through Norton's theoretical constructs of investment and imagined communities (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2000). With investment, motivation is reconceptualised to explain learner engagement in terms of a learner's identity, social context, and aspirations. This way the relationship between language learning and attaining multiple senses of self can be understood (He, 2010). Some studies show that learners report low levels of investment in learning the HL if imagined identities cannot be attained (Wu, 2017).

Chapter Summary

While research in HLE and identity continues to grow, its imprint can be seen in many sectors of language education and education in general. In this chapter, I have chosen to focus this literature review on language socialisation and HL and identity connections because there is still much to learn and investigate in terms of these perspectives. The literature has helped me to situate the study in language socialisation as the theoretical framework, specifically HL socialisation, to inform my investigation into HL and identity formation. In Chapter 3, which follows, I begin by presenting the guiding points of inquiry for this study and then orient these points in a theoretical framework for my inquiry.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter Overview

I begin Chapter 3 by presenting the questions guiding this inquiry. I follow this with an overview of the theoretical framework supporting the methodological approach of this study, then the methodological toolkit I employed. I also detail the space from which participants were recruited and the space in which this study was conducted, with a summary of each student participant's linguistic background. It is important to know the history of each participant, however brief, in order to better appreciate their HL learning trajectories. Therefore, this background information highlights their overall language learning histories, showcasing each participant's entry point into their HLE and/or language and identity questions. Furthermore, I outline the two phases of this protocol. I close this chapter with a description of the analytical framework for analysing the data.

Guiding Questions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain an understanding of why adult HLLs want to learn their HL. The overarching questions were "what value or capital do HLLs gain by knowing their HL, and how does this impact their ethno-linguistic identities?" Searching for answers to these questions involved investigating the importance of learner identity formation and identity investment when HLLs learn the HL in non-HL learning environments. Therefore, the primary objective of this study was to determine if learning a HL in a non-HL learning environment aids HLLs in their ethno-cultural identity affiliation. More discrete points of inquiry were:

1. What impressions do HLLs have of their university language classes in terms of their linguistic gains in their HL?

2. How are the imagined outcomes of an investment in their ethno-cultural identity fostered by the language-learning environment, a foreign language classroom?
3. From the perspective of HLLs, how does knowing their HL impact their sense of heritage identity and how is the HL valued or acknowledged in the learning environment?

Within the parameters of this study, if the non-HL learning environment continues to be thought of and sought out as a good alternative setting for learning a HL and fashioning a heritage identity, then it needs to be scrutinised further to get at the depth of the ideologies behind this understanding.

Theoretical Framework for Methodology

As reviewed in Chapter 2, language socialisation is a key theoretical approach that makes it possible to see language learning beyond a structuralist perspective. Language learning, and languaging for that matter, are social practices that foster greater understandings about the link between language knowledge and L2 identity formations. It is within language socialisation ideologies that I situate this study. Specifically, I adopt a social constructivist perspective that language and identity co-exist and have a reciprocal relationship. In other words, identity reflects the language a person might use, and language reflects the identity a person might claim to be. With this social constructivist perspective of language and identity, a post-structural theoretical framework about language socialisation and identity formation forms the basis for the methodology of this study. Within this framework, the relationship between identity formation and language socialisation is viewed as being dynamic, ever-changing, and socially co-constructed. As a unit, language and identity have a fluid association which has an impact on human agency (Block, 2007). Therefore, language learners should be seen as progressive social actors and agents who are at the centre of their language development and identity formation

(Duff, 2007; Swain, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). With this understanding, I examined how adult HLLs were, or were imagined to be, socialised to be competent members of the target culture through their HL use (He, 2008b). By accepting that people's ethno-linguistic identity was not a static construct, I was able to examine how acquiring language forms and functions were associated with socio-cultural dimensions, such as identities, agency, and learner investment over time and space (He, 2006; Norton, 2000).

Moreover, identity construction is accepted as an ongoing process of creating a third space in order for new cultural positionings and hybridities of identities, worldviews, and imagined perspectives to be developed, constructed, negotiated, and challenged (Anderson, B., 2006; Norton, 2000). Thus, it is accepted that identity lies on a continuum between fixed and fluid senses of being. It is fixed due to cultural and societal norms and implications but also fluid because it is co-constructed, enacted, negotiated, reinforced, and challenged through social interactions and discourses (Gee, 2005). In the present study, HLLs' identities are considered to be multiple, varied, and/or emergent due to the individual's everyday lived experiences and language learning experiences. This will challenge the assumed positioning that in order to claim a heritage identity, one must be ethno-linguistically competent in the language. This will also challenge the "one language, one place, one community" ideologies about HLE and maintenance (Baumann & Briggs, 2000; Blommaert, 2010).

Such understandings about language and identity bring forth implications about the methods required for investigating the complex and multifaceted relationship between identity and language learning (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Therefore, this study is based on the belief that a person's language and identity are socialised through interactions, experiences, and discourses with others (Duff, 2008b; Gee, 2004b) and that a dialogic relationship exists between language,

culture, and identity (Dunlop, 1999; Ochs, 1993). Specifically, HLLs are discovering their identity through the language exposure and experiences they are having with others who may or may not be members of their heritage ethno-linguistic community. While many HLLs are attempting to augment their linguistic competence through FLCs, their heritage identity might not be seen as a factor in this language learning space. Therefore, it is of interest to explore the impact of this learning space, and the way the language is learned, on their identity formation. This will open a door into seeing how HLLs'/speakers' identity formation is dependent on negotiations of different socio-linguistic spaces based on different language ideologies (Giampapa, 2004; König et al., 2015).

I also aligned myself with an ethnographic perspective similar to Blommaert and Dong's (2020), where the methodology focuses on the language in which people have made "social, cultural, political, or individual-emotional" investments (Blommaert & Dong, 2020, p. 10). Thus, every language act is situated in a wider pattern of social behaviour. Through this ethnographic view of language, nothing is static; therefore, an open multi-level methodological framework makes it possible to describe the ebbs and flows of language socialisation and identity maintenance (Duff & Talmy, 2011). This made it possible to explore and potentially understand culturally predictable outcomes and culturally elusive sensitivities and subjectivities, such as ethno-linguistic identity claims and HLLs' experience in non-HL learning environments. Culturally predictable outcomes refer to stereotypical cultural artifacts, such as eye-contact or no eye-contact when saying "hello" and "good-bye." Culturally elusive sensitivities and subjectivities are the undocumented ways agency is displayed in a group, for example, a bilingual child who code-switches or exhibits translingual practices when speaking with their parents (Epp, 2008; Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004).

I hope that the results from this study will serve as one of many stepping-stones towards encouraging FL educators and language program and curriculum developers to take the opportunity to capitalise on the linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge (González, 2005; González et al., 2006) of the HLLs who might be in their classes. HLLs are different from their FL learner classmates (Montrul, 2010; Polinsky, 2008; Valdés, 2001) in that their linguistic competence is heterogeneous. In other words, they may have a stronger receptive proficiency than productive proficiency. Moreover, they are potentially bringing more socio-cultural information about the language community to the class and their learning experience than FL learners. More significantly, their imagined language learning goal is tied to their sense of being and belonging to the ethno-linguistic community, which is potentially unlike that of most of their FL classmates. Therefore, the non-HL learning environment is an interesting site of investigation to explore the degree of individual effort HLLs are exerting during the language learning process to shape their identities (Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Watson-Gegeo, 1988).

Study Context: Learning Context and Participants

The learning context for this study was the FL classroom. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, a university FLC can be a site for people to learn their HL. For some learners, it is their primary site for HL acquisition. In this study, the FLC was the site for soliciting participants, and it is a point of discussion for exploring how HLLs invest in their HLE outside of a HL context. Table 1 highlights the stages of data collection, the data collection tools, and intention of data collection stage:

Table 1

Summary of Phases and Data Collection

Stage of Data Collection	Data Collection Tool	Intention of Data Collection Stage
Phase 1 Beginning of Fall 2017 semester	Personal Background Questionnaire (Appendix B)	For participants to provide personal background information
	Language Autobiographies: Written responses to questions (Appendix C)	For participants to provide information about their HL learning experiences and identity claims
	First Round Interviews: One-on-one semi-structured interview prompts (Appendix D)	For participants to elaborate upon information presented in their written language autobiography
Phase 2 End of Fall 2017 semester into beginning of Winter 2018 semester	Second Round Interviews: One-on-one semi-structured interview prompts (Appendix E)	For participants to add information to topics and themes highlighted in the first round of interviews

Procedure. Using a sequential data collection pattern, the data was collected over the course of one semester so as to gain a holistic perspective on students' ethno-linguistic identity movements (Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Watson-Gegeo, 1988) from the beginning of their language course to the end. All meetings with participants took place face to face in a private office at the university or at another convenient location for the learners. The information from the questionnaire and autobiography writing helped in starting the interview and aided in the direction of conversation. Interviews were conducted in English and were oriented with the help of interview prompts (Appendices D & E). Interviews were conducted in two phases. The interviews in both phases were conducted individually and were approximately 30–50 minutes in length. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Each participant was emailed a copy of their transcribed interview for their review and confirmation or correction of details. The data

was then thematically coded and analysed for perspectives about language identity importance and maintenance and its support in the learning environment.

Phase 1

Recruiting Participants. Ethics approval to begin participant solicitation and data collection was obtained in Summer 2017. This allowed me to commence the first phase of this study in Fall 2017. The first phase consisted of soliciting learner participants, obtaining background information from the participants, and conducting the first round of the interviews. Phase 1 took place at the beginning of and into the first five weeks of the Fall 2017 semester. The first part of Phase 1 consisted of soliciting for participants. In this study, HL participants were university students in FLCs at an English university in Montréal. In my Call for Participants, I reached out to departmental heads and program coordinators of different FL programs in the following departments: East Asian Studies, Islamic Studies, German Studies, Italian Studies, Hispanic Studies, and Russian Studies. There was no intention to solicit participants from specific language departments or backgrounds because I grounded this study within the understanding that the ideas and perspectives about HL identity and investment in learning a HL are not language specific. In other words, I worked with the premise that adult HLLs of different language backgrounds all sought HLE when an opportunity for language education was available.

As stated earlier, HLLs may appear to have a similar pedagogical make-up as their FL learner counterparts; however, HLLs have their sights on different linguistic and identity affirmation goals (Cummins, 1983; Tse, 1998). They are cultural capital learners; therefore, their investment in the language learning process exceeds (He, 2010; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2000) the typical and assumed linguistic goals of FL learners. I believe that the reasons for

wanting to learn a HL and the imagined outcomes are not language specific. Learner participants were also recruited from different language classes to account for any potential pedagogical or curricular differences that might be a factor in identity formation in class. All learner participants received a small monetary stipend of $25.00 at the end of the study.

HLLs were recruited in one of two ways: 1) through an emailed letter sent to their respective program departments, or 2) an open call advertisement on online notice boards in language departments in the university. Islamic, German, and Italian Studies responded to my call and gave me approval to reach out to their course lecturers about my study. I then reached out to the lecturers who were teaching in the Fall 2017 semester. I approached Beginner and Intermediate language classes, and once I received approval from lecturers to visit their classes, I scheduled a time to visit the class during the first two weeks of the semester. The email letter sent to departmental programs, students, and professors informed them about the nature of this study. Once departments expressed support for this study, they provided me with the lecturers' email addresses. Lecturers who opened their classes to me made it possible for me to recruit student participants for the study. They also helped in passing along my Call for Participants to students who were not in class the day of my visit. During class visits, I gave an overview of the study and defined HLs to the students, and I encouraged those who considered themselves to be HLLs to participate. Interested students were encouraged to sign up and asked to provide their email addresses for further contact. Once this Call for Participants was complete, participants were sent a Consent Form (Appendix A) with an overview of the study and what would be required for their participation.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the language learning environment was a site for soliciting participants. Participants self-identified themselves as HLLs based on the working

definition that HLLs were language learners who had an ancestral link to a language and its community. The criteria to participate in this study was that the student was learning their ancestral or familial language in their FLC Their exposure to their HL was on a spectrum from no or minimal conversation exposure to familial and some educational exposure, such as Saturday schools or private tutoring. Their primary exposure to HLE was their language learning in the FLC from which they were solicited.

As indicated by their program descriptions, Italian language classes focused on grammar, reading, and dictation. Their primary goal was to work on speech patterns and written structures, and eventually augment learners' linguistic competencies to higher levels of grammar, reading, conversation, and composition skills with embedded details of ethno-cultural and historical perspectives of the target language community. The language level of focus in this study was beginner to intermediate, so participants were solicited from language courses at these proficiency levels. Advanced levels of language courses were not offered.

The German Language program offered intensive language instruction with a primary focus of developing communicative language skills. The German Program offered language courses from beginner to advanced levels of proficiency. The advanced level expanded upon general communicative skills to more linguistic structure skills where learners had a more guided learning experience to enhance all four language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. At this language level, students were offered greater opportunities for oral and written expression.

Urdu-Hindi and Persian/Farsi language courses were offered through the Islamic Studies department. The Urdu-Hindi courses were offered at a beginner, intermediate, and advanced level. Introductory Urdu-Hindi courses focused on pronunciation, introducing the Urdu-Hindi

scripts, phrases, and basic sentence structuring and commands. As the learners progressed from the introductory course to a higher language proficiency level, the courses focused on building the learners' reading and writing skills, with greater awareness of more complex grammar structures along with greater exposure to video/audio material. Finally, the Persian language program offered four levels of language proficiency: introductory, low intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced. Introductory courses in Persian focused on pronunciation, grammatical structures, and reading and writing. As learners moved through the different levels of language proficiency, the grammatical structures got more complex and the course material got more culturally contextualised through poems and insights into political and historical points of interest. At the advanced level, learners of Persian continued on with augmented cultural content and material presented in the previous level. In this present study, participants did not come from advanced language classes. My Call for Participants resulted in 11 students expressing interest to share their HL stories and experiences.

Obtaining Background and Biographical Information. Biographical data on interested participants was obtained through the personal background questionnaire (Appendix B). The background questionnaire and the language autobiography questions (Appendix C) were emailed to learners who consented to participate in the study. The background questionnaire and language autobiography focused on questions oriented around their language background, language exposure, and identity affinity. Each participant emailed me their questionnaire responses and autobiographical writing, and upon receipt I emailed them back with a schedule for our first interview. A summary of the learner participants for this study is in Table 2:

Table 2

Summary of Learner Participants (grouped according to their language program)

Language Program	Pseudonym	HL(s)	L1(s)	Other Languages	Program of Study (Undergraduate)	Ethno-Identity	Nationality
German	Marco	German	English	French	Philosophy	Canadian	Canadian
	Cata	German	Spanish	English, French	Physiology	German and South American	Argentine German
Italian	Monti	Italian	English	French	History & Classics	Italian-Canadian	Canadian
	Olivia	Italian	English	Spanish	Arts / International Development	Italian	Canadian
	Stefania	Italian	English	French	Psychology	Italian	Canadian
	Daniella	Italian (dialects)	English	French Spanish (basic)	Anthropology	Italian	Canadian
	Isabella	Italian	English	NA	Music / Italian Studies	Italian-Acadian	Canadian
	Crystal	Italian	English	French	Kinesiology	Italian	Canadian
	Helen	Italian	English	French	Psychology	Italian and sometimes Irish	Canadian
Farsi	Arya	Farsi	Farsi, English French	Russian, Italian	Linguistics	Persian	Iranian Canadian
Hindi	Hannah	Hindi, Punjabi French	French, English	Spanish	Economics	French (Québécois), Scottish, Indian (Punjabi)	Canadian-American

Introducing the HL Participants

The participants' stories provide a lens to see how family dynamics and experiences and identity claims have impacted *their* language knowledge and learning. This information gives the reader a glimpse into what these learners feel is the principal gain from knowing their HL and how it connects them to others in their heritage communities. The richness of this information ultimately sets the stage for the remainder of the findings, presented in Chapter 5, which sheds light on the participants' HL gains and identity-becoming through their second site of HL socialisation, the FLC.

German HL Participants.

Marco. Marco's parental languages are French and English. His mother is French-Canadian and his father was born in Québec but has German heritage. He considers himself to be a French/English bilingual, with French being his mother tongue. He notes that there was little exposure to German while growing up at home, so he began learning German as an adult. Most of his learning took place in a classroom, and he learned "survival German"; simple words and phrases to help him negotiate everyday encounters when in Germany, such as going to the grocery store. Marco participated in a study abroad exchange to Germany, and this experience highly encouraged him to speak German. During this time, he felt that his use and understanding of the language improved. However, once he was back in Canada, he lost his language gains because he was out of a German speaking context, but his desire to learn German became more serious. He decided to pursue German language studies at university. At the time of data collection, he was at an intermediate level of language proficiency in German.

Cata. Cata is South American, and she had five languages in her linguistic repertoire at the time of data collection. Spanish is her mother tongue and her parental and L1. She also

speaks English and French, and she claims Italian and German as her HLs. Her father is German, and all of his family lives in Germany. When she was living in Argentina, she attended a German school. However, Cata commented that she did not learn very much because she and her family left Argentina for Canada when she was five years old. Her father never spoke to her or her brother in German. Cata commented that there is a lot of code-switching [Cata's wording] between Spanish, English, and French in her everyday language use. At the time of data collection, Cata had been studying in English for 14 years and had completed all of her studies through English. Alongside English, she had studied French for 12 years and achieved a B2 level in accordance with the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (2024). She primarily spoke Spanish at home and French with her friends. Prior to her university German language class, her experiences in learning, using, or being exposed to German had been trying to speak with her brother, grandparents, and other relatives, and watching films. When we met, Cata's most recent exposure had been primarily through her German language classes. However, outside of the class, her exposure was limited to sporadic conversational opportunities with her family.

Italian HL Participants.

Monti. For Italian-Canadian Monti, Italian is not only his HL but also his mother tongue, and parental language. English is an additional parental and L1, and he can also speak French. Monti commented that while Italian had a strong presence in his linguistic history, he did not speak the language very well. For Monti, most of his exposure to Italian had been within his family. Even though he only knew a few words and felt that he could not communicate through the language, he was able to participate in family events. He expressed that if he were exposed to the language more, he would have been able to catch more information from the conversations.

Despite both sets of grandparents being Italian speakers, he explained that he primarily conversed with them in French, especially in situations where a longer conversation was needed. At the time of data collection, Monti was at an elementary level of Italian language proficiency.

Olivia. Olivia is Italian-American. Italian is her HL, and English is her mother tongue, parental language, and L1. Her third language is Spanish. She primarily converses in English in her everyday life and relationships. Her family had been the primary source of her exposure to and contact with the HL, which is a dialect of what is considered "standard" Italian. However, this exposure was limited, and it resulted in Olivia knowing only a few commands and short phrases in the familial dialect. In addition to family exposure, Olivia listened to Italian music and watched Italian films. Her most concentrated exposure to the language had been in her Italian classes. For while, she had a penpal in Italy, and she would try to communicate with her penpal in Italian. However, the penpal's English overtook Olivia's Italian. During travels to Italy with the family, Olivia felt the need to speak in Italian but because she did not have the language, she probably responded in English. Those moments stuck with her as she pursued learning Italian.

Stefania. English is the primary language for communication and studies for Stefania. Her mother tongue and parental language is Italian. English is her L1 and French is her L2. One of her parents is of Italian heritage. She had been exposed to Italian since birth through music and familial conversations. While growing up, there was much code-switching between English and Italian happening in the family. Moreover, the Italian she was exposed to through her family is a dialectal variety that was not taught in her university class. She claims that what she did know of her familial dialect consisted of rote broken phrases. Stefania had a beginner level understanding of Italian when she began her studies at university. She felt that prior to starting classes at university, her exposure to "proper or standard" Italian was minimal.

Daniella. Daniella's L1 is English. Her parental languages are Italian, French, and English. She also has a basic level of Spanish. Her family primarily speaks English at home. When Italian is spoken at home, it is a dialectal variety that is typically spoken in her family's region of Italy. Her first exposure to French was in daycare at 3 years old. She attended an English/French elementary school. Since her school was in a predominantly Italian speaking area of Montréal, two hours per week were dedicated to Italian language courses to meet the linguistic demands of the local community. She also attended Saturday Italian language courses for 12 years. At home, Italian was primarily spoken by her grandparents. Her parents spoke a mix of English and Italian, but there was more English in this mix than Italian. Daniella commented that this mixing of the languages "made it 'hard' to know the proper words to use." Since English is her strongest language, Daniella felt that she thinks in English while speaking Italian. She stated that anglicisms permeate her Italian. Her exposure to Italian also included listening to Italian music at home.

Isabella. Isabella's L1 is English. She began learning French in kindergarten at a Francophone school. Her parental languages are English and Italian, yet her primary language of communication is English or French. Her Italian grandmother spoke to her in Italian, but Isabella always responded in English. Her father speaks Italian with his family members. Through this exposure, Isabella gained some HL knowledge, but the majority of her language ability was gained through studying the language at university. Without knowing her HL, Isabella felt out of place or questioned about her identity when she would try to converse with others. Isabella felt her university experience has made it possible for her Italian linguistic skills to evolve from short simple phrases to reading, writing, and speaking with her classmates and sometimes with her father.

Crystal. Crystal's family languages are English, French, and Italian. She is Italian on her paternal side and French-Canadian on her maternal side, and Italian is her HL. She identifies herself as being "half Italian and half French." She noted that she was exposed to all three languages at a very young age; however, she was never directly spoken to in Italian until her teen years. It was at that time that she attended Saturday Italian schools with her brother. She also noted that she primarily heard Italian from her aunts and uncles during family events. Crystal commented that she had been questioned about her Italian identity by friends who spoke Italian better than she did. At the time of data collection, Crystal was registered in a beginner Italian course.

Helen. Helen has been speaking English her whole life; however, French was the language of instruction for her education from kindergarten to college. Italian, specifically a Sicilian dialect, is her HL from her mother's side of the family. When she was in Grade 5, her mother decided it was time for Helen and her sister to start learning their HL, so she employed an Italian language tutor for them. After a couple of years of private lessons, Helen attended a Saturday Italian language school. She continued on with her studies in the language in university. Her father, whose heritage background is Irish and French-Canadian, understands a bit of Italian and can say a few words. At the time of this study, Helen was at an intermediate language level in Italian. Helen could converse at a basic level in Italian, and she sometimes used English to get her idea across fully. Helen mentioned that she ran into difficulties when speaking with her family because of the linguistic differences between the dialectal variety she heard at home and standard variety she learned in school.

Persian (Farsi) HL Participant.

Arya. Arya's linguistic make-up consisted of five languages. Persian is her mother tongue and HL. She considers Persian, English, and French to be her first languages. In addition to these languages, she also speaks Russian and Italian. She was born in Iran, and both of her parents speak Persian and English. Her mother spoke to her exclusively in Persian until the age of 3-4 years old. She began to learn English through immersion in school starting in kindergarten. This exposure took place for less than a year, at which point in time, she was switched to French immersion in Grade 1 and continued her elementary and high school education in French. Even though she indicated English as one of her first languages, she only started re-learning English in Grade 4. Unlike her primary languages, her experience in Russian began in her undergraduate years of university. At the time of her participation in this study, she had just begun to study Italian along with studying Persian at university.

Hindi HL Participant.

