RETHINKING MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES INSTRUCTION

AS DECOLONIZING PEDAGOGY

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CHAPTER I: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Introduction

"Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed." (Weedon, 1987, p. 21)

Few modern languages and cultures teachers have been fortunate to have been encouraged to reflect critically on the place of language in society that Weedon (1987) describes above. As a result, most modern languages and cultures teachers do not recognize that from the moment they use the gift of language, they create their own unique interpretation of this knowledge by drawing from their inner wisdom and resources, their cultural identities. Indeed, the role of a good teacher is not only to share information, but to involve himself/herself and his/her students in a process of self-discovery in relation to the subject matter at hand.

The purpose of this study was to explore secondary modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities, and how these beliefs were embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices. The study also explored how these teachers encouraged their students to use their first languages and cultures to support their acquisition of the languages they were taught. The design of the study was qualitative and emergent (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002) and was informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Smith, 1999; WaThiong'o, 1986).

The present chapter describes the rationale, my cultural autobiography, the research questions, an overview of the design and methodology, the limitations, and significance of this study. Chapter II reviews the literature. Chapter III then describes the design and the methodology. Chapters IV and V present the findings of the two phases of this study and their

interpretation. Finally, Chapter VI describes the conclusions, implications and recommendations of the study.

Rationale

Byram and Feng (2005) note that educational and language researchers contend that, modern language instructors have political and social responsibilities in their teaching. Some scholars consider that while modern language instructors are assumed to be sensitive towards linguistic and cultural diversity, many instructors do not recognize the extent to which their own cultural identities reinforce inequalities in both classrooms and communities (Chacón, 2009; Kubota, 2004; Kubota & Lin, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Reagan & Osborn, 2002; Santoro, 2009). As a result, modern language instruction is still delivered in an apolitical and de-cultured manner (Chacón, 2009; Reagan & Osborn, 2002).

Scholars such as Kramsch (1994), Kubota (2004a, b), Kubota and Lin (2009), and Morgan (1998, 2004) contend that language instructors' depoliticized multicultural approaches fail to recognize their own positions as persons with cultural identities. They argue that this hegemonic view has influenced how diverse cultures are addressed in teaching in general (see also Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001; Johnston, 2006; Wane, 2009; Zine, 2005) and modern language teaching, in particular (see also Kubota, 2004b; Kubota & Lin, 2009; Chacón, 2009). For example, these scholars argue that frequently superficial topics such as food, clothing, song, dance or holidays are incorporated in language programs rather than acknowledging colonialism and its legacies.

Despite the above arguments and the centrality of research and methodology on culture teaching to date in the field of modern languages acquisition and instruction (Beers, 2001; Byram & Risager, 1999; Ryan, 1998; Sercu, Méndez & Castro, 2005; Morgan, 1998, 2004), little

attention has been paid to Canadian secondary and adult modern language teachers' individual concepts of language and culture and their beliefs on their cultural identities in relation to the cultures of the languages they teach in secondary and adult institutions. In the same way, the pedagogical and social implications that these beliefs bring to teachers' practices have also remained insufficiently explored (Byram & Risager, 1999; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Ryan, 1998). One notable exception is a study conducted by Duff and Uchida (1997) who explored the relationship between the languages and cultures of two North American and two Japanese teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL). They explored the teachers' perceptions of their cultural identities and how these identities influenced their teaching practices in Japan. One important finding described by these scholars and that informed in part my study was the participants' shifting perceptions of culture and how they perceived themselves in relation to their diverse social and cultural roles. For example, when interviewed during the first phase of the study, one of the four teachers did not consider culture teaching as part of his mandate, although culture teaching was an objective of the curriculum. However, classroom observations made clear to the researchers that each of the participants transmitted their cultural values implicitly either through their approach to teaching English as a foreign language, what they perceived their roles to be in the classroom and their choices of materials to scaffold students' English acquisition processes. One of the most important contributions of the study was that it revealed the importance on having in-service teachers reflect on their personal cultural identities and the cultural foundations of their practices, in order for them to realize how these influence their teaching.

Duff and Uchida suggest that the findings from their study should be considered in future research which investigates modern languages and cultures teachers' understandings of their

images, beliefs about teaching language and culture and the role of their identities in teaching. Duff and Uchida also suggest that further research should examine the cultural foundations of second language curricula and teaching in order to understand how language instructors address institutional and curricular expectations regarding the teaching of diverse cultures in their classrooms.

My research is also based on earlier work by Agar (1994, 2006), Canagarajah (2005), Coehlo (2004), Cummins, Bismilla, Chow, Cohen, Gianpapa, Leoni, Sandhu, & Pastri (2005), Kubota (2004a, b), Morgan (2004), Duff and Li (2009), Norton and Toohey (2004), and Reagan and Osborn (2002). Agar's (1994, 2006) concept of *languacultures* explains that language and culture are so closely related that one cannot really know a language if one does not know the cultures expressed by that language. Agar argues that because of the plural character of the term "culture" and the world in which we live today, "we have to train ourselves to say, think and write it [culture] with an 's' at the end. Never *culture* [sic]. Always *cultureS* (p.7). My study also extends the arguments advanced by modern languages critical pedagogues Canagarajah (2006), Kubota (2004a), and Morgan (2004) that critical language awareness encourages instructors and students alike to explore the relationships among languages, cultures and power. Their works will be described in depth in the literature review chapter.

Similarly, in their introductory article to an issue of the *Canadian Modern Language Review* journal devoted to research on Indigenous and heritage languages and cultures in Canada, Duff and Li (2009) observe that, contrary to the proliferation of studies on the teaching and learning of English and French as additional languages in Canada, little attention has been paid to the teaching and learning of heritage and Indigenous languages in the same context. These scholars note that the lack of studies in these areas is problematic because, according to Statistics

Canada (2007), 20% or 31 million of the Canadian population speak neither English or French as their mother tongues and are usually referred to as "allophones" (p. 1). They contend that the heterogeneous and rich cultural backgrounds represented by such a high number of individuals determine their educational goals and needs. Therefore, Duff and Li call for research projects that focus on the contributions, as well as challenges posed by the diversity of languages and cultures many of these students bring to their schools:

> It is our hope that by calling for and publishing articles in these focal areas, we can encourage future issues of this journal and of other Canadian publications to devote more space to this burgeoning and timely research, reinforcing a recognition of the linguistic diversity and richness of Canada and of its crucial significance in contemporary society and in language education across the lifespan.(pp. 6-7)

To address Duff and Li's call for inclusivity, the term *modern languages and cultures* is used in this dissertation to refer to all languages and cultures taught as second, additional, heritage or foreign languages (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Reagan & Osborn, 2002). Further, in the context of this dissertation, use of this term acknowledges the inclusivity of all languages from English, French and Spanish to Annishnaabemowin languages; it does not emphasize "otherness," "foreignness" or "secondness" of the language being taught or acquired. However, for accuracy, the use of *foreign languages, second languages*, *Native* or *Aboriginal languages,* and *Ojibway* will be retained in citations which employ such terms.

The following section describes my cultural autobiography and how this autobiography has influenced the path that has taken me to this dissertation.

Cultural Autobiography

> "…our cultural and historical past is very much present in the present. That is, stories of the past, with their embedded cultural, social and historical events, both affect and effect stories of the present and future." (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011, p. xi)

Decolonization means a myriad of things to different people. In the context of my lived experiences, *decolonization* means starting from within myself in a reflective process where I, as Swain, Kinnear, and Steinman (2011) suggest above, have analyzed how *my* cultural, historical and social past inform *my* present and *my* future. This process has meant questioning my education and how I acquired knowledge, what I learned at school, who wrote the history of my people, whose story was legitimized and how language and power played a role in the production of knowledge. In the context of this cultural autobiography, *decolonization* is in part reflected by the ongoing political process in which I have been engaged since I started to live in Canada. In this process, I have engaged in a decolonization of my own story by addressing the colonial practices that have shaped and continue to shape my long-held cultural assumptions and pedagogy to teach the Spanish and English languages and about the cultures these languages represent. This process has not been easy because I have experienced uncertainty and constant struggle with multiple identities, at times as an insider and at times as the *Other*.

Where are you from? De La Habana, Cuba.

I am a new Canadian male citizen originally from The Republic of Cuba. Cuba was a colony until the end of the 19th century and was the last colony in Latin America to gain independence from Spain in1902 (Cantón-Navarro, 1998). After a period of 60 years of political instability, a socialist government was established in 1961. However, although seventy two years had passed since Cuba had achieved formal independence from Spain and a socialist structure was well in place, I was still raised with a very colonial, Eurocentric mindset. In Cuba, I was part of the mainstream racial group (in Cuba, I would be described as White because of the light colour of my skin) and was raised in a middle-class home with middle-class values. In the Cuban context this means in part that, although racism and classism had been apparently eradicated

institutionally by the socialist state, they were very much alive in Cubans' everyday language and views towards any person who was not white or who was considered poor. It also means that my views on my own and different cultures were monolithic and static; they essentialized mine and other cultures.

At the age of 17, I decided to become a secondary school teacher of English as a Foreign Language and enrolled in university. My previous Eurocentric views were reinforced throughout my undergraduate program through different approaches to learning the English language that emphasized the learning of formal linguistics and the need to speak like American-natives, learn about their culture and standard. In other words, my education was mainly focused on grammatical knowledge and the development of written and oral communicative skills that did not transcend traditional notions of language learning. Although I understand that it is important and necessary to develop written and oral communicative competence for benefits that range from personal to societal, I also echo Chacón's (2009), and Pennycook's (2001) argument against a strictly prescriptive and normative view of language teaching as an activity that is neutral and that does not take into account the social, cultural, political, historical and economic contexts of a given society. For example, when referring to English Language Teaching (ELT) in Venezuela, Chacón (2009) argues that "under this descriptive normative approach, students are uncritically exposed to language that places ELT as an 'apolitical' and 'transparent' activity that legitimates social inequity" (p. 216).

As a result of my pre-service teacher education, my views of languages and cultures, and upbringing were reflected in my own practice in the way I taught languages. For example, to me (and many others like me), language was, as Burke (1987) describes, "a mere tool in the hands (or mouths!) of its users" (p. 14). When I contrasted the cultures that different languages, other

than English, represented to my own, I thought mine superior or better. For example, traditional Eurocentric views present in textbooks and in the curricula to teach English in Cuban secondary schools reproduced the stereotype that, for the most part, someone from the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia or New Zealand was white, blonde, blue-eyed, and middle class or rich. On the other hand, however, a person from any other of the English speaking islands of the Caribbean or countries of the world was usually portrayed as being African-looking. In other words, in Cuba, like in many other Latin American countries (see Chacón, 2009), European ethnic features were stereotyped and essentialized through school curricula.

Where are you from? Not from here or there.

While I lived in Cuba, I remained ignorant to all of these views as I was always on the side of those who were not affected by them. As Lakoff (2000) so eloquently describes it "if you're a member of the dominant group, your attributes are invisible, as your role in making things the way they are is not noticeable" (p. 53). However, when I started to live in Canada, my attributes became visible for I was no longer part of the mainstream ethnic group, nor did I belong to the middle class: I became the *Other*. Living in Canada allowed me to interact with people from different Hispanic countries and other countries of the world. This new position also allowed me to realize that, for example, even though Salvadorians, Mexicans, Spanish, Venezuelans and Cubans spoke a common language, each of our variants of this language represented centuries of different histories, different cultural foundations and different races that extended beyond dichotomies such as American/Latin American, Black/White, and so on to which I was accustomed.

Similarly, with respect to many mainstream Canadians, my native tongue, ethnicity and nationality have positioned me in many ways as the object of resentment, indifference or

admiration. As mentioned before, I have taught Spanish as a foreign language in Canada for the past 15 years. For many people, when I am teaching Spanish, I am where I should be. My competency in the language and teaching abilities are not contested because I am teaching what I should be teaching. However, since my first appointment to teach Literacy and Teaching English as a Second Language courses at a Faculty of Education, I have been the object of resentment on the part of many of my students for I am not where I am supposed to be. As a result, at the beginning of every academic year, I have to constantly prove myself to my students. Many have gone to the extent of arguing that I am imposing a political agenda on them.

I have also met many Canadians who opened the doors of their houses and their lives to me. Some of them have done it because they genuinely care and understand what it is like to be an immigrant. The same individuals have expressed their admiration for my written and oral proficiency in the English language and have always encouraged me to also become aware of different cultural aspects of what they considered to be "proper." For example, early on I was made aware of the importance of the use of words and phrases such as "please" and "thank you", and to not be "loud," and the positive cultural implications of their use. I also became accustomed to hearing comments about my accent and "passionate" nature as markers of my ethnicity and my nationality. Other Canadians have welcomed me into their lives because I was the only Cuban in town at a certain point in time and to them, Cuba was an exotic and fascinating country due to its history of opposition to the United States' imperialist foreign policies. Many of them also believed that I sympathized with Castro's dictatorial regime and, as soon as they would learn that I was a detractor of Castro's ideology, they would resent me for it and then I would become "uninteresting" to them.

These different positions along with daily intercultural exchanges have led me to experience moments of self-doubt, humiliation and euphoria, and to learn that race and nationality were markers of social inequality. They also informed the academic journey I started in 2004 when I decided to enroll in the Master of Education program at Lakehead University.

Decolonizing my mind

As a graduate student, I started what Freire (2004) calls a process of *conscientization*: a process in which one learns, consciously, that language intersects race, gender, nationality and power to produce and reproduce social inequality. This process of becoming "conscious" started when I did my Master of Education research study and continued during the different courses I took and readings I did during the Joint PhD program, as well as the work I have done in different research projects. The two graduate programs and different research projects have positioned me and allowed me to reflect on my own upbringing and views of different cultures, and to become very critical of these views. The course work in the PhD program and two major research studies which I describe later on in the literature review chapter of this dissertation, have encouraged me to struggle to dismiss misconceptions and myths that lead to the reproduction of inequalities in describing the *Other* as inferior. During my PhD studies, I have also been engaged with topics related to language, power and racial discrimination for the first time in my life. Like other scholars in my position (see Chacón, 2009), I have grappled with the complexity of the many identities that compose who I am. As a Cuban-Canadian father, husband, son, brother, male, modern language and cultures instructor, and teacher educator who is engaged in a process of decolonization, I understand that the language acquisition process is a very complex one in which an individual's cultural identity plays an essential role. The satisfaction and frustration I have felt from learning a new language and the cultures this

language represents, and my excitement in using it to engage with members of these cultures at a deep level, have motivated me to encourage other instructors to examine their own cultural identities in order to discover the embodied dimensions of the languages and cultures they teach. This is how I have started an ongoing process of decolonizing myself, a process in which I have begun to discard my colonized beliefs regarding my own and other cultures, to reflect on how nationality, ethnicity, social class and gender shape our cultural identities and how these identities permeate our own teaching practices. To this effect, Wane (2009) observes:

> …a decolonization project involves being aware of how we live our lives and how our thoughts, beliefs, and interactions with others are shaped by systems that create universal norms, by erasing, delegitimizing or marginalizing other knowledges and forms of knowing. This awareness is the first step to transforming educational systems in ways that create an education that speaks to all. (pp. 171-172)

In order for me to understand my students' cultural identities, I have learned that I must explore my own experience as an immigrant from a different ethnic group as I live my life and how this impacts my own teaching practice. As reflected by the above description of my lived experience as an immigrant and through a deep analysis of these experiences in Canada, I have come to realize how others perceive me as a person and as a professional. For many people, the fact that I am from a Spanish speaking country makes me automatically capable of teaching Spanish. Further, the analysis of my lived experiences and those of others like me has taught me what it really means to be an immigrant and how, by reflecting on these issues, these experiences have shaped my own teaching practice.

