Western Graduate&PostdoctoralStudies

Western University
Scholarship@Western

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository

11-2-2020 1:00 PM

Seniors, French, and Conversation Groups: An Investigation Into Seniors Who Pursue French As A Leisure Activity

Alan D. Russette, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Dr. Shelley Taylor, *The University of Western Ontario*
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education
© Alan D. Russette 2020

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd

Part of the Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons

Recommended Citation

Russette, Alan D., "Seniors, French, and Conversation Groups: An Investigation Into Seniors Who Pursue French As A Leisure Activity" (2020). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 7446.
https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/7446

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact wlswadmin@uwo.ca.

Abstract

The dissertation investigates the motivation to learn French as an additional language later in life and maintain and/or improve one's proficiency in it through participation in an L2 conversation group in an Anglophone setting. The research study consisted of participation in and observation of weekly French language conversation groups over the course of a 12-month period, a multiple round qualitative interview approach involving twelve participants, and document analysis.

The research study investigates what experiences led these learners to pursue French as a minority language, and why they choose to maintain it though it is not necessary for their daily lives nor is it necessarily connected to their ethnic backgrounds. It also asks how participation in conversation groups contributes to the maintenance of French, and how maintaining it affects their lives. Interview transcripts were analyzed using a fusion of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. The participants were not consciously aware of why they connected to FML or why they chose to maintain it. However, themes connected to family, social interaction, and a sense of nostalgia emerged from the interviews as did simple enjoyment using the language. The hybrid Dörnyei-Stebbins framework provided guidance, focus, and clarity into why L2 learners may choose to pursue an L2 as a leisure activity and additionally explained why activities, like conversation groups, are important to the L2 learning experience. This formulation added additional layers of analysis that may have been overlooked if only using one framework.

Though not generalizable to all seniors, this study adds to the body of literature pertaining to lifelong learning.

Keywords

Second Language Learning, Seniors, L2 Maintenance, Minority Languages, Conversation Groups, Lifelong Learning, L2 Motivational Self System, L2MSS, Serious Leisure Perspective

Lay Abstract

The dissertation investigates the motivations of seniors who chose to learn French as an additional language later in life and maintain and/or improve their proficiency through participation in one of two specific L2 conversation groups in an Anglophone setting. The research study consisted of participation in and observation of two discrete weekly French language conversation groups over the course of a 12-month period. One group was organized through an online social networking site while the second was organized and facilitated by a Francophone seniors' services organization. In addition, data were collected via a multiple round qualitative interview approach and document analysis.

The research study investigates what experiences led these learners to pursue French as a minority language, and why they have chosen to maintain French when it is not necessary for their daily lives nor is it necessarily connected to their ethnic backgrounds. In addition, it asks how participation in conversation groups contributes to the maintenance of their French. Finally, the study asks how maintaining French has affected the participants' lives.

Interview transcripts were analyzed using a fusion of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. The participants were not consciously aware of why they connected to French or why they chose to maintain it. However, themes connected to family, social interaction, and a sense of nostalgia emerged from the interviews. Some expressed a sense of loss of familial identity or guilt at not having learned the L2 earlier in life. Others had learned the L2 as a means of connecting with loved ones. Some just had fun learning and using the language.

Keywords

Second Language Learning, Seniors, L2 Maintenance, Minority Languages, Conversation Groups, Lifelong Learning, L2 Motivational Self System, L2MSS, Serious Leisure Perspective

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have supported me in various capacities through the dissertation process. First, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Shelley Taylor. Thank you for your continued support dating back to the early days of my Master's thesis. Your feedback and guidance through all the twists and turns of the research process helped more than you may realize. Thank you, as well, to Dr. Mi Song Kim for serving on my committee and providing much needed feedback, particularly as the submission deadline drew closer and closer.

Thank you to members of my PhD cohort, particularly Dr. Lynn Dare, who quite literally provided the rock upon which this dissertation was built. Thank you as well to Dr. Joelle Nagle, who somehow managed to send the right text message at the right time and always ensured that I was aware of upcoming deadlines.

Thank you to my friends in the teaching profession, including Veronica Sutherland, Laura Flick, and Jannaia Arthur. Conversations with Veronica led me to my research sites years before the project was ever conceived. Laura spent time accompanying me to scout out the research sites and always provided encouragement whenever my confidence seemed to be wavering. Similarly, Jannaia was there to offer encouragement and often acted as a sounding board for my theories.

Thank you to Dr. Chris McNorgan who was always available to answer questions, offer feedback, and just generally be supportive of this project over the last several years.

Finally, thank you to my parents, Paul and Elena Russette, who supported me in innumerable ways over the course of my doctoral studies. Without you, there is no way I could have completed this dissertation.

Table of Contents

Abstract ii

Lay Abstract iii

Acknowledgments iv

Table of Contents v

List of Tables ix

List of Figures x

List of Appendices xi

Chapter 1 1

1 Introduction 1

1.1 Canadian Language Learning Context 2

1.2 Research Rationale 5

1.3 Coming to the Research 7

1.4 Research Questions 9

1.5 Theoretical Frameworks 10

1.5.1 The L2 Motivational Self System 10

1.5.2 The Serious Leisure Perspective 15

1.5.3 Connecting the Frameworks 19

1.6 Chapter Overview 23

Chapter 2 25

2 Literature Review 25

2.1 Quantitative Studies of Second Language Learning 26

2.2 L2 Motivational Self System 31

2.3 Investment and Identity 35

2.4 Motivations to Learn an L2 in a Foreign Language Context 40

2.5 Seniors and Lifelong Learning 44

2.6 Informal Language Learning 50

2.7 Minority Language Maintenance 54

2.8 Chapter Overview 57

Chapter 3 63

3 Methodology and Methods 63

3.1 Qualitative Methodology 63

3.2 Research Design 65

3.2.1 Case Study 65

3.3 Recruitment 68

3.3.1 Informed Consent 69

3.3.2 Risks, Benefits, and Safety 69

3.4 Research Sites 70

3.4.1 Site One – The Pub 71

3.4.2 Site Two – The Library 71

3.5 Participants 72

3.6 Data Sources 73

3.6.1 Semi-structured Interviews 73

3.6.2 Participant Observation 75

3.6.3 Document Analysis 76

3.7 Data Analysis 76

3.8 Trustworthiness 80

Chapter 4 82

4 Findings 82

4.1 Observation Sites 82

4.1.1 Conversation Group – the Pub ... 82

4.1.2 Conversation Group – the Library ... 89

4.2 Seniors-related Documents ... 95

4.3 Participant Profiles ... 98

4.3.1 Single and Two Interview Seniors ... 99

4.3.2 Three Interview Seniors ... 105

4.3.3 Section Summary ... 142

4.4 Emergent Themes ... 143

4.4.1 Familial Connection ... 143

4.4.2 Social Connection ... 147

4.4.3 Nostalgia ... 152

Chapter 5 ... 157

5 Analysis and Discussion ... 157

5.1 Evaluating the Hybrid Framework ... 157

5.2 Discussion ... 164

5.2.1 The Multi-Interview Format ... 164

5.2.2 The Focus on Seniors ... 167

5.2.3 Quebec, Identity and the Participants ... 172

5.3 Chapter Overview ... 174

Chapter 6 ... 175

6 Conclusions ... 175

6.1 Summary of the Study ... 175

6.2 Significance of the Study ... 184

6.3 Limitations of the Study ... 185

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research ... 186

6.5 Recommendations 187

References 190

Appendices 200

Appendix A – Letter of Information and Consent Form 200

Appendix B – Ethics Approval Form 203

Appendix C – Interview Questions 204

Curriculum Vitae 206

List of Tables

Table 1 - Rewards Gained from Participation in Serious Leisure Activities.......................... 18

Table 2 - Framework Overlap... 22

Table 3 - Single and Two Interview Senior Summary 99

Table 4 - Three Interview Senior Summary 105

List of Figures

Figure 1 - The Serious Leisure Perspective 17

Figure 2 – Interactions Between the L2 Motivational Self System and the Serious Leisure Perspective 21

Figure 3 - Analysis of Tony's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework 159

Figure 4 – Analysis of Bruce's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework 160

Figure 5 – Analysis of Steve's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework............................... 161

Figure 6 – Analysis of Wanda's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework 162

Figure 7 – Analysis of Natasha's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework........................... 163

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Information and Consent Form 200

Appendix B: Ethics Approval Form 203

Appendix C: Interview Questions 204

Chapter 1

1 Introduction

> *As much as I'm saying I'm motivated, I think probably I wouldn't have identified it -- I probably wouldn't have said that I missed speaking French. I think it was when I started to come to the group that I would have said, "I really crave to speak French," like, because I'd missed it that much. And I don't know why. I have no idea why.* – Natasha

When I began this research project, I was not sure what kind of people I would meet. I knew that minority and foreign language conversation groups existed, but I did not know anything about the members. Who were they? What were the participants' backgrounds? For instance, were these groups made up predominantly of first language (L1) speakers, second language (L2) speakers or foreign language (FL) speakers? Why were they going out of their way to get together to speak a language like French that has official status in Canada, but official minority status in the middle of Southwestern Ontario, especially if they did not *have* to do it? That is, what was their motivation? Finally, what could I learn from their efforts and experiences? This dissertation represents the culmination of over a year of observations and participant interviews focused on the language learning journeys and motivations, and related document analysis, of seven L2 speakers who have actively sought to maintain their additional language in an English-dominant city in Canada.

The opening chapter is divided into five sections. The first section describes the Canadian language learning context and details programs and funding provided by the federal government that is earmarked for education in one of Canada's two official languages. It also details the decline in enrollment for French as a Second Language (FSL) programs over the course of secondary school. The second section discusses the rationale of the study. The third and fourth sections detail how I arrived at the initial project idea as well as providing the specific research questions used to guide this

inquiry. Finally, I introduce the two theoretical frameworks through which the data were analyzed and how they connect.

1.1 Canadian Language Learning Context

Any discussion of language learning in Canada would be incomplete without addressing Quebec and the complicated relationship between English and French Canada. While an in-depth discussion goes beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to establish some context in order to better understand the perspectives of the participants in the present study. Canada has two official languages, English and French, representing the majority languages of Upper and Lower Canada at the time of Confederation. Tensions between the two populations have led to Canada being described as a country of 'two solitudes', a metaphor taken from the title of a 1945 novel by Hugh MacLennan. The novel explores tensions between English and French Canada from the first World War to the start of the second (MacLennan, 2018). The term has come to symbolize the communication, or lack thereof, between the Francophone majority of Quebec and the rest of Canada.

The rights of French-speakers in Canada has been a point of contention in Canada dating back to at least the 1930s when "Nationalist organizations in Quebec and those that defended the rights of French Canadians and Acadians in the English-speaking provinces had presented memoranda to the numerous royal commissions of enquiry" (Martel, 2019, p. 210). These memoranda were sent to draw attention to the "minor role given to French in federal institutions and their ongoing battles to obtain French language education" (Martel, 2019, p. 210). In Ontario, battles to secure French language education had been going on since the late 1890s until 1968 when Franco-Ontarians were finally granted the right to open their own French-language secondary schools, though battles in the province over French-language education continued in the province until the late 1990s (Cartwright, 1996; Heller, 2003).

Political tensions in Quebec continued to escalate in the 1960s during the Quiet Revolution (C. Taylor, 1993). This, in turn, led to Ontario making French one of the official languages of education in 1968 and to the introduction of the Official Languages

Act of 1969 by the Federal government in order to try and placate Quebec sovereignists (Heller, 2003; Leroux, 2014; Martel, 2019). Elections of the Parti Québécois in 1976 and 1994 led to two referendums on Quebec sovereignty in 1980 and 1995 respectively. In both cases, the majority of Quebec voters voted to stay in Canada. Tensions exacerbated by these referendums play out in different forms, one being the nomenclature of identity. The term Québécois has very specific connotations within Quebec society associated with language and ethnicity (Le Gall & Meintel, 2015; Leroux, 2014; Reid, 2012). Those that find themselves outside of the accepted definition are excluded. An English speaking resident of Quebec, for example, would never refer to him/herself as an Anglo-Quebecois, even though the adjective may be accurate (Reid, 2012). It simply is not done. The prioritizing of one's English language identity over their ethnic background or history, plays out with a number of participants as detailed in Chapter 4. There are Canadian Francophone communities outside of Quebec, such as the Acadien, the Franco-Ontarien, the Franco-Albertan communities, which make up Canada's linguistic duality (Government of Canada, 2008, 2012, 2013). However, most of the participants spent significant portions of their lives in and around Montreal during the period of the Quiet Revolution (C. Taylor, 1993). As such, particular emphasis has been placed on Quebec in this section because of its importance to the individuals in my study. This emphasis should not be construed as diminishing the contributions or importance of the Acadien, Franco-Ontarien, or Franco-Albertan communities to Canada's linguistic duality.

Quebec's presence in Canada has had a significant impact on the education across the country. For example, all students in English-medium schools in Ontario are required to take French as a Second Language (FSL) as a mandatory subject in the elementary school curriculum by Grade 4. This is referred to as Core French. Additional instructional models, including Extended French, and French Immersion, are offered across the province (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1998, 2013). Secondary schools and universities offer additional foreign language courses as subjects, as well.

The Canadian government has invested significantly in second language (L2) learning programs (i.e. in one of the country's official languages), as demonstrated by its $2.2 BN commitment to its L2-related Roadmap programs from 2008-2018 (Government

of Canada, 2008, 2012, 2013).[1] The $1.1 BN *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013: Acting for the Future* provided funding for a number of language-related programs, including support of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs)[2]; L2 education bursaries for those who wish to participate in English or French Immersion programs; early childhood education and care; family literacy; and L2 education programs like French Immersion (Government of Canada, 2012). As Canada is a predominantly Anglophone (English-speaking) country (Statistics Canada, 2013), despite having two official languages, a sizable amount of the funding allotted to OLMCs goes toward the support of Francophone minority communities and to the promotion of French language programs in English-dominant provinces (Government of Canada, 2012).

One French L2 program that continues to grow in popularity in English Canada is French Immersion education. In Ontario, French Immersion schools use French as the medium of course content instruction "for a minimum of 50 per cent of the total instructional time at every grade level of the program and provide a minimum of 3800 hours of instruction in French by the end of Grade 8" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 16). The 2008 Roadmap's Midterm report indicated a 10% increase in enrollment in French Immersion programs across Canada between 2007 and 2012, bringing the number of students enrolled to approximately 350,000 (Government of Canada, 2012). Core French enrollment in 2012, by contrast, was approximately 1, 474, 000 students (Canadian Parents for French, n.d.-a).

Having deemed the 2008 Roadmap a success, the government unveiled the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities*. This $1.1 BN initiative identifies Education as one of its three pillars, with the Federal government planning to invest $658 million, or approximately 60% of the

---

[1] Second language, in this context, refers to the Canadian official language that is not the speaker's L1. Moreover, the term "second language" is used for ease of classification, though learners could be learning an L3, L4 or more.

[2] OLMCs are made up of speakers of an official language that live in an area where their L1 is in the minority (e.g. English in Quebec, or French in the English-dominant provinces).

$1.1BN funding, toward education programs and initiatives (Government of Canada, 2013). Despite these investments, there continues to be a considerable decline in enrolment in secondary school Core French programs after Grade 9, when French study becomes an elective (Canadian Parents for French, n.d.-b). Canadian Parents for French (n.d.-b) report a drop of 71.6% in Ontario Core French enrolment between Grades 9 and 10 from 2011-12 to 2012-13. This means that 61, 431 Ontario students chose to abandon Core French studies after Grade 9. While not as dramatic in other provinces due to differences in population, the attrition from Core French between Grade 9 and Grade 10 is a consistent trend across the country (Canadian Parents for French, n.d.-b). There are, however, students who continue through Immersion and Core French programs and complete their FSL schooling at the end of secondary school (Canadian Parents for French, n.d.-b). Learning a language, though, is just the first step.

1.2 Research Rationale

Like other skills, languages must be used (practiced) in order to be maintained. Lack of use could lead to decreased proficiency or perhaps loss of the language. Schmid (2011) notes that language attrition (i.e. forgetting a language) "takes place in a setting where that language is used only rarely" (p. 3-4). Though she was discussing L1 attrition due to lack of use, the same criteria apply to minority L2 use. Those who have learned minority languages face the added difficulty of finding opportunities to use the language. Outside of workplace use or family interactions, opportunities are limited. Lack of opportunity has led some minority L2 speakers to create their own opportunities in the form of community-organized conversation circles through websites like http://www.meetup.com or http://www.mylanguageexchange.com. These sorts of websites are examples of informal learning in that they function outside a formal learning environment without an externally imposed curriculum (Livingstone, 2001). Informal learning will be discussed further in the Literature Review in Chapter 2.

MyLanguageExchange.com is a social networking site that aims to pair speakers of different languages in a mutually beneficial communicative relationship. The site "helps language learners become fluent by enabling effective language exchange practice via email, voice chat or live in-person" (Yuen, n.d.-a, para. 11). Users browse the site for

individuals who either speak the language they wish to practice or who are seeking to learn a language they speak. Initial contact is made via e-mail, leaving users to negotiate how their language exchange would work (Yuen, n.d.-b). For instance, users may agree to e-mail one another regularly or to talk via video conferencing on Skype once a week. Initial site registration is free, but full functionality requires a paid subscription. Initial contact must be made by users who have subscribed to the site.

Meetup.com offers people with common interests a medium through which they can network and organize events. Comprised of over 9000 groups, each "with the goal of improving themselves or their communities" (Meetup, n.d. para. 1), the site aims to "help people around the world self-organize" (Meetup, n.d., para 2). Membership in Meet Up groups is typically free, and participants are free to attend as many (or as few) events as they wish. A wide number of interests are represented, including minority language conversation groups (Meetup, n.d.). Baker (2011) indicates that minority languages tend to be used in the home, by a particular cultural group, or perhaps within a religious community. This differs from majority languages that are the languages of commerce, education, mass media, government correspondence, and in everyday daily interactions in a particular region or country.

Minority languages, as the name implies, are spoken by a smaller proportion of the population than the majority (Baker, 2011). For the purposes of this study, the terms minority language and heritage language are used differently. Although heritage languages are also minority languages in that they are not spoken by the wider community, speakers of a heritage language have particular ethnic or familial ties (Valdés, 2001). For example, the children of Portuguese immigrants who learn to speak Portuguese are learning it as a heritage language. By contrast, if a Japanese immigrant to Canada chooses to learn Portuguese, then he or she is learning a minority language as a foreign language since the learner has no familial or ethnic affiliation with the language nor does Portuguese enjoy official language status in Canada. Please note that this study does not focus on heritage languages. Rather, the focus is on seniors who have learned French as an additional language.

1.3 Coming to the Research

I began in earnest my second language learning journey in the early 2000s when I enrolled in an intermediate level French course as a mature student at the local university. I was a product of the Ontario Core French program, taking French through elementary and secondary schools but had not pursued French in any form for over a decade when I enrolled in the university course. One course led to another, part-time, until I had earned a Minor in French to add to my bachelor's degree. From there, I spent a couple of years in Montreal before returning to Ontario to do a Bachelor of Education degree in the Junior-Intermediate panel of the French as a Second Language stream. After teaching Core French for half of an academic year, I began graduate studies in Education where I earned a Master of Education degree, focusing on Multiliteracies and Multilingualism, while continuing to teach as a substitute teacher in a local school board. My master's degree research focused on pedagogy employed in a Francophone childcare centre. My interest in learning and maintaining additional languages dates back close to two decades at this point, and my ongoing employment as a substitute teacher, predominantly in French immersion elementary schools, makes learning French a part of my daily life.

I became aware of sites like MyLanguageExchange.com and Meetup.com several years before the start of the research study. For example, I had been a member of MyLanguageExchange.com in the mid-2000s when I lived in Montreal and wanted to meet people with whom I could practice my French. I learned of Meetup during a conversation with a friend of mine whom I had met during French immersion courses in Trois-Pistoles, Québec (See Explore, n.d. for additional details on the program). She had brought up the Meetup site as a possible way for me to meet people with common interests. Because of how we met, she suggested I check to see whether any French language groups had been organized, and to attend some sessions of any local groups. At the time, I agreed to try them, but had no intention of doing so.

Several years later, I was in the process of finishing the course work component of my doctoral studies and, on the last day of our final class, one of my classmates gave each of us the opportunity to choose from a number of rocks and stones she had decorated. On each of the stones was a word that was meant to be inspirational. She

instructed us to choose whichever rock we felt spoke to us. When it came to my turn to choose, I chose a rock with the word 'motivation' on it. This rock became one of the catalysts for the eventual research project.

At the outset of my doctoral studies, I had a different project in mind. However, factors beyond my control made the projects unviable and I was forced to come up with a new project idea. By chance, I had another conversation with my friend from the immersion program and the subject of the Meetup groups was broached again. Once again, I agreed to attend the sessions, but I was not very interested in doing so. However, a short time later I came across the 'motivation' rock I had chosen a couple of years before and ideas began to coalesce. I thought about the French language Meetup groups and how I was not motivated to go. These groups had been operating for some time, so members must have been attending sessions regularly enough for the group to continue. Who were the group members? What made these people different from me? Why were they motivated to go while I was content to stay at home? These sorts of questions motivated me to start attending the group sessions to see if there was something I could use in a research study.

After participating in one of the groups, I started reflecting on the types of people who were active members and I had noticed the small number of beginners there. In fact, from the conversations I had, very few of the members were taking any sort of L2-related courses whatsoever. This led me to consider the idea that the members were not necessarily language learners per se, but rather L2 speakers who were comfortable with the language. In my own experience, there are not abundant opportunities for me to speak my L2 outside of the workplace. I work as a substitute teacher, primarily in French immersion elementary schools. If I did not have that as an outlet, my L2 use would be greatly reduced, if not non-existent.

I began thinking about the phenomenon of people in similar circumstances, who had learned a minority L2 well enough to be comfortable with it, yet who had no workplace or familial connection to it. How would they maintain their L2 proficiency? Going to a weekly L2 conversation group would seem to be a less convenient way of

using one's L2 than, for example, using a smartphone application. Participating in conversation groups like these require members to travel to a specific location at a specific time, rather than opening an app whenever the mood struck them. If the L2 was not a part of their work life and not a part of their family background, why were they doing it? How could this phenomenon be explained? Those people, the ones who were willing to go to the extra effort, were the ones that interested me. They were essentially going against the grain. Could their language learning journeys provide insights that could inform teaching practice and, as a result, improve student engagement?

1.4 Research Questions

Members of conversation groups, especially those who are intermediate level L2 speakers and higher, are an under-recognized and under-researched in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Research on informal language learning tends to focus on software applications, smartphone apps, and digital spaces rather than on forms of informal learning that take place in face-to-face circumstances. This study aims to shine a light on the people who choose to engage in such language learning/maintenance activities.

The individuals who participate in minority L2 conversation groups continue to put forth time and effort into a minority L2 that they do not necessarily use on a daily basis, nor do they need to use it to function or thrive economically, unlike immigrants acquiring a majority L2. When I began to recruit participants for the study, I had a far greater interest from seniors than from other age groups, which led me to focus on these senior participants in this study. In their report, *A Portrait of Seniors in Canada, 2006*, Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) acknowledge that the term 'senior' is open to debate, particularly in light of changes in average life expectancy and the potential differences in quality of life that comes with it. Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) noted that 65 is the "age at which individuals are entitled to receive full pension benefits in Canada" (p. 8) and it is generally recognized as the typical retirement age by most Canadian social institutions. However, the term 'senior' remains fluid in Canada, with many retail outlets and pharmacies providing discounts to individuals at ages as young as 55 years of age. In addition, the seniors' conversation group where I met many of the participants was aimed at those 55 years and older. Rather than tying the 'senior' designation to a specific

number, for the purposes of this study the term ‘senior’ will be broadened to include those who have retired from their careers and may be as young as 55 years of age.

I have refined my study to explore the following questions:

1) What motivates these senior L2 speakers to continue to work on and to maintain their L2?

2) How does Stebbins' Serious Leisure Perspective relate to Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System? How does this lens inform our understanding of the seniors’ L2 hobby?

1.5 Theoretical Frameworks

This dissertation is informed by Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) , and Stebbins’ (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) frameworks. Each of these frameworks brings to light different aspects of the participants’ motivation and personal interest in maintaining their minority second language. By examining the data through the lens of both frameworks, I intend to provide a more complete analysis of the data collected than would have been possible using just one of these frameworks. In the first subsection, I discuss how I arrived at the use of the L2MSS, covering some preliminary L2 motivation frameworks, before moving on to discuss the Serious Leisure Perspective in the next subsection. In the third section, I discuss how the two chosen frameworks complement each other as well as the role of theory to explain phenomena such as the one I am investigating. In the final section, I provide a brief summary of the chapter.

1.5.1 The L2 Motivational Self System

In searching for an appropriate framework to analyze my data, I examined several L2 motivation frameworks. Defining the motivation to learn an L2 in an academic sense is a challenging and complex endeavour. In fact, Dörnyei (1998) notes that there are an “abundance of motivation theories” (p. 118) that each take a different psychological perspective on human behaviour.

One of the earlier models came from Gardner (1985), who defined motivation to learn an L2 as a "combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language" (p. 10). Gardner (1985) suggests that acknowledging the goal to learn an L2 naturally leads to the question of *why* the goal was chosen, which Gardner calls the learner's orientation. Gardner (1985) identified two orientations, "instrumental" and "integrative". An instrumental orientation indicates that the L2 learner is pursuing the goal for specific purposes, like employment opportunities or career advancement. An integrative orientation indicates an interest in or an affinity for the target language itself and its associated culture. Gardner's (1985) model examines motivation from more of a generalized perspective, rather than examining motivation as a more detailed step-by-step process. Gardner's (1985) definition of motivation was meant to be used in conjunction with research tools where variables like effort and desire could be quantified and measured. However, the wording makes it applicable to an everyday understanding of the term, as well. For the purposes of this study, motivation will be used in a more abstract sense, looking at more of the spirit of Gardner's (1985) definition rather than attempting to measure the variables. For this study, motivation still requires effort, a desire to achieve language learning goals, and positive attitudes toward learning the L2.

Dörnyei's (2003) Process-Oriented Approach to Second Language Motivation, by contrast, attempts to examine how motivation is fluid and changes over time, rather than being a fixed trait. He separates the motivation process into three distinct stages: Preactional (or Choice Motivation), Actional (Executive Motivation), and Postactional (Motivational Retrospection). The Preactional stage is the initial spark of motivation that the learner experiences to learn the new language. The Executive stage is the motivation required by the learner during the learning process. It is affected by peers, the learning environment, and the influence of teachers and parents. The Postactional stage is concerned with the learner's reflection on the learning experience and his/her re-evaluation of his/her goals and interest in the endeavour (Dörnyei, 2003).

The issue I had with several of the frameworks was their focus on motivation while learning the L2 itself. Because of this focus, they seemed to be ill-suited to the

heart of my research, the motivation to *maintain* a minority L2 once reaching a certain level of competency. Although it could be argued that one's language learning never truly ends, my intended participants were individuals who had completed formal L2 schooling and were pursuing L2 activities independently. The process-oriented approach seemed more applicable to, and easier to monitor in, a classroom setting.

Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) seemed to best reflect the data I aimed to captured in the qualitative interviews. The framework represents Dörnyei's attempt to fuse theories of the self from Psychology with research conducted in the L2 field. The system is comprised of three parts: 1) the Ideal L2 Self; 2) the Ought-to L2 self; and 3) the L2 Learning Experience.

Dörnyei (2005, 2009) built upon concepts of possible and future selves forwarded by Markus and Nurius (1986), who suggested that possible selves "can be viewed as the cognitive manifestation of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears, and threats" (p. 954). The domain of possible selves is tied to an individual's goal setting. He/she imagines potential outcomes connected to different tasks, activities, or events. These potential outcomes are positive, neutral, or negative and influence how the individual sees him/herself as a result of action or inaction. The individual creates visions of 'self' that act as motivators either to achieve a desired result or prevent an unwanted result. Markus and Nurius (1986) identified three general categories of 'self': the 'ideal self', a 'self we could become', and a 'self that one fears becoming'. These selves are tied to an individual's past, present and future, yet are still distinct from the current/present self. Experiences, thoughts, feelings, fantasies, dreams – all play a role in the formation of these future selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The 'ideal self' represents the positive internal image that the individual has generated for him/herself. It represents the positive outcome that he/she is working toward. For example, an individual may create an 'academically successful self' based on prior experiences of success in similar courses or achievements in secondary school. The individual sees his/her 'future self' succeeding in post-secondary studies and it pulls the individual toward making that 'future self' manifest itself. The 'self we could become' represents a future self that has an overall neutral outcome. This 'future self' is not inherently positive or negative, but more along

the lines of a factory default setting. An individual who was raised in a family where parents struggled to make ends meet could create a 'homeless self'. This 'future self' represents what the individual fears will come to pass if the individual does not take actions to prevent it. Markus and Nurius (1986) would identify this as the 'self that one fears becoming'. Dörnyei (2009) took the three general categories of 'self' and adapted them for L2 learning, renaming the 'ideal self' to the Ideal L2 Self and combining the 'selves that we could become' and the 'selves that we are afraid of becoming' to become the Ought-to L2 Self, seeing these two as more connected to external motivators than the Ideal L2 Self.

The Ideal L2 Self integrates the "traditional integrative and internalised instrumental motives" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29) of previous models of L2 learning motivation and concerns the positive, aspirational aspects of one's self. For example, a person may have an idea or image in mind of how he/she might sound when speaking with native speakers of the target L2, so he/she will actively work on pronunciation to try and get closer to what would be deemed a proper accent. As goals are achieved, the sense of what the Ideal L2 Self is may evolve to include more challenging goals and a redefining of the learner as an L2 speaker. For example, the learner, having improved his/her pronunciation, may move on to mastering difficult grammatical concepts, like the Subjunctive mood in French. The learner's Ideal L2 Self will have evolved to include native-like pronunciation, as well as a strong understanding of how and when to use the Subjunctive mood in conversation. As new concepts are added to the learner's linguistic repertoire, the learner will redefine him/herself as an L2 speaker relative to his/her Ideal L2 Self, moving from beginner level proficiency to higher degrees of fluency.

The Ought-to L2 Self is concerned with preventative measures and avoiding negative outcomes, but also with attaining skills or attributes that one feels one should possess to reach certain expectations, goals, or results. It is tied to "more extrinsic (i.e. less internalised) types of instrumental motives" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29) than the Ideal L2 Self. For example, a student may be more motivated to study for an upcoming test or exam because they ought to do so to get a higher grade. They fear the negative outcomes that could arise as a result of failing the test. The Ought-to L2 Self, seeking to avoid this

outcome, will motivate the learner to spend more time studying. Perhaps a learner sees an L2 as a pathway to better job prospects or to career advancement. They are not necessarily interested in the L2 for its own sake, but rather for the advantages it could provide over potential competition. Parental or familial pressure to succeed and to make a comfortable income could also factor into the scenario. The Ought-to L2 Self engages to motivate the learner to study the L2, both to succeed and to avoid disappointing family. Learning the L2 is a by-product of the pursuit of another goal and not the goal itself.

The L2 Learning Experience is comprised of "situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success)" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). This part of the framework corresponds to the Actional/Executive motivation stage of Dörnyei's (2003) Process-oriented Approach to L2 Motivation briefly discussed earlier in the chapter. This part of the framework attempts to accommodate motivations that are not easily placed in either the Ideal or Ought-To L2 Self categories. It was added to acknowledge research from the 1990s that recognized the importance of the various components in the immediate classroom environment that impacted student motivation (Dörnyei, 2009). For example, connecting well with a teacher can have a positive effect on a learner's motivation. Similarly, a learner may be motivated to succeed by the attitudes and work ethic of his/her classmates. However, negative L2 experiences could adversely affect a student's interest in continued L2 learning. For example, when I was growing up, Core French class was typically a clash of personalities between the teacher and disengaged students. There was a great deal of yelling, worksheets, bad behaviour, and more yelling. An environment like that is probably not conducive to motivating lifelong interest in the French language. The L2 Learning Experience takes these factors and more alluded to above to form the third pillar of the framework.

Typically, the L2 Learning Experience is comprised of elements connected to a positive learning environment in a classroom. However, in the current study, as the participants are not actively taking language courses, the conversation groups are considered the learning environment, taking the place of the classroom setting. In the

next section, I discuss the Serious Leisure Perspective and its relevance to the study and the L2MSS.

1.5.2 The Serious Leisure Perspective

While the L2MSS offers potential insights into the motivation behind learning and maintaining a minority L2, I felt that the third component, the L2 Learning Experience, was too vague as it encompasses anything and everything that contributes to or detracts from an L2 learner's experience, particularly in the classroom setting. However, the participants selected for this study are not generally pursuing formal language studies in a classroom. If one includes the conversation group sessions as part of the L2 Learning Experience, then the positive interactions members may have as part of these conversation groups could fall under this third category.

Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective offered a different perspective on why participants may choose to attend conversation groups on an ongoing basis – one that offered more specific explanations for their participation than the L2 Learning Experience component while still remaining compatible with it. This Serious Leisure Perspective attempts to categorize the varied types of leisure activities that one may pursue, as well as describe the types of people involved in these activities.

Stebbins (2007) defines leisure as "uncoerced activity engaged in during free time, which people want to do and, in either a satisfying or a fulfilling way (or both), use their abilities and resources to succeed at this" (p. 4). He identifies three general categories of leisure in this framework: serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure. Though the framework is named after the serious leisure category, Stebbins acknowledges that each is equally important and valued. There is also a degree of overlap between the three.

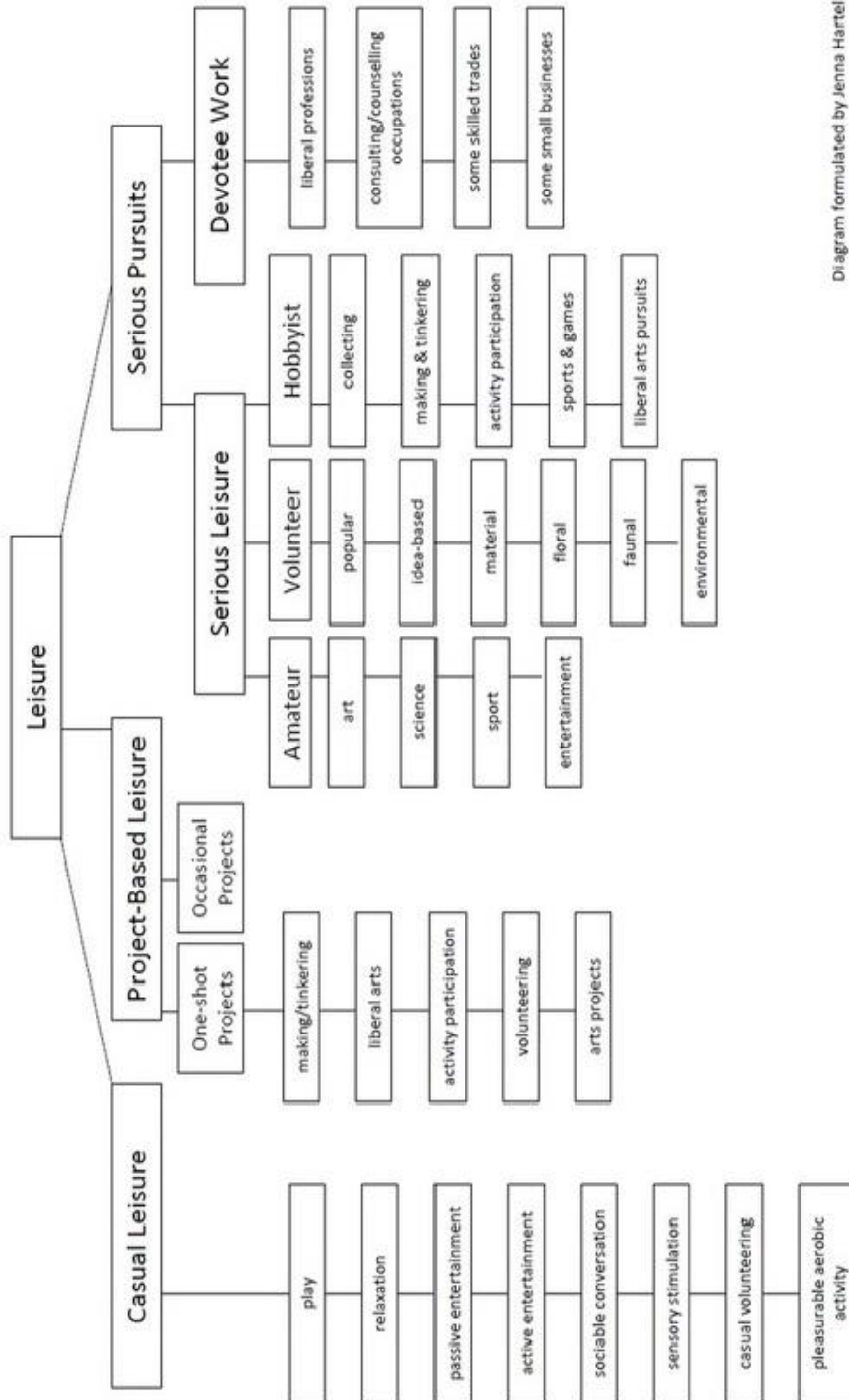
Stebbins (1992) considers serious leisure "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge" (p. 3). Stebbins (2007) used the term 'amateur' to designate pursuits that

have a professional career associated with it. For example, an amateur hockey player could have designs on becoming a coach or a talent scout once his/her prime playing days have finished. A hobbyist, by contrast, lacks a professional counterpart. For example, an individual may enjoy building dioramas for toy action figures. While it may use skills that could be useful in a work capacity, there is not really a professional career path associated with such a pursuit. Volunteers give freely of their time for the benefit of others, without the expectation of monetary compensation. The designations of amateur, hobbyist, and volunteer are further divided to reflect the type of activities they pursue. For example, an amateur tends to participate in activities connected to art, sport, science or entertainment, while hobbyists are collectors, athletes, or liberal arts enthusiasts (Stebbins, 2007). Participants in this study would fall under liberal arts enthusiasts because of their interest in and pursuit of an additional language.

Figure 1 is a visual representation of the full Serious Leisure Perspective framework. I placed the participants in this study under the hobbyist subcategory of Serious Leisure because participation in this group required that members speak a minority L2. Stebbins (2007) argues that serious leisure practitioners require perseverance, significant personal effort, training, knowledge, and experience, all of which are demonstrated in the learning of an L2. Each participant has spent years studying the language in formal education environments in order to communicate in the L2. Successful completion of L2 courses require all the above traits.

An argument can be made that participants would fall under the sociable conversation example of Casual Leisure, and while that may be appropriate for Francophone members of the conversation groups, that would not apply to the participants of this study. To place them in the Casual Leisure category downplays and diminishes the dedication, effort, and training required of the L2 learners and trivializes their language learning journeys. Given how well Serious Pursuits and Serious Leisure describes the participants, using this categorization is the best possible fit.

Figure 1 - The Serious Leisure Perspective



Note. Reproduced from Diagrams of the Serious Leisure Perspective by Jenna Hartel for the Serious Leisure Perspective website, retrieved from https://www.seriousleisure.net/slp-diagrams.html

Of particular interest to this study are the rewards derived from pursuit of serious leisure activities as these rewards serve as motivators and plausible explanations for why participants continue participating in the conversation groups. Stebbins (2007) identifies ten specific rewards for pursuit of serious leisure activities, divided between two general categories: Personal Rewards and Social Rewards. Of these rewards, personal enrichment, self-actualization, self-gratification, social attraction, and contribution to the maintenance and development of the group are especially relevant to the current study. Each of these rewards work well with Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self (2009) framework as experiencing these rewards would contribute to a positive learning environment and thus neatly fit into the L2 Learning Experience portion of the framework and act as a motivator for activity participants. In addition, self-image and re-creation work well with the Ideal L2 Self in Dörnyei's framework. A full list of the personal and social rewards can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 - Rewards Gained from Participation in Serious Leisure Activities

Personal Rewards
1. Personal enrichment (cherished experiences)
2. Self-actualization (developing skills, abilities, knowledge)
3. Self-expression (expressing skills, abilities, knowledge already developed)
4. Self-image (known to others as a particular kind of serious leisure participant)
5. Self-gratification (combination of superficial enjoyment and deep fulfilment)
6. Re-creation (regeneration) of oneself through serious leisure after a day's work
7. Financial return (from a serious leisure activity)
Social Rewards

8. Social attraction (associating with other serious leisure participants, with clients as a volunteer, participating in the social world of the activity)
9. Group accomplishment (group effort in accomplishing a serious leisure project; senses of helping, being needed, being altruistic)
10. Contribution to the maintenance and development of the group (including senses of helping, being needed, being altruistic in making the contribution)

Note. Reprinted [adapted] from *Serious Leisure* (p. 14) by R. A. Stebbins, 2007, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. Copyright (2007) by Transaction Publishers.

1.5.3 Connecting the Frameworks

In the previous subsection, I mentioned that the Serious Leisure Perspective fits in with aspects of the L2MSS. In this subsection, I go into more detail about how the two frameworks are compatible with one another and, in fact, complement each other.

As noted in section 1.5.1, the L2MSS is made up of three components: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the L2 Learning Experience (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). When I first examined the framework, I found the L2 Learning Experience to be extremely vague. It seemed to be a catch-all category for people's motivations that did not fit cleanly in the first two categories. If one accepts that the L2 Learning Experience component encompasses the impact of teachers, parents, peer groups and curriculum, then a leisure activity associated with the target L2 would fall under this component's umbrella, as well.

Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective, specifically the rewards gained through participation in serious leisure activities, fills in the gaps by providing focus to the L2 Learning Experience while also supporting the two 'Self' components. Rewards, by their very nature, are the result of positive actions. It would be reasonable to think that rewards would have a positive impact on one's motivation to continue an activity, making them motivators.

Two of the personal rewards outlined by Stebbins (2007) are directly connected to the Ideal L2 Self: self-actualization and self-image. Stebbins (2020) indicates that "people not only see themselves in their serious leisure activities and the way they carry [them] out, they also have an image of what they hope to become and do in them in the future" (p. 47). This description fits Dörnyei's (2009) description of the Ideal L2 Self. By participating in serious leisure activities, like L2 conversation groups, one can develop skills and/or acquire knowledge. Acquiring these newfound abilities would most certainly move learners closer to their ideal selves. This, in turn, could positively impact self-image. Since the Ideal L2 Self plays into how people picture themselves, the connection to self-image is clear.

Self-expression, as it pertains to the use of these acquired skills, knowledge, and abilities, ties into the L2 Learning Experience component. Using the conversation groups as an example, group members have an opportunity to interact with peers in an authentic real-world setting. Peer groups are an aspect of the L2 Learning Experience, and as noted by Dörnyei (2009), peers have a significant impact on learners' motivation to learn additional languages. Just finding a peer group with similar interest in the target L2 could act as positive motivation. Associating with a group who participates in similar leisure activities falls under the social attraction reward.

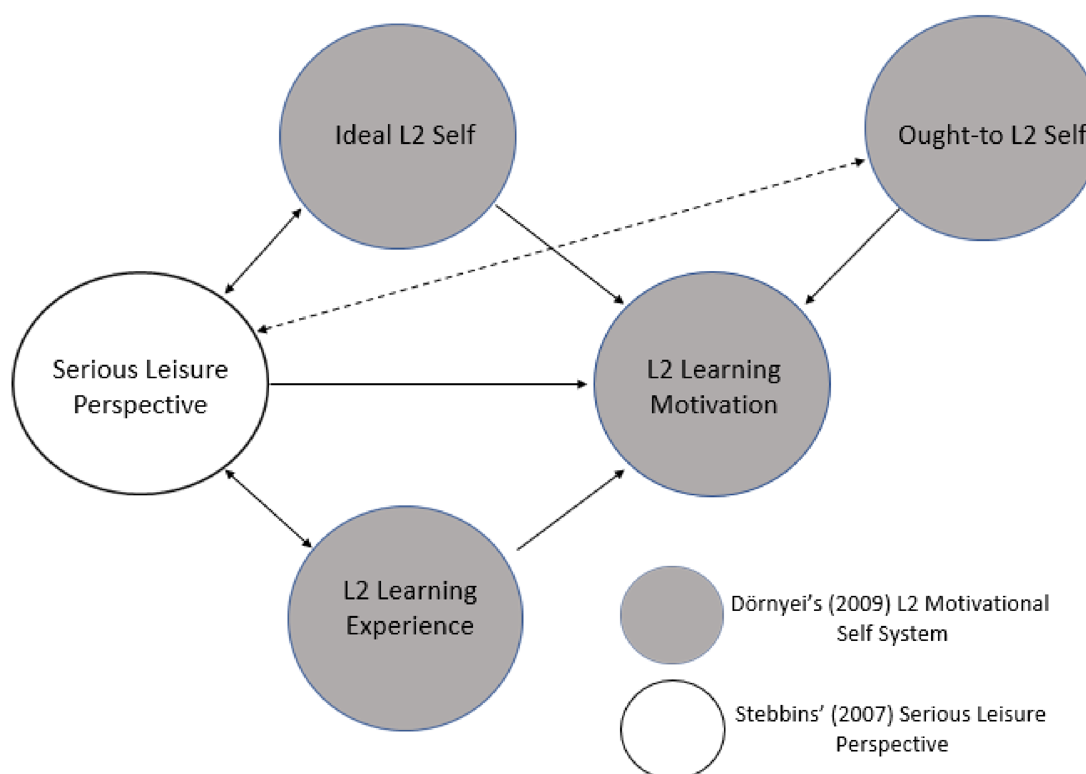
Something as simple as having fun during the conversation group sessions could be considered a positive, potentially motivating L2 learning experience. 'Fun' is covered under the Self-gratification reward Stebbins (2007) put forward. Taking leadership roles in the group, like acting as a moderator or organizer, would satisfy the group accomplishment and contribution to the development/maintenance of a group rewards. These contributions to the group could be interpreted as taking ownership of, and attempting to enhance, their L2 Learning Experience.

Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the interaction between Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. Of the three components found in the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009), Stebbins' (2007) framework matches up best with the Ideal L2 Self and the L2 Learning

Experience; however, it can be present in the Ought-to L2 Self under the right circumstances. The figure has been colour coded to distinguish between the two frameworks. Coloured circles represent the L2 Motivational Self System, while the white circle represents the Serious Leisure Perspective.

When creating this figure, I could have embedded the Serious Leisure Perspective in the L2 Learning Experience, but I chose to keep it separated in the figure because of how the personal rewards impacted the other components of the L2MSS. By doing so, the interactions and dual directionality of the frameworks becomes easier to recognize than had I attempted a different configuration.

Figure 2 – Interactions Between the L2 Motivational Self System and the Serious Leisure Perspective



As noted in Figure 2, the L2 Motivational Self System and the Serious Leisure Perspective connect and interact in a dual directional fashion. The Ideal L2 Self, for example, can be affected by activities that offer opportunities for Self-actualization.

Meanwhile, the Ideal L2 Self may seek out activities that offer such a reward. The conversation groups could offer such a reward by giving L2 speakers the opportunity to improve their speaking skills. The improvement of these skills could prompt a redefining of the learner's Ideal L2 Self in that goals may seem closer to being attained. Similarly, an activity that offers Self-gratification (fun) enhances the L2 Learning Experience. The learners could see how using the language in an authentic setting was a positive experience. The memories of having had fun could then provide incentive for learners to return. The Ought-to L2 Self can be influenced by what people fear will come to pass, and thus actively try to prevent. For example, a group member may be motivated to take on a leadership position in a group out of fear that the group would collapse and disband without his/her help in that role. While this is a very situation-specific example, it nonetheless illustrates how the Ought-to L2 Self and the Serious Leisure Perspective can interact.

As a complement to the schematic diagram in Figure 1, I have created Table 2 to illustrate specifically how the personal and social rewards found in the Serious Leisure Perspective connect with the L2 Motivational Self System.

Table 2 - Framework Overlap

Serious Leisure Perspective Rewards	**L2 Motivational Self System Component**
1. Personal enrichment	L2 Learning Experience
2. Self-actualization	Ideal L2 Self
3. Self-expression	L2 Learning Experience, Ideal L2 Self
4. Self-image	Ideal L2 Self
5. Self-gratification	L2 Learning Experience
6. Re-creation	Ideal L2 Self

7. Financial return	n/a
8. Social attraction	L2 Learning Experience
9. Group accomplishment	L2 Learning Experience
10. Contribution to the maintenance and development of the group	Ought-to Self, L2 Learning Experience

Table 2 demonstrates that the rewards for participation in Serious Leisure activities suggested in Stebbins (2007) framework are very compatible with Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System. Only Financial return seems disconnected from Dörnyei's model. There seems to be a stronger connection between the Serious Leisure Perspective and the L2 Learning Experience, which would be expected given that leisure activities are, themselves, experiences.

1.6 Chapter Overview

Over the course of this chapter, I have provided a brief overview of the Canadian language learning context including a brief discussion of Quebec and its impact on Canadian language policies. In addition, I have discussed the federal government's financial investment in promoting Canada's dual language identity through funds allocated to education-related initiatives. I have provided data that indicate that, despite this financial commitment, there remains a substantial level of attrition in secondary school FSL programs after students have satisfied the mandatory grade 9 French requirement.

I outlined how online resources, like websites, are being used as a learning tool and for social networking for the purpose of improving and/or maintaining one's proficiency in a minority language. Through one such website, Meetup.com, I met individuals who participate in L2-related conversation groups in an effort to improve and/or maintain their oral proficiency in French. These individuals do not need to use

their L2 for employment purposes, nor do they identify as heritage L2 speakers, yet they pursue their chosen L2 anyway. I believe these individuals represent an under-researched phenomenon and have proposed research questions to explore and better understand their motivations. This study asks the following research questions: What motivates these senior L2 speakers to continue to work on and to maintain their L2? How does Stebbins' Serious Leisure Perspective relate to Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System? How does this lens inform our understanding of the seniors' L2 hobby?

To address these research questions, I provided a brief synopsis of different motivational frameworks before suggesting a blending of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. I demonstrated how these two frameworks from different research traditions are highly compatible and how Stebbins' (2007) framework can provide focus and specificity to Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) system.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

Finding appropriate literature for this study proved to be a more difficult task than I had first anticipated, typically because my descriptions and terminology can have different meanings in different academic contexts. For example, a database search using keywords like 'minority' and 'language maintenance' typically yielded articles connected to the maintenance among immigrant populations and linguistic minorities. The populations studied are typically ethnically connected to the language, not members of the linguistic majority who have learned the country's second official language. This echoes Garcia's (2003) observations that language maintenance research is predominantly concerned with language maintenance and language shift connected to minority heritage languages.

A search of the Open Access Theses and Dissertations site (https://oatd.org/) for the key words 'minority language maintenance' yielded 125 search results dating back to 2005, only 78 of which were written in English. Of these 78 results, each was tied to home language or heritage language maintenance in some capacity. A search using key words 'conversation group' and 'second language' yielded no results, while a search for only 'conversation group' returned 17 results, only four in English, and none of them dealt with the use of conversation groups in second language learning settings. I did an additional search for 'second language' and 'maintenance', which returned 329 matches, of which 204 were written in English. The topics of these dissertations ranged from software design to psychology to heritage language maintenance and differed too much from the current study. I also ran a search using the key words 'informal', 'second language' and 'conversation', which yielded 17 English language results. Of these, only one study seemed applicable, albeit tangentially, to the research detailed here. This should provide an indication of the originality of my research study.

In the following section, I review literature I consider relevant to the research study. The selected articles fall under the umbrella of Quantitative studies related to SLA, the L2 Motivational Self System, informal learning or under learning an L2 as a foreign language. I also sought out literature concerned with seniors returning to post-

secondary institutions to study. Articles could also be categorized under the term leisure. For the purposes of this paper, I use Livingstone's (2001) definition of informal learning, which describes it as "any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria" (p. 4). In other words, informal learning takes place outside of traditional learning institutions, is not led by a teacher or instructor, and has no formal guidelines, expectations, or codified curriculum attached to activities. This definition fits well with Stebbins (2007) definition of leisure, which is described as "uncoerced activity engaged in during free time, which people want to do and, in either a satisfying or a fulfilling way (or both), use their abilities and resources to succeed at this" (p. 4). Taking the two definitions together, one can see how L2 conversation groups or learning a foreign L2 could fit under either category, or under both.

Research articles will be divided into the following sections: Quantitative Studies of Second Language Learning, the L2 Motivational Self System, Investment and Identity, Motivations to Learn an L2 in a Foreign Language Context, Seniors and Lifelong Learning, Informal Language Learning, and Minority Language Maintenance. Each of these sections is relevant to the study in different ways. The L2MSS section provides an overview of recent research studies using the framework. An emphasis was placed on highlighting the qualitative studies as there are so few of them and they connect, to an extent, with the methods I employed in this study. I attempted to find language-related studies that used the Serious Leisure Perspective but was generally unsuccessful. The lone study I found, a research study by Kubota (2011), has been included in the Informal Language Learning section. Studies using the Serious Leisure Perspective tend to focus on physical activities, ranging from gardening to rock climbing. The additional sections chosen are relevant because of the participants who volunteered to be in the study, and the nature of the activity that they use to improve or maintain their minority L2 proficiencies.

2.1 Quantitative Studies of Second Language Learning

Studies of Second Language learning often trace their lineage back to the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959) and their study of motivational variables in L2 acquisition.

In fact, Dörnyei (2019) notes that the study is often considered “the ‘official’ starting point of modern scientific research on L2 motivation” (p. xix). It was also the first step toward the development of Gardner’s (1985) Socioeducational Model of Second Language Acquisition. The early exploratory study of Montreal high school students learning French as an L2 identified linguistic aptitude and motivation to be independent factors that are equally related to student achievement in French (Gardner & Lambert, 1959). This study proved influential in the careers of researchers like Dörnyei, Horwitz, and Norton, each of whom have researched aspects of motivation in L2 learning (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2019). Mention of it has been included here because of its importance in the field and its impact on researchers whose work will be included in this review.

By the 1990s, motivation research in SLA had begun to investigate other areas to see if they could provide additional insight to the field. For example, Tremblay and Gardner (1995) examined whether motivational constructs from other areas of Psychology could benefit the study second language acquisition. They explored potential measures of motivation like persistence, attention, goal specificity and causal attributions and their relations to each other, to the existing indices from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), and to achievement in French courses. Their findings suggested “that specific goals and frequent reference to these goals lead to increased levels of motivational behavior” (p. 515). In other words, goal setting and reminders of those goals can lead to increased effort, attention to learning the language, and persistence in learners. In addition, they found that additional concepts related to motivation were compatible with the Socioeducational model.

At around the same time, Horwitz (1988) explored how student-held beliefs about second language learning affected their future success. She developed a survey battery called the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) “to assess student opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning” (Horwitz, 1988, p. 284) to make instructors more aware of the variety of preconceived notions and expectations their students bring with them into the second language learning classroom.

felt that being aware of these beliefs could help inform their instructors' practices in the classroom.

Horwitz (1988) administered the BALLI to students from beginning level foreign language courses at a US university to assess student beliefs across five different areas, including the difficulty of learning languages, foreign language learning aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations. The results indicated that students held similar beliefs about foreign language learning across different target languages. She felt that the BALLI could be a valuable tool for teachers by identifying their students' popular beliefs about language learning, as well as areas of differing opinions.

Horwitz (1999) expanded her study of student second language learning beliefs by administering the BALLI to students of different cultural backgrounds, like American, Korean, Taiwanese, Korean, Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot. Though the study yielded interesting group differences, Horwitz (1999) found them to be somewhat ambiguous and was hesitant to claim that beliefs about language learning varies by cultural group. Horwitz (1999) noted that "the results point to the possibility that within-group differences, whether related to individual characteristics or differences in instructional practices, likely account for as much variation as the cultural differences" (p. 575). In other words, students within the same cultural backgrounds had sufficient differences with each other that it became difficult to determine how much of a role cultural background played in differences across different groups.

Having noted limitations in previous BALLI studies, Rifkin (2000) expanded comparisons to address some of these concerns. First, he compared first-year language learning students to upper year learners. Next, he compared students of commonly taught foreign languages, like French, German, and Spanish, to those taking less commonly taught languages, like Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Japanese and Russian. Finally, he compared foreign language learners at a large research institution to smaller liberal arts colleges.

He found that some first-year students “hold beliefs that are clearly not conducive to language learning (Rifkin, 2000, p. 401) and urged instructors to work towards affirming more positive beliefs about language learning. Rifkin (2000) felt that the differences between the beliefs of first-year students and advanced students could be indicative of students choosing to abandon the L2 or of instructors successfully changing student beliefs to something more positive. Considering the number of Canadian FSL students who abandon French after Grade 9, student beliefs are worth exploring in future studies. However, Rifkin (2000) cautioned against drawing conclusions about based on the study, noting that results were specific to the participants in the examined courses at the different educational institutions. He also suggested that other unexamined factors or variables could be equally or more important in shaping learner beliefs about language learning.

In the years since its introduction, Gardner’s (1985) socioeducational model was subject to queries and critiques concerning the relationships between second language achievement, attitudes, motivations, and orientations. In addition, there were questions concerning the sociocultureal milieu and its effects on factors in the model. To address these critiques, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) conducted a meta-analysis focusing on studies by Gardner and associates using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and the Socioeducational Model of Second Language Acquisition. The meta-analysis examines the relationship of language achievement to the main aspects of the model: integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and motivation, while also examining the relationship between language achievement and the integrative and instrumental orientations. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) concluded that their five major variables were all positively related to achievement in a second language. In addition, “motivation is more highly related to second language achievement than either of the other four variables” (p. 158). Finally, the findings are not greatly moderated by the age of the learners nor the availability of the language in the immediate environment. They re-assert that motivation is the key variable in second language acquisition, but that the other variables mentioned in the Socioeducational model have positive, though indirect, influences on learner achievement.

Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004) studied "the effects of language instruction on language attitudes, motivation, and anxiety that take place" (p. 7) over the course of year-long first year French courses at a Canadian university in Ontario. Gardner et al. (2004) examined a sample of 197 university students on six occasions over the course of an academic year. On the first and final sessions, participants completed the AMTB, while during the other testing sessions, students answered questions concerning state motivation and state anxiety.

Gardner et al. (2004) found that the potential for change in the examined areas is not great, but it is greater if connected to attitudes toward the learning environment. Teacher evaluations varied from fall to the spring, and motivation, anxiety and language attitudes gradually waned over time. The results also indicated that "changes occur in some affective variables and that these changes are moderated by the individual's final level of achievement in the class" (Gardner et al., 2004, p. 30). In other words, higher achievers tended to maintain more favorable attitudes, motivation, and anxiety levels over those who achieved lower grades. The changes themselves are small but can be traced back to experiences in the learning environment, thus reinforcing the importance of maintaining a positive learning environment and creating a good L2 learning experience for students.

Exploring a different vein of motivation in second language learning, Hsieh and Schallert (2008) examined the relationship between attributions, self-efficacy, and performance in a foreign language setting. Five hundred undergraduate students, learning either Spanish, French, or German for the first time, participated in the study. Following the return of course content tests, students were asked to complete attribution questionnaires and self-efficacy questionnaires. Hsieh and Schallert (2008) noted that participants in different language courses had significantly different levels of self-efficacy. Students of Spanish recorded the highest levels of self-efficacy, which was partially attributed to the university's location in the southwestern United States, where there is a large Spanish-speaking population in the area. The results suggested that "students' beliefs about the causes of test results reflect their beliefs about their capabilities in learning a foreign language successfully" (p. 528). For example, if a

student did poorly on a test or assignment, it was often attributed to a lack of effort by the student rather than an inability to learn the language.

The studies mentioned in this section are examples of the sorts conducted using quantitative methods like the AMTB or the BALLI. Each of these studies focused on student populations, allowing for larger numbers of participants than the current study. Students came from differing levels of language learning courses, but typically from one study-specific post-secondary institution. Rifkin (2000) provided an exception to this by conducting his study in different-sized institutions. The advantage to using students as participants is access. Researchers could be reasonably sure of a large pool of people and because of the nature of year-long courses, would have been better able to monitor large scale studies and ensure minimal attrition from the study. The greater numbers of participants also allowed for different data collection tools, namely the AMTB or the BALLI to be used. The data collected could be subjected to statistical analyses and trends could be revealed. However, the present study had considerably fewer participants and a very different population. Rather than students, this study focuses on seniors who were, for the most part, finished with post-secondary education at the time. The difference in population size alone warranted different data collection techniques. These studies have been included in the interests of providing a more thorough and balanced review of available second language motivation literature. It should be noted that quantitative studies conducted by Gardner, in particular, provided Dörnyei with a foundation upon which he was able to build during his studies of L2 learning and motivation (Dörnyei, 2019). Given Gardner's influence on Dörnyei's work, it is important to acknowledge Gardner's contribution to quantitative studies of L2 motivation and learning and the second language acquisition field as a whole.

2.2 L2 Motivational Self System

Since its introduction in 2005, the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) has been used in a number of quantitative studies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (Al-Shehri, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009; You & Dörnyei, 2016). Since its introduction, the L2MSS has steadily increased in its use with Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan (2015) finding over 400 published articles making use of the framework. Oakes and

Howard (2019) have remarked that “the L2MSS has possibly become the pre-eminent theoretical paradigm in the field” (p. 2). In lieu of attempting to cover the over 400 studies that use L2MSS, I provide a sample of quantitative studies, Al-Hoorie’s (2018) meta-analysis, and examples of qualitative studies that use the framework.

Papi (2010) tested a theoretical model that used the L2MSS, English anxiety and the intended effort to learn English to examine “the relationship between emotions and future L2 self-guides” (p. 468). Papi (2010) hypothesized that the Ideal L2 Self and positive L2 learning experiences would reduce English anxiety and have a positive effect on intended effort to learn English. A questionnaire was administered to 1011 Iranian high school students with the results run through structural equation modeling software. Papi (2010) determined that there was a significant difference in L2 anxiety between students with an internalized view of their future self and an L2 self that is motivated to fulfill the expectations of others. Those with the internalized view seemed to express less L2 anxiety than externally motivated peers.

In a study of EFL learners in Saudi Arabia, Moskovsky, Assulaimani, Racheva, and Harkins (2016) aimed to “examine the relationship between the L2MSS theory’s three main constructs and learners’ intended learning efforts” (p. 645). In addition, they tested whether they could predict L2 achievement, measured through L2 reading and writing proficiency. The participants were 360 EFL majors from two Saudi universities. Data were collected via a two-part questionnaire and a reading and writing proficiency test drawn from International English Language Testing System (IELTS) practice materials. Moskovsky et al. (2016) found that although the L2MSS could predict learners’ intended learning effort, it did not extend to L2 learning achievement. They suggest that achievement is more complex than the amount of effort put forth.

Al-Hoorie (2018) examined the correlation between the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self and the L2 learning experience to educational outcomes. The meta-analysis examined “32 reports involving 39 unique samples and 32,078 language learners” (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 728). Al-Hoorie (2018) noted that the study could not examine the effects of age, gender, or context in which the source data were derived. He notes the

"dominance of English as the target language in recent research" (Al-Hoorie, 2018, p. 735) and high number of studies of motivation in foreign language contexts rather than second language contexts. Al-Hoorie (2018) suggests that there is a "qualitative difference in the motivation to learn English versus the motivation to learn other languages" (p. 735) because of English's global dominance. He found positive correlations between the three aspects of the L2MSS and the intended effort of participants, but lower ones with respect to achievement. Al-Hoorie (2018) also found high correlations between intended effort and the L2 learning environment. Al-Hoorie (2018) observed an abundance of studies using intended effort as a primary outcome but a dearth of studies focused on other outcomes. He suggests that the meta-analysis be conducted again once a greater number of studies using additional outcomes and moderating factors (e.g. age, gender, context and target language) become available. Although my study would be excluded because of a lack of quantitative measures, it is important to note that mine takes age and context into account and uses a target language other than English for the study.

The Papi (2010) and Moskovsky et al. (2016) studies demonstrated how the L2MSS can be used on a large scale to try to capture traits like effort perceived anxiety and intended effort. However, these studies could not capture the individual experiences of these L2 students. The following studies provided participants the opportunity to use their voices and relate their L2 learning experiences.

Sakeda and Kurata (2016) conducted a study of L2 selves using ten university intermediate or advanced Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) students as participants. Data was collected from semi-structured interviews and participant diaries and a final stimulated recall interview. From these sources, the researchers noted hoped to glean what types of L2 selves the participants had constructed and how their L2 experiences affected these L2 selves. Sakeda and Kurata (2016) noted that each participant displayed evidence of an Ideal L2 self, though some were more detailed and elaborately constructed than others. However, the Ought-to L2 self was mostly absent from the study, except in an interview with one participant who felt pressured by the responsibility to help her sibling with Japanese studies. The L2 Experiences varied among participants, as each

had engaged in different language or culture-related activities during the studies. Processing these experiences seemed to influence the ongoing construction of the participants' L2 selves.

Nakamura (2018) compared and contrasted the motivations of Japanese language learners' motivation in Australia and South Korea. A total of 26 university students participated via in-person semi-structured interviews between the Australian and Korean contexts. The interviews focused on their heritage language background, previous experiences with Japanese, including travel, as well as future plans for use of the language to determine their overall motivation for learning Japanese. Nakamura (2018) found that Korean and Australian participants were interested in and motivated by Japanese pop culture. However, Korean students tended to have extrinsic goals, leading to less motivation coming from L2 future selves. In fact, many indicated that they would likely abandon Japanese in favour of continued study of English once their extrinsic goals were met. Some, however, would keep learning Japanese as a hobby. The Australian participants, by contrast, were committed in part because of positive experiences, like study exchanges or trips to Japan during high school.

These two points overlap with the L2MSS and the importance of the L2 learning environment as a source of motivation and with the Serious Leisure Perspective in deriving personal rewards from participation in a hobby or pastime (Dörnyei, 2009; Stebbins, 2007). Several participants "expressed their desire not to waste the time and energy they had spent on Japanese, and also their feeling that they needed to continue their efforts in order to keep up their language skills" (p. 327). Nakamura (2018) suggested that the Australian participants' English proficiency may have contributed to their ability to pursue languages of interest. Since they did not have to spend time on English, they were free to devote more time to Japanese.

Noting that a significant number of L2 motivation studies are focused on learning English as a foreign language, De Burgh-Hirabe (2019) opted to investigate the motivation of learners of Japanese as a foreign language in New Zealand, a country with a very Anglo-centric perspective on languages and declining interest in learning foreign

languages. De Burgh-Hirabe (2019) recruited 16 participants from a cohort of 69 students enrolled in intermediate and advanced level university Japanese courses to participate in a primarily qualitative mixed methods study investigating the general motivation of Japanese as a Foreign Language university students to learn the language. The L2MSS was used to analyze the data. Participants responded to three questionnaires comprised of open-ended questions. In addition, at the time of the third questionnaire, participants completed a survey to corroborate questionnaire data. The study found that participants were more interested in Japanese pop culture than on potential career prospects or opportunity for advancement. The participants "had enjoyable JFL learning experiences in and beyond the classroom that sustained their motivation" (p. 104).

The Japanese as a Foreign Language studies connect to the present study through the mentions of language use as a leisure activity. Though French does not enjoy the same sort of pop culture status as Japanese does through anime and manga, the fact that both languages, French in the present study and Japanese in this section, are both used as a source of fun and entertainment is highly relevant. In the next section, I review studies connected to concept of Investment in language learning and Identity, predominantly focused on Anglophone identity in Quebec.

2.3 Investment and Identity

Prior to deciding on the L2MSS and the Serious Leisure Perspective as theoretical frameworks, I had explored different iterations of Norton Peirce's (1995) Investment framework as a potential fit for this study. In addition to discussing the Investment framework, I discuss literature pertaining to the forming of identity, particularly concerning Quebec and the Quebecois identity.

Norton Peirce's (1995) original framework was tied to the learner's ever-evolving social identity and to imbalances of power relations between L1 and L2 speakers in the community. Norton Peirce (1995) argued that each interaction helps the learner understand his/her place in the social world and that continued investment in a new language has an ongoing effect on the learner's social identity. Investment in the L2 helps facilitate the learner's access to the L2 community, its resources, and potential

opportunities. As L2 learners become more proficient, their role within the community gradually changes to reflect this.

Darvin and Norton (2015) describe the current model of the Investment framework as the intersection of identity, ideology, and capital. In this context, identity is seen as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2013, p. 45). The second piece of the construct, ideology, is described as “a complex, layered space where ideational, behavioral, and institutional aspects interact and sometimes contradict one another” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43-44). The ideological piece expands upon Norton Peirce’s (1995) prior concerns about potentially unequal power relationships and how these can affect language learning. The final piece of Darvin and Norton’s (2015) framework, capital, is rooted in Bourdieu’s (1986) work. It covers a range of subtypes from economic to cultural to social to symbolic capital. Economic capital refers to assets, income, and property. Cultural capital covers “knowledge, educational credentials, and appreciation of specific cultural forms” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 44). Social capital encompasses individual power, influence, and connections to networks of power. The forms that these different types of capital take once deemed legitimate are called symbolic capital. Darvin and Norton (2015) note that symbolic capital allows for an understanding of the fluid and dynamic nature of capital. Further, it demonstrates how dominant ideologies, groups, or fields influence different types of capital.

Jin Sook Lee (2005) examines how post-secondary learners of less commonly taught languages, like Hindi, Japanese, Arabic among others, self-identify in terms of their heritage or non-heritage language status. Jin Sook Lee (2005) suggests that, from a curriculum and proficiency standpoint, heritage learners have different academic needs than non-heritage language learners. Heritage language learners are thought to have some level of exposure to, comprehension of, and proficiency with the target language through its use in the home while non-heritage learners are typically true beginners (Jin Sook Lee, 2005; Valdés, 2001).

Jin Sook Lee (2005) gathered data from participants via a questionnaire with additional open-ended survey items. The data suggested that identification as a heritage or non-heritage learner is complex, and multifaceted. Found that "there are many learners who seem to possess characteristics of both heritage and non-heritage language for various reasons, which would not be captured if we were to only look at learner profiles in an either/or scenario" (p. 562) and suggests a reconceptualizing of the terms to accommodate those from either background who do not fit the stringent dichotomy. This particular study is relevant to my own because of how my participants self-identify.

Reid (2012) contrasts the speech given by Lucien Bouchard following the unsuccessful 1995 sovereignty referendum with a play called *The Death of René Lévesque* by playwright David Fennario to discuss tensions surrounding the concept of the term 'Anglo-Québécois', its lack of acceptance, and the notion that an 'Anglo-Québécois' community does not exist. Reid (2012) explains that "the idea of an Anglo-Québécois subject remains so contested that it is difficult (sometimes bordering on impossible) to claim or analyze clear, uncontested evidence of its existence" (p. 107). One can be an Anglophone living within the boundaries of Quebec, but because there is no common or united vision of what the language and culture mean, there is no community, and thus no Anglo-Québécois. The term 'Québécois' is not only the preferred term for a citizen of the province, but also carries with it connotations of Quebec nationalism that do not apply to those who speak English (Reid, 2012). Leroux (2014) notes that the term also carries with it ethnic connotations. In addition to speaking French and believing in sovereignty, Québécois is code for French-speaking descendants of the colonies of Nouvelle France. Leroux (2014) explains that "what counts as Québécois culture ostensibly revolves around the French language, even though Québécois culture (viz. values) is consistently used to exclude racialized Others, many of whom speak French quite well" (p. 135). In other words, one could be Francophone in Quebec but still not be considered Québécois.

From a political standpoint, the Anglophones in Quebec hold a great deal of power with respect to aspirations of sovereignty. Approximately 90% of Quebec's Anglophone population voted against Quebec sovereignty in the 1995 referendum, a

number high enough to defeat the motion stave off separation (Reid, 2012). Reid (2012) explains that the "The mere idea that an anglophone could be a Québécois could, of course, undermine purist convictions that the purpose of Independence is the upholding of Quebec's French language and culture" (p. 111). In other words, to be Anglophone in Quebec is to be Canadian and a Federalist while being Québécois implies a French linguistic and ethnic background and a desire for sovereignty.

Groff, Pilote, and Vieux-Fort (2016) conducted a qualitative study with ten participants who live in Quebec City but speak a language other than French in their homes and who go to school in English. Of the ten participants, four were immigrants who spoke neither English nor French as their L1. Those born in Canada (even those born in Quebec) identified as Canadian, while the immigrant participants emphasized that they immigrated to Canada, not specifically to Quebec. One of the Anglophone participants expressed that he felt he was treated differently, identified as a "maudit Anglais", despite being able to speak French as fluently as others around him.

Groff et al. (2016) interpreted the participant responses as carrying an air of superiority that they felt was a reaction to how Francophones treated them in their day to day interactions. Essentially, Francophones resented that the participants were not making the effort to integrate into Quebecois society, and the participants reacted defensively, putting on airs of superiority. The researchers question whether the participants would feel the same way or identify differently had they felt more included earlier in their experiences.

Moving outside of Quebec, Roy (2010) examined how students in two Alberta French immersion junior high schools see themselves. She interviewed students, parents, teachers and administrators to investigate "their perceptions of the students' place in Canadian society" (p. 543). Roy (2010) found that the students "considered themselves bilingual, but not *"entirely"* bilingual or *"truly"* bilingual because they did not speak French at the same level as native speakers of French" (p. 550). They felt their language proficiencies did not measure up, and to be considered bilingual meant to have equal proficiency to native speaker in both languages. The Council of Europe that would

recognize these students' abilities as falling in line with the concept of 'Plurilingualism' which acknowledges the evolving linguistic repertoires of the individual with varying competencies in different language (S. K. Taylor, 2019; S. K. Taylor & Snoddon, 2013).

Roy (2010) suggests that official bilingualism, having two official languages, is not about promoting one common bilingual community, but to acknowledge two completely separate linguistic communities. French immersion students occupy a space that straddles the two communities without fully belonging to either one. This, in turn, affects how the students view themselves. They can speak French but not at the level they deem would make them legitimate members of the French community.

Levasseur (2017) conducted a study in a similar vein in a francophone school in British Columbia. She recruited twelve students between the ages of 6 and 11 years old, each involved at one point in a francization program, which could be considered similar to an ESL program in an English language school. Over the course of the study, the participants shared that a Francophone "should be Québecers or French, have French as their first language, master it as native speakers and use it at all time" (Levasseur, 2017, p. 54). This idea of what it means to be Francophone was perpetuated and promoted by the school via its language policies and cultural events.

Like the students in Roy's (2010) study, Levasseur's (2017) participants "are definitely not monolinguals and are often considered deficient French speakers in oral expression and writing competency" (p. 55). By their own constructed definitions, none of the participants considered themselves Francophones nor did they feel like a legitimate part of that community. Instead, they tended to identify as people who speak French.

Each of these studies illustrate how complex linguistic identities are. There is also evidence of imbalances of power in play, which could have affected the investment of those involved in their language learning. Linguistic identities in Canada, particularly those connected to Quebec and the Quebecois, are politically charged a source of tensions within the province (Groff et al., 2016; Reid, 2012). Outside of Quebec, one finds those who straddle the two official language communities yet belong to neither (Levasseur,

2017; Roy, 2010). Any discussion of French in Canada is aided by at least a passing familiarity with the varied and complex cultural context.

2.4 Motivations to Learn an L2 in a Foreign Language Context

The literature discussed in this section has a connection to informal learning environments or a more leisure-oriented approach to L2 learning. In addition, parallels can be drawn between the minority languages in the studies and the challenges of learning French in Canada. Informal and leisure-oriented L2 learning literature is important because of the seniors' participation in French-language conversation groups as a major activity.

The *neofalantes* movement in the Galician region of Spain, for instance, shares a number of similarities with the status of French in the greater Canadian context (O'Rourke & DePalma, 2017; O'Rourke & Ramallo, 2015). Both Galego and French are minority languages in their respective countries, with the dominant language of the country (Spanish in Spain and English in Canada) exerting considerable influence over the country's youth. Speakers of both Galego and French are concentrated in particular regions of each country, and both languages are promoted via a sort of educational tourism. O'Rourke and Ramallo (2015) examined the *neofalantes* movement in the Galician region of Spain through discussion groups, comprised of 12 university students and graduates between the ages of 18 and 25. During the sessions, the researchers suggested that the movement is more than a language revitalization or maintenance movement, as it has political dimensions, noting, the participants "showed a strong sense of responsibility towards ensuring the future survival of the language, as well as a clear commitment to what they perceived as a situation of social and political injustice" (p. 154). This commitment to the survival of their language and the righting of perceived wrongs done to the minority language speakers could be seen as quite similar to the plight of Franco-Ontarians during their struggles for language rights and control over their own school systems (Cartwright, 1996; Heller, 2003). The sense of responsibility

for the future of the language also echoes my own experiences with Québécois university students during the years I spent living in Montreal.[3]

O'Rourke and DePalma (2017) examined minority language learning as a form of education-oriented tourism, exploring participants' motivation and investment via participant observations, in-depth interviews, and a survey. Also taking place in the Galician region of Spain, participants came from other countries in Europe such as Croatia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Poland, as well as South America (e.g. Chile and Peru) via free bursaries provided by the local Galician government. These bursaries are similar to those provided by the Canadian government through the Explore program, which grants bursaries to high school and post-secondary students who wish to learn French in a Francophone environment (Explore, n.d.).

In the Galician study, O'Rourke and DePalma (2017) noted that "interest in learning the language was always rooted in its relation to the local culture, and this ranged from the desire to continue future touristic visits, to maintaining personal and familial ties to the region, to eventually setting and finding work" (p. 6). Some chose to learn Galego as an attempt to reconnect with lost familial heritage, while for others, learning it was more of a supplementary benefit of a free course in a coastal city. This tracks well with my own experiences in Trois-Pistoles, Quebec, where I met a number of students who found the 'free' university course credit via government bursary to be a motivator for participation in the program.[4] The French Immersion program in Trois-Pistoles, Quebec divides each weekday into morning classes, afternoon workshops, and evening cultural events (Explore, n.d.). Formal learning occurs during the morning class time, while informal learning occurs during the workshops and cultural events. Students get an opportunity to turn language theory into language application each day. Students

[3] I lived and worked in Montreal, Quebec from 2005 to 2007 and interacted daily with university students at work and in the community.

[4] From 2004 to 2005, I spent three 5-week French immersion sessions in Trois-Pistoles, Quebec. I returned for an additional 5-week session in 2009.

are forced to interact with the language in a different way than they would have during class time.

Peer groups play a role in learner motivation, as well, as Vasilopoulos (2015) noticed in his examination of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speakers in Korea. Vasilopoulos (2015) noted that participants had minimal opportunities to use English outside of the classroom and described numerous challenges to using English in the local context. They also expressed an awkwardness in speaking English with other Koreans. According to Vasilopoulos (2015), the participants had "to make strategic identity switches to not distance, offend, annoy, or embarrass members of the local group or to avoid showing off or "boasting" in a foreign language." (p. 72). The learners would have to downplay their L2 proficiency or risk a degree of alienation from their L1 group. The net result was a reduced level of L2 communication with participants having to modify their language use to fit in with their peer groups. The strategic identity switches also forced the participants to create an additional L2 linguistic identity, one different from the L2 identity they would have created in the target language community, but one that would be more in line with the expectations of their L1 culture. This study connects to Dörnyei's (2005; 2009) L2 Motivational Self through the third component of the framework, the L2 Learning Experience. Peer groups, family attitudes, and teacher impact all factor into this component of the framework. The modifying or downplaying of L2 ability around peer groups, as found in Vasilopoulos' (2015) study could be demotivating for learners and part of a negative L2 Learning Experience.

Kurata (2010) noted a lack of opportunity for communication in her participant's Japanese L2 despite the availability of two members of the learner's social network whose L1 was Japanese. The participant was a German L1 student studying Japanese as an L2 at a university in Australia. Kurata (2010) found that her participant's opportunities to use his L2 were limited because his Japanese L1 peers chose to primarily interact with him in English. This could be partly attributed to his language level, and partly to an established norm at this university "that English be used among speakers with mixed language backgrounds, particularly, among international students" (p. 395). Despite his lower Japanese language level, the student was able to participate in L2

speaking and listening opportunities, demonstrating that these sorts of interactions were possible. Kurata (2010) notes that constructing L2 use opportunities with native speakers is a difficult and complex undertaking and suggests that "educators provide students with some devices to maximise [sic] the chance for learners to use and learn L2, which suit their actual contexts" (p. 396). Some examples of devices include introducing appropriate topics and subtopics or setting aside one's goal of L2 usage in the short term in order to socialize in a common language. This, in turn, could help to increase L2 usage and learning opportunities over the long term. Kurata's (2010) study demonstrates the difficulties that can potentially arise for minority L2 learners to find opportunities to use the language outside of the classroom. The participant's efforts to initiate and conduct L2 conversations could be seen as an example of informal learning, as he pursued it of his own volition, outside of class time, in casual or social environments. The difficulties noted in Kurata's (2010) study are echo my experiences when living in Montreal. I would often be served in English at restaurants or stores whenever someone noticed my Anglophone accent when speaking French.

Gao (2010) conducted an ethnographic study of non-Korean families in China who chose to learn Korean. The decision to enroll children in a minority L1 school is reminiscent to the growing trend of English-speaking parents registering their children in the Francophone school system in Ontario, Canada (Russette, 2013). Similar to the case of the Ontario Francophone schools, Chinese L1 students are slowly becoming the majority in the Korean bilingual schools. It should be noted that the situation in China is different, however, since French is an official language in Canada, while Korean has no official status in China. Gao (2010) noted that parents' motivations to send their children to Korean bilingual schools were primarily tied to perceived future career advantages thanks to increasing business ties between China and South Korea. The children were similarly motivated, though they were further motivated by their parents' high expectations. The motivations of the parents correspond with different aspects of Dörnyei's (2009) framework. In seeking out advantages for the future successes of their offspring, they are impacting the learners' L2 Learning Experience. Their high expectations drive the students to succeed. In addition, they satisfy their Ideal L2 selves

by trying to raise bilingual children. Meanwhile, student motivation is driven by a combination of their Ought-to L2 selves and their L2 Learning Experience.

Motivations to learn foreign languages vary depending on the context. In the Galician context (O'Rourke & Ramallo, 2015; O'Rourke & DePalma, 2017), motivations to learn Galego ranged from language preservation to enjoying a new culture in a different part of the world. Gao (2010) noted that family and future expectations provided the motivation to learn an L2, particularly for children. Vasilopoulos (2015) and Kurata (2010) demonstrate that peer groups can have a powerful influence on L2 learning, either by actively discouraging L2 learners through subtle peer-pressure, making them less willing to demonstrate their true proficiency, or by stymying attempts to communicate in the target L2. In these instances, the peer groups presented obstacles for the L2 learners to overcome.

2.5 Seniors and Lifelong Learning

Many participants in this study would be considered in the senior age range, making studies about lifelong learning and senior students returning to school relevant to the present study. These studies are particularly relevant because five of the seven seniors discussed in Chapter 4 returned to post-secondary educational institutions to study French as a Second Language. In addition, one of the participants also began taking Spanish through a community program. In this section, I introduce literature connected to seniors' pursuit of lifelong learning (LLL) opportunities, particularly related to foreign language learning.