Hannah. Hannah speaks English, French, Malay, Indonesian, Hindi, Punjabi, and Spanish. Her primary languages for communication are English, French and Punjabi. She learned Spanish in high school. Her French-Canadian mother mostly spoke French to her and her sister. Her Malaysian father was her main source for English. As a child, she spent more time with her mother's French-Canadian family. She rarely interacted with her father's Indian side of the family, resulting in little exposure to Hindi or Punjabi as a child. When she was exposed to either language, the moments were brief but intense. Most conversations among her paternal family members were in Punjabi and Hindi. She was extremely close to her paternal grandmother who did not speak English, so Hannah took it upon herself to learn Punjabi and Hindi. She desperately wanted to communicate with her grandmother. She grew up watching films in

French and Hindi/Punjabi. This exposure gave her an ear for her HL. At the time of the study, Hannah wanted to be an active linguistic speaker in the Punjabi/Hindi ethno-linguistic community.

First Round Interviews. The first round of interviews also occurred in Phase 1 of the study. In a private office on campus, I conducted individual face to face interviews with participants in the following order: Olivia, Isabella, Crystal, Stefania, Monti, Cata, Hannah, Arya, Helen, Daniella, and Marco. The interviews were scheduled according to the students' availability during the Fall semester. The semi-structured interview conducted at this initial stage of the data collection was guided by question prompts (Appendix D), such as: "What has motivated you to learn your HL(s)? Have you tried learning the HL in other places other than university? What language(s) was spoken in your home? What was the importance placed on knowing the HL?" A synthesis of information collected from the participants' background questionnaires and autobiographical writing also helped in starting and directing the conversation with the participants. The interviews were conducted individually and were approximately 30–45 minutes in length. This first round of interviews focused on the participants' ethno-linguistic histories and experiences. Their stories of being and belonging in a non-heritage community and/or non-HL classroom and the factors that support their heritage-ness or marginalise their place in society are relevant dimensions of this project. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and thematically coded for perspectives about language identity importance and maintenance, and its support in the learning environment.

Phase 2

Second Round Interviews. The second phase of the protocol consisted of a second round of interviews for learner participants. Interviews took place in the office. Once again, I

conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants in the same order as first round interviews. Phase 2 of this study took place at the end of the Fall semester and into the Winter semester. Once again, possible interview prompts were created in order to help guide the interview (Appendix E). This second interview acted as a member check, and to verify my understanding of participants' narratives from the first set of interviews and from their written language autobiographies. A sample of a participant's member check is presented in Figure 1. As Roller and Lavrakas (2015) indicated, "member checking is the technique used … to confirm the research findings and interpretations with some (or possibly all) of the actual study participants" (p. 43). Questions for the Phase 2 semi-structured interviews were based on the Phase 1 responses and the language autobiographies. Some open-ended questions focused on: "How has your HL development affected your sense of ethnic identity? Do you feel the current language learning experience has helped you in your heritage identity formation? If so, how? If not, why?" Once again, the interviews were 30–50 minutes in length. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and thematically coded after each sitting. A semi-structured interview protocol was followed once again, but the focus of this second interview was also aided by the information obtained from the language autobiographies. The same learner participants were asked to share their thoughts and perspectives about their HL learning experience thus far. The span of time between Phase 1 and Phase 2 was relatively short, as the second round of interviews took place at the end of the Fall semester. Some language classes were only one semester long and then the learner would move on to the next level. Therefore, another key reason for conducting a second round of interviews was to determine if linguistic advances from language instruction played a role in how learners were seeing the development of their ethnic identity.

Figure 1

Sample of Participant's Member Check (Language Autobiography from Phase 1 to Phase 2)

<table>
<tr><th>Language Autobiography Stefania</th><th>Phase 1 Interview</th></tr>
<tr><td>List things that you feel might hinder or slow down your learning of the heritage language(s).</td><td rowspan="2">Interviewer: Do your parents speak Italian?

Respondent: Yes, they both, both parents.

Interviewer: Fluently?

Respondent: Fluently. The problem that I have is that they speak their dialect

Interviewer: But do they speak the same dialect?

Respondent: They don't. My mom leans more towards her mother, so my maternal grandmother… speaking the Abruzzo dialect.

Interviewer: What about your father's side?

Respondent: My father he speaks his dialect… which is Avellino and Casetta.

Respondent: my mom said once they start kindergarten, we'll integrate them every Saturday and they'll go to Italian, learn the proper… standard Italian</td></tr>
<tr><td>Academic context mis-match:
- I have a hard time differentiating between speaking the proper Italian language (what I am currently learning in my beginner's Italian class) and the village dialects that I spent my whole life hearing (the dialects my parents and grandparents speak). There must be efforts made in order to properly learn your heritage language.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Phase 2 Interview</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Interviewer: what gives you the feeling or what do you see happening that makes it feel more academic?

Respondent: We had grammar exercises, we had like three books. We had grammar exercises, we had like three books….she gave us so many exercises to really like have it engrained in us. To me, it just became, I'm like, "I have all this homework to do."</td></tr>
</table>

Methodological Toolkit

Operationalising language socialisation and identity formation for this study was made possible through the use of an ethnographic research protocol designed for narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry provides a way for researchers and participants to build "collaborative stories"

(Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 12). In language learning studies, narrative inquiry provides rich sources of information about the relationship between language and identity in L2 learning and socialisation. It provides a unique glimpse into personal and intimate aspects of language socialisation (Pavlenko, 2007). Cho (2014) was able to detail one HL teacher's growing awareness of the dynamic and conflicting nature of their own identity while also discovering that they had changing perspectives about HL and identity. Narratives can be analysed and reflected upon to gain insight into identity exploration and how this exploration is being carried out (McLean & Pasupathi, 2012). Therefore, my qualitative investigative toolkit consisted of a background questionnaire (Appendix B), language autobiography prompts (Appendix C), and 2 one-on-one interviews with possible prompts (Appendices D & E). This multi-method toolkit opened up possibilities to document not only when linguistic and identity practices were acquired but also how and when they were acquired differently from what was intended in the language course (Duff, 2007; Duff & Hornberger, 2008; Toohey, 2000). In other words, I gained insight into the lived experiences of identity formation/construction in an additional language-learning environment (Talmy, 2010). The methods employed in this study set the stage for a bigger narrative inquiry to highlight identity negotiations and to show how narratives are co-constructed and shaped by social, cultural, and historical constructs (Barkhuizen, 2013; Early & Norton, 2013). This manner of inquiry makes space for the participants to reveal how their ethno-identity affinity is impacted or developed as a result of HL knowledge.

The questionnaire form (Appendix B) was presented during the call for participants. It was used to collect background information pertaining to the participants' overall language and identity descriptions. Following the completion of the questionnaire form, participants were asked to provide a written language autobiography of their language learning experiences to date

(Appendix C). The bigger part of the data collection came from the semi-structured interviews that were conducted in two phases (Appendices D & E). The two interview protocols (Interview Phase 1 and Phase 2) were conducted in one-on-one fashion. The first round of the interviews (Phase 1) was guided by a first set of interview prompts (Appendix D). The second round of the interviews (Phase 2) was guided by a different set of interview prompts (Appendix E).

Biographical Data. This biographical data was obtained through the personal background questionnaire (Appendix B) that each participant was given at the start of the protocol. As can be seen in Table 1, participants are either mono-heritage or mixed HLLs. The variation in their heritage background could prove to be an interesting factor about the level of importance of ethnic identity for the learner because their heritage identity is significant for their concept of self. While mono-heritage participants have one heritage identity to negotiate in their sense of self, for example an Italian-Canadian, participants with a mixed heritage background, such as an Italian-Québécois Canadian or Indo-Québécoise Canadian, have dual or multiple ethnic allegiances, and as such it is of importance to account for why they might be learning one HL over the other or potentially why they are learning both HLs at the same time (Mahtani, 2002, 2014). People with a hybrid or mixed heritage experience the fluidity of their identity as cultural straddlers (Lee & Anderson, 2009). Their feet are in two or more cultural worlds, and they continually negotiate their place and identity claims in multiple ethno-cultural and social spaces (Mahtani, 2002, 2014; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Wallace, 2001). Thus, mixed HLLs' perspectives can potentially highlight the multiplicity of identity formation. In addition, factors such as exposure to the HL in the home and/or through the community were not among the inclusion criteria; however, a key criterion for inclusion was that participants were choosing to learn their HL in university because there was no other venue for them to learn the language.

Written Language Autobiographies. The participants were asked to provide a short, written language autobiography of some of their language learning and/or identity experiences (Appendix B). Language autobiographies are a methodological tool that "involves first-person analysis of experiences of second language learning by those who directly experience them" (Benson, 2004, p. 12). The method is fruitful in providing more information for HLE by focusing on intimate accounts of language and learning experiences. "Autobiographies allow students to express their views on a variety of topics in greater depth than is typically allowed in most surveys" (Tse, 2000, p. 70). Their reflective accounts about their attempts to access HLE and to foster understandings of their identity experiences provided not only an intimate account of learners' experience of being heritage community members without having the language, but also a primary source of their experiences as HLLs in their non-heritage classes and the impact on their identity formation (Kramsch, 2009; Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Thus, their reflection is not only personal but also critical, in terms of the factors supporting or hindering their language use and development (Danielson, 1989).

In this study, the purpose of using language autobiographies is two-fold: a) to have a personal account of the heritage learners' non-HL learning experience, b) to characterise the contributing effects of this language learning environment on their identity development. Telling a personal narrative is a sense-making endeavour involving the construction and presentation of events in ways that can reveal how the tellers make connections between events, how they feel about those events, and whether they have embedded expectations (Early & Norton, 2012). Specifically, the participants were asked to recall and reflect on their HL experiences prior to learning the language in a FLC. They were not instructed to recall these experiences on their own. In other words, the participants could have talked about their previous HL experiences and

histories with others, for example family members. However, they were instructed to write out responses to the language autobiography prompts on their own. Some participants responded to each prompt in paragraph form. Others chose to write out their response in essay form. These prompts tap into potentially key experiences that can impact language learning: previous questions about their language knowledge and identity from community members, the need for identity formation, and the need for belonging. The participants were asked to do some of the following: (a) recall a time when they were questioned about their language and identity; (b) write down a particular incident related to inability or lack of ability to speak the language; (c) write down a positive or negative experience while speaking/learning the HL. Moreover, these prompts were intentionally designed to assist the adult HLLs in constructing their language autobiographies and to provide them with an opportunity to reflect on their learning experiences in more detail. The participants were asked to email me their responses prior to the first interview. Their language autobiographies were reviewed for thematic analysis with, as possible exploratory themes, positive impressions of language learning, identity affinity, or familial negative impressions for not knowing the language.

Semi-structured Interviews. In the growing body of research in HLE and identity, interview protocols have been extensively, and at times exclusively, used to gain insight into learner perspectives (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Duff, 2012; Kagan & Dillon, 2012; Leeman et al., 2011; Maloney & De Costa, 2017; Manosuthikit & De Costa, 2016; Norton & De Costa, 2018). A research interview protocol that focuses on participants' stories, rather than on what the researcher wants to hear, makes it possible to hear intimate accounts of different personal language learning experiences. Removing my pre-conceived ideas about the HL experience was possible for me because I focused, rather, on listening to their interesting stories. In other words,

I invested in wanting to know more about their story. Moreover, the interview prompts allowed for a co-constructed dialogue where each participant was the focus of the interview. Thus, interviews are not only a research instrument but also a social practice (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Seidman, 2013; Talmy, 2010). The use of interviews provides an opportunity to obtain a wealth of information, individual and collective, about language socialisation and identity maintenance, and provides a means to understanding lived experiences or realities for individuals, what is plausible for a given discourse community, and how members of the community share the ideas of that community (Pavlenko, 2007).

King and De Fina (2010) used interviews in order to see how immigrants position themselves in relation to US policies and context and thus reflect on policies' impact on personal identity negotiations. In Motha's 2006 study on the links between English L2 education and (neo-)colonialism, data that was collected through interviews and through conversations over afternoon tea highlighted the need to listen to and capture the voices of learners who are typically marginalised in education research. Canagarajah (2012) used interviews to gain emic perspectives on how individuals self-style their ethno-cultural identity based on their language. This investigation focused on HL maintenance from one generation to the next among Sri Lankan Tamil speakers. Interviews were used in Das' (2016) depiction of Tamil migrants' experience in Québec as a means to getting at the voices of this diaspora community. Guardado and Becker (2014) used interview protocols to investigate whether refugee and non-refugee family participation in grassroots projects fostered Spanish HL development. In three communities in Western Canada, their investigation described how the communities forged and supported ethnic identity construction/reconstruction.

For the current study, I took a semi-structured approached to interviewing (Appendices D & E) because the flexibility of this style of interviewing allowed for a realistic conversation. While the questions were not pre-established, question prompts were drafted as a means to orient the conversation on the topic of language learning and identity. Thus, the semi-structured interviews consisted of open-ended questions, such as "How has your knowledge of your HL affected your experiences in school and outside of school? What is your motivation for pursuing HL studies in university? How do you view your identity in terms of your HL learning experience?" Thus, with the aid of the question prompts, questions could build upon each other over the course of the conversation with the participants (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015).

Working with these ethnographic tools made it possible to provide a descriptive and an interpretative account of how learners shape an ethno-linguistic/cultural sense of self and becoming, an identity, by what they do or do not do in this language learning environment (Hymes, 1982; Shin, 2010). Furthermore, this protocol made it possible to speak to the underpinnings of learners' imagined outcomes in terms of their language learning goals and identity construction (Anderson, B., 2006; Kanno & Norton, 2003) by making it possible to view all interactions as potential opportunities for socialisation for all involved parties (Ochs, 1988; Schieffelin, 1990).

Analysing the Results

After the interviews were completed, the responses from the language autobiographies and Phase 1 and Phase 2 one-on-one interviews were reviewed and analysed through a narrative and thematic analytic lens. Narrative analysis was employed to examine personal and social interactions potentially experienced at both micro (family) and macro (school) levels of narrative production. A sample of the language autobiography is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Sample of Participant's Language Autobiography

Language Autobiography – Student Summary – Arya (Farsi)

Sometimes I would ask my mom for help, but through light criticisms and humorous mocking by my family *- I was the only Persian student in the IB class, and all others were in the academic class and seen as "thugs". This led to me denying my heritage and my heritage language, so I never had any Persian friends I could speak to and try to improve my language.* *- I met a few Persian students. Some of them were incredibly fluent in the language, but I had grown accustomed to never speaking, so I denied any knowledge of the language so I wouldn't ever have the stress of trying to formulate my thoughts in tangible words. Some of the other students were like me, and knew very little of the language.*	*language, as I saw it as a severing of a tie to negative stigma* - At home: (parents) - *They would criticize me for being "too Canadian", which in their eyes meant that I was lazy and selfish.* - *my parents have never forced Persian values on me, yet they encouraged them as they believed these values and morals were those of good/better members of society.* - Cannot identify a sole instance; its been a way of life. - *it is difficult to name a single instance where my identity was questioned by a lack of knowledge of my (heritage) language, as it is something I have struggled with consistently my whole life.* - trying to speak heritage language: - *when I tried to speak Farsi with my parents, they would mock me as I had lost the phonemes of that language, and would speak very poor, broken Farsi. They would tell me that I had become "too Canadian" and lost my own culture.*	*individuals near my age also helped positively contribute to learning the language* - *Learning to love and appreciate my culture greatly motivated me to relearn the language and reconnect with my roots.* -	*being criticized for many other things (my parents, especially my father, always had an idyllic vision of how I should be and he was very vocal with his thoughts, and as a result my self-esteem greatly suffered during my formative years* - School – classes: - *Persian class in itself can be a bit limiting – I've found that my grasp on the language has steadily grown much faster than other students in the class, yet I am not quite at the level of the native speakers in my class. This leaves me in between a rock and a hard place and there seems to be no level suitable for me to interact with* - Lack of community contact - *but I've not found quite a strong Persian community in Montreal – even Persian restaurants seem to be lacking here. Or else, the Persian*

The narrative analysis used in this study consisted of deductive coding, where information was analysed in a top-down process with pre-determined intentions for categorisations. These pre-determined intentions were centred on the family, potential learning experiences outside the family (Saturday schools), and identity claims. This method of analysis aligned with the semi-structured interview protocol employed in this data collection phase of this study. The narrative analysis unfolded over several steps:

1. I reviewed the information from their written language autobiographies. Their responses were categorised into columns according to the questions they answered in their language autobiographies (Figure 2).

2. Then, I revisited each interview recording and listened only to familiarise myself with the participants' stories. First, I listened to the interviews along with the written transcripts to get an overall impression of the conversation with each participant. Then, I listened to the interviews for a second time, but the intention was to observe any patterns in the data.
3. After this second listening and read along, I went through the transcripts again and highlighted interesting excerpts and coded the data according to the pre-determined intentions. These intentions were elaborated upon based on the depth and focus of the participants' responses.
4. Similar excerpts were then grouped together into overarching themes which were further defined into subthemes. This phase of organising and sequencing elements of their narrative gave me insights into how best to retell key aspects of their story on language and identity.

Confirming understandings of the stories was done via email with the participants. Aspects of their stories with strong links between language and identity within the theme of language socialisation sites of family and school were highlighted throughout the transcripts. Careful notes were taken to indicate the importance of key elements in each site of socialisation. This made space for reflexivity and looking at potential areas of dialogical intersubjectivity where the intersections of the peoples and ideas involved in their language identity socialisations were examined.

Thus, a narrative analysis protocol revealed the potential for multiple linkages and interdependencies between varied perspectives of language learning and identity formation at various points in time and place (Shin, 2010). For this study, narrative analysis made it possible to highlight the language ideologies (see glossary, p. xx) and discourses (see glossary, p. xx) that

had currency for the learners personally and within their varying social spaces, with regards to how they were positioned by others and themselves in the classroom and within their ethno-linguistic community. It provided a means to gain an interpretation of life experiences, making it possible to create a narrative profile of each learner. Along with the narrative analysis, I adopted thematic analysis, a strategy to discover patterns and develop themes from qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), to categorise all my data by codes and themes. As stated above, I employed the process of analysis that allowed me to identify the recurring and meaningful patterns in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). That process allowed me to: familiarise myself with my data, generate initial codes, search for themes, review themes, define and name themes, and produce a review of the commonalities and shared perspectives of the participants.

Once the interviews were completed and transcribed, the content was coded with conceptual labels to highlight the main focus of the responses. The conceptual labels were thematically coded for each participant and categorised under the scope of the following themes: “heritage identity,” “family language policy,” “language shift,” “school and community,” “maintenance efforts,” “mixed code,” and “peer groups.” These headings were pre-determined to a certain degree, based on the semi-structured interview prompts. The findings were organised within the framework of family and school as sites of HL socialisation and identity construction. The labels were then grouped into themes centred primarily on identity claims and self-styling, sense of self within the family or community, and cultural awareness in language learning. A sample of a participant’s coded transcript is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Sample of Participant's Coded Transcript

Roles	Transcript Information Marco	Family	School	Identity
Interviewer:	Fair enough. So how do you identify yourself? Like do you consider yourself to be French-Canadian, do you consider yourself to be Canadian, to do you consider yourself **[00:22:30]** to be French-German-Canadian - like what - how do you identify?			- ? related to defining self-styling – hyphenated/ hybrid identity
Respondent:	I'd say that's a really good question. I think I identify myself first as a Canadian, but I'd say also French-Canadian is strong - with like I'm not French-Canadian, like English-Canadian is not - you know I'm really like focused on Canada because I've travelled a lot in Canada and like I know this country **[00:23:00]** pretty well. So that's I think defined my identity as being first maybe Canadian rather than French-Canadian. But then French-Canadian is what I grew up in so I have a strong identity with that also, like there's –			- Canadian first but a strong sense of French-Canadian over "English-Canadian" - **(SUB - 2B) language knowledge strength identity claim**
Interviewer:	Do you feel you have an identity with Germany - or being German I should say.			- ?HL identity - Would he claim
Respondent:	I'd say that now I do, and that's probably - and I think that's the reason why I wanted to do this exchange, was to get the chance to go explore this culture that was **[00:23:30]** part of my family and try to - yeah, learn about it and give up maybe a bit of identity towards the German culture. Because like I said growing up my grandfather who was in was Slovakia and spoke German, he died before my birth. And my grandmother - German grandmother died when I was a teenager and, like I said, she spoke only German and English. So growing up I spoke only French. So there was a language barrier there that because of that we never really **[00:24:00]** - we were never really close, and never really got to have real discussions. We'd see mostly - we would see her mostly at Christmas and that would be it. So I thought that I didn't have this - like this heritage was missing.	- **(SUB – 1A) Without the lang sthg was missing in knowing family members**		- Claiming a sense of H identity now. - Have an opportunity to self-style

Thematic Categories: Family, FLC School, Identity
Colour code: Family, School, Identity
Sub-categories:

- Family & HL: SUB (1- A, B, C, D);
- Identity & HL: SUB (2 – A,B,C);
- FLC & HL: SUBFLC (1 – A,B, C, D, E;
- FLC & Identity SUBFLC (2 – A,B,C)

Specifically, sub thematic categories for family as a site of language socialisation (family and HL) were:

a) communicating with family locally and abroad,

b) feeling linguistically frustrated during family gatherings,

c) wanting to get a better sense of who they are in their family,

d) wondering if they really need the language to feel part of the family.

Sub thematic categories for identity focused on several perspectives on the relationship between their language and their identity (identity and HL):

a) feeling like an imposter or outsider without the language,
b) knowing that the language might strengthen identity claims,
c) knowing that the language might or might not be needed to claim an identity.

Under the second site of language socialisation, the FLC (FLC and HL), the following subthemes emerged:

a) learners' impressions of the class as a comfortable zone for learning,
b) learners' gains in terms of their imagined outcomes,
c) the impact of their language learning on family dynamics.

In addition, a second subtheme in the FLC centred on identity (FLC and identity):

a) on the link between the HL and their identity,
b) on whether they identify as a HL or L2 learner,
c) on the impact of knowing the HL on their identity claims.

Examining the participants' narratives in such a manner provided insights into their realities and lived experiences. The thematic analysis highlighted the different sites of language socialisation for these learners. This analysis, combined with narrative analysis, made it possible to see that the discourse occurring at different sites of language socialisation was an important factor in understanding how relationships shape and secure varying degrees of agency in a community. It highlighted whether different sites of language socialisation produce different discourses about the relationship between language knowledge and identity affinity (Showstack, 2012). However, ultimately this discourse reflects how identity is valued, supported, fostered, challenged, and negotiated through the dialogic relationships of the learning environment.

The methodology employed in this study also invited a multitude of interpretative responses to the subject matter (Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This made it possible to focus on understanding the way people make sense of their experiences and the world around them (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). A glimpse of the social reality that is being experienced by people themselves, in this case HLLs, will make it possible to describe a situation, such as the learning environment and pedagogy, or development of a state of being, such as identity formation, rather than attempting to capture stereotypical characterisations about a situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Holloway, 1997; Malterud, 2001). For example, the learners' responses in terms of how their learning has taken place in the non-HL class might put to rest stereotypical beliefs that all HLLs are taking these classes for an "easy A." I also chose to employ Bucholtz and Hall's (2005, 2010) "tactics of intersubjectivity" framework in the data analysis.