Reflecting on my cultural identity has allowed me to explore my lived experiences as an immigrant and a teacher who is still trying to make sense of these experiences and how these experiences have shaped and are still shaping my own teaching practice. Further, as I noted above, it has been through my research experiences in the Master of Education program, in a

pan-Canadian, longitudinal study investigating pre-service teachers' perceptions of Canadian identity as represented in Canadian multicultural picture books, my PhD studies, in a study investigating teachers and principals' perceptions of the place of Aboriginal education in Canadian urban schools, and my lived experiences in Cuba and in Canada, that I have become very interested in exploring in depth Canadian modern language teachers' understandings of how their cultural identities influence their teaching practices.

In light of what I have learnt about my past and present subjectivities during my graduate years, I have started a transformation of my teaching practice. I have come to envision a teaching practice that moves beyond the attitude of superficial acceptance of difference and the development of cultural sensitivity promoted by the liberal views of multicultural education (Kubota, 2004a). I have come to envision a practice that acknowledges the narratives of teachers and students of modern languages as foundations for real acceptance of difference and the development of cultural sensitivity through the implementation of curriculum as phenomenological, autobiographical and biographical text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995).

Similarly, my experiences as a modern languages and cultures instructor and an immigrant have made me more committed to reflect on my own practice, my knowledge of the cultures I represent, and how these experiences impact my own teaching of the cultures represented by the languages I teach and in which I teach. This process of conscientization has made me more committed to the transformation of the instruction of modern languages and the diverse cultures one language may represent at all levels possible. I believe that when teaching modern languages, we, as instructors, should start by understanding our own cultural identities and, in turn, see ourselves and our students as part of ethnic groups in order to understand and teach the

cultures that comprise the language(s) we are studying or teaching. This process of constant self-reflection may assist modern languages and cultures instructors to become more critical of their own practices as languages and cultures become problematized.

I take the position that notions of the instructor's cultural identity in modern language instruction theory need to be reconceptualized in ways that problematize not only dichotomous distinctions between languages and cultures in general, but also modern languages and cultures instructors' cultural identities. I argue that modern language and culture instruction theory needs to continue to develop a conception of the modern language instructor as having a complex cultural identity that must be understood in relation to larger, and inequitable social structures which are reproduced in daily interactions. In taking this position I foreground the role of language as constitutive and constituted by an individual's cultural identity. It is through language and culture that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language and cultural knowledge that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks that give modern language teachers the opportunities to teach. Thus, language and culture are not only conceived as vehicles of communication, but are also understood with reference to their places in society.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are modern languages teachers' conceptions of languages and cultures?

2. How are their conceptions about language and cultures embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices?

3. How do modern languages and cultures teachers incorporate their students' first languages and cultural identities in their programs and pedagogy?

Design and Methodology

The design of this research was qualitative and emergent (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006; Patton, 2002) and was informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Smith, 1999; WaThiong'o, 1986). This design required beginning the study with important ideas and questions that I wished to investigate, but also to pursuing other interesting and salient issues, which emerged during the data collection.

When referring to decolonizing research methodologies in relation to Aboriginal people, Smith (1999) notes that *decolonization* is about transforming lives. In relation with research, she explains, *decolonization* means conducting research that benefits directly Aboriginal peoples, as opposed to subjecting them, once again, to a process that has "extracted and claimed ownership of Indigenous ways of knowing only to reject the people responsible for those ways of knowing" (p. 1). In my study, I intended to conduct research that would benefit directly Indigenous languages and cultures teachers and also teachers of other languages and cultures by exploring beliefs of language and cultural identities and how these beliefs become evident in their practices in the Canadian context. Furthermore, this type of design provided me with the context to explore the ways in which a group of modern languages and cultures teachers in Canada taught these languages and the cultures they represent. WaThiong'o (1986) and Wane (2009) consider that in order to start to decolonize our minds, teachers should start by considering their lived-experiences as a platform for affirmative action in education. WaThiong'o notes that since "education is a means of knowledge about ourselves" (p.2), teachers and students should discover themselves first in order to discover the world.

The study had two phases and I conducted it over three months. During Phase I, I interviewed nine modern languages and cultures teachers (two Annishnaabemowin, three French,

and four English as a Second Language) in the winter semester. The years of experience of the participants ranged from five to 26 years. The purpose of this phase was to gain insights into these teachers' personal conceptions of languages and cultures, their beliefs on their own languages and cultural identities, how conceptions and beliefs affected their daily practices. This phase also provided insights on these teachers' roles as teachers of modern languages and teachers, and on the challenges they faced as teachers of modern languages and cultures.

Data obtained from the interviews in Phase I informed the second phase of the study where I selected a purposive sample (Patton, 2002) of two teachers from Phase I. In this stage, I observed the participants as they engaged in teaching over a period of three weeks. The design of the second phase of this study took the form of a case study approach (Stake, 1995; van Lier, 2005). After Phase II ended, I interviewed each participant individually with the purpose of clarifying questions I may have had concerning methods for teaching languages and cultures I observed them implement in their classrooms. I also encouraged these two participants to share any concerns and/or recommendations they might have had regarding language and culture teaching and the study, as well as to share their experiences in the study.

Qualitative research methods that I used within the study included: an interview guide (Patton, 2002) (Appendix 1), non-participant observations (Patton, 2002) (see Appendix 2 for the observation protocol used), and analysis of documents (Patton, 2002). I recorded and reflected upon extensive fieldnotes in a journal. The use of multiple sources such as digitally recorded interviews, my observation fieldnotes, my log and reflective journal portraying classroom's observation, samples of in-class assignments and texts used by the teachers to scaffold students' learning, and Ministry of Education documents allowed for triangulation (Creswell, 2009;

Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The data analysis was constant comparative (Creswell, 2009). I describe the research design and methodology in depth in Chapter III.

Limitations

The findings of this study are limited to the experiences of the participants and may not necessarily be applicable to other modern language teachers' beliefs about languages, cultures and their practices. In their analysis of the pros and cons of case studies, Stake (1995) and van Lier (2005) point out that one of the major criticisms of the case study approach is that the results obtained from it cannot be generalized to a wider population. However, the study provides information on participants situated in a Canadian urban setting not usually described in other studies on modern languages and cultures teaching. Therefore, the findings may be transferable to similar contexts and situations related to this type of study.

Another limitation of the study is that the findings depended in part on participants' willingness to share their perceptions and beliefs of their cultural identities and to allow me access to their classrooms. In this study, nine participants gave their consent to an interview and only two of the three participants originally identified in the purposive sample volunteered to take part on the second stage of the study. However, these two teachers taught two different languages and their students belonged to two different ethnic groups. Therefore, this limitation is countered by a possible advantage inherent in this situation. To illustrate, the differences in languages, students, and teaching conditions broadened the context of the study in that they provided information on teachers with very different cultural backgrounds and personal teaching histories than described previously in other studies. Therefore, these differences have the potential to expand the transferability of the findings to other settings.

Significance

The data obtained from both the interview phase and observations phase of the study demonstrate that involvement in the study encouraged the participants, modern languages and cultures teachers, to become more reflective of their practices. These findings may lead to improved understanding of the successes and challenges experienced by teachers in modern languages and cultures teaching/learning and may illuminate ways in which to support professional growth. Therefore, the findings of this study may inform the development of modern languages programs and language and cultures courses so that programs become increasingly integrative with stronger connections between teachers' language and cultural identities.

As I noted in this chapter early on, when referring to the increasing importance of research on what are not considered mainstream modern languages and cultures in Canada, Duff and Li (2009) express the need for initiatives that take into account languages and cultures such as Indigenous languages and cultures as part of the reinforcement of the "recognition of the linguistic diversity and richness of Canada and of its crucial significance in contemporary society and in language education across the lifespan" (p. 7). This was the first time that Annishnaabemowin teachers' perspectives on language and culture instruction were considered together with those of other modern languages and cultures instructors. Therefore, the study might lead to new insights into the ways Canadian secondary modern language teachers integrate language and culture teaching and to recommendations related to modern language curriculum planning, development, implementation and assessment. For example, as first inhabitants of Canada, Aboriginal cultures passed down their traditions from generation to generation orally and had no writing system. As result, Aboriginal languages and cultures were learned in natural

settings, by means of oral interactions and in meaningful ways. As Aboriginal peoples preserved and transmitted their cultures through the oral tradition, no Aboriginal language in Canada had a writing system before European colonization. While I acknowledge the social, historical, political and cultural differences between Indigenous languages and cultures and their European counterparts, the findings from this study might contribute to a dialogue among modern languages and cultures teachers and scholars about barriers that distinguish between "modern languages and cultures" and "Indigenous languages and cultures". I elaborate on the social, historical, political and cultural differences between Aboriginal and European languages and cultures in Chapter II.

This study also has the potential to inform the theory and content of preservice and professional development courses designed to give modern languages and cultures teachers the opportunity to develop a decolonized Canadian perspective on teaching languages and cultures. In providing case studies of modern languages and cultures teachers' understandings on language and culture teaching, beliefs about their cultural identities in the Canadian context and how these influence their practices, this study contributes to and extends the existing literature on modern languages and cultures teacher preparation for teaching such languages and cultures.

Finally, the findings also inform the ways in which Faculties of Education and teacher educators approach implementation of courses for preservice teachers of languages and cultures, language arts, literacy and multicultural education. In the same way, results also have the potential to influence ways in which Faculties of Education, school boards and schools approach ongoing professional development for supporting modern languages and cultures education.

Summary

In this chapter I contextualized the dissertation within my cultural autography. In this cultural autobiography, I examined the way my cultural identity has been informed by a colonial past and my experiences as an immigrant and modern language and culture instructor in Canada. As well, I described the rationale and the research questions that guide this study. Because of the nature of my study, I used a qualitative and emergent research design (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006; Patton, 2002) informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Smith, 1999; WaThiong'o, 1986). Finally, the limitations and significance of the study were outlined.

Chapter II reviews the literature on curriculum theory, modern languages and cultures acquisition theories and research on modern languages and cultures pedagogy. The research design and methodology are then discussed in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> Language teachers are so much teachers of culture that culture has often become invisible to them. (Kramsch, 1994, p. 48)

> The culture concept is a mess in anthropology. Where did such a nice concept go wrong? In the old days, we used it to describe, to explain, and to generalize. A person did something, so it was their culture. Why did they do it? Because it was their culture. Who were they? They were the members of that culture. It just doesn't work like that anymore. (Agar, 2006, p. 5)

Taking into account Agar's reflection on the concept of culture, it is not difficult to conclude that *culture* is a complex and contentious concept. As such, it has had many different meanings throughout history and these meanings have stemmed from distinct academic perspectives (Agar, 2006; Beers, 2001; Ramírez, 1995). For example, Agar explains the traditional concept of culture, according to a definition given by anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn back in 1952:

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour, acquired and transmitted by symbols constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of actions, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (p. 3)

Hall (1959, as cited in Ramírez, 1995) provided a more revolutionary definition of the concept when he defined *culture* as a way of thinking, feeling, and believing of a specific group of people, and the ways these people communicated such feelings and thoughts. From this perspective, *culture* was considered to be embedded in language and language was one of the means by which culture was shared. In addition, one might argue that such a perspective on *culture* may also provide teachers of modern languages and cultures a sense of self and location in society, culture and politics. However, if we take a closer look at both definitions, we realize that they tend to open up more questions than they answer. More problematic are the

assumptions on which they rest, assumptions that are problems in ways suggested by my cultural autobiography in Chapter I.

More recently, Agar (1994, 2006) provides a more comprehensive framework, one that I use to support one of the main arguments in this dissertation. According to Agar, *culture* is a working assumption, that is, the concept is always evolving and depends on shared contexts and meanings. *Culture*, he notes, is relational for it always provides a link between one's cultures and the one we are learning about. According to him, "whenever we hear the term *culture* [sic], we need to ask, *of* [sic] whom and *for* [sic] whom" (p. 5). In other words, cultural differences only become visible when two cultures come into contact. Finally, Agar suggests that in today's world *culture* is also partial or plural for we can no longer refer to the concept in the singular when referring to a specific person, situation or group. For Agar, this specific person, situation or group is "never about *one* [sic] culture. It is always about *cultures*" (p. 6). Again, taking into consideration the accounts of my experiences back in Cuba and since I have lived in Canada, I would have to concur with Agar when he states that nobody can be "described, explained, or generalized completely with a single cultural label" (p. 7).

When approached from the perspective described above, *culture* means difference, variability; it should not be a fifth skill, added on to the teaching of the traditional four-language proficiency skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Furthermore, Kramsch (1994) explains that when *culture* is problematized in this manner "such an approach is more interested in fault lines than smooth landscapes, in the recognition of complexity and in the tolerance of ambiguity, not in the search for clear yardsticks of competence and insurances against pedagogical malpractice" (p. 2).

In this study, I foreground the role of language as constitutive and constituted by an individual's cultural identity. As Norton Pierce (1995) suggests:

> It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to – or is denied access to – powerful social networks that give learners the opportunities to speak. Thus, language is not conceived as a neutral medium of communication, but is also understood with reference to its social meaning. (p. 13)

As such, languages and cultures must be analyzed as part of the lived experience and cultural identities of teachers, as part of the biographical, autobiographical and phenomenological fabric of curriculum as defined by Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995).

Numerous scholars have traditionally described modern languages and cultures classrooms as special linguistic settings with specific rules for talking and interacting (Beers, 2001; Chacón, 2009; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Morgan, 2004). For example, Lightbown and Spada (2006) explain that the exchanges between teachers and students have traditionally involved numerous types of classroom activities ranging from mechanical drills to meaningful use of language. The study of such activities has motivated the creation of many psycholinguistic, linguistic and sociolinguistic approaches, hypotheses and perspectives that have proposed more than one way in which languages are to be taught (Brooks, 1960; Chomsky, 1959; Lado, 1964; Krashen, 1982; Nunan, 1991, among others). Some of these approaches, hypotheses and perspectives have been replaced by new and exciting emerging ones. These new approaches have the potential to promote more linguistic competency in learners and, as a result, more gains for these learners. However, as I shall describe below, the literature strongly suggests that despite the proliferation of approaches that prescribe language learning as a quantifiable entity, and literature that focuses on critiques of classroom practices with regards to the social, cultural and political views modern languages and cultures teachers support, the same literature has not provided practicing teachers

with sufficient effective models that address these issues. Furthermore, the literature has not provided effective models that encourage teachers of modern languages and cultures to reflect critically on their roles not only as teachers of languages, but also as cultural negotiators who can learn from their students as much as their students can learn from them.

In the following review of related literatures, I draw on the following: curriculum theory, modern languages and cultures acquisition theories and modern languages and cultures pedagogy. These foci are described below.

Curriculum Theory

> The school curriculum communicates what we choose to remember about our past, what we believe about the present, what we hope for the future. Curriculum debates-such as those over multiculturalism and the canon-are also debates about the American national identity." (Pinar, 2004, p. 20)

Sociocultural constructivist and sociolinguistic scholars describe literacy and language development as processes involving individual and social constructions of meaning within various sociocultural settings (Bainbridge, Heydon, & Malicky, 2009; Freire, 1985; Iser, 1978; Roessingh, 2011; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978). For example, Iser (1978) and Rosenblatt (1938, 1978) suggest that the act of reading, interpreting and re-interpreting a literary text is mediated by the connections students make with their own lived experiences. Similarly, Freire's (1985) notion of knowing how to read the word and the world recognizes literacy as situational and reflects the importance of learners developing literacy through active participation in a variety of activities. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995) provide a definition of curriculum that acknowledges the lived experiences of not only students, but also of teachers.