Scala (1996) conducted a survey of current and former students of Worcester State College over the age of 60. Half-hour semi-structured interviews were conducted with 191 students via phone regarding reasons why participants chose to return to school, or why they stopped, if not currently enrolled. Scala (1996) found that "expressive goals or motivations, those which are a part of the act of learning itself, are clearly what was most important, whether as a motivation for participation or as a benefit of going back to school" (p. 764). The seniors surveyed expressed a love of learning, interest in particular subjects, and were motivated to explore new options and ideas. However, their

motivations were also instrumental in nature, pertaining to a desire for social connection. Instrumental, in this case, is not referring to the potential for job opportunities or workplace advancement, but rather a specific goal, that of social interaction (Gardner, 1985).

Scala (1996) noted differences along gender lines, with women of the cohort being more likely to express a lack of opportunity to pursue college studies earlier in life, while men were more likely to have returned to school for work purposes, because of an interest in specific courses, or a desire for mental stimulation. She explains these differences between genders were the result of the times in which the participants grew up and the roles and expectations of the time. Women of the study were likely already married and raising a family rather than pursuing college studies at the traditional age. Men, by contrast, would have been responsible for supporting their families.

The seniors in my study had all attended post-secondary institutions, demonstrating a shift in education from the previous generation covered in the Scala (1996) study. However, this study is noteworthy because it identified expressive motivations and an interest in learning for its own sake rather than for career progression. The participants in my own study express similar sentiments, as detailed in Chapter 4.

Leung, Lui, and Chi (2006) conducted two surveys of Lifelong Learners (LLL): one of Chinese seniors pursuing studies, and another of center directors providing courses for Chinese seniors in Hong Kong. Participants in the senior survey were aged 55 or above and had taken at least one course in the past 12 months. They found that the "educational background of the elderly learners was associated with their perceived benefits from LLL, their choice of study and their willingness to take up peer teaching" (p. 11). The top 5 reasons provided by participants for pursuing lifelong learning could be considered expressive motivation, including meeting new people, making life more meaningful, and developing personal interests or hobbies. This categorization differs slightly from Scala (1996), who considered developing social connections to fall under the instrumental motivation category.

Practical courses, including learning languages, and hobby-related courses were the most popular courses among senior participants. Leung et al. (2006) note that seniors with higher levels of education were also attracted to skill acquisition courses that would fall under instrumental motivation (Gardner, 1985, 2006). Courses that led to recognized qualifications were not as popular as anticipated, though the researchers suggest further exploration into why this is the case, rather than eliminating the course options. The seniors in my study expressed similar sentiments to those outlined in the Leung et al. (2006) study, making it relevant to my research.

Narushima (2008) conducted a qualitative case study with 15 senior students and four key informants involved in the Seniors' Daytime Program in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). She observed in at least one session of five different classes, ranging from calligraphy to fitness, focusing on course content, classroom environment, teacher-student interactions and pedagogy employed. Next, she conducted semi-structured interviews on a variety of topics connected to retirement, learning experiences and the TDSB program. Narushima (2008) identified three major benefits of learning that she described as "'enduring interests and their effects', 'classroom-based informal social support networks' and 'the raised awareness of the right to learn'" (p. 687). She argued that there was a need to support and develop affordable and accessible continuing education program for seniors as these play a positive role in the health of aging Canadians. The relevance to my study comes via the Canadian learning context and the methods of data collection, as I also used semi-structured interviews and on-site observations.

Parks, Evans, and Getch (2013) conducted a qualitative study of seven seniors at a traditional American university to investigate the experiences of students participating in a reduced tuition program for people aged over 62 years old. They conducted two semi-structured to identify participant motivations to return to school at this age. Parks et al. (2013) identified a commitment to lifelong learning and an interest in the "the wide variety of cultural events and activities, lectures, restaurants, musical performances, and sporting events associated with a large university" (p. 72). In addition, the participants expressed an interest in the diversity of the student body. This study relates to my own in

that several of the participants studied French at a local community college, taking advantage of a reduced tuition option in their age bracket. The sentiments concerning diversity of students connects well with remarks made about the appeal of the conversation groups, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Kim and Kim (2015) explored factors affecting senior Koreans' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. The study included 420 females aged 43 to 78 years (average age 60) enrolled in courses at a lifelong learning center in South Korea. The center offers courses ranging from very rudimentary language and math classes to high school level courses. In the study, Kim and Kim (2015) identify 5 motivational constructs for senior learners' English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, with self-actualization being the most motivational. They consider self-actualization to be related to intrinsic motivation and includes an enjoyment of learning. The enjoyment of learning would also fit with Scala's (1996) expressive motivation. Self-actualization is one of the personal rewards listed in the Serious Leisure Perspective (Stebbins, 2007). Senior participants in the study "attribute their participation in EFL learning to their interest and enjoyment of the learning itself" (Kim & Kim, 2015, p. 131). Moreover, they feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from their increased knowledge of English. They suggest that "an immediate sense of enjoyment, satisfaction, and achievement is crucial" (Kim & Kim, 2015, p. 131) for seniors' learning process.

The data suggest that instrumentality and pressure stemming from the exams are most detrimental to the seniors' learning process (Gardner, 1985, 2006). Kim and Kim (2015) suggest that "excessive emphasis on exam preparation ought to be avoided" (p. 131) when dealing with senior learners. The study also suggests that "elderly learners who set excessively high standards for themselves" (p. 131) are more likely to be demotivated by environmental and internal factors connected to EFL learning because they have created an unrealistic and unattainable ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009). Kim and Kim (2015) suggest that EFL programs for seniors should consider setting up educational goals that focus on "feelings of satisfaction to be gained from learning English" (p. 133) as a way of encouraging increased participation in these programs.

Jamie Shinhee Lee (2016) recruited 15 participants from a public senior center in Seoul in 2008 in a working class neighbourhood. All of the participants were women between the ages of 60 and 75 at the time of the study, and came from working class backgrounds with lower, fixed incomes. None of the participants had better than high school education, and most had a lower to middle school level education. Jamie Shinhee Lee (2016) reports that participants took English classes because they felt that English is everywhere in Korean society. Moreover, some studied it to feel a stronger connection to English-speaking grandchildren. They took pride in their grandchildren's perceived proficiency in the language. Their desire to study English was also tied to their views on globalization and a need for Korea to keep up with advanced nations.

Participants felt a sense of inadequacy when their grandchildren challenge them on English terms. They felt as if they lost face within the family as a result of the linguistic imbalance between young and old members of the family. They conflate a lack of English proficiency with a form of disability or blindness. Jamie Shinhee Lee (2016) suggests that English and its associated globalization ideologies have penetrated Korea to the point that underprivileged and marginalized populations feel their effects. This study connects to mine in that seniors in both studies learned a second language that was not necessary for their daily use. In addition, one of my participants expressed a similar sort of pride in her nephew for his command of French as Jamie Shinhee Lee's (2016) did with their grandchildren.

Tam (2016) conducted a mixed methods study, beginning with a questionnaire given to 519 participants ranging in age from 55 to 75 years old. The questionnaire covered 3 main areas: background information, learning in older age, and successful ageing and well-being. The qualitative data were collected via interviews with 39 seniors, 18 who has participated in organized learning in the past 6 months, and 21 who had not.

Tam (2016) found that senior learners were motivated to "increase knowledge and to keep up to date with society" (p. 581), and to enrich oneself, in addition to keeping healthy both mentally and physically. Participants expressed a need to seek self fulfilment and a simple love of learning, rather than instrumental motivations like skill

acquisition or enhanced opportunities for employment. Tam (2016) found that learners preferred to learn in a traditional classroom environment, in an organized fashion, rather than through self-study. They preferred a lower stress learning environment with younger students in the same class and with positive, rewarding interactions between younger and older students. The desire for enrichment connects well with Dornyei's (2009) idea of improving oneself, as well as Stebbins' (2007) personal rewards for Serious Leisure pursuits.

Boulton-Lewis, Pike, Tam, and Buys (2017) recruited 40 participants from Australia and 39 participants from Hong Kong to participate in semi-structured interviews. Australian participants were identified and/or recruited from 400 respondents to a quantitative survey called the Learning and Ageing Survey. Participants took part in 45-minute semi-structured interviews over Skype or telephone for the Australian study, while the Hong Kong participants were interviewed face-to-face.

The study investigated how loss can serve as a motivator for senior learners. Three main categories connected with loss were identified as having an effect on motivation: health, job, or partner. Hong Kong participants, in particular, "were concerned about learning to avoid decline and degeneration with age" (p. 92) by keeping their brains and memories stimulated. Loss acted as a catalyst or a barrier to learning, either spurring on efforts or deterring participants from the attempt. Those who felt that "learning was essential to prevent degeneration, keep active, and enrich their lives" were more likely to pursue some form of learning or study. This line of thinking aligns well with an investigation into why seniors would learn French in the late stages of their careers or early stages of retirement and why they would participate in conversation groups.

Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018) studied the needs, beliefs, and attitudes of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) EFL students in their 50s at the Open University of the University of Warsaw through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Participants in the study were motivated to be active and to keep up with perceived changes around them. They felt that English is a part of their daily

lives, whether traveling, watching TV, listening to the radio, or in the street. The students were interested in actively using the language to communicate in everyday situations, like giving directions on the street. Since reading and writing were of less interest to students in this age range, the researchers recommended that the university should adjust their programs to focus more on listening comprehension. Participants indicated that "pressure from tests is unwelcome" (p. 262), and that exams and assignments served as demotivating factors for these learners. Learners also preferred work in pairs or small groups than to be called on to answer questions in front of the whole class. Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018) noted that learners in this age-range want to actively use the language, rather than work quietly on memorization tasks or tests. They advised that an optimal learning experience can only be achieved if the teachers are prepared to meet the needs of their students.

The studies detailed in this section discussed varying reasons why seniors would return to post-secondary institutions or engage in lifelong learning pursuits. Senior participants want to remain active and involved in their community. They want to remain mentally and socially engaged and learn things without the pressure of ongoing assessments or examinations. My study's participants expressed similar attitudes and sentiments to the seniors discussed in the above studies and is documented in Chapter 4. The next section examines studies of informal language learning.

2.6 Informal Language Learning

This section looks at studies connected to informal language learning, or in other words, learning in a non-traditional environment rather than a classroom. The conversation groups should be considered an informal language learning site, given that Anglophones are using them to improve or maintain their French, as documented in Chapter 4. As such, an examination of studies of informal language learning are relevant to my research.

Freeman (1999) looked at the study of EFL and French at two British universities over a 3 to 6-month period, taking a sample of 118 language students with half learning EFL and the other half learning French. Participants used self-reporting tools to track

language learning activities and a study diary to detail a more finely focused, minute-to-minute reports on language learning. In addition, Freeman (1999) conducted interviews, used questionnaires, tests, and direct observation of classes to collect data.

Freeman (1999) found that the "percentage of time spent on out-of-class language learning was very high" (p. 87), with EFL students spending as much as 88% of their time on these pursuits. French students, by contrast, would spend up to 71% of their time on language learning. While French students would spend most of their time on homework, EFL students would listen to the radio and spend time talking with other non-native speakers. The EFL students spent a considerable percentage of their language learning time on informal language learning activities (p. 84). The activities undertaken by the EFL students match closely with those indicated by my own participants. Chapter 4 will cover that in more detail.

Kubota (2011) investigated "eikaiwa" (learning English conversation in informal settings) in Japan and noted how these groups connect to concepts of serious and casual leisure. She spent a year in a Japanese city of approximately 160, 000 people, observing *eikaiwa* lessons, conducting interviews with Japanese adults involved with learning in these groups, teaching lessons, and observing community events. She noted that the instructors tended to be white male native speakers of English. Due to difficulties gaining access to larger chains, she studied more community-based options, either self-organized or done through local churches.

Kubota (2011) found that for her participants "learning eikaiwa is unrelated to socioeconomic inclusion – it is more about enjoyment, pleasure, and fantasy" (p. 486), which falls in line with leisure pursuits. Participants wanted an outlet "to socialize with peers and a foreign instructor and to belong to an imagined community – a captivating space removed from learners' daily life filled with exotic sounds, words, culture, and a person with different facial features and skin color" (p. 486). White male instructors were sought after because of a romanticized notion of English and Western culture. By participating in these *eikaiwa*, the learners felt they were part of something exotic and different from typical day-to-day routine.

Learners involved in these groups are more concerned with maintaining, rather than improving their language proficiency, but keep coming back because of a sense of enjoyment the groups provide. Kubota (2011) suggests that *eikaiwa* is more commodified and consumption-based than an investment. Foreign instructors are considered an exotic commodity. Those who participate are doing so for the experience of it and for the social aspects of being part of a group. Most of the participants were not interested in improving their English to enhance career prospects. This activity was entertainment for them. Kubota (2011) indicated that maintenance of English proficiency was perhaps more important to participants than improvement or skill development. This study most closely connects with my research. In fact, it was this study that introduced me to the Serious Leisure Perspective (Stebbins, 2007). However, she opted to use aspects of Norton's (2000) Investment framework in addition to using the Serious Leisure Perspective.

Dettori and Torsani (2013) discuss the use of social bookmarking online as a complement to a formal online language learning environment. Students at Faculty of Foreign Languages of the University of Genoa have access to an online platform called CliRe that is used as an additional instructional tool to complement on-site, face-to-face language courses. The platform had recently added an option that allowed external web resources (social bookmarks) to be suggested to users, based on keywords provided by instructors during their course design. The researchers collected qualitative data via semi-structured interviews to determine if the participants had used the social bookmarking tool. In addition, they sought to assess its relevance and usefulness to students.

Dettori and Torsani (2013) found that having links to outside resources motivated students to "extend their learning to useful sites outside the formal learning platform" (p 101). Using existing bookmarks and micro-evaluation guides helped students find resources that connected to the formal learning materials as well as their interests. The micro-evaluation guides were a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' rating system of links that had been used during the course. The more positive the results, the more useful students believed the bookmarked sites to be. Dettori and Torsani (2013) that this initial study

demonstrated the potential usefulness of the feature to L2 learning motivation as it prompted platform users to explore resources they may not have otherwise.

Jones (2015) used interviews and a survey to study 12 learners' use of digital resources for informal Welsh learning. She found that all participants used social media to support their language learning, but to varying degrees. On the low usage side, participants used videos, films, or TV programs on Youtube or the BBC site. More experienced learners used social networking sites like Facebook to seek out additional Welsh learners and learning communities. The sites are used as a method of connecting people, rather than language practice. Participants reported a mix of activities, online and in person, to help facilitate learning. The social media mentioned by the participants lines up with those used by the participants in my study as each of them used sites like Youtube or movies, television and radio as means of facilitating learning and maintenance of their French proficiencies. The senior group organized by participant Tony communicates through an e-mail list, for example. Additional details on Tony appear in section 4.3.2.4.

Lai and Zheng (2018) conducted a survey of 256 language learners and interviewed 18 participants from Hong Kong about their use of mobile devices for language learning outside the classroom. The study found that learners used different forms of technology, depending on the task and context. Mobile phones were associated with "casual learning and simpler tasks" (p. 313), while laptops were used for more serious study and more challenging tasks. Lai and Zheng (2018) also suggest that the constraints of the device and their use in different sociocultural contexts could impact which devices are selected for particular tasks. My participants indicated use of the internet for viewing of French language videos or to read French language newspaper articles but did not mention use of mobile smartphones. However, the study was intended to focus on their use of conversation groups as method of improving or maintaining their French proficiency. It is possible that a younger group of participants would be more apt to use their mobile phones as a learning tool than their senior counterparts.

Of the studies discussed in this section, Kubota's (2011) is the most relevant and similar to the present study as it involves informal language use in a face-to-face setting, rather than via social media or digital spaces. Articles pertaining to digital spaces and online communities, while interesting, were not applicable to my study, but were included as examples of what one typically finds in online database searches. In the next section, I discuss a sampling of research related to minority language maintenance.

2.7 Minority Language Maintenance

In this section, I discuss a small sample of articles concerned with minority language maintenance. However, in each of these cases, the language in question was a heritage language, meaning that there was a familial tie to the language (Valdés, 2001). While it could be argued that two of the seniors learning French are learning or maintaining a heritage language, they are the minority among the participants and the focus is more on FSL learning and maintenance more so than heritage language. Moreover, the term language maintenance, in an academic sense, is often associated with the safeguarding and preservation of endangered languages (Batibo, 2005; Dorian, 2006; Fishman, 2006). That is not the case in the present study. The participants in my study are members of the linguistic majority who have actively chosen to learn a minority official language and to participate in activities aimed at maintaining their proficiency. The articles listed below were included to potentially add insight into the present study and to add to the discussion of the topic.

Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) conducted a mixed methods study with 106 Hispanic teenagers in Sydney, Australia. The majority of them had been educated entirely in Australia while the remaining participants varied in time in Australian and in Spanish education. Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) found strong correlations between beliefs and minority language maintenance. They found that a strong belief in bilingualism and minority language maintenance were almost "as important in our community as more familiar affect, pride, status, and instrumental beliefs" (p. 112). There was a strong sense of wanting to resist the English-language dominance and wanting to pass along their heritage language to their children so the children would be bilingual.

The desire to pass along one's language and cultural heritage is also acknowledged in a study of mixed background couples in Montreal (Le Gall & Meintel, 2015). Mixed heritage couples have been increasing in Montreal, raising the question of how parents will raise their children and which communities will be valorized. Le Gall and Meintel (2015) found that their participants "strove to offer their children the widest range of "cultural resources" that they could" (p. 118) rather than focusing on the heritage of a specific parent. Spouses would actively promote the learning of the other's language to their children. These findings seem to contradict the characterization of the Quebecois in other studies (Leroux, 2014; Reid, 2012). However, Le Gall and Meintel (2015) suggest that "mixed couples in Quebec are not only a reflection of today's society but are precursors of societal transformations that go beyond the field of interethnic relations" (p. 125). In other words, they are a sign of changing attitudes in Quebec.

Iqbal (2005) conducted a qualitative study involving 8 participants in the Vancouver area who were raised in childhood and adolescence in either French only or a combination of French and English. As mothers, participants wanted to improve their heritage L1 language proficiency as well as transmit French to their children. Iqbal (2005) notes that exposure to their L1 and few opportunities for interaction in the language made it more difficult to maintain their L1 language proficiency. "In the absence of sufficient opportunities for interaction and exposure, mothers are unable to maintain and increase their own language skills, and language loss frequently results" (Iqbal, 2005, p. 308). In other words, a lack of L1 use caused language skills to diminish, often resulting in an inability to use the L1. However, they felt more motivated to communicate in French now that they were mothers. Participants also were more involved with the Francophone community. They seemed to feel grateful to "their children for reconnecting them with French and for providing an incentive to improve and maintain their French" (Iqbal, 2005, p. 320). Iqbal (2005) recommends that action be taken to provide Francophone adults with greater opportunities to use French in their daily lives. This article provides a different perspective to the Francophone community in Vancouver to the one discussed by Levasseur (2017) in Section 2.3. Where the Levasseur (2017) study examined how children in the Vancouver Francophone school

system viewed themselves in relation to the Francophone community, the Iqbal (2005) study reveals the mothers' desire to pass on the language and culture to their children.

Gathercole and Thomas (2009) explored the extent that bilingual speakers of English and Welsh in bilingual communities become proficient in the two community languages in Wales. Welsh is one of the mediums of education, either as the primary language of instruction, or in conjunction with English. Gathercole and Thomas (2009) suggest that "children's and adults' knowledge of Welsh is directly tied with the level of input they have or have had in Welsh" (p. 213), while English seems to develop regardless of how much exposure they receive in home or at school. This system of education is reminiscent of both French immersion and Francophone school systems in Ontario, Canada. Gathercole and Thomas (2009) suggest that acquisition of the minority language requires continued exposure to the language, potentially throughout the individual's lifespan, to ensure maintenance. This study supports Schmid's (2011) contention that the target language must be used or risk being lost by the learner.

Han (2013) conducted a case study based on a larger, 17-month ethnography in an English congregation of a Baptist Chinese church in Western Canada. The church was made up of three congregations: a Mandarin congregation, a Mandarin-medium Suburb congregation and an English congregation. The Suburb congregation and English congregations were aimed at more of a youth audience. Although referred to as the English congregation, the language of communication in the audience consisted of a variety of languages, including English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, and other dialects. English was the language of the main 'on-stage' discourse, including sermons. Han (2013) found that "the English Congregation constituted a multilingual space and a major site of socialization outside the home for developing multilingual skills, including Chinese proficiency" (p. 102), rather than a space that reinforced the language shift to English. Han (2013) suggested that, in addition to intergenerational language transmission in the home through family, institutions like churches could be important to heritage language maintenance. This study documented the use of the minority language in daily activities and interactions, and how space was created to allow for a gradual

growth of language competencies in the Canadian-born youth members of the congregation.

Though the studies above referred to efforts to maintain a heritage minority L2, they were selected because they either dealt specifically with the Canadian context, as in the studies by Iqbal (2015) and Han (2013), or because their circumstances had parallels to the Canadian linguistic duality, as found in Gathercole and Thomas' (2009) study of minority Welsh in Wales. Han (2013) provided an additional link to my research in that members of the English congregation of the Baptist Chinese church were gradually improving their heritage language proficiency through exposure to 'extracurricular' church activities, rather than a formal school setting. While religious worship cannot be considered leisure, the additional activities of the youth in connection to the congregation, but outside of formal ceremonies, could probably be described under the Volunteer subcategory of Serious Leisure (Stebbins, 2007). In that respect, both the conversation groups and the congregation's activities fall under the same umbrella term and are useful points of comparison.

2.8 Chapter Overview

In this section I provide a brief overview of the material covered in the Literature Review. Starting with a review of various quantitative studies of second language learning, I began with Gardner and Lambert's (1959) landmark study of motivational variables in L2 acquisition that identified language aptitude and motivation as independent factors in student achievement. From there, I discussed the Socioeducational Model of Second Language Acquisition, the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, and their compatibility with motivational concepts like persistence, attention, and goal specificity (Gardner, 1985; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

Using a meta-analysis of research conducted by Gardner and his various associates, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) demonstrated that motivation is more related to achievement than integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, motivation, or the integrative and instrumental orientations. However, the other pieces of the Socioeducational Model positively influence language learning. Gardner et al. (2004)

examined the effects of language instruction on the attitudes, motivation, and anxiety of first year French students over the course of the academic year and found that each factor gradually decreased over the term. Attitudes and motivation tended to be moderated by student achievement with higher achievers maintaining more positive attitudes and motivation than those who achieved lower grades.

I also examined the work of Horwitz and Rifkin with respect to student beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1988, 1999; Rifkin, 2000). Horwitz (1988, 1999) believed that understanding student preconceptions about language learning could be beneficial to instructors. Rifkin (2000) noted that first year students in his study displayed beliefs that could be considered counterproductive to language learning and encouraged instructors to be mindful of this potential in their own classes and to actively encourage more beneficial mindsets.

The next section focused on the L2 Motivational Self System and demonstrated its use in quantitative and qualitative studies. Studies conducted by Papi (2010) and Moskovsky et al. (2016) examined traits like anxiety and intended effort using large participant populations. Studies like this are useful in that they can capture large scale trends and provide a bird's eye view of the traits examined. A meta-analysis conducted by Al-Hoorie (2018) noted that the L2MSS is used extensively in studies of learning English as a foreign language, rather than other target languages or second language contexts. In addition, studies focused on intended effort as an outcome rather than other outcomes and moderating factors.

Studies by Sakeda and Kurata (2016), Nakamura (2018), and de Burgh-Hirabe (2019) demonstrate that the L2MSS could be used in qualitative studies as well, and can be used in studies of target languages other than English. Each of these studies focused on learning Japanese as a foreign language. In addition, each of these studies demonstrated the impact of the L2 Learning Experiences in the formations of L2 future selves and student engagement and motivation to learn the L2. These studies connect nicely to my present study in that I also use the L2MSS for qualitative analysis purposes.

The target language I studied was French, rather than English, and focused on L2 Learning Experiences in the form of conversation groups.

The next section briefly covers Investment as a theoretical framework before focusing more on learner identity (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). In brief, the Investment framework is an intersection of forms of capital, identity and ideology (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Ideology refers to imbalances of power while capital manifests in subtypes from economic to cultural to social to symbolic capital. Economic capital is essentially assets and income while cultural capital refers to knowledge and credentials, while social capital refers to one's relationship to networks of power (Darvin & Norton, 2015). While this could potentially have been a viable choice of theoretical framework, I ultimately opted for a combination of the L2MSS and the Serious Leisure Perspectives.

Jin Sook Lee (2005) suggests a reconceptualizing of the terms 'heritage' and 'non-heritage' language learner as defined by Valdés (2001), arguing that individuals do not necessarily fit neatly into either category. She suggests that there are learner's that exist within a continuum that share characteristics of both types of learner and that each comes to the learning environment with different needs (Jin Sook Lee, 2005). Language heritage is a politically charged topic in Quebec where the term Quebecois has very specific ethnic and political meanings (Leroux, 2014; Reid, 2012). Anglophones in the province, though geographically Quebecois, are not identified as such, and do not identify as such even if they are French-English bilinguals, because doing so would imply nationalist leanings or affiliations (Groff et al., 2016; Leroux, 2014; Reid, 2012).

Outside of Quebec, Canadian bilinguals occupy a space straddling the English and French linguistic solitudes but belong to neither. They do not identify themselves as a part of the Francophone community, but are different from the Anglophone community (Levasseur, 2017; Roy, 2010). They measure themselves and their French proficiencies against Francophones and because they fall short of 'expected' proficiency levels do not necessarily even consider themselves bilingual (Levasseur, 2017; Roy, 2010). Roy (2010) suggests the opening of a third space that recognizes the bilingual community and

their identity. This recognition of partial competencies falls in line with notions of Plurilingualism supported by TESOL and the Council of Europe (S. K. Taylor, forthcoming).

Motivations to learn foreign languages vary depending on the context. O'Rourke and Ramallo (2015) and O'Rourke and DePalma (2017) studied the learning of Galego in the Galician regions of Spain. In the case of the *neofalantes* movement, learners are motivated to preserve and revitalize the language and culture of the region (O'Rourke & Ramallo, 2015). The region also enjoys an influx of learners from around the world who are eager to learn about a new language and culture in a form of educational tourism via bursaries from the Galician government (O'Rourke & DePalma, 2017).

In China, Gao (2010) studied non-Korean families who chose to enroll their children in Korean language schools. Parents were motivated by the growing economic relationship between the two countries and a desire to give their children a career edge. The children, meanwhile, were motivated to meet family and future expectations (Gao, 2010).

Vasilopoulos (2015) and Kurata (2010) demonstrate that peer groups can have a powerful and negative influence on L2 learning. In Vasilopoulos' (2015) study of EFL students in Korea, L2 students would purposely downplay their abilities to avoid risking social alienation from their peer group. Kurata (2010) studied the case of a German L1 student taking Japanese L2 courses in Australia. Despite his efforts, the German student found it difficult to communicate with Japanese L1 students. The Japanese students would often respond to him in English, impeding his opportunities to use his L2.either by actively discouraging L2 learners through subtle peer-pressure, making them less willing to demonstrate their true proficiency, or by stymying attempts to communicate in the target L2. In both cases, the actions of peer groups presented a challenge for L2 learners to overcome. The influence of peer groups would fall under the L2 Learning Experience in the L2MSS, which can affect student motivation in either a positive or negative manner (Dörnyei, 2009).

Next, I moved on to discuss studies pertaining to seniors who returned to post-secondary educational institutions. The reasons why seniors return to school is varied. Scala (1996) found that female participants had missed out on educational opportunities to raise families while male participants would return to improve qualifications. The differences in education level from that time period when compared to today is touched upon in the section 4.2 of the Findings chapter. In addition to catching up on missed opportunities or improving credentials, the seniors in many of the studies expressed a genuine love of learning (Kim & Kim, 2015; Scala, 1996; Tam, 2016). The social aspect was also a factor in seniors' decision to return to school, as found in studies by Leung et al. (2006), Parks et al. (2013), and Tam (2016). Seniors wanted the opportunity to keep up with society and interact with people.

Motivations of seniors to learn English as a foreign language were tied to an interest in relating better with family, as noted in Jamie Shinhee Lee (2016) where seniors were concerned about keeping up with grandchildren, or as an acknowledgement of English's prominence and importance in daily life, even in a foreign country, as seen in Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018). Another common thread linking the studies is the seniors' preference to pursue studies without the pressure of dealing with exams or certifications (Kim & Kim, 2015; Klimczak-Pawlak & Kossakowska-Pisarek, 2018; Kubota, 2011; Leung et al., 2006).

Of the studies dealing with informal language learning, the most relevant to the present study is Kubota (2011). She examines independently organized English study groups through the lens of leisure where the activity is a commodity to be consumed rather than a means of gaining greater proficiency in English (Norton, 2000; Stebbins, 2007). The group members hire a language instructor, meet, and essentially socialize. This is a hobby for them, or a form of entertainment (Kubota, 2011). The similarities to my study will become more apparent in the Findings and Discussion chapters. The remaining articles in the Informal Learning section focused on the use of online and more casual methods of language learning through activities like mobile smartphone applications, social media sites, video streaming platforms, as well as traditional media

like movies or the radio (Dettori & Torsani, 2013; Freeman, 1999; Jones, 2015; Lai & Zheng, 2018).

Finally, I discussed articles connected to minority language maintenance through articles that connected with the Canadian context directly, as in the case of Iqbal (2005), Han (2013) and Le Gall and Meintel (2015), or through the context described by Gathercole and Thomas (2009) in Wales, with its similarity to Canada. Iqbal (2005); Le Gall and Meintel (2015) described the importance parents placed on the transmission of their linguistic and cultural heritage to their children, while Han (2013) suggested the importance of large community gatherings like church congregations as viable means of transmitting language and culture to the next generation. In the next chapter, I introduce the Methodology and Methods employed in this study.

Chapter 3

3 Methodology and Methods

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology and methods employed over the course of this study. Beginning with Qualitative Methodology, I discuss my understanding of its nature and how it applies to my research. From there, I describe the research design and the choice of Case Study as the method employed. I also provide details about the recruitment process, and the research sites, along with information about the study participants and the data sources utilized.

3.1 Qualitative Methodology

At its most general, research methodologies can be divided into two paradigms: quantitative and qualitative. The choice of which methodology to adopt for a given project is largely dependent on the nature of the research questions. Quantitative research, as the name implies, allows researchers to quantify and measure their results. Research criteria and results tend to be expressed as numerical values and researchers strive for objectivity and impartiality in their experiments and interventions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It concerns itself with questions that ask, 'how much or how many?' or 'to what degree?' Typically associated with scientific research and hypothesis testing, quantitative research in the social sciences and humanities allows for large-scale data collection, and the generalization of results across populations via tools like questionnaires, surveys, or pre- and post-tests, depending on the needs of the researcher (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Punch, 2009).

Qualitative research, by contrast, places its emphasis on individuals or smaller populations, delving into details of personal experiences, and answering questions of 'why?' of 'how?' Berg and Lune (2012) explain that qualitative research "refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things" (p. 3). Additionally, it allows researchers to understand issues, behaviours, or events from the perspective of the study participants (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). The aspects of qualitative research described here are very clearly subjective in nature

and open to a wide variety of interpretations. Qualitative research embraces subjectivity, and rather than feigning impartiality or objectivity, researchers "stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry." (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). Qualitative researchers acknowledge the difficulty, if not impossibility, of maintaining an impartial and objective distance from the research and recognize "the possibility that the observer may affect the situation being observed in unknown ways" (Patton, 2002, p. 306). They choose instead to minimize the distance between researcher and participant in the hopes of better understanding the subject under scrutiny.

In addition to the differences in data collection methods employed between quantitative and qualitative paradigms, the setting wherein the research takes place also differs between the two. Quantitative research usually takes place in a strictly controlled environment under conditions that can be readily repeated or duplicated – all in the hope of maintaining impartiality and objectivity. Quantitative research seeks to control as much as possible in its search for universal and objective truths. Qualitative research, by contrast, undertakes "the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 44). Qualitative researchers want to know about the world the participants live and interact in, rather than one with artificial controls or carefully measured tasks. People do not live in laboratories; they live in a world of random occurrences, and wholly unique, unrepeatable experiences. Though not necessarily generalizable across large populations or geographic regions, these data nonetheless provide insight into the human experience, and can contribute to theory building. Please note that, for the purposes of this study, a 'natural setting' is the everyday world the participants experience, rather than a laboratory setting with artificially controlled interventions.

Qualitative research methods are appropriate for this study because at its heart is the backgrounds and experiences of the L2 learners, their motivations, and how they feel the L2 has impacted or shaped their identities. The nature of these questions falls squarely within the qualitative paradigm since attempting to quantify something as subjective as participant experiences or as fluid as motivation and investment is

challenging under the best of circumstances. With respect to motivation, Campbell and Storch (2011) observe that "it has been increasingly recognized that traditional, quantitative approaches to research on L2 motivation may not effectively capture this dynamic and complex construct" (p. 168). They point out that researchers like Lamb (2009), Spolsky (2000) and Ushioda (2009) each "advocate the use of qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis" (Campbell & Storch, 2011, p. 168). Qualitative inquiry allows researchers to explore the finer details of the participants' individual stories. It allows them to assert and express their experiences and convey the sort of detail and nuance that cannot be expressed through numbers.

Quantitative research is valuable and contributes greatly to the field of L2 learning and motivation, as reflected in Section 2.1 of the Literature Review. However, its methods and tools would be better employed in a study with more participants than the present study. I wanted to know the 'how' and 'why' of the participants' language learning experiences. I wanted to know how their past influenced their current practices. I wanted to know how they feel about their L2 and why they find it important to maintain. In order to properly address these questions, at length and in-depth, the best choice for this study was to pursue it qualitatively.

3.2 Research Design

In this section, I discuss Case Study as a research approach and why it is an appropriate choice to investigate the phenomenon of seniors pursuit of learning French as an L2 as a hobby and their participation in conversation groups as a means of maintaining and/or improving their proficiency with the language.

3.2.1 Case Study

Qualitative research encompasses a multitude of methodological approaches that could be applicable for this project; however, I have chosen to use case study as the primary methodology. Case study is an extremely adaptable approach used across the spectrum of social sciences including, but not limited to, the fields of psychology, sociology, political sciences, and education (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Yin, 2009). Although this adaptability

allows case study to also be used for quantitative and mixed methods research, I will focus on the qualitative applications of this methodology.

Like many other forms of qualitative research methodology, case study is rooted in the experiences of people in their everyday, uncontrolled, and un-manipulated, environment. Yin (2009) describes it as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). In this instance, the phenomenon being explored is the motivation behind seniors learning French as an L2 later in life and maintaining the L2 through participation in informal, but organized, L2 conversation groups. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) simplify the definition, describing case study as "a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles" (p. 289). They note that case study can "penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis" (p. 289). These definitions connect well to the phenomenon and my research questions, as will be described below.

Although case study is quite diverse, there remain some features common to most qualitative case studies. Case study research is typically conducted in a specific, defined, real world environment for a specific, defined timeframe (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, case studies have a particular intent. For example, a qualitative case study may "illustrate a unique case, a case that has unusual interest in and of itself and needs to be described and detailed" (Creswell, 2013, p. 98). Case studies may also seek "to understand a specific issue, problem, or concern" (Creswell, 2013, p. 98). In this instance, I investigated the case of adult seniors who chose to learn French as an L2 later in life and maintain and/or improve their proficiency through participation in one of two specific L2 conversation groups in an Anglophone setting. While these conversation groups are perhaps not "unique" per se, as they exist in a number of locations across the country and, indeed, across the world, the notion that people organize and attend events aimed at maintaining or improving a language that does not necessarily affect their daily lives is certainly a phenomenon that merits exploration. Stake (2005) would likely categorize

this study as an intrinsic case study because I wanted a better understanding of this specific phenomenon, rather than trying "to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization" (p. 445). The individual participants have their own motivations for learning and maintaining their L2 and they merit exploration.

Another key feature of case study research is its in-depth understanding of the case. In order to create this understanding, the case study uses multiple data sources to gain a more holistic view of the case, its participants, and the environment in which the study is conducted. Creswell (2013) asserts that using a single source would be insufficient to create the depth necessary for a good case study. These data are then organized into themes and described. These descriptions of issues, themes, or specific incidents provide the heart of good case study research. Creswell (2013) notes that themes may be analyzed across cases or used to suggest a theoretical framework. For this project, data sources will include participation in and observation of L2 conversation circles, in-depth one-on-one interviews with regular participants of the conversation circles, and document analysis.

Yin (2009) identifies three criteria for determining if case study is an appropriate research methodology for one's study: the form of the research question; whether the study requires behavioural control over the participants; and whether the study is focused on contemporary events. Research questions investigating how and why are considered good candidates for the use of case study because "such questions deal with operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence" (p. 9). Yin (2009) also suggests that what questions could also be asked in exploratory studies that seek to "develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry" (p. 9). As noted in an above section, my questions were centrally concerned with how and why senior learners of French as an L2s maintain their language proficiency, thus satisfying the first of Yin's criteria. Since no interventions which affect the participants were implemented during the course of this study, the second criterion is satisfied. Finally, since the conversation circles from which I drew my participants occur on a weekly basis, the contemporary event criterion is satisfied.

3.3 Recruitment

Several months prior to participant recruitment, I began using the website Meetup.com to identify groups that held regular minority language conversation sessions in or around a city in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. I narrowed down potential groups based on distance and time required to attend sessions on a regular basis. Groups that met more than a 30-minute drive outside of the city were eliminated as potential research sites. Though I was open to interviewing speakers of any minority L2, I focused more attention on finding French conversation groups than on other languages for the observation portion of the study. I believed that my French-speaking ability would make it easier for me to observe and participate in the conversation sessions. If I were to attend sessions conducted in a language I could not speak, I felt my presence would disrupt the flow of the group and potentially force group members to communicate in English, rather than the language they were there to speak.

Once I had identified groups that met my criteria, I began attending and participating in conversation group sessions on an occasional basis to determine if these groups would be appropriate for the needs of the study (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). The research study was not mentioned nor discussed prior to receiving Ethics approval from the university. After receiving Ethics approval, participant recruitment began in earnest.

I contacted group organizers and asked permission to speak to group members about the study. Organizers were provided with an overview of my recruitment criteria and, if requested, a copy of the interview questions approved by the Ethics committee. Organizers discussed the study with group members that attended regular sessions and granted me permission to attend sessions and to recruit participants. Two of the organizers actively suggested potential participants and passed along my contact information to those they felt may be interested. Participants were also recruited over the course of informal conversations during the group conversation sessions.

One of the organizers identified another conversation group I had been unaware of and put me in touch with the group's moderator. Like the first group, the organizer of the second group passed along my contact information. There was a certain amount of

member overlap between the two groups, with some participants attending sessions of both groups. I also contacted different language-related groups from the local university and made a brief recruitment presentation to one of the groups.

3.3.1 Informed Consent

I scheduled potential interview times with participants via e-mail and I provided copies of the study's Letter of Information (LOI) and consent forms for participants to read and sign at their convenience. Interviews typically took place at the Faculty of Education in a private room, though the time and place of interviews were ultimately decided upon by the participants. For example, two participants chose to be interviewed in study rooms at local Public Library branches.

Participants were provided with additional copies of the LOI and consent forms prior to the beginning of the interviews, though they often brought signed copies of the consent forms with them. I went through the LOI with each participant in person and addressed any questions or concerns before continuing. Participants were reminded that I intended to audio record the interviews and they were given the opportunity to verbally agree or decline to be recorded. There was also a section on the consent form to be checked off that acknowledged the interviews would be recorded. Each participant consented to be audio recorded. None of the participants was under the age of 18, so there was no need to seek the consent of a legal guardian. At the end of each interview, participants were reminded that they would receive copies of the interview transcripts to verify. They were given the opportunity to edit, clarify, or strike from record any segment of the interview they wished. Participants were also reminded that participation was optional and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. None chose to withdraw. Signed consent was only requested prior to the initial interview. Their continued participation in later stage interviews can be viewed as implied consent.

3.3.2 Risks, Benefits, and Safety

There were no known potential risks to participants involved in this study and ethical concerns were minimal. Pseudonyms were used for each participant for the purposes of confidentiality. No interventions were planned nor implemented over the

course of the study, allowing participants to proceed with their daily routines as they normally would. The study was not formally discussed during group conversation sessions, nor were participants identified to other group members. If participants chose to discuss their participation in the study with other group members, they did so without any prompting. Moreover, if they shared information about their personal interviews during conversation sessions where I was not present, they did so without my knowledge and of their own free will.

Participants were not compensated for their time nor their participation in the study. The only benefits they would have received were abstract and intangible, coming in the form of the opportunity to share their personal stories and perspective on one of their pastimes. Scheduling of interviews at a time and place of the participants' choosing was done to ensure that they felt comfortable and in control of the setting.

3.4 Research Sites

Participant observation took place over the course of a year at one of two sites where French language conversation groups met on a weekly basis. Both sites operated on a drop-in basis without registration fees or obligatory attendance. The majority of observations took place at site one, referred to in this study as the Pub. The physical location changed partway through the year-long observations, but the participants and general organization of the group remained the same, so I considered both venues to be the same site. Site two, referred to as the Library in this study, was more formal in nature and organization, being associated with Francophone seniors' services in the city.

There are additional sites mentioned, including a site administered by the organization that runs the Library group and caters to a more Francophone clientele. Two of the participants, Wanda and Tony, were also members of a French conversation group that ran out of a local community centre. Only site one and site two described below will be discussed in detail as they were directly involved with the research study.