Tactics of intersubjectivity is a framework that allows one to describe how and why social identity is created through language. In other words, identity is tailored to its context, and tactics of intersubjectivity are focused on the ways learners/speakers position themselves and others through identity relations. Bucholtz and Hall (2005, 2010) suggest that an identity can be described by different dimensions, for example, heritage background or social status. These different dimensions are connected and intersect each other, and they are impacted by different factors, such as family or education, that can shape an identity. This means that identity should not be understood as "a pre-determined, fixed psychological attribute that a person has" (Donaghue, 2018, p. 101). Instead, identity should be seen as active and performative (Pennycook, 2003, 2004). For the purposes of the analysis in this study, I was curious to explore two dimensions: the tactic of adequation and distinction, and the tactic of authentication and

denaturalisation. Adequation emphasises "that in order for a group or individuals to be positioned as alike … they must merely be understood as similar for current interactional purposes" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 599). Distinction "focuses on identity relations of differentiation" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 600). In other words, what makes individuals' identity relations unique from others? The second tactic of intersubjectivity that could prove fruitful in my analysis is the tactic of authentication and denaturalisation. Authentication highlights how individuals claim an identity through a sense of naturalness of qualities that they share with the group. Denaturalisation is centred on how individuals dent the authenticity of claim identities by suggesting that these qualities are not essential. This framework for looking at identity claims potentially highlights nuanced perspectives about the heritage learners' language/identity claims.

Another essential component of my analytic lens in this study is the examination of intersectionality. Intersectionality captures the fluid dimensions of a person's identity (Crenshaw, 1991). While she looked at the intersections between race and gender, Crenshaw argued for the need to account for multiple dimensions of identity when trying to understand the social construction of individual realities. By extension, intersectionality in language and identity ideologies makes it possible to accept identity as fluid and ever-changing as well as fixed or stable (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). Examining the intersectionality of the learner's identity and instructors' perspectives about language and identity also allows for emic and etic perspectives (Pike, 1954) to be revealed. The emic/etic perspectives tend to be viewed as a dichotomous relationship which can be simply explained as insider versus outsider perspectives. Emic perspectives or viewpoints are accounts of social behaviour from inside a system. Etic perspectives or viewpoints are accounts of social behaviour from outside the system. These

perspectives are further reinforced by the concepts of experience-near and experience-distant (Geertz, 1973, 1983). Experience-near is a spontaneous unaware experience, while experience-distant is a conceptualised account of reality. It is believed that learners examining their HLL experiences shift back and forth between these two experiences during their investigations (Geertz, 1974) as they are reflecting on their experience as both a near and distant member of an ethno-linguistic community.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have shown how I attempted to capture the participants' language-identity relationship. I believe that HLLs are neither objective nor subjective in their reflections on the relationship between language and identity; they are both. Their emic and etic experiences highlight their dilemma for claiming their membership in a community. The intention in this study was to gain a more personalised understanding of the dynamic relationship between language and identity from the voices of adult heritage learners themselves. In Chapters 4 and 5, I present an overview of my findings from my time with the participants.

Chapter 4: It Started With the Family: Findings From Learners/Speakers

Chapter Overview

The findings for this study will be presented over this chapter and the next, Chapters 4 and 5. The information in these chapters comes from the HLLs' written language autobiographies and the one-on-one interviews in Phase 1 and 2 of data collection. I have decided to present the findings over two chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) because of the thematic nature of the information. Here in Chapter 4, specifically, I begin with presenting the participants' views and perspectives about their first site of HL socialisation, their families. I present the learners' perspectives on familial influences and the language learning and identity claims that have impacted their ethno-linguistic realities. While there may be some shared realities among the learners/speakers in terms of the role and opinions of family and community members and the effects of language knowledge on a sense of self, each learner's/speaker's experiences are unique and particular to their own language learning trajectory and the way they were socialised into the language and their heritage identity. "Although language and cultural values may be inextricably linked, they are experienced individually and separately" (Little, 2017, p. 200).

Theme 1: Impact of the Family on Participants' Language Learning Experiences

Family was the first theme that arose from the participants' responses. A language filters through the family (Little, 2017). In other words, the family is a crucial factor for HL transmission and maintenance. Baker (2011) notes that "intergenerational transmission of a language" (p. 49) is a key aspect of HL maintenance. Several of the respondents commented that their initial start in their HL was because of their parents or grandparents. Many grandparents and other family members only spoke the HL and spoke very little English or French. Therefore,

being able to communicate or participate in conversations with family members, primarily extended family, were reasons for learning the HL. Despite having little to no HL knowledge, the participants learned about their family and cultural traditions and habits. This was their entry point for wanting to learn their HL, and I tapped into this starting point by giving the participants an opportunity to express varying perspectives and instances that detail their HL/family experiences.

First, I detail the participants' experiences of knowing their family and culture without the HL. Then I pivot to exploring more discrete thematic subthemes, such as: (a) communicating with family locally and abroad, (b) feeling linguistically frustrated during family gatherings, (c) wanting to get a better sense of who they are in their family, and (d) wondering if they really need the language to feel part of the family.

Knowing the Family and Culture Through a non-HL

Maintaining a connection to family and culture and a link between family members far away was a sentiment expressed by a majority of the participants. There was the impression that maintaining ties to family and where your family comes from is of great importance, but in many instances the family and cultural ties were experienced through a language that was *not* the HL. While growing up, Marco and his family celebrated "things with Christmas traditions" like Saint Nikolaus on December 6th, and he was told stories about his grandparents and their journey to Canada. However, celebrating those traditional events and hearing about his family history were all experienced through French, the primary language spoken in his home. Because he never knew the HL, certain familial relationships could not be fully nurtured. He did not have a deep relationship with his parental grandmother because she spoke German and English and Marco

only spoke French. Marco recalled that he “never really got to have real discussions.” As a result, Marco felt that “his heritage was missing.”

Cata commented on similar sentiments about not having the HL to communicate with family. Despite her father’s attempts to track down German language classes in the small town they lived in, Cata primarily spoke to her family through Spanish. When Cata’s immediate family got together with the rest of the family in Germany, they celebrated and spoke about “traditions and stuff that came from the German family, but we never [spoke in] the language”; they all spoke in Spanish. “I know a couple prayers and songs that my grandfather taught me, but I know them mostly by memory now because I know what they mean.” This limited knowledge maintained a link to the German culture. Cata felt that the German language and culture were on the periphery of her upbringing.

Monti also knew his family through a non-HL. Since he did not know any of the familial dialects, he only knew his grandparents through French,

> I always recall having more trouble understanding what my father's parents said before they passed away and an easier time with my mother's parents. With time and listening, I could understand what's said but I'm not much able to respond to what's said because I don't know how.

Olivia’s Italian heritage was brought to America by her great-grandparents, but while the heritage and cultural habits were maintained and passed from one generation to the next, the language was not:

> My grandparents adapted pretty quickly to an Americanization, where they maybe didn’t want to speak Italian as much, even at home, and they were very quick to sort of adapt to

> new identities as American, even though they did maintain that sort of … the cultural heritage of the cooking and the language in some respects.

Despite her grandparents seeing a value in maintaining cultural links to their Italian identity, Olivia wished they had given the same value or sense of maintenance to the language. If she had the language, Olivia would not only be a teller of her family's stories where everyone was "sitting around the tables with big dinners and loud conversations, sometimes getting out of hand," but also a more active participant in the storyline.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Hannah really wanted "to be able to communicate with her [grandmother], to call her up and tell her how my day was." The desire to connect with her grandmother was strong, but she did not know the language, and not knowing the HL has strained other family relationships. "My grandmother spoke very little English and only Punjabi and Hindi, and as I've grown older I've been more and more frustrated at my dad for not making more of an effort to teach me Punjabi."

Unlike some of the participants, Daniella could speak a bit of Italian, "I remember my nursery rhymes were in Italian." Even though Italian was heard in the home, English was and continued to be the primary language of communication among immediate family members. When it came to speaking to her grandparents, basic Italian was used. In fact, the languaging was a mix: "sometimes we throw English words in with French but I've always spoken with them in [broken] Italian"; as she puts it, it was a kind of "hillbilly Italian." Isabella feels her father had his reasons for not teaching her the HL, but she could not escape from the feeling that her connection to family could have been deeper if she had known her HL better.

Depending on who was present at different familial events, English, Italian, or a mix of both would be spoken by Helen's family. Her exposure to Italian was centred around family

gatherings, “when the whole family gets together, we're kind of going back and forth between English and Italian and whichever language we're in, someone's kind of left out in a way.” However, many times, Helen was the one who felt left out because she could not participate fully in the conversation.

Similar to Isabella and Helen, Arya was also exposed to her HL as a child, but it was not the language of communication for her in the home. This limited exposure to and use of the HL created a distance between her and her parents and brother. Arya believed that the reasons her parents did not speak Farsi to her as a child had to do with her parents being focused “more on my brother. I don’t think I was really spoken to very much if that makes sense.” As her brother started to learn and need English for school, Arya’s parents made the decision that “we all switched to English and then at one point I sort of lost my ability to speak Farsi and so they almost completely gave up [on me learning the language] at that point.” For Arya, giving up on the language led to giving up on parts of the culture.

> When we were younger there would be more cultural involvement. Like we would celebrate the Persian new year … as soon as my brother left the house, we became more of an English-speaking household. Because my parents were dealing with me only, we sort of stopped engaging in these traditions.

1A: Communicating With the Family (Locally and Abroad). Before taking his German language studies more seriously, Marco said he knew “a couple of German words or short phrases that I learned through the family, but nothing that could be considered serious.” While traveling to Germany with his family, he found his language knowledge to be very limited. After the trip, Marco realised the importance of knowing German because his family in Germany only spoke German and he had to communicate with them through “my father with his

German from when he was five years old." A connection to the family was sparked, but Marco felt he would need to know and speak German to fuel the relationship,

> For the family I visited in Germany, they spoke only German, so I always tried my best with what I knew … it's really then up to the point where I told myself I really want to learn this language so I can come back and exchange with my family members here.

It was not until he went on a student exchange to Germany for a year that he felt his language skills improved quite a bit: "It is the only place where I learned the language, and it was in preparation for a student exchange in Germany. There I had the opportunity to speak with relatives." This desire to be able to speak to members of the family in their HL seems like a natural thing for the participants to want to do. Cata noted that she wanted the language to speak with her nuclear family who spoke German because it "felt almost unnatural to not be able to communicate with my family; we share the same genetic material but not a language." The language can bring family members closer together.

Stefania noted that knowing the HL helps familial bonds. "There is also the possibility for a stronger sense of attachment to your culture and family. There's a sense of togetherness and belonging that is created." Daniella also noted that family events dictated that knowing the HL is important: "[M]y parents took us to a lot of community gatherings but also family events where knowing Italian was super practical because I could understand everyone."

1B: Feeling Linguistically Frustrated or Embarrassed. Other participants commented that their languaging experiences with their family could be linguistically taxing. The frustration of not being able to speak to family, grandparents or aunts and uncles, was a reason for wanting to communicate using the HL. They were tired of needing other family members to translate for them. For Daniella, "when speaking to my grandmother … I will ask my mom to translate the

word or try to work around it by describing the thing instead and/or google a translation." In addition, Crystal notes that,

> My grandfather greeted me and began splurging Italian words very quickly, and I couldn't comprehend a thing. I felt quite bad, because he assumed I knew Italian … he could have been speaking of horse poo, and I wouldn't have known.

A similar sentiment was shared by Isabella. Isabella thought not being able to speak with family members or participate in family conversations was a key reason for wanting to learn the language. She felt bad for not being able to speak the language. "My Italian grandmother always speaks to me in Italian and I respond in English." Not being able to speak to family members led to a sense of embarrassment for some of the participants.

Monti wrote vividly about an incident involving his aunt:

> I wanted to help [my aunt] with the dishes and things in the kitchen, because it isn't fair to leave it all to her, but I could not, for the life of me, communicate what I wanted to do, and when she tried to figure it out I couldn't exactly help. I tried through French, but she didn't know French. It was a little embarrassing.

Meanwhile, Arya's lack of family support ended up being the primary reason for her to seek out language education, "[My family] hindered my learning of my HL." As Arya grew, her "grasp on Farsi deteriorated over the years, negative commentary provided by my family would discourage me from trying to speak the language." She continues by saying that she

> was far too afraid of being mocked, and as I was already being criticized for many other things … my parents, especially my father, always had an idyllic vision of how I should be and he was very vocal with his thoughts.

However, it is the thoughts of the other family members that had a lasting impact on her reasons to find the language and hold on to it. Arya goes on to say,

> At most, older Farsi individuals would somehow be able to tell from my facial features that I was Farsi and attempt to engage me in Farsi, yet tease me when I couldn't speak, and they would implore me to relearn the language so we could communicate, but also so I would not lose my link to such a rich culture.

1C: Wanting to get a Better Sense of who They are. For some other participants, knowing the HL was not necessarily to please a family member or to participate in family gatherings. Learning the HL gave them a better sense of who they were in their family. Hannah wanted to learn her HL to get a better sense of how she fitted in with all of her familial identities:

> French within the walls of my home, English at school. French amongst the white side of my family, Punjabi amongst the brown side … cultural differences between my maternal and paternal families, I was raised in such a way that led to the compartmentalisation of my languages.

In other words, her relationships with her family members were different depending on the language she used to communicate with them. For Arya, her family assumed that her Farsi linguistic skills as a child were poor and would not improve. This assumption pushed her to prove them wrong and convinced her to learn the HL as an adult. For Arya, phone calls to family consisted of simple phrases in Farsi, "Sometimes I would ask my mom for help, but through light criticisms and humorous mocking by my family." Her family would help her out and then light-heartedly mock her for not being able to speak on her own. When she decided to take Farsi classes, her family could not believe she was attempting such a thing.

1D: Wondering if Knowing the HL Brings a Sense of Family. For Olivia, getting to know or reconnecting with her family through Italian was a primary goal for learning her HL. She noted that a gap in the transmission of the familial dialect was caused by her grandmother, who comes from Italy. Her grandmother declared after coming to America in the 1940s, "We're in America, you've got to speak English!" This affirmation to let go of the HL impacted the future maintenance of the language and the culture, but it did not impact the sense of being part of the family. For other participants, knowing the HL has deepened or changed family connections. For Hannah, knowing the HL helped her connect "psychologically, emotionally, and personally" to her family and heritage. Crystal mentioned that knowing the language gave her opportunities to speak with family members in the language, "my aunt knows I can speak Italian." Monti commented that he was never able to carry out a conversation in Italian with his immediate family, so knowing the language could forge new familial connections and understandings with his grandparents that could not be fully attained when they spoke in French to each other. Moreover, knowing Italian could give him a stronger connection to family in Italy. It is "so strange, these are people that you are related to, but you have never met them." They are family without the language, but a different familial connection could be gained by speaking the HL.

Theme 2: Identity Claiming

The second theme that arose from the participants' responses was linked to identity claims, specifically, heritage identity claims. The participants in this study also shared their views about knowing or not knowing their HL and the impact that had on their identity representation. Blackledge and Creese (2010) noted that understanding a HL is not a simple, straightforward process of passing on language and cultural values. It is linked to identity as

well, and thus language and identity have an invisible link. Being able to express ideas and voice opinions in a language builds a connection to a people and a community. However, participants in this study may be representatives of a larger population of heritage learners, speakers, and non-speakers, who have been exposed to and immersed in their ethno-cultural community and customs with limited to no ethno-linguistic competence. In their language autobiographies and interview responses the participants expressed several perspectives on the relationship between their language and their identity, such as (a) feeling like an imposter or outsider without the language, (b) knowing that the language might strengthen identity claims, and (c) knowing that the language might or might not be needed to claim an identity.

2A: Feeling Like an Imposter or Outsider. Some of the participants reflected on how being in their parents' country of origin pushed upon them a link to their identity. Marco noted that even though he had had several opportunities for learning German in Québec, it was only when he was in Germany that he actually started to feel connected to the culture. Being able to have small conversations and to be an active participant in a conversation helped him feel a connection to the language and the people he was conversing with. He started to feel at one with his people. However, once the simple conversation got more elaborate in terms of content or context, his ease in speaking went out the window and a sense of being inadequate crept in.

> It went pretty well at first, the people I was talking with even thought I was German. It reminded me of the German identity I had developed during my year abroad in Germany (for a student exchange). However, when the conversation moved from small talk to more complex topics, I started running out of vocabulary and I started to have a hard time understanding and making myself understood. I would say that the strong identity feeling I had at first, when everything was going well, started to fade away and I began to feel a

> bit like an impostor. I was thinking I had sufficient knowledge of my heritage language but realising I didn't.

Marco felt a sense of being akin to the community because he could converse with them in the language; however, when his linguistic limitations were revealed, he felt like he was an imposter, in other words, not a true member of the community.

In addition, the impact of others' impressions can affect how someone views themselves in their family or community. Isabella reflected on a time when her immediate family made her feel like an outsider in her bigger family because she did not know the language. "We had a huge bonfire. About eighty of my relatives were all singing cultural songs that I didn't know and didn't understand. I asked my father to tell me what they were saying and he just shooed me away." Even though she was ok with this, she still felt as if she was

> set aside, as I couldn't understand the jokes and sort of felt like a nuisance because I kept asking what was being said. It seemed like no one wanted to take the time to let me know what was going on. This made me feel like an outsider.

Helen also felt that her identity was questioned:

> when I felt like my identity was questioned because of my lack of knowledge in the Italian language. I felt a little ashamed (might be a strong term for this case) that I didn't know the language I should know to be able to communicate with my family.

Because she did not know the language, she felt out of place with her own family.

2B: Knowing the Language Strengthens the Bonds to Culture and Others in the Community. Some of the participants reflected on their limited HL knowledge in a broad community perspective. Stefania stated

> that learning one's HL benefits you by being able to connect even more to your culture and people. I am not saying that you must know your HL fluently in order to identify yourself to that particular culture, however, I believe it helps strengthen that bond and connection.

Other participants commented that they feel like a visible member of the community but at the same time, they are not a member because they lack the ethno-linguistic knowledge. Olivia shared that Italian-Americans are stuck in a cultural limbo. She specified that

> the children of Italian-American immigrants have generally failed to retain the language of their parents. They haven't preserved enough of the "unadulterated" culture to be considered Italian, but neither has the heritage "Italian" yet blended into mainstream American culture the way Scottish, English, or Irish, or even German and Scandinavian ancestry has.

This caused her community to maintain a strong tie to a pseudo-authentic Italian culture, which has roots in Italy but is cemented in American socio-cultural ways. As her grandmother, who grew up in America in the 1940s, commented many years ago, "she would get aggravated with her parents when they spoke dialect to her at home. 'We're in America, you've got to speak English!'" Consequently, the push to integrate into the larger community and culture was the reason to perpetuate an identity that closely resembles American society but is rooted in Italy. In many ways, this history of integrating into the host community, but not at the complete expense of an ethno-cultural identity, has reinforced a hyphenated identity that many of the participants self-claim.

For some people, a hyphenated identity, such as Italian-Canadian, does not seem to be descriptive enough in terms of honouring all identities that a person claims. In these situations, it

is not uncommon for people to explain their identity with a descriptive narrative. For example, rather than using a hyphenated identity marker, Crystal comments that it is simpler to say, “I am half Italian and half French.” This small descriptive narrative gives her the agency to be an ally to both of her heritage sides. While she stands up for both heritage lines when they are called into question, she has been pushed to the point of doubting her identity. She reflected on a time when she was practicing ice skating,

> one of my Italian teammates pulled a comment about French people and insulting our other teammates, and right away I intervened and said “Hey, I’m half French, and you’re insulting not only them but me as well as my whole mom’s side of the family.” I was really upset by her inconsiderate comments, but what made me question my Italian identity was how she said, “Wow, you’re not full Italian, you lied to us, you don’t actually belong to the Italians.”

Despite the teammate’s claim that she was just joking around, “the words still affected me, making me think is that true?” She began to question the roots of her identity and how she made sense of her identity. However, she found strength in the realisation that “I know that it’s not whether I am half or a quarter that counts, but the traditions, and the values in my up-bringing that make me of Italian descent, as well as other heritages.” With this realisation, she feels that knowing the HL is not essential to help her in claiming her heritage identities.

2C: Knowing the Language Might or Might not be Needed for Identity Claims.

Some participants expressed other experiences where their identity claims were clear and firm; they did not question their identity claims. For Daniella,

> I have always understood and spoken my HL, so I never felt inauthentic or that my identity was questioned because I did not speak the language. In addition, I am also very

> aware that I am not an authentic Italian from Italy so I would never identify as solely Italian. I am proud of my Italian heritage but usually identify as Canadian of Italian origins and follow up with "my grandparents immigrated from Italy.

However, for Hannah, she expressed that "out of all the characteristics of identity, language is one of – if not the only – characteristic over which I have control." The cultural and linguistic differences between her maternal and paternal families created a "fragmentation of my personality and identity." Hannah noted that

> I most often speak French with my maternal family and friends. With this language comes the habit of excessive cursing, Québécois slang, and an undeniable French-Canadian accent. English is reserved primarily for school and for work – for maturity, formality, academia, and professionalism.

Within each context, she experiences a different sense of self. She notes that this can be a struggle at times:

> I hesitate to say that there is no true 'me' beneath these extensions, because the reality is that they are only characters adapted to the requirements of a given social situation. No matter what language I speak, I am always fond of my Indian ethnicity, but I am also undeniably Québécoise and I take pride in the extent of my English vernacular.

Moreover, Hannah feels that the best way for her to live her identities is for her to acknowledge each of them separately rather than try to blend them together into one concept or construct. She commented that she lives her ethno-linguistic identity struggle on a daily basis, because with or without the language, she continues to struggle to define herself, "It becomes easier to separate myself into standalone heteronormative pieces rather than assemble a mosaic I'm uncertain will be accepted in the museum of society." She continued with her assessment of how she feels she

is different from peers "who can easily and indubitably fit within a group or minority, I have never found the umbrella that fully describes me or accepts my multilingual, multiracial, multicultural experiences." She went on reflect on how she had "made considerable efforts to force labels upon myself by proving that I belong, including hyper-representation of my culture(s), disassociation with ambiguity, and the adoption of ethnic markers such as language." She noted that her "lack of knowledge in my HLs serves as an additional disconnect between me and my minority communities. Because my struggle to define my identity is so closely linked to my HLs." Thus, her attempts to learn her HL helped her attempt to claim a sense of self and a desire to belong.

For Arya, her ethno-linguistic identity was tied up in what others deemed her to be and claimed her to be. "[C]hildren who bullied me would find out I was Farsi, and they would insist on calling me a terrorist." As she grew up, she continued to hide herself from those who thought she was different. "I denied my own heritage for the entire time I was studying in high school – unless someone would ask me outright where I was born, I would never offer up this information candidly otherwise." As the challenges to her identity intensified, they created a negative stigma for her identity claim and caused her "to see other Farsis as people to avoid, rather than a way to improve my language skills. I did not quite care if I lost my knowledge of the language." While the feeling of being an outsider was thrust upon her by others in the community, she noted that her feeling of being othered was also brought on by her family. Her family always encouraged her to be a good member of the broader Canadian society while trying to instill Farsi values. However, even with the knowledge of and respect for Farsi values, her parents outwardly criticised her, "for being 'too Canadian', which in their eyes meant that I was lazy and selfish." Arya was in a Catch-22 situation; her parents wanted her to maintain Persian cultural values and

be a proper participant in Canadian society. They felt this could be achieved even if she did not speak the language. Consequently, in their minds, she was not Farsi. For them the language was needed.