Curriculum as Auto/biographical and Phenomenological Texts

Pinar et al. (1995) define curriculum as *currere* and explain that

> *currere* [sic] focuses on the educational experience of the individual, as reported by the individual. Rather than working to quantify behavior to describe their surface interaction or to establish causality, *currere* [sic] seeks to describe what the individual subject him or herself makes of these behaviors. (Pinar et al., p. 414)

Pinar and his colleagues believe that curriculum comprises different types of texts and each of them offers curriculum a dimension that interprets the lived experience of teachers and students from different perspectives which are, at the same time, closely related. They define curriculum as autobiographical, biographical, and phenomenological text. Although the analysis of the lived experience differs across these three approaches, the definitions these scholars provide encompass the way I envision curriculum in the modern languages and cultures classroom: a text which reflects on, acts upon and creates social change based on the lived experiences of students and teachers alike; a text which brings into the classroom the narratives of the teachers and students.

Curriculum as biographical and autobiographical text. Pinar et al. note that curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text represents "…a method by means of which students of curriculum could sketch the relations among school knowledge, life history, and intellectual development in ways that might function self-transformatively" (p. 515). These scholars explain that "voice" rises as a determinant concept in an effort to understand curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text. They define voice as "meaning that resides in the individual and that enables individuals to participate in a community" (p. 4). In addition, they suggest that since understanding is a social process, the concept of "voice" is also related to the individual's relationship to language and to the "other." "Voice," then, provides a sense of self

and location in society, culture and politics. Further, they suggest that this sense of location in society, culture and politics creates a site which can be reconceptualized reflexively by interpreting voice.

To illustrate, the study described in this dissertation builds upon the study that I conducted during my Master of Education program (González, 2006). In this study, use of reader response as a focal practice approach to read a novel in an advanced Spanish language course, allowed for language and culture to be interwoven; one enriching the engagement of the other for the participants and me, the instructor of the course. The participants and I had the opportunity to bring our lived experiences and cultural views into the modern language classroom in ways that were political and value-laden, thus, allowing a non-traditional and decolonizing concept of *culture* to emerge: an acknowledgement of race, gender, class and nationality as part of an individual's cultural identity. Further, the implementation of reader response as a focal practice allowed participants and me to find our voices in the classroom. This approach provided us a sense of self and location in society, culture and politics. In turn, this sense of location in society, culture and politics created a site in which my students and I interpreted our voices by reflecting on different aspects that not only concerned Hispanic cultures, but also our lived experiences as cultural beings that were constantly negotiating our cultures with each other.

Curriculum as phenomenological text. Similarly, when defining *phenomenology*, Pinar et al. (1995) explain that, "Phenomenology is a disciplined, rigorous effort to understand experience profoundly and authentically" (p. 405). In other words, developing insight into the character of our daily lives, as 'lived'" (p. 420). These characteristics encompass my position in this study regarding the development of a modern languages and cultures curriculum as a

phenomenological text. Further, I support this position by analyzing Van Manen's (1990) contributions to the field of phenomenological research.

Van Manen (1990) describes four characteristics of phenomenological research that may be applied to an approach to curriculum as a phenomenological text. Van Manen considers that, first and foremost, phenomenological research explores the lived experience. In relation to modern languages and culture teaching, in order for modern languages and cultures teachers to understand their students' cultural identities, they must explore 1) their individual conceptions of languages and cultures; 2) their experiences as gendered individuals in a social class and who belong to particular ethnic groups as they live their lives; and 3) reflect upon how these multifaceted dimensions impact their own teaching practices. Secondly, van Manen suggests that phenomenological research explores the experience and the meaning of events in this experience. As I have already explained, the study of a modern language and the cultures this language represents must move away from static and monolithic views of languages and cultures in which cultures are stereotyped through the celebration of superficial aspects of these languages and cultures such as foods, clothing and festivals. Thirdly, in line with Freire's (2004) concept of *conscientization* described in Chapter I, van Manen suggests that phenomenological research is the conscious practice of critical thinking. In other words, the analysis of our lived experiences should inform our understandings about what it means to be a teacher and, by reflecting on these experiences, teachers can come to realize how these experiences have shaped their own teaching practices. Fourthly, van Manen explains that phenomenological research creates knowledge and exposes what it means to be human; as such, it "always embodies a poetic quality" (p. 407). In other words, to understand teachers' narratives, the reader has to participate in "how a poem means" (p. 407). I argue that this is achieved by understanding one's cultural identity and how

this cultural identity becomes evident in our practices. Such a process may become facilitated if we take into account Eisner's (2002) notion of the literacy learning process as one in which teachers and students express and represent meaning through the use of different cognitive abilities.

Eisner's Cognitive Pluralism

Eisner (2002) defines literacy as "the ability to encode or decode meaning in any of the forms of representation used in the culture to convey or express meaning" (p.x). He suggests that literacy encompasses a variety of symbol systems and criticizes the predominant emphasis within educational institutions, on verbal and written symbolic systems:

> We have created a culture in schooling that is so heavily pervaded by verbal and written performance systems that we take such performance systems for granted. In the process we forget that the culture at large depends on a much wider array of human competencies. We regard alternatives that are nondiscursive as "enrichment activities". We assign them to margins of our concerns; they are events that are "nice to have" but not really of educational significance. (p.148)

Eisner explains that symbol systems are cultural resources employed in content areas such as mathematics, music, literature, dance, and drama. He suggests that humans have the capacity to employ multiple symbol systems to acquire, store and retrieve understanding, and to express their knowledge about the world. He criticizes how written performance systems and assessment practices guide presentation and response in classroom settings. He notes that should the goal of education be to deepen individuals' understandings, then schools need to support the development of multimodal literacies.

Eisner also suggests that the current emphasis on the primacy of verbal and mathematical reasoning impedes the development of socially valuable interests and aptitudes. As a result some students, by nature of their preferred ways of knowing the world, are advantaged from the beginning of their schooling, while other students, with preferences outside the valued

intelligences, struggle. As a result Eisner proposes an ideology of *Cognitive Pluralism*, the

inclusion of multiple forms of knowledge and multiple intelligences, in the classroom. This

ideology is based in part on Gardner's (1993) research on multiple intelligences in which he

argues that humans are capable of constructing and expressing meaning through a variety of

means. Gardner suggests that there are, at least, eight separate human intelligences: a) verbal

linguistic, b) logical-mathematical, c) musical-rhythmic, d) visual-spatial, c) bodily-kinesthetic,

d) interpersonal, e) intrapersonal, and f) naturalistic. According to Gardner (1999, as cited in

Eisner, 2002), each individual is equipped with intellectual potentials to varying degrees in each

area. Eisner underscores the importance of establishing the relationship between types of

knowledge and forms of intelligences:

> If the kind of mind that children can come to own is, in part, influenced by the
> kinds of opportunities they have to think, and if these opportunities are themselves
> defined by the kind of curriculum schools themselves provide, then it could be
> argued that the curriculum itself is a kind of mind altering device. In this view it
> is easy to see how curriculum decisions about content inclusion and content
> exclusion are of fundamental importance. (p. 81)

Eisner argues that *Cognitive Pluralism* allows for differentiated curriculum, wherein

students' individual needs and interests are recognized and valued in the teaching and learning of

literacy. Eisner suggests that in pluralistic societies a part of this pluralism emerges in different

views of what schools should teach and why. Reader response theory (Iser, 1978; Rosenblatt,

1978) contributes to our understandings of the ways in which a curriculum that encourages

Cognitive Pluralism facilitates students' and teachers' processes of interpretation of their lived

experiences.

Reader Response Theory

Reader response, as an approach to teaching literature, differs from the New Critics'

approach to teaching literature (Ali, 1994; Courtland & Gambell, 2000; González, 2009; Leggo,

2001). Where the New Critics assumed fixed positions on the comprehension and interpretation of literary texts, reader response theory explains the act of reading as a transaction between readers and texts, a transaction in which the readers use their lived experiences, convictions, personal opinions, and assumptions to interact with the ideas in the text and create personal meaning as a result of this transaction (Iser, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978). Therefore, the reader response approach consists of the development of an aesthetic relationship with a text. In this approach, literature is presented as "an experience rather than as an object, and readers as active participants rather than passive consumers" (Davis, 1989, p. 421).

Rosenblatt (1978) coined two terms to explain the stances a reader may assume when reading a literary text: *Aesthetic reading* and *Efferent reading*. *Efferent reading* refers to the conventional way in which texts have been approached in classrooms. In this conventional way, the reader looks for specific information and analyzes the text. Rosenblatt (1978) explains that in this type of reading the attention of the reader is "directed outward, toward concepts to be retained, ideas to be tested, and actions to be performed after the reading" (p.24). *Aesthetic reading*, on the other hand, refers to reading for pleasure. Rosenblatt (1978) states that when an individual is reading a literary text aesthetically his/her attention "is centred directly on what he/she is living through during his/her relationship with that particular text" (p. 25). Further, although the initial response to reading is individual, sociocultural constructivist learning (Courtland & Gambell, 2010) processes such as shared response and reflection, contribute to the social and cultural constructions of meaning.

Researchers in modern languages instruction (Chi, 1999; Carney, 1990; Cook, 1994) have criticized the traditional approach to teaching modern language literature for a number of reasons. In a traditional approach, comprehension of literary works is assessed by comprehension

questions which require the reader to give literal answers from the text. In a study conducted in Taiwan, Chi (1999) investigated how the reader response approach promoted response and comprehension of ten advanced college students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The students read and interpreted two English short stories. Chi's study showed how the reader response approach gave the students the opportunity to engage in a contextual, meaning-making process, and how it embodied the potential to engage readers' interest and stimulate their critical thinking. Chi concluded that teachers should re-evaluate their perspectives towards reading instruction and provide the students with a positive environment in which to make meaning personal through the transactional process. Chi explains that, because literary texts in modern language classes have traditionally been looked upon as resources for the detailed study of structures and form and not as the departure point for language use, modern language learners have long been encouraged and taught to read a text only from the author's or the instructor's perspective. Therefore, the instructor would validate the students' interpretations of a text as long as these interpretations are consistent with his or hers. As a result, modern language classes have traditionally failed to encourage readers' personal constructions of meaning in favour of their instructors' interpretations of texts.

Chi (1999) cites an argument articulated by Davis (1989, 1992) and Cairney (1990), who have suggested that literary texts should not only be considered avenues for the analysis of usage (grammar and form), but also to encourage authentic communication. Cook (1994) notes that when instructors use this latter approach, texts become resources which provide the readers with "opportunities for critical reading, questioning, negotiating, and the expression of meaning, as well as communication, interpretation and the exchange of meaning" (p. 2).

In a more recent study, Gao, Miall, Kuiken, and Eng (2005) explored how Chinese-Canadian and Euro-Canadian readers negotiated their cultural identities within a multicultural context and to what extent these readers became involved in a personal way in their reading experiences. Participants in this study were asked to comment on passages that they found striking in two texts, a philosophical and a narrative text written in English by the Chinese author Lin Yutang. Gao et al. (2005) found that differences between the two ethnic groups of readers took place only when they responded to the narrative text. The Chinese-Canadian readers exhibited a style of reading indicating a familiar connection with Chinese culture by comparing their life worlds and the world of the text, and explicitly referencing cultural contrasts. However, Euro-Canadian readers exhibited a style of commentary that combined evocative elaboration with a form of identification that situated them within the implicit "we" of the text. For example, Gao et al. note that the styles of reading exhibited by both ethnic groups reflected the different ways in which they found themselves implicated during the act of reading. These scholars suggest that these different ways could be described respectively as similes or metaphors of personal identification.

In another study, Boyd-Batstone (2002) explored how a fifth grade bilingual student connected reader response and culture as an aesthetic experience. He explains that this participant expressed her culture aesthetically in the context of a reader response learning environment. The results of this study demonstrated that reader response and culture connected in three ways: (a) plugging into another's story; (b) telling one's own story; and (c) connecting to a family story. In addition, this study also demonstrated and affirmed the role of the instructor. Boyd-Batstone contends that, in the classroom context, it is the instructor's responsibility to

foster an environment of reader response and the positions the students will adopt in their responses to the text:

> When a teacher establishes an efferent stance, the classroom environment becomes a place for accommodation to the culture of the teacher and for subordination of the culture of the students. However, if the teacher is predominantly interested in connecting the text to the students' lives, aesthetic reading comes to the forefront. (p. 133)

Boyd-Batstone problematizes the role of the instructor in the classroom by explaining that, when an instructor does not share the same cultural background as that of the students, then reader response requires the instructor to negotiate culture with the students continually. The implication of this cultural negotiation requires the instructor to listen actively for the ways in which the culture of the students influences their understanding of what they are reading. As I explain in the next section, the cultural negotiation experienced by Boyd-Batstone and his student poses a way in which the teachers' and students' narratives alike acquire a voice in the classroom. As a result, the role of the instructor shifts from that of an expert to that of a co-learner while his/her students share their responses. When reflecting on the importance of the role an instructor assumes in a multicultural classroom, Boyd-Batstone explains:

> In culturally diverse classrooms, the teacher and the students can function as cultural mediators of meanings as these meanings are expressed by the students of differing backgrounds. Essentially, reader response invites cultural negotiation as a way of affirming how each one thinks and comes to an understanding of a text. (p. 134)

The Role of the Instructor

As I noted above, sociocultural-constructivist learning processes (Courland & Gambell, 2010) such as shared response and reflection, not only contribute to the social and cultural constructions of meaning among students in the language classroom, but also implicate the teacher as an active member of the learning activity. The reflective dimension of shared

response, leads learners to explore issues of concern, clarifying understandings, enriching interpretations and possibly altering their conceptual perspectives (Eisner, 2002).

Several researchers point to the important role of the teacher in the literacy and language arts classroom, as well as in the modern languages and cultures classroom (Canterford, 1991; Courtland et al., 1998; González, 2010; Mingshen, 1999; Smagorinsky, 2002; Sumara, 1994, 1995). They note that the role of the teacher should be that of another learner, participant and facilitator in the learning activity. To illustrate, Sumara (1995) explains that teachers should not exclude their responses to literary texts from the students. He explains that, since teachers are involved in the "ecology of the curricular experience" (p. 25), they cannot look at the commonplace location (the space created by the relations among reader, text, and the contexts of reading) as outsiders. Rather, he suggests that teachers should become part of that location as interpreters:

> Teaching literature, then, is an act of interpretation where the teacher works with the students to understand the ever-evolving complex set of relations that include literary readings. The teacher must be prepared to reveal some of her or himself to the students, for it is impossible to talk about one's relation to the text without talking about oneself. (p. 25)

Similarly, Courtland et al. (1998) explain that "teachers should be readers and writers who engage in the reading of literary texts and shared response" (p. 340). Teachers need to experience this process of engagement themselves in order to model it for students. Courtland et al. (1998) explain:

> Teachers should redefine their role in the classroom to be that of a member of a reading community engaged in literature. As such, they become partners engaged in genuine inquiry with their students, discovering commonplace locations that connect readers to each other, readers of texts, and texts to students' own lived experiences. They assist students in negotiating the relations between the experience and the reflection on experience in ways that enable the students to develop their understanding of the processes involved in comprehension and

interpretation, private and public reading, and the resymbolizing of texts in new forms. (p. 340)

Smagorinsky (2002) highlights the important roles teachers play in scaffolding students' learning. He defines scaffolding as "the way in which experienced and capable people assist others in learning new knowledge and skills" (p. 19). He explains that this scaffolding should be planned in such a way that in the end "students can understand the complexity of the theme and construct their own understanding of the role it plays in their lives" (p. 21). Smagorinsky (2002) contends that teachers are also learners and that their notion of knowledge building can possibly change by means of engaging with students and "their ideas of what needs to be constructed" (p. 21).