3.4.1 Site One – The Pub

This site is connected to one of the online groups organized through Meetup.com. The group was originally formed by a newly graduated teacher who had hoped to improve his French proficiency enough to take FSL teaching qualification courses and improve his hiring prospects. Since that time, the group has expanded to several hundred members and two additional co-organizers were added to help with group administration. Despite there being three organizers, the group is run very informally. There are no moderators for the conversation hours. The weekly sessions were created several years ago and have remained a mainstay of the group's activities.

The organizers arranged a standing reservation with a local Pub in the downtown area to accommodate the group. Weekly sessions draw anywhere from 6 to 25 people at a time. The upcoming session is posted on the group's Meetup page, and members are asked to R.S.V.P. to give the organizers an idea of how many people will be attending that week. However, many group members drop in without RSVP'ing online and are never hassled for not doing so. Partway through the year-long observations, the Pub decided to end the arrangement because they were not making sufficient alcohol sales to justify the space the group was occupying. As a result, the organizers had to seek out a new location that was willing to host the group. The group continues to meet at the new location.

3.4.2 Site Two – The Library

This site was associated with a group that provides various services to Francophone seniors. During the study, the organization offered French conversation hours at two different locations, one on Tuesdays, and the other on Fridays. Each session drew different members, with Tuesday drawing Francophone seniors and more advanced French speakers, while Friday tended to have more Anglophones who spoke French with varying levels of proficiency. Since this study was aimed at French L2 speakers, I chose to attend and observe the Friday sessions as those sessions had more of the target group than the Tuesdays did.

Unlike the Pub sessions, the Library's sessions are more formal and organized. The seniors' organization provides a paid moderator who attends each session, takes attendance, and prepares topics to move conversation along. The sessions also bring in guest speakers to speak on issues relevant to seniors, though presenters tend to speak in English and require a translator when presenting to the Francophones on Tuesdays. The Library sessions usually draw between 6 and 9 members on an ongoing basis with people cycling out on an ongoing basis, depending on the time of year. In the summer, the Library group moves to another location because of other programs run at the site and need for the space the group normally uses. This move tends to affect participation in the sessions, as well.

3.5 Participants

In this section, I discuss general information about the participants, including their assigned pseudonym, their dominant language, the minority language they speak, their general age demographic, and the number of interviews conducted with them. The majority of participants fell in the senior range (age 55+) by coincidence. Though efforts were made to recruit from a wide range of age groups, those who chose to participate tended to be over the age of 55.[5]

Ideal participants were those with at least an intermediate proficiency level in their minority L2 who actively participated in L2-related conversation groups on a regular and ongoing basis. I attempted to find participants who were not heritage members of the minority L2 community (e.g. French L2 speakers who came from French ancestry), nor did they learn the L2 specifically for employment purposes. I was willing to interview anyone interested during the first round but evaluated their applicability to continue in the study based on the data collected. I discuss suitability to continue in the study in Section 3.6.1 when discussing the semi-structured interview process I used.

[5] See Section 1.4, page 9, for the description of seniors used in this dissertation.

In total, twelve individuals were willing to participate in the study, of which seven are reported on in the profile section (See section 4.3). Each participant profiled in the dissertation were seniors as defined in section 1.4, being retired and falling approximately in the 55 to 60 year age bracket. Although he is not a senior, participant Clint is cited in Section 4.1.1 because it described his perspective of the atmosphere created by the Pub group.

3.6 Data Sources

The data for this study were collected through three primary means: semi-structured interviews, participant observation of French language conversation groups in a city in southwestern Ontario, and document analysis. Additional data came via electronic communications and comments provided by participants as they verified and amended interview transcripts. The following sections will provide additional details about each of the primary data collection methods.

3.6.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The participants were asked questions pertaining to their interest in their chosen L2 and their language learning journey, as well as their experiences with conversation groups. I tried to create a relaxed atmosphere for the interviews to allow participants to convey their experiences candidly and without fear of judgement. There were no concerns about sensitive or potentially damaging content since the study focused on experiences tied to activities participants regularly pursue and, therefore, presumably enjoy.

The semi-structured format was chosen because of the flexibility it provided me as an interviewer. I was free to pursue lines of inquiry that arose during the course of the conversations, rather than adhering strictly to a fully structured format. Brinkmann (2013) notes that it "would be foolish to continue with a bad interview guide that does not result in valid answers, for example, if it turns out after a couple of interviews that the guide is problematic" (p. 47). The semi-structured format mitigated this problem considerably, allowing me to change course during interviews, if necessary. The

interviews were conducted over the course of three sessions, with each session taking anywhere from 30-60 minutes.

The first interview session was a focused life history where the participants recounted their minority second language learning journeys, going as far back as possible. Exposure to the minority L2 varied, depending on the region where participants grew up and the curriculum in place at the time. Drawing on Seidman (2013), my goal as a researcher during this session was "to put the participant's experience in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or herself in light of the topic up to the present time" (p. 21). The first interview tended to be the longest of the three, allowing the participant to become more at ease with the interviewing process, as well as identifying events and experiences they deemed significant in their language learning journeys. This interview provided me with preliminary insights into the participants and a direction for inquiry, which was used in subsequent sessions. It also served as an opportunity to screen participants for continued participation or exclusion in the study. Participants were released from the study under two circumstances: 1) They were not actively maintaining their L2 proficiency through any sort of activity; or 2) Their self-reported L2 proficiency put them more in a beginner/learner stage of L2 learning development than an intermediate/maintenance stage.

The second interview focused more on the details of the participants' backgrounds concerning minority L2 learning and maintenance in a largely Anglophone environment. Particular attention was placed on events and experiences identified by the participants during the first interview session. I used this interview as an opportunity to follow up on or clarify details elicited from the first interview. Seidman (2013) suggests that researchers should "not ask for opinions but rather the details of their experience, upon which their opinions may be built" (p. 21). These details provided further talking points and lines of inquiry for the third interview session. I also used this interview as another opportunity to release participants who were no longer actively engaged in any sort of L2 maintenance activity.

The third interview offered an opportunity for participants to reflect on the meaning of their minority L2 learning experiences. I asked the participants to clarify details or experiences recounted in previous sessions, or perhaps to add additional details. During this session, I asked participants to "look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation. It also requires that they look at their present experience in detail and within the context in which it occurs" (Seidman, 2013, p. 22).

3.6.2 Participant Observation

The participant observation piece took on a slightly different form than originally envisioned. Observations took place during regularly scheduled conversation sessions organized independently from the study, typically on Fridays or Saturdays, depending on which group was being observed. Since participation in the conversation sessions is entirely voluntary, and pre-arranging times to observe specific individuals during these sessions would unduly influence participants' drive and motivation to attend, I opted to observe the groups as a whole, rather than specific individuals.

The group attendance varied, often greatly, from one week to the next, so I chose to track total attendance and the number of male and female attendees for each session I attended. This helped me get a better idea of the group's composition and how it changed over time. Field notes were taken after each session concluded in order to maintain the casual and welcoming atmosphere created by the groups. Since I was not observing specific individuals each session, I restricted my notes to general topics of conversation, rather than taking down detailed descriptions of interactions.

Sessions held at the Pub were also more difficult to track because of the seating arrangements. Unlike sessions held at the Library, where the group would often sit around one large table, sessions at the Pub often consisted of multiple pockets of conversation across several tables. The number of concurrent conversations in close proximity to one another would have made audio recording impractical and intrusive, at best, and inaudible at worst. Additional discussion of how the seating arrangements affected observations are found in the Findings chapter (Chapter 4).

3.6.3 Document Analysis

The document analysis piece took place in two parts during the research project. The first part occurred prior to conversation group observations or the individual one-on-one interviews. In order to gain a better understanding of the language learning context in Canada, I examined pamphlets produced by the Canadian government that covered the ongoing plans outlined in the Canadian Roadmap documents, as discussed in Section 1.1. In addition, I examined the Canadian census data concerning spoken languages that was available at the time the study was proposed.

As I began exploring online spaces concerned with co-operational, informal language learning and peer-to-peer exchanges, I examined the websites for MyLanguageExchange.com and Meetup.com. I had previously used MyLanguageExchange.com in the mid-2000s, but I took a closer look at the site during the research proposal stage to verify if the site was still running or if it had gone dormant. I examined and used Meetup.com to verify that the groups I sought existed, as well as to understand the general functionality of the site. I examined membership features and explored group information, including the event scheduling system to better understand how information was disseminated to the Pub group members. Additional information about the Pub conversation group is found in Chapter 4.

After participant observations and interviews had concluded, I conducted another round of document analysis, this time using reports produced by the Canadian government and the National Seniors Council. In addition, I examined materials available through the organization responsible for facilitating the Library conversation group sessions. I examined these documents for evidence that corroborated what I observed and what was conveyed to me during the interview process.

3.7 Data Analysis

This section describes how I approached and conducted the analysis of the data collected. Analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection to better shape interview questions from one round to the next. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, and copies provided to participants for verification, feedback, and/or

clarification. Transcriptions took a considerable amount of time, delaying the start of subsequent rounds of interviews as I wanted to have all the interview data from each round available in order to construct additional lines of inquiry, where possible.

Once copies of the interview transcripts were approved by participants, transcripts were uploaded into MaxQDA 12 for coding and thematic analysis. From there, I created a 'project' to be used for the coding process. The MaxQDA program allowed me to examine documents line by line and code specific sections by topic. These topics could be compared and contrasted to create themes. Using the program, I was able to add multiple documents into the same project file folder for coding. The coding process proved to be an exercise in frustration as the project files proved more fragile than I had anticipated. The project file was stored on a portable USB drive; however, on multiple occasions the project file became corrupted, leaving me unable to open it. This forced me to re-code the data after each time a file was corrupted.

Although the program had a periodic automatic backup feature, I found that I would lose several days of coding at a time. I consulted MaxQDA's technical support team and they hypothesized that my USB drive was disconnecting momentarily as the program was shutting down and saving, resulting in the corrupted file. After re-coding the files four or five times because of the corrupted files, I began making additional backups each day to try and ensure I would not lose any more days of coding, if possible.

When trying to identify emergent themes, I analyzed each interview, treating it almost like its own unique case and trying to determine what meaning they were trying to express. I was looking for what came across beyond the baseline answers to questions. What were they adding? What seemed most poignant to them? I identified themes by comparing individual participants' interviews from round one to round three and then comparing them to the group, as a whole (Merriam, 1998). These comparisons were done each round from interview to interview, participant to participant, and on a project-wide basis. These themes were used to guidelines of questions during each subsequent round of interviews. For example, a couple of participants brought up their thoughts on the importance of French to the Canadian identity. In later interviews, I asked participants

for their thoughts on Canadian identity and French. Had their responses demonstrated that it was of central importance to their motivations, then I would have pursued it more strongly as an emergent theme. However, that was not the case, so that potential theme was disregarded.

However, determining the themes was not a matter of noting which topics were discussed most often in the interviews. Pre-screening questions through the university's Ethics Review guaranteed that certain topics would be covered more extensively than others. For example, several questions were devoted to elementary and secondary school language learning experiences and, as a result, were more prevalent during the coding process. I re-examined participant responses, forcing myself to dig deeper into what the they were saying, and essentially disregarding surface level responses that I may have led them to. For example, I asked about their earliest memories connected to their target L2. It was often when they elaborated on initial responses that deeper responses were offered. Themes have not truly emerged if I have influenced responses by asking leading questions.

Once interviews were coded, I re-read the transcripts and organized interview-related data into profiles with each profile containing findings from the sum total of interviews conducted with the individual participants. Next, I began compressing the contents into easier to read summaries for each participant. The number of interview summaries varied by participant, depending on how many interviews were conducted. For example, a participant whom I interviewed three times would have three summaries, while a participant who was interviewed once would only have one summary. From there, I began combining the summaries into one overall summary per participant, organizing them by topic discussed. For example, while organizing Steve's summary, I took every instance of him discussing French courses he took either through the local community college or through university Continuing Education faculties and put them in the same section of his profile. Next, I eliminated any redundant information on the topic in order to create a more coherent narrative. Organizing the data in this manner allowed me to make best use of the three-interview format, as I was able to delve more deeply into participants' responses than I would have been able to, had I left the interviews in

their original form. This method allowed me to view participant responses in order of increasing depth and detail, as each interview's questions built upon answers provided in the previous one.

Once the data was organized into individual participant profiles, I began examining each one through the lens of the L2 Motivational Self System, making preliminary notes about how each profile reflected the framework. I went back to the interview transcripts to further verify my initial analyses and find relevant quotes to support my thoughts. I analyzed each person's motivation to learn and maintain their minority L2 and then their motivation to participate in conversation groups. Next, I examined the profiles from the perspective of the Serious Leisure Perspective to see if I could find mentions of the personal or social rewards Stebbins (2007) had proposed in his framework. Like I did with the L2MSS, I went back to the original transcripts to find quotes that clearly supported my ideas. Finally, I started examining the two frameworks in tandem to see if I could reconcile them with one another. My analytical efforts were geared toward an overarching question of 'why'? Why were the participants doing what they were doing? By using the frameworks in tandem, I had a better idea of the 'why' of the study. From there I began to tease out the answers to the research questions.

The study relies heavily on qualitative interviews and participant observation; however, as noted in the previous section, there was a degree of document analysis in the form of websites, government pamphlets and census data. These three different data sources allowed me to examine data from different perspectives through methodological triangulation (Patton, 2002). Triangulation takes its name from land surveying and navigation. By using landmarks as reference points, one can approximately determine one's location. Similarly, by using multiple data sources, I can validate and add credibility to my findings (Patton, 2002). In addition to using the three different data sources to flesh out the picture of this case, I was able to use the multiple semi-structured interviews to act as an additional form of source triangulation (Patton, 2002). I used the multiple interview format to test for consistency with each participant, as well as using interviews across the same round of data collection. The multiple interview format acted as a form of time triangulation (Cohen et al., 2011). The constant comparing and

contrasting of interview data provided me with a more focused picture of the phenomenon and my participants' place in it. In addition, I analyzed the data through the lens of two theoretical frameworks from different research traditions. This was a form of theory/perspective triangulation (Patton, 2002).

3.8 Trustworthiness

My goal in this chapter was to clearly define the methods used in this study and thus contribute to my trustworthiness as a researcher. Patton (2002) stated that "the trustworthiness of the data is tied directly to the trustworthiness of the person who collects and analyzes the data – and his or her demonstrated competence" (p. 570). I have endeavoured to ensure that appropriate methods were in place for the collection and analysis of the study data.

I acknowledge that objectivity is not truly possible as my participation in conversation groups would inevitably impact the group environment. In addition, I was aware that the multiple rounds of interviews could potentially influence future behaviour of the participants. I have tried to be mindful of my potential biases and the impact I have on others, as well as to minimize my influence. During the interview rounds, I focused on the activities that participants were pursuing on their own, without volunteering additional options that may have been of interest. I felt that making such suggestions could potentially alter their behaviour and taint the data collected.

I have attempted to establish trustworthiness by being mindful of my biases and the impact I have on the study, as well as using different forms of triangulation to establish consistency across my different data sources. Stake (2005) describes triangulation as "a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning" (p. 454). Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) explained that with triangulation "a researcher deploys different methods – interviews, census data, documents, and the like – to "validate" findings" (p. 963). Denzin (2012) indicates that triangulation does not validate findings, but rather offers an alternative to validation. Validation and validity are measures found in quantitative research. To him, triangulation "reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question" (Denzin, 2012, p. 82),

adding that objective reality "can never be captured. We only know a thing through its representations" (Denzin, 2012, p. 82). The form of triangulation described by Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) is only one type: methodological triangulation. Cohen et al. (2011) list six forms of triangulation, including time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation (e.g. individual, group, and collectivities), theoretical triangulation, investigator triangulation, and methodological triangulation. The present study uses theoretical triangulation via the L2MSS and SLP theoretical frameworks and methodological triangulation through the use of multiple methods of data collection.

I encouraged participant involvement in the research process by offering opportunities to verify interview transcripts. This practice is referred to as member checking (see Yin, 2009). I have also compared data from individual participants from one round to the next, as well as across participants in successive rounds. The methods outlined in previous sections should satisfy any questions of my competence as a researcher. As such, the findings and analyses detailed in the chapters to follow should be deemed trustworthy.

Chapter 4

4 Findings

In this chapter, I present in-depth examinations of the two research sites, the Pub and the Library, before moving on to the data collected through document analysis and each of the rounds of semi-structured interviews. As mentioned in Section 3.7, interview-related data have been organized into profiles with each profile containing findings from the interviews conducted with the individual participant profiled. Emergent themes are discussed in the final section of the chapter.

4.1 Observation Sites

The following subsections contain the data collected at the two research sites. In addition, it contains interview-related data relevant to the site. Each section contains general background information as well as more detailed observations.

4.1.1 Conversation Group – the Pub

I first encountered the Meetup French conversation group (referred to going forward as the Pub group) a couple of years prior to beginning this research study. As previously noted, a friend whom I had met during a French immersion course in Quebec years earlier had suggested I check out the conversation hours because of my interest in the French language. Going more out of a sense of obligation to the friend than an interest in the session, I met two of the three group organizers, including the group's founder, the first time I went to the Pub.

As mentioned in Section 3.4.1, the conversation group at the Pub was created by a newly graduated teacher in the mid-2010s as a means of helping him improve his French proficiency. He conveyed that the hiring pools in the teaching market were highly competitive, so he wanted to add FSL teaching qualifications to improve his chances of being hired on by a school board. However, he recognized that his oral fluency needed to improve, leading him to found the group on Meetup.com. In the early months of the group, members were similarly motivated new teachers, but gradually the group expanded beyond prospective language teachers, incorporating members from a variety

of backgrounds and interests. At the time the study began, the Meetup group numbered several hundred people, though only a fraction ever came out to the conversation sessions.

The group had a longstanding arrangement with a location in the downtown core of a medium-sized city in Southwestern Ontario. Each week a notice was sent out to group members via the Meetup site's event announcement option, reaffirming the date and time of the upcoming group events and asking members to R.S.V.P. if they planned to attend. In the past, members had organized monthly dinners for small numbers of members, but that practice had ceased by the time the study began. During the twelve-month study, the only officially advertised group events were the weekly Saturday conversation sessions at the Pub. However, group members would occasionally get together on their own.

The group had selected the Pub as its meeting place because of its central location and relatively easy access from anywhere in the city. Wait staff directed new or returning members to wherever the group was seated from one week to the next. The Pub location itself was a converted Victorian-era house. Each time I attended, the atmosphere was very casual and relaxed, and group members were very welcoming and willing to talk. There was no itinerary or group schedule from one week to the next, aside from the start time. Attendees were welcome to stay as long or short as they wanted with no pressure to participate in conversation more than they wished.

When I began attending the conversation sessions in early December 2016, the group numbered just over 10 people, evenly split between females and males. I was told that things were beginning to slow down because of the holiday season but would resume in January. During this time, one of the co-organizers informed me of the Friday conversation group at the Library and offered to connect me with that group's moderator, an offer which I gladly accepted.

When the January sessions resumed, there was a considerable increase in attendees over the December sessions. The number more than doubled to 23 people, with females comprising just under half the attendees. The group met in what probably would

have been a living room or family room area of the original Victorian era house. In order to accommodate the size of the group and maintain the feel, attendees moved circular tables together to keep everyone more or less together. This made the group far more identifiable for newcomers or those arriving late. However, the new configuration also crowded non-group members out of this area of the group was using. On weeks with lower attendees, non-group members could potentially sit in the same room at separate tables.

During the second January session, a friend whom I had met during a university French immersion course years earlier decided to attend. She brought with her a friend who had gone through the French immersion program via the local public schoolboard until the end of high school. These two took considerably different paths with respect to the French language. One continued studying it through university and now lives and works in Quebec while the other had not had a conversation in French since high school. I opted not to sit near them in order to ensure that I would talk to new and different people.

Conversation was lively without being too noisy, but it became clear that talking to someone seated more than a couple of seats away would be difficult, at best, unless the table was engaged in a larger conversation. One such conversation revolved around a couple who had brought their first-year university-aged daughter with them to the group to expose her to French prior to going on an exchange program. The couple were not regular members of the group but used the daughter's exchange trip as an opportunity to return to speaking French. The daughter, for her part, seemed overwhelmed, but it was unclear whether she was overwhelmed by the attention of the group, the speed of the conversations, or both. However, she gradually relaxed and used the time to ask questions of those who had been abroad before.

There were no moderators or conversation facilitators leading any sort of group discussion, though members were welcomed by one of the co-organizers, a retired high school French teacher. Once attendees were seated, it was up to them to make conversation with those around them. Because of the turnover from one week to the

next, members often spent time disclosing information about their background, how long they had been members of the group, and other miscellaneous information about their interest in French. The group attracted people with a wide variety of language proficiencies, ranging from complete beginners to Francophones. The group also tended to skew toward older members, with only a handful in their 30s and even fewer in their 20s.

The higher number of attendees continued for the well into late February, as did the discrepancy between the numbers of females and males at the sessions. By April, attendance figures had stabilized with the number of attendees typically falling in the mid-teens. I found the high number of males in attendance to be unusual, particularly because it was so different from the typical male to female ratio in programs like French immersion where females comprise approximately 60 percent of students across all grades and provinces in Canada (Allen, 2004; New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016).

The disparity between females and males may have perpetuated the continued lack of attendance from females. Though group members seemed quite welcoming to me, it is possible that the lack of female attendees could deter interested females from going to the sessions. A teaching colleague of mine whom I met through the conversation groups indicated that she always responds affirmatively to the group's online R.S.V.P., even on days she cannot make it, as her way of encouraging other women to attend.

In early April, the organizers were advised that they would have to change venues for future sessions. The host venue indicated that the group, while pleasant enough, did not order sufficient quantities of food or alcohol to make the arrangement worthwhile for them any longer. As a result, the group moved to another more of a restaurant-style venue a few blocks away. The new location, while able to accommodate more people overall, could not do so in quite the same way. As mentioned earlier, the first location was in a converted Victorian era house, which created a different ambience during sessions. The physical layout, though cramped when the group was at its largest, was more intimate and cozier than the second location. Typically, the group would have a

room set aside all to itself, which added to the intimacy of the sessions. It also added a sense that people could circulate freely and talk to more people, rather than stay in assigned seating.

The new location, by contrast, was far more of a restaurant than a pub, complete with multiple flat-screen televisions positioned in easy view for patrons. Tables were arranged in such a way as to provide easier access for wait staff and quicker service. To me, this changed the feel of the sessions. The first location had circular or rectangular tables, depending on where in the group was seated, while the second location had uniform rectangular tables. The circular tables, in particular, seemed more conducive to a conversation group as they allowed people to face more of the group members. In the new location, there were times when new arrivals were seated apart from the main group and somewhat isolated because it was not always possible (or convenient) to rearrange the tables to accommodate the group size. The presence of the televisions also allowed for group members to disengage from conversation and watch whatever sporting event was playing at the time. Unlike the first location, the group was allotted table space, as opposed to a private room area, which made it more difficult to circulate. Even just going to the washroom forced group members to stop conversations to accommodate people trying to get up and get by them on their way. There was considerably less circulation occurring between group members. Once members arrived and were seated, they essentially stayed in the same spot until they left. Circulating between different small groups was inconvenient, and at times disruptive. Members were essentially 'stuck' with whomever they were seated near, which occasionally stunted conversation, depending on the personalities of those nearby.

The language level of group members varied widely on a week to week basis. The core group of regulars would likely fall into a low-advanced or upper intermediate proficiency range, as it is fairly common for members to use cell phones to look up vocabulary. Though the group encourages Francophones to join the group and attend the conversation hours, the majority of those who attend are Anglophones looking to practice, maintain, or improve their French. Language is not actively policed or monitored during the conversation sessions, allowing group members the space to

express themselves however best suits them. This aligns with definitions that assert that informal learning is "controlled primarily by the learner, does not have a predefined structured curriculum, and does not result in receiving a certificate" (Levenberg & Caspi, 2010, p. 324). The sessions are meant to be casual and provide an opportunity to improve, as Clint[6] indicates in personal interview 1:

Clint: I know what's expected of me and the people there are more forgiving, or I know that most of the people there – almost all – speak English as well, so I wouldn't be stuck in some sort of situation. And the conversations are light, it's just basically visiting, right. Whereas if I just ran into someone, say who needed my help, I would try and I'd look forward to the opportunity to speak French with someone that I hadn't before, but I would probably have some anxiety about how am I going to get through this and …

Researcher: Okay, now you've mentioned also that you know what's expected of you. What do you feel is expected?

Clint: Nothing. [Laughter]

Researcher: Okay?

Clint: I just feel like I can easily practice, and if I switch to English, because I don't know words or whatever, that there's no pressure on that. And I know that anyone there who does know the word, will just repeat it back to me in French and there's no reprimanding or anything like that, right. So that makes it much easier to try, I guess.

---

[6] Clint is an intermediate-level FSL speaker in his 30s who began attending sessions when he and his wife moved to Ontario from one of the western provinces. He participated in the full study but his data are not reported here because of the focus on Seniors. However, his comments provide valuable insight into the atmosphere created in the group.

Clint's quote demonstrates the self-actualization personal reward from Stebbins (2007) framework because he can practice and refine his French conversation skills. For Stebbins, self-actualization is tied to the development of skills, knowledge and abilities. If he stumbles on a word, another group member will help him with pronunciation, thus increasing his knowledge of French vocabulary. The opportunity to have conversations in French could be seen as an opportunity for self-expression, another of Stebbins (2007) personal rewards.

As noted above, the intention of the conversation sessions is to keep things light and casual, thus the topics explored by the group follow the same trend, falling into what Cummins (1979, 1999) would classify as basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS), rather than the domain of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).[7] Steve's description of the conversation sessions supports this classification, as noted in his second personal interview, "It's a cocktail party. You know, it starts off with small talk or things like that and then goes from there." Though this atmosphere is helpful for beginners, it has the potential to drive away more advanced speakers who want to speak and enjoy the language.

Simon, for example, found the language level used at the sessions to be too low for his taste. He found that he was spending a considerable amount of time helping others with their developing French, rather than challenging himself and improving his own:

Simon: Yeah, I only went once. And I didn't like it.

Researcher: Okay.

[7] Cummins (1979) suggested that language-related tasks and proficiencies can be classified along a continuum of complexity. The less cognitively demanding tasks, like face-to-face casual conversations, fall under the BICS classification, while more demanding tasks, like participating in a philosophical debate, using more abstract concepts and higher-level vocabulary would be considered part of the CALP classification.

Simon: It was too elementary for me.

Researcher: Okay.

Simon: Apart from one person who was from some French-speaking country, but it wasn't France. It was just too basic and, so I thought this isn't going to help. In fact, I was helping others with vocabulary and… I just can't [go] at the drop of a hat…

Since Simon lives a 45-minute drive outside of the city, he wants to be sure that the activities he participates in are worth the effort it takes to drive in. In the case of the conversation sessions, he found it difficult to justify attending them when there were so few Francophones present on a consistent basis. For him, the groups lacked the social attraction they were looking for. Associating with other French speaking group members was not a sufficient social reward to motivate continued participation in the group (Stebbins, 2007).

4.1.2 Conversation Group – the Library

During my first couple of observation sessions at the Pub, one of the group's co-organizers mentioned another conversation group he was involved with. This other group was run by a local organization that provided services to Francophone seniors. He offered to put me in contact with the organization's moderator, and she, in turn, contacted me for additional information about the study. After I addressed any questions she had about the nature of the study, she asked permission from her group to allow me to attend their sessions. The seniors agreed, and I began visiting the group in early 2017.

The organization ran conversation sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays at local public libraries. The Tuesday session, held on the opposite side of the city from the Friday session, was attended by predominantly Francophone seniors. The Friday session, by contrast, had mainly Anglophone participants who would be better described as

Francophiles[8] than Francophones, though there were one or two Francophones who would regularly attend. Over the course of the study, I noticed that there was some overlap between the group members who attended the Pub and the Library. Senior participants who consented to interviews tended to be members of both groups, though they attended were the Library sessions far more consistently than those at the Pub.

The format at the Library was considerably different than what was used at the Pub. First, there was an appointed moderator, employed by a local organization that provides services for seniors. The moderator would be responsible for tracking attendance and directing sessions. Over the course of my observations, there were three moderators for these sessions, each with a different facilitation style.

The initial moderator kept track of attendance in a notebook, along with conversation topics from one week to the next. She tended toward a more open style, allowing conversation to flow where the group wanted. For example, group members like Bruce were self-described movie buffs. On one occasion, he moved conversations toward interesting films he and his wife had recently seen. While this topic had the potential to involve the whole group, the seniors generally did not contribute to the conversation. It became a conversation between Bruce and the moderator. The moderator attempted to draw more people into the topic, but it became a series of individual conversations with the moderator, rather than conversations amongst the group.

The moderated format created an environment similar to a classroom setting where an instructor posed a question and a student responded. The more outgoing and talkative a member was, the easier it was to dominate conversations with the moderator. I noticed that one of the most fluent Francophiles of the group tended to dominate conversations while others would listen. Wanda had noticed that, too:

---

[8] The term Francophile refers to someone with an interest or affinity for the French language. In this instance, it will be used for non-Francophone speakers of French.

Researcher: [The first moderator] seems very much more free form, whereas [the second moderator] has got a sort of almost like a checklist of things that she wants to go through.

Wanda: Yeah, but [the first moderator] can sometimes let it be too free formed and sometimes, we've had people leave. I don't know why I persevered there either, because sometimes it would just be a conversation between two people, just like that and the rest of us were just there. And then it would break up into little groups, which isn't good because then you have – you know?

Researcher: Okay. So you like the sort of roundtable format?

Wanda: I like as long – yes, yeah if it's small enough and everybody has a chance to say something.

Researcher: Okay, yeah. So from what – okay, so you like almost like a balance then between – a certain amount of direction, monitoring but a certain amount of ability to free form conversation?

Wanda: Yeah, because like if I don't know much about a subject, I'm not going to say anything in English or French, you know?

During my observations, I had never seen the group break into smaller side conversations. However, I did observe during two sessions where individual group members took control of the discussion and interacted almost exclusively with the moderator. Group members do not necessarily have several opportunities to go out and use their L2, so I can see how such interactions could be frustrating for those not actively involved in the conversations.

The first moderator was very well-liked by the group, but during the first couple of months of the study, the organization opted to replace her and hire someone new to

take over the group. This sudden change had an immediate impact on the group, with several members choosing to boycott sessions or to leave the group outright. One of my interview participants, Natasha, was particularly upset by the staffing change, as she had developed a friendship with the first moderator and disliked the second. During this stage of the interview process, she was boycotting the group out of support for the first moderator:

> Natasha: Some of the people in the French group have become significant in my life, like not in any kind of romantic way or anything else, but certainly like I struggle with this business of [the first moderator] being fired because I just hate the way they treated her. I couldn't tolerate [the second moderator] and we met once or twice, but I was very conflicted for two reasons.
>
> One is I hate the way they treated [the first moderator] and I kind of don't want to support [the organization], but I also miss the people in the group and I miss what I'm talking about, I miss being able to speak French. I miss being, you know, I miss them as people and I miss them as people I can converse in French with, like that kind of aspect in me, for sure.

In this instance, Natasha's L2 Learning Experience was adversely affected by the replacement of her moderator friend (Dörnyei, 2009). She missed her fellow group members and her opportunity to speak French. Missing the group shows her desire for social attraction and her interest in speaking French is a sign that she misses the self-expression personal reward gained from attending the sessions (Stebbins, 2007).

Other interview participants from the Library group, though sympathetic to the first moderator's situation, did not feel as strongly about her departure as Natasha did. Wanda, for example, could understand the group members' frustration, but was not going to allow it to affect her participation in the group:

Wanda: A lot of them were very close with [the first moderator], very close. They – well, they had also gone through three other leaders, so, but they seemed to bond with [her] and some of them wouldn't come back. Some of them haven't come back so – I just, look, change is part of life. Move on. Tournez la page!

Wanda compared the situation to a workplace environment after someone leaves in that people should be loyal to the employer and those who are still there, rather than to the people who leave. She felt more loyal to the group itself and those who continued to participate than she did any individual person. Bruce felt similarly, also using workplace analogies to describe the situation:

Bruce: You have a new boss, or you've changed groups, okay that's what happens. I mean, I feel bad for [the first moderator], but I'm not going to stop going to French conversation because it's no longer [her]. That wasn't my drawing card, my drawing card was the people there, you know and a good moderator. Obviously, if the moderator was a jackass I probably wouldn't go, you know.

For both Wanda and Bruce, the group was more important than any individual, though for different reasons. Wanda[9] enjoyed the groups for social and personal rewards, social attraction and self-actualization, while Bruce was more interested in self-expression (Stebbins, 2007). He admitted in his interviews that he enjoyed the social element as well, but his main motivation was the opportunity to speak French.

The second moderator was a more divisive figure in the Library group. She had facilitated sessions when the first moderator was on vacation, but also during the interim period when the organization was seeking to hire a new moderator to take over the

---

[9] See Section 4.3.2.3 for Wanda's profile.

sessions, and likely took the brunt of the group's disappointment in the staffing change. Her approach was far more structured than her predecessor. She came with a prepared list of discussion topics, and always connected them to issues she felt were relevant to seniors. She made sure that group members were aware of what sorts of services were available to seniors in the city, more specifically those that were earmarked for Francophone seniors. For example, she made available lists of counselors who catered predominantly to Francophone clientele. She also arranged for presentations about the importance of exercise as one ages.

During my observations, I found the conversations and interactions to be more moderator-centric than group-centric. Rather than engaging with one another, group members tended to respond directly to moderator questions. She talked *to* the group members, rather than *with* them. This could be compared to a teacher-focused style of instruction where the authority figure is the one who does most of the talking, rather than a learner-focused instructional model where the learners drive the conversation. This had an impact on session attendance, with some group members choosing to skip sessions they knew would be led by the second moderator.

The third moderator's facilitation style struck me as a happy medium between her two predecessors. She prepared conversation prompts for the group but seemed happy to allow the conversation to flow. She also came across as very personable and genuinely enthusiastic about being at each session. The group members took to her immediately, including Natasha, who had decided to return to give the group another try.

The number of people who attended the Library group was smaller than the Pub sessions, attracting between 5-9 people, including the moderator. The group was given a private room off the main library that allowed for privacy. The room itself was set up with long rectangular meeting room tables that were pushed together to allow a group of varying size to gather around them. Name cards were distributed to each person to allow new members to learn everyone's names. The cards also assisted the moderators with tracking attendance from one week to the next.

Rather than allowing for open conversation among several smaller groups, the Library ran its sessions as a large group discussion. A topic would be suggested by the moderator and the whole group discussed it. The topics tended to be framed around seniors' issues, but could flow into areas of personal interest, as well. Unlike the Pub, discussions at the Library rarely touched on people's interest in the French language. French was the medium of conversation, but not the group's focus. It just happened that Anglophones coopted the Friday sessions, using them as an opportunity to practice, improve, or maintain their language proficiencies. Like the Pub, the discussions tended to stay within the BICS range of language proficiency, though the moderators tried to add additional meaning and significance to the topics by making them relevant to the group's lives (McGrath, 2002; Mishan, 2005).

In the summer, the Friday group moved to an alternate library to accommodate children's programs held at the host library. The move caused a slight change in attendance, though Wanda attributed the decrease to summertime, in general, more than the new location. Bruce, however, found the summer location to be more difficult to get to via public transit, so noted that his attendance had decreased during this period. In the fall, the group returned to its usual location.

In this section I discussed my observations of the two sites, referred to as the Pub and the Library. I summarized my observations and provided quotations from participant interviews to corroborate my impressions of the groups. In the next section, I discuss data collected via seniors-related documents.

4.2 Seniors-related Documents

In this section, I discuss the data collected via the analysis of seniors-related documents, ranging from government reports to organization pamphlets. Documents include those produced by the Canadian government and those by the organization responsible for organizing the Library conversation group.

Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) produced *A Portrait of Seniors in Canada 2006* for Statistics Canada. The document offers what, at the time, would have been an up to

date portrait of Canadian seniors. This provided a good starting point as the seniors in the current study would be part of the age group (age 55 to 64) just preceding the age group focused on in the document (ages 65+). Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) survey topics like demographic trends, Health and Wellness, Living Support, among others. However, the particularly relevant chapters are chapters 3, and 5, which discuss topics like continuous learning and leisure.

Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) observed that the population was becoming more educated over time and that this held true for seniors, as well. The age group 55 to 64, which would correspond to the seniors in the present study, were approximately twice as likely to have earned a university degree. This holds true for the participants in the study, each of whom have at least one university degree. Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) also predicted that the next wave of seniors, aged 55 to 64 at the time of the report, would be more likely to be involved with at least one organization. Examples of organizations "cultural, education, or hobby organizations, such as theatre groups, book clubs, or bridge clubs" (p. 171). The conversation groups could be argued to be an example of all three types of group.

Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) identify four types of leisure: passive, cognitive, social, and physical leisure. Passive leisure includes watching television, films, or listening to the radio. Cognitive involves more active thinking and includes educational activities. The conversation groups would be considered cognitive and social forms of leisure, while some of the additional French-related activities pursued by the seniors, like listening to French-language radio or watching French-language film could be considered forms of passive leisure. The document also acknowledges that as paid work hours decrease, more time is open for leisure-related activities. During the interviews, Bruce mentioned that he had more time to pursue French now that he was retired, and his children were grown. In terms of leisure-related activities and education level, the study participants match up well with the data presented in the document.

The National Seniors Council (2015) released a document called the *Report on the Social Isolation of Seniors 2013-2014*. This document reports on the results of

consultations across the country initiated by the National Seniors Council to better understand the needs of seniors and to develop best practices to help reduce social isolation within that group. During the consultations, seniors indicated that language could be a barrier to accessing services. Though that was not the case for the participants in the study, the Library group acted as an outreach tool for a local health-related organization to educate Francophone seniors on the sorts of supports they could access in their language. Health-related presentations made by the organization were mentioned by participants during the interviews, demonstrating that the organization was attempting to implement aspects of the best practices outlined in the report.

Details concerning the different stages of the *Roadmap* programs initiated by the Canadian government have already been discussed in Chapter 1. However, it is worth noting that the majority of the funding is earmarked for programs for young Canadians, despite claims that the programs were meant to benefit all Canadians (Government of Canada, 2008, 2012, 2013). There is a mention of seniors in the Government of Canada (2013) *Roadmap* with respect to funding going towards access to health-related services in their own language.

The most recent iteration, the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018 – 2023: Investing in Our Future* continues along a similar path to the previous *Roadmaps.* Education-related programs were focused on younger Canadians, including bolstering of FSL programs like immersion through investing in recruitment of FSL and immersion teachers and development of an official languages learning smartphone app. There was one mention of adding additional funding via Health Canada to improve seniors' access to health-related services in their own language (Government of Canada, 2018).

I also examined several years worth of annual reports of the local health organization responsible for the Library group conversation sessions. There was no specific mention of French programming in the reports I found until the 2017-2018 report that made mention of the organization's involvement in what was referred to as a francophone hub, along with several other unnamed organizations, to provide services to

the city's francophone community (XXXXXX XXXXXXX, 2018).[10] Though I could not confirm the direct source of the funding for the francophone services, it appears that the initiatives mentioned in the *Roadmap* plans were reaching the community level. In addition, the organization is mindful of the best practices put forward by the National Seniors Council.

A pamphlet of services created by the organization advertises the Library conversation group but uses interesting word choices when discussing the group. In its description, it mentions francophone seniors, meeting new friends, doing fun activities, and learning about seniors-specific health issues. Next it mentions that the group is open to all levels of French proficiency (XXXXXX XXXXXXX, 2019). It seems contradictory to put the term francophone in the same description as a group that is open to all levels of French. If past posters or ads for the group contained similar descriptions, it could explain why the Library group consists of primarily French L2 Anglophones.

Overall, the documents seem to corroborate the information obtained via the personal interviews and observations of the Library group. This corroboration aids in establishing credibility to the data collected through the other two methods. In the next section contains the participant profiles created based on the semi-structured interviews.

4.3 Participant Profiles

In this section, I present participant profiles constructed from data obtained via qualitative interviews for those seniors who participated in the study. Those participants who did not do all three interviews will be briefly discussed in their own entry at the beginning of the following subsection. Following that, I present the seniors who participated in the full three interview protocol.

[10] In order to disguise the name of the organization providing the services, and thus attempt to ensure that participant identities remain confidential, the name of the organization has been represented by a series of Xs in the body of the text and in the References section.

4.3.1 Single and Two Interview Seniors

In order to streamline the data and avoid potential confusion with the three-interview participants, I have grouped together data from the seniors who only participated in one or two interviews. Each participant was willing to do additional rounds of interviews, but after re-reading the transcripts, I opted to excuse them from future rounds. One was still actively taking language courses and considered herself to be a beginner in their L2, while the other had not continued with conversation sessions after attending one meeting. The inclusion of their data should not be misconstrued as theirs having equal weight to the data provided by three-interview participants as theirs is not as in-depth. However, their stories provide echoes of the stories provided by the three interview seniors, making the data relevant to the study.

Table 3 - Single and Two Interview Senior Summary

Participant	**French as HL?**	**Raised in Quebec or Francophone area**	**Formal FSL Education**	**Lived in Quebec or Francophone area as an adult**	**Motivation for Maintaining FSL proficiency**
Janet	Yes (father)	No	Secondary Continuing Ed.	No	Hobby-related: genealogy
Simon	No	No	Secondary University	Yes	Social, personal identity

Janet is a retired former employee of the local university who speaks English but began pursuing French in order to reconnect with her heritage and to aid with her genealogy hobby. She traced her family's arrival in Canada to the 1600s but found that she needed to improve her French to understand the surviving documents from the period.