Chapter Summary

The information presented above provides insights into why these adult HLLs pursued HL studies. Their initial reflections on how their HL knowledge, or lack of it, impacted their family relations and identity claims show that HL learning is not detached from wanting to form stronger family bonds or understand identity claims. The participants' brief histories, and their perspectives on their family relationships and identities without knowing the HL give the reader a sense of the dynamic link between language and identity. This is only one site of HL socialisation that was discussed with the participants in this study. In Chapter 5, I explore themes and subthemes centred around a second site of HL socialisation, the FLC, and the impact of the classroom on the participants' HL learning and heritage identity becoming.

Chapter 5: Learning a HL in a FLC: Learners'/Speakers' Responses

Chapter Overview

As stated in Chapter 2, HLLs typically learn their HL from their family, in their ethno-linguistic communities in the form of Saturday (or other complementary) school programs, or through private language schools. Regardless of the learning context, HLE seems to take place primarily at a young age. Adult HLLs are presented with fewer opportunities to learn the language in their ethno-linguistic communities. In Chapter 4, I focused on the participant responses that centred on the family as a site of HL socialisation and identity claims. There seems to be an unspoken assumption that adult HL speakers should have learned the language when they were children and through their families. However, many adult HL learners/speakers have grown up with strong ethno-cultural ties but minimal ethno-linguistic ties because of HL loss among or between generations. In other words, they have the culture and traditions but not the language.

In Chapter 5, I focus on the participants' experiences with learning their HL in a second site of socialisation, a university FLC which is a non-HL learning context. When adult HLLs seek out HLE, it tends to take place in a FLC. The data comes from the two sessions of one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the 11 participants. These findings are explored through two overarching themes. The first theme reviews participants' perspectives about learning their HL in a FLC. The second overarching theme within this site of language socialisation examines the potential implications of learning the HL in the FLC on the learners' HL identity formation, claims, and becomings.

Theme 1: The FLC as a HL Learning Site

In the context of a FLC being a site of HL learning and language socialisation, there is emerging research focusing on adult HLLs. Some of this research explores HL learning in tertiary education, and some focuses on the connections between learners' roots and the heritage community through the use of the HL. In addition, some investigations in the HL at the tertiary level explore learners/speakers pursuing HL education for practical goals such as professional opportunities (Duff & Li, 2014; Li & Duff, 2008). There are several studies out of British Columbia that have investigated the experience of HLLs studying in university language classes that were intended for L2 learners rather than HLLs (Nakamura, 2005; Shinbo, 2004). The responses of the participants in this study add to the discourse about HLE in post-secondary environments. Within the first theme, participants' perspectives about learning their HL in a FLC are broken up into several subthemes, such as: (a) learners' impressions of the class as a comfortable zone for learning, (b) learners' gains in terms of their imagined outcomes, and (c) the impact of their language learning on family dynamics.

FLC 1A: FLC as a Comfortable Zone for Learning (or not). From the stories of the participants in this study, it was revealed that the FLC was a safe space to enter into proper language study. Learning the language in a FLC gave the learners a space to make linguistic gains and mistakes. Many of the participants believed that the classroom was a space where instructors were actively "trying to make sure everyone felt comfortable speaking" to learn the language. In the FLC, making mistakes is part of the learning process, and receiving feedback from an instructor offered a sense of linguistic support. Consequently, learner anxiety is lowered because the FLC is the space to learn and speak a language without pressure to get it right from the beginning.

Marco felt that the feedback from instructors pushed him to a different level of comfort and confidence in the language. In addition, Monti commented on how he appreciated the safe zone the professor created for learning and speaking. When students made mistakes or stumbled in their speaking, “she [the instructor] was not harsh … she corrected [us], but in a very kind way.” This made him feel at ease to learn the language without feeling embarrassed when mistakes were made, a feeling he had when he would try to learn or speak the language at home. The safe zone for learning also gave the learners a space to speak. Cata felt that she thrived linguistically in the classroom because she and her classmates “were encouraged to speak” all the time. In the family situation, the participants would have been spoken to and would have been expected to actively participate in the dialogue on any topic. However, in a FLC, learners would have been encouraged to speak because the course content is reflected in the conversation exercises. With little pressure to get things right from the start, the language class gave her a sense of ease in learning the language. The class felt “like high school,” and Cata’s instructor “had a very relaxed approach to teaching the class, and he [the instructor] utilised a lot of videos and music to help get the students” attuned to the German language and culture. This approach made the class “very enjoyable because some things I knew, but some things I didn't.”

Moreover, Olivia commented on how much she appreciated that there were “a lot of opportunities for speaking,” and at the same time, there was consistent revision of “different grammatical concepts, which helped break down the nuts and bolts” of the language. In the FLC, the purpose of the learning environment is to give focused opportunities to speak that were not always available to students in the home environment. Similar to Olivia, Daniella commented that her instructor offered cultural characteristics in class through “his expressions, his mannerisms.” She enjoyed the class and learning experience because “it was great to reinforce

my base" of knowledge of the language. Helen also felt that she made many linguistic gains because of her instructor's determination to make sure that the class used the language. In the family, there might have been instances of code-switching that would allow for the conversation to continue. When this happens, it opens the door to an acceptance to not speak the HL. This does not happen in a FLC. As Helen mentioned, the instructor encouraged the class

> to respond in Italian, so I feel like I can do it … obviously, there's some words I really don't even know, but I definitely think that it [the language] comes [to her] a lot easier than it would have a year ago or two/three/four years ago.

The push to use the language, no matter if there are stumbles and false starts, gave Helen and the other participants the confidence to speak the language. Another language, such as English or French, would only be used if it was really necessary for comprehension or to aid learning.

Hannah also felt that her instructor created a comfortable zone for learning and speaking because he gave the students ample opportunities to speak in class; as a result, "every one of us is going to speak in Hindi or Urdu." Arya commented that her instructor would say "I love hearing your mistakes because it tells me what you guys are struggling with." Her instructor encouraged the class "to speak out a lot in class and especially answer the exercises in person so that when these problems arose she'll explain them, so it's clarified for us." This safe zone for learning the language made it possible for Arya to finally feel comfortable to learn Farsi.

While some of the participants reflected on the positive aspects of their FLC, others commented on what was not comfortable about learning in a FLC. Not all FLCs are taught or structured in a similar way. While instructors agree on core materials and information that should be taught, individual instructors do not necessarily teach in the same fashion. Some participants commented that the FLC was very relaxed, but Stefania commented that the FLC lost some of its

comfort because homework was a key element of the learning process. The class "was mostly communicative. She [the instructor] would want us to read, practice speaking with a partner through the basics. Who are you? Where are you from?", but there was also an element of language accuracy practice: "the homework was so prominent," and this impacted her learning because it took away some of the fun in learning a language. This instance highlights one difference between learning a HL in the home versus in the class. Learning the language in the home or natural setting is more focused on fluency and ease of conversational flow. However, at lower levels of language proficiency, accuracy, and practice are key elements of the learning process (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). Isabella also commented that focusing on specific linguistic skills in the course hindered her advances in communication. The class was "really focused on reading and writing, which was important but … I feel I still struggle speaking Italian."

FLC 1B: The Language is "not Exactly Foreign but not Exactly Familiar." Learning the HL in a FLC was an opportunity for the participants to get a more focused and concentrated exposure to the language. In the home, the HL might not have been spoken, or their family members spoke a dialect or variety of the language that is not considered a standard form. However, in the FLC a standard form of the language is taught, and this standard language variety might have an academic element to it. For Marco, the German he learned "was different than the German I would have developed if I had learned my HL through my parents or my family …. It [German class] is all about structuring grammar and speaking in the right way," an academic way. He went on to explain that the home version of the HL, "would have this colloquial style that is not taught in an academic institution." This gave Marco the feeling that "there was something missing" from the language learning experience. While "learning this academic style German is going to be my starting point for really moving into the culture," he

felt he still needed to discover the nuances of the language that might only be available to learn in more colloquial language instances. This is not hard to imagine in an academic FL setting, as a key element of the courses is to develop a standard understanding or knowledge of the language, especially at lower levels of language proficiency. At advanced levels of language proficiency, greater pragmatic awareness might be addressed where socio-cultural nuances of the language are explored.

The academic language was "not exactly foreign but not exactly familiar." Monti expressed this view when he was trying to identify with the standard Italian that was taught in class and how it mixed with the Italian he had heard and knew receptively from his family. Monti commented that his "parents and grandparents used a lot of common colloquialisms and not so much standard wording." This familial exposure to the language gave Monti a familiar base to work from in the FLC, but it did not match the version of the language he was learning in class. The differences between the two versions of the language left Monti feeling he was learning the language for the first time,

> I know I've had exposure to it [Italian] when I was younger, but now everything is sort of locked doors and sometimes you just have an 'ah-ha moment' when it unlocks, but then there are times you're learning it and all you can say is, "What's this? What is this? What is this?"

Noticing these differences left some of the participants questioning what they might have already known, and how to use this language with family members who do not speak the standard version as taught in the FLC.

Isabella commented that exposure to standard Italian shed light on differences that existed in the Italian that her family spoke at home, for example, "in conjugating certain verbs,

they [the family] would do weird things that aren't proper, or they're proper for their dialect, Florencian, it's not what they're supposed to do." In fact, Isabella commented that when she was speaking Italian to her family, they judged her in terms of the Italian she used, "Oh, you're fancy." In other words, the standard form of Italian that she was learning in the FLC was an "uppity" version of Italian to which they could not always relate. On top of that it was a formal academic version of the language standard with few informal items explored in class. Conversely, Olivia had the opposite experience. In her class, the instructor "would cover a lot of different aspects about the culture and dialects." As a result, her language classes not only gave her the confidence to speak Italian but also showed her how her dialects could fit into conversations in the standard version of the language.

Unlike the other participants, Hannah felt the classes gave her the opportunity to learn "a very formal academic version of the language" and build conversational skills at the same time. However, she was quick to comment that she would not speak this academic version of the language with her father because his Hindi was not that great anymore. "He learned more of a slang street Hindi, so the academic and very formal Hindi that I'm learning right now … doesn't really work as well" for both of them to speak to each other at the same level.

FLC 1C: Language Gains and Meeting Imagined Outcomes. Several of the participants commented they were able to make inroads to achieving their imagined HL goals. One common goal among the participants was that they chose to learn the HL so they could get credits for their degree programs or to complete program requirements, as was the case of Isabella. Choosing to learn Italian made sense for her field of study—music and voice. "To properly convey musical and artistic ideas, you have to have a great pronunciation and it's hard to do that if you don't know the language." For others, choosing to learn their HL completed an

elective criterion in their program of study. For all the participants, they chose these specific language classes because if they were going to learn another language to meet a program requirement, why not learn a language to which they are personally connected.

For some participants, their imagined outcomes for learning the HL were solely linked to familial ties. Knowing his HL allowed Marco to strengthen his ties to family in Germany; "we started from not knowing each other and not being able to communicate to knowing each other pretty well and we had a really good relationship." For Cata, conversations with family members could finally take place, "when we [Cata and her brother] Facetime them [family] now we say hello in German. We can't really hold a [full] conversation, so it's very limited," but it's something. The feeling of finally being able to communicate with the family gave some participants an opportunity to establish a deeper relationship with elderly family members before it would be too late. Monti commented that his desire to learn the HL "became more pressing after my father's parents died." Monti's maternal grandparents "don't have much time left," so he had a personal pressure to learn the language in order to communicate with family members while there was still time. Sadly, this was an imagined goal that Hannah would not be able to achieve. Her primary imagined goal was to have a conversation with her paternal grandmother and to hear her stories. With her grandmother's passing, Hannah was left wondering who she would be able to communicate with in her family; "We [Hannah and her grandmother] always had a strong relationship. I think she was proud that I was learning it [the language], but now that she's gone, there are fewer people that I'm eager to speak to in Hindi." Without learning the language in the FLC, many family relations would have continued to thrive. However, when the language is known, the connection between family members has a different sense of worth or

stronger cultural capital because language knowledge could likely lead to stronger cultural and linguistic maintenance.

For some participants, their HL imagined outcomes centred on instrumental goals, such as having opportunities to travel abroad. Within minimal or little HL knowledge, several of the participants commented that they would have met up with family and friends who lived abroad, but by knowing more of the language and having the comfort and confidence to speak the language, their link to family overseas and to the culture has intensified. Any future experiences in Germany would have been shallow if Marco had not learned the language in the FLC, "I had really basic language skills [before FLC], and I couldn't just go on my own." He would have needed someone else with a stronger knowledge of the language to help him out. However, taking German language classes gave Marco the "right way of speaking, so I can maybe immerse myself a bit better in the culture" when he travels to Germany. Cata viewed taking a FLC as a language opportunity that could lead to greater opportunities to travel and to pursue potential jobs,

> The amount you could learn and the amount of languages was always very highly valued in the sense that we [the family] were always taught the more languages you can learn or the more things you know, the more opportunities you will have and the more you will be able to do.

In this case, the generalised idea of knowing more than one language is an essential element of greater global movement and professional mobility. The fact that the language Cata chose to learn was her HL, was a bonus.

Moreover, Crystal found that the FLCs gave her the means to see her linguistic gains in real time and how that could translate into future opportunities. It was "rewarding to be able to

practically see that I can converse" in the language with others. She would feel confident going to Italy without her family because she could "ask how to get around, I would go shopping, I would be able to order food; I would be able to do all the things that you would need to do as a tourist." Learning her HL in a FLC gave her the means to do things for herself in the language. If she had only learned her HL through her family, she might still feel dependent on them to speak for her. This is because exposure to the language would have been high but speaking in the language would still remain low because Crystal would have continued to gravitate towards letting her family speak for her. When Crystal was in class, there was no family member to speak for her. If she continued to learn Italian in a FLC environment, she would continue to learn more, "there's a lot of things that I can't say in Italian. If I start talking about work, at a certain point [she would give up because] I don't know much in detail the vocabulary." This is not discouraging for Crystal. It simply means that there is more to learn.

Other participants noted that professional opportunities were the reason for them seeking out language lessons. Learning the HL in FLCs gave Olivia the possibility to see that she could work in Italy. Her "goal would ultimately be going to Italy, maybe working in Italy for a few years," and the FLCs had given her "a firmer grasp on the language which is something very valuable." Finally, for Hannah, the linguistic competence that she has achieved through FLCs has been reflected in her job advances at work, "I work for the Canadian government," and, "I'm the only one in my office that can speak Hindi." Knowing another language, and in this case her HL, put her in professional demand. Consequently, the FLCs gave the participants a sense of confidence to use the language, converse in the language, and move on through the language because the FLC gave them a structured approach to making linguistic gains that they might not have seen otherwise.

In addition, some participants commented that learning the HL in the FLC helped them reach an affective imagined outcome, that is, reducing a sense of shyness in speaking the language. When learning the HL through the family, some participants commented that they needed to be able to speak properly and fluently right away. They should know the language and should be able to hold conversations on a variety of topics. This was not the case for many of the participants; as a result, they were shy to speak. However, learning their HL at a manageable pace in a FLC gave them a means to break their shyness in speaking because it was a safe place to be an emerging language speaker. Monti commented that the feeling of wanting to speak to others but never really having the ability to do so was one reason he pursued Italian language studies. The feeling of embarrassment that he had for not knowing the language had weakened once he started learning the language in the FLC: "I can actually say something without feeling ridiculous; I can do it without sounding stupid." Prior to taking classes, Monti commented that "I feel the only thing that would impede me in learning the language would be how shy I am to use it because I'm worried about sounding like an idiot." Monti no longer had the feeling of being a timid speaker because the FLC allowed him to discover that he could speak the language and not feel like a non-speaker of the language.

The feeling of being a non-speaker of the language could also translate into a feeling of embarrassment. Arya mentioned that she "wanted to take it [the class] because I wanted to stop bringing so much shame to my family and finally to be able to communicate with the other members." Arya was able to break this sense of shame because her FL instructor supported her linguistic endeavours. This was a kind of support that she did not get from her parents. For Arya, the university language course was a space where learning Farsi was safe, and she gained confidence in Farsi that finally made it possible for her to see herself as a speaker of the

language. Her instructor helped Arya accept that she was a beginner learner of Farsi by telling Arya that "it's not your fault if you're learning your own language."

Stefania summed up the realism behind learning of the HL in the FLC context that would be felt by all of the participants, "I wasn't expecting to be completely perfectly fluent without flaw in grammar and speaking. I wanted to be more comfortable speaking the language." For Stefania specifically, she "wanted to learn more writing skills because I had no writing skills at all coming into this class." The FLC helped Stefania to realise that her ability to communicate with others had improved a lot, "I'm getting there. I wish maybe they would slow down on how much they're throwing at you and really give you the time to really master what you're learning." However, Stefania also commented that her desire to continue on with language studies was negatively impacted by the language learning experience. Being placed in a FLC and at a proficiency level determined by a proficiency test, or as a result of completing a previous level, did not give her the freedom to make her own linguistic decisions. Stefania's first-semester class met her imagined learning needs, but the structure of the class in the second semester did not; "I didn't like his teaching style." At the university level, you get the class that you register for and that is it. It is hoped that the learning environment will continue to be as interesting, motivating, and/or productive as others. Unfortunately for Stefania, "I'm not taking intermediate [level]. I've decided I'm not going to do it, and I will take private classes, or I'll just use the books at home to kind of help me continue alone." Some FLC environments will meet a person's learning style and some will not.

FLC 1D: It is not a "Target Language Only" Zone. For many of the participants in this study, the FLC presented their only source of target language input and exposure outside of their family, or even in spite of their family. The structure of the FLC gives learners a

concentrated exposure to the language. From a program or an instructional perspective, this might be the only target language exposure for the learners. However, for HLLs in the class, this is not necessarily the case; they might potentially have speakers to converse with at home or through their ethno-linguistic community. Some of the participants commented that the reason for seeking out HL lessons during their post-secondary studies was because they wanted the exposure. In other words, they felt that it was too easy for family members or other community members to switch into another language that everyone could speak fluently. In addition, speaking with family sometimes is not a HL zone only. It is not uncommon to switch between the HL and another commonly spoken language in the home. Consequently, the FLC was seen as a space for target language use, exclusively.

However, some participants in this study commented that FL instruction was not always consistently delivered in a monolingual manner. In fact, and probably without their overtly naming it, the participants had a plurilingual experience in class where English and/or French still seeped into the learning experience to either aid the learning of the language or ease the pressure to communicate. Marco commented that despite being in a German language context, his thought patterns for German were still filtering through his two other dominant languages, English and French, because at times both languages were used in class. However, the FLC allowed him to achieve a vocabulary base to be able to communicate better. In addition, Daniella commented that class was kind of "tricky" to describe. She thought learners should start speaking in the target language the moment they passed through the door of the classroom and that English or French would be used at times when students would feel "embarrassed and struggle with the language." However, Daniella quickly observed that this was not the case, "we [students] were always in English mode and only when the teacher forced us, did we make the

effort to go into Italian." The FLC exposed the learners to the language but also made space for English and/or French. This gave the learners the possibility to see different entry points in which the early stages of learning Italian used a shared language for greater understandings of the target language. In other words, she could have been experiencing a plurilingual learning context.

Helen commented that her FL instructor would switch "into English and French when she's [the instructor] translating a word, like a new vocabulary word or if it's a specific grammar question, or if there is something that's very difficult to understand." This was done as a means to help the learning of lexical items. At low levels of language proficiency, translation is a quick way to ensure lexical understanding. However, Helen commented that English and French also had a presence in the extra practice opportunities, such as the movie night and the book club hosted by the Italian Students' Association. For example, in the book club, students "can read the book in Italian, and you can contribute to part of the discussion in Italian … or in English or French." Moreover, Monti added that at the lower levels of Italian, the FLCs used a bilingual Italian/English textbook. Therefore, students were learning Italian through a dominant language. As the students progressed through the chapters, less English was present. This weaning off of English in the textbook pushed the learners to focus on Italian more, but it did not necessarily mean that English did not continue to have a presence in the overall class instruction. When the textbook was not bilingual, some participants mentioned that the instructor initiated the use of another language to help in the learning of the target language. Stefania recounted that her instructor would switch

> between English and Italian. A few times she'll [the professor] say a few sentences straight in Italian and then she'll ask if we [students] have questions. We [students]

would ask, “What does this mean?” When we didn’t understand, she would explain it in English.

She understood why the instructor did this; she was “trying to get us to understand” so that linguistic gains were accessible to all. Finally, Cata commented that switching between codes is a natural occurrence in beginner level classes; “there’s definitely English brought in when you’re translating words, but I think that’s natural. If there’s a word you don’t know at a beginner level, you’re going to have to bring it in in English” as a means to ease learning of lexical items. However, at more advanced language levels, the use of languages other than the target language is frowned upon. Isabella’s instructor made sure that the class was an Italian class, and the instructor made sure that target language continuity was “part of your grade. If you speak in English in the class, you get penalized” on a class participation grade. Whether the classes were delivered solely in the target language or in a plurilingual fashion, the participants felt that eventually being able to use the language with family would be a true marker of learning.

FLC 1E: Using the Language With Family – “Family Gatherings are Better Because I can Understand Everything That is Spoken,” but …. Now that the learners had more of the HL at their disposal, it was interesting to explore whether this linguistic knowledge translated to changes in family dynamics. The FLC gave the participants a lexical base to build upon or a structural foundation to use the language correctly, but it would be up to the learners to see if it gave the ability to establish or strengthen familial connectedness. HL gains made it possible for Marco to speak to family members; however, it did not ease speaking with his father in German. There was “a natural tendency to speak in English” with his father; as a result, speaking in German, “felt kind of weird” because they primarily communicated with each other in English or French. They know each other through these two languages; “it's my mother tongue and the

language I'm used to using with him." At times, there would be sprinklings of German in conversation, so having a full conversation in German might feel a bit artificial. In addition, Monti noted that he still felt like a fish out of water in his family because the language of the FLC was different from his familial dialects. His different familial dialects gave him a foundation to "identify the sounds of the language" when learning the language in the FLC, but the standard Italian that was taught in his FLC exposed him to "words or sounds that aren't exactly the same [as at home] … the terms aren't the same." Therefore, his school Italian was different from his home Italian, and this potentially impacted how he could communicate with family members. He might still feel excluded from the family language. Conversely, Isabella commented that before taking Italian at university she "could pick out things here and there [in a conversation] but I didn't understand the whole conversation." After taking classes, she "feels more included" in family conversations because she now has a strong linguistic repertoire to speak from.

For Crystal, the FLC gave her the confidence to speak Italian when opportunities arose. She made attempts to speak in Italian with her father. "I told him I wanted to practice speaking because the hardest thing was speaking Italian." Speaking Italian happened "here and there, and sometimes my dad would say something in Italian or I'd say something in Italian or text him something in Italian." Isabella noticed that "family gatherings were better because I could understand everything" that was being said. Daniella commented that her family in Canada has held on to their traditional version of Italian, but her family in Italy have gone beyond this,

> living in Canada, a lot of English and French words were added to the language, whereas they [the family in Italy] were becoming more standardized in Italian. The family in Italy were laughing at my Canadian family, "Oh, you still speak this?"

Thus, learning Italian in the FLC has allowed her to have a greater connection to her family in Italy because she would be speaking the same type of Italian.