Likewise, a number of researchers argue that teachers need to explore and understand their cultural identities first in order to develop an understanding and an appreciation of their students' diverse cultural backgrounds (Bérci, 2007; Davis, Ramalho, Beyerbach, & London, 2008, Duff & Uchida, 1994; Lee & Dallman, 2008; Ndura, 2004; Santoro, 2009; Tedick & Walker, 1994). For example, Santoro (2009) conducted a qualitative study on eight preservice teachers' engagement with culturally diverse students during their practicum. Santoro was particularly interested in exploring how preservice teachers understood their identities and their students' as constituted through and by ethnicity and socio-economic class. The study had three phases. During the first phase participants participated in a focus group meeting before they went into their practica. The purpose of this focus meeting was to obtain information on how participants' constructed their identities in terms of their ethnicities and social classes. During the second phase of the study, participants kept a reflective journal during their practica. In these journals they reflected on concerns, issues and experiences while working with students of diverse cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The researcher also visited these

participants during this practicum and observed them in their classrooms. The preservice teachers were then interviewed individually and participated in another focus group meeting during the third phase of the study.

Santoro found that participants in this study possessed limited knowledge about their students' ethnic identities. This limitation in their knowledge was based on singular, fixed, and static assumptions about culture that led the participants to believe that students from determined ethnic backgrounds had predetermined dispositions towards schooling and, as such, would conform to certain cultural expectations. More importantly, Santoro notes that such a perception of students from diverse ethnicities "constructs the students ... and 'the way they've been brought up as *the* [sic] problem and places the blame on the students and their families" (p. 37). Santoro suggests that this perception has contributed to preservice teachers' lack of reflection on their own practices and conceptions of the *Other*, thus contributing to the marginalization of students of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the schools.

Santoro recommends that teacher education programs should provide preservice teachers with opportunities to develop knowledge about themselves at the same time they develop knowledge about the *Other*:

> ...teachers need to come to know themselves as ethnic and encultured if they are to understand their students and engage with the complexities of teaching for diversity. This means understanding how their own ethnic identities shape teaching identities, their classroom practices and their relationships with students. (41)

In the same way, there has been a growing concern regarding the role of the instructor in the field of modern languages and cultures education. Such concern has ranged from the teachers' curricular conceptions to their ideological conceptions when it comes to teaching languages and cultures.

The role of the modern languages and cultures teacher. Several scholars (Reagan and Osborn, 2002; Kramsch, 1995; Norton Pierce, 1995; Morgan, 2004; Duff and Uchida, 1994; Kubota and Lin, 2009) have scrutinized the role that modern languages and cultures instructors play in their classrooms and how this role may impact the language acquisition process and the students' investment in this process. To illustrate, Reagan and Osborn (2002) suggest that although the field of modern languages instruction and acquisition is "a discipline engaged in on-going self-examination and reflection" (p.1), it is evident in the many attempts to bring changes to this field, that very little has changed since the 1950s in the ways North Americans are taught modern languages. These researchers suggest that the field has failed to produce students who are culturally competent in the target language and contend that this failure has been in part due to the role modern languages instructors have played in the classroom.

Reagan and Osborn (2002) argue that the modern languages and cultures teacher has traditionally been viewed only as a guide to the target language, when they consider that a modern language instructor should also be "a mentor or colleague in the student's development of critical language awareness" (p. 2). This type of awareness includes, but is not limited to, getting to know and understanding the cultures represented by the languages being studied in a political and value-laden manner. When describing this role they explain that the modern languages and cultures teacher

> must not only have competence in the target language, but also understand the nature of language writ large, and must be sensitive to the political and sociocultural aspects of language and language use. In other words, the teacher of foreign languages must be able to function in a classroom setting as something of a critical or applied linguist. (p. 2)

Reagan and Osborn (2002), and French and Collins (2014) also direct our attention to the implementation of modern language education in public schools. Reagan and Osborn suggest

that, in order to begin to understand what is happening in modern languages and cultures classrooms, researchers must start by contextualizing modern languages and cultures teachers' experiences and consider the realities of their practices. They explain that modern languages teachers in public schools face a series of constraints that affect the effectiveness of their programs. Examples include: time constraints related to the length of courses; the lack of significant support from institutions for the learning of modern languages; institutional and individual biases that determine which languages are offered and who takes which language; the public justifications for modern language education; and "the social expectation of failure with respect to the learning of languages other than English" (Reagan & Osborn, 2002, p. 3). Further, in a recent comparative study on two survey projects conducted by French and Collins, 1305 teachers of French as a second language and 512 teachers English as a second language from 11 provinces of Canada cited as their main challenges the lack of access to resources, the lack of importance given by the administration to second language teaching, a perceived lack of respect from other staff at their schools, low prioritization of second language learning and/or teaching in their schools' schedules, and a feeling of isolation.

Reagan and Osborn suggest that, although the constraints are a reality in North America at present, modern languages and cultures teachers still have significant control not only of the content of the modern languages and cultures curriculum, but also of determining what counts as correct or incorrect use of the language under study, as well as preferred grammatical and lexical choices. In addition, Reagan and Osborn consider that this control affords modern language teachers ample opportunities to control the discourse of the classroom. Thus, modern languages teachers' beliefs about their cultural identities play an important role in deciding how cultures will be portrayed in the classroom.

In a discussion on the politics of cultural difference in language education, Kubota's (2004b) work complements Agar's (1994, 2006) discussion on the concept of *culture*. Kubota explains that by politicizing cultural difference, language teachers would be able to move beyond essentialist views on culture. Grounding her discussion in a post-structural framework, she notes that "post-structuralism encourages us to view culture and cultural difference as discursive constructs rather than as objective and permanent truths" (p. 30). To illustrate, she explains that the specific meanings and images that are assigned to cultures are generated inside several discourses that are institutionally located. These discourses can be detected in literature, teaching materials, advertising, media, art and politics, and produce knowledge about cultures that is commonly accepted and thus legitimate this knowledge as truth: "Images of culture and cultural difference do exist as products of discursive construction but not as essential, inherent, or fixed truths. The meanings ascribed to cultural difference are politically and ideologically produced, plural and ever shifting." (p. 31)

Giroux and McLaren (1992) also suggest that: "as a socially organized and culturally produced human practice, language never acts on its own but only in conjunction with readers, their social locations, their histories, and their subjective needs and desires" (p.15). Therefore, as modern languages and cultures teachers we need to reflect on our cultural identities and how much they determine our priorities when it comes to teaching language in a cultural manner. Further, our cultural identities will also determine how culturally relevant our practices are. To illustrate, Reagan (2004) notes that language specialists, linguists and the general public have tended to view language from a predominantly positivistic standpoint. This standpoint has led teachers, students, and the public in general to believe "that language as an abstract entity… exists as just a knowable entity" (p. 42). As a result, when we teach modern languages, our main

goal has been primarily to bring our students' linguistic behaviour closer to the prescribed norms of the static reality of the target language. Reagan explains that by engaging in this process "What we do, in short, is to engage in the objectification of the construct of 'language' which in turn, I would suggest, has led us to misunderstand the nature of language and to accept technicist views of the teaching and learning of languages" (p. 43). Reagan observes that when language is approached from a technicist perspective, the consequences are problematic in the modern language classroom. One such consequence is the role of the modern language instructor as authority and model. Similarly, Craig (1995) is concerned with such an authoritative role and notes that such a view of the modern language and culture teacher

> is based on the conception of knowledge as a quantifiable intellectual commodity. The teacher, as an expert in the field of inquiry or as an expert speaker of a language, has more of this knowledge than his or her students have. Because this knowledge has a separate existence outside its knowers, it can be given, or taught, to the learners by the teacher-expert. (p. 41)

On the other hand, Li (1999) suggests that, as modern languages and cultures teachers, we must also be cautious when adopting approaches like those described by Reagan and Craig. Li provides a compelling example of how the role of the modern language and culture instructor becomes problematic when the instructor attempts to implement pedagogical approaches without considering the cultural relevance of such approaches to the context in which they are being implemented. Li investigated the nature of the implementation of North American pedagogical approaches by two North American EFL teachers in China, and the community building that these approaches promoted. He found that the participants considered that languages could better be acquired by involving students in spontaneous situations through language strategies such as group work, discussions, and role plays. In other words, these teachers advocated for the Communicative Language Teaching approach (Nunan, 1991), an approach to teaching languages

that I shall describe later in this review of the literature. In addition, these teachers also reported that the use of textbooks was limiting to their teaching activity and expected their Chinese students to change their habits of rote memorization and passive learning into a more Western style of learning in which democratic participation is encouraged through the implementation of in-class activities. These strategies contrasted significantly with their Chinese students' traditions of learning in which the teacher is expected to be an authority and the students are passive learners. As a result of such expectations, the students showed their resistance to the Western style of teaching showcased by their teachers by their unwillingness to participate in classroom activities, their silence, and expectation of a lecture-style delivery. Since the teachers did not comply with these expectations, the students then did not consider them to be good teachers and thought them disorganized. The communicative approach to teaching languages implemented by the teachers created a perception of them not being serious in their work because of their casual appearance and behaviour. The students perceived them as "clowns."

Li raises important questions regarding the implementation of Western approaches in different cultural contexts such as the one described above. He contends that while culture is an important element in the teaching of languages, further attention should be paid to the discrepancies between the culture of teaching and the culture of learning. Li encourages modern languages and cultures teachers to constantly examine their pedagogical approaches to language teaching in order to confirm that what is shared in their classrooms is culturally meaningful to their students: "Cultural factors play a crucial part in participants' perceptions of their individual roles based on their cultural mindsets. These perceptions ultimately determine the styles of communication. Mis-communication occurs when different parts *[sic]* read the 'text' differently" (p. 19). Li also recommends that modern languages and cultures teachers should understand and

deal with the subjectivities of their students, their positions as cultural agents, and their lived-through experiences. One way of coming to understand students' subjectivities, Li asserts, "lies in the establishment of a synergic culture in which common interests are to be found and shared, sources of problems identified, cultural differences understood and respected, otherness transcended, and learning maximally enhanced" (p. 19).

The concern shared by Reagan and Osborn (2002), Kubota (2004a), Reagan (2004) and Li (1999) as it relates to the role modern languages and cultures teachers in their classrooms, has also been raised by Beers (2001), Cannagarajah (2005), Kramsch (1994), Pérez (2004), and Ramírez (1995). These scholars advocate for an adoption of critical pedagogical frameworks that encourage teachers to be not only reflexive, but also critical of the roles they have in their classrooms. Further, these scholars problematize these roles by contending that modern languages and cultures teachers are also transmitters of cultures. They have also pointed to the need to raise students' awareness of themselves, to provide them with some kind of *metalanguage,* a language or symbol system to discuss, describe or analyze another language or symbol system, in order to talk about other people's languages and cultures. Kramsch (1994) notes that usually, because of the poor critical approach to modern language and cultures teaching and learning, students do not know that they belong to a specific culture, nor do they know enough about the target culture in order to be able to "interpret and synthesize the cultural phenomena presented" (p. 228).

Critical Pedagogies

Cannagarajah (2005), Norton and Toohey (2004), and Reagan and Osborn (2002) have considered the place of critical pedagogies in modern languages and cultures instruction and acquisition and the role these pedagogies perform in this area. These scholars explain that

implementing critical pedagogies in modern language education require commitment to transformation at the social level (Cannagarajah, 2005; Norton & Toohey, 2004). For example, they consider that when critical pedagogies are used in modern language education doors are open to new sources of knowledge and understanding regarding not only the cultures of the languages we teach, but also our own cultural identities. Norton and Toohey (2004) note that by understanding our own cultural identities, critical pedagogies give us the opportunities to investigate "whose knowledge has historically been privileged and whose has been disregarded, and why" (p. 15).These scholars base their argument in the roots of critical pedagogies, which are found in the liberation movements and political scholarship of the Frankfort School in 1923 (Norton & Toohey, 2004). Norton and Toohey (2004) explain that the approaches proposed by the members of the Frankfort School called up for a pedagogy that scrutinized social relations through embodied action or discursive practice. These social relations comprised, and still do, "externalizing, naming and questioning the world, to accompany action that resists the psychological and physical violence and material disempowerment that many students have experienced" (p. 2).

"Critical pedagogies" is also a term that has been linked to educators such as Freire (1968), Giroux (1992), Luke (2004), Luke and Gore (1992), McLaren (1989), Simon (1992) and Ellsworth (1989). Luke (2004) notes that critical education was formally framed by Freire (1968) with the publication of what became later a seminal document for all advocates of critical theories in education: *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (Freire, 1968). Luke explains that, even though there were other authors such as Bernstein (1988), Bourdieu (1982) and Young (1971), who spoke about how the messages of the systems of education worked politically, it was Freire who

spoke directly to the "psychic memory and bodily experience of being Other" (Luke, 2004, p. 22).

Giroux (1992) explains that critical pedagogies find at their core a necessity to explore how pedagogies work as cultural endeavors of producing instead of transmitting knowledge within relations of power that are opposed and that prescribe the relations between teachers and students. Similarly, McLaren (1989) suggests that critical pedagogies scrutinize schools in their historical context and as part of the present social and political composition that represents the mainstream or dominant society. He explains that this type of pedagogical approach to education

> …poses a variety of counterlogics to the positivistic, ahistorical and depoliticized analysis employed by both liberal and conservative critics of schooling- an analysis all too readily visible in the training programs in our colleges and universities of education. Fundamentally concerned with the centrality of politics and power in our understanding of how schools work, critical theorists have produced work centering on the political economy of schooling, the state and education, the representation of texts, and the construction of student subjectivity. (p. 159)

Cannagarajah (2005), a scholar and researcher in the field of modern languages acquisition and instruction, explains that critical pedagogies found their way into the modern languages and cultures field quite late in comparison to other disciplines such as literature, composition and education. For example, he explains that while critical pedagogies had been discussed in education since 1979 by Giroux, this was not the case in the fields of foreign and second languages acquisition and instruction until the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Canagarajah suggests that critical pedagogies should be viewed as a fluid set of ideas that inform practice and work to respond to the diversity of students, classrooms and communities with whom we work:

> Critical pedagogy is not a set of ideas, but a way of "doing" learning and teaching. It is a practice motivated by a distinct attitude toward classrooms and society. Critical students and teachers are prepared to situate learning in the relevant social

contexts, unravel the implications of power in pedagogical activity, and commit themselves to transforming the means and ends of learning, in order to construct more egalitarian, equitable, and ethical educational and social environments. In this sense, the term *critical* [sic] contrasts with terms like detached, objective, dispassionate, instrumental, practical, and descriptive, which have informed "noncritical" traditions of L2 practice from the modernist philosophical perspective. (932)

Conversely, at the same time that critical pedagogues have attempted to provide teachers with the tools to teach for a more democratic education, they have limitations (Eisner, 2002; Ellsworth, 1992; Reagan & Osborn, 2002). In his analysis of different curriculum ideologies, Eisner (2002) outlines some of the main shortcomings of critical theories. For example, he notes that the main source of critical theorists' writing is to be found in academic form of address. According to him "their ideas have been lively and often extremely insightful and illuminating, but they speak essentially to intellectuals" (p. 76). He considers that critical pedagogues have criticized the failings of the educational system without offering clear possible solutions to the problems they argue about: "although pulling the weeds is helpful, their elimination in a garden does not ensure the presence of flowers; flowers have to be planted" (p. 74). Eisner considers that if critical pedagogues' discourse were less negative and more constructive, their suggestions would be more likely to have an effect on practice.