Growing up, her father could speak French, but her mother was English, so there was very little French spoken in the home. When Janet's father married her mother in 1940s Toronto, it was considered almost unacceptable that he had married an English woman, as the Toronto of that time was a very English city with few other nationalities. In addition, her father worked for Shell Canada, so he hid the fact that he spoke French out of fear that the company would transfer the family to Quebec. She described French as being present, but not prominent, in her life. For example, she would try to speak French when visiting her grandmother in Toronto, but it was not a major focus.

She mainly took Continuing Education courses over the last couple of years because of her interest in genealogy. She also noted the benefits of learning an additional language as one gets older. She found the courses to be fairly simple, so began considering going to Quebec for an immersion course, and if that went well, she would consider going back annually and then spending time at the archives in Montreal or Quebec City. She also took the French at Noon courses offered at the local university's downtown location. She found them convenient and liked that there were no exams or essays involved in the courses as she's more interested in learning for learning's sake and to achieve her personal goals.

She considered her reading vocabulary to exceed her oral comprehension, remarking that she still translates what is said to her. She has always been comfortable reading in French, incorporating it whenever the opportunity arises. For example, if she goes to an art gallery, she reads the French descriptions first and then checks the English to see if she understood what was said. Her focus is on challenging her brain and being able to read primary source documents for her genealogy. To bolster her vocabulary, she created 2000 cue cards based on content from the courses she's taken, ranging from common expressions to verb conjugations. She reads the cue cards regularly and says the words or expressions out loud to reinforce her vocabulary, hoping she can catch more words when she hears them. She also uses the internet to search out lists of the most common 300 verbs in French, in addition to several thousand of the most common words. She also has a book that covers the sorts of situations one might encounter if traveling to

France. It includes vocabulary, activities, and other info to try and prepare people for a trip.

Simon participated in two interviews. He attended one conversation session of the Pub group, opting not to go back because he felt the overall language level was too low for him. In fact, he felt he was spending so much time helping others with their vocabulary that he was not seeing any personal benefit to attending, especially since he lived out of town and had to travel 40 minutes to attend. His area is sparsely populated when compared to the city where the conversation groups met. As a result, there are fewer kinds of activities offered where he lives.

Simon began studying French in Grade 9 as there were no opportunities to learn in elementary school at that time and added German in Grade 11. He went to high school when foreign language courses like Latin, French, and German were taught by Anglophones with a focus on written proficiency. His high school opened a language lab in Grade 12, which would have been a novelty at the time. Desks were set up with headphones and students were able to listen to and repeat back different expressions. They could also record themselves speaking. Having the opportunity to listen to his own voice helped him realize his level of oral proficiency and a need for improvement.

Simon grew up in what he described as an era of change in Canada with Expo 67 and the election of Pierre Trudeau, and felt it was important that more English-speaking Canadians speak French due to all the political upheaval. He felt particularly motivated after going to Expo 67 and having difficulty communicating with people. He was interested in becoming fluently bilingual, so he continued studying French until second year of his undergraduate degree.

Simon met his future partner at a conference late in his undergraduate studies. When they met, they spoke to each other in English, but when he realized his partner spoke French, they switched to French. He graduated and, after visiting family in New Brunswick, opted to move to Montreal and live with his partner. Once they lived together, his partner insisted they never speak English in the home.

When the two went into business together, Simon handled all the written communications as his writing was better than his partner's. He had constant exposure to the language through his partner's almost entirely Francophone social circle. His interest in becoming more fluent also helped him acclimate to the new environment. Simon also believed learning French was easier for him back then because his brain was still young.

There were a number of political changes going on in Quebec at the time, so French was a necessity to follow what was happening. Simon found it astonishing that Anglophone Montrealers would have no facility with French. He considered speaking only English to be very limiting since one would not have access to the other society living in the same city.

Simon was fascinated by Quebec French and the different accents found in and around Montreal, listening to French radio and watching French TV exclusively during his time there because of his partner. He recalled that people in Montreal were always very patient with him as his proficiency developed, but he found it difficult to interact or interject in conversations. After two years of living in a predominantly Francophone environment, he realized he could follow and participate in conversations, and even tell jokes. He said his Anglophone accent made him somewhat of a novelty, and that his openness to learning helped him be more accepted.

Simon considers his ex-partner to be a big influence on him linguistically and politically. His partner, though not Quebecois, was interested in Quebec nationalism and the sovereignty movement, prompting him to join an Anglophone pro-sovereignty organization. He even had a sign out front of his house that said, "Yes" to indicate his affiliation during the referendum. This prompted opponents of the referendum to vandalize his property, writing "Non" in magic marker all over the front door.

Simon stayed in Montreal for 9 years, working 7 of those in an antique shop and later doing building renovations before entering the museum field. He also worked for an architectural preservation organization, going through original documents dating back as far as Louis XIV. He found French to be a boon to his career over the years, being included in different projects and committees he would not necessarily have been

otherwise had he not had good French. During his time with the Canadian Museum Association, he acted as a resource person, fielding questions from museums and the general public in English and French. He worked for a variety of museums, but particularly enjoyed his time as Curator Director of a museum in southwestern Ontario because of its historical connection to New France and its old Francophone community.

He made it a point to have labels and texts connected to the exhibitions in both French and English, particularly in that city because of the historically French background of the area. These exhibitions led to several interviews with the CBC and Radio Canada since Radio Canada is always eager to interview people who can respond or provide sound bites in French whenever a new exhibition opened. He also made it a point to reach out to different Francophone organizations in the area and tried to hire assistant curators who were fluent in French. He found it difficult to find people who could offer the educational programs in French but made a more concerted effort to find French speakers, depending on the exhibition. For one of the permanent exhibits, he felt a sense of personal responsibility to offer programs in French to honour the contributions and sacrifices of Canadian Francophones during the war.

Simon is a member of several Meetup groups, and seeing the Pub group's description, decided to check out one of the conversation sessions. However, he was disappointed by the overall language level of the members who attended that day. He likes to be challenged and doubted the group could provide what he was looking for. Simon associates additional languages with music in that they both keep the brain active. He also enjoys the puzzle of languages. In German, for example, the verb comes at the end of the sentence, so one has to think ahead.

Simon noted that his French proficiency interferes with his attempts to learn other Romance languages, like Spanish and Italian – something he is becoming particularly mindful of as he gets older. He has noticed that his French is slowing down as time passes; following social conversations with Francophone friends has become more difficult than it had been in the past. However, he believes his fluency would return should he ever spend extended periods in France or Quebec again, though he considered

it unlikely that he would ever live in a Francophone area again. Simon feels comfortable in Quebec, stating he feels an affinity through familiarity because of the time he spent there.

He believes it is partly stubbornness that has allowed him to maintain his French. He used to maintain his French through different work environments or expectations, though he also drew inspiration from his father, who went to school in New Brunswick in what he considered a version of a French Immersion school (likely a Francophone school). Now he maintains it through personal inclination and effort, and through occasional trips back to Montreal to visit friends. Simon returns to the notion that building a strong foundation for additional languages pays off later in life as basic structures remain and vocabulary gradually comes back when in environments where that language is dominant. Though he lives in an Anglophone environment, he keeps lists in French, particularly for groceries. He also uses French terminology when cooking. In operating his Bed and Breakfast, he keeps track of guest information in French, as well. He also continues to listen to Radio Canada. Occasionally, he finds himself talking to himself in French rather than English. He notes that writing requires more thought than it used to. He also finds reading novels in French to be taxing now, so he has given that up.

Simon considers learning another language to be a liberating experience because it provides another means of expressing himself. He notes that he is a slightly different person when speaking in French. He becomes more animated in French. He also finds it easier to talk about love, friendship, and relationships in French than in English. He finds his interpersonal relationships tend to work better in French than in English. Simon feels he would likely be happier in Montreal than he is in Ontario, despite living in the same area for over 30 years. He finds people to be duller in Ontario than in Montreal and finds he would get more excited about meeting new people in Quebec than he does meeting them here. He believes the languages one speaks significantly affect who one is as a person, as it connects to culture and behaviour.

Simon remained a member of the online group, which is how he was advised of the study, and contacted me directly about participating. He remarked that he never

really considered going back, though he would likely do so if there were a group for gay men.

4.3.2 Three Interview Seniors

This section covers seniors who participated in the full three interview protocol. Each one was actively participating in conversation groups over the course of the study or had a history of participation in either the Pub or the Library settings in prior years. Their entries are subdivided into sections discussing their early education and exposure to French, their post-secondary experiences, and their conversation group experiences.

Table 4 - Three Interview Senior Summary

Participant	French as HL?	Raised in Quebec or Francophone area	Formal FSL Education	Lived in Quebec or Francophone area as an adult	Motivation for Maintaining FSL proficiency
Bruce	Yes (father)	Yes	Elementary Secondary University	Yes	Social, familial connection
Steve	No	Yes (until age 13)	Elementary Secondary University Continuing Ed.	No	Social, hobby (fun)
Wanda	No	Yes	Elementary Secondary Continuing Ed.	No	Social, hobby (fun)

Tony	No	Yes	Secondary Continuing Ed.	Yes (six months in France)	Social
Natasha	No	No	Elementary (gifted program) Secondary University	No	Social

4.3.2.1 Bruce

Early Education and Exposure to French

Originally from Montreal, Bruce is a retired CN worker who decided to relocate to Ontario with his wife. Initially, the couple moved to Belleville, but found it too small for their tastes, so they moved to a larger city in Southwestern Ontario. Though his paternal background is French, he tended to live in more English areas of Montreal. Bruce went to English schools, had English friends, and identifies as English. He speaks two languages, English and French, and has been living in a strictly Anglophone environment for 3 years. He is a consistent member of the Library group, but occasionally joins sessions with the Pub group.

Growing up, his parents sometimes spoke French to each other but spoke to him in English. Occasionally, his father would speak to him in French, but he would reply in English. Most of his exposure to French came from family gatherings with his father's side of the family where he would try to talk with aunts, uncles, and cousins.

At the age of 7-8 years old, Bruce's family moved to Shawinigan, Quebec where he found French to be more of a necessity. All his neighbours spoke the language and, in order to play with other kids, he needed to be able to speak French. He felt these

interactions with neighbourhood children helped raise his French level, though he still went to an English school.

When Bruce returned to Montreal in Grade 5-6, he found his French classes to be too grammar focused, concerning themselves with verb tenses and conjugations rather than French that he would use in daily life. He could not relate to the content or see how it was applicable to him as it was different from what was used in the schoolyard by the Francophone kids. That difference made the classes seem meaningless to him. Bruce thinks the attitudes of his peers may have rubbed off on him as this was a common sentiment among his classmates, with many of the students questioning why they had to learn the language.

Bruce recalled his French teachers lacking fluency, except for the Grade 8 teacher, who could speak the language. Considering he lived in Quebec, he felt he should have had bilingual teachers. He could accept French teachers being less fluent in Ontario or Alberta, but he expected better in Quebec. This trend continued in high school where he was taught by a Catholic brother who was not fluent in French. In later grades, Bruce had a French-speaking teacher who had difficulty controlling the class, but she stood out for him because she taught him the meaning of the word "chomage," which stuck with him until now.

After high school, he attended one of the larger and more prominent universities in Quebec, a predominantly English institution, and took a French course from an instructor from France. He wondered why they would teach Parisian standard French there rather than Quebec French. He felt that Quebec French was fine and should have been taught instead. He considered the differences between the two flavours of French to be similar to the difference in accents one hears between North American English and the English spoken in England with neither one being better than the other.

Post-Secondary Experiences

During his undergraduate years, Bruce made friends with people who spoke multiple languages, and this encouraged him to speak more French. However, his friends

found his French to be ‘awkward’ so they would tell him to speak English instead. This mirrors my own experiences in Montreal when I would socialize with a Francophone friend from my undergraduate years. My friend found it strange to hear me speaking French since he had met me in English and known me in that language.

During the Pierre Trudeau era, Bruce noticed how easily the Prime Minister could switch back and forth from English to French. He admired that because, at the time, there were very few politicians who could switch languages at will like he did. He was inspired by Trudeau and his command of the two languages and did not want to be one of those Anglophones who could not get by in French. He could not understand how people could live in a French environment and without learning the fundamentals of the language to survive.

Bruce considered a career as a teacher, even doing a practicum assignment at his former high school 6-7 years later. He noted that the attitude toward French had changed dramatically for the better. French class was considered a positive thing. He thinks the change of attitude could be attributed to the number of anglophones who left in the early 1970s. Those who stayed were more open to learning French. He also suggested there may have been some new teachers at the school who could speak French better than their predecessors. He felt that having an Anglophone teach French in Quebec set a negative tone for the classes and reinforced the idea that French was not important.

After graduation, Bruce taught in Manitoba and Saskatchewan for a little over a year before deciding that teaching was not for him. He found classroom management difficult and cited that as a factor for him deciding against a career in teaching. He came back to Montreal and got a job with CN Rail.

At the company, he was given a choice of three possible career paths and he chose Information Technology (IT). The IT field is predominantly English. For example, coding is done in English. Moreover, CN Rail was very English as a company because of its dealings around North America. They expanded offices into Chicago and New Orleans where English is the language of the majority. Industry terminology for railway cars was in English and, though they would be translated for Quebec, any communication

done with offices outside of the province would take place in English, including conference calls and emails. Although the Francophones in his department were all bilingual, he would force himself to speak to them in French.

Bruce's wife is an anglophone who speaks very little French, though she has no adverse feelings about the language. Although he wanted his children to learn French, Bruce chose to educate them in English due to what he perceived to be anti-Anglophone, anti-Canada, nationalistic perspectives in the French schools at the time. In addition, he wanted to be to easily communicate with his children's teachers. He believes his son, who works in an English hospital, can get by in French, but he is not sure how his daughter's French is now that she lives in Vancouver.

Despite being able to speak French, he does not consider himself bilingual. For him, he would need to be able to write and read without searching for vocabulary. In addition, fluency allows someone to transition back and forth from one language to the other easily, like one sees in Justin Trudeau. He puts a higher status on oral production than the ability to read and write in the language.

Conversation Groups

Bruce enjoys French because of its connection to his heritage and it is an aspect of his identity. He enjoys reading in French because he sees a different way of thinking about things than he finds in English. Bruce can function in French. For example, he can order food in restaurants, shop in stores, and do other daily tasks in French. He likes being able to go to museums and restaurants in French. He also enjoys watching films and being able to understand the dialogue. Bruce connects English and French together culturally but finds anglophones to be very reserved while the French have a different sort of expressiveness.

Bruce came across the mention of the Library group while in a local library one day. He noticed an ad for French conversations and decided it would be a good idea to start going. He enjoys going to the conversation groups now that he's retired, he has more time to pursue his interests. When his kids were growing up and he was working, he

had different responsibilities that pushed him in more Anglo-centric directions. He didn't feel like he had the energy to pursue French. Now that they're fully grown, he has more energy to pursue his interests.

When choosing activities, French became a motivator. Bruce wanted to meet people and seeing its connection to French made him more comfortable. He considered it a net positive as he could meet people, get out of the house, and maintain his French at the same time. He enjoys the small group dynamic and the energy of the group. The Quebecois couple that attends reminds him of his relatives. Bruce noted that there are some weaker French speakers there, but he likes that they put in the effort. He also likes that the group is all seniors, so they have common ground. Having Quebecois Francophones participate gives him a taste of his old life in Montreal. He can relate to their expressions and can identify with them.

When he first started going to the sessions, Bruce was going primarily for the opportunity to speak French with the social aspect a secondary reason. He likes the give and take involved in the conversations and the ethnic mix of the group. He believes it gives a different sort of dynamic than other groups might have. The rapport he has built with the members adds to his motivation to attend each session.

Reflecting on specific members of the group, Bruce believes certain members may have lost a bit of the language over the years, whereas the Quebecois couple still speaks very fluidly and automatically. Certain members are more helpful with his French than others, due to their proficiency. He wants people who are more advanced in the language than he is, so he has to push himself to speak it.

Bruce was not as affected by the change in moderators as some of the other members, but felt the dynamic was different afterward. However, it did not affect his participation as his reason for attending had not changed. He felt that each moderator was good in her own way. He liked that each one allowed the conversation to flow. Sometimes one seemed to have more of a structured agenda of topics, and he liked that she was taking notes to keep track of what was being discussed. He felt that was an indication she was interested in them and what they were saying. Sometimes one of the

moderators would come to the sessions with papers or topics to discuss, but the group would gradually take over and discuss whatever they wanted to, regardless of the moderator's intentions. He feels the new moderator is very interactive, sociable, and genuinely happy to be there.

Bruce observed that participation in the group dropped over the summer, but he attributed that more to the location change than anything else. There was a 3-week period where he had not attended because they were doing health-related presentations for the group, but the presentations were mainly in English. There was a translator present for those who did not speak English, but he disliked it because it interfered with his French speaking time. He goes to the sessions to speak French, not English.

Bruce acknowledged that having less exposure to French now that he lives in Ontario prompts him to go to the Library sessions. He feels that hearing French helps him maintain his French. He compared it to going to the grocery store in Montreal in that, at least he would speak some French. Now that he is retired, he hears less French on a daily basis and maintaining it requires effort because it is not part of his everyday environment anymore. He noted that hearing French spoken around town is a rarity and little things, like hearing the self-checkout machine speak in French at the grocery store, are a novelty here.

Additional Thoughts

Outside of the Library sessions, Bruce occasionally listens to a jazz show on Radio Canada, buys French newspapers or reads French books. He started reading French books because he wanted to maintain his French and for the challenge. He found himself immersed in the books, not having to look up every few words, particularly if it was written about an area of interest. With newspapers, there are words he does not understand, but he usually understands the gist of the articles. He's also travelled to France with his wife in the past. He likes history, particularly the war memoirs of Charles de Gaulle and biographies of Pierre Trudeau.

Sometimes Bruce feels guilty about his level of proficiency in French, particularly since his father was Francophone. He wonders what life would have been like had his parents decided to send him to a French school instead of an English one. Despite these feelings, he still sent his kids to school in English. He does not dwell on the push and pull of his identity but thinks it would be nice to snap his fingers and become fluent in French. Bruce felt more concerned about it when he was younger. When he went to Manitoba to teach, he wondered if he should go by his baptismal name but decided not to because he thinks his name sounds odd when anglophones say it.

Bruce felt that his French proficiency had remained roughly the same as it was when he was living in Montreal. He had visited Montreal recently for the Jazzfest and was able to communicate without difficulty. He acknowledged that the move away from Montreal had probably hurt his fluency.

Bruce recalled enjoying a 90th birthday party he attended for a Francophone relative several years ago, but when he was invited to the 95th birthday, he ignored the invitation because he did not want to go. When he went to the party, Bruce found himself repeatedly asked questions like, does his wife speaks French? Does he speak French? Why does he not speak more French? Why did he move? He did not want to deal with the constant questioning.

Bruce encounters a lot of nationalistic attitudes at family gatherings and did not feel like dealing with questions about why he left Quebec for an anglophone province. He disclosed that he and his wife moved because they had grown tired of the constant English/French nationalism debates in Quebec. He felt there are times others make him guilty for speaking English. There are also services like medical, financial, or income tax that he prefers to have in English but finding those can be difficult in Quebec. Bruce also said that each provincial election in Quebec brings with it a tension and uncertainty about what will happen. Will another PQ election bring on another referendum? Ontario does not have the same sort of tension and he likes that, so he doubts he would ever move back.

Bruce read a book in French recently – a memoir, written in diary format, of a Prisoner of war (POW) in Japan who was a friend of his father. When he chooses to read something in French, he tries to find something that will be interesting to him to stave off boredom. He found reading the book to be an emotional experience because his father was mentioned and because the subject matter (POW camps). He plans to read other things in French, like books and newspapers. He felt a sense of accomplishment having read the book in French.

Bruce feels it is important to know another language. It expands your perspective, especially when traveling. Being able to speak French in France, to understand restaurant menus, watch a film, or understand conversations around him broadened his horizons. He enjoys speaking French, except when dealing with income tax or health concerns. French has allowed him to meet new people and make friends in a new city where he knew no one. He reiterated that he didn't want to lose his grasp of the language.

4.3.2.2 Steve

Early Education and Exposure to French

He was born in Quebec and lived there until the age of 13 when his family relocated to Ontario. Most of his adult life has been spent in the same city in Southwestern Ontario. However, he returns to Montreal yearly and expressed an interest in Quebecois culture and Montreal, in particular. He was a longstanding member of the Pub group dating back to the early days of the group, though his attendance had lapsed by the time the study had started. He contacted me by e-mail to participate.

He grew up in the quartier of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG), a more working-class area of Montreal, that bordered on Westmount. Both areas were very Anglophone, though Westmount was considered a higher economic class area than NDG. There were French speakers in NDG, but not many, and the few times he did interact with French children, playing pickup football or something similar, the games were always run in English as the Francophone kids knew enough of the language to get by.

Steve recalled meeting a new kid who spent 3-4 years in French school and he was amazed that the kid was perfectly bilingual at the age of ten. The child had two sets of friends and command of two languages, which Steve thought was fantastic. He believes this is what prompted him to suggest to his parents that his younger brother be sent to French school. However, his parents, while not prejudiced or biased against the French, were not ready to take that step.

The Montreal he grew up in was very Anglo-centric. He was aware of some tensions between the English and French speaking populations in Montreal, describing it as a low-level rivalry between the groups. At the time, the corporate bosses and managers were all English, while members of the working class were all Francophone. His family would have been part of the managerial class, so it never occurred to him to learn French as a language of play or work. Even hockey, a family passion, was watched in English. Some family members might watch the occasional French broadcast, but they never really learned the language. Any social interactions between the children always took place in English.

He recalled beginning French in grade 4 with very simplistic French along the lines of "John and Mary went to school." He felt the teachers were not teaching with any eye to the students using the language in conversation. The teaching approach was very teacher-centric, consisting of rote memorization with very limited interactions, similar to how multiplication tables were taught at the time. In fact, he did not recall ever having conversations in French with classmates. The program was not constructed that way.

He compared French classes in Montreal at that time to German or Spanish classes in that they were just meant as an introduction to the language. He thinks Francophones would have had an English equivalent but noted that most Francophones in Montreal would probably have been fairly bilingual. However, he doubted that bilingualism extended too far outside of Montreal.

His exposure to the French language was generally limited to customer service people he might run across in day-to-day life as he never really played with the French kids. However, he recalled times when he and his sister cut across the French schoolyard,

repeating the simple sentences they had learned, pretending to be French. He moved to Ontario at the end of grade 7 with very minimal French proficiency, being unable to really speak or read it.

He went to high school at a Catholic junior seminary run by Dutch priests that came over after the Second World War. He commuted to school in grade 9, but during his last 3 years he lived in the boarding school portion of the school. He chose to take French classes throughout high school, though he had never considered using it in a career sense. Like his elementary school classes, the high school program was not geared toward communicating in the language. Class time was spent memorizing tenses and grammar constructions. Since there was no French TV or radio in the area at that time, he had no additional opportunity to hear authentic French spoken by Francophones. He would have liked to have heard French songs to help him add to his vocabulary.

Post-secondary Experiences

After high school, he studied at the University of Ottawa, a bilingual institution. He found the setup of the university to be very strange in that the institution was run in a dual stream French-English format with seemingly no thought or incentive to bring French and English students together. He questioned whether the professors in either stream spoke to one another. There was nothing stopping a French student from taking English courses or vice versa, but he could not recall ever speaking to anyone French. He considered it crazy that there could be a class in the next room taking the Francophone equivalent of the same course as him, but never interacting with them. He compared the relationship to boys and girls at a school dance without knowing how to talk to one another.

On the advice of a friend, he took a course in French literature, rather than a grammar course. The friend had told him the literature course was more concerned with communicating ideas than with grammar. He felt that, while grammar is important, communicating ideas is more important. Students submitted written assignments and completed tests consisting of short essay questions, and though oral communication was not a focus, he felt the course was designed to push students to use the language and to

convey meaning. He drew a comparison to immigrants who have been living in Canada for decades and can be understood despite terrible grammar. He believes the message is more important than how grammatically correct something is.

He did not feel proficient in French after leaving university, but over the course of 10-20 years of going back to Quebec to visit, he fell into a pattern of becoming interested in French. In the 1990s, a local Francophone college opened a satellite campus in the city where he lived and began offering courses right near his workplace. He noticed it one day over lunch and decided to enroll in a course. There were 9 levels in their program, including additional conversation classes, and he progressed through starting at the Intermediate level, taking a new course each term until he completed it.

It was around this time that his office became a designated place for French services, so he and a couple of coworkers volunteered to handle incoming French calls. However, he lacked confidence in his French and would let the calls go to voicemail, so he could listen to messages over and over. Most of the times, he received wrong numbers. Eventually, the office hired Francophones to field calls.

Going through the levels, he found that most of his classmates were younger than him and were adding French to help with career advancement. Some were even being subsidized by their employers. One of his classmates, for example, was frontline call center support for a local company. By contrast, he saw the courses as a pastime and an enjoyable way to spend one evening per week. He found them interesting, challenging, and fun, all aspects of Stebbins' (2007) self-gratification personal reward. He also received a discounted tuition rate per course as a senior, which served as an incentive to continue in the program.

The early courses were very academic, using textbooks and a heavy grammar focus, but there were opportunities for group work and interaction. In addition, there were conversation courses offered separately from the nine level main program courses. There were no additional assessments done between the intermediate and advanced levels to see if students had reached an appropriate level of competence. He compared it to grade school where students just pass from one grade to the next.

Overall, he felt the courses at the college were fantastic, but their conversation group was run poorly. To him, a good facilitator is one who talks as little as possible during the sessions, but the college group had facilitators who seemed to feel pressured to continually talk rather than pass the opportunity on to the group. He preferred facilitators who could encourage spontaneous interactions over ones who would use the time as an extra tutorial session.

He continued taking Continuing Education courses in French through a local university. During one of these courses, he struck up a friendship with one of his classmates. They had been studying together throughout the course, having connected by being among the oldest in the class, and exchanged email addresses. Shortly after the course ended, she was applying for a French position and she asked him if he would help her prepare for the interview. The relationship built from there. She moved to Oakville, but the two remain in weekly contact, making time to converse in French.

He considers himself fluent in speaking “bad French.” He started making return trips to Montreal in the early 1970s, but it was the late 1990s when he started going back every summer, staying for longer and longer durations. Now he spends 6 weeks every year in Montreal, Quebec, and Ottawa and can function well without feeling stressed by the interactions. He feels that, if he were 10-15 years younger, he could apply for a job in French, and work in French. He acknowledges he would face a steep learning curve if he were to work in French, but he feels it would be similar to challenges faced by immigrants who are English language learners.

He also noted that service people in Quebec often switch to English when they hear his French. However, he recalled interacting with Marc Garneau at an event in the neighbourhood where he grew up. He had an ongoing conversation with Garneau for 10-15 minutes in French and he felt it was very respectful of Garneau to do so, despite the mistakes he was likely making. Interactions like this that contribute to the feeling he can speak fluently when needed.

Conversation Groups and Additional Thoughts

He began attending sessions of the Pub group in January of 2013, shortly after the group started meeting. He enjoyed the diversity of people, noting people from a variety of Francophone areas of the world were attending the sessions. Attendance was good, with anywhere from 10-20 people coming out regularly. However, as the number of people increased, he found it more difficult to keep up with the conversations. At a certain point, he stopped going to sessions, initially claiming there was too much noise. In later interviews, he admitted it had more to do with shyness and being unsure how to fit in with such a large group, but the sessions remain on his weekly agenda.

He can read and write in French and has taken to reading Quebecois novels, especially those that focus on the late 1870s and early 1900s. He sees French as a regular daily hobby, not dissimilar to collecting stamps or other leisure activities. He enjoys being able to read through French books without having to rely too heavily on dictionaries and feels a sense of accomplishment when he does so. He would be interested in joining a book club or something more focused on a specific topic. He finds that more motivating than people just getting together to have casual conversation.

He makes an active effort to take notes as he reads, believing it helps with his comprehension and his writing. For example, he read Victor Hugo's (1861) *Last Day of a Condemned Man* and was amazed he could read the whole book. He had thought it would be like reading Shakespeare but found it very open and accessible. He started making notes because he felt it would be more constructive than just reading it. In addition to summaries, he also keeps a list of new vocabulary words. However, if he finds he is relying too heavily on the dictionary, he chooses another book.

He considers himself an immigrant to Ontario and thinks most immigrants would feel similarly to how he does. He still feels a connection to Quebec and Montreal and identifies as being from there, despite having lived most of his life in Ontario. He would jokingly say he was kidnapped at the age of 13 and brought to Southwestern Ontario.

He regrets not learning French as a child in Montreal, feeling he missed out on a great life opportunity, but acknowledges a certain lack of control over his education as a child. He went to school where he was told to by his parents and never gave it additional

thought at the time. He described feeling guilty about his French when recalling an event commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City. He met a Quebecois woman who, when she learned he was originally from Montreal, remarked that he should be ashamed of himself for his level of French.

He remarked that, while his early motivations for learning French may have been tied to nostalgia or exploring roads not taken, he felt that gaining fluency and proficiency became self-satisfying. It's become something he enjoys. He finds using French to be an enriching experience. For example, he has discovered books and films he never would have otherwise had he not learned the language. He feels it has had less of an impact on his life than it would have had he started 20-30 years ago, but he enjoys pushing himself at his own pace to do things in French. He realizes how much he's missed out on over the years because he could not understand or speak French, so why not pursue it now?

Steve sees his independent French study as a hobby, comparing it at one point to collecting stamps. It is just something he enjoys. He and Wanda, discussed the next section, openly asked why there had to be additional reasons or meaning behind what they did, wondering why it could not just be for fun. This perspective falls in line with Stebbins' (2007) personal reward of self-gratification once again.

4.3.2.3 Wanda

Early Education and Exposure to French

Wanda is originally from an English-speaking area of Montreal but has lived in Southwestern Ontario for quite a while. She is extremely active in French conversation groups, regularly attending sessions for three conversation groups, including the Library group and another seniors' group run out of a community centre, while occasionally joining the Pub group if the mood strikes her. I recruited her to participate when I visited the Library group for the first time, but she was already aware of the study through the e-mail mailing list for the Pub group.

She describes herself as being able to speak one and a half languages, English and French, but she lacks confidence in her French. For example, she would not be

comfortable checking off “bilingual” on census forms. However, she acknowledged that she is very critical of herself. She’s envious of how others are able to speak and uses it as inspiration to improve.

She was born in Quebec but was raised speaking English. She had French family members, like her grandmother who was half-French, but only two of her cousins were raised as bilingual while the rest were raised Anglophone. Her earliest memories of French come from visiting her grandmother. Her grandmother, who lived in Three Rivers with two older unmarried aunts, spoke French whenever she wanted to have a private conversation when there were children around. At the time, Three Rivers was far more English than French.

She heard French all around her but was never encouraged to learn it. In the 1950s and 1960s, Montreal was an English city, even though many Francophones lived there. The language of business was English. There was also a large English-speaking Jewish community that owned many of the stores and small businesses. However, when her family moved to the South Shore area near Montreal, the dominant language varied from one town to another. For example, her town was predominantly English, but the next town over was mainly French. Now the whole area is French-dominant. Because the populations had segregated themselves, there wasn’t a need to learn the other language.

In school, they learned Parisian rather than Quebecois French, beginning in Grade 3. They would practise verbs in a rote memorization fashion that she uses to this day. For example, if she were searching for a specific pronoun, like *nous*, she would mentally run through the list of pronouns she had memorized in the order she had memorized them until she got to *nous*. Later grades just reinforced the content they had learned in previous years, rather than encouraging further language development. She took French in high school because it was mandatory in Quebec but could not speak it at the end.

She left Quebec as an adult, moving to Southwestern Ontario. Over the years, she began taking French classes from time to time because she felt she might need the language if she ever moved back to Montreal. She never ended up moving back, but over

the years she has continued to try to improve her French. However, she only started taking it more seriously about eight years ago.

Post-secondary Experiences

She found herself thinking about different words in French. For example, she would wonder where her keys were and think of the word for key in French, 'clé'. To try and get French out of her system, she bought a *French for Beginners* book, thinking she would learn a few French words each night and that would be the end of it. However, she ended up registering for a year long course at the local community college. She continued taking courses until they stopped subsidizing the fees for seniors, but when that resumed, she decided to take a DELF preparation course.

She had no plans to take the DELF exam but bought the books for up to the C2 level as she enjoys the challenge of the C-level books, despite having to look up words in dictionaries. She listens to the materials and does the exercises on her own time with no pressure to finish them. She uses the exercises as a means of finding expressions to use in conversation. By working her way through each level, she is forced to work within a framework, where before she wasn't as focused.

In her courses, she commented that there was always a lot of writing exercises involved, which she disliked. She doesn't feel she learns much through cloze exercises, finding it confusing to have chunks of information missing. She prefers complete sentences that she can dissect.

She prefers reading, often buying books at a used bookstore that has a French section, so she can underline sections she wants to analyse, often writing notes in English to help her comprehension. She had started concentrating on the subjunctive mood, underlining examples and asking herself why it works the way it does. She is constantly updating her goals. At the time of the first interview, it was to put together 2-3 sentences at a time without making major grammar mistakes. In subsequent interviews, she was focused on mastering the subjunctive mood. To her, being fluent means being able to speak in coherent sentences, consistently using grammatically correct forms.

She found her most recent college courses to be very stressful and too academically focused. She found the instructor difficult and demanding, and the homework to be very intensive. She felt she always had something to finish. After her experiences, she decided she would rather learn French on her own time and on her own schedule. She wanted to speak conversational French, not worry about tests or exams.

She also bought a book of French-English expressions to help her understand different constructions. She worries that she will get lost during conversations because of a particular expression or phrase and then, while she tries to understand piece together the meaning, the conversation will continue, and she will be even more lost.

She is disappointed in the progress she has made over the past 8 years. She can read and understand the language, but is self-conscious about how she speaks, getting caught up worrying about verb tenses and pronunciation. This anxiety stems from an interaction she had with a university professor from the Continuing Education faculty where she was singled out for poor pronunciation. After the experience, she never participated in class again and still self-censors occasionally when she attends different conversation groups. This is evidence of a negative L2 Experience (Dörnyei, 2009); however, she demonstrates perseverance by continuing to pursue French even after the humiliating incident.

She consistently listens to Radio Canada and seeks out French news videos on Youtube, but finds her comprehension varies, depending on her interest in the subject matter. She's also noticed she has difficulty understanding different accents. She used to have difficulty distinguishing between where words begin and end, but she persisted, and her comprehension improved. Note that perseverance is one of the qualities Stebbins (2007) mentions when defining Serious Leisure pursuits. She can get thrown off track by unfamiliar words. She gets fixated on them and loses track of the conversation.

She reads every day, choosing "Chick Lit" like the *Shopaholic* series because of its focus on conversation rather than being overly descriptive. She likes that she can use the expressions she reads in her own conversations. Over the course of the study, she

moved on to translated versions of Danielle Steel novels. After she reads something, she goes over it in her mind and repeats it.

She also picks up *Action*, the Francophone newspaper, every week and reads the articles. She used to read articles about psychology and philosophy, thinking she would understand them better since she has a background in those subjects already, but she found herself getting bored. She felt that she was limiting herself by sticking to topics she already knew well. Whenever she receives mail from the government, she tries to read the French first before looking at the English.

Conversation Groups

She started going to the Pub group while she was going through the college program. One of her instructors had mentioned it, so she and some of her classmates decided to go. She was one of the first to join the group and had recently run into the group's first organizer who prompted her to check things out again. She had been more active in the group during its first couple of years but disliked that the Meetup website tracked people's participation and listed groups on people's profiles. She noted that people's participation varied, depending on the time of the year and the weather. She found that, when she went, there were a lot of teachers attending to improve their French and improve career prospects.

She enjoyed attending the Pub sessions more when the group was smaller. She often spent her time listening rather than actively contributing to the conversations. As it got bigger, people tended to break off into their own little cliques. For her, it would be better in a group of 8 people so that everyone could still talk to one another. She still goes occasionally, but feels insecure about her level of French, which has also impacted her interest in going to the sessions. However, she knows the sessions were helping improve her French. This is evidence of Stebbins' (2007) self-actualization in progress. She felt that the group helped in that she worried less about whether she was using the correct tenses or vocabulary, but she still holds on to residual aspects of the school system in which she was raised where it was very authoritarian and shaming someone publicly for errors was common.

She enjoys conversation groups because they provide the opportunity to socialize with people she might not otherwise meet. For example, she's met people from Belgium, Lebanon and Morocco. Most of her other activities are done with white women, which she finds less interesting than activities where she interacts with people from other countries. This is an example of Stebbins' (2007) self-actualization personal reward because she feels that is broadens her perspectives. It could also be an example of the social attraction reward.

In addition to the Pub group, she was also a member of the Library group and an additional group for seniors run out of a community centre. She also got together with a group of women on a monthly basis to speak French. They would usually go to a coffee shop and would have conversations consisting of mainly small talk. The senior group, by contrast, tries to have a weekly topic or theme that is open enough that newcomers could easily join in.

In the first interview, she was critical of the style the Library moderator had, commenting that she found the sessions to be a bit too freeform in structure, which she felt prompted some people to leave the group. Conversations tended to devolve into essentially two-person interactions between the moderator and one other person, rather than including the whole group. She preferred a round table format, provided the group is small enough and everyone gets a chance to contribute. She likes having a certain amount of direction and guided moderation, but with enough freedom to allow the conversation to flow.

She feels that round table discussions can be flawed in that she could be preparing to add something to the discussion, but by the time she gets an opportunity, the conversation may have moved on and her point is no longer relevant. She recalled one instructor who she felt was very good at managing discussions. He would make it a point to include people who he felt had not said much, asking if they had something they wanted to contribute.

Between interviews, she joined the more heavily Francophone group run by the same organization as the Library group. The Library group was originally intended for

Francophone seniors, but it had been co-opted by Anglophones and Allophones who spoke French. This new group was made up of people from Northern Ontario, Quebec, and a few African countries. She felt it made a difference having people whose first language is French there, rather than English speakers trying to speak French. She was able to follow the conversations and contribute to the discussions to a certain extent but was happy as long as she understood the gist of the conversation.

At the groups, she speaks when she has something relevant to say. She remarked that some people talk more than others in any given group, but she tends to stick to the point when she speaks. She needs to talk about something, rather than just talking for the sake of talking. She said two things during the session that day and was happy she contributed. Generally, she just attends the Francophone group to listen, and she feels happy if she can follow the conversation. She remarked that spontaneous questions from the moderator or other group members can throw her off. She speaks more during the Library group sessions, but even there, she only talks if she has something relevant to say.

The Library group had recently lost their moderator, which upset some of the group members who were fond of her. She saw it as just another change in life and it was time to move on. Now that the sessions had moved to the summer location, there were 5-6 regulars who were attending. She attributed the decline in group numbers partially to the summertime and partly to the change in moderator. She took a very business-minded attitude toward the change. Her loyalties were tied to the people who were still attending, rather than the people who had left.

She found that a clique had formed within the Library group. One member, in particular, would dominate the conversation and leave the others just sitting there listening. She felt that the old moderator should have found ways to include more people in conversations, rather than allow one or two people to dominate it. She found another of the moderators to be too structured, and the other too be too free form.

She likes the new moderator. She knew her from another group that she's attended several years before. She said the new moderator leaves things very open and

allows conversations to flow. For example, during one session, the group learned that one of its members had taken quite ill and was dying, so the moderator let the group spend time discussing that instead of any other prepared topics.

Her participation in the group is not tied specifically to anyone else's participation. She agreed that it is easier if people she knows are there because she feels more welcome. However, she felt that it would be difficult to go back to a group if she were given the cold shoulder. She chooses to go to the conversation groups to meet a wider variety of people. This would be part of Stebbins' (2007) social attraction personal reward. She accepts that the social aspect of the groups could be one of the bigger drivers for her, without realizing it. She likes meeting a wider variety of people but finds that the Pub group is the only place she meets anyone new now. Attendance at the other groups has remained pretty consistent and unchanging. She is a member of a women's club and she finds everyone to be very similar: same background, same interests. She felt like it was something out of the 1950s. She also finds the women associated with these clubs to be very cliquey. While she won't be dissuaded from going to conversation groups because of certain people, there are people who motivate her to go because she enjoys listening to them speak.

Additional Thoughts

She is considering putting together a French book club. She would like to be able to focus on a particular book, discuss it, incorporate the vocabulary, and use it until they know how to use it in a sentence. She recalled meeting a man at one of the Pub sessions who was taking an intensive course through the college and she wondered if she should set aside a certain amount of money to hire a tutor and really focus on improving. She wants to build a more substantial vocabulary.

She tried reading literary works, like translations of *The Grapes of Wrath* (Steinbeck, 2006), but she found that the French was similar to the English version in that it's imperfect/incorrect. She wants proper, correct French. She considers the Danielle Steel books to be more relevant to her life and what's going on in current society. It has

also helped her learn new expressions she had not seen before. She likes the prospect of reading a chapter in a book and discussing it afterwards.

There are times she wanted to quit, but she gets over it. If she gets tired of reading fiction, she will pick up her book of expressions and go through that. She cycles herself through reading, going over expressions, and doing DELF listening exercises. She doesn't want to do the exercises themselves as she finds them boring, but she likes listening to the recordings. She is not concerned with supporting arguments or putting sentences in the correct order. She just wants conversation. She wants the chance to just speak French. She has no interest in learning to write French. She feels that her reading is sufficient because every time she reads something, she's indirectly learning about writing.