Learning the language proved to be the glue that could bring Arya to her family again. While her parents never really asked her how her language classes were going, Arya mentioned that they were "amazed that I can speak better now. Sometimes, they were amazed that I finally have acquired some of the phonemes that I lost previously." Arya expressed that her awkwardness for being Persian without the language has disappeared a bit. She recalled times when she "would always sort of feel left out when they [other Persians] tried to talk to me, and then my parents would just step in and say, 'Oh, she doesn't speak Farsi.'" This will not happen anymore, "it's nice to sort of now be able to put my foot in, step in and speak my own thoughts."

Thus, for the participants in this study, the ability to express their own thoughts and ideas in their HL without the constant help of others was one key reason the participants ventured into HL learning as an adult. Since their language skills in the HL evolved from minimal or no knowledge to a basic conversational skill or higher, it is interesting to see the impact that knowing the HL had on their identity claims.

Theme 2: FLC and Identity

In Chapter 4, the theme of identity was explored through the family as a site of language socialisation and identity formation. The identity theme that is explored in Chapter 5 is related to identity formation or identity becoming due to learning the HL in a FLC setting, a different site of language socialisation. This context is the second overarching theme of the chapter; therefore, the second half of this chapter focuses on how learning the HL in a FLC gives HLLs/speakers a different sense of their ethno-linguistic identity. Specifically, I will explore and address the participants' views: (a) on the link between the HL and their identity, (b) on whether they

identify as a HL or L2 learner, and finally (c) on the impact of knowing the HL on their identity claims.

FLC 2A: My HL and My Identity: "Because it was Important to me to Keep This Heritage." The participants in this study made big linguistic strides and advances in learning their HL. In the previous FLC theme, I reflected on their imagined goals for learning the HL. One imagined goal that was a point of inquiry for this study focused on a link between knowing the HL and heritage identity claims. The participants' narratives expressed varying perspectives on this link; their ethno-linguistic link. This has the potential to provide further insights into discussions and research on the link between language and identity. In this particular study, the insights would highlight how the FL lessons help HLLs in their identity claims or formation.

For some participants, knowing the HL gave them a chance to grow into their "identity-ness." In other words, it gave them a means to claim a self-styled identity that resembles who they are. Learning German gave Marco a stronger connection to his German-ness that he claims because he "saw this [language classes] as my only opportunity to try to get to this heritage." Therefore, the language class provided Marco with possibilities to come into his German-ness claim because he could then understand and speak the language. As his German language skills improved and got stronger, so did his "connection with the culture" and his identity claims to his German heritage.

In addition, Monti held the belief "I've never not felt Italian-Canadian … that's how I would identify myself because I have this heritage." Monti stated that there might be something different in terms of an identity claim by knowing the HL, "I've always felt that it would've been much nicer if I was able to communicate fully in Italian." Thus, the FLC gave him the opportunity to forge deeper familial connections and, like Marco, a stronger sense of Italian-ness,

but it did not change his Italian-Canadian identity claims. Daniella commented that she felt "Canadian with Italian origins," and learning the HL gave her the opportunity to form a link to her evolving heritage identity. "For me, definitely the language [is needed for the identity claim], whereas other people still seem to have this pride and strong connections although they don't speak it." Knowing the language fueled her Italian identity claim.

For Olivia, there is a link between knowing the language and claiming an identity, but she mentioned that this seems to be situational: "in the United States, it wouldn't feel weird to say that I'm Italian and not have the language." However, in Canada "it doesn't feel right to say I'm Italian anymore. I always feel the need to say, I'm Italian-American." In addition, she mentioned that she felt "kind of disconnected from the culture" because her linguistic skills and cultural exposure were limited. Therefore, learning the HL led to a strong identity link that made her want to continue on with learning the language. She identified "as an Italian-American and learning Italian helped" her to claim that.

Stefania resisted the need to hyphenate her identity claim. "Maybe I should I say I'm Italian-Canadian but I identify myself as Italian," and learning Italian strengthened her sense of identity, because she found "it weird to consider yourself Italian and not speak the language. The language for me is a big part of my association of my identity to my culture. They go hand-in-hand." Stefania asserted that for herself, she "needed to learn it properly, reading, writing, to be as fluent as possible. Because that'll strengthen my bond to my language, to my culture." Isabella articulated her belief about the link between language and identity as follows: "being able to communicate in the language that originates from that place [nation] is a strong bond that you would share with the people and that would make you feel connected to them." Isabella felt "more Italian" when she spoke Italian. Learning the language gave her the chance to "understand

more of what my family is saying, and this makes me feel a bit more Italian." Crystal commented that the link between language and identity is a matter of practice. "If I was speaking it [Italian] more in my daily life I would feel a difference." However, because she was still learning the language, she commented that her identity claims might change; her identity claim was evolving as her HL knowledge was growing. Crystal explained that "language comes with the culture and if I don't know at least some of the language, then how can I claim it?" For Helen, the link between language and identity is not a factor in her identity declarations, and her identity claims are not necessarily at the expense of other aspects of her heritage. As a result, learning the HL has not changed or strengthened her identity claims or given her a stronger sense of being; "I'm Italian and Canadian or sometimes I'll mention Irish if we're having a full conversation about it [her background], but I'll say I'm half Italian and Canadian," unhyphenated and with or without the language.

For Hannah, acknowledging a link between language and identity helped her claim an identity. "Personally, it helps me connect better to my heritage by knowing the language" because without the language, she "didn't think I was Indian enough." By learning the language, Hannah was starting to come into a greater sense of self and felt more confident to state that "identity comes in within the context of how well you can speak or understand the language," and "personally I feel I'm more accepted if I have the language." Her sense of belonging has a greater sense of legitimacy because she can speak the language.

Learning the HL gave Arya a different sense of pride about her culture. "Finally, I am seeing my own culture in a positive light and I want to reconnect with it because learning the language has opened more doorways for me." For so long, Arya felt her parents denied her the opportunities to learn the language, and this had a slight impact on her identity claims. However,

Arya said, “I associate myself as Persian first and foremost,” and learning the Farsi language had helped her to say that “I’m proud to say I’m Persian.”

While the majority of the participants commented that their identity claims or sense of identity-ness were bolstered by learning their HL, Cata was the only participant to comment on identity claims linked to nationality. An identity claim may not only be an ethno-cultural link but also a nationality link. For Cata, if she did not have German citizenship, she was not sure she would be learning the language. “I feel I should know it [German] … I have the citizenship.” She went on to explain that,

> The mentality I have is that this citizenship allows me to move if I need to, so I think that’s where it comes from; the need to learn the language. I think if I had the Italian one [citizenship] maybe I would concentrate more on Italian.

Therefore, the German FLCs gave her a sense of legitimacy in being a German national. Her sense of German-ness could potentially get stronger because knowing the language would allow her “to be part of the country or the culture.”

FLC 2B: HL Learner or L2 Learner, That is the Question … “I’m not Positive Anymore.” The participants faced a unique challenge in defining their agency in their FLC because they were seen as either a L2 or HLL The class did not dictate their positionality. Instead, the distinction was based on how the participants felt during the language learning process that determined their “learner type” declarations. Marco concluded that “when I'm in class [university class] I don't have a German identity. Maybe it is because of the formal setting” for education. Therefore, when he was not in class, Marco felt like a HLL but in class he felt like a L2 learner. Cata felt that she was “definitely a second language learner of German” as opposed to being a HLL She also commented that if she ever went to Germany, people would see her as

"as a person who has learnt German" as a L2. However, she was quick to qualify that she was a L2 learner with the heritage. This is based on the impression that she will always be seen as a L2 or FL learner because of her distinct Spanish accent when speaking German. With an accent, people "will not think I'm a German German."

Monti felt that he was "in between because it is my HL but it's also new." Therefore, he was not a HLL, but he was also not a L2 learner. He is somewhere in between the two characterisations.

> I have been exposed to it [Italian] and I have heard it all my life and I do have some tiny phrases and words, but it's still new to me in terms of proper usage, new words and phrases, and ways of communicating.

Helen also said that feels like she is both, "but maybe more a second language learner because my exposure is pretty limited in terms of my heritage." For Crystal, she commented that a generational gap is a factor in her determination about whether she is a L2 or HLL. She is part of the "third generation or second generation [in her family] and I need to learn [the language] as if I wasn't a heritage learner" because she is removed from the source of who speaks the HL in the family. However, Crystal also felt her cultural links to the community were quite strong and because of that she does not quite feel like a L2 learner. Somehow, she is somewhere in-between.

Some participants who had an opportunity to learn their HL when they were growing up claim they are HLLs because they have a history of learning the language. Daniella felt like a HLL "because growing up I learned Italian on the side" in Saturday schools. In the first interview, Olivia was certain in her claim that she was a HLL "I wouldn't be learning Italian if I weren't Italian, so I definitely feel I am more of a heritage language learner." However, by the

time of our second interview, Olivia was conflicted about her stance, “I’m not positive anymore.” She linked this feeling of uncertainty to the difference between standard and dialect versions of Italian, “Maybe because the differences [between the standard and the dialect] are a little more accentuated to me now. When I hear some Sicilian music, I have no idea what they’re saying. That’s another reminder of the distance that exists” between the language spoken at home and the language she was learning in class. With this linguistic distinction, Olivia was starting to wonder if she was in fact a L2 learner with a heritage link to the culture.

Stefania commented that she felt like a HLL because her heritage was tied to her. She commented:

> I feel a connection to it … I’m starting to learn Italian, I feel a lot more satisfaction. I feel, I’m Italian for this reason. My culture, my religion, my sacraments are tied into this. I think that this [feeling] is something I want to pass down to my children.

Isabella also considered herself to be a HLL, “because I grew up with it [the Italian language]” in the background “but not really knowing it.” Italian “was always there but I just couldn’t grapple with it.” In other words, Isabella was exposed to the language, but without knowing it, she was not sure how she was connected to it. Learning the language in the FLC gave her the means to see how she is connected to the language. Hannah commented that,

> I think I am a HLL. A lot of people will ask me, “What's your second language?” or some people would say, “French is your second language.” That’s hard because I really grew up speaking English and French in tandem. They are both my first languages, but I think Hindi and Punjabi are both HLs and not necessarily something that I was really exposed to as well as I could have been.

Finally for Arya, “when I started this course I saw it as a FL of sorts, but now I’m learning on the sort of a slope. I see myself as a heritage learner.” Arya’s learning of the language progressed so quickly during the class that she was starting to feel a greater connection to the language.

FLC 2C: The HL has Impacted Identity Claims - “I Feel a Certain Identity.” All the participants have commented that learning the HL has given them the possibility to experience their identity and get a feel for their cultural roots and heritage, but each participant has experienced this in a slightly different fashion. Some might not feel like an imposter anymore, some might finally feel they can offer ideas in conversations, and some might finally feel embraced by their families. While their ethno-cultural sense of being may not have been fully impacted by learning the HL, the participants mentioned some small yet significant revelations about their identity-ness or cultural connectedness or disconnectedness.

Marco commented that learning the language brought him closer to his cultural roots, the “cultural side that you get in an academic setting cannot compare to finding it through people that are close to you or your family.” His experiences in learning his HL have been beneficial.

> I've had the opportunity to sort of try to get back this heritage, and I'm trying to look less and less like an imposter. I feel a certain identity with my German heritage, and before I started learning the language I had nothing at all.

Cata noted that the classes did not really tap into fostering a German identity. The classes just gave her the means to communicate in the language. However, Cata also mentioned that the language had “always been part of our family and I always do say I’m German, so it felt, not natural, but it almost felt like the right thing to do.” In other words, learning her HL was just logical.

For Helen, the language classes allowed her to see cultural nuances that are typical in the Italian culture. “I found it funny when we covered the family [language unit] in class because it was described as very close-knit, everyone lived in the same house, it wasn’t uncommon for distant cousins to get married to each other.” This made her wonder how her family was affected in a similar way. It gave her an entry point to learn more about her family’s history because she never thought about the family structure from an Italian perspective before. Olivia commented that while she has learned a lot in class, she was not sure how much the class is feeding into a sense of identity, “there’s not a heritage identity fostered in the class, per se.” She continued that, “I’m learning the language, but it’s not the language my parents spoke to me in any significant capacity; It’s not the same Italian that my great-grandparents would have spoken either.” She mentioned that by learning the language, “maybe a new sense of being Italian-American would develop; I’d be sort of a different breed.” For Stefania, the language learning experience had been rich and it helped her achieve her language identity goals.

> The class is giving me more confidence. If I’m going over to my grandparents’ home and speaking with them, or if I’m just talking to my best friend and she says a joke, I get it [what everyone is saying] more.

For Isabella, learning the language gave her the opportunity to think about what her identity means.

> I didn’t really think of myself as Italian, but I think it made me realize that I am very Italian because I am a first generationer. I use my hand gestures and I’m a loud person, you know. I think I identify with the culture.

Being able to speak the language made her “feel more connected to it [her culture].”

For Hannah, she mentioned that,

> learning Hindi and learning Punjabi has given me a stronger connection to my Indian heritage. I'm mixed and for 20 years I have struggled to realise what my identity is. Learning Hindi and Punjabi three days a week, every week for an entire school year has really helped me to strengthen whatever idea I have of my identity.

The feeling of being a cultural straddler lessened for her because she can communicate in the language as she tries to find and claim a position in her different cultural communities.

I feel that the strongest impact of learning the HL on an identity can be seen with Arya. She was positioned as a non-HL speaker by her parents because they did not feel she could learn the language. This positioning fostered a sense of negativity towards her culture because she would not be accepted as a member of the community without the language. However, the FLC had given Arya the space to learn and excel in her HL goals. She was able to see her

> culture in a positive light and I want to reconnect with it; I'm interested in continuing to stay immersed. I think this personal interest [in learning the language] and actually taking the leap [to learn the language] has opened more doorways for me.

The 11 participants in this study, the FLC seemed to help them meet their immediate needs to learn the language. Specifically, the participants have shown that when a HL class is not available or provided by a program or institution, FLCs can be a good fit for learning the language. Despite learning a form of the language that they might not have been familiar with or that might not match the variety that was spoken in the home, they learned a form of their HL that would give them the possibility to speak with their family, and enter into new language spaces that knowing the standard/academic variety could afford them.

At the start of this study, I had wondered if the FLC would be a proper place for HLLs because the FLC was never intended for HLLs. The participants indicated that they learned the

language; they have bigger vocabularies, a clearer understanding of sentence structure, an ear that is more attuned to pronunciation, and less hesitation to speak and converse with others through the language. These are typical or expected linguistic gains of L2 and FL learners. Therefore, the HLLs are not linguistically different from their L2/FL learners/speakers in terms of structural understandings of the language and in terms of metalinguistic awareness about the language. However, the participants show that their ethno-linguistic connection or their ethno-cultural upbringing does impact their learning. Thus, indicating that HLLs are different from L2/FL learners.

The participants come to the FLC with a history or exposure to cultural traditions because of their families or their connection to the cultural community. Their HL learning experiences in a FLC highlight that they are a nuanced type of learner in the FLC. The HLL potentially comes to the FLC with understandings of a dialectal variety and culturally specific habits and traditions that are associated with the regional variety. Moreover, the HLL comes to the FLC with greater understandings of colloquialisms and linguistic subtleties that might not be addressed or acknowledged in class. Furthermore, the HLL comes to the FLC with a wide range of cultural knowledge that far exceeds the stereotypical characterisation of who a speaker of a language is and what a speaker of the language should sound like. As a result, the HLL *is* different, and the participants' narratives presented in this chapter show that while they may face similar challenges or obstacles in the FLC, they are each different in what they take away from the experience.

Finally, the participants' narratives have shown that among adult HLLs there is a fluidity that exists in identity claims or sense of being that is not necessarily shared or universal. In other words, each participant's identity claim(s) or movements are distinct. While being able to speak

the language appears to give the participants a sense of legitimacy about their self-styled or self-defined identity claims, the participants were deliberate in stating that having the HL for their heritage identity claim is something that is personal. They do not feel that the HL is needed for the identity claim, yet they also comment that without the language they might be missing something in their identity-ness. It is a conundrum, because they have lived and experienced their heritage identity without the language or with minimal understanding or use of the language for many years. After actively seeking out HLE and making linguistic gains, some participants feel that their identity claims have not changed. This is because their sense of legitimacy or agency in their identity claims is a personalised definition. For others, though, learning the HL was needed to make them feel that they can rightfully claim to be a member of their cultural community. Thus, learning the HL, even if it took place in a FLC, seems to have anchored the participants in either their identity claim or their cultural connectedness.

As I have mentioned above, many of the participants in this study have commented that the HL is needed in order to feel or deepen their link to their culture and family/community and to help them embrace their identity claims. However, they also mention that that stance is a personal position. In other words, everyone would have to determine the strength of or need for the HL and heritage identity link for themselves. Some of the comments were as follows: “I don’t think you need the language to have the identity,” or “other people still seem to have this pride and strong connections although they don’t speak it.” The participants do not seem to support the ideology that the language is needed to claim the identity. Many of them do not support the idea that “if you do not speak it [the HL], then you are not” a member of the community.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented participants' voices about their individual HL learning experiences in a FLC setting. A summary of the themes and perspectives that emerged from the findings are presented in Table 3:

Table 3

Summary of Findings

Themes	Subthemes	Learner perspectives
Family & HL	1A: Communicating with the family (locally and abroad) 1B: Feeling linguistically frustrated or embarrassed 1C: Wanting to get a better sense of who they are 1D: Wondering if knowing the HL brings a sense of family	Not knowing the HL: - Impacted some participants connections to their family members. - Left some participants with a sense of frustration to not be able to communicate with family. - Left some participants with the feeling that they could know themselves better through knowing the HL. - Left some participants wondering if HL knowledge would bring them closer to family.
Identity & HL	2A: Feeling like an imposter or outsider 2B: Knowing the language strengthens the bonds to culture and others in the community 2C: Knowing the language might or might not be needed for identity claims	Not knowing the HL: - Left some participants feeling like an imposter to their culture. - Left some participants feeling like they know the culture but what they know or have experienced is not enough. - Highlighted that HL knowledge might strengthen their sense of who they are in their community. - Did not leave some participants with the feeling that they needed to know the HL to claim the identity. This is an individual claim.
FLC & HL	FLC 1A: FLC as a comfortable zone for learning (or not) FLC 1B: The language is "not exactly foreign but not exactly familiar" FLC 1C: Language gains and meeting imagined outcomes FLC 1D: It is not a "Target Language Only" zone	FLCs - Were comfortable spaces to learn because mistakes were welcomed and learner anxiety was low. - Taught a variety of the language that was a standard form or academic version that was different from the variety they spoke at home. - Made it possible to learn the language and meet varying imagine outcomes, but some participants felt that imagined outcomes for identity were not met.

	FLC 1E: Using the language with family – "family gatherings are better because I can understand everything that is spoken," but …	- Presented some participants with their only source of HL exposure, but the target language was not the only language used in class. - Gave some participants enough language to be active participants in family gatherings with the HL.
FLC & Identity	FLC 2A: My HL and My Identity: "because it was important to me to keep this heritage" FLC 2B: HL learner or L2 learner, that is the question … "I'm not positive anymore" FLC 2C: The HL has impacted identity claims – "I feel a certain identity"	FLCs - Gave some participants a chance to grow into their "identity-ness." In other words, it gave them a means to claim a self-styled identity that resembles who they are through HL knowledge. - Gave some participants the feeling that despite their cultural link to the language, they are similar to FL learners in their linguistic competence, but there is still something that makes them different. - Gave the participants an entry point to explore their identity and their identity claims in their own individual ways.

The information shared is honest, it is reflective, and it is rich. These HLLs/speakers presented how their HL learning experience in a non-HL learning environment added to their HL learning journey. From their early HL experience with their families, as detailed in Chapter 4, to their HL learning experience in a university classroom, the participants in this study gave insights into what it is like to be an adult HL learner/speaker. They also reflected on how their heritage identity claim has been impacted by learning their HL language. From their words, their stories, there is greater insight into what adult HLLs/speakers experience in their journey to learning their HL. In Chapter 6, I continue this thesis by reflecting on the implications of the participants' stories in the bigger picture of HL socialisation and identity formation. Their stories show that it is not a linear progression, but it is potentially a fruitful one.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications

Chapter Overview

In Chapter 6, I revisit and discuss the key themes that emerged from the participants' stories about their HL learning journeys, within a theoretical underpinning based in ethno-linguistic maintenance and identity formation. I do this by reflecting on the three specific points of inquiry I presented in Chapter 3. Within this chapter, I reflect on the data in an interpretative fashion to form relations between prior and current research. In addition, I discuss the implications of the findings, which tapped into the different perspectives on the participants' ethno-linguistic realities. The link between language and identity is multi-dimensional. There are many layers to the language/identity relationship. The findings in this study will help language educators acknowledge some of the factors that shape a person's identity, specifically the impact of learning a HL in a non-HL environment. Identity construction is complex and often difficult to unpack, because its formation is ongoing and encompasses socially co-constructed relations and discourse practices (Block, 2007; Duff, 2007; Gee, 2005; Shi, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978; Watson-Gegeo, 2004). This study is ultimately about language and identity awareness in language education which could benefit from deeper insights from CLA ideologies that are needed in language pedagogy (Beaudrie et al., 2021; Loza & Beaudrie, 2021). A key goal of this study was to see what the language learning experiences and identity claims of adult HLLs could offer to future understandings of language awareness in language education.

Points of Inquiry Revisited

In Chapter 3, Methodology, I presented an overarching point of inquiry, which focused on the questions "what value or capital do HLLs gain by knowing their HL, and how does this

impact their ethno-linguistic identities?" More discrete points of inquiry were related to the following research questions:

1. What impressions do HLLs have of their university language classes in terms of their linguistic gains in their HL?
2. How are the imagined outcomes of an investment in their ethno-cultural identity fostered by the language-learning environment, a foreign language classroom?
3. From the perspective of HLLs, how does knowing their HL impact their sense of heritage identity and how is the HL valued or acknowledged in the learning environment?

By revisiting these points of inquiry, I was able to get a picture of the language socialisation and potential identity formation of the HLLs.

Situating Points of Inquiry About Language, Identity, and Language Socialisation

In exploring the invisible thread that ties language to identity, I took up a socio-cultural stance towards language learning and identity claims. The goal was not to see what a language learning environment could teach HLLs about their identity, but rather to see what social factors impact the language-identity link. I was primarily interested in exploring familial entry points into learning a HL. In addition to these entry points, I wanted to explore classroom contexts for learning, and their impact on a sense of belonging and self-styling of one's identity (Canagarajah, 2012). When reviewing the narratives, I discovered that some familial and educational experiences among the participants were shared and some were uniquely individual. Despite the reasons why they did not make many HL gains in the family home, all the participants expressed that the FLC at the time of this study was their preferred option for pursuing the learning of the HL as an adult. Throughout their educational journey, the participants' reasons, desires, and need to learn and speak the HL fluctuated (Latham Keh &

Stoessel, 2017). Like identity construction, their HL learning trajectories experienced ebbs and flows of false starts, stops, and restarts.