Ellsworth (1989) questions the overuse of the terms *empowerment* and *dialogue* by critical pedagogues. In 1988, Ellsworth developed an antiracist course with a diverse group of students amidst increased racist acts inside and outside the Wisconsin-Madison University campus. A series of events experienced by Ellsworth and her students during the development of this course led her to be dissatisfied with the way critical pedagogies were being enacted at that moment. For example, Ellsworth explains that both she and her students found that their class was not in fact a safe place for them to speak about experiences of oppression either inside or outside the

classroom. Some of the reasons why her classroom was not a safe place were supported by her students' fear of being misunderstood or offering information that made them vulnerable, and negative memories of experiences when trying to make their voices heard in other contexts. Ellsworth and her students agreed that in order to establish such a safe place in the classroom two conditions were to be met: high levels of trust and personal commitment of the teacher to students in the classroom. In order for these conditions to be met they considered that something more than class time was needed; students and instructors needed to have social interactions outside of the classroom:

> Opportunities to know the motivations, histories, and stakes of individuals in the class should have been planned early in the semester. Furthermore, White students/professors should have shared the burden of educating themselves about the consequences of their White-skin privilege, and to facilitate this, the curriculum should have included significant amounts of literature, film, and videos by people of color and White people against racism-so that the students of color involved in the class would not always be looked to as "experts" in racism or the situation on the campus. (Ellesworth, 1989, p. 317)

As a result, Ellsworth became dissatisfied with the superficial way critical pedagogies, and the educators who proposed them, used terms such as *empowerment*, *dialogue*, *student voice*, and *critical* to describe practices that claimed to empower students with an equal space to voice their beliefs and respond to others' beliefs in a dialogical and critical manner. For example, Ellsworth contends that *empowerment*, as a central concept in critical pedagogies, "gives the illusion of equality while, in fact, it leaves the authoritarian nature of the teacher/student relationship intact" (p.306). In other words, Ellsworth argues that very often critical pedagogies exacerbate relations of domination within the classrooms. Likewise, when referring to the use of *empowerment* as a strategy to share, give and redistribute power to students, she states that this strategy "treats the symptoms but leaves the disease unnamed and untouched" (p. 306).

Similarly, Ellsworth suggests that critical pedagogies, in trying to bring a *voice* to marginalized groups, have silenced the white, middle-class, Christian, heterosexual male. As a result, critical pedagogies have failed to acknowledge the implications this specific ethnic group has in the information being presented and obstructing the dialogic nature such pedagogies claim to promote. She critiques Giroux's call for the use of *dialogue* as a strategy in the classroom by arguing that such a dialogue envisions "an illusionary safe place in which the students find trust, share and are committed to improve human life" (p. 314). According to her experience, such a dialogue cannot exist in a classroom where the instructor/student relationships are still determined by differences of power and privilege. Moreover, she contends that such a dialogue cannot exist when such a strategy leads to a homogenization of students' thinking or what she calls a "harmony of interests" (p. 315).

What are the implications of critical pedagogies for modern language and cultures teachers? How might critical pedagogies assist modern language and cultures teachers to realize the importance of viewing languages and cultures as inseparable in the modern languages classroom? How might these pedagogies help modern languages and cultures teachers in the analysis of their own cultural identities in order to teach the cultures of the languages they teach, thus fostering competence in a modern language?

Critical Pedagogies in Modern Languages and Cultures Education: Reagan and Osborn (2002) explain that when critical pedagogies are used in modern languages and cultures education, doors become open to knowledge and understanding of not only the cultures of the languages we teach, but also of our own cultures. Norton and Toohey (2004) note that by understanding our own cultural identities, critical pedagogies give us the opportunities to

investigate "whose knowledge has historically been privileged and whose has been disregarded, and why" (p. 15).

Eisner (2002) contends that critical pedagogues need to propose a way in which to apply the pedagogies for which they advocate. He suggests that it would be useful if critical pedagogues described what a school based on critical principles would look like, what this school would teach, and how learning would be assessed. Eisner's positive description of critical pedagogies provides a strong reason why these pedagogies should be considered a curriculum ideology:

> There is no group I know more ardent about their beliefs or as outspoken about the righteousness of its cause. It attracts adherents, it provides a common lexicon for its advocates, and it has a common canon. Its views on the ills of education are often exceedingly plausible; they are frequently both trenchant and accurate. (p. 77)

One convincing example that addresses some of Eisner's concerns regarding the practicality of critical pedagogies is a grammar lesson delivered by Morgan (2004) in which he offers a strong argument against the decontextualized teaching of English grammar in ESL environments. Motivated by the 1995 Quebec Referendum on Sovereignty and a possible separation of Québec from Canada, Morgan explored how his students' opinions on the referendum could be informed by their thoughts on the re-acquisition of Hong Kong by China in 1997. Morgan's students were a group of Chinese immigrants (mostly from Hong Kong) who were taking his advanced ESL class at a Chinese community centre in Toronto in 1995. In order to facilitate discussion during this lesson, Morgan determined that he needed to make the intertextuality of Hong Kong and Québec the main feature of the grammar lesson and then present *modal auxiliaries* such as *will*, *might*, *may* and *should*, and *modal adjuncts* such as *definitely* and *probably* in order to prompt students to express feelings of ambivalence,

apprehension and possibility regarding the future of the Quebec Referendum and the re-acquisition of Hong Kong by China.

To assess and later scaffold his students' background knowledge, Morgan spent a few lessons prior to the grammar lesson, presenting and analyzing vocabulary that would have a relation to the main issues they were studying. The students compared and responded to newspaper articles presenting different perspectives on the issues at hand. On the day the grammar lesson took place, Morgan assessed his students' background knowledge on modal verbs using sentences in which they were to identify the different levels of intensity of the messages conveyed by different sentences that contained expressions of certainty (i.e. *I'm absolutely sure that* and *I'm certain/sure that*). After this activity, Morgan asked his students to organize in small groups and discuss what they thought the implications of the referendum would be for Canada and Québec, and the implications of the re-acquisition of Hong Kong by China for Hong Kongers using some of the expressions used in the previous activity. The sentences that the students created were reflexive of their actual feeling towards both historical events and, in the case of the latter event, sentences communicated uncertainty as to the future of their country under the Chinese rule. By relating two historical events in his students' lives, Morgan was able to encourage his students to discover "the meaning potential available through the lexicogrammatical system" (p. 167). Use of a critical approach to learning English as a modern language in this study demonstrates how traditional language learning activities such a grammar lessons can be organized in such a way as to explore larger questions of identity and possibility. In this way, a grammar lesson can serve not only as site of identity representation, but also as a site of identity creation. Morgan notes that the metalanguage associated with language learning

provides exciting opportunities for interconnecting the microstructures of text with the macrostructures of society.

Morgan recommends that we should explore in-depth the degree to which modern language and cultures instruction "constitutes different ways of being and knowing the world" (Morgan, 2004, p. 174). Like Kramsch (1994), Morgan considers that by doing so, modern languages and cultures teachers may be able to critically reflect on their own views on social issues such as racism and sexism, for example, and be less complacent about them. He offers a possible solution to avoid this complacency: "Part of this complacency could be redressed through constructive engagement with pedagogy as a legitimate site of identity formation and knowledge production – hence, our understanding of others" (p. 174). Such a perspective implies that for modern languages and cultures teachers to re-examine their beliefs on social issues and the place of these beliefs in their own classrooms, they need to examine their beliefs on teaching modern languages and cultures and how these beliefs become embodied in their classroom practices. Further, we may need to examine the training of modern languages and cultures teachers and how much they have been encouraged to reflect on their own cultural identities and languages as points of departure to teaching.

So far, I have discussed the curricular conceptions that underpin the research study that I will describe in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Proponents of critical pedagogical approaches to languages and cultures education recommend that modern languages and cultures teachers should adopt a critical stance if they are to educate students who are not only proficient linguistically, but also culturally. Reagan and Osborn (2002) contend that the field of modern languages and cultures acquisition is "a discipline engaged in on-going self-examination and reflection" (p.1). At the same time, the same authors consider that that although constant reflection has been common in

this field, not much has changed in the way students learn and teachers teach modern languages and the cultures these languages represent. Similarly, Luke (2004) contends that "… the field must do something other than what it currently does. Otherwise it will remain a technology for domesticating the Other into nation, whatever its scientific and humanist pretenses" (p. 28). However, how did we get here? When did languages become separate from cultures in the field of modern languages and cultures acquisition and instruction? Why, while most teachers think that languages and cultures are inseparable, does the former take prevalence over the latter in the classroom? What theories have informed the field of modern languages and cultures acquisition and instruction? I shall attempt to provide an answer to these questions in the following section.

Modern Languages Acquisition Theories

Psycholinguists, linguists and sociolinguists have historically been concerned with the ways humans learn a modern language in order to develop approaches that would best aid learners in the challenging task of learning an additional language (Bates & McWhinney, 1981; Brooks, 1960; Chomsky, 1959; Ellis, 2001; Gass, 1997; Hatch, 1978; Lado, 1964; Long, 1983, 1996; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Pica, 1994; Segalowits, 2003). There is a general consensus among scholars regarding the complexity of the process of learning an additional language. Firstly, scholars note that such a complexity acknowledges the fundamental differences that exist between children learning their first language and children, adolescents and adults who learn an additional language at different stages of their lives as a result of immigration, professional and academic interests, etc. (Bates & McWhinney, 1981; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Secondly, in the last twenty years, scholars such as Beers (2001), Byram (1997), Carhill, Suárez-Orozco and Páez (2008), Kramsch (1984), Lightbown and Spada (2006), Norton Pierce (1995) and Pérez (2004) have pointed out that in order to start to

understand how an individual learns a second language, careful attention should be paid to both the learner's individual characteristics such as cultural backgrounds and the environment in which s/he is learning and acquiring a modern language. Thirdly, according to Beers (2001), the field of modern language and cultures teaching and acquisition has been criticized for fragmenting theories and models of language acquisition by disciplines: the field of linguistics for a theory of language; the field of psycholinguistics for a theory of learning; and the field of sociolinguistics for a theory of language use. This fragmentation has reduced understanding of the different factors that affect language learning to instrumental and positivistic views of languages and teaching.

In the section below I describe behavioral and cognitive/developmental theories that describe modern language acquisition from a psycholinguistic perspective, behaviorism, the innatist views of modern language acquisition, key linguistic theories or cognitive/developmental theories. Finally, I describe sociocultural theory (SCT) (Vygostky, 1978; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011), a theory that places modern languages and cultures learning and acquisition in a larger social context and that explores the relationship between internal and external processes that affect such learning and acquisition processes.

Behavioural Theories

Among behavioural theories are included:

Behaviourism. Proponents of a behaviourist view of modern language acquisition (Brooks, 1960; Lado, 1964) were influential in North America between the 1940s and 1970s. Brooks (1960) and Lado (1964) explain modern language learning in terms of imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation. They viewed language acquisition as a process in which habits were formed and suggested that modern language learning occurred in an audiolingual

manner; that is, modern language learners mimicked and memorized dialogues and sentence patterns. For example, Brooks and Lado believed that modern languages learners would use habits previously learned in their native languages and would transfer them to the new language. In other words, these scholars assumed that where the native language and modern language sentence structures were similar, learners would not have difficulties acquiring new sentence structures; however, where sentence structures were different, the learner would have difficulties acquiring them in the new language.

Lightbown and Spada (2006) note that critics of this view of language acquisition argue that many errors modern language learners make do not necessarily relate to the habits they possess in their native languages. Lightbown and Spada base their arguments on a review of studies that demonstrated that although many adult language learners are highly literate in their native languages, the sentences they constructed in the modern language were more similar to those of children. Further, Lightbown and Spada note that these scholars found that this characteristic is consistent among learners from different languages. As a result of this and other criticisms, the audiolingual view of second language acquisition began to diminish and an innatist view of modern language acquisition started to emerge.

The innatist perspective. Chomsky (1959) theorized that language use is natural to all human beings and that the same universal principles are at the basis of all of them. In other words, Chomsky considered that, while the environment in which a modern language is learned can be considered an important variable in how an individual acquires such a language, s/he possesses the biological capacity to acquire this language. He viewed this human biological predisposition towards languages as a "universal grammar" with which individuals discovered by themselves the fundamental rules of language.

The monitor model (Krashen, 1982) is one approach through which the *innatist perspective* on additional language learning was put into practice. Krashen's monitor model explains additional language acquisition in relation to five hypotheses:

- Acquisition-learning hypothesis: "acquiring" and "learning" a second language are two different processes. According to Krashen, "acquisition" occurs while learners are exposed to the second language in a natural way and do not pay much attention to form. However, "learning" occurs when the learner is exposed to formal instruction of the second language;

- Monitor hypothesis: only when exposed to formal instruction and after having learned relevant rules, the learner becomes concerned with grammatical correctness;

- Natural order hypothesis: language acquisition follows predictable sequences in which, as in first language acquisition, the easiest structures learned are not the most easily acquired. For example, while the third person singular conjugation of verbs is one of the easiest verb forms to learn in English, even the most advanced additional language speakers fail to produce it in spontaneous conversations;

- Input hypothesis: language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible language; that is, language that contains what learners already know and new elements that challenge them to go beyond what they already know; and

- Affective hypothesis: second language learners possess a series of affective filters which will promote or hinder language acquisition. For example, it does not matter how motivated to learn is an individual, if s/he is tense or finds the material boring, s/he may filter out input and make it unavailable for acquisition.

This model has been instrumental in the creation of approaches to teaching modern

languages which start to drift away from the behavioural hypothesis that birthed them and

become more transactional in nature. An example of such an approach is the well-known

communicative language teaching (CLT) approach (Freeman & Richards, 1993; Lightbown &

Spada, 2006). The *communicative language teaching* approach is usually characterized as a

broad *approach* to teaching, rather than as a teaching *method* with a clearly defined set of

classroom practices (Freeman & Richards, 1993). As such, it is most often defined as a list of

general principles or features. One of the most recognized of these lists is Nunan's (1991) five

features of CLT. Nunan describes the characteristics of this list: a) an emphasis on learning to

communicate through interaction in the target language; b) the introduction of authentic texts

into the learning situation; c) the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on

language but also on how they manage their learning; d) an enhancement of the learner's own

personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning; and e) a link

between classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

Nunan notes that these five features show an interest in the needs and desires of learners

as well as the connection between the language as it is taught in their class and as it is used

outside the classroom. Under this broad definition, any teaching practice that aids students in

developing their communicative competence in an authentic context is deemed an acceptable and

beneficial form of instruction. Thus, in the classroom CLT often takes the form of pair and group

work requiring negotiation and cooperation among learners, fluency-based activities that

encourage learners to develop their confidence, role-plays in which students practice and develop

language functions, as well as proper use of grammar and pronunciation activities.

The *communicative language teaching* approach has been widely implemented in Canadian *French immersion programs* in bilingual schools and *content instruction* in all-French schools (Lighbown & Spada, 2006). Lightbown and Spada (2006) explain that one of the limitations of the innatist perspective of modern language acquisition is that it has usually focused on the competence of advanced language learners and their complex knowledge of grammar. More importantly, they note that research studies that use this perspective are usually conducted in controlled environments in which language is viewed as an object of study rather than as a subject of study. In other words, such a perspective views language as a quantifiable tool that can be given to learners by an expert in a value-free manner. Further, Norton Pierce (1995) argues that the notion of *motivation* put forth by Krashen has such a strong grounding in the field of social psychology that it has not taken into account the complexity of the relationship between language learning, identity and power.

As a teacher of modern languages and cultures who has used the *communicative language teaching* approach in his own teaching in the past, I have found that it does not offer opportunities to reflect on the role of the teacher of modern languages who is considered the expert in charge of providing students with the tool of language. As a result, the implications that this role of teacher as expert in the process of learning a modern language goes unchallenged. Indeed, the main limitation of such approaches has been in separating the roles of the teachers and learners. Further, in such approaches, the cultural backgrounds of teachers are not analyzed as important aspects of the teaching and learning process.