She feels she has invested so much time into it now that she sees no point in stopping. She compared it to when the stock market crashed a number of years ago. She rides out the tough times. She believes that, even going at her own slow pace, she'll still be farther ahead in 6 months than she would have been otherwise. She admits to a degree of nostalgia when she started studying French, but that's gone now. She sees it as an investment in herself. She knows that if she drops it now, she'll never get past her current level, but if she keeps grinding it out, she'll improve.

She wants to get past her speaking issues and is seriously considering doing some sort of short-term immersion program in Trois-Pistoles or Trois-Rivieres. She has a family connection to Trois-Rivieres, since that's where her grandmother lived. Although it's changed, there are still historical sites she can visit, as well as her grandmother's grave, so that's appealing to her.

She is not sure why she is doing it, though she has read articles about how learning another language can be good for brain health as one gets older. She had also taken up juggling for similar reasons. She also started drawing and sketching with her non-dominant hand because she'd heard it was good for the brain. She feels that learning a language must be fun, but also takes time and perseverance. There were many times she thought it would be easier to quit but she is quite invested in improving her French. She

said she’s a different person in French than in English. She is more introverted in French and extroverted in English.

She suggests that she might need some structure in her life, but freedom within that structure. She wants to have the freedom to pursue her own interests at a pace she is comfortable with. If she does not feel like doing something that day, she does not have to, and that appeals to her. She has no interest in volunteering because she feels like that’s the same as having a paying job. She would consider volunteering with a French family, but there aren’t many of those in London.

She does not feel that French has impacted her life because she still lives her life in English. It is just something she is doing for personal interest. She is in competition with herself. Now that she is retired, she has time to enjoy more of the city and what it has to offer. She questions why there has to be a reason for what she is doing. She suggests she could just do it because she enjoys it and enjoys hearing new things in a different way. Like Steve, her French pursuit is an enjoyable pastime, which would be described by Stebbins (2007) as part of the self-gratification reward.

4.3.2.4 Tony

Early Education and Exposure to French

Tony’s family immigrated from England to Quebec, but he has lived in Southwestern Ontario for many years, having worked for one of the dioceses in Southwestern Ontario. He was an occasional member of the Library group and made sporadic appearances at the Pub group sessions, but also organizes and leads his own French conversation group through a community centre. I met him during one of the Pub sessions, but Wanda was the one who really encouraged him to participate in the study.

He moved to Canada at the age of 9 and spent his first 11 years in different cities and towns in Quebec before finally settling in Montreal on the West Island. He was educated in the English school boards and took French as a subject in school. However, he truly began to speak French at the age of 20 when he traveled and worked in France for several months. Living in that environment, he had no choice but to speak French.

Several years later, he returned to France to work at the same place and felt his French was developed enough that he was motivated to maintain it. He's lived in southwestern Ontario for a long period of time without an opportunity to speak French.

Tony took several courses through a local community college, and since retiring, has been coordinating a conversation group for seniors through a local senior centre. He had attended a few sessions of the Library group before deciding to start his own. He learned about the Pub group sessions through Wanda, who is also a member of the group he coordinates.

He speaks English and French and studied Greek and Latin in school. He began studying Latin in high school and Greek while in the seminary but has since lost his proficiency in both languages.

Tony's first encounter with another language came after he first immigrated to Quebec. When he lived in St-Jear-sur-Richelieu, they lived in an area he called an English ghetto. He also attended an English Catholic church and school, so his interactions with anyone who was primarily Francophone were limited to a neighbour living downstairs from the family. He was mainly interacting with English people in school and through church over the four years they lived in St-Jean.

His life followed a similar pattern when the family moved to the West Island: he went to English school and attended an English Catholic church. He believes it would never have occurred to his mother to enroll the children in French schools. Tony feels a sense of regret at having been afraid and suspicious of the Francophone community when he lived in St-Jean. He believes his mother should have put him and his siblings into French school, but felt it never occurred to her to do so. His fear of the unknown, represented by the Francophone community gradually diminished and he became more interest and open to their culture. Though there was minimal interaction with the Francophone community, there was a baseball diamond down the street where he went a few times to watch people play softball. He recalls the players calling out to each other in French. He also recalls picking up some of the Quebecois curse words. Tony thinks his lack of interaction was driven by fear of getting into a fight with Francophones, due to

the politics of the time (See C. Taylor, 1993). For example, there were rivalries between English and French, as well as Catholics and Protestants.

The first time he took French as a course was in high school. He learned grammar, which was helpful for his Latin course, as well. However, his courses lacked a speaking focus. He improved his oral proficiency through traveling and working in France. He feels that the foundation he received through his high school studies in French and Latin served him well, particularly when he studied New Testament Greek because of his exposure to grammar concepts. He traces his interest in French to different times in his life when he felt awakened somehow. His interest evolved over time. As a teenager, French was a course that no one wanted to take, but it was required. His life in Quebec was isolated from the French community. The French were viewed as almost enemies with his only interactions being fights and since he was not a fighter, he was afraid of being singled out. In his later teens in Montreal, he made it a point of listening to Quebecois music and going to restaurants to get a bit more exposure to Quebecois culture.

Post-secondary Experiences

When he turned 20, his father was transferred to Guelph because of work. He worked a job picking tobacco to save for his trip overseas. The move occurred during a time of social unrest in Quebec, just after Expo 67 and the Quebec Libre speech by Charles de Gaulle[11]. He noted that a number of companies relocated out of Montreal because of the uncertainty around the politics of the province.

He decided to travel to France for six months after his older brother had spent some time in Scotland exploring their mother's roots. He felt something in his heart that drew him to France. Though his family had toured Europe for his father's work, he

---

[11] On July 24, 1967, French President Charles de Gaulle made a speech while standing on the balcony of the Montreal City Hall. During the speech, he indicated his support for Quebec sovereignty by exclaiming, "Vive le Québec libre!" This gesture of support contributed to the growth of the sovereignty movement in Quebec and heightened tensions between Anglophones and Francophones in the province (Woods, 2017).

didn't feel that was a major factor in his desire to travel there. He suggested that he wanted to do something different from his brother.

During his first visit to France, he traveled to the l'Arche community[12], to the northeast of Paris. He gravitated to the other English-speakers in the group, but after three weeks, he was sent to Cognac to work with another small group. There were no English speakers nearby, so he was forced to learn to communicate, and made his best progress with the language. He interacted with French people who were sympathetic to his language plight and spoke very clearly and patiently with him as he learned to speak the language. He felt that working with mentally handicapped adults also helped because they would speak in a far simpler form of French. After his first six-month stint, he felt he was proficient enough to survive on the streets of France, if necessary. He continued working with the organization in Canada and then spent a couple of years in India before returning to France for another six months.

Tony mentioned that, as part of his job in the mid-1980s, he edited a newspaper for the diocese. During his time, he introduced a French section, feeling that the Franco-Ontarian population is often forgotten or ignored. They produced five issues per year, and he made it a point of reading through the French sections each time because he felt it was important, as the overall editor to keep up with the content.

Tony began taking courses through a local college around the year 2000, partly for professional reasons as he found that his job description continued to evolve. He decided to take courses at the local college because he felt it would be an advantage in his career at that point. The tasks that he undertook required a certain level of familiarity and fluency in French. For example, he had acted a spokesman for the diocese when dealing with French language media. In addition to it being useful for his job, he also felt an

---

[12] The L'Arche community was founded on August 4, 1964 by Canadian Jean Vanier in France as a community home for men with intellectual disabilities. It has since grown as an international organization to include 149 communities and 14 projects in 37 countries around the world (L'Arche Canada, n.d.).

affinity for the language and culture, so that added to his desire to pursue French studies. Since his oral proficiency was a bit spotty, he decided to explore the college courses.

Tony took a written placement test that determined he should start midway through the program. The courses were a mix of oral interactions, reading, and writing. His first instructor spoke to the group entirely in French, engaging them in conversations, as well as reviewing the written homework material he had assigned. There was mainly student to instructor interactions, though there was a bit of student to student interactions. The instructor would lead the class through homework or review and then prompt conversations. In later courses, students would spontaneously interact with one another in French.

He was not very happy with the program because the college seemed to continue to pass people through the program, even if their French was not very good. The students in the class varied in terms of speaking ability. Some, he felt, were quite fluent, while others struggled to communicate. The courses, themselves, were academically focused. Students were encouraged to speak, but there were also elements of grammar and structure, and vocabulary that one would expect in a language course.

There was a textbook for the course, and he recalled a mix of reading, writing, listening, and speaking being taught. The ads for the program promoted improving one's French. It was the notion of improving that drew him to enroll. Tony described the course as being more akin to an interest/leisure course than one going toward an academic certification.

He continued through the program until there were no more courses available to him. The instructors may have emphasized interaction more in the final courses, but for the most part they just followed the textbooks. Tony reiterated his disappointment that people seemed to be passed form one course to the next, regardless of proficiency. Classes moved along the program as a cohort, so Class 8 became Class 9. By the end, it was essentially the same group that had gone through a number of courses together, so while there was familiarity with classmates, the relationships he formed in class did not affect his motivation to continue from one course to the next.

Conversation Groups

When he found the flyer for the Library group, Tony had already retired and so did not have any professional stakes in maintaining his French level. At this point, it was interest. He liked the Library group, but never stayed for the full sessions. His decision to start his own group was a practical one. He travels by bicycle, which makes it difficult to attend the Library sessions, particularly as it got closer to winter.

Tony publicized the group through his seniors' group monthly publication and people began attending. He has experience leading discussion groups, so he didn't find it too onerous to organize this one. His biggest fear in facilitating the group is that no one will say anything, so he makes extra efforts to keep conversation flowing. The members of the group have a wide range of experiences and education levels, which contributes to the group discussions. Some group members are very fluent members while others struggle to express themselves, but they are trying to improve their French.

When the group initially began, it was meant to be very freeform and unstructured. Group members would sit around and have conversations on a range of topics. However, some members wanted more structure, so they began choosing a weekly topic. Tony prefers conversations to be freer flowing and spontaneous, rather than determined by a weekly topic, but he accommodates the needs and interests of the membership.

The group is organized by 3 people, including himself. He doesn't know if he would continue running the group of the other 2 decided to leave. He also doesn't know if the group would carry on without him. Typically, there are 6-8 people who attend the Thursday sessions, depending on the time of year. He worries about whether people will find it interesting or if they'll withdraw. When people do, he wonders if it's something he's doing wrong or something he's not doing.

Tony chooses discussion topics by surfing different websites, like Radio Canada, or by making connections to life events that members could relate to, like the 50th anniversary of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely-Hearts Club* album, but group members still have the

freedom to let conversations flow however they want. He runs his group in a very informal manner. He does not have any goals for membership level or participation. The language level in his group is quite mixed. There are some who are very fluent, and others who struggle to put together sentences. He mentioned one woman whose pronunciation is awful, but she's enthusiastic and willing to participate, which is something they hope they'll find in group members. Another group member whose French level is rather low is quite outgoing and extroverted, so she jumps in and participates, as well.

He continues to run the e-mail correspondence for the group. He sends out conversation prompts for the next session. He has had difficulty trying to identify topics from one week to the next. He would be fine with people just showing up and talking, but there are some group members that prefer having a topic identified ahead of time so they can look at relevant vocabulary. One topic they had looked at was horoscopes. However, he found that assembling the info was too much for him.

Tony has not noticed a difference in the engagement of his group during the sessions where topics have been prepared ahead of time and when conversation is freeform. However, some topics have been better received than others. Topics that everyone can relate to tend to be more popular. For example, food-related discussions are popular, like the different ways people prepare Christmas dishes. He wants to be sure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute if they want to. If someone is too shy to speak up immediately, that is fine, too.

Tony did not place any significance on the relationships he has built through the group in terms of motivation to keep it going. He finds that he may gravitate to some people's personalities more than others, but he feels that the group itself is more important than any clash of personality. Seasons play a role in group attendance, as well as the events of everyday life. When he first started the group, he had no idea how much interest there would be, but he continued to put notices in the centre's monthly publication to remind people that the meetings were taking place. Tony also maintains

regular e-mail communication with group members, sending them potential discussion prompts and reminders of meeting times.

He believes that if he does not keep using the language, he will start to lose it, so he tries to read French daily, partly to prepare discussion topics for his conversation groups. His French use tends to be restricted to the group sessions, though he occasionally chats on the phone in French with members of the group, depending on what the topic requires or demands. When he sends e-mails to the members of the conversation group, he writes them in French. Sometimes he forwards articles in French, others he writes reminders of upcoming meetings. He doesn't write anything lengthy because the group members have different proficiency levels.

Additional Thoughts

Tony defines fluency as the ability to move back and forth between languages. He considers someone fluent if he/she can easily move between the two languages while using the correct grammar constructions and vocabulary. He considers the spoken component more important than reading and writing, but acknowledges that those strands are tied in, as well.

Tony enjoys learning languages. He finds other languages enriching and enjoys being exposed to another culture. Because of his immigrant status, he feels an empathy for those who come from a different culture. He felt the shock even when coming from England. Tony admires those who can come from another country and start from ground zero in a language. He believes his French proficiency is as good as it has ever been because of his continued involvement in the conversation group he formed at the seniors' center. He also began attending an additional conversation group through the French community centre.

Having experienced traditional academic environments and community learning environments, he finds that each complements the other. Tony appreciates the importance of learning grammar constructions, but he also appreciated being able to slowly pick up the language through daily exchanges in real world settings. He learned

quickly that people do not talk like they do in textbooks. Classrooms and the real world are very different, but he feels they're complementary.

Tony sees pursuing French as a path to self-improvement. It allows him to broaden his horizons culturally, allowing him to access media he otherwise wouldn't be able to, like Radio Canada. This perspective is both an example of Dörnyei's (2009) Ideal L2 self and Stebbins (2007) self-actualization personal reward as self-improvement is central to both concepts. He views his pursuit as more instinctual and driven by interest rather than by any conscious drive. He believes it's natural to want to maintain an acquired skill or ability, and he knows that lack of use could affect it.

Unlike some other participants, he does not connect French with the Canadian identity nor does he consider it a driving factor for him. He feels more of an affinity for France than any connection to French Canada. He has attempted to learn German and Italian, but he didn't learn much. Living in the right milieu made a difference for him.

Living in France had more of a profound influence on his learning than living in Quebec because he didn't live in a French environment in Quebec. He recalls his accent being an issue when he would try to speak French in Quebec. It was easier in Montreal, but in the different suburbs, like St-Jean, the accent was different enough that he had difficulty making himself understood and understanding others. That was a turn-off for him. He wasn't aware of the same issues during his time in France. He finds Quebecois French to be a different manner of speaking, using different vocabulary and expressions. He found the differences discouraging. He has a deep appreciation for French culture, and he welcomes the opportunity to be exposed to it. He feels it's partly intellectual and partly emotional.

4.3.2.5 Natasha

Early Education and Exposure to French

Natasha is semi-retired and holds a graduate degree from an Ontario university. She is a regular participant in the Library group and occasionally visits the Pub group. She speaks English and French and has begun taking Spanish courses.

As a child, she was identified as gifted, which is how she first began learning French. When she was growing up, there was no French immersion in the city. To her, French was connected to France, not Canada. However, the gifted program allowed her to begin French at grade 5. By grade 8, she and her classmates were learning grade 9 French, so she was always a year ahead of her age group. She remembers enjoying French, but because she was more focused on math and science, she never considered taking it after high school.

Natasha feels she just acquired French, rather than learning it. Information was presented to her, and it stayed. She reiterated her feeling that she loves the language, despite having no connection to Quebec or France, and growing up in a very Anglophone hometown.

Her first French teacher was an unusual woman. Her teacher spoke very standard French and was very outgoing and demanding of her students. She used a European method of instruction, favouring drilling as an instructional approach. Natasha attributes part of the fondness for her French teacher to the fact that her teacher was demanding. She saw her teacher as a force of nature. Despite being short in stature, her teacher had a powerful presence about her. She could not say that she necessarily liked French as a subject back then. It was just like any other subject that she had to take in school. She remembered singing songs in French and the class would occasionally perform at local events in French.

In high school, she started with the Grade 10 course because she had already taken the equivalent of Grade 9 French. She could already speak French by that point and had the lead in the French play. The French play was a terrifying experience since she was already younger than her classmates since she skipped a grade, but she was also a year ahead in her French studies. She had to perform for the senior students (Grades 11-13) and found it really intimidating. She attributes her ability to get through it to the teacher she had. The constant repetition involved in rehearsals may have positively contributed to her confidence and pronunciation in French, since it is essentially an extended roleplay experience.

She recalled that she treated French similarly to how she would have treated other subjects. It was just something she was supposed to do as a part of her schoolwork. In high school, she did not enjoy French literature, but she felt the same about English literature, which she found funny given that she's now a writer. She found the classes too structured and boring.

Growing up, Natasha was oblivious to any of the political unrest in Quebec, noting that no one talked about it and no one spoke French around her day-to-day. French offered her an opportunity to go beyond what she found in her hometown and daily life. For example, she met a Moroccan restauranteur who had opened a restaurant in Barrie. He told her he had thought she was French when he met her. The language enriched her life, opening up a different culture. In the early 1980s, she went to France and spent time in Paris, which helped with her language maintenance and motivation, but found that there were not the same opportunities to use the language when she came back to Ontario at the time.

Post-secondary Experiences

While living in Toronto in the mid-1980s, she came across a French course offered at a local community college. She registered in some courses and was assessed at a level 8 in the program, one of the higher levels. She found the people interesting and she enjoyed learning more of the language. By the mid-1990s, she decided to go back to school. During her undergraduate studies, she took a French course during the summer and things went well. Her instructor suggested she study linguistics. She continued taking math and computer courses, but also added French to her studies and went on to do graduate studies. She considers it a fluke that she ended up in Linguistics and doing it in French. Since that time, she has had a more conscious motivation to maintain her French. She found taking the courses in French to be difficult, but she loved it. She loved hearing French spoken. During this time, she began doing more editing and French to English translations. At this point, she feels that her French skills are no longer current enough to pursue job avenues associated with French, but she could still do French to English translation.

Natasha said she feels “a craving” to speak French. She also used the word hunger to describe her desire to speak and interact in French. During her undergraduate and graduate studies, she was always around people who spoke French, but now that she is out of the environment, she misses it. She is far more conscious of her connection to French now that she is out of the university environment. She feels the separation from the university French community.

Conversation Groups

Natasha became aware of the conversation sessions after having seen some postings about French groups downtown, but she considered them inconvenient, so she did not join them. She remarked that she has become more aware of how much she has missed speaking French now that she is part of the Library group. She speaks French once per week with the group but has also started listening to the radio more often since she joined. She finds herself talking to herself and thinking in French when she does tasks around the house. Natasha feels that the French conversation group likely helped her maintain her proficiency or move it back toward the level she had had during graduate school. She also acknowledges that there are benefits for her brain at her age, and she considers that part of her motivation to maintain the language

She is currently taking Spanish courses through a community program and she attributes her interest in learning the language to her time with her French conversation group. She was told by several people that learning Spanish should be easy considering her background in French, but she has found difficult to pick up. She continues to take courses because they are run by the same instructor and many of her classmates were continuing, as well.

Part of the reason she is taking Spanish is because she has heard it is good for the brain, and that when one gets older one should do things that are cognitively demanding. She had just finished her 4th Spanish course and had been reflecting on language learning as a senior and the differences between Spanish at her age and French at a younger age. She finds Spanish frustrating because she knows it has the same parts (i.e. nouns, verbs,

verb conjugations) as French, but she can speak French. It does not require the same amount of effort for her.

Natasha had heard about a free Spanish class in the local library run by a volunteer, but she avoided going because of word of mouth. People had said that the course is very structured, including exercises and handouts, and is conducted all in Spanish. She does not want to attend because she is self-conscious about her inability to speak Spanish. She believes her brain is not as agile as it was even 10 years earlier.

She compared the hesitance of new Library group members to speak up and participate to how she feels in Spanish class. The new members of the group were hesitant, possibly due to being new, but also because of a lack of confidence in their French. She experiences the same lack of confidence in Spanish.

Natasha considers the ability to speak another language akin to having a secret code or being part of a club that required a password to access it. She liked being able to have conversations with people she otherwise wouldn't have been able to. She enjoyed being able to go to French speaking places on her own and being able to speak the language.

She related some of her interactions with a man from the Pub group and how he seemed to look down on the French proficiency of different members of the group. However, once she demonstrated her fluency and knowledge of French expressions and culture, he gave her more respect. I also interacted with the same individual during different sessions and experienced the same sort of initially dismissive attitude from him, but I found that he warmed up to me over time. She was not deterred by his attitude, attributing it more to youthful arrogance than malicious intent. While the Pub was not her regular group, she enjoyed the atmosphere and the opportunity to speak with different people. For example, she recalled conversing with a biology professor that the group had playfully nicknamed "Professor Mouche" after he mentioned that his area of study was various insects.

Natasha has been part of the Library group through 3 different moderators. She started going 5 years ago but missed time due to different issues. She attended less with the second moderator and attended the Pub sessions more often because she was going through a sense of French withdrawal. Of all the study participants, Natasha was especially bothered by the sudden dismissal of the first moderator, as noted in Section 4.2. However, she relented and returned to the group. Her short-term boycott led her to begin interacting with a few of the other Library group members outside of the sessions. For example, one week she brought a couple of them, including the first moderator, to one of the Pub sessions to be social. She observed that when she sees the other group members outside of the Library sessions, they typically speak English, though there is some code switching that occurs.

She really likes the new moderator, calling her warm, welcoming, and outgoing. She noted that, with the first moderator, once they walked outside the meeting room, people would switch to English, whereas she keeps speaking French with the new moderator, since that is her preferred language.

Additional Thoughts

During the study, she had seen a CBC interview with people who speak multiple languages and it had mentioned they felt like they were different people depending on which language they were speaking at the time. She related to this idea but remarked that she did not really feel like a different person. Rather, there were aspects of herself that were brought forward. She finds speaking another language to be a positive distraction from everything else that is going on in her life.

She remarked that learning Spanish has made it apparent that she is no longer actively learning French. She feels she has gotten to a point where she is forgetting more often than learning, but feels that is just a part of the aging process. She has noticed that she has forgotten everyday words that she used to know. She is motivated to maintain her French because she’s interested in it. Something about the language feels like home to her.

She relates her French proficiency back to her difficulties learning Spanish. She appreciates her French so much more because of how difficult it has been to learn Spanish and to form sentences in the language. She's a French speaker, and it's cemented that much more by her inability to speak Spanish. She only developed her craving for French after leaving the university environment. Because of how difficult her new Spanish pursuit has been, she appreciates and values the things she has more facility with, like French. French is a part of her. She enjoys the language, the wine, and the country.

She sees her time in graduate school as an opportunity to combine her affinity for numbers and her love of language, but specifically French. French was a means of completely altering her life. She went from living in a basement and having panic attacks to getting academic recognition and meeting new people from around the world, none of which would have been possible without French.

4.3.3 Section Summary

In the preceding section, I presented participant profiles of the seniors who participated in the study. The profiles of the three interview seniors was divided into sections including Early Education and Exposure to French, Post-secondary Experiences, Conversation Groups and, in some cases Additional Thoughts.

In terms of early education and exposure to French, four of the seven seniors were raised in Quebec; however, they did not all start learning French at the same time. Bruce and Steve, for example, both began learning French in elementary school while the remaining Quebec seniors began learning it in high school. The amount of exposure to French varied by the individual and seemed to be largely dependent on the neighbourhood or town in which they lived. Two of the three Ontario seniors began also began learning French in high school. Natasha was the exception here because she was part of a Gifted program and given access to different opportunities from Janet and Simon.

Five of the seven seniors took additional French courses as mature students. Natasha went back and took French courses during her return to university as a mature student, while Janet, Steve, Wanda, and Tony took more community-based continuing education courses through a local community college or the local university. Interestingly, Steve, Wanda, and Tony were each enrolled in the same community college French program but did not overlap in the courses themselves.

Each participant had his/her own reasons for joining and attending conversation groups, though all five of the three interview seniors enjoy the wide range of people that attend the groups. Steve, Wanda, and Natasha pointed out the diverse group members and how that positively added to their experiences. In the next section, I discuss themes that emerged from the interviews.

4.4 Emergent Themes

In this section, I discuss themes that emerged over the course of the multiple interview process. I begin with the familial connection theme before moving on to the themes of social connection and nostalgia. While discussing the themes, I use Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Leisure framework to provide additional insights into motivations of specific participants.

4.4.1 Familial Connection

For the participants, family was an important recurring theme as we discussed their language learning journeys and L2 maintenance, though it manifested differently for each person.

Janet's motivations for learning French are intertwined with her interest in genealogy and connecting with her heritage.[13] She was raised by parents from different linguistic backgrounds. In her case, it was her father who spoke the minority language rather than her mother. However, she indicates that social pressures were evident in

[13] Janet was discussed in section 4.3.1.

Toronto when she was growing up, and though she never explicitly stated that she was discouraged from learning French, she seems to imply it:

Janet: At that time, when my parents married in 1945, it was almost considered unacceptable that my dad marry an English person in Toronto.

Researcher: In Toronto even? Okay.

Janet: Well, you know Toronto in a way that's very different than what I remember when I was a child. You know, it was white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. That's what it was. There were no other nationalities – very seldom did you ever see anybody, so it's very, very different than what it was in the 40s and the 50s.

The environment in which she grew up prioritized English over other cultures and ethnicities, including French, so she grew up speaking English. When she was going through school, French was not available until high school, therefore, if it was not being spoken in the home, then her access to French was extremely limited, even through family.

Janet's quest for familial connection manifests through her genealogical pursuits. She had already traced her routes back to the 16th century but had reached a point where she felt that learning French would aid her in reading original documents. This is an example of motivation via the Ought-to L2 self as it is tied to something extrinsic to her: furthering her genealogical research. Though she could continue to pursue her research without learning French, she *ought to* do so to if she wants to fully understand original source documents. She sees it as a means to an end:

Janet: My objective to do it is to … My objective in all of this is primarily, A, to continue to challenge my brain, B, acquire sufficient information in order to read original documents, and they do not have- it's not like reading a treatise or a

thesis, right? It's birth certificates, marriage certificates, you know, contracts between individuals and things of that nature.

While an argument could be made that Janet's Ideal L2 self is one who could read original historical documents in French without difficulty, her focus is the hobby itself more than the language. If the documents were written in Gaelic or Italian, I believe she would pursue those languages instead. Connecting to her past is important to her – so important that, at the time of the interview, she had enrolled in a week-long immersion course in Quebec.

Simon found his inspiration to improve his French after meeting his ex-partner at an academic conference near the end of his undergraduate studies. They spoke English when they met, but upon learning that his ex-partner was Franco-Venezuelan, Simon made the effort to speak French. He credits this relationship as being vital to his French language development:

Simon: He was in Montreal as a student studying at the University of Montreal, following his sister… And so that helped me develop when the brain was young, which is really important, in my 20s. It helped me develop my French because he had – and I didn't know anybody else in Montreal. So most of his friends were Francophone or Spanish-speaking. So I learned to function and then work in French, although I was working at McGill at the time, so the working environment was English but then later on the working environment in another job was French.

So that really assisted me over a period of nine years, and it makes a big difference because so many Anglophones have studied for a period of time and then that comes to an end and there's no way of continuing to use it.

His partner insisted that French be spoken in their home, which forced Simon to apply himself and focus on learning the language. He also received encouragement from his partner's immediate family, who complimented his accent and his fluency. If he wanted this relationship to work, he *ought to* learn French. Similarly, if he wanted to be accepted by his partner's family and social circle, he *ought to* learn French. Though the relationship ended after nine years together, Simon continues to return to Montreal every year to keep up his French.

Bruce's circumstances are different than the other participants in the study in that he spent most of his life in an environment where French was the dominant language. The switch to an English dominant area was relatively recent compared to those who had previously lived in Quebec or other French-speaking regions. He acknowledged that having less exposure to French now that he lives in Ontario prompts him to go to the Library sessions. He feels that hearing French helps him to maintain it. He compared it to going to the grocery store in Montreal in that, at least he would speak some French. Now that he is retired, he hears less French on a daily basis and maintaining it requires effort because it is not part of his everyday environment anymore. He noted that hearing French spoken around town is a rarity and little things, like hearing the self-checkout machine speak in French at the grocery store, are a novelty here.

He read a book in French recently – a memoir, written in diary format, of a prisoner of war (POW) in Japan who was a friend of his father. He read it because his father was mentioned in the book and because of the author's connection to his family. When he chooses to read something in French, he tries to find something that will be interesting to him to stave off boredom. He found reading the book to be an emotional experience because his father was mentioned and because of the subject matter.

The connection to his heritage and the guilt he mentioned about his French proficiency place part of his motivations squarely in line with Dörnyei's Ought-to L2 Self. He comes from a French-speaking background, so he *ought to* speak better French. However, other motivators seem to be more important to him, like maintaining his connection to his identity as a Montrealer and developing social outlets.

4.4.2 Social Connection

Participating in the conversation groups provided members with an opportunity to practice and maintain their minority L2, but also a social outlet. Several of the study participants referenced an interest in expanding their social circles as reasons why they attended sessions of the conversation groups. Others expressed how the group's composition persuaded them to attend or dissuaded them from attending sessions. In either case, it was the social aspect that was driving their attendance more than the language.

Bruce had recently relocated with his wife from another province to Ontario. Being new to the area led him to explore the library system in his city. During one of his visits, he noticed a sign for the Library conversation group and decided to check it out. Having lived most of his life in Montreal, he had never had any real need of a driver's license, so he tended to choose activities based on proximity to running bus routes. Fortunately, the Library sessions were held close to several routes.

When he first started going to the sessions, he was going primarily for the opportunity to speak French with the social aspect a secondary reason. He wanted to meet people and the French connection made him more comfortable. He considered it a positive as he could meet people, get out of the house, and maintain his French at the same time. He enjoyed the small group dynamic and the energy of the Library group. He liked the give and take involved in the conversations and the ethnic mix of the group. He believes it gives a different sort of dynamic than other groups might have. The rapport he has built with the members adds to his motivation to attend each session.

A Quebecois couple that attended the sessions reminded him of his relatives. He could relate to their expressions and identify with them. He also appreciated the effort put forth by weaker French speakers. He found it appealing that the group consists predominantly of seniors, as they have common experiences and interests.

The desire to connect with other seniors was a factor for Tony, as well, as demonstrated by his decision to start his own group through a local senior centre.[14] He valued the time he spent interacting with his group members, taking feedback and suggestions from them on how to improve the sessions. For example, he began setting a weekly conversation topic based on Wanda's input.[15] He did not have internet access at home, so he often used library computers specifically to look for ideas and resources to spark discussion at his group sessions.

He worked closely with two other co-organizers to keep the group running, and recognized their importance in keeping the group viable, but interestingly he placed a higher value on the continued existence of the group than on any particular relationships he had formed through it. People would come and go, but as long as the group continued, that was what mattered to him.

Researcher: What significance do these relationships have for you at this point in terms of keeping the group going?

Tony: Significance of the relationships in terms of motivation to keep - to keep the group going? I don't know. It mixes together. You find you're – naturally, it made me gravitate towards this or that person and maybe less towards somebody else in the group, but for me it's always… the primary motivation is to keep the group going. Sometimes there are personality conflicts or people rub you the wrong way or something, but you sort of just say the group itself is of higher value and that's enough to keep working to keep it going.

---

[14] See section 4.2.2.4 for Tony's participant profile.

[15] See section 4.2.2.3 for Wanda's participant profile.

Tony's perspective is reflected in the social rewards noted in Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure framework.[16] Some hobbyists feel motivated by their contributions to the development and continued existence of a hobby group. In this instance, Tony helped found the group and was greatly invested in its continued success.

A number of participants enjoyed the opportunities to meet a wider variety of people than they would have otherwise met in their daily routines. The Pub group was described using terms like "global" and like the "United Nations" by several current and past members. Steve, for example, was quite enthusiastic about the group's international flavour.

Researcher: So what were your initial impressions when you first went? Did you -- like, do you remember offhand what your initial impressions were?

Steve: The first bunch of weeks that I was there, back -- I started maybe in January of 2013, a few months after the whole thing started. And back then -- I'm not sure what it's like now -- but it was the United Nations, and that's what I was delighted with. We had people from -- before the war in Syria, but Quebec, all over the world, and that was delightful.

Wanda also saw the international make-up of the group to be a draw for her. Many of her social activities tend to involve women of similar ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, so she welcomed the opportunity to meet people she would not necessarily have met otherwise.

Wanda: I think – well I like the socialization and I like that in English, too, so it must be the socialization. To me it's just a new way

---

[16] See section 1.5.2 for the list of personal and social rewards derived from Serious Leisure activities.

of meeting people and new way of meeting different types of people. English is English, but if you go to a French Meetup – I've met people from Lebanon, Morocco, Belgium. That's what I like.

The Pub group drew people from a variety of backgrounds together through a common interest in the language. Though it was not explicitly described this way, it could be argued that the worldly makeup of the group enriched the experience of the participants. Personal enrichment, as noted in section 1.5.2, was one of the key benefits/rewards of Serious Leisure pursuits (Stebbins, 2007).

The Library group also has a diverse makeup in its own right, being moderated by Francophone immigrants, and attended by members from countries like India, Mexico, and Turkey, but it has a more stable and consistent group from one week to the next when compared to the regular turnover found in the Pub group. As a result, the Library group had somewhat crystallized during the time of the study, staying consistently at between 6 and 10 members. There was a different comfort level that developed between group members, which made the sudden and unexpected departure of a well-liked moderator traumatizing for some of the participants. Natasha, for example, left the Library group for a number of weeks in protest and a show of solidarity with the dismissed moderator.

Natasha was a semi-retired academic who regularly attended sessions of the Library group and occasionally attended sessions of the Pub group. In addition, she had also taken up introductory Spanish classes. The social connection she experienced, and its importance to her, manifested in several different ways. She had pursued higher education in French, so had become a part of a community of French-speakers, but since leaving the department, she had minimal contact with the language outside of the Library group. In the years following her graduation, she developed what she referred to as a craving to speak French and her participation in the Library group satisfies that craving.

Natasha: I'm going to go back to using the verb I was using before. This has become totally clear to me and I don't understand why, but I literally, not metaphorically, it's a craving. I crave

to speak French. I crave to interact with people in French. It's almost like a physiological craving sort of thing and intellectual. I have no idea why but it's like a hunger.

Once she found the group, she made friends that extended outside of the conversation sessions. For example, she would have Skype calls with members who spent winters in warmer climates, she went hiking with Bruce on a semi-regular basis, and as mentioned earlier she developed a close relationship with the past moderator.[17] Ultimately, her craving to speak French led her to return to the group and she has grown to really like the current moderator.

Her Spanish classes provided another interesting dynamic to her motivation to continue learning the language. She had noted that her motivation to take the next available class was waning until other class members inquired if she would be taking it.

Researcher: That's part of what I'm wondering, as well, is, in terms again, the interactions or relationships that are being formed through this class, have those become, I guess, more important than the course itself? Like, if you knew you were going to walk into a class of random, complete strangers would that have an effect on your willingness to participate or enrol in this new class?

Natasha: That is a great question and absolutely it would. It's not something that I've really had before in this particular way but very much so. And I think for most of us, you know, like the other women would say, "Are you going to take it? Are you going to take the one in April?" And I was kind of like, yeah, I'm thinking about it. And then, but you know, X number of people were going to, but I think I still might not

[17] See section 4.1.2 for additional details.

> have done it because it was 8:30 or 9:00 in the morning and they switched to 10:30 and I'm like okay, I'm in. And very much, like I mean there's been social events, Facebook connections, that kind of thing.

The class bonded further when the instructor's daughter took ill. The class had formed a community through their time together, and when one member of the community was in distress, they came together to be supportive however they could. The students spent time sending him encouraging messages, baking him cakes and pies, and trying to be supportive as his family went through a difficult time. The daughter recovered and came to the class to express her gratitude for all the students had done for her family during her recovery.

Other participants, like Steve, Wanda, and Tony, who had each gone through a multi-level evening French program at a local community college, went through their studies with the same cohort of students from one course to the next. Unlike Natasha, they did not feel the same sort of social pull to register for the next course as they went through; they were committed to the program regardless of who their classmates were. However, they could see how people could be motivated to enrol based on friends made during prior course sessions.

4.4.3 Nostalgia

Over the course of the interviews, a theme emerged that can be described as a sense of nostalgia, particularly from many of the senior participants. In this study, nostalgia would be described as a sense of longing for a connection to the past or, perhaps an attempt to travel roads not taken. There is a certain degree of overlap with the familial connection theme, but enough differences between the two to merit its own section.

Early in the data collection process, I learned that several of the seniors began French studies at a local community college years before the study began. In each case, the seniors were close enough to retirement that their pursuit of the language was not for

the purpose of career advancement. Interestingly, several of these seniors had a personal connection to Montreal, Quebec, where each of them spent part of their childhood and teenage years in Anglophone pockets of the city. In the case of two participants, Steve and Wanda, they felt compelled to take courses to learn the language.

Looking back, Steve expressed regret for not having learned French earlier in life. He felt his path may have been very different if he had learned the language earlier than he did, believing he was capable of living and working in French with his current competencies. Had he been younger, he may have pursued bilingual career opportunities. Despite living most of his life in Ontario, Steve identifies himself as a Montrealer. This identity comes with certain expectations, like being bilingual, as noted in his exchange with a Quebecois woman detailed in Section 4.3.2.2. She felt he should be ashamed of himself as a Montrealer for his level of French, and he agreed with her assessment. His pursuit of French could be a reflection of his Ideal L2 Self and a desire to be the person he feels he could have been had he never left Quebec.

Wanda, by contrast, spent her childhood and teenage years in the Montreal area, but never learned French at the time. Like the other study participants, she grew up in a time when Anglophones were the managerial class of Quebec, so there was not the same sort of pressure to be bilingual as there would have been in later decades. After she left Quebec for Ontario, she had half-heartedly considered taking French courses in the event she ever moved back to Montreal, but it took her until the past ten years before she started taking her studies seriously. She did not know why French words kept popping into her mind, but the fact that she pursued the language so vigorously for the past decade leads me to wonder if she was trying to reconnect to a path not taken like Steve had. When I asked if a sense of nostalgia could have been part of her motivation, she acknowledged that it played a part in the beginning of her language learning journey, but that it had grown since then. Regardless of her initial motivations, Wanda exhibits aspects of Ideal L2 Self motivation in her constant goal setting. For example, as she became more proficient with her pronunciation, she moved on to specific grammar concepts that she found difficult. She was always assessing herself and trying to find different ways to improve.

During her interviews, Wanda discussed her participation in different conversation groups, including a group attended by more Francophones and advanced speakers of French. She said she spends most of her time listening when attending these sessions, but proudly recounted her contribution to a session that had occurred on the day of the interview:

> Wanda: We also had to say when we first started, where we came from and what we remembered about the place. So, of course, I could say something about that and the lady next to me knew the area right away. She knew the area. I said, 'It's beautiful. When we first moved out there in the country and there was a lot of apple trees. Today it's a lot of houses and it's a suburb of Montreal' and – oh and then I said when I was that age, there was a song that was very popular and we all – all the girls were singing it and it was the French song. You probably don't know the French song and she knew it. A few of the others knew it, so the lady who was leading it found it on the internet and they just loved it. It was Quand le soleil dit bonjour aux montagnes and we had a mountain, right, Mont Saint-Hilaire. It's a beautiful mountain, so of course we were always singing this song to the mountain. So I said probably five minutes of conversation today, okay, but generally I'm just there just to listen. I figured if I can follow the conversation – because some of the Northern Quebec, northern Ontario is totally different again, so if I can follow their conversation I'm happy. The Friday I speak more if I have – again, if I have something to say. I don't believe in talking just to talk.

Wanda used memories of her teenage years to contribute in a meaningful way to the group conversation. In addition, she found a way to demonstrate an authentic connection to the Francophones – one that may not have been apparent to them due to her

strongly Anglophone French accent. In this instance, nostalgia benefitted her and would provide motivation to contribute more in future sessions.

Janet represents an instance where familial connections and nostalgia overlap considerably. Janet's interest in her genealogy is a deliberate look to the past to learn more about her family heritage. The language serves as a vehicle by which she can reclaim a part of a lost identity. She looks to the past to explore who she is and where she came from, which further fuels her pursuit of the language.

In the case of Bruce, he was looking for opportunities to meet new people and socialize when he started attending the Library group, though the chance to use his French was foremost in his mind. Although he lived a predominantly English home life, he spent most of his life in a Francophone province, surrounded by French speakers wherever he went. The move to an Anglophone province and city would have been a significant change in his life, so it seems natural that he would seek out activities that reminded him of home. As mentioned in Section 4.4.2, the Quebecois couple from the Library group reminded him of his relatives and the group, as a whole, made him feel comfortable. The group allowed him to transition into life in a new city by allowing him to connect to his old life, so while the nostalgic aspect is more recent for him, it is present, nonetheless.

Simon returns to Montreal on a yearly basis to reconnect with friends and to maintain his French. Having spent close to a decade living in Montreal during his 20s, a time when he formed his French-speaking identity through his relationships, it is understandable that the city would be important to him. While he never said so explicitly, returning to the city could be seen as his attempt to revisit who he was at that time of his life. His desire to maintain his French, even through small things like writing his grocery lists in French, could be his way of maintaining that part of his identity and honouring who he was.

Though the theme of nostalgia may be more subtle than the other themes described, particularly because of its overlap with the familial connection, its influence should not be underestimated. I have felt the pull of nostalgia several times over the

course of my L2 learning journey. For example, I returned to Trois-Pistoles, Quebec for one last French immersion session after completing my Bachelor of Education program. I wanted to revisit familiar places, see familiar people, and do things I enjoyed one more time. The participants may be subconsciously seeking a similar sort of connection to what I have experienced.