The participants expressed varying reasons for continuing or not continuing on with HL studies in a tertiary educational environment. After completing a semester or two or more of language courses, these participants were able to speak with their family members, with community members, and were able to identify with cultural artifacts and traditions that they were exposed to through their contact with the ethno-cultural community. Despite the linguistic gains, some participants chose to continue on with their HLE in a FLC for very practical reasons, such as limited course selection outside the chosen language program or completion of other courses for program completion. For other participants, the FLC might not be the best context for learning the HL. This is because the structure of the course was not conducive to their learning style or because they felt their linguistic gains were good enough to get by. Therefore, they might choose to continue their HLE through a private school, online lessons, independent study, or through travel and immersion in the cultural community. They might even decide to continue their learning with their family members because they have a foundation in the language structure and a greater sense of how to communicate in the language. They gained this foundation from HLE in the classroom, but their HL development will grow through their interactions with HL speakers and the community.

However, at the first site of language socialisation, the family and the decisions of the family have impacted the longevity and linguistic learning curve of the HL, potentially for generations. At the second, school has given the participants an opportunity to learn a language with which they culturally identify. This identification with the language is not necessarily cultivated in a FLC because the primary objective in FLCs is to engage learners in a form of

language learning that is structured according to linguistic guidelines and rules, rather than being a natural acquisition setting (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

Moreover, language socialisation in a classroom setting exposes learners to a standard version of the language rather than a familial dialectal version. Their exposure is primarily limited to the classroom, where the teacher is most likely the only proficient speaker in the room. Errors are corrected with a metalinguistic awareness which may not be evident in a natural acquisition setting. In a natural acquisition setting, learners are exposed to language at home, or in social situations where others are native speakers of the language. In other words, the language is not presented in a step-by step approach. In a natural setting, a learner would also have opportunities to participate in a wide range of cultural events in the target language (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). At either site of socialisation, and regardless of whether the setting for acquisition is structured or natural, language socialisation is bidirectional (Duff & Talmy, 2011; Xiao-Desai, 2018); therefore, it depends on a dialogical relationship based on fruitful exchanges and uptakes between novice and expert. This demands that a learner has agency in their learning, which impacts their identity construction. Thus, it is of importance to recognise that HL socialisation represents a "twist in the interface of language learning and socialisation in identity construction" (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011, p. 16), because across time and space heritage learners will experience "multiple socialisation sites, … reflecting complex and fluid cultural norms, beliefs, and values" (Xiao-Desai, 2018, p. 465). In addition, there seems to be the responsibility of the individual to forge connections at these sites. There is an awareness that it is not possible to recreate L1 socialisation for adult HLLs. Moreover, there is an understanding that L2 socialisation taps into different issues about language and identity. Furthermore, an issue that

would not necessarily come up in L1 or L2 socialisation is the potential stigma or shame thrust upon adult HLLs by family and/or peers for not knowing the HL.

The family may have been the initial HL socialisation site for HL maintenance, but, ironically, it was the site where many of the participants mentioned that they did not fully maintain, or potentially even lost, their HL. Language exposure in the family was limited to cultural droplets: subtitled movies, songs, recipes, jokes and conversations at the dinner table, and occasional trips to the home country. In many of these instances, conversations in the HL happened around some of the learners with an attempt to involve them in conversations, but not truly engaging them. Therefore, there were many opportunities for exposure; however, the linguistic exposure was inconsistent in terms of amount of time or type of context. Moreover, language exposure could have been limited to one speaker; for example, one parent is designated as the HL purveyor and the other parent is the purveyor for a dominant language. As a result, many of the participants had HL word knowledge that might have been receptive rather than productive. Therefore, they could understand what was being said or the general gist of what was being said, but they could not always respond in the HL, or else their responses were a broken mix of language codes consisting of short exclamations or one-word responses. Fuller responses would be in either English or French or another common home language. In some ways they were "cultural comprehenders" who could make "inferences about what utterances mean given their knowledge of the speaker, language, and context" (Goodman & Frank, 2016, p. 818). However, the participants were also viewed as "HL offenders" since they could not respond in the language. With this construct, I highlight that several of the participants spoke about being teased or made fun of by family members (Arya, Monti), peers (Olivia), or the community because they could not speak the HL. In the eye of some in their cultural community, these

participants are HL offenders because they are not carrying on the language in a "traditional" manner. Moreover, some community or family members might be proud of the participant's linguistic gain, but others might feel that their language and conversational skills are too formal or structured. Therefore, the lack of a "natural" quality to their languaging can result in an othering along the lines of offending other HLL or speakers. I now turn to addressing the discrete points of inquiry of the study that are centred in the FLC as the HL socialisation site.

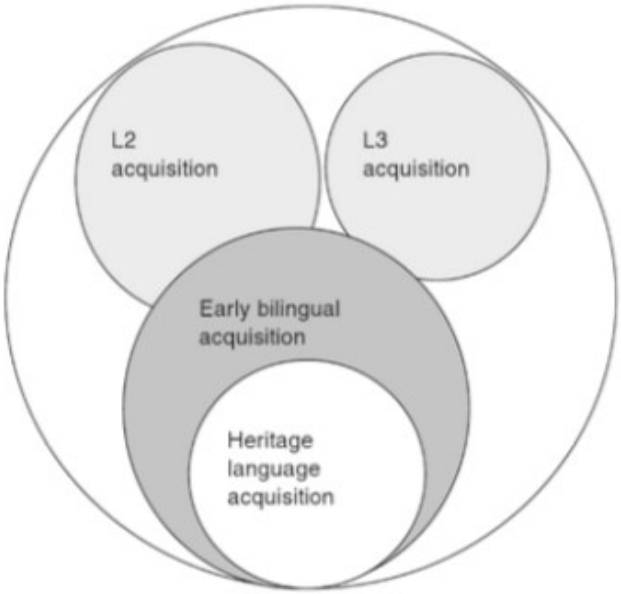
What Impressions do HL Learners Have of Their University Language Classes in Terms of Their Linguistic Gains in Their HL? Learning the HL through the family or in community-based schools at young age is the stereotypical HLE background for a HLL. However, when the language is not spoken in the family or when community-based programs are not available due to lack of community support or lack of public funding for minority languages (Duff, 2008a; Duff & Becker-Zayas, 2017; Ricento & Cervatiuc, 2010), HLE is sought out in other language learning streams. For adult HLLs, taking language lessons at university has been the next best option. When true HL courses are available in university, for example, Spanish and Russian for heritage learners, HLLs potentially get a chance to learn the language with other HL learners and speakers who potentially have a similar language background to themselves. These courses are typically designed with some of the following criteria in mind: (1) a familiarity with the language often because of childhood upbringings, and (2) medium to advanced knowledge in their HL or mother tongue. However, HL courses tend to be few and far between in post-secondary settings (Li & Duff, 2008). When these courses are not available, the same HLLs seek out language education in FL programs. Are these language programs a good fit for the HLL. There are reasons to believe that the pedagogical materials and methods for the L2 classrooms "may not be transferable to the HL context" (Zyzik, 2016, p. 20). In other words, the methods for

the FL classroom may not be relatable to HLL. In her paper on mixed classes with heritage and second language learners, Fernández-Dobao (2020) stressed that this dynamic can pose challenges for students and educators because mixed-learner classes draw attention to the language differences between the learners. A replication study comparing Spanish native speakers, L2 learners, and HLLs' performance on language tasks revealed that HLLs have strong implicit knowledge for oral narration or oral imitation, but they show weak metalinguistic knowledge. It is the metalinguistic focus, however, that tends to be a predominant instructional focus in the L2 or FL classroom (Bowles, 2011). The primary focus would be learning language skills and metalinguistic knowledge without promoting the learners' existing multilingual and multicultural identities and socio-cultural knowledges.

In order to determine if the FLC is a good fit for HLLs, it is important to see how the HLL is viewed in multilingual acquisition settings. Typically, mainstream language learning ideologies would describe HL education as taking place at the same time as L1 acquisition. This is represented in Figure 4 (Montrul, 2016, p. 7) which highlights multilingual language acquisition:

Figure 4

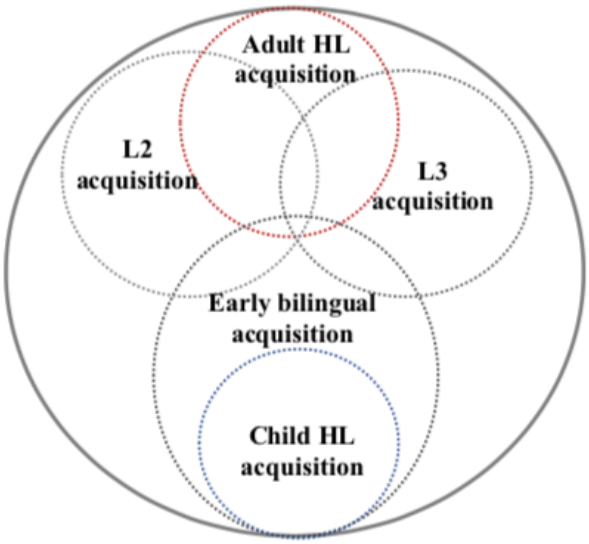
Heritage Language Acquisition as Another Instance of Multilingual Language Acquisition



This model would seem to show that HL acquisition, like L1 acquisition, would follow some kind of longitudinal timeline or learning progression. However, I find this to be a narrow representation of only one type of HLL. The participants of this study have shown that exposure to the HL at an early stage of language acquisition does not necessarily result in language acquisition. In fact, based on the participants' experiences, I would propose that an altered version of this figure, Figure 5, should embrace adult learners who learn the HL after proficiency in an L1, L2, or L3, for some participants in this study only attempted to learn their HL as an adult.

Figure 5

Proposed Alternate View of Montrul's (2016) Heritage Language Acquisition as Another Instance of Multilingual Language Acquisition



This altered view would show that HL acquisition is similar to L2 or L3 acquisition in terms of the age of acquisition/learning. Moreover, this altered view would indicate that the languages that make up an individual's multilingual repertoire are not linguistic silos that overlap each other. Instead, languages in the repertoire would intersect each other. The blurred linguistic lines would show that different funds of knowledge could aid in language development and use. It would also highlight that multilingual speakers have their whole linguistic repertoire at their disposal when learning or using language. Furthermore, it would indicate that HLLs are potentially on an equal footing with their FL classmates in terms of their linguistic knowledge, spanning a language proficiency spectrum from no or little language knowledge to high language competence. Several of the participants in this study commented that their HL proficiency prior

to starting the FLC was strong in comprehension but limited in production or metalinguistic understanding (Duff & Doherty, 2019; Polinsky, 2015; Weger-Guntharp, 2008). This characterises many L2 and FL learners alike. What distinguishes the HLL from the FL learner is that FL learners typically have "no significant familiarity with, or connection to, the language and culture" (Li & Duff, 2008, p. 15). The participants in this study felt a different sense of commitment and responsibility, for example to their family or feeling of connectedness to a community. Because of this sense of responsibility, they chose to invest in the FL learning space because other opportunities were not as fruitful or time did not necessarily allow learning to take place otherwise. This space would provide HLLs with different learning experiences and meanings than those of their home, communities, and their childhood HL learning.

In this study, I have asked the participants whether their university level FLCs have been a good fit for their HLE or HL gains. Several of the participants mentioned that their course met their linguistic needs because they learned to speak the language. That is, a fundamental goal of making linguistic gains in their HL was met. However, a few of the participants reflected on how the academic rigor of the course was a mismatch for their desired HL outcomes. They were not necessarily interested in cloze activities, assignments, or tests. In addition, the FLC is heavily oriented to teaching a standard variety of the language, or registers that are geared towards formal and academic tones of writing and speaking. They wanted an opportunity to learn a conversational version of the language; a version of the language that would help them participate more fully in what is being said at the dinner table. Consequently, this highlights that language classes need to rethink the pragmatics of "conversing informally".

Several of the participants also commented that their presence in the FLC was questioned by some of their FL classmates. One reason is the anecdotal "easy A." There is potentially the

impression by their FL classmates that the HL students were able to get high marks easily because they have already been exposed to the language through their family (Duff & Doherty, 2019; Li & Duff, 2008). However, several of the participants mentioned that this idea of the "easy A" is somewhat of a misnomer, because, like their FL classmates, the participants in this study were experiencing this language in a formal educational context for the first time. While the participants mentioned that they learned a lot about the language and about structural aspects of the language, some did not necessarily think they needed to continue on with studies beyond the level that they had already achieved. They had a foundation, and for many of the participants this was all they needed in order for them to continue to foster their HL needs on their own. Latham Keh and Stoessel's (2017) study of a German/Polish family's HL maintenance showed that reconnecting to their HL had a strong link to age. In their study, adult sibling HLLs reflected on how their father wanted them to know the HL from a young age even thought it would not be spoken in the home. However, as adults, the same HLLs mentioned that the desire to maintain or keep the HL alive came from them. This is a similar sentiment that can be seen in this dissertation study. Several participants in this present study mentioned that their parents encouraged or pushed them to take HL classes. It was something that they *had* to do. However, as they got older, like the participants in Latham Keh and Stoessel's 2017 study, the HLLs were more likely *to want* to learn their HL and appreciate the familial and cultural gains from learning and or speaking the HL. The push did not come from anyone else. In addition, after experiencing difficult life periods or environments, such as a push to learn the dominant language at the expense of the HL, or the family's decision that learning the HL would not lead to any economic gain, HL users could seek out their HL as a part of their identity that they might have repressed or deferred (Latham Keh & Stoessel, 2017; Kouritzin, 1999). In Song's (2022) study of 1.5-

generation Korean-Canadian heritage learners, he highlighted that HL learning trajectories and investment in learning may change depending on the site of language socialisation, whether family, formal educational setting, or peers. Song also stressed that access to HL learning, and changes in how learners self-style their identities in response to different social factors, are key determinants of whether or not HL learners/speakers will pursue HL studies as adults. All of the participants in this study indicated that for them it was possible and desirable to pursue their HL after adolescence. However, their reasons for pursuing HLE might be different. It is at this juncture that I move to the next point of inquiry, the participants' imagined outcomes.

How are the Imagined Outcomes of and Investment in Their Ethno-cultural Identity Fostered by HLLs' Language-Learning Environment? When HLLs were in their language classes, they brought their different wishes, histories, and imagined goals to the language learning experience, and the learners expected or hoped "to have a good return on their investment – a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources" (Norton Peirce, 1995; p. 17). Minority-language students tend to experience greater social mobility and personal empowerment when they can maintain a sense of "their own culture, literacy, and ethnic identity" (Li & Duff, 2008, p. 14) in their education. Therefore, a second point of inquiry in this study was centred on the different meanings or values that were constructed for the participants because of learning their HL. The HLLs' imagined outcomes could alter their expression of their identities. Since identity is multi-dimensional, HLLs could have a different sense of agency in using the language depending on the context. For example, with their family, a HLL might feel a strong sense of connection to them. Alternatively, they might see themselves as a strong speaker of the language in professional settings. It was believed that from their HL learning experiences, these different meanings would lead to several outcomes, such as: (1) a deeper level of

connectedness to their heritage, family, and community, (2) a stronger sense of agency with their family and community members, (3) greater opportunities and pursuits in work, and finally (4) a greater sense of their personal identity.

Among all the participants, there may have been fluctuations in their initial attempts to learn the language before entering language courses at the university. However, being able to pursue the language in a context that differed from the home seemed to have added to their linguistic gains. The participants had various motivations for enrolling in these classes. All the participants expressed that one motivation for enrolling in a university language class was because they had an opportunity to take a class in their HL. In addition, Hannah, Arya, Olivia, and Isabella enrolled in a university language course to fulfill a language requirement or elective requirement for their program of study and ultimately their GPA. Thus, as Latham Keh and Stoessel (2017) stated, "the evolution over time in the subjects' motivations for [heritage language] maintenance … may not progress linearly from one end of the spectrum to the other … but rather … bilinguals' attitudes and efforts may fluctuate through life as they experience new circumstances" (p. 113). For the participants in this study, I have heard about different personal pursuits in HLE that tap into different times on their learning spectrum. Some participants had casual familial exposure, some participants started with Saturday schools or private lessons, some participants were denied exposure to the HL, and some only attempted HLE, or had exposure to the language, as an adult. In fact, all the learners commented on instances of stops and starts in their HLE journey. This reinforces the notion that HLE should not be seen as something that is only attempted or possible at one stage of a person's life. Instead, HLE can take place at later stages in life, and when it does, the imagined outcomes of the learners can vary depending on the need or purpose of knowing the language. The imagined HLE

outcomes of a young child may be influenced by, and reflective of, their parents' imagined outcomes. Parents want their children to be exposed to the HL to maintain traditions and cultural connections (Park, 2013), and there may be intentions of professional advancement later in life. However, the imagined outcomes of the adult HLL come directly from the adult HLL.

Family and Connectedness. For each of the participants, learning their HL could have started earlier with the family or community. This decision would have been made by their family. However, their desire to learn their HL as an adult was not influenced by others. All the participants expressed that their families were okay with them not speaking the HL as an adult. With the lack of family or community pressure to learn the language, their learning experience became a personal choice. Collectively, the participants commented that they had made linguistic gains in the HL. They were able to converse with greater ease and a stronger level of confidence. They were less worried to make mistakes, and they felt they could understand conversations better. However, in terms of family relationships and forming connectedness with family members, there were some varying results. Some of the participants commented that being able to communicate with their family created excitement and emotion among their family members. There was the feeling that the language and cultural essence that the family holds dear will continue to thrive, for example, Cata's grandfather's booming sense of pride that the German language and culture will continue on. For some participants, learning the HL opened the door to a better relationship and sense of understanding with family members. Some of the participants commented that they could enter into conversations with family members in the HL and that they could get a better sense of family stories and community gatherings, for example, Monti gaining a better sense of his family history or Crystal feeling like she could fit in with her Italian-speaking friends. As cited in Guardado and Becker (2014), *familism* consists of "the fundamental

values that foster feelings of identification with and attachment to nuclear and extended family as a unit, strongly emphasising loyalty and mutual support among its members" (p. 163). This sense of familism is felt in many cultures and in different ways among family members. This can be fostered through the HL, and, as several of the participants commented, learning the HL did help to create a sense of familism. Therefore, the imagined goal of connecting to family on a different level than before was achieved for some participants. Knowing the language strengthened family bonds.

Sadly, some participants were not able to attain their imagined outcomes of connectedness to their family because key family members were no longer alive to witness and experience the fruits of their efforts; for example, Hannah's grandmother passed away at the moment she was starting to feel like she could ask questions more confidently. Nevertheless, this had not deterred them from moving forward with their HLE. For other participants, their imagined outcome was to prove their family members wrong. In some situations, it was believed that learning the HL was not possible. However, one participant showed that this was a wrong point of view. Arya's linguistic gains have stumped her family. The family belief that Arya would never be a speaker of Farsi was a strong impression for her family. Arya proved to herself, and more importantly to her parents, that she could do it. Moreover, she proved to herself that she could claim a Persian identity with and without the language.

Travel and Work. For some participants, the value of knowing the HL went beyond the family. It went into the realm of creating opportunities for travel and/or employment. Only three of the participants spoke about the potential use of the HL for professional gains, Cata, Isabella, and Hannah. This is because these learners also saw the benefits of using their HL beyond the ideals of building family connections. As more people continue to migrate from one place to

another, it is not surprising that some of the participants see the economic and professional capital and value in knowing additional languages. It increases their marketability for jobs and movement within jobs. Thus, HLLs see their HL as a means to moving beyond traditional and cultural understandings to improving social conditions and making economic gains. This sentiment pushed some western provinces, Manitoba and Saskatchewan for example, to usher in bilingual education programs at the primary level, with a link to ethno-linguistic maintenance, certainly, but also a hope for greater linguistic longevity that will translate into fostering globalisation and professional opportunities (Tavares, 2000). If Canada taps into this growing resource of linguistic diversity beyond merely celebrating its multicultural and multilingual mosaic, it will discover that it can revitalise the missed economic and workforce opportunities of a multilingual workforce (Raza & Chua, 2022). In other words, language education, and (as in this study) HLE should be seen and promoted as a resource for not only community building but also for economic advancement. This was the imagined goal voiced by some participants.

Identity and Legitimacy. Aside from what I will call *functional* imagined outcomes, a final imagined outcome that the participants commented on dealt with a stronger sense of being able to self-style their identities through language knowledge. In other words, some participants claimed that their sense of self-styled ethno-linguistic identity had less of an imposter-ish feel because they knew their HL (Creese et al., 2014; Kramsch, 2012). The notion of "imposture," first introduced by Kramsch (2012), is the inability to feel a sense of legitimacy as a speaker of the language. A sense of legitimacy as a speaker of language is dependent on how multilingual speakers "interrogate the larger flows of people, knowledge, and capital, and their own vulnerability in playing the paradoxical roles that are required of them" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 499). There is a prescriptive sense of legitimacy which implies a high degree of linguistic knowledge

in a “legitimate language” (Bourdieu, 1977; Heller, 1996) where the right words are used at the right time or in the right situations. Legitimacy of a speaker of a language is negotiated among speakers and varies depending on the situation (Costa, 2015).

From a poststructuralist perspective, “identity is multiple, changing, and a site of struggle” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 36). Moreover Norton (2013) defines identity as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2013, p. 45). As such, a sense of legitimacy as a speaker of a language should be seen with the same fluidity. The participants in this study had varying levels of language proficiency; some were more advanced in their HL than others. However, no matter the quantity or quality of their linguistic gains, they were able to feel less like an imposter or a faithful imitator and more like a speaker of the language with a greater sense of their own agency. Several of the participants indicated that they were not planning on taking the next level of language studies because they had attained what they set out to achieve, for example, Stefania. Other participants mentioned that they had greater confidence in speaking the language and this translated into a greater sense that they are coming into their ethno-linguistic identity, for example, Marco and Hannah. Regardless of the imagined goals, the participants in this study learned the language. With the linguistic knowledge and skills that they learned, the participants mentioned that they have a greater sense of legitimacy as a speaker of their HL. They are at different stages of HL development, but at each stage their sense of being a member of the ethno-linguistic community potentially gets stronger (Creese et al., 2014). However, only time will tell if their imagined goals and outcomes come to full fruition.

From the Perspective of HLLs, how Does Knowing Their HL Impact Their Sense of Heritage Identity and how is the HL Valued or Acknowledged in the Learning Environment? Many of the participants in this study were not sure if their university language instructor knew they were a HLL. Some had commented that if their instructor did know, this might have impacted how they taught them. Their instructors might have assumed that they were stronger students in the class. As a result, their instructors might have used them as the stronger learner/speaker in paired-work activities, or they might have leaned on them to speak about cultural content or colloquialisms in class. However, the participants mentioned that their HLL status should not have been seen as a marker of greater success in the class because they were learning the language like their FL classmates; they were learning a "traditional," "standard," or "mono-cultural" foundation of the language (Li & Duff, 2008). While the participants might feel like their FL classmates because of their similar linguistic competence, the participants also noted that they were different from their FLC classmates because they came to the learning site with cultural information and experience that many of their non-HLL classmates did not have.

Learner Identity Conundrum. In the uniqueness of each FL learning context, several of the participants experienced a learner identity conundrum; they might have identified themselves as a HL learner/speaker and/or as an L2 learner. This conundrum was a result of their learning experience. The participants felt they were HLLs because they have a cultural understanding of the HL that was tied to their ancestry or ethnicity. However, in this learning context, some of the participants identified themselves as a L2 learner of the target language because it felt like they were learning a new or unfamiliar language, yet they had access to cultural knowledge and exposure outside the classroom. Opportunities for exposure to the language outside of the class gave the participants a different familiarity with the language that their FL classmates would not

have access to. In addition, the sense of being a L2 learner was due to the language structure they were learning. For some of the participants, the family dialect is what solidifies their claim to be a HLL. However, since they were learning a standard version of the target language, some participants could not identify with the vocabulary or languaging used in the classroom. This made them feel like they were L2 learners of their HL because it was a variety of the language that was not spoken by their family or in the home.