Similarly, researchers who have studied CLT in immersion settings (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Harley & Swain, 1984; Lyster, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Tarone & Swain, 1995) have found that although students do make considerable progress learning the language in a "natural"

way, there is a moment in which students stop learning in this way and need the intervention of an instructor in order to continue learning. These researchers do not dismiss the gains made by Krashen's *monitor model* to language learning and its emphasis on having students scaffold each other's learning, nor do they dismiss CLT's claims that language learning is more successful when taught communicatively. Indeed, as Roessingh (2011) explains, there is no single approach to teaching languages and cultures that responds to all the needs to languages and cultures learners all the time. Rather, Lightbown and Spada (2006), Harley and Swain (1984), Lyster (1994), Swain and Lapkin (1998), Tarone and Swain (1995) have refocused the attention on the role of the teacher of modern languages and cultures as a facilitator of students' learning. Furthermore, scholars such as Norton Pierce (1995), Roessingh (2011) and Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011) make the case for the important role that teachers play in encouraging their students' emotional investment in the language they are learning. For example, Norton Pierce calls for the need for modern languages and cultures teachers' to aid their students to "claim the right to speak outside the classroom. To this end, the lived experiences and social identities of language learners need to be incorporated into the formal second language curriculum" (p. 26). Similarly, when referring to young English language learners, Roessingh argues that modern languages and cultures teachers need to create the spaces to assert their students' identities "as they struggle to but cannot find their place in either the first language and culture or the second" (p. 129).

The work of scholars and researchers such as Coehlo (2004), Cummins (2007), and Cummins, Bismilla, Chow, Cohen, Gianpapa, Leoni, Sandhu, & Pastri (2005) also points out at "English Only" policy that has dominated the practice of English language teaching as another shortcoming of CLT. They contend that this policy has traditionally undermined students' native

languages and cultures as foundations to acquire a new language. However, their research shows that English language learners who use their first languages in their classes tend to improve their language comprehension skills in particular and literacy skills in general. Therefore, they argue that teachers of modern languages and culture should be providing opportunities for students to use their first languages and cultures as it allows students to comprehend and understand, and demonstrate many capabilities that they possess. They explain that when using English skills, many issues may arise. As a result, many students, who are trying to understand complex tasks are probably thinking first in their own language and trying to remember the English letters and their sounds, not to mention trying to figure out the best word to use from a very limited vocabulary which is very time consuming and challenging. This is not an accurate reflection of the students' abilities. Using students' native languages and cultures clarifies and builds meaning, thus creating an environment that promotes linguistic identity, thereby creating an inclusive environment.

Cognitive/Developmental Perspectives

Other psycholinguistic theories and hypothesis have found inspiration in a cognitive/developmental perspective of modern language acquisition. For example, Segalowits' (2003) *information processing theory* suggests that modern language acquisition occurs when learners construct knowledge that can become automatic when speaking and understanding. Ellis' (2001) *connectionism theory* emphasizes that often modern language learners encounter specific linguistic features while learning the target language and hypothesizes how often these features occur together. Ellis hypothesizes that this frequency, in turn, will allow modern language learners to connect features together.

Bates' and McWhinney's (1981) *competition model theory* not only takes into account form, but also language meaning and language use. According to these scholars, modern language acquisition requires learners to learn the relative importance of the different cues that are appropriate in the language they are learning.

Hatch (1978), Long (1983, 1996), Pica (1994), and Gass (1997) contend that interaction through conversations is the most important condition for modern language learning. They call this process of modern language learning the *interaction hypothesis*. These scholars argue that what modern language learners need is to have the opportunities to interact with others speakers and work together to attain mutual comprehension. One important aspect of this hypothesis is that it suggests that when communication becomes a difficult task for modern language learners, learners must negotiate meaning. Further, they note that this meaning negotiation becomes the opportunity for the development of oral skills in the modern language. In other words, these scholars, as Vygotsky (1978) suggests below, base modern language development on the frequency with which learners are exposed to social interactions. However, this hypothesis is also limited to prescribing one way in which learners will improve their oral language proficiency without taking into account the cultural dimension of language and the essential role of the teacher as a mediator and negotiator of cultural values.

Sociocultural Perspective

> Sociocultural theory is simultaneously new and old. It is a theory about how humans think through the creation and use of mediating tools. It is a theory that has been extended to a wide number of domains including second language learning and teaching. (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011, p. X)

Vygotsky (1978), the "father" of Sociocultural Theory [SCT] suggested that learning occurred when a learner interacted with another learner inside his or her *zone of proximal development* (ZPD), a situation in which the learner is capable of performing at a higher level because there is

support from his/her interlocutor. ZPD was a metaphor Vygotsky used to describe the co-construction of knowledge by two learners based on their collaborative interaction in social and cultural contexts. As applied to the field of modern language acquisition, in order for an individual to acquire an additional language, s/he needs to learn within meaningful social interactions with other individuals as they engaged in a variety of activities and contexts. Applied linguists have become leaders of SCT scholarship, although Vygotsky did not originally intended it to be a theory of modern languages and cultures learning. The sociocultural perspective on modern language acquisition views speaking and thinking as closely related and interdependent. According to Swain, Kinnear, and Steinman (2011), "What distinguishes Vygotskian SCT from other more social and less psychological theories, is that Vygotskian SCT is a theory of mind (a psychological theory) and the connections between internal and external processes are explored" (p. XV). In other words, the sociocultural perspective of modern language acquisition views both native and modern language acquisition as external activities that are socially and culturally mediated and which will become internalized eventually.

Vygotsky's ZPD has traditionally been interpreted to involve an expert and an apprentice; however, researchers such as Lantolf (2000), Donato (1994), and Swain and Lapkin (2002) have expanded this term and have included apprentice-apprentice interlocutors. For example, Swain and Lapkin (2002) conducted a qualitative study in which they explored the sociocultural explanations for second language learning in Canadian French immersion programs. This study was grounded on Swain's previously proposed *comprehensible output hypothesis*, a response to Krashen's *comprehensible input hypothesis*, and the idea that the task of learning modern languages encourages learners to process language more deeply. In this study, Swain and Lapkin explored how modern language learners assisted each other in the co-construction of linguistic

knowledge while they were engaged in speaking and writing tasks that drew their attention to form and meaning. The researchers suggest that for modern language learners to develop their oral and writing skills they need to be provided with opportunities to engage systematically in collaborative verbal production (the output) in the classroom. Further, they conclude that it is through this co-construction of knowledge that language use and language learning occur.

More recently, Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011) point to the effectiveness of the use of narratives with the purpose of demonstrating how SCT concepts such as *mediation* and *ZPD* may be observed inside and outside the modern languages and cultures classroom. They support their suggestion by contending that the most important pedagogical claim made by Vygotsky was that "all forms of human activity are mediated by material and/or symbolic means that are constructed within and through cultural activity" (p. 2).

A growing body of applied research draws on Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective of language acquisition; this framework is sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes merely implied. Such research, like the study described in this dissertation, may provide information that is more helpful in guiding teachers' self-reflections and pedagogical decision-making. Self-reflections may include their beliefs on their cultural identities and how they perceive these beliefs to be embodied in their classrooms. Further, these self-reflections may lead teachers to analyze the role of their students' first languages and cultural identities as vehicles to acquire a modern language and understand the cultures that this language represents. As a result, modern languages and cultures teachers may develop more effective approaches that encourage their students' critical analyses of the languages and cultures they are learning.

In the following section, I examine a number of research studies that have focused on the teaching of modern languages and cultures.

Modern Languages and Cultures Pedagogy

One of the main limitations that all the approaches and hypothesis described in the previous section have is that they have excluded the teachers' conceptions of their languages and cultural identities, and their conceptions of the languages and cultures they teach as factors that have an impact in the acquisition process. Byram and Feng (2005) contend that "education is never neutral and foreign languages education has a political role to play in any education system in the world" (p. 915). Byram and Feng also suggest that language teachers should assume social and political responsibilities in the education of their students in the contemporary world. However, Kramsch (1994) asserts that modern language teachers who teach languages other than their own in schools "generally transmit with that language a view of the world that mainly promotes the values and cultural assumptions of the L1educational system" (p. 12). Kubota (2004a), and Norton and Toohey (2004) observe that, although modern language instructors are assumed to be sensitive towards linguistic and cultural diversity, most do not recognize the extent to which their own cultural identities reinforce inequalities in both classrooms and communities.

In the following sections I discuss a number of studies that have focused on the teaching of modern languages and cultures in different contexts. I then discuss the role that multicultural education has played in informing education in general and modern languages and culture in particular.

Modern Languages and Cultures Teaching

Much of the research on modern languages and cultures teachers' beliefs on teaching has explored teachers' assumptions of culture teaching and the place culture occupies in their practices (Beers, 2001; Byram & Risager, 1999; Castro Prieto, Sercu & Méndez García, 2004;

Ryan, 1998; Sercu, Méndez García & Castro Prieto, 2005; Sercu, 2006). For example, Ryan (1998) conducted a longitudinal, two-year qualitative study with a group of 30 Mexican and non-Mexican English as foreign language (EFL) teachers in a large urban Mexican university. Ryan investigated the overall impact of culture in teacher and language training and learning. During the first phase of the study, Ryan interviewed 30 EFL teachers' regarding their definitions of "culture" and how important they believed culture teaching was in the modern language classroom. The findings from this phase revealed that the teachers relied heavily on personal experiences to define "culture" and agreed on the important role culture occupied in language teaching.

The second phase of the study included observations of six of the teachers in phase one in order to gain insights into how these teachers' beliefs on culture and culture teaching were reflected in their practices and how they interacted with their students. Ryan found that while these teachers believed "culture" to be inseparable from language, the place culture teaching occupied in their classrooms was minimal. The teachers usually used "culture" as an add-on dimension to language teaching and rarely used it as part of daily lessons. Further, when "culture" teaching was implemented, it was in the form of an off-topic comment such as personal anecdotes which described their personal experiences in the target culture.

One important finding of Ryan's study was the impact of politics on the sharing of cultural knowledge and how this became an indicator of how modern languages teachers' personal beliefs impacted their pedagogical practices. For example, the participants in his study felt inhibited about teaching the cultures of English-speaking countries because they did not want to be perceived as forcing upon their students' cultural topics of first world English speaking countries and, thus, presenting English as a lingua franca. For example, one Mexican teacher was

worried about being perceived as a *malinchista* (a traitor and lover of foreign things) if she were to teach American or English cultural aspects. However, this finding is not sufficiently explored by the author and leaves the reader wondering how this teacher balanced her teaching of English and her own political views on the English language or its users.

Castro Prieto, Sercu and Méndez García (2004) conducted a quantitative study that investigated 35 EFL teachers' perceptions of culture teaching in Spain and the place culture occupied in these teachers' practice. This study was motivated by the implementation of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) and the new guidelines this framework posed for the teaching of modern languages in Europe in which a strong emphasis is made on the teaching of languages and cultures as inseparable and necessary to becoming interculturally competent in a globalizing world. The method used in this study was an electronic questionnaire, designed to give a profile of respondents' views on culture teaching and intercultural competence in modern language education. The researchers found that, although the participants supported the new guidelines, they did not know how to approach them. As a result, they did not devote enough time to teaching culture because they either did not have time allocated in the mandated curriculum to teach culture, or did not feel confident enough to teach it.

Castro Prieto et al. also found that teachers placed little emphasis on developing students' awareness of their own cultures as a foundation to becoming interculturally competent. However, since this was a quantitative study and the method of data collection was a questionnaire, the authors could not address this finding in-depth and investigate other reasons why teachers felt uncomfortable or not confident enough in addressing culture in their classrooms. Although a limitation is that the study did not explore teachers' understandings of their own cultural

identities in order to teach about other cultures, it does provide insights as to why teachers do not teach languages in a cultural manner.

In the United Kingdom, Arthur (2002) investigated whether 12 language teachers who were native speakers of Deutsch had different attitudes towards their own and other cultures than native speakers of English who taught German as a second language. Arthur grounded the study on notions of the modern language teacher as sensitive to bi- or multiculturalism and how this sensitivity was likely to affect not only these teachers' judgements when it came to culture and intercultural communication, but also how they viewed themselves as agents of another culture. He interviewed native speakers of Deutsch and native speakers of English who taught German as a second language in order to obtain their insights on their personal biographies as speakers of Deutsch and teachers of the language. The interviews revealed that the main reason the majority of the teachers (10 out of 12) had chosen to become language teachers was because of their proficiency in German during their teenage years and their appreciation for the country or countries where the language was spoken. Their motivation was also heightened by external factors such as having grown up in families where there was a strong teaching tradition. All of the participants had had multicultural experiences during their lives as they had travelled and experienced different cultures during these travels. These experiences seemed to have shaped the participants' views on other cultures and their own. For example, although all participants had experienced some form of stereotyping, the Deutsch native speakers seemed to have developed a stronger sense of identity than their English counterparts.

Arthur found that the participants distinguished between teaching in a political manner in public schools versus in colleges and universities. When asked to reflect on themselves as agents of change, they commented that teachers who practiced in public schools had a different sense of

commitment to social issues in the classroom than those who taught in adult education. The reasons for this marked difference between one setting and the other, according to the participants, was that language education in public schools was mediated by external factors such as when children started to study languages and the negative attitudes towards modern languages other than English in England. These views led to a simplistic and objective way of teaching languages that did not encourage a critical look at either the L1 culture or that of the target culture. In contrast, when they taught university students, the participants considered undergraduate students to be mature and introduced political topics in their classrooms. However, the participants introduced these topics only in courses where they considered such topic would be fitting such as political sciences or culture-oriented courses. Furthermore, although participants felt compelled to some degree to combat issues of prejudice and other social justice issues in their personal lives, they disclosed that they kept these topics "locked into their private spaces" (p. 92) and did not talk about them.

Although the findings from Arthur's study may inform existing research on modern languages teachers' cultural identities, there are still gaps that could have been investigated more deeply. For example, why were participants' personal biographies limited to finding out why the participants became language teachers? Other aspects of their personal biographies would have provided a clearer picture of their self-concepts as language teachers and how these self-concepts became evident in their teaching practices.

Sercu (2006) suggests that if modern languages instruction can no longer be referred to as a predominantly linguistic task, but as an intercultural task as well, then instructors must "be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to accomplish this wider task in an appropriate way" (p. 55). Moreover, modern languages and cultures teachers must deal

with broad and coinciding sets of issues such as their background experiences as language learners themselves, how they were taught these languages and the pressures of standardized curricula.

Canagarajah (2005) also criticizes how the teaching of modern languages and cultures teaching has traditionally been viewed by teachers, linguists and the general public. His arguments contest the different theories and hypotheses proposed by psychologists and linguists who have traditionally thought of the way humans learn a language as a linear, objective process that can be measured and tested. Canagarajah notes that modern languages and cultures professionals have traditionally displayed an attitude which he labels as an "idyllic innocence toward their work" (p. 931). In other words, he explains, these professionals look at modern language acquisition from three basic perspectives: a) a structural perspective which looks at language learning as the acquisition of a whole set of abstract value-free grammatical rules; b) a behaviourist orientation to learning, which looks at students as passive individuals who are exposed to a calculated level of stimuli with the aim of achieving linguistic competence; and c) a positivistic perception of language acquisition research, which considers that researchers would uncover the processes by which languages are learned, through observation in clinically-controlled contexts. Canagarajah suggests that all these conditions have led to a view of language teaching as founded on a "pragmatic attitude of equipping students with the linguistic and communicative skills that would make them socially functional" (p. 931).