In the next chapter, I discuss different aspects of the research study, including my thoughts on the multiple interview format, the data collected, and the effectiveness of the hybrid Dörnyei-Stebbins framework.

Chapter 5

5 Analysis and Discussion

This chapter is broken into two main sections, including an evaluation of the Dörnyei-Stebbins hybrid framework and a discussion of the study itself. In addition to a discussion of the framework, I provide diagrams of the framework in action for each of the senior participants. The study discussion section is divided into an additional three sections, covering the multi-interview format, the focus on seniors, and a discussion of Quebec, identity and the participants. At the end of the chapter I provide a chapter overview.

5.1 Evaluating the Hybrid Framework

Having conducted the research and performed the data analysis, it is necessary to evaluate the proposed Dörnyei-Stebbins hybrid framework. I had become aware of Stebbins (2007) framework as I conducted the literature review for the study. Kubota (2011) had proposed a similar interaction between Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective and Norton's (2000) Investment framework, relying on the cultural and social capital aspects of Norton's framework to analyze casual English as Foreign Language groups in Japan. Although I was intrigued by the combination, the more I examined different iterations of Norton's (2000) framework, the more convinced I became that it was not the right fit for what I was doing.

Once I had found Dörnyei's (2009) framework, I knew I was on the right track. In many respects, the study could have been analyzed solely through the lens of the L2MSS and been quite thorough, but I feel the third component, the L2 Learning Experience, is too open-ended. It seemed like anything that could not be slotted into the Ideal or Ought-to L2 selves were part of the L2 Learning Experience. Things like parental attitudes, peer attitudes and behavior during class time, classroom resources, pedagogical approaches, and rapport with teachers, among others, are all included under the L2 Learning Experience umbrella. I felt this third component was too all-

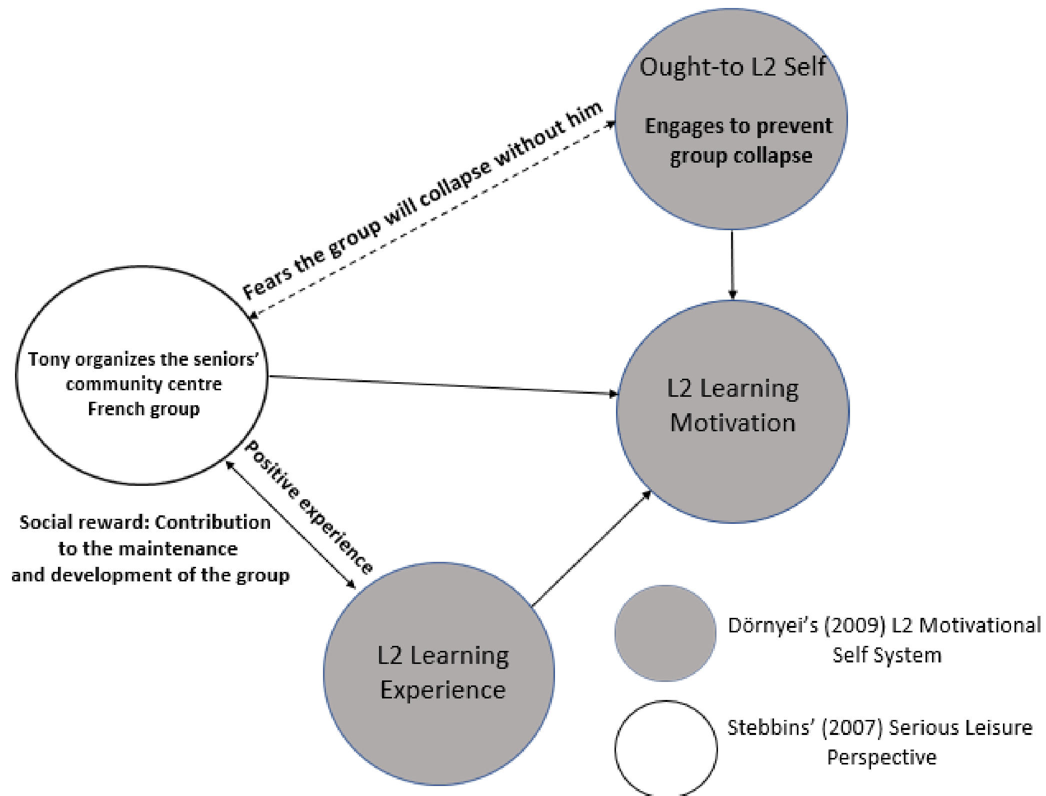
encompassing. However, when combined with Stebbins (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective, the complex picture of motivation becomes clearer.

I started thinking about Dörnyei's (2009) framework and it occurred to me that L2-related activities would be part of the L2 Learning Experience. L2 Conversation groups are leisure activities that would also fall under the L2 Learning Experience, so there should be a natural overlap between the L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. In addition, many of the participants learned French as a hobby or pastime, which means that the act of learning the L2 itself should fit within both frameworks. By adding Stebbins' (2007) framework to the L2MSS I found that I could better understand the participants' motivation than I could without it. The additional focus should not be undervalued.

When I first analyzed Tony's interviews, for example, he was more difficult to accommodate with the L2MSS. However, by using the Stebbins (2007) framework, I was able to make a connection back to Dörnyei's (2009) system. For the past couple of years, Tony has organized and facilitated a French conversation group out of a community centre. Stebbins (2007) notes that one of the social rewards of participating in serious leisure activities comes from contributing to the maintenance and development of a group. As a founder, organizer and facilitator of this conversation group, this social reward applies to Tony.

During the interviews he expressed concern over the group's continued existence should he or his partners choose to step away from their leadership roles. This worry, concern, or fear that the group would stop running drives him to continue. The Ought-to Self was conceived as a combination of the 'self that one could become' and the 'self that one fears becoming'. It is, at its core, a preventative and defensive self, motiving the person to act before a negative outcome occurs (Dörnyei, 2009). It is also extrinsic in nature. The fear that the group will collapse without him engages his Ought-to Self, which motivates him to continue as a facilitator. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the Hybrid Framework in action.

Figure 3 - Analysis of Tony's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework

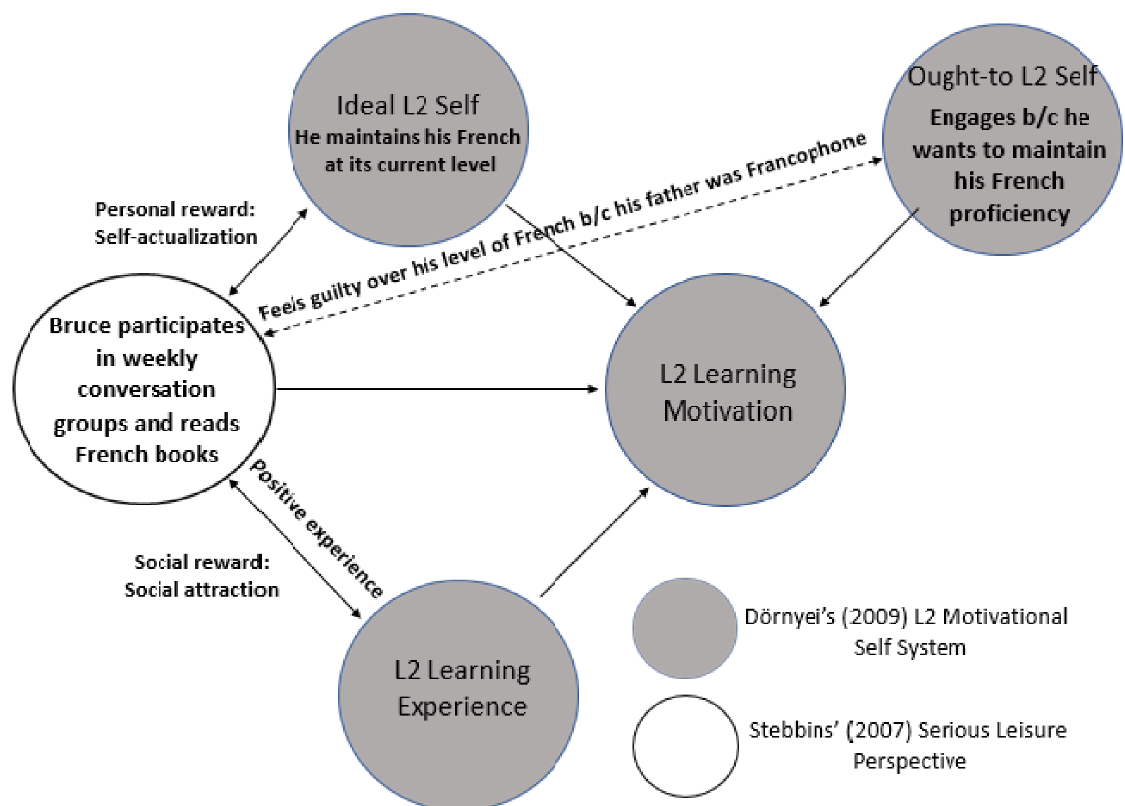


While I may have made the connection to the Ought-to L2 Self without it, the Serious Leisure Perspective provided me with the additional focus I needed to more easily describe Tony's motivations. The Ought-to L2 Self, in particular, was more difficult to reconcile with the Serious Leisure Perspective since most of the personal and social rewards are linked to the Ideal L2 Self and the L2 Learning Experience; however, this example demonstrates that a link is present between each component of the two frameworks.

Bruce's motivations to maintain his French proficiency can be accommodated across multiple aspects of the Hybrid Framework. Upon moving to Ontario, he was looking to meet people and socialize, so the conversation group provided the Social Attraction reward (Stebbins, 2007). In addition, he indicated that he felt guilty that his French was not better considering his father was Francophone. While Bruce would be considered a heritage language French speaker, it is worth reiterating that Bruce identifies

himself as Anglophone and always specified that it was his father that spoke French (Valdés, 2001). Section 5.2.3 will discuss his identity and what it means from the perspective of someone who was raised in Quebec. Bruce's guilt is a manifestation of his Ought-to L2 Self, urging him to make efforts to improve his French. He moves closer to his Ideal L2 Self through his attendance (Dörnyei, 2009). He is able to get in his practice and, while not necessarily improving his French, he is able to maintain his current levels. He had indicated in interviews that he did not feel that his French had declined during his time in Ontario. This could be attributed to his participation in the groups. Figure 4 is a graphical demonstration of Bruce's motivations through the lens of the Hybrid Framework.

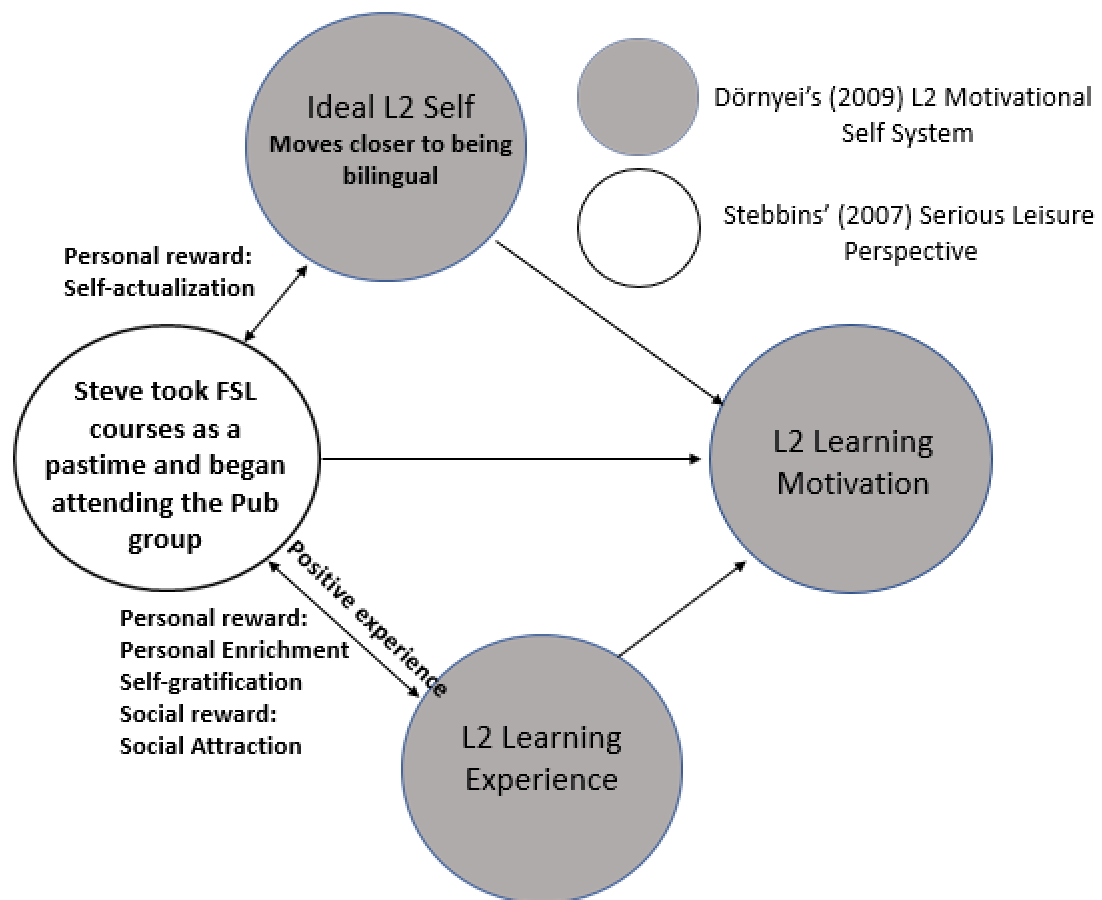
Figure 4 – Analysis of Bruce's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework



Steve has been actively pursuing French as a hobby for many years and as a part of that pursuit would attend the Pub group in its early years. He set goals to become more fluent, spurred on by his Ideal L2 Self, and receiving the Stebbins' (2007) personal

reward of Self-Actualization as he progressed and became more comfortable with his French. In addition, the conversation groups introduced him to people from different countries of origin, which he appreciated and enjoyed. These experiences correspond to the personal reward of Personal Enrichment and the social reward Social Attraction as he would not have met these people otherwise (Stebbins, 2007). His enjoyment of the sessions and of learning French correspond to the personal reward of Self-gratification. Each of these positive experiences in the Pub group contribute to a positive L2 Learning Experience that, in turn, feeds his L2 Learning Motivation (Dörnyei, 2009). Similarly, his motivation is bolstered by seeing his goals become more attainable and his Ideal L2 Self becoming closer to a reality. Figure 5 shows this relationship.

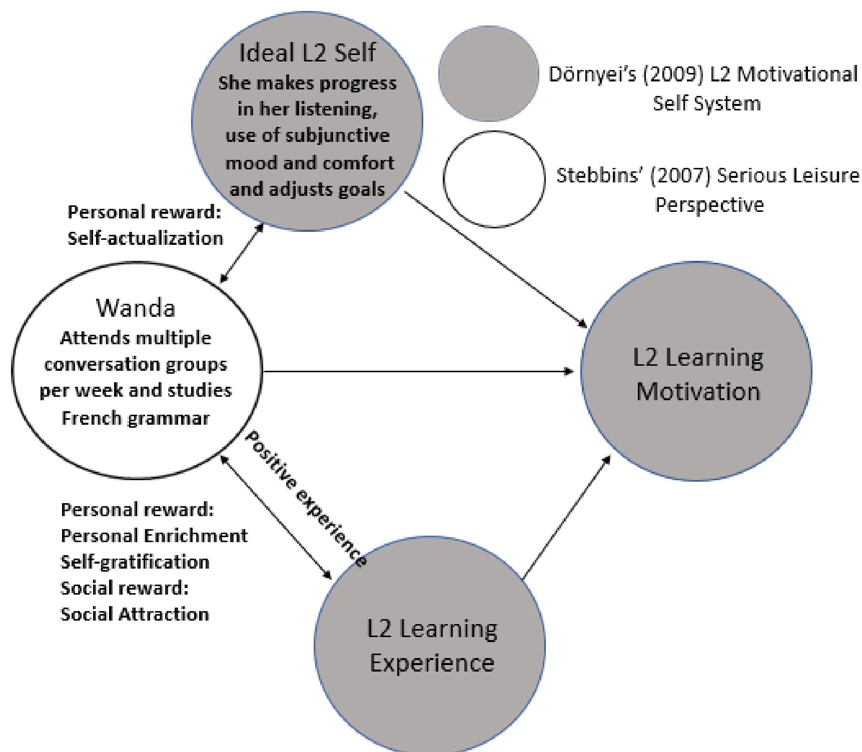
Figure 5 – Analysis of Steve's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework



Like Steve, Wanda has been pursuing French as a pastime for many years. However, she has been more active than him in conversation groups, attending as many as four in any given week. She sets goals for herself, like mastering the use of the subjunctive mood or speaking without searching for vocabulary words and using those words in a grammatically correct fashion. As she achieves these goals, she sets new ones and inches closer to becoming her Ideal L2 Self.

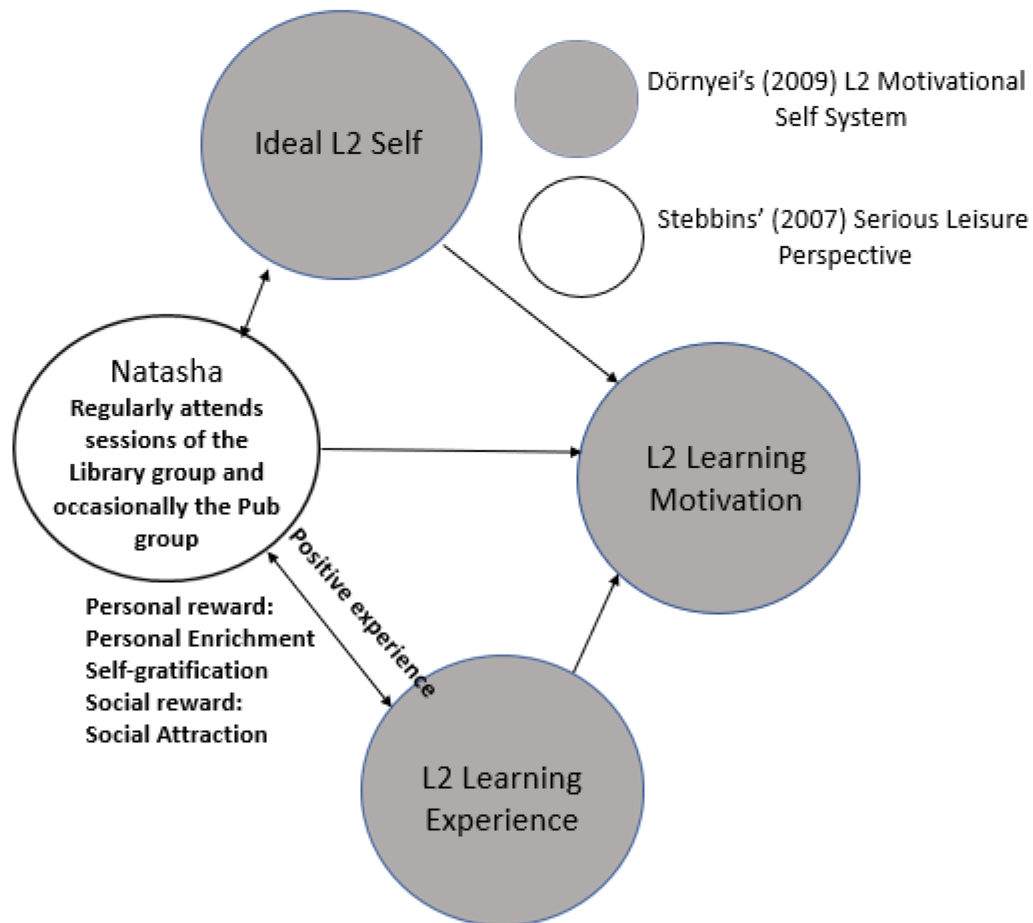
Her participation in these groups provides her with the personal rewards Self-actualization, as reflected in her improvements, Personal Enrichment and Self-gratification, which come from the range of different people she meets and her enjoyment of both the sessions and her study of the language. Associating with others of similar interest to herself provides her with the personal reward of Social Attraction as defined by Stebbins (2007). Seeing progress toward her Ideal L2 Self and having good L2 Learning Experiences with the conversation groups contribute positively to her L2 Learning Motivation (Dörnyei, 2009). Figure 6 provides a visual representation of this.

Figure 6 – Analysis of Wanda's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework



Natasha's motivations are more connected to the social aspects of the conversation sessions. She is not looking to improve her French, as is the case with other participants in the study. Rather, she is seeking a return to the community she misses after having finished graduate school. Her motivation to attend the conversation groups is tied to the relationships that she forms as a result. When there was a disruption to that social group after the first moderator was dismissed, she rebelled and boycotted sessions until the second moderator was replaced. When she has positive experiences, she feels rewarded via the personal rewards of Personal Enrichment and Self-gratification, as well as the social reward of Social Attraction (Stebbins, 2007). Even when taking into account her dabbling in community-based Spanish classes, she continued with them because several of her classmates encouraged her to take the classes with them.

Figure 7 – Analysis of Natasha's Motivation via the Hybrid Framework



For this study, the hybrid framework was a more appropriate and complete analytical tool than either of the individual frameworks would have been alone. The combination added depth to the analysis and additional insights needed to better understand why the participants do what they do to learn and maintain their L2. In addition, the combination of the two frameworks served as a form of theoretical triangulation. Cohen et al. (2011) describe theoretical triangulation as the use of "alternative or competing theories in preference to utilizing only one viewpoint" (p. 196). The L2MSS is primarily a quantitative framework coming from the Applied Linguistics and Psychology domains while the Serious Leisure Perspective comes from Sociology and has mainly been used in qualitative studies. These two frameworks come from different research traditions and can both be used to explain the motivations of the participants in their L2 pursuits, thus satisfying the criteria for theoretical triangulation.

5.2 Discussion

The following subsections discuss points that emerged over the course of data analysis. It is divided into the Multi-Interview Format where I discuss its benefits to the study, followed by a discussion of surprising or unexpected results, before finishing on the topic of Quebec, identity and the participants.

5.2.1 The Multi-Interview Format

As I prepared to embark on this research study, I came across the work of Seidman (2013) on qualitative interviewing as a research tool. He recommended using multiple interviews with the same participants to obtain richer data than might have otherwise been available through a single interview format. As this was my first encounter with a multiple interview process for each participant, I was eager to try it to see how different it was from the single interview format I had used in the past.

Having now gone through the process, I believe that it can be a useful tool for researchers who wish to deeply explore a topic. However, there are aspects of the approach that I had not initially anticipated. For example, the time spent transcribing each of the rounds of interviews adversely affected the turnaround time between each successive round of interviews. Ideally, the time between interviews with participants

would be a couple of weeks. This would allow the recent interview to be fresh in their minds, while also allowing time for reflection. Unfortunately, the time it took me to transcribe the interviews stretched into several weeks, forcing each round of interviews to take place a couple of months apart. Since I wanted participant interviews to inform questions for future rounds, I chose to delay the beginning of successive rounds of interviews until the previous round had been fully transcribed and coded.

As a result of the extended time between each round, I may not have received the same type of reflective response I would have received had the rounds been conducted closer together. I asked participants to review transcripts prior to follow-up interviews, but several neglected to do so. Though there is no guarantee that I would have received more thoughtful responses had they followed through, the possibility is worth acknowledging. If I were to do a similar project in the future with access to research funding, I would try and make use of research assistants or clear the use of transcription services through the university Ethics board to help to maintain a shorter time period between each round of interviews and better adhere to Seidman's (2013) recommendations.

Despite the challenges outlined above, this study benefitted greatly from the use of a three round interview format. This is evident from the profiles I chose to include in this dissertation. Janet and Simon's profiles are merged into a single section while those of Bruce, Steve, Wanda, Tony, and Natasha warranted their own entries. This is due to the amount of data I had available from which I could construct the profiles. As noted in Table 3 of Section 3.5, Janet and Simon only participated in one round or two interviews respectively while Bruce, Steve, Wanda, Tony, and Natasha went through the full three interview protocol. Having an additional two hours of time with the participants allowed me to follow up on questions that required clarification and more deeply explore topics that came up over the course of the interviews. For example, Tony was far more reserved in his interviews. It took more time and effort to get him to open up and discuss his concerns and insecurities about his conversation group. In fact, Tony did not express his concerns over the continued existence of his group until the third interview. Had I only interviewed him once, an important aspect of his motivation would never have come to

light. The additional time, familiarity and rapport that developed provided me with key information for him.

I was also able to monitor the progress on Wanda's language learning goals from one interview to the next. In the first interview, for example, she was focused on being able to say three or four sentences using all the correct vocabulary and verb tenses. She also spent most of her time at the Library group listening to the discussions. By the time of the third interview, she was regularly attending sessions of a predominantly Francophone conversation group and contributing to the discussions. She had also set her mind to understanding and correctly using the subjunctive mood in conversations. These developments showcase milestones in her language learning journey and allowed me to talk with her at different points in her language proficiency. I would not have been able to notice these changes had I not had the opportunity to meet with her several times over the course of the yearlong study.

The time between rounds of interviews allowed me the opportunity to explore unforeseen events related to the conversation groups. For example, I was able to discuss the impact of the loss of the Library group's initial facilitator due to staffing changes. This event had a different impact on members of the participant group with some taking it harder than others to the point that it affected their attendance. Had I conducted only one round of interviews, I may not have had the opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings about the change and how it affected their motivation to continue participating in the group sessions. In addition, the time between rounds of interviews acted as a form of Data Triangulation, specifically Time Triangulation, where the same data collection method is employed but at different times (Cohen et al., 2011).

The above examples demonstrate the value added and overall importance of the multi-interview research approach. The study would have been greatly diminished had I used the more common single interview format.

5.2.2 The Focus on Seniors

When I set out to do this research study, I had anticipated an easier time finding participants. I was willing to interview anyone who was interested in participating, but it just happened that the more senior group members were the ones who wanted to do it. I had contacted local post-secondary French clubs in the hopes of finding representatives of the younger demographic, but I did not receive a response from club executives. As a result, I did not pursue the matter further with them, but this turned out to be a boon for the study.

Over the course of the study, I learned that seven of the nine senior participants had returned to school later in life to pursue a language, whether French, Italian, or Spanish. In each case, they began their studies either during retirement or in the latter stages of their careers when learning an addition language would not have been a major benefit for long term job prospects. Had I had a more evenly split group of participants, I may have missed the trend, a finding which adds to the significance of the study.

I found it interesting that several of the participants referred to the benefits that learning an additional language would have on their cognitive health. There was no doubt or questioning on their side of things. To them, it was an established fact. Simon compared speaking an L2 to playing music, saying “It keeps the brain working, and as you get older, it’s really important.” These beliefs connect to similar findings made in Boulton-Lewis et al. (2017) where participants took courses to stay active and prevent degeneration.

Wanda had similar thoughts, connecting her French language use to performing coordination tasks like drawing with her non-dominant hand and juggling. She explained, “I don’t know why I’m doing all this, I really don’t. Then I started reading articles about the brain and everything, how it was better if you – the older you get that you use other parts of the brain, so I also took up juggling for that reason.”

Natasha summed it up like this, “What I think and what the research keeps showing is, over and over again, [is that] speaking in another language is good for your

health, right? It's good for your brain. There's no -- it's universally agreed." Although none of them would be able to cite where they had first heard about these benefits, it is clear that the work of researchers such as Bialystok, Craik and Freedman (2007; Craik, Bialystok, & Freedman, 2010) has entered the public consciousness to some extent.

Despite the participants' belief in the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, I hesitate to classify this as a true motivator for their behavior. Rather, this is a positive by-product of the activity that they use to justify their participation in the conversation groups. When I asked Tony[18] if the cognitive benefits acted as motivation for his L2 activities, he expressed that they were "a side benefit but not – not a motivator". The personal and social rewards suggested by Stebbins (2007) are far more evident as motivators than the cognitive health benefits, coming out repeatedly during each of the interviews. Tony, for example, experienced two of the possible social rewards, personal enrichment and contribution to the maintenance and development of the group. Steve and Wanda[19] both emphasized that they found the activity fun, which Stebbins (2007) identified as self-gratification. They enjoy meeting new people they may not have otherwise, learning new things, and being part of a group. The cognitive benefits, by contrast, were added as an aside by the participants.

It was interesting to see how the seniors-related documents connected with the interviews I conducted and the sessions I observed. Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) had predicted that the next wave of seniors, who at the time of this present study would be aged 68 to 77 years old, would be better educated than their senior predecessors. Though I did not specifically ask the age of any of my participants, those documented in this study confirm the predictions. Each of the seniors I interviewed had attained at least a bachelor's degree, and five of the seven had pursued a new L2 later in life via some form of post-secondary institution. In addition, Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007) had predicted that these seniors would be involved in different organizations connected to

---

[18] See Section 4.3.2.4 for Tony's profile.

[19] See Section 4.3.2.2 for Steve's profile and Section 4.3.2.3 for Wanda's profile.

culture, education or a hobby of some sort. As has been discussed in Section 1.5.2 participation in conversation groups would fall under the hobbyist category of the Serious Leisure Perspective (Stebbins, 2007). The conversation groups themselves could be considered cultural organizations with the sessions acting as informal learning environments.

The Library group could be considered an example of the National Seniors Council's (2015) recommendations being implemented. The document makes note of potential language barriers to access to health services. As mentioned in section 4.1.2 the second moderator of the Library group was consistently providing information to the seniors about health-related services that could accommodate Francophone clients. Although the Library group was composed mostly of Anglophones, the group was originally meant for Francophone seniors. In addition, the existence of the Library group is an example of a program meant to help reduce feelings of isolation among Francophone seniors by making new friends with common interests, as noted in the Library organization's pamphlet of services (National Seniors Council, 2015; XXXXXX XXXXXXX, 2019).

The experiences conveyed by my participants reflect findings and recommendations of several studies discussed in Chapter 2. For example, both Wanda and Steve had mentioned that the local community college where they took French courses had offered lower tuition rates for seniors. This is similar to the study by Parks et al. (2013) who studied seniors who attended a traditional US university through a reduced tuition program. Parks et al. (2013) found that their seniors enjoyed meeting a diverse array of people and learning about new cultures. Wanda, Steve, and Natasha expressed similar sentiments about meeting a new and diverse group of people through the conversation groups. While the conversation groups are not connected to the community college French courses, students from these courses are encouraged by college staff to attend anyway. The college program serves as a potential entry point to participation in the conversation group, and by extension, the diverse array of people who participate in it.

Narushima (2008) recommended that affordable and accessible education programs be developed for seniors as these play a positive part in the health of seniors. Cost and accessibility were factors in Wanda's enrollment in the college FSL courses. She mentioned that her participation in the FSL program was contingent on the senior tuition rates. When the college temporarily cancelled the reduced rates, Wanda stopped taking courses. She did not return to the program until the reduced tuition rates were restored for seniors. Steve had also made mention of the senior tuition rates and commented on their importance to senior students. Their interviews support Narushima's (2008) recommendations by reinforcing the need for financially accessible programs for seniors. Had these tuition rates not been restored, Wanda's language learning journey may very well have come to a halt. Given the substantial amount of time she spends in French conversation groups, this would be a sharp blow to her routine and her social network (Narushima, 2008).

Wanda's interviews also supported the findings of Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018) who cited the pressure and stress from exams and assignments as a source of demotivation for senior students in post-secondary studies. Wanda indicated that found course work and assignments to be very stressful. She had no interest in taking exams or receiving certifications. She was there to learn French. She also disliked the focus on textbook exercises, feeling she got very little from cloze exercises. This reflects the Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018) study, as well, as their participants wanted to actively use the language, rather than spend time on exercises and memorization tasks. Tony's perspective differed in this respect, as he considered the standards in the community college courses to be too lax. He felt there were classmates who moved on from one level to the next before they were ready to do so.

I was surprised by the disparity in participation between males and females at the Pub sessions. Having taught for a decade as a substitute teacher, predominantly in French immersion schools, I have become accustomed to encountering more females than males in French L2 settings. For example, when I taught for six months in a French immersion homeroom, the class consisted of 16 girls and 12 boys (57% female to male

ratio). Similarly, when I taught elementary school science to a class in a different French immersion school for a six-month assignment, the class was made up of 17 girls and 13 boys (56.7% female to male ratio). On a staff of over 35 teachers and support staff, I was one of four males at the school (91.4% female to male ratio). This trend is supported in French Immersion research and has been noted for several decades (Allen, 2004; New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2016; Swain & Lapkin, 1982; S. K. Taylor, 1992). I had similar experiences throughout my undergraduate course work. The higher the course level, the fewer males tended to be in the French courses. This overrepresentation of female students pursuing French courses has been documented by Kissau (2006, 2007). If one accepts the notion that French-related activities in my local region have a higher participation rate among females, what makes this group different?

Drawing from personal experience, as noted in Section 1.2, a friend of mine had recommended using Meetup.com as a means of meeting new people with similar interests to my own. The overall age of the Pub group members tended to skew toward mid-30s and older, so perhaps others in the group had similar thoughts to my own. Simon[20] had indicated he would have been more inclined to participate in the group if it had been made up of gay men. Though the group has always seemed open and welcoming, there may be a perception that the sessions are filled with men who are looking to meet women. This perception could contribute to women's lack of attendance, particularly since the events are held in a pub. I never explored this topic with my participants because I was more interested in their experiences than having them hypothesize about potential reasons for the male to female disparity. However, it may be worth exploring if groups in other cities display a similar breakdown to what I observed. Does the proximity to Quebec affect the ratio, not only in the ratio of males to females, but Anglophones to Francophones?

---

[20] Simon's entry can be found in section 4.3.1 because he had only attended one or two sessions of the conversation groups. Although he was maintaining his French L2, he did so in much more subtle ways than the others in the study.

5.2.3 Quebec, Identity and the Participants

During the interviews, questions of participant identity began to surface. Bruce, in particular, offered an interesting glimpse into identity struggles in Quebec. His father was a Francophone, but Bruce was raised in English. His mother spoke English, his friends spoke English, and when he had children, he sent them to English schools. He identifies himself as an Anglophone and does not even consider himself bilingual. This speaks to an ideological perspective that does not recognize partial competence in a language (S. K. Taylor, 2019; S. K. Taylor & Snoddon, 2013). When Bruce thinks of bilingualism, he connects to balanced bilingualism, that is, an equal proficiency in both languages (Roy, 2010).

Valdés (2001) offers two definitions of the heritage language learner. She states that "heritage language refers to a language with which individuals have a personal connection. It is the historical and personal connection to the language that is salient and not the actual proficiency of individual speakers" (Valdés, 2001, pp. 37-38). Based on his family name, he could be argued to be Québécois, and it appears that members of his extended family would embrace that definition (Valdés, 2001). He, however, does not identify as such. (Jin Sook Lee, 2005). For pedagogical purposes, Valdés (2001) defines heritage language learners as those students "raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speak or understand the heritage language, and who have some proficiency in English and the heritage language" (pp. 39-40). By those criteria, Bruce also qualifies as a heritage language learner. However, the significance of his personal identification should not be undervalued.

As discussed in Section 2.3, the Québécois label comes with expectations and connotations (Leroux, 2014; Reid, 2012). By Bruce identifying himself as an Anglophone, he is making, consciously or unconsciously, a political statement. He is a Montrealer and a Canadian, not a Québécois with all that it implies. Moving to Ontario, much to the chagrin of his extended family, is another example of him asserting his Canadian heritage over one connected to Quebec. In his interviews, he indicated that he chose to put his children in English schools because of the nationalist views that he felt

were permeating the system at the time. This is a deliberate action to distance himself from Québécois identity and the politics of the sovereignty movement.

There are also parallels to the studies conducted by (Roy, 2010) and Levasseur (2017) in that he does not feel he is bilingual because his French does not measure up to the standards of Francophones he knows and interacts with in Quebec. He occupies that *third space*, straddling between the English and French monolingual solitudes.

Steve, Wanda, and Tony each grew up in Quebec around the time of the political unrest in the province (Le Gall & Meintel, 2015; C. Taylor, 1993). Both Steve and Tony were aware of the tensions but experienced them differently. Steve saw them as low-level rivalries whereas Tony was worried about getting into fights with French kids if he wandered into the wrong neighbourhood. They experienced Quebec at a time when the English were the managerial class of the province and the sovereignty movement was only starting to gain political traction, as mentioned in Section 1.1. Echoes of that time can be seen in the discourses expressed in the study by Groff et al. (2016). Wanda did not address the tensions of the time, though she lived in a predominantly English area so may not have had direct contact with it.

Simon presents an unusual case in that he is an Anglophone who was quite supportive of the sovereignty movement during his time in the province. It was interesting to note that when referring to his partner of the time, Simon was quick to point out that his partner was not Québécois, thus reinforcing the 'understood' meaning of the term (Reid, 2012). Though he had experienced some of the daily tensions that went along with the times, his openness and willingness to try and integrate more into Québécois society may have led to him being treated differently as Groff et al. (2016) suggested was possible with their participants.

I found it interesting that so many of the participants had a connection to Montreal and surrounding areas in Quebec. Five of the seven senior participants were either raised in the Montreal area or lived there for a number of years. This enabled me to explore aspects of their identities, both how they identify themselves, and how others would classify them (Jin Sook Lee, 2005; Reid, 2012; Valdés, 2001). Bruce and Steve identify

themselves as Montrealers, for example, even though Bruce could be considered Quebecois heritage and Steve only lived in Montreal until his early teens. Wanda sees herself as English, as evident by her references to the city of Trois-Rivières as Three Rivers. Tony considers himself English, as well, since that was his country of origin, despite living in Canada for most of his life and being raised in Montreal. It is apparent that identity is a complex and nuanced thing.

5.3 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I evaluated the usefulness of the Dörnyei-Stebbins hybrid framework as a tool for qualitative analysis. I provided explanations of how each of the senior participants' motivations can be understood via use of the framework. I believe the use of both frameworks in concert provides a more complete understanding of each participant than would have been available using only one single framework.

Next, I discussed the value of the three round multi-interview format and how it provided additional depth to my data and enhanced the study. The additional interviews allowed participants to become more comfortable with me and allowed me to obtain data that may not have come to light had we not taken more opportunities to talk. The time between interviews also allowed me to make note of progress of individual participant goals and to get reactions to events that transpired after the initial round of interviews.

I discussed the change in focus to a more senior-centric study. I explored how the seniors' experiences connected with existing literature, often supporting previous findings. I also discussed how the participants and the conversation groups reflect government documents and the recommendations made related to Canadian seniors. The participants seem to conform to predictions and the Library conversation group seems to be an example of an organization attempting to implement government recommendations.

Finally, I discussed aspects of the Quebec context and how it affected how seniors in the study self-identified. Language and identity are very political in Quebec and this was reflected in how one of the participants identifies himself.

Chapter 6

6 Conclusions

In this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the study and address the research questions before discussing the significance of the findings. Next, I address the research questions and the limitations of the study before proposing possible directions for future research and additional recommendations.

6.1 Summary of the Study

At the outset of this study, I wanted to explore the language learning journeys of minority, non-heritage L2 speakers to better understand what led them to maintain their L2, particularly if the L2 is not used in an employment capacity. I wanted to see if there was something in their pasts that I could learn from to better understand why they have chosen to pursue and maintain their L2 when, in all likelihood, their classmates have not decided to do so. I wanted to hear from the L2 speakers themselves why they felt they had chosen to actively maintain their L2. However, the study evolved to focus on seniors who had chosen to learn and maintain French as an L2, the majority of whom had done so later in life.

In addition to asking about their past L2 experiences and why they had chosen to pursue the language, I was interested in how they maintained their L2 proficiency. I focused on their participation in conversation groups because of the opportunity to observe people actively engaged in L2 maintenance face-to-face, but also because of the additional effort required to participate in such an activity. I was interested in learning about any activities they pursued to enhance their L2 learning and/or maintenance. In a broader sense, I was interested in how their L2 had affected their lives. Finally, I was interested in if the participants experiences, my observations, and interview data could be understood through the lens of a hybrid framework that blended Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective.

The participants went through the typical provincial system for whichever time they were educated. Bruce, Wanda, and Tony, for example, went through the Quebec

school system, while Steve began school in Quebec before moving to Ontario prior to the start of high school. Janet, Simon, and Natasha were educated in Ontario. Some of the Ontario seniors started their first formal French classes in high school (Gidney, 1999). Others began in elementary school, as is the norm now. Section 1.1 discusses the Ontario FSL learning context in more detail, but French immersion was not an available option, nor did it exist in a widespread fashion when these seniors were going through school (Heller, 2003).

Interestingly, the majority of the participants chose to return to some form of post-secondary education to pursue studies in their chosen L2 as adults, typically just prior to or during their retirement. Steve, Wanda, and Tony each took courses through a local community college, while Janet took courses through the local university. Natasha took French courses as a mature student and now, during semi-retirement, takes Spanish courses through community organized programs.

What motivates these seniors to continue to work on and to maintain their L2?

Most participants did not know why they chose to return to learn an L2 later in life, but the thematic analysis of interview data seemed to indicate they did so out of a desire for a closer familial connection, more social opportunities or out of a sense of nostalgia. The familial connection and nostalgia seemed to go hand-in-hand as many of the seniors looked back to parental relationships and decisions about their early L2 experiences for motivation. As children, they would not have had a real say in what kind of school they went to or whether they would be taught an L2 in the home. Learning an L2 later in life allowed them to reconnect with memories of family and to ponder roads left untraveled.

Many of the participants had some sort of direct connection to the city of Montreal. Five of the seven senior participants lived there for extended periods of time. Four of the participants grew up in and around the city, while the fifth moved there in his 20s. It makes one wonder how much of an impact having firsthand experience with a target language culture during a learner’s formative years increases the likelihood that

they will pursue the target language later in life, in this case decades after the fact for some participants.