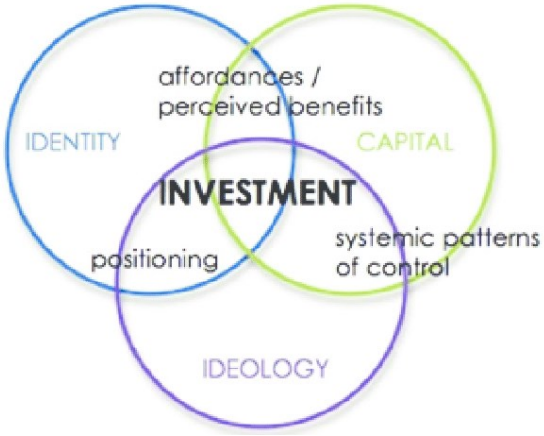
This duplicitous sense of identity as being a HL and L2 learner/speaker at the same time resulted in the participants having diverse understandings of strengths in their identity claims. Because they were able to speak their HL, regardless of their language proficiency, they felt their heritage identity. Some of the participants hyphenated their identity; others would claim they had one identity over another. In fact, the participants always claimed an ethnic identity, even when they did not speak the language. Their ethnic identity sense grew somewhat stronger once they had more language at their disposal. This was because they could speak with greater ease to members of the community or family members. Despite this stronger connectedness to their ethno-linguistic identity, the majority of participants claimed that is it not necessary to know the language to claim the identity. Personally speaking, the same participants said that the language was needed for *their* self-styled identity because it helped to solidify some sense of cultural links. However, they would never prescribe that ideology on to others. In other words, the participants feel that there is a link between language and identity. They each claimed ethno-linguistic identity for the language; however, the way someone claims their ethno-linguistic identity is a personal choice. Moreover, some participants chose to hyphenate their ethno-linguistic identity and others chose to have a scripted answer that details all their ethnicities or cultural/national

ties. This confirms that like language development, identity construction is fluid, multi-layered, and personalised. Therefore, coming into an identity was different for each participant.

Identity Claiming vs Identity Becoming: Value or Capital in Knowing a HL. There is a complex relationship between a language learner and the social world and experiences they encounter (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton 2013). Figure 6 shows Darvin and Norton's 2015 Model of Investment:

Figure 6

Darvin and Norton (2015) – Model of Investment



Within this model, it is possible to get a greater sense of the participants' HL learning trajectories. At the centre of the participants' HL trajectory is their investment in wanting to learn the language. As many of the participants indicated in this study, being able to connect with family, participate in family gatherings, and complete their sense of ethno-linguistic characterisation were key reasons for investing in HL learning. Within this concept, ideology, identity, and capital are not mutually exclusive; they overlap. This highlights that over time and space, learners' positioning, identity, and investment in learning a language will shift (Seals,

2018). Their reasons and imagined goals (economic, social, or cultural) shift and evolve depending on their desire to know the language and/or the increase in their language proficiency. I believe that once learners see positive advancements in their language proficiency, they are open to seeing other possibilities that might not have been observable before; for example, job advancement or higher levels of education.

Knowing languages and/or having multiple languages available can offer learners/speakers cultural, social, or economic opportunities, but it depends on the strength of the learners' investment. When examining the participants' responses through the lens of investment (Norton, 1995), a key result was that the HLL participants invested in their language learning not simply to get a good grade, but to have the linguistic capabilities to forge stronger and deeper relations with family members and to foster a different perspective of their ethno-linguistic identity. However, Norton (2013) noted that a wider range of outcomes beyond identity formation and family connections are available to an individual when they learn a language. The value of having other languages in their multilingual repertoire means that learners have the potential to increase their cultural and social capital. They can participate in more cultural events or discussions with members of the community. There is the potential for greater professional advancement because many occupations value highly competent bilingual or multilingual speakers. For the learners/speakers in this study, the value that they gained from taking FLCs was that it gave them the space to have a greater sense of ownership of their ethno-linguistic identity in their communities. For many of the participants, they were no longer embarrassed to speak with their family members, even if there was a dialectal difference between the language they learned in class and the linguistic variety that was spoken in the home. Of the participants in this study, only a few were taking the class as part of their minor degree. For these participants,

an economic capital was woven into their language studies, in addition to their being able to communicate with their family, an ability that would give them greater cultural capital. For all the participants in this study, the value of knowing the HL taps into their cultural capital with their families. Their familial connections might be different than when the participants did not speak the HL. However, as their language knowledge improved, several of the participants mentioned that their feel for and use of the language diversified. These diversified uses of the language potentially offer new understandings about new speakerism/speakerness, the feeling of being cultural straddlers, and tactics of intersubjectivity and authenticity in identity formation. There is a multi-dimensional nature of identity and each of these dimensions relate to or overlap with each other differently.

HL New Speakerism/Speakerness

The participants in this study came to their HLE and use as new speakers of the language. This means that they entered into new linguistic dimensions and relationships based on how they use the language. The notion of new speakerism (Jaffe, 2015; O'Rourke et al., 2015) gives the impression that learners are coming into the language for the first time. However, unlike their FL classmates, some of the participants in this study came to FLC with an already-established linguistic and cultural background. However, HLLs' new speakerism is supported by a linguistic foundation that might be seen as pragmatically receptive. In other words, the familial exposure to culture and traditions with minimal or no HL exposure tweaks the sense of what it means to be a new speaker of the HL. For the participants in this study, the notion of new speakerism would tap into their first-time exposure to the standard version of the language.

In addition, this sense of new speakerism in HL offers implications in understanding HLLs' bilingualism or multilingualism. What was seen from the participants in this study was

that they are learners/speakers or non-speakers with varying levels of bilingualism or multilingualism. The participants' narratives show that their linguistic ability is reflective of real-time plurilingual linguistic competence; it is varied and rarely balanced (Galante, 2020, 2022). In other words, the HL might not be equally balanced with the other dominant languages that the learners already know and use on a regular basis. Thus, the new speakerism of adult HLLs translates into them being sequential language learners who were raised in homes where they were exposed to a language other than the dominant language of the community. This exposure was stratified, because in some instances the HL was spoken fluently and in other instances there was simply an awareness of the HL with an occasional word here or there. Therefore, the construct of new speakerism in HLE highlights that HL knowledge, like L2 or FL knowledge, should be viewed on a continuum, between mere HL awareness and full HL competence.

As a result, adult HLE opens the door to HL maintenance where the learners/speakers reach a "divergent attainment." This is a "situation where the learner acquires a system different from the baseline" (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020, p. 5). Adult HLLs will potentially have a different "mental representation of their linguistic knowledge" (p. 5) from a HLL who was exposed to the HL as a child and continues to learn the language as an adult. The notion of new speakerism or new speakerness of adult HLLs then invites the characterisation that HLLs are cultural straddlers.

HL Cultural Straddlers

As cultural straddlers, the participants in this study had one foot in their heritage or ethnic community and their other foot in the dominant community. Several of the participants were working out ways to negotiate their agency in two or more communities. They are mixed heritage individuals (hereafter, MHIs) who identify with multiple ethnicities and communities

where they were exposed to multiple cultures and linguistic practices. Consequently, the participants were linguistically and culturally heterogeneous, and they were negotiating identities and notions of acceptance by community members. This was even more challenging for some participants whose straddling went beyond two cultural communities. Knowing the language of the communities helped in forging relationships with family members and other members of the communities. However, when MHIs did not know the language, their legitimacy as a member of the community was often contested and they might have experienced social exclusion (Albuja et al., 2019; Tsai et al., 2021). They experienced instances of rejection by family members, community members, and occasionally by the FLC.

The potential othering of these participants for looking the part but not speaking the part could lead to greater personal questioning about their sense of agency in the communities. Some of the participants mentioned that they felt moments of being left out because of not knowing the language. They were fully familiar with, and able to participate in, cultural events and celebrations, but with little linguistic ability, they struggled at times to fit in. Without the language, some participants mentioned feeling "fake" as far as claiming agency within the ethno-linguistic community. The mixed heritage participants in this study could experience exclusion from both their family and the FLC because they might be perceived as being outside of fixed racial norms. With their families, the participants would seem different because they learned and spoke a standard variety of the language that was unfamiliar to family members. They are potentially not speaking their HL "with the same accent, manner, fluency associated … with native speakers of their heritage languages or dialects" (Tsai et al. 2021, p. 11). In the FLC, the participant might potentially experience exclusion because their linguistic background could

signal them out as knowing more than their other classmates, who might feel that this disrupts the cohesiveness of the learning context.

While adding their HL to their linguistic repertoire strengthened connections to their pluri-cultural identities, participants who grew up with a deeply-rooted connectedness to their cultural traditions did not feel that it was *necessary* to have the language to claim their identities. However, some participants (Marco, Hannah, and Arya) commented that their HL had given them the possibility to feel their sense of identity and to self-style what their identity means to them while straddling their pluri-cultural boundaries.

Tactics of Intersubjectivity. In Chapter 2, I indicated that I would employ a framework of intersubjectivity in hopes of better understanding the relationship between identity and language. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005, 2010) intersubjectivity embraces that the identity construct is fluid, and that identity is tailored to or by its contexts. In this study, some of the participants commented that their identity claims had been strengthened or had a deeper meaning because the HL is more fixed within their linguistic repertoire. Thus, they had a greater sense of agency within their families or communities. There was also a greater sense of pride from family members that the language was passing on to the next generation. In addition, there was a greater sense of confidence to speak the language and use the language with other family and within other venues, for example for work purposes. Within different social settings the participants commented that their subjectivity shifted based on how they used the language and thus performed their identity. In other words, they would experience a fluidity in their identity claims or becomings based on how they use the language (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010).

Two planes of subjectivity that were adopted for analysis in this study were "tactic of adequation and distinction" and "tactic of authentication and denaturalisation" (Bucholtz & Hall,

2005). “Tactic of adequation” is when learners/speakers are considered to be similar to other members of the ethno-linguistic community, family, or linguistic group. Language seems to be the vehicle that will allow for such affinity to take place. However, while some of the participants commented that learning the HL had given them the confidence to speak with their families, there was still a missing element. Monti, for example, explained that learning a standard version of the HL had given him the means to communicate in the language, which pleased his family, but still set him apart because he did not have the dialectal lexicon of the familial language variety. In this case, Monti, and other participants who expressed a similar sentiment in their individual interviews, were not only experiencing adequation, but they were also experiencing distinction. Yes, they were learning the HL, but it was the normative version of the language. This would give them access to greater employment possibilities or opportunities to travel to meet family abroad, but it would also potentially highlight that their HL is different or distinct from the family HL.

In addition to adequation and distinction, another tactic of intersubjectivity that was evident with the participants was authentication and denaturalisation (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). If there was a sense of legitimacy in claiming an identity that the participants hoped to gain by learning the HL, it was only partially achieved. Authentication highlights how individuals claim an identity through a sense of “naturalness” of qualities that they share with the group. Some participants’ naturalness in their qualities was always present. If there was a strong cultural presence in their upbringing, the feeling of having the identity was not questioned. They watched the movies, heard the songs, practiced the prayers, ate the food, and shared in the holidays, and all of this happened without having the language. Their ethno-cultural experiences, without or with minimal HL use, were authentic and truly traditional for them. However, for participants

like Marco and Hannah, their exposure to the heritage culture was occasional; their identity claims did not necessarily come from having the culture fully around them. Their sense of identity came from knowing that a link to their heritage existed. Learning the HL just made their connection to community feel a bit more authentic.

Thus, the participants illustrated that claiming or living a heritage or ethno-linguistic identity entails having varying degrees of authenticity. Those who had exposure to the language through their families or communities did not necessarily feel that they were more or less authentic in their identity claims now that they had learned the HL. Some participants who had little exposure to the language or culture growing up, but knew that it was part of their ancestry, made identity claims that bend, or denaturalise, the notion of authenticity. In other words, the idea of a monoethnic or monoracial structure for identity was challenged by these participants. Because many of the participants were MHIs, they have potentially experienced moments of not being ethnic enough, or they potentially lean too much towards one heritage, for example Hannah. Therefore, the participants feel that they embody different versions of authenticity.

However, Arya, who was not a MHI, also challenged or denaturalised the normative authenticity of being Persian. Because her parents felt that she could not speak Farsi properly when she was young, they decided not to speak to her in the HL. This gave her and other family members and friends the impression that she was a different kind of Persian. When she finally started to learn, and excelled in learning, the language, her parents had a different impression of who she could be. For Arya, she became the Persian she was meant to be, and for her parents, she was finally an authentic Persian, even though Arya had always claimed to be one.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed and drew together common themes or impressions that emerged from interpretation of the participants' HL experiences. In Chapter 7, I outline some limitations of this study, indicate future directions to move forward in HLE research, and include the conclusion for the thesis.

Chapter 7: Reflections, Limitations, Future Directions, and Personal Remarks

Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with a brief synopsis of the study and a short reiteration of the main findings, which I presented in Chapters 4 through 6. I follow this synopsis with final reflections on identity. Specifically, I discuss my subjectivity, as being an HLL who is also the researcher of this study. In addition, I comment on "talk about" identity, and Critical Language Awareness (CLA) in heritage language education (HLE). Then, I discuss theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical implications of the inquiry. These implications are linked to two questions: 1) what does the field of applied linguistics need to know about this group of language learners?; 2) what can they learn from them? Following this discussion, I address limitations of the study, and I outline questions for further investigation in the Future Directions section. The thesis closes with final personal remarks.

In this study, I explored the heritage language (HL) experiences of 11 adult HL learners/speakers who attended foreign language classes (FLCs) at the university level. Their FLCs were intended for foreign language (FL) learners, but in the absence of other university-level HL-streamed classes, FLCs were the only available option for the participants to pursue their HLE at the same time as their other studies. Within the protocol of this study, the participants had a space to voice their experiences of trying to make linguistic gains in their HL, albeit in FL learning environments. Was this space the best context to learn their HL? If they made linguistic gains, did this knowledge help them better understand, claim, or come into their ethnic identity? Through their written language autobiographies and one-on-one interviews, multiple factors that impacted the participants' HL learning trajectories were revealed, such as different sites of socialisation, namely the family and the school. These different sites fostered or

challenged the HL participants' attempts to learn and/or speak their HL. I delved into the learners' different HL experiences in order to gain a better understanding of the link or interplay between HL learning and identity construction. I did this to see how the experience of adult HLLs can inform current research on HLE and HL maintenance, which is currently primarily focused on young HLLs.

The findings in this study reveal that learning the HL in a FLC can be a fruitful linguistic experience. Linguistic gains can be made, and this learning can help HLLs achieve their imagined outcomes: to feel more connected to family, or to make more functional gains for travel and professional opportunities. Moreover, the perspectives of the participants reveal that there is a link between language and identity, but this link must be seen as having great fluidity. Individuals, with or without the HL, determine their heritage identity. As HLLs shuttle between varying degrees of HL knowledge and different sites of HL socialisation, they will experience instances where their ethno-linguistic identity claims will be challenged or accepted.

My Subjectivity as a HLL and Researcher

In Chapter 3, I noted that HLLs can experience emic and etic relationships with members of their HL community. In their families, the participants in this study were insiders (emic) who navigated family conversations without knowing their HL. In addition, they participated in all other cultural activities, such as food, dance, religion, celebrations, and histories that socialised them into their ethno-linguistic identity or community. However, they were also outsiders (etic) to their families or communities because not knowing their HL created a barrier in terms of their affinity to the community. Conversely, in the FLC, the participants felt like an insider to their ethno-linguistic community because of their ancestral and cultural ties to the target language. However, they were assumed to be an outsider because the FLC characterised them as FL

learners. These experiences reinforced experience-near and experience-distant (Geertz, 1973, 1983) perspectives in their language learning, Similar to the participants, I am also an insider and outsider in this study.

In Chapter 1, I shared my personal language identity experiences which set the stage for this doctoral dissertation. I do not speak my HLs, but I claim an ethno-linguistic identity that is associated to my HLs. I am a potential HLL, an insider. I ventured into a qualitative study to share not only the voices of the HL participants but also to share my voice. Therefore, I acknowledge that there were two subjectivities at play, that of the 11 HL participants, and my own as the researcher. In qualitative inquiry, the researcher's subjectivity can impact the collection of the data (Norton Peirce, 1995) and potentially "cloud the interpretation of the data" (Brink, 1993, p. 35). The questions explored in this study came from my own language identity experiences. The participants' responses and my interpretation of their narratives may have been influenced by my personal HLL subjectivities. However, over the course of data collection and analysis, I kept my reflexivity in check because I positioned myself as an outsider with a different HL history. Unlike the participants in this study, I have not actively pursued my own HLE. Therefore, I do not share in their language learning experiences. This allowed me to maintain a neutral stance as they recounted their experiences.

Talk About Identity is Everywhere

"Talk about language is everywhere. It matters what language(s) you speak, what you say about language, and who you say it to" (Crump, 2014, p. 16). For me, at times, language, or I should say my lack of "ethnic" language, has been the clearest marker that I am different; this could be different from the rest of my family or different from the ethno-cultural community. This sentiment was expressed by some of the participants in this study. Once people had

identified their ethno-linguistic background, they were tested on this claim through language. People in their family, or who they were immediately close to in the community, would speak to them in the HL. When the participants could not respond, their ethno-cultural identity claim, their background, was questioned. My lack of knowing my HL has followed me all my life, and I have always been questioned, like many other HL non-learners/non-speakers or receptive-only HL learners/comprehenders. Membership in an ethno-linguistic community seems to be strongly tied to the language you speak, despite the rich *non*-linguistic cultural exposure, knowledge, and experience a person may have had. These questions always come from others in the community, based on the assumption that a person should have the language, or should have grown up learning the language. This might be a reason why community-based adult HL programs are rare.

I adopted the essence of Crump's idea about language into this dissertation and extended it to encompass identity: *Talk about identity is everywhere. It matters what identities you claim, what you say about identity, and how you convey it to others.* As a HL non-learner or non-speaker or new speaker of the language, there is an assumption that HL knowledge is a prerequisite for a legitimate sense of agency as a member of the heritage community. In other words, how well you speak the HL might potentially give a person a greater sense of their identity claim. If a person knows the language, they might have an easier time in defending their ethno-cultural/linguistic identity claim, because they will be able to speak the lingo of who they claim to be. Based on this ideology that there is a link between language and identity, I chose to pursue a study that would explore what that link looks like for different adult HLLs.

CLA in HLE

I now take a moment to reflect on how language awareness can inform different learning contexts for HLE. Because research on language awareness perspectives on adult HLLs in post-

secondary FLCs is still in its infancy, it is important to shed light, not only on what the HLLs are taking away *from* the classes, but also on what they are offering *to* the classes. A main goal of HLE is to give HLLs the opportunity to explore and develop their cultural and linguistic heritage (Beaudrie, 2023). It is assumed that HLE takes place as someone is growing up. However, there is a growing population of adult HL learners/semi-speakers (HL speakers with some HL knowledge) who are also seeking out opportunities to develop their ethno-linguistic/cultural heritage. With this understanding, I propose that Dorian's (1977) original definition of "semi-speakers" be turned on its head so that a HL's limited linguistic knowledge can be seen as a positive starting point and/or valued funds of knowledge. If they are seeking out this education in a FLC, it would be important to explore what learner identity awareness is needed, on the part of instructors or curricula, to best meet the learning needs of, and provide pedagogical support for, HLLs.

CLA, as discussed in Chapter 2, brings awareness to language variation and diversity which challenge static ideologies that prevail in language education (Alim, 2010; Fairclough, 1992). CLA asks FL instructors and program developers to make concerted efforts to understand and integrate aspects of dialectal varieties into language lessons. If HLLs are present in FLCs, acknowledging dialectal varieties in class content could help these learners understand how their "home" version of the language intertwines with the "class" version of the language. This will give HLLs a different sense of agency in FLCs because they can see themselves in the content. Moreover, it will help FL learners to see beyond the assumption that their HL classmates are experts or experienced learners in the target language.

In order for this to happen, FL pedagogies and instructors have to move beyond the monolingual, standard-language form ideologies which still seem to be firmly entrenched in

applied linguistics research. FL education has reinforced an ideology that language learning consists of a "direct method" of language education, where the best language outcomes happen when a learner is immersed and is allowed to *only* use the target language in class (Cummins, 2007). However, plurilingual and translanguaging pedagogies and practices are pushing educators to view language beyond the standard (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Galante, 2020; Galante et al., 2022; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Milroy, 2001; Rosa & Flores, 2017). These epistemologies highlight that varieties of a language are not just deviations from a linguistic structure; they are representations of the diversity of identities that make up a language's whole ethno-linguistic community and of people who are "performing their bilingualism in ways that reflected who they were as bilingual beings" (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 24) or performing their multilingual repertoire in ways that reflect their multilingual and multi-dimensional being. Usually, HLLs and their identity are not addressed in FLC because the standardised or academic version of the language that is taught reflects the linguistic and identity truths of its speakers (Conteh & Meier, 2014). In other words, teaching a standard or academic form of the language would not allow for the nuances of other identities linked to dialectal or regional variations of the language to flourish. The primary objective in FLC is teaching the language and helping learners use the language in idealized situations, such as politely asking for directions to the grocery store. This promotes an essentialised version of the language which ultimately promotes an essentialised identity. As a result, mainstream FLCs will not help HLLs achieve their goal of seeing themselves as members of the target language community, because standard FL education is not set up for integrating multilingual/plurilingual perspectives of learners (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Since adult HLLs are in many FLCs, I propose that CLA approaches to HLLs and their imagined goals should be acknowledged in FL teacher training (Ducar, 2022). In Canada, it is not uncommon for educators to ignore a learner's HL as a source of knowledge. Moreover, it is quite common for immigrant parents to be told to limit HL use in the home in favour of greater use of English or French (Cummins, 1981, 2005, 2021). This also takes place in FLCs. In Ducar's study on Spanish HL pedagogy, she found that FL instructors tended to show a lack of understanding or respect for non-standard language varieties of the target language they were teaching (2022). This ultimately had an impact on how they taught their lessons and how they taught to their different language learners. However, Ducar also highlighted that teachers in her study were not *taught* how to address language varieties and different learners in their class. They lacked the socio-cultural and socio-linguistic knowledge to help them understand and work with varieties. This shows that there is a space for CLA in teacher training and in pedagogical development.

FLCs "often reproduce standard language ideologies that draw rigid distinctions between appropriate academic and social language use" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 159). This potentially positions people as speakers of prestigious or non-prestigious language varieties "based not on what they actually do with language but, rather, how they are heard" (p. 160) by the listener. With greater awareness, FL educators will have the tools to respectfully address linguistic varieties beyond the standard language form and to highlight the diversity of ethno-linguistic communities. This would also make it possible to move past the "easy A" characterisation that plagues HLLs when they are in FLCs. In addition, this would also give the HLLs a greater appreciation of their agentive capacity, their active role and sense of agency, during their HL learning in a non-HL environment. I understand that CLA ideologies strive to politicise a

language learning space. However, I believe that CLA ideologies can highlight that HLLs are in a space where a standard linguistic form will give the learners language skills but may also create fractures in how HLLs see their ethno-linguistic identity melding with a stereotypical or normative identity. I will now turn to the theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical implications of this study.

Implications

When I began this doctoral study, HLE research focused on language pedagogies and maintenance, and much of that research explored childhood HL experiences. Studies on the link between a HL and identity affinity were in their infancy. In recent years, though, HLE and identity research have ushered in new theories and novel teaching practices that foster diverse learning spaces for HLLs. In these studies, language and identity are examined through the lens of CAL (Pennycook, 2021), critical pedagogies (Beaudrie & Ducar, 2005; Correa, 2016), raciolinguistics (Alim et al., 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2016), and social justice (Ortega, 2020; Piller, 2016), to name a few. As a result, with all this research, new theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical implications about this type of education flourish.

Theoretical Implications. The results of this study were not intended to add to the standardised view of who a HLL is, nor was the purpose of this study to give a fixed view that there would be a one-size-fits-all interpretation of HLLs and their ideas about the link between language and identity. The participants in this study confirm that adult HLLs exist in FLCs. Thus, if they are in these classes, they have a position or role in the learning context. If they have agency in a FLC, then they have a sense of identity in FLCs. However, what does this mean to FL pedagogy and instructors? If FL instructors are trained to view language learners' specific characterisations, then it would be of value to investigate how FL instructors work with language

learners who do not fit the mold. In addition, adult HLLs in a FLC bring their histories, experiences, and identities to the learning context. It would be of interest to investigate whether FL instructors utilise these histories and experiences in the classroom. Moreover, when HLLs' imagined goals become real goals, their drive to learn increases. Because HLLs are seeking out their language education at different ages and in non-HL contexts, the stereotypical definition of who a HLL is needs to address these nuances. Not all HLLs are alike. It would be of interest to compare adult HLLs to other adult language learners to get a clearer picture of what truly makes them different language learners. I say this because there are HLLs who are not only learning their HL for the first time, but they might also be discovering their heritage culture for the first time. In this case, how would they fit into the existing "who is the HLL?" construct?

The HLLs are different from L2 learners. The results from this study confirmed that HLLs in FLCs are in classes that might not be the best fit for their learning needs. In their study comparing L2-L2 and L2-HLL in a Spanish classroom, Bowles et al. (2014) also questioned the suitability of the classroom as a fruitful learning experience for HLLs, because both L2 learners and HLLs commented that greater conversational gains were made when a L2 learner spoke with a HLL. Moreover, Chang et al. (2011) found that the stronger learners in producing and noticing cross-language contrasts learned in a FLC are HLLs. These learners generally identify as either HLLs or L2 learners. They may have a similar level language proficiency as their classmates, but their linguistic knowledge is deepened by their ethno-cultural understandings or links to the language. Like other studies that look at HLLs, their learning trajectories, and their HL experience, this study had a vested interest in understanding the imagined outcomes adult HLLs hope to achieve in terms of identity links to their family and community.

Methodological Implications. In addition to theoretical implications, there are methodological implications from this study. First, more longitudinal and cross-sectional studies are needed about the benefits of HLE and to get a better understanding of the learning trajectories of HLLs. Most studies tend to provide a snapshot of what the HLLs are experiencing in their current HL learning situation or what they have experienced in their past learning experiences. These snapshots are compiled to give an overall impression of who a HLL is. However, are the compilations of stories and experiences telling the whole story? I can see three ifs. If a key element of HL research is to investigate a link between language and identity; if identity formation is fluid and multi-layered; and if language development evolves over time, then longitudinal or cross-sectional studies will provide deeper insights into this fluidity.

Second, the criteria for recruitment were quite open. The only defining factor for participants in this study was that they self-identify as a HLL. Greater clarity in the descriptors of who a HLL is could have yielded more participants. Moreover, the participants were learning their HL in different FLCs at different levels. A more balanced representation in the number of participants per language proficiency level might have highlighted different perspectives about their HL learning experiences in a FL context. In terms of the language groups, the majority of the participants in this study were studying Italian. While I do not feel that a language type would have an impact on whether adult HLLs would take FLCs, I wonder if different perspectives and insights about language learning might vary from one language group and community to another. Therefore, HLLs from other ethno-linguistic backgrounds, such as East Asian language backgrounds (Chinese and/or Korean), for example, might have added a different richness to the data. Maybe the views about identity would reveal that certain language groups have differing ideologies about identity claims and ethno-linguistic links of adult HLLs. This

could potentially reveal that different ethno-linguistic communities view similar imagined outcomes in different ways. In other words, the would-be core reasons for HL maintenance may differ from one ethno-linguistic community to another. For example, one ethno-linguistic community might value the economic power offered by knowing the HL while another ethno-linguistic community would see the socio-cultural value of HL maintenance. This could potentially give insights into the likelihood of adult HLLs learning the HL for a variety of imagined outcomes, such as professional reasons or social justice reasons.

Pedagogical Implications. Finally, there has been much talk about and focus on minoritised language speakers and best practices and novel practices in second or additional language pedagogy (translanguaging practices and plurilingual pedagogies) (Cenoz & Gorter, 2019; Prasad & Lory, 2020), including a consideration of learners' linguistic repertoires in the learning context. However, the FL learner is still seen as a learner who potentially knows very little about the language and the culture. HLLs are multilingual learners with a rich socio-cultural knowledge that is typically not reflected in FL textbooks and other learning materials. Acknowledging learners' pluri-cultural knowledges and identities in the FLC can only enhance the learning experience. Such an acknowledgment would give learners the space to be active agents in their language learning outcomes, the opportunity to share their knowledge with others, and the possibility to foster their heritage identity in contexts other than the family or HL community. Thus, if FL instructors are aware that HLLs are in their classes, research would be needed to find out what FL instructors know about these learners. FL instructors could then offer insights on how FL pedagogy can foster HLE and heritage identity construction. It is time to raise HL awareness in FL pedagogy.

Another point of contention in this study was the one-sided view about HLLs in the FLC. In this study, the HLL participants offered their perspectives based on their learning experience. However, another important perspective to have would have been that of FL instructors. For example, the learners have indicated that at times they were seen as "easy A" students by other classmates or similar to the other FL learners in the class. However, what do the instructors think about their presence in the class? Do instructors even know how many HL students are in their class? Do they think that these learners are a different type of learner? It is not uncommon to hear of language instructors placing linguistically strong learners with weak learners during pair-work activities so that the weaker learner can be supported by the stronger learner. Therefore, it would be interesting to see if the HLL would be considered the stronger learner/speaker simply because they would be assumed to have more ethno-linguistic knowledge. Since the relationship between language and identity is a dialogical co-constructed relationship, FL instructors should be invited to offer their insights on the agency of the HLLs in their class and on whether they feel the HLLs are different from the FL learners. In addition, it would have been of interest to get the instructors' understandings about how identity may be a key function in the language learning environment, or if it even plays a role in the language learning process. In other words, if I am making recommendations for language educators to be more critically aware of ethno-linguistic identities of multilingual learners in their classes based on what HLLs say, it will be important to get an inkling of what instructors already think and practice in their language classes that would aid or hinder this awareness.

Limitations

While there were several revelations in terms of how adult HLLs see themselves in these classes and what they are striving to achieve from their learning experience, two points about the

methodology in this study, specifically the number and diversity of participants and the duration of data collection, need to be addressed. While the intent of this section of the chapter is to present limiting perspectives of the study, I want to stress that the very notion of limitations implies that there were specific results intended for this study. However, on the contrary, the intention of this study was to create opportunities for greater HL awareness. I am reluctant to offer definitive conclusions about the link between language and identity because the learners expressed a sense of fluidity in that link. Therefore, I offer ideas that could have enhanced the design of the study and the findings.

First, the majority of the participants were from Italian studies (7 participants), followed by Germanic studies (2 participants), and then Farsi (1 participant) and Hindi (1 participant). Ideally, I would have interviewed more people from more diverse language backgrounds than the four language groups represented here. Including more participants would have offered a greater robustness to the findings in terms of the commonalities and differences that learners experience in language learning and identity formation. In addition, interviewing more learners might have shown whether different language groups utilise different language pedagogies to support HL development and identity formation. Also, it might have shown whether the nuances and multi-dimensional construct of identity formation are language-specific. Another methodological factor of concern in this study was the duration of data collection. A greater longitudinal protocol over more than one semester (13 weeks) would have potentially yielded deeper insights from the learners about their language learning experience. By focusing on a longer duration of language instruction, for example one year of HLE in the FLC, I would have been able to investigate how learners experience the complexities of heritage identity formation over greater periods of language exposure, learning, and development.

Future Directions

This inquiry points to several directions for future research, some of which are linked to the implications discussed above. One point of inquiry for future research is centred on multiple identities. Specifically, there is still a need to acknowledge and speak to learners who have multiple identities in FLCs. A pedagogical tool that language educators can use is a well-executed needs analysis that informs them about what the learner knows about the language. A needs analysis will also inform educators about the learners' linguistic backgrounds, socio-cultural histories, and imagined goals for language learning (Kondo-Brown & Brown, 2008; Torres et al., 2017; Torres, 2024). Learning goals and motivations vary from learner to learner, and the imagined outcomes for HLLs might be different from those of FL learners. If heritage identity formation is a goal for a HLL in a FLC, educators need to know how to use HLLs' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) as language resources.

A second point of inquiry for future research explores the implementation of language activities that can bring awareness of the ethno-linguistic identities in the FLC. One such activity consists of using language portraits. These involve the mapping of one's language and cultural makeup on a silhouette template (Krumm, 2011; Prasad, 2014). The use of language portraits gives language learners a space in which to focus on their multilingual lived experiences. This can provide FLC educators with information about an individual's learning trajectories, language learning, practices, and use. Identity formation is a performative practice that involves multiple acts, one of which is language learning and use. Language portraits are a useful practice in reflexivity for language learners that gives them a platform to share their language identity experiences. For the language educator, these portraits offer awareness into the learners' ethno-linguistic identity claims. In addition, the implementation of language portfolios in the class

allows individuals to monitor and reflect on their language learning experiences. The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) (2015) and the Council of Europe (CoE) (2024) provide reference kits for language portfolios that help pre-service and in-service educators become aware of the linguistic diversity in classes. In addition, continued education about the changes in HLE is needed. The Centre for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) (2024), out of the University of Minnesota, offers professional development workshops which focus on current critical approaches and diverse practices in HLE. With greater understanding about language and identities, educators can foster pedagogical practices and activities that draw on "learners' plurilingual resources for both language and content learning" (Lau, 2016, p. 148). These will support linguistic diversity and foster identity formation (Cummins, 2004).

These two future directions can promote a greater understanding of CLA for pre-service and in-service teachers. Teaching training programs need a course for pre-service teachers which draws awareness to the sociolinguistic needs and knowledge of their HLLs. This could consist of fostering greater awareness about language variation, so that all learners can engage in language learning for their imagined outcomes. Therefore, curriculum design and implementation of best practices should support the diversity of language learners and the presence of HLLs in FLCs. In investigating the link between language and identity, the present study focused on one type of key player in that link, the adult HLL. Future directions exploring this link consist of investigating: (1) FL educators' perspectives about HLLs enrolled in their FLCs, (2) FL educators' perspectives about the link between knowing a language and claiming an identity, (3) best practices employed by FL educators in the classroom that offer opportunities to support multiple identities and foster identity formation, and (4) other socialisation arenas, such as online

social media platforms and online language classes, that provide alternative ways to access a heritage community and HLE. These are points of inquiry that I would like to explore or hope others will investigate in future research.

Concluding Remarks About the Study

In this chapter, I have reflected on key perspectives about HL learning and identity that resulted from my time with 11 HL learners/speakers. Their voices and perspectives about having a heritage identity, with or without knowing the HL, add another dimension of understanding to the growing research on HLE and HLLs. As stated earlier in this dissertation, for too long HLE and HL studies focused on young HLLs, because HL maintenance studies saw the child learner as the only way for a HL to carry on from one generation to the next. While adult HLLs have been investigated in terms of HLE, there is still room for investigation in relation to the points of inquiry focused on in this study. In some ways, the present study could be aligned with the work of Kouritzin (1997) in which she examined HL loss in adults. Specifically, she focused on what it means to lose a language from an individual's perspective. Thus, authorship on adult HLLs is present in HL literature. However, the purpose of the present study is not to focus on language loss, but to speak to adult HLLs who want to compensate for missing out on learning their HL when young. The adult HLL was typically seen as an afterthought language learner, because once you are an adult, you either have the language or you do not. However, adult HLLs actively seek out HL learning opportunities. When they do, it is important for researchers in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and sociocultural theories to investigate why they want to learn the language and what the language can offer them. The participants in this study decided to pursue HLE as adults. While it might not have seemed strange to them to seek out language education, the lack of HL programs for adults shows that there is not enough of a population of HLLs to fill

HL-streamed classes in university. Some of the participants in this study learned bits of their HL as children through their family or in Saturday schools; most did not. However, all of the participants feel, have, or claim a sense of heritage identity. While there has been much research on the link between language and identity, the participants in this study have lived their heritage-ness or ethnicities for most of their lives with minimal, if any, HL use and understanding. The participants decided to pursue HL studies because they claim, have, or are coming into their HL identity, but at the same time they entered into this study wondering "what does language have to do with it?" The answer is that language has quite a lot to do with it.

Conclusion: Final Personal Remarks

I began this dissertation with a personal trip down memory lane where I described an incident that took place in the past when I first had to face an issue with my identity. It centred around the question, "Where are you from? … no, where are you *really* from?" That incident and reflecting on it pushed me to explore questions of "When does someone's self-styled identity claim seem good enough for another person to accept it, and what is needed for someone to feel a sense of legitimacy in their self-styled ethno-linguistic identity?" These two questions were at the heart of my point of inquiry in this doctoral project. Specifically, does a person need their HL to claim their heritage identity links?

The participants in this study had given me permission to investigate, explore, retell, and eventually disseminate their personal stories of trying to learn their HL as adults and of positioning themselves as members of their ethno-linguistic community through their identity claims and personal evolution. Like me, the participants in this study have felt the sting of imposed identity characterisations. I have lived my whole life with a strong sense of being Canadian with multiple layers that make up *my* self-styled identity. I am Canadian, with South

African East Indian cultural heritage and a good dose of Irishness as well. In my lived Canadian experiences, I have never felt the need to hyphenate my identity to acknowledge my multiple ethno-cultural layers. I have simply explained who I am. However, my explanations led to further questions about my background and challenges as to what I am claiming to be a member of.

The 11 participants claimed that knowing the HL does have an impact on how they negotiate their self-styled heritage identity. Their responses indicate that they feel there is a link, but they also commented that they need the HL in order to have a sense of connectedness to their heritage community is an individual feeling. In other words, everyone needs to determine for themselves whether they need the language for the identity claim. They would not prescribe a language-identity link for others. Consequently, language may be important to identity and potentially creates a greater sense of belonging.

However, language identity has multiple dimensions. In one dimension, there are stereotypical understandings of the language-identity link. The understanding that each community had a one-to-one relationship between an identity and language pushes the belief that there is only one way to be a member of a community. This also leads to an embedded impression that strong identity claims are only possible if there is high linguistic competence. This understanding is wrought with ideologies about the power structure or imbalance that a language can impose on a person's identity claims and/or positionality in a community. For example, a power structure in language can be seen when a standard version of a language is a more accepted version to speak than an equally rich dialectal variety of the language. One difference between a standard language version and a dialectal variety is that the standard version has more support from an academic community. Another difference is that the dialectal

variety is potentially spoken in limited communities and contexts. While there is a lot of research that supports a one-to-one relationship between language and identity, there are language learners and speakers who challenge this understanding.

Many of the participants in this study were multilingual cultural straddlers who show that the language-identity link is not a dichotomous relationship; they represented another dimension of the language-identity link. The participants in this study highlight that the link offers a space for go-between identities. In other words, nothing is concrete about the language-identity link, because people can claim an identity regardless of their linguistic knowledge. They can choose to be who they invest in being and they can choose what that investment would look like. If they are strongly invested in learning the language and making far-reaching linguistic advances, then they might have a keen sense of connectedness to the community and potentially a greater sense of agency. This does not mean that other people with a lower sense of investment in their HL learning have a weaker sense of community connectedness. Consequently, nothing is fully concrete about the identity and language link, and the diversity of language-identity affinity is something to be celebrated. The participants supported that a unidimensional, imposed language-identity link is not the whole story. People will come into their identity in their own time, with or without the language. The language-identity link is not fixed or static.

When conducting this doctoral study, I wore two hats. One hat was that of a researcher. In this position, I wondered if the participants were in fruitful language learning environments that would bring them linguistic and cultural value. The other hat that I wore was that of a HL non-learner/non-speaker. My primary role was as a researcher, but I realised that I walked a fine line between being an insider and outsider with respect to the participants' experiences. I am an insider because I am a member of my ethnic community without knowledge of the language, and

I used my experience as the stepping-stone to this investigation. However, I am an outsider because I am a researcher, and I recognise that each participant is unique in their identity language claims.

I end this thesis the same way I began it. In Taiye Selasi's 2014 TED Talk, *Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local*, she commented that any discussion about identity is a discussion about the human experience. Researching the relationship between language and identity has shown that we sometimes place ourselves and others in "mutually exclusive categories" (Selasi, 2014, minute 15:34), and this may not be the best way to understand one's identity or for someone to speak of their identity. If her proposed stance of "where I'm a local" is adopted, it could open up possibilities about how people claim their identity. However, what I believe the participants in this study have offered the field of HLE is an understanding that the link between language and identity is colourful and textured. It is multi-layered; it is multi-local. It might be multilingual or it might not be. The complexity of an ethno-linguistic identity is also the beauty of an ethno-linguistic identity.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Research Consent Form McGill University

Title of Research: "What does language have to do with it?": Exploring the ethno-cultural identity attainment and maintenance of adult heritage language learners in post-secondary language programs

Researcher: Sumanthra Govender, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Information: Tel: +1 514 264 5237; email: sumanthra.govender@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Mela Sarkar; Committee Members: Dr. Martin Guardado, Dr. Angelica Galante

The purpose of this research is to explore the importance of ethno-cultural/linguistic identities of adult heritage language learners in their non-heritage oriented language classes. In other words, I am interested in understanding how you build your sense of ethnic identity through your language classes. Does learning your heritage language in university help in your ethnic identity affinity?

Your participation requires filling out a demographic/personal background form and then answering a few questions related to your ethno-cultural/linguistic identity and personal experiences with learning the heritage language as an adult. The whole interview may take from 60 to 90 minutes at two different times during the semester. The two interviews, one at the beginning of the semester and the end of the semester, will be conducted one-on-one. The time and location of our two interviews will be at your own convenience or at my office at McGill University. The interviews will be audio-taped and later written in text. Soon after, I will give you a summary of our interview so you can tell me if I have correctly understood what we

discussed.

You will also be asked to write a brief but detailed language autobiography about your identity and heritage language learning/using/speaking experiences. You will be given written prompts for this task. This writing task will be given to you when you are filling out the demographic/personal background form.

Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire study and your anonymity will be maintained from the moment the interviews are transferred into text (transcribed) and/or your language autobiography is submitted.

My dissertation will be available in the university library and be accessible to the public. The dissertation will contain no information that will permit you to be identified by anyone reading the dissertation.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can choose to refuse to answer any question or even to stop the interview and your participation at any time. You will also have the opportunity to participate in part of the study; for example, you might be able to do the interviews without submitting the language autobiography. No person other than me will have access to the interview materials and they will be coded with numbers instead of names so that it will be impossible to identify them as originating from you.

You will be compensated $25.00 for your participation in the interview and $25.00 for your reviewing of the summary of the interview. You may contact me at any time if you have any questions about the study.

Your signature below serves to signify that you agree to participate in this study.

I have read the above information and I agree to participate in this study.

I consent to audio-taping of the interview ____YES _____NO

Participant Signature: _____ Researcher's signature: _____

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: PHASE 1 - Identity Language/Personal Background Questionnaire

Please answer all of the following questions. Please tick off one answer and write the appropriate information wherever necessary.

1. Name:_____
2. Contact Information (Mobile Number or Email): _____
3. Age: _____
4. Gender: _____
5. Nationality:_____
6. Ethnic Group(s):_____
7. Area of Study: _____
8. Languages: Mother Tongue: _____; Parental Language(s):_____HL(s): _____; First Language(s): _____; Other Languages: _____ (Comment on the level of proficiency, use, or understanding in the language)
9. Years of Language Study:_____
10. How many heritage languages were you exposed to growing up?
11. If you were exposed to more than one heritage language in the home, were you exposed to both languages equally?
12. How much of the heritage language(s) did you hear growing up?
13. How often were you spoken to in the heritage language(s)?
14. Experience in learning, using, or being exposed to the heritage language:

_____

_____

15. Comment on the quality of your exposure to the heritage language? (word, short phrases, random sentences, code-switching: the practice of alternating between two or more languages.

Appendix C: PHASE 1 - Prompts for Language Autobiography

The language autobiography is your personal account/reflection of your experiences in learning and using the heritage language(s) or your experiences in not knowing the heritage language(s). Your autobiography will be helpful in identifying potential trends or salient factors that impact ethno-cultural identity in the language-learning environment.

1) Recall a time when you were spoken to in your heritage language(s) but didn't respond in the heritage language(s). Any experience can be accounted for here: experience with family, community members, strangers of the same ethno-cultural background. Write down as much as you can remember about it.

2) Write down a particular incident during a time in which you felt your identity was questioned because of your lack of heritage language knowledge.

3) List all the things which you believe positively contribute to the learning of heritage language(s): include activities or groups that are outside of the formal language learning environment.

4) List things that you feel might hinder or slow down your learning of the heritage language(s). Again, think of as many of these as you can.

Appendix D: PHASE 1 - Semi-Structured Interview Prompts

List of Potential Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. How do you self-identify? For example, …[Indo-Canadian]
2. What has motivated you to learn your heritage language(s)?
3. Have you tried learning the heritage language in other places other than university?
4. What language(s) was spoken in your home?
5. What was the importance placed on knowing the heritage language?
6. How does your family support your desire to learn the heritage language?
7. Which language did you first speak?
8. Follow-up question: If the heritage language(s) is not your first language, can you recall how you were exposed to the language(s)?
9. Have you ever attended any community-based heritage language schools/programs?
10. Why did you choose to take a language course in your heritage language?
11. What factors do you think contribute to your learning of heritage language?
12. What factors do you think hinder your learning of your heritage language?

Appendix E: PHASE 2 - Learner Semi-Structured Interview Prompts

1. How were you generally received by people from your father's ethnic/racial background?
2. How were you generally received by people from your mother's ethnic/racial background?
3. How has your heritage language development affected your sense of ethnic identity?
4. Do you feel the current language learning experience has helped you in your heritage identity formation? If so, how? If not, why?
5. Over the course of your current language course, how have you been exposed to cultural content that could support your identity affinity?
6. How important is proficiency in [insert learner's heritage language] for you now as an adult?
7. What are your impressions about the importance of identity in your language course?
8. As a heritage learner, do you think you could contribute cultural insights into the course content or discussions that other language learners might not?
9. Do you think children should be taught [insert learner's heritage language] at a young age? Why or why not?
10. Have your desired language and identity goals changed since you began your language course? If so, how? If not, why?