Norton Pierce (1995) conducted a longitudinal study of five immigrant women's experiences in ESL courses in Canada from January to December 1991. Norton Pierce explored the conditions in which the immigrant women in her study created opportunities to speak English, responded to these opportunities, and resisted these opportunities through the use of

diaries, questionnaires, individual and group interviews, and home visits. For example, Norton Pierce explains that after taking an ESL course for adult immigrants for six months, one of the participants in the study decided to continue taking ESL evening courses in order to improve her oral and written skills in English. After many sacrifices that this participant had to make to attend these evening courses, the participant expressed great frustration with one of the courses she was attending. In an interview, Norton Pierce asked her to describe her experiences in this course. The participant explained that the course was focused around students' presentations on life in their countries of origin. She expressed that it had been frustrating for her to sit through a whole class and listen to one student speak. She added that she was hoping that the course would help in the same way as the previous six-month course had, but one night the class spent all the allotted time on one man who had come from Europe and his experiences there. The presentations lasted for a whole week and the participant did not return to this class.

Norton Pierce explains that the participant's ESL teacher was obviously trying to include the students' lived histories into the classroom by encouraging them to make presentations about their countries of origin. In addition, this teacher was giving students the opportunity to practice their oral skills in the classroom and to share their lived experiences with the rest of the class. However, Norton Pierce explains, this approach did not have the expected pedagogical effect for the participant because she thought that when she remained silent, listening to her classmates talk about their home countries, she did not learn at all. Pierce argues that although she cannot provide a definitive interpretation of the events described by the participant, she was inclined to believe that the approach the teacher implemented did not do justice to the complexity of the participant's identity. Further, she argues that whereas learners' experiences in their home countries may be a significant part of their identity, "these experiences are constantly being

mediated by their experiences in the new country, across multiple sites in the home, workplace, and community" (p. 413). She believes that at that particular stage in the course, the ESL teacher had not provided her students with the opportunities to critically examine experiences in their native countries in comparison to more recent experiences in Canada or to examine critically their experiences in Canada in comparison to the experiences in the native countries. As a result, Norton Pierce concludes, the participant had little investment in the presentations of her peers, and an opportunity that was potentially rich for language learning and teaching had been lost. I would also add that an alternative explanation to the student's lack of engagement might be that the teacher did not explain how the approach she was using would benefit the students' language and culture learning.

When discussing the objectives for teaching modern languages in North American schools, Osborn (2006) explains that traditionally these objectives have been primarily based on positivistic assumptions. He notes that such assumptions pose languages as realities that can be objectively studied and that can be meaningfully separated from the language learner. In addition, he suggests that such perspectives assume that generalizations and observations regarding language teaching can be presented free from situational and temporal constraints, and that learning and teaching a language can be a value-free process. An example of this positivistic way of looking at language learning is found in the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum document for *Grades 9, 10: Classical and International Languages* (1999a), and the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum document for *Grades 11 and 12: Classical and International Languages* (1999b). Aside from developing a series of cognitive skills such as creative thinking and problem solving skills, both curriculum documents suggest that, learning a new language will promote career mobility "since successful participation in the global community depends in

part on knowledge of world languages" (*Grades 11 & 12: Classical and International Languages*, 1999b, p. 4). Knowledge of cultural aspects of the target language is perceived as an added-on expectation to fulfill that usually has no explicit relation with the other expectations established in each of the strands (listening, speaking, writing and reading).

The positivistic view of languages is also demonstrated in the way native languages and cultures have been separated from other modern languages and cultures. The following section describes the current state of the art of native languages and cultures education in relation to modern language education.

Aboriginal Languages and Cultures in Canada. Although there are at present efforts to revitalize and maintain Indigenous languages through the implementation of Indigenous languages programs in Canadian public school systems (Duff & Li, 2009; Graham, 2005; Norris, 2006; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001), these languages remain excluded from what are considered "modern languages" in the same public school systems. As a result, Aboriginal language teachers' experiences and contributions to the field have remained insufficiently explored. Further, while other modern languages programs are considered to be an asset in order to achieve social mobility and economic gains in today's global community, native languages programs are considered important only to "assist in the development and maintenance" (*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10: Native Languages*, 2001a, p. 3) of such languages. The marked differentiation is an example of how market and consumerism ideologies guide the educational requirements of language education programs in Canada. Such ideologies, Osborn (2006) explains, dismiss the fact that students are located in and defined by a large sociopolitical setting. This attitude towards Aboriginal languages has contributed to the lack of consideration

of these languages as "legitimate" and, thus, the limited attention paid to the contributions these languages and cultures, and their teachers can make to the field of modern language education.

Reagan and Osborn (2002) explain that *linguistic legitimacy*, what count and what do not count as "real" languages, also determines what languages are included in modern language education in North America. They suggest that the exclusion from serious consideration of many languages as "real" languages, even the ones that are considered "real" go through a process of meticulous selection of what variety of these languages to study. However, when analyzing the legitimacy of European languages, Osborn (2006) explains that

> what we teach as the "language" is in fact a consensus form of similarities among numerous idiolects. There is no neutral and natural definition of "German" or "French" or any other language. Thus, teaching a language by presenting it devoid of the social constellations that birthed it, including differential power relationships, is both inaccurate and a reflection of the "culture of positivism" within our domain. (p. 40)

In a discussion on how British colonists' imposition of the English language in their colonies erased most of the languages that already existed in these colonies, Bradford (2007) explains:

> The imposition of English as the national language of British settler colonies resulted in the loss of large numbers of Indigenous languages, and with them rituals, songs, narratives and cultural practices. In the territories that are now Canada and the United States, some 300 distinct languages were spoken at the end of the fifteenth century, of which some 134 have survived. (p. 52)

Similarly, Gresczyk (2011) explains that after numerous attempts to completely eradicate Aboriginal languages and cultures in North America failed, British colonists proceeded to force assimilation upon Aboriginal populations. This process of assimilation became embodied in the creation of Residential Schools in the 19th century. According to Steckley (2013), Residential Schools were the first schools to teach English as a second language in Canada and perhaps the first educational settings in which an "English-Only" policy to learn a modern language was ever imposed on English language learners.

As a consequence, this attitude towards Aboriginal languages and cultures has also had negative implications in all areas including educational research on Aboriginal students and Aboriginal languages acquisition and in Aboriginal languages instruction. For example, Dehyle and Swisher (1997; as cited in Gresczyk, 2011) studied sixty years of research in Aboriginal education in North America. They found that most of the research studies they reviewed depicted Aboriginal students as "suffering from cultural and intellectual deficits and that cultural assimilation into the mainstream was the solution to the Indian problem" (p. 22). Likewise, Honda and O'Neil (2004) explain that most research on language acquisition has focused mainly on the languages of large nation states and, when an attempt to go beyond these languages has been made, research has then focused on languages such as Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese or similar languages. Hence, there is marginalization of Aboriginal languages and cultures, and their teachers.

As a result of such a marginalization, there is not an extensive body of research documenting the social, pedagogical and methodological contributions that Aboriginal languages instructors may make to the field of modern languages research. One notable exception is a study conducted by Graham (2005). This scholar grapples with issues related to the implementation of an Aboriginal language program in southern Ontario. She argues that, in order for Aboriginal language programs to be successful, a collaborative process which involves representatives from the school district, community and Aboriginal agencies needs to be developed. This process, she suggests, should encourage the emergence of strategies that have the potential of transforming material and discourse conditions in the community "through dialogue and norms of reciprocity" (p. 318).

Motivated by the growing Aboriginal population in urban centres and the struggles this population faces when adjusting to a new community, Graham conducted a case study to explore the complex interactions, meaning making, cultural elements, and interpersonal relationships involved in the development of an Aboriginal language program in a public school setting. Graham found that the Aboriginal language teachers interviewed were very much influenced by their previous experiences in learning English. To illustrate, when asked about different instructional strategies they used to teach language, they noted that although they used strategies such as memorizing long lists of vocabulary, they did not think this was a useful strategy to learn to communicate. However, none of these teachers were able to suggest other strategies that they thought would work better. This finding was not surprising to the researcher; she explains that since these teachers had learned English in the same way, their experiences as learners of English were all they had as a reference in their own practices:

> Their personal experiences learning English by memorizing lists of words had channelled their mental model of language teaching and determined how they would teach their classes. When the classes in Cree and Ojibway began, the instructors approached language teaching as the transmission of grammatical rules and vocabulary words. (p. 319)

Another important finding of this study was that the participants did not see themselves as public school teachers of language, but rather as speakers of a language in a familiar context such as their family, relatives and friends. This position was based on their belief that their language acted as a protective shield between their private world and the mainstream world. In contrast, they perceived language classes as public. Graham suggests that their earlier experiences as English learners had also inhibited them from taking on the role and responsibilities of being a teacher in a mainstream school, and, as a result, being able to become effective teachers and develop a teacher identity. The students in the program responded

negatively to the teachers' instructional styles and started to miss class or refused to participate in classroom activities. In the same way, the students' parents also complained about the quality of instruction their children were receiving.

The tensions experienced by the teachers, students, parents and community in general were eventually resolved when Graham found a qualified teacher of languages, who had experience in and knowledge of second language acquisition strategies, spoke Cree and was not involved in the study. One of the recommendations this teacher made was to follow a thematic approach to the development of curriculum and to the implementation of the Aboriginal language program under study. This approach to curriculum development encouraged language teachers to identify themes and to create their own instructional resources and methods. This, in turn, allowed the students to develop vocabulary and linguistic structures in the target language, and, most importantly, learn the culture at the same time. Through collaborative work with other teachers, and professional development sessions, the respondents in this study gained confidence in their teachings skills. They started to create their own teaching strategies "that honoured the cultural and linguistic conventions of their languages and that built on students' prior knowledge" (p. 334). Although these strategies were based on the experienced teacher's modelling at the beginning, teachers extended these strategies and created their own.

Graham's study is significant because it described the development and the implementation of a language program that responded to the cultural needs of the students in the classroom and community; it also highlights the role of the language teacher as a mediator of cultural values, beliefs and symbols. Graham argues that only by developing productive collaborations among school districts, community organizations, and government agencies, programs such as the one described in her study, may start to be viewed as another element in an approach to working with

a growing segment of the population which is integrated and more culturally respectful. I would add that by developing such collaborative relationships among modern languages and cultures teachers, they would be able to engage in a dialogue that opens up the possibilities for self-reflection and development of Canadian modern languages and culture practices.

In his discussion on the decolonization of education for the First Nations peoples of Canada, Mussel (2008) observes that, more often than not, Western programs train Aboriginal people to function only in Western contexts. However, if Aboriginal people choose to work with other Aboriginal people, they must then struggle to adapt what they learned to provide effective service because of the differences in values, worldviews practices and conditions of living. Further, Mussel argues that by indigenizing a program, Western and Indigenous ways of knowing can find a place in the school context. He explains that this indigenization "would be reflected in the curriculum context, the methodologies and the strategies to bring together Indigenous and Western paradigms and practices" (p. 333).

Mussel has not been alone in his call for the development of teacher education programs that are more consistent with the cultural practices of much of the population in our schools. For example, scholars such as Duff and Li (2009) and Kubota (2004) argue that the linguistic and cultural makeup of Canada's urban schools provides the most convincing argument regarding the need for modern languages and cultures teachers to take a second look at how their individual cultural identities become evident in their pedagogical practices. Duff and Li (2009) suggest that the significant changes in demographics in Canada call for attention to reform if teachers are to be prepared for teaching a diverse student population. This implies that modern languages and cultures teachers are in the critical position of initiating, guiding and monitoring such reform for teaching languages and cultures, and thus, positively influencing such a reform in the process.

Such a reform would also encourage modern languages and cultures teachers to examine their

own beliefs on what educating for a multiculturally diverse student population means for them.

The connection between modern languages and cultures and multicultural education are critical.

Below I examine how and where those connections exist and how their influences are present.

Multicultural Education

Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) define *multicultural education* as

> …a philosophical concept and an educational process. It is built upon the
> philosophical ideas of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human
> dignity…Multicultural education is a process that takes place in schools and other
> educational institutions, and informs all subject areas and other aspects of the
> curriculum. Like all good educational strategies, it helps students to develop
> positive self-concepts and to discover who they are, particularly in terms of their
> multiple group memberships. (p. 171)

Other scholars and researchers have defined multicultural education as: a)"a way to help students

of different backgrounds to communicate and get along better with each other and feel good

about themselves" (Sleeter & Grant, 1987, p. 426); and b) "a way to teach learners to recognize,

accept, and appreciate cultural, ethnic, social class, religious and gender differences…"

(Manning & Baruth, 1996, p. 3). Despite the ideals underlying these definitions, the way

multicultural education has been addressed in schools has been strongly criticized by Canadian

and American researchers (Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001; Johnston 2006, Kubota, 2004a; Zine,

2005) who consider that multicultural education in these two contexts has only paid superficial

attention to diversity issues in schools while approaching those issues through multicultural

festivals or weeks.

Dimitriadis and McCarthy (2001) criticize the essentialist or stereotypical view of

multicultural education in the United States and explain that multicultural education is the new

"metadiscipline" or interdisciplinary term that is usually employed to address the proliferation of

diversity and difference in schools at present. They suggest that multicultural education has been interpreted by many as a number of recommendations about identity, knowledge, power and change in education, which makes an attempt "to 'discipline' difference rather than be transformed by it" (p. 113):

> Multiculturalism has become a discourse of power that attempts to manage the extraordinary tensions and contradictions of modern life that have overtaken educational institutions. Multiculturalism has succeeded in preserving to the point of petrification its central object: "culture". (p. 113)

Dimitriadis and McCarthy emphasize that it is critical for multicultural societies like the United States and Canada to create a framework in schools that fosters multicultural education across disciplines. Johnston (2006) also expresses concerns in regards to the state of multicultural education in Canada. She argues that multicultural education in North America has been interested in the more superficial and static signs of cultural diversity. She explains that in the Canadian context, initiatives in this field have concentrated on accepting the claims of Native peoples and on providing for a constantly increasing immigrant population. She criticizes these initiatives by arguing that they have been led by arguments of bilingualism and of the protection of heritage languages, in order to maintain the 'founding' British and French cultures with an added-on commitment to the many other cultural groups in the country.

When referring to the effects the implementation of this type of multicultural education has had on teacher education in Canada, Johnston (2006) argues that these official policies of multiculturalism such as the Official Languages Act (1985), the Citizenship Act (1977) and the Canadian Human Rights Act (1977) have extended teachers' awareness that they need to change what and how they teach. However, she suggests that the impact the above policies have had on teacher education has been insufficient in that they have not aided teachers in their understanding of how, for example, complex questions of representation are related to issues of culture, race, gender,

and ethnicity. As a result, Johnston asserts that "despite 'official' policies of multiculturalism that have been mandated at both federal and the provincial levels, changes have largely been ideological rather than structural and schools continue to function largely as assimilationist agencies" (p. 118).

Johnston (2006) supports her argument with a series of action research projects she conducted together with a group of researchers and graduate students from her home university wherein they attempted to promote critical multicultural and antiracist education to pre-service teachers and graduate students in the Faculty of Education where they work at both. Using statistical information provided by such initiatives, Johnston found that the perception of multiculturalism held by most participants who were surveyed was determined by their lack of exposure to diversity either at school or home and, as a result, saw multicultural education as a technicality rather than as a form of personal engagement to deal with the diversity issues. Johnston considers that the results from these projects should not discourage teacher educators to continue investigating and incorporating critical analysis of issues revolving around diversity in their classrooms as these results might inform them better how to "approach teacher education with understanding and sensitivity" (p. 167).

In the field of modern languages and cultures instruction, Kubota (2004a) contrasts two approaches to multicultural education: liberal multiculturalism and critical multiculturalism. Kubota contends that the general assumptions about multicultural education have kept most modern languages and cultures teachers from analyzing such an education as something more complex than respect for cultural difference, appreciation of ethnic traditions and artifacts, and the promotion of cultural sensitivity. Kubota (2004a) explains that multicultural education has entered the field of modern language education and has worked against the development of serious critical analysis of languages as a means through which cultures are conveyed. She calls

the attitude of relatively superficial acceptance of difference and development of cultural sensitivity, and colour-blind attitude promoted by multicultural education "liberal multiculturalism" (p. 30). She argues that one of the ways liberal multiculturalism has been exercised in our schools has been by holding annual multicultural festivals where artificial aspects of culture are treated out of their context and trivialized; thus divorcing them from the everyday lives of the peoples and the political struggles they represent. During these "celebrations of difference," Kubota argues that very little attention is paid to oppression, discrimination and inequality among people. This results in the essentializing of other cultures as homogeneous and the formation of stereotypes, which at the same time leaves teachers' cultural identities unchallenged.

Kubota describes "critical multiculturalism" is an "intellectual ally" of critical pedagogies because it aims at raising students' awareness of unjust social practices and encouraging them to become active agents for social change. She explains that due to the orientation towards antiracist and inclusive education of critical multiculturalism, important issues of race in educational debates can be examined. For example, Kubota notes that while we should avoid essentializing views on race in such debates, race is not usually looked as part of an individual's cultural identity. Therefore, she concludes that multicultural education should move beyond colour-blind perspectives of multicultural education and focus on social justice and transformation.

Willinsky (1998) provides a good example of Kubota's arguments with respect to how race is part of an individual's cultural identity. Willinsky conducted a qualitative study on electronic communications in a Vancouver high school where a large percentage of the student population was of Asian origin. In this qualitative study, participants were of European and

Chinese descent and their task was to maintain electronic communication with students from other countries. One finding was that many of the Asian-Canadian students had issues concerning their identities regardless of whether they had been born in Canada or had come to Canada at a very young age. Such issues were reflected in their need to constantly justify themselves to their international pen pals regarding their physical appearance and where they had been born. However, participants of European descent did not have such need to justify where they came from or explain their cultural backgrounds because they automatically thought they fit the norm of what a Canadian should look like. As a result, Willinsky advocates for "a degree of educational accountability" (p. 16) from teachers. He contends that such an educational accountability would encourage teachers to examine critically their practices and the ways they have contributed to the reproduction of imperialism in schools. Further, Willinsky encourages teachers to ask themselves who has decided what the norm is and how they, consciously or unconsciously, have produced and reproduced that norm that has been imposed on to them.

More recently, Roessingh (2011) offers a compelling example of the inclusion of students' native languages and cultures in the modern languages and cultures classroom Coelho (2004), Cummins (2007) and Cummins et al. (2005) advocate, the educational accountability Willinsky called for, and how Kubota's critical multiculturalism may find a way into the modern languages and cultures classroom. Roessingh conducted a study with the Kindergarten students at Almadina Language Charter Academy, a charter school in Alberta with a population of 500 ESL students whose first languages are Arabic and Kurdish. Roessingh grounds her study on Kramsch's (1993) notion of "the third space", a space in which the first and second languages and cultures are shared in order to negotiate meaning. In addition, the author used *Learning By Design*, an interactive tool for curriculum design that allows teachers to use a template in order

to create lessons plans. The template is divided into five items: a) an instructional plan which takes into consideration three categories of overall learning objectives: learning strategies, language objectives, and concept objectives; b) materials and learning resources; c) unit overview with a lesson sequence; d) task design; and e) assessment strategies. Roessighn explains that planning is seen as a dynamic, generative, and a transformative endeavour within this framework. Further, she explains that this framework is always carried out with students' needs and interests in mind and "always reflects the notion of deep pedagogical intent" (p. 134). Furthermore, she explains that this framework allows for flexibility in the planning process as it allows teachers to constantly assess their students' understanding of the tasks and determine the pace of at which to introduce new content in the classroom.

Once Roessighn determined what her overall goals for the unit were and what content she wanted to address in each of her lessons, she sent a letter to the kindergarten students' parents where she asked them to send with their children objects that were culturally and personally relevant to them or to their families. When the students brought the artifacts from their homes, the author asked them to generate stories of "Family Treasures" (p. 123) in their first languages. With the help of pre-service teachers who were collaborating in this study and who were fluent in any of the first languages of the students, the stories were translated into English. Once the books were finalized, the students uploaded the books into a webpage for public viewing and also presented their products to their parents, members of the school community and community at large.

Roessighn explains that the dual-language books project contributed to the students' formation of identity, pride in their families and cultures and the acquisition of linguistic skills in English. She also notes that for the process of negotiation required for a third space to emerge,

students' learning experiences must be carefully structured and scaffolded. For example, one of the major contributions of this study is that during the course of the unit in which the students developed the books, they were taught Ministry-mandated grammatical aspects such as possessive forms, past tense, verb forms and *wh-* questions through well-known literacy strategies such as modeling storytelling, modified guided reading, and reader response. She also helped students' concept formation by using the Frayer Model, a graphic organizer used to analyze words and to build vocabulary. This literacy strategy is usually implemented with the purpose of encouraging students to think about a word or a concept and provide its meaning by a) defining the term; b) describing its main features; c) providing examples of ideas related to the word or concept; and d) offering non-examples of the of the same word or concept (Frayer, Frederick, & Klausmeie, 1969). Other literacy strategies implemented by Roessingh were the use of picture and flash cards to help students retain vocabulary, as well as a semantic web.

It may be argued that one limitation of this study is the setting in which it was conducted: a school with a strong ESL program, and how this context may have contributed to the success of the study. It may also be argued that the researcher possessed the resources to implement the study and that, as a result, the context described in the study is not reflective of the reality of most schools in Canada (e.g. having research assistants who spoke the participants' first language to interpret and translate for researcher). However, I also believe that the results of this study may be transferred to other school settings where there is a need to develop literacy skills of ELLs. The opportunities to develop literacy skills in English described by Roessingh in her study may contribute to the students' investment in the English language and cultures and their engagement with their literacy development. Further, the approach described by Roessingh may be a starting point for an implementation of curriculum as an auto/biographical and

phenomenological text that Pinar (1995) and his colleagues advocate. Further, as demonstrated by her study, the participants and their parents had a voice in the classroom and by having this voice the students came to not only read the word, but also the world (Freire, 1985). Furthermore, the dual-language book project took advantage of students' different cognitive skills in a manner that not only emphasized their oral and written skills, but also their artistic skills.

Summary

The review of the literatures focused on literature in the areas of curriculum theory, modern languages acquisition theories and modern languages and cultures pedagogy. The analysis of psycholinguistic, linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives of how languages are learned shows that there has not been a shortage of approaches to teach languages. However, these approaches and the limitations they expose call for an examination of the conceptual base of modern languages and cultures teaching. An analysis of these conceptions of teaching languages can play an important role in extending our understanding of modern languages and cultures teaching.

The field of modern languages and cultures instruction has been slow to acknowledge that teaching needs to be re-examined and understood in its own terms (Freeman & Richards, 1993; Luke, 2004; Canagarajah, 2005). As demonstrated by this review of the literatures, modern languages and cultures pedagogy and the work of the teachers which shapes the many activities in the field frequently go unchallenged. To date, there have been very few organized examinations of the conceptions that support modern languages and cultures education (Beers, 2001; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Freeman & Richards, 1993; Morgan, 2004). However, the literature also demonstrates that there continues to be an interest in improving the practice of modern languages and cultures by challenging insufficiently contested areas in the field such as the role

of teachers' individual beliefs on *languages* and *cultures* and how these beliefs are embodied in their pedagogical practices. As a result, supporting modern languages and cultures teaching in the classroom necessitates a deep understanding and appreciation of the complicated social, cultural and political contexts of such teaching.

Exploring modern languages and cultures teachers' understandings of cultures, languages, their own cultural identities, and how they influence their practices affords opportunities for teachers to actively engage in critical reflections of their pedagogical practices and have more ownership of their programs. I argue that curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text (Pinar et al., 1995) and a curriculum ideology based on cognitive pluralism (Eisner, 2002) provide a starting point to commence such exploration. Eisner (2002) notes that the first consequence in implementing cognitive pluralism would be an extension of the term *literacy* to include a vast array of ways in which students and teachers use to produce and convey meanings. Such an expansion of the term *literacy* would lead to "the expansion of educational equity in the classroom" (p.82). This expansion of educational equity in the classroom would then lead to the implementation of the concept of "voice" proposed by Pinar et al. (1995).

The following chapter discusses the research design and methodology and the data analysis process used in the research study.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In Chapter II, I reviewed the literatures that informed my study: curriculum theory, theories of modern language acquisition and teaching, as well as modern languages and cultures pedagogy. Chapter III builds on the literature described in Chapter II. The purpose of this qualitative and emergent study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002) was to explore secondary modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities, how these beliefs were embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices, and how they used their students' first languages and cultures to learn about a different language and culture. The study was also informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; WaThiong'o, 1986; Smith, 1999).

In this chapter I describe the design of the qualitative study and situate it in the context of a decolonizing research framework. I then describe the methodology, the research process and the ethical considerations.

Design

Early in the coursework of the Joint PhD program, I became familiar with the history and philosophical foundations of education in my field of study. I was also introduced to qualitative, interpretive methodologies in relation to educational inquiry and contexts. This coursework provided the context to examine my ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions. I analyzed several qualitative research traditions such as grounded theory, ethnography, narrative and testimonio, as well as different traditional research methods used in these traditions. The analysis of these and other traditions encouraged me to position myself as a researcher and to examine critically respectful research practices.

Although at times confusing and challenging, the content of the coursework at such an early stage in my PhD studies achieved its goal of introducing me to scholarly inquiry and the production of new knowledge within the context of a research culture. Furthermore, the content of the coursework allowed my understanding of the postmodern movement to deepen and locate myself in it (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Tilley, 2003, 2007; Scheurich & Young, 1997; Yosso, 2007). These studies informed my inclination towards qualitative research methods and their important place in educational research. The design I chose for this study is a reflection of my present epistemological and ontological stances. Below I describe the qualitative research design I used for this research study.

The Qualitative Research Paradigm

Because of the nature of this study, I used a qualitative and emergent design (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002) informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; WaThiong'o; 1986; Smith, 1999). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as

> a situated activity that locates the observer in the world… qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

These scholars note that qualitative researchers believe that there is no such ideal as a simple objective reality. They explain that multiple realities of any given phenomenon are socially constructed through individual and collective interpretations of the situation. According to Merriam (1998), the qualitative researcher's goal is to understand the event from the perspectives of the participants, to uncover the qualities that contribute to re-constructing its meaning and significance.

Scholars contend that qualitative research is distinguished by a number of characteristics that are inherent in the design (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2006; Patton, 2002). Below I describe some of the major characteristics of qualitative research articulated by Patton (2002) and which constituted the foundation for the conception of the design of this study:

1. Qualitative research occurs in natural settings, where human behaviour and events occur. In other words, qualitative research studies real-world situations as they unfold naturally. Researchers are open to whatever emerges.

2. Qualitative research is emergent (as opposed to predetermined). Meanings and interpretations are negotiated with human data sources because it is the respondents' realities that the researcher attempts to reconstruct. Patton (2002) notes that because the researcher seeks to observe and interpret meanings in context, it is neither possible nor appropriate to finalize research strategies before data collection has begun. Qualitative research proposals should, however, specify primary questions to be explored and plans for data collection strategies.

3. The sample is selected purposefully. That is, cases for study are selected because they are information-rich and offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest; sampling is then aimed at gaining insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population.

4. The data that emerge from a qualitative study are descriptive. That is, the data are reported in words (primarily the participant's words) or pictures. The focus of qualitative research is on participants' perceptions and experiences, and the way they make sense of their lives. The attempt is then to understand not one, but multiple realities.

5. Qualitative research focuses on the process that is occurring as well as the product or outcome. Researchers are particularly interested in understanding how events occur. In qualitative research attention is paid to particulars and data are interpreted in regard to the particulars of a case rather than generalizations.

6. The researcher has direct contact with and gets close to the people, situations, and phenomenon under study. The researcher's personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry and critical to understanding the phenomenon.

7. An emphasis in interviewing seeks empathetic understanding without judgment (neutrality) by showing respect, openness, and responsiveness. In observation it means being fully present.

8. This research tradition relies on the use of implicit knowledge because the nuances of the multiple realities can be appreciated fully in this way.

9. Qualitative research places findings in social, historical, political, cultural and temporal contexts. Qualitative researchers are careful about making generalizations across time and space. Rather, they emphasize the possible transferability and adaptation of findings to similar settings.

10. In qualitative research, the researcher seeks believability based on coherence, insight, instrumental utility and trustworthiness through a process of verification. In addition, Patton (2002) notes that the qualitative researcher owns and is reflective about his or her own voice and perspective. A credible voice conveys authenticity and trustworthiness.

Decolonizing Research Framework

This study was informed by a decolonizing research methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Smith, 1999; WaThiong'o, 1986), a theory and analysis of how research proceeds and the types of tools to gather evidence. As I noted in Chapter I, *decolonization* means many different things to different people. For example, some scholars (Sleeter, 2010; Smith, 1999; Wane, 2009) explain that *decolonization* refers to questioning how Western knowledge, thought, and structures of power dominate today's society. Smith (1999) and Lincoln and González y González (2008) extend the previous definition. These scholars note that *decolonization* is also about transforming lives and, in relation to research, conducting research that benefits directly "nationals and locals (or Indigenous people)" (Lincoln and González y González, 2008, p. 784). Smith notes that traditionally Aboriginal peoples were subjected to a process that "extracted and claimed ownership of Indigenous ways of knowing only to reject the people responsible for those ways of knowing" (Smith, 1999, p. 1). Smith also contends that decolonizing research challenges dominant power structures and works towards social changes with a specific focus on acknowledging colonial history and present realities and contexts.

The study was designed to take into consideration the theoretical and practical space to contest the colonial education project for teachers of modern languages and cultures in the social, political and cultural institutions of public education in Canada. Brayboy (2005) describes the process of decolonization in Eurocentric institutions as challenging the drive for material acquisition that permits an ongoing process of colonization that is natural to educational policies in North America. As I stated in Chapter I, much of the research conducted in the field of modern languages and cultures teaching has addressed the pedagogical inadequacies of modern languages and cultures teachers when it comes to teaching languages in a cultural manner.

However, the reasons why these teachers teach languages aculturally and the conditions in which they teach have not been sufficiently explored. This study also considered the perspectives of teachers of Annishnaabemowin languages and cultures. Like English and French languages and cultures, Aboriginal languages and cultures are alive in Canada and in many parts of the world. As such, the perspectives of the teachers of these languages and cultures must be considered as valuable as those of the teachers of English and French as a modern languages and cultures.

Researcher Stance

Qualitative methodology considers the researcher as an instrument. Creswell (2009) suggests that "data are mediated through this human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines" (p. 145). As I will describe in Chapter Four, in-depth interviews allowed me to engage in conversations with participants. In doing so, we constructed meaning through these conversations. Magoon (1977) explains that teaching behaviours can be understood as being constructed purposefully by the participants. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stress personal accountability and the value of individual expression and sharing of emotions by participants.

I acknowledge that my beliefs and assumptions shaped the way I viewed and understood the data I collected and the way in which I interpreted my experiences during the study. Therefore, I made every effort to ensure what Patton (2002) calls "authenticity" (p. 546) or "reflexive consciousness about one's own perspective, appreciation for the perspectives of others, and fairness in depicting constructions in the values that undergird them" (p. 546). As a researcher, I have and continue to acknowledge my preconceptions and theoretical beliefs as much as possible in order to better understand the participants' experiences. The sociocultural paradigm that I implemented in this research is also reflected in my approach to the teaching of

languages, cultures and literacy, and the training of future teachers of literacy and modern languages.

Similarly, use of a decolonizing research framework demands from the researcher that s/he not only considers the lived experiences and voices of all participants, but also scrutinizes