The participants were drawn to conversation groups for a variety of reasons. In some cases, it was purely social. For example, Bruce was looking to keep up with his French and meet new people in a new city. In other cases, it was to practice their L2 now that their course work was finished. Steve, Wanda, and Tony had each completed their community college programs before joining the conversation groups. The Pub and Library sessions offered opportunities to interact with people from a wide variety of countries and ethnic backgrounds. This was a significant factor for several participants. The chance to interact with French speakers from different countries brings an authenticity to the sessions that would not be available through a smartphone app or other form of digital space. It provides new cultural perspectives, as well as a sense of belonging to something bigger than oneself. While international Francophones were in the clear minority during the sessions, they left a lasting impression on the participants.

In addition to attending conversation group sessions anywhere from one to four times per week, the participants spent time seeking out novels, TV programs, films, radio broadcasts and online videos in their chosen L2. When they chose to practice, they would often rely on low-tech pen and paper options, like working on grammar exercise books or doing independent novel studies. This could be attributed to a lack of familiarity with software and smartphone applications or their own comfort level with using techniques they had used in the past. Two of the participants took extensive notes on the novels they read in order to add new vocabulary to their linguistic repertoires. Another participant wrote notes to himself and made his shopping lists in French.

While some participants claimed their pursuit of their L2 had no impact on their lives, the time commitment alone would say otherwise. The most active participants could spend up to eight hours per week across four different conversation groups. This is all before accounting for time spent listening to the radio, reading, or watching television. If nothing else, this sort of time commitment justifies its description as a serious leisure activity (Stebbins, 2007). For some it was an opportunity to reclaim a piece of their

identity, for others it was an opportunity to rewrite their personal history. Some just considered it a fun pastime.

How does Stebbins' Serious Leisure Perspective relate to Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System? How does this lens inform our understanding of the seniors' L2 hobby?

Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective is more of a classification framework to aid in the categorization of practitioners' leisure activities, while Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System is, as the name indicates, a motivational framework. However, Stebbins (2007) identified ten rewards of participation in serious leisure activities. These rewards, classified as either personal or social, correspond very well to the component parts of the L2MSS. In fact, nine of the ten rewards identified in the Serious Leisure Perspective map on to a feature of the L2MSS. The Self-actualization and Self-image rewards, for example, correspond to the Ideal L2 Self component of the L2MSS. The rewards of Personal Enrichment, Self-gratification, Social Attraction, and Group Accomplishment correspond to the L2 Learning Experience portion of the L2MSS framework. The most difficult reward to accommodate was the Contribution to the Maintenance of a Group reward, though it does align with the Ought-To L2 Self component of the L2MSS. The only reward that does not seem to correspond to the L2MSS is Financial Return.

The hybrid Dörnyei-Stebbins framework successfully captured the motivations for why this group of participants seek out L2 leisure activities like weekly conversation groups. Some are pursuing a version of their ideal L2 self, as proposed by Dörnyei (2009). Some are doing things they feel they ought to do. Others still are doing it because of the personal and social rewards gained from their participation (Stebbins, 2007). Those participants who did not initially seem to fit neatly under one framework are accommodated by the second, thus enhancing the analysis. The Serious Leisure Perspective added to the analysis because its terminology fit well with the participant responses. Participants were more likely to describe themselves as having fun or enjoying an experience than using terms like 'future self'. The combination of the two provides more depth and insights into their motivation than either framework could have

done on its own. However, the use of both in tandem would only be applicable when referring to the pursuit of an L2 as a leisure activity.

Additional Thoughts

The themes that emerged from the study, particularly the familial connection and nostalgia, are highly personalized and relevant to the individuals, so I would not expect them to be duplicated in a classroom environment. However, the social connection and the idea of incorporating opportunities to socialize in the target L2 seem quite attainable, particularly in an adult learning environment. When I was in my Bachelor of Education program, my classmates and I were concerned about whether our level of French was sufficiently high to meet the demands of teaching in elementary school settings. To mitigate our apprehension, we organized our own weekly conversation session in the cafeteria of the faculty.

Organizing an additional conversation hour outside of lecture times in a post-secondary learning environment should be feasible, even if the sessions are done on a voluntary basis. If an instructor wants to go with a more communicative approach, then he/she could allot a portion of lecture time on a weekly basis to form smaller conversation groups. The instructor could circulate and ask additional questions or perhaps use some language-related games to stimulate conversation. One participant had mentioned that he found the Pub group to be a safe and relaxed place where he could take risks and try to speak without the worry of being mocked or looked down upon if he forgot a word of made verb conjugation errors. Creating a similar sort of risk-taking environment in the classroom would likely encourage more spontaneous conversations and peer to peer interactions. This sort of activity would be most useful with intermediate level L2 speakers.

At the elementary school level, the current Ontario FSL curriculum places a stronger emphasis on oral production of the language than previous iterations of the curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1998, 2013). However, creating an atmosphere conducive to linguistic risk-taking in a typical Core FSL classroom would require some creativity. French conversation times in French immersion environments

would be significantly easier to implement, in part because of the students' greater comfort level and proficiency with the language. Convincing elementary school students to participate in an optional conversation group outside of instructional hours could be very challenging.

The idea of pairing formal and informal learning to facilitate better language learning outcomes is not new. The French Immersion program in Trois-Pistoles, Quebec divides each weekday into morning classes, afternoon workshops, and evening cultural events (Explore, n.d.). Formal learning occurs during the morning class time, while informal learning occurs during the workshops and cultural events. Students get an opportunity to turn language theory into language application each day. Students are forced to interact with the language in a different way than they would have during class time. The atmosphere is supportive and safe, similar to the atmosphere created during the conversation groups.

In a predominantly Anglophone setting, it is not possible to duplicate an immersion environment on the scale that students experience during immersion sessions in Quebec. However, the effectiveness of the Trois-Pistoles program is partly based on an agreement to speak only in French over the course of the five-week session. There is an unspoken understanding between members who attend conversation groups that the language used will be French, if possible. While not strictly policed, this creates a space where members can express themselves without fear of mockery. The conversation groups move members out of the classroom and into a world of spontaneous interaction that encourages them to apply what they have learned. Adding an element like this to an existing formal program, an element that encourages spontaneous interaction, can only be helpful to the students' L2 development.

The participants demonstrated the usefulness of informal L2 language learning opportunities over the course of the study. Several of the participants went through a local college's FSL program. Having completed the course options, they turned to conversation groups as the next step in their L2 journeys. There comes a point in any program where course options are no longer available or relevant to the learners. If

learners wish to continue their progress, they will have to seek out additional opportunities. Perhaps it would be helpful to both learners and the programs if they developed student-led informal sessions. Perhaps rooms could be made available to those who were interested in facilitating such a venture.

On the theory side, the hybrid Dörnyei-Stebbins framework could be used in conjunction with an interest inventory survey at the beginning of a semester. The students could be analyzed using the framework to provide the instructor insights into student motivations. Language learning activities could be planned around the results of this survey. Perhaps feedback sessions could be held at regular intervals during an academic term. The data obtained could be analyzed from one term to the next to aid in the development of curriculum that meets the needs of the students. I have not developed an appropriate survey or feedback mechanism for this purpose; however, its development could become the basis for an interesting research project.

Canadian Parents for French (n.d.-a, n.d.-b) has demonstrated the significant attrition rate in Core French classes after the Grade 9 language requirement has been satisfied. However, French Immersion programs across the country continue to grow at a steady pace (Government of Canada, 2012). The federal government dedicated $2.2B to its promotion of Canada's Linguistic Duality programs between 2008 and 2018 with a sizable portion allotted for education programs (Government of Canada, 2008, 2012, 2013). However, the programs do not address the needs of minority language learners, particularly seniors. Education-related programs are aimed at younger students while language-related services for seniors is confined to access to health care in their preferred official language (Government of Canada, 2008, 2013, 2018).

To better understand participant motivations on an individual basis, I used a hybrid framework that combined Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System and Stebbins' (2007) Serious Leisure Perspective. Using the two frameworks in concert provided me with additional focus and depth than would have been otherwise available had I only used a single framework. In fact, the two frameworks work together so well for L2-related leisure pursuits that each one seems to support and validate the other.

The L2 Learning Experience component of the L2MSS encompassed such a wide range of activities and interactions that it became almost abstract. However, the Serious Leisure Perspective allowed me to focus in on two distinct levels of motivation in the participants. I could analyze their reasons for pursuing the language, but also why they were participating in minority L2 conversation groups. These motivations, in turn, could be related back to the L2MSS, which provided additional insight into the participants.

For example, participant motivation could be described in terms of the personal or social rewards identified by the Stebbins (2007) framework. These rewards act as motivators for continued participation in and/or maintenance of the chosen L2, in general, and participation in the conversation groups, specifically. The personal or social rewards experienced through the learning and/or maintaining of the L2 can be mapped on to the three components of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2MSS: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the L2 Learning Experience. Each of these components contribute to the motivation to continue with the L2. The conversation group activities fit neatly into the broadly defined L2 Learning Experience by virtue of being an L2 activity. Positive experiences in the conversation groups enhance motivation to continue to go to the groups, and by extension, continue to improve or maintain the L2.

This case study focused on the phenomenon of senior FSL speakers who were actively trying to maintain their L2 in a predominantly Anglophone area. I focused on seniors who were participating in FSL conversation groups that were not affiliated with post-secondary educational institutions like colleges or universities. The senior participants were members of one of two weekly FSL conversation groups. One of the conversation groups was organized through an online site called Meetup.com. The French language club on the site boasted several hundred members of all ages, though only a fraction would attend the weekly conversation groups. The second conversation group was considerably smaller and organized through a local health service organization. Data were collected through on-site observation of the groups, semi-structured qualitative interviews with participants, and document analysis of seniors-related government publications.

I regularly attended sessions of this group and recruited several participants through it. Through networking within the Meetup group, I became aware of another conversation group that was organized for Francophone seniors. I began observing this group as well and recruited participants from among their membership. In total, I recruited 12 people to participate in a series of qualitative interviews. The initial participants ranged in age from an early 20s graduate student to 55+ year old retirees, the majority of which fell into the retiree category. However, once the study was refined, the focus shifted to the senior participants. Data collected from non-seniors has not been reported here as it is outside the bounds of this case.

I opted to use a semi-structured three interview approach that allowed me the freedom to delve more deeply into topics than would have otherwise been possible had I used a single interview format (Brinkmann, 2013; Seidman, 2013). From one round to the next, I analyzed interview data to draw out themes relevant to participants' motivation to learn and maintain French as an L2. Participants who were not actively attending conversation groups, were not actively trying to maintain their L2, or who were still very early in their L2 learning journey were dismissed in earlier rounds. In total, five senior participants went through the full three interview process.

Using MaxQDA 12 software, I coded each interview individually, treating each almost like an individual case before comparing them to subsequent interviews by the same person and to other participants in the study (Merriam, 1998). The participants were not consciously aware of why they connected to their L2 or why they chose to actively maintain it. However, themes connected to family, social interaction, and a sense of nostalgia emerged from the qualitative interviews. Many expressed a sense of loss of familial identity or guilt at not having learned French earlier in life. Others had learned the language as a means of connecting with loved ones. Some just had fun learning and using the language.

Data collected from the interviews reflected what I had observed during on-site observations. For example, I met many of the international Francophones that participants referred to when they spoke of how much they enjoyed meeting a diverse

array of people from different countries. The practices observed at one of the conversation groups also reflected recommendations put forward in different seniors-related publications by the Canadian government (National Seniors Council, 2015; Turcotte & Schellenberg, 2007). The educational background of the participants also matched predictions made by Turcotte and Schellenberg (2007).

6.2 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in a number of ways. First, the study acknowledged the efforts of individuals who exist outside of typical L2 learning studies. There exists a population outside of the formal learning environments who are motivated to improve and maintain their L2 proficiencies through independent means. They use social media applications and websites to meet others with similar goals and they congregate to socialize in their target L2. I observed and participated in two French language conversation groups, but there are many other languages that have similar groups, and these groups merit exploration as there are many more stories to tell.

Second, the study shone a light on seniors who have chosen to return to educational institutions or community-based learning environments for the purposes of learning an additional language. In some cases, these learners returned to school prior to retirement, while others did so once they had retired. This is significant because, as Canada's population ages, there will be a greater number of people potentially looking to return to educational institutions as a means of socializing, keeping active, and maintaining their cognitive health (Government of Canada, 2014). Canadian seniors are projected to number approximately 9.5 million people and make up 23% of the population (Government of Canada, 2014). Educational institutions should be aware of seniors' needs and interests and plan accordingly. Setting affordable tuition fees for seniors and others on a fixed income will become increasingly important.

The seniors in this study participated in several different independently organized L2 conversation groups. In addition, three participated in a group that was intended to be run for Francophone seniors. These participants and other members of the group are Anglophones and essentially took over a session that was not originally intended for

them. This indicates that there is a need for services that is not being met. Programs for Anglophone seniors should be made aware of this interest and investigate whether adding similar activities would be feasible for their clientele.

Another concern for seniors is transportation. Several participants were reliant on public transportation to make it to the conversation groups, as well as the individual interviews for the study. While these seniors were mobile and active, there may be others who could benefit from the conversation groups but who lack the means to attend. Issues such as this are important and deserve investigation.

The final significant piece of this study is the hybrid Dörnyei-Stebbins L2 Motivational Leisure framework. This represents an effort to take frameworks from two different research fields and traditions and make them work together to provide insight into the motivations of those that choose to learn and/or maintain a minority non-heritage L2 as a leisure pursuit. The study successfully connected personal and social rewards suggested in Stebbins' (2007) framework with all three components of Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System. The fusion of these two frameworks provides guidance, focus, and clarity into why L2 learners may choose to pursue an L2 as a leisure activity and additionally explains why specific activities, like conversation groups, are important to the L2 learning experience and, by extension, to the learners themselves. While either framework could be used to study the same phenomenon documented in this research study, using the two in combination adds additional layers of analysis that may go overlooked without the two. In addition, successfully combining the two frameworks also serves to validate both frameworks as they come from different fields and perspectives.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

As with any research project there were certain limitations beyond my control. The first limitation was sample size. Because I was the only researcher doing data collection, transcription and analysis, there were only so many participants I could accept and still complete the study within the required time frame. I had other people potentially interested in participating, but because of where I was along the research process, I was

unable to accept them for this study. Although twelve participants provided rich data, I am sure that a larger participant pool would have been even more informative.

A lack of age diversity with the participant pool proved to be a limitation, as well. I had intended to recruit participants from a wider range of ages. However, I recruited those who were willing and available. It just happened to be more of a senior age range than had been anticipated. It is possible that younger participants would provide considerably different data from the seniors discussed in this study.

Canada's significant geography limited access to conversation groups from different areas. Since my study began, new French language groups formed on Meetup and have had ongoing conversation sessions. Unfortunately, I was unable to conveniently attend those sessions. I would have liked to have seen how different groups from the same online platform conducted their sessions. In addition, I would like to see if the gender disparity existed in other groups, as well.

A final limitation was that of my own L2. I only speak English and French, so my presence would have been disruptive had I observed other minority L2 group sessions.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

First, I would encourage researchers to conduct a similar study using a younger age group as participants. This would address the limitation of the study mentioned in the previous section and further assess the applicability and usefulness of the Dörnyei-Stebbins hybrid framework. As this is a new formulation of the L2MSS and Serious Leisure Perspective, it would benefit from rigourous testing by different groups of researchers.

Next, I would expand the study to include more seniors than the present study. I would also expand the data collection methods to include small focus group discussions and a weekly feedback card that could be used to evaluate how participants feel about the sessions from one week to the next. In addition, I would increase the number of researchers to accommodate the additional work required to successfully conduct the

study. This would include additional people for transcription and for coding of interview and focus group data.

Finally, I would recommend conducting similar studies in different geographic areas. The demographics would certainly change from one city to the next, and from one province to another. It would be interesting to compare and contrast the data obtained through such a study.

6.5 Recommendations

The Canadian Federal government has invested a considerable amount of money and resources in support of Canada's linguistic duality over the past decade, as noted in Section 1.1 (Government of Canada, 2008, 2013, 2018). However, participants in this study noted that once an Anglophone's FSL education comes to an end, whether that comes during high school or at a post-secondary institution, there are few opportunities to use the language they have learned unless it is directly connected to their source of employment. This amounts to a significant cost for little return on financial investment.

It is unrealistic to expect the Federal government to fund local French L2 organizations, particularly if the interest is not there from the local population. However, post-secondary institutions should allot space to interested parties to run informal conversation sessions. In addition to providing space, the institutions need to do a better job of supporting and publicizing the existence of any currently available sessions. Use of campus media and bulletin boards would raise awareness of such sessions and, in turn, create some interest in the endeavour. Several participants noted that they became aware of their current conversation groups through fliers posted on bulletin boards. A more pronounced web or mobile presence could serve a similar function as the bulletin boards did, but for university or college-aged Canadians instead of seniors.

Many of the participants in the current study are members of Canada's ever-growing senior demographic (Government of Canada, 2014). These seniors chose to return to post-secondary education institutions either late in their careers or post-retirement to pursue second language studies. While campuses are still the domain of

those readying to start their careers, it would benefit post-secondary institutions to consider the potential for seniors returning to the lecture halls. The participants in this study seemed to be financially stable, but tuition costs could be prohibitive to others in their age bracket. Colleges and universities should consider adopting a tuition fee structure that would accommodate seniors on a fixed income. Such a policy would be in line with current Canadian government initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for Canada's seniors (Government of Canada, 2014).

A number of the senior participants in the study were active members of a conversation group aimed at Francophone seniors. As Anglophones, these seniors are not part of the organization's target clientele. The interest garnered from the Anglophone group members is an indication that their needs are not being appropriately addressed by Anglophone senior services. I recommend that organizations for Anglophone seniors survey their client base to gauge interest in L2-related programming. If there are not sufficient numbers to justify running their own group, then the Francophone seniors' groups should receive additional funding to cover the influx of Anglophones to their activities.

Seniors represent the foundation upon which our country was built. Their contributions should be valued, and every effort should be made to ensure that they enjoy a healthy and engaging retirement. The benefits to seniors' quality of life through activities like the L2 conversation groups far outweigh the financial costs, and after a lifetime of working and contributing to Canadian society, they deserve a good quality of life. For the seniors in this study, learning and maintaining French as an L2 was an important part of their lives. For some it was an opportunity to reclaim a piece of their identity, for others it was an opportunity to rewrite their personal history. Some just considered it a fun pastime.

With respect to the proposed Dörnyei-Stebbins hybrid framework, the combination of these two perspectives appears viable for investigating motivations of those who pursue L2 learning as a hobby, pastime, or leisure activity. Those participants who do not fit neatly under one framework are accommodated by the second. The

combination of the two provides more depth and insights into their motivation than either framework could have done on its own.

References

Al-Hoorie, A. H. (2018). The L2 motivational self system: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 8*(4), 721-754.

Al-Hoorie, A. H., & MacIntyre, P. (2019). *Contemporary language motivation theory: 60 years since Gardner and Lambert (1959)*: Multilingual Matters.

Al-Shehri, A. S. (2009). Motivation and vision: The relation between the ideal L2 self, imagination and visual style. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity the L2 self* (pp. 164-171). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Allen, M. (2004). Minority language school systems; a profile of students, schools and communities: Reading achievement of students in French immersion programs [based on data from the Programme for International Student Assessment]. *Education Quarterly Review (Online), 9*(4), 25-30.

Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (Vol. 79). Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Batibo, H. (2005). *Language decline and death in Africa: Causes, consequences, and challenges* (Vol. 132): Multilingual Matters.

Berg, B. L., & Lune, H. (2012). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Bialystok, E., Craik, F. I., & Freedman, M. (2007). Bilingualism as a protection against the onset of symptoms of dementia. *Neuropsychologia, 45*(2), 459-464.

Boo, Z., Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). L2 motivation research 2005–2014: Understanding a publication surge and a changing landscape. *System, 55*, 145-157.

Boulton-Lewis, G. M., Pike, L., Tam, M., & Buys, L. (2017). Ageing, loss, and learning: Hong Kong and Australian seniors. *Educational Gerontology, 43*(2), 89-100.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241-258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Brinkmann, S. (2013). *Qualitative interviewing*. New York, NY: Oxford university press.

Campbell, E., & Storch, N. (2011). The changing face of motivation: A study of second language learners' motivation over time. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 34*(2), 166-192.

Canadian Parents for French. (n.d.-a). 2011-2012 Core French enrolment by province/territory and grade. Retrieved from http://cpf.ca/en/research-advocacy/research/enrolmenttrends/

Canadian Parents for French. (n.d.-b). 2012-2013 Core French enrolment by province/territory and grade. Retrieved from http://cpf.ca/en/research-advocacy/research/enrolmenttrends/

Cartwright, D. (1996). The expansion of French language rights in Ontario, 1968–1993: The uses of territoriality in a policy of gradualism. *Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe canadien, 40*(3), 238-257.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.): Routledge.

Craik, F. I., Bialystok, E., & Freedman, M. (2010). Delaying the onset of Alzheimer disease: bilingualism as a form of cognitive reserve. *Neurology, 75*(19), 1726-1729.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.): Sage publications.

Cummins, J. (1979). Cognitive/Academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working Papers on Bilingualism, 19*, 121-129.

Cummins, J. (1999). BICS and CALP: Clarifying the Distinction.

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Identity and a model of investment in applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 35*, 36-56.

de Burgh-Hirabe, R. (2019). Motivation to learn Japanese as a foreign language in an English speaking country: An exploratory case study in New Zealand. *System, 80*, 95-106.

Denzin, N. K. (2012). Triangulation 2.0. *Journal of mixed methods research, 6*(2), 80-88.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (Third ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Dettori, G., & Torsani, S. (2013). Enriching formal language learning with an informal social component. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 16*(1), 93-103.

Dorian, N. C. (2006). Minority and Endangered Languages. In T. K. Bhatia & W. C. Ritchie (Eds.), *The Handbook of Bilingualism* (pp. 437-459): Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching, 31*(3), 117-135.

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. *Language Learning, 53*(S1), 3-32.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol, UK; Buffalo, NY;: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. (2019). Foreword. In A. H. Al-Hoorie & P. MacIntyre (Eds.), *Contemporary language motivation theory: 60 years since Gardner and Lambert (1959)*: Multilingual Matters.

Dyson, A. H., & Genishi, C. (2005). *On the case*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Explore. (n.d.). Explore. Retrieved from https://www.myexplore.ca/en/

Fishman, J. A. (2006). Language Maintenance, Language Shift, and Reversing Language Shift. In T. K. Bhatia & W. C. Rictchie (Eds.), *The handbook of bilingualism and multilingualism* (pp. 466).

Freeman, M. (1999). The language learning activities of students of EFL and French at two universities. *Language Learning Journal, 19*(1), 80-88.

Gao, F. (2010). Learning Korean language in China: Motivations and strategies of non-Koreans. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 13*(3), 273-284.

García, M. (2003). Recent research on language maintenance. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 23*, 22-43.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Arnold.

Gardner, R. C. (2006). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition: A research paradigm. *EUROSLA Yearbook, 6*(1), 237-260.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1959). Motivational variables in second-language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology/Revue canadienne de psychologie, 13*(4), 266-272.

Gardner, R. C., Masgoret, A. M., Tennant, J., & Mihic, L. (2004). Integrative motivation: Changes during a year-long intermediate-level language course. *Language Learning, 54*(1), 1-34.

Gathercole, V. C. M., & Thomas, E. M. (2009). Bilingual first-language development: Dominant language takeover, threatened minority language take-up. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, 12*(2), 213-237.

Gibbons, J., & Ramirez, E. (2004). Different beliefs: Beliefs and the maintenance of a minority language. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 23*(1), 99-117.

Gidney, R. D. (1999). *From Hope to Harris: The reshaping of Ontario's schools*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Government of Canada. (2008). *Roadmap for Canada's linguistic duality 2008-2013: Acting for the future.* Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Government of Canada. (2012). *Roadmap for Canada's linguistic duality 2008-2013: Acting for the future - Midterm report*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Government of Canada. (2013). *Roadmap for Canada's official languages 2013–2018: Education, immigration, communities*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Government of Canada. (2014, March 25, 2019). Government of Canada — Action for seniors report. Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/seniors-action-report.html

Government of Canada. (2018). *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Groff, C., Pilote, A., & Vieux-Fort, K. (2016). «I am not a francophone»: Les choix identitaires et les discours de jeunes qui s'associent à une minorité forte. *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies/Revue d'études des Cantons-de-l'Est (JETS/RECE)*(46).

Han, H. (2013). Unintended language maintenance: the English Congregation of a Baptist Chinese church in Western Canada. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 2013*(222), 101-129.

Heller, M. (2003). *Crosswords: Language, education and ethnicity in French Ontario* (Vol. 66). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Hennink, M. M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal, 72*(3), 283-294.

Horwitz, E. K. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning: A review of BALLI studies. *System, 27*(4), 557-576.

Hugo, V. (1861). *Le dernier jour d'un condamné*: Lahure.

Iqbal, I. (2005). Mother tongue and motherhood: Implications for French language maintenance in Canada. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 61*(3), 305-323.

Jones, A. (2015). Social media for informal minority language learning: exploring Welsh learners' practices. *Jornal of Interactive Media in Education, 2015*(1).

Kim, T.-Y., & Kim, Y.-K. (2015). Elderly Korean learners' participation in English learning through lifelong education: Focusing on motivation and demotivation. *Educational Gerontology, 41*(2), 120-135.

Kissau, S. (2006). Gender differences in motivation to learn French. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 62*(3), 401-422.

Kissau, S. (2007). Is what's good for the goose good for the gander? The case of male and female encouragement to study French. *Foreign Language Annals, 40*(3), 419-432.

Klimczak-Pawlak, A., & Kossakowska-Pisarek, S. (2018). Language learning over 50 at the Open University in Poland: An exploratory study of needs and emotions. *Educational Gerontology, 44*(4), 255-264.

Kubota, R. (2011). Learning a foreign language as leisure and consumption: Enjoyment, desire, and the business of eikaiwa. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 14*(4), 473-488.

Kurata, N. (2010). Opportunities for foreign language learning and use within a learner's informal social networks. *Mind, Culture, and Activity, 17*(4), 382-396.

L'Arche Canada. (n.d.). A brief history of l'Arche. Retrieved from http://www.larche.ca:8080/about-larche/our-history

Lai, C., & Zheng, D. (2018). Self-directed use of mobile devices for language learning beyond the classroom. *ReCALL, 30*(3), 299-318.

Lamb, M. (2009). Situating the L2 self: Two Indonesian school learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 229-247). Bristol, UK; Buffalo, NY;: Multilingual Matters.

Le Gall, J., & Meintel, D. (2015). Cultural and identity transmission in mixed couples in Quebec, Canada: Normalizing plural identities as a path to social integration. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 662*(1), 112-128.

Lee, J. S. (2005). Through the learners' eyes: Reconceptualizing the heritage and non-heritage learner of the less commonly taught languages. *Foreign Language Annals, 38*(4), 554-563.

Lee, J. S. (2016). “Everywhere You Go, You See English!”: Elderly Women's Perspectives on Globalization and English. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 13*(4), 319-350.

Leroux, D. (2014). Entrenching Euro-settlerism: Multiculturalism and the politics of nationalism in Québec. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 46*(2), 133-139.

Leung, A., Lui, Y.-H., & Chi, I. (2006). Later life learning experience among Chinese elderly in Hong Kong. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education, 26*(2), 1-15.

Levasseur, C. (2017). When children challenge what’s ‘obvious’: Identities, discourses, and representations from the perspective of schoolchildren in Vancouver, Canada. In *Sociolinguistic Research* (pp. 65-85): Routledge.

Levenberg, A., & Caspi, A. (2010). Comparing perceived formal and informal learning in face-to-face versus online environments. *Interdisciplinary Journal of E-Learning and Learning Objects, 6*(1), 323-333.

Livingstone, D. (2001). Adults' Informal Learning: Definitions, Findings, Gaps, and Future Research. NALL Working Paper# 21.

MacLennan, H. (2018). *Two solitudes*: McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist, 41*(9), 954.

Martel, M. (2019). The 1969 Official Languages Act: A Turning Point, but for Whom? *Canadian Historical Review, 100*(2), 208-222.

Masgoret, A. M., & Gardner, R. C. (2003). Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *Language Learning, 53*(S1), 167-210.

McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Meetup. (n.d.). About Meetup. Retrieved from https://www.meetup.com/about/

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education: Revised and expanded from case study research in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Mishan, F. (2005). *Designing authenticity into language learning materials*. Britol, UK: Intellect Books.

Moskovsky, C., Assulaimani, T., Racheva, S., & Harkins, J. (2016). The L2 motivational self system and L2 achievement: A study of Saudi EFL learners. *The Modern Language Journal, 100*(3), 641-654.

Nakamura, T. (2018). A comparative analysis of Japanese language learners' motivation in Australia and Korea. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 12*(4), 316-329. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2016.1213267

Narushima, M. (2008). More than nickels and dimes: The health benefits of a community-based lifelong learning programme for older adults. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 27*(6), 673-692.

National Seniors Council. (2015). *Report on the Social Isolation of Seniors, 2013-2014*: National Seniors Council.

New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. (2016). *Summary Statistics School Year 2015-2016*. Fredericton: Government of New Brunswick

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: gender, ethnicity and educational change*. New York;Harlow, England;: Longman.

Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: extending the conversation* (Second ed.). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly, 29*(1), 9-31.

O'Rourke, B., & DePalma, R. (2017). Language-learning holidays: what motivates people to learn a minority language? *International Journal of Multilingualism, 14*(4), 332-349.

O'Rourke, B., & Ramallo, F. (2015). Neofalantes as an active minority: understanding language practices and motivations for change amongst new speakers of Galician. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 2015*(231), 147-165. doi:10.1515/ijsl-2014-0036

Oakes, L., & Howard, M. (2019). Learning French as a foreign language in a globalised world: an empirical critique of the L2 Motivational Self System. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1-17.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (1998). *The Ontario curriculum: French as a second language : core French, Grades 4-8, 1998*. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education and Training.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013). *The Ontario curriculum: French as a second language : core French, grades 4-8 ; extended French, grades 4-8; French immersion, grades 1-8*. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education

Papi, M. (2010). The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety, and motivated behavior: A structural equation modeling approach. *System, 38*(3), 467-479.

Parks, R., Evans, B., & Getch, Y. (2013). Motivations and enculturation of older students returning to a traditional university. *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development, 25*(3), 62-75.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd. ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Punch, K. (2009). *Introduction to research methods in education*. London; Los Angeles;: SAGE.

Reid, G. J. (2012). Performing Anglo Quebec: The Myth of Solitudes and (E) Merging Anglo-Québécois Subject. *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d'études canadiennes, 46*(3), 105-127.

Richardson, L., & Adams St Pierre, E. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 959-978): SAGE.

Rifkin, B. (2000). Revisiting Beliefs about Foreign Language Learning 1. *Foreign Language Annals, 33*(4), 394-408.

Roy, S. (2010). Not Truly, Not Entirely..." Pas comme les Francophones". *Canadian journal of education, 33*(3), 541-563.

Russette, A. D. (2013). *A case study of pedagogical practices and learning environment in an Ontario Francophone child care centre*. Master's Thesis. The University of Western Ontario. Retrieved from https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/1399/

Sakeda, M., & Kurata, N. (2016). Motivation and L2 Selves: A Study of Learners of Japanese at an Australian University. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 13*(1).

Scala, M. A. (1996). Going back to school: Participation motives and experiences of older adults in an undergraduate classroom. *Educational Gerontology, 22*(8), 747-773.

Schmid, M. S. (2011). *Language attrition*. Cambridge, UK;New York;: Cambridge University Press.

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Spolsky, B. (2000). Anniversary article. Language motivation revisited. *Applied Linguistics, 21*(2), 157-169.

Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research, 3rd ed.* (pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.

Statistics Canada. (2013). *2011 Census of population*. (no. 98-314-XCB2011038). Ottawa: Statistics Canada,

Stebbins, R. A. (1992). *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.

Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious leisure: a perspective for our time*. New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Publishers.

Stebbins, R. A. (2020). *The serious leisure perspective: A synthesis*: Springer Nature.

Steinbeck, J. (2006). *The grapes of wrath*: Penguin.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1982). *Evaluating bilingual education: A Canadian case study*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Taguchi, T., Magid, M., & Papi, M. (2009). The L2 motivational self system among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: A comparative study. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity the L2 self* (Vol. 36, pp. 66-97). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tam, M. (2016). Later life learning experiences: Listening to the voices of Chinese elders in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 35*(5), 569-585.

Taylor, C. (1993). *Reconciling the solitudes: Essays on Canadian federalism and nationalism*: McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.

Taylor, S. K. (1992). Victor: A case study of a Cantonese child in early French immersion. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 48*(4), 736-759.

Taylor, S. K. (2019). Multilingualism. In N. Schmitt & M. P. H. Rodgers (Eds.), *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (3rd ed., pp. 205-220): Taylor & Francis.

Taylor, S. K. (forthcoming). Plurilingualism in TESOL. In H. Mohebbi & C. Coombe (Eds.), *Research questions in language education: A reference guide for teachers*. Berlin: Springer.

Taylor, S. K., & Snoddon, K. (2013). Plurilingualism in TESOL: Promising controversies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 439-445.

Tremblay, P. F., & Gardner, R. C. (1995). Expanding the motivation construct in language learning. *The Modern Language Journal, 79*(4), 505-518.

Turcotte, M., & Schellenberg, G. (2007). *A portrait of seniors in Canada, 2006*: Statistics Canada, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division.

Ushioda, E. (2009). A person-in-context relational view of emergent motivation, self and identity. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 215-228).

Valdés, G. (2001). Heritage language students: Profiles and possibilities. *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource*, 37-80.

Vasilopoulos, G. (2015). Language learner investment and identity negotiation in the Korean EFL context. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education, 14*(2), 61-79.

Woods, A. (2017, July 12, 2017). Battle for the balcony 50 years after 'Vive le Québec libre' speech. *The Toronto Star.* Retrieved from https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/07/12/battle-for-the-balcony-50-years-after-vive-le-qubec-libre-speech.html

XXXXXX XXXXXXX. (2018). *Annual Report 2017-2018*. Retrieved from XXXXXX:

XXXXXX XXXXXXX. (2019). Health and Wellbeing. In XXXX (Ed.). XXXXXX: XXXX.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: design and methods* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

You, C. J., & Dörnyei, Z. (2016). Language learning motivation in China: Results of a large-scale stratified survey. *Applied Linguistics, 37*(4), 495-519.

Yuen, D. (n.d.-a). My Language Exchange presents to the office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada. Retrieved from https://www.mylanguageexchange.com/OCOL.asp

Yuen, D. (n.d.-b). New member sign-up. Retrieved from https://www.mylanguageexchange.com/SignUp.asp?showmenu=1

Appendices

Appendix A – Letter of Information and Consent Form

Appendix A: Letter of Information and Consent Form

Why learn a minority second language? An investigation into the motivations, investment, and lived experiences of non-heritage minority second language learners

Letter of Information and Consent - Participants

Dear Participant,

My name is Alan Russette and I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at Western University. I am conducting research into the motivations, personal investment, and language learning experiences of speakers of non-heritage, minority languages. I would like to invite you to participate in this research study because you speak a minority second language (L2) and pursue activities related to maintaining this language on a regular basis.

The purpose of this study is to explore the qualities, characteristics, or experiences that lead minority L2 learners to invest themselves in the maintenance of their L2. Additionally, the study explores why these minority L2 speakers choose to maintain their L2, the sorts of activities they do to maintain their L2, and how learning this language has affected their lives. The study includes observation of L2-related conversation groups over a 6-month period, and three one-hour one-on-one interviews.

I will be visiting French conversation group meetings over the course of several months, observing general participant demographics, topics of conversation, perceived language levels, group interactions, and if/how the sessions are organized and moderated on a session by session basis. The interview component will be conducted over 3 sessions, each lasting approximately 60 minutes, at a location of your choosing. It will be audio-recorded, with your permission, and later transcribed. Once the transcriptions are complete, you will be contacted and provided with an opportunity to check them for accuracy. You may make amendments or corrections to the transcriptions, if you wish. This will take you approximately 30 minutes.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor any information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential in a locked, secure location. Only the researcher will have access to the audio files, field notes, and transcripts. You will be given a pseudonym to protect confidentiality in any forms of publication. All collected data will be destroyed after 5 years.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. There may be no direct benefits; however, there may be benefits to educators who seek to understand what motivates and engages students when learning a minority second language. This, in turn, could positively affect pedagogy and programming used in language learning classrooms.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any questions, refuse to be audio recorded, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on you personally or professionally. Further, if you choose not to participate, no data referring to you will be collected or recorded in the researcher's field notes. Representatives of The University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to your study related records to monitor the conduct of the research, and you do not waive any legal rights by participating in this research.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, at Western University at [redacted] or [redacted]. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Alan Russette at [redacted] or my supervisor Dr. Shelley Taylor at [redacted]taylor@uwo.ca.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Sincerely,

Alan Russette, B.Ed, M.Ed, PhD candidate
Western University, [redacted]
[redacted]

Why learn a minority second language? An investigation into the motivations, investment, and lived experiences of non-heritage minority second language learners

Alan Russette
Western University

Dr. Shelley Taylor
Western University

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name (please print):
____

I agree to be audio-recorded Y ☐ N ☐

Signature: _______________________________ Date: _______________

Researcher Name: ____

Signature: _______________________________ Date: _______________

Appendix B – Ethics Approval Form

Appendix B: Ethics Approval Form

Western Research

Research Ethics

Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Shelley Taylor
Department & Institution: Education\Faculty of Education,Western University

NMREB File Number: 108554
Study Title: Why learn a minority second language? An investigation into the motivations, investment, and lived experiences of non-heritage minority second language learners

NMREB Initial Approval Date: November 15, 2016
NMREB Expiry Date: November 15, 2017

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Western University Protocol	Received November 1, 2016	
Recruitment Items	Recruitment Poster	2016/09/28
Letter of Information	Letter to Conversation Group Leaders for Permission to Recruit	2016/09/21
Letter of Information & Consent		2016/10/31
Instruments	Interview Questions	2016/09/28

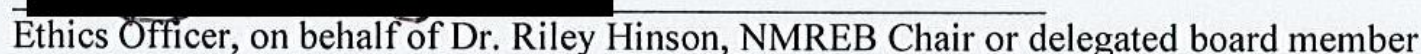
The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.



Ethics Officer, on behalf of Dr. Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer: Erika Basile ___ Nicole Kaniki ___ Grace Kelly ___ Katelyn Harris ✓ Vikki Tran ___ Karen Gopaul ___

Western University, Research, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150
London, ON, Canada N6G 1G9 t. 519.661.3036 f. 519.850.2466 www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

Appendix C – Interview Questions

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Initial Interview Questions

1. How many languages do you speak?
2. How often do you use your French (or second language)? Is it a part of your daily life, or something that you use occasionally?
3. Tell me about when and how you use your French (or second language). For example, do you only use it in conversation, or do you read and write it, as well?
4. Tell me about your earliest memories of learning French (or second language). Was it in school?
5. Did you enjoy learning the language? Why or why not?
6. Did you take French (or second language) throughout high school? Why or why not?
7. Did you take French (or second language) in a post-secondary setting? Was it at a college/university level or more community based?
8. At what point in learning the language did you start to feel proficient?
9. When you think back about the experiences you've had in/with the language, what stands out to you?
10. When did you start participating in conversation groups?
11. How did you learn about this conversation group?
12. What prompted you to check it out? How often do you attend the group sessions?
13. What were your initial impressions? Why do you choose to come back?
14. Do you do anything else that could be connected to French (or second language)? If so, what? How often?

Second Interview Questions

These questions will be developed based on responses to the previous interview questions, but the following provides an idea of the questions that could be asked.

1. Tell me about the first French (or second language) classes you remember. What do you remember about your teacher and how she/he taught the class?
2. How was French (or second language) class received in your school? Did you look forward to it?
3. How was the behaviour in the class during French (or second language) class?
4. How did the classes change as you got older?
5. In our last conversation, we talked a bit about experiences that stood out for you with respect to the French (or second language) language. Talk to me more about it.

6. How would you personally rate your French (or second language) proficiency right now? Compare it to when you took classes in elementary school, high school, and post-secondary. Is it better now than it was then?
7. Are you concerned about maintaining your current level of French (or second language)?

Third Interview Questions

1. Let's go back to your early memories of French (or second language) class. What was it that engaged you in learning the language?
2. Why do you think you continued learning the language?
3. Was there ever a point in time where you considered giving up on the language?
4. Why did you keep going?
5. How do you feel that French (or the second language) has impacted your life? Your place in the world? How you see yourself?
6. Is French (or the second language) important to you? In what way? Why is it important?
7. How has your motivation to learn the language changed over the years? Or has it?

Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Alan Russette
Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 1993-1997; 2005 B.A.
	The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2008-2009 B.Ed.
	The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2011-2013 M.Ed.
	The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2013-2019 Ph.D.
Honours and Awards:	Joan Pedersen Memorial Award Faculty of Education The University of Western Ontario 2012-2013
Related Work Experience	Teaching Assistant – Teaching French Immersion The University of Western Ontario Jan – Mar 2017
	Teaching Assistant – French as a Second Language in Elementary The University of Western Ontario Sep 2015 – Apr 2016; Sep 2016 – Apr 2017
	Research Assistant – Dr Shelley Taylor The University of Western Ontario Aug 2014 – Apr 2016

Publications:

Russette, A. D., & Taylor, S. K. (2014). Pedagogy and learning environment in a Franco-Ontarian Child Care Centre. Language and Literacy, 16 (2), 131-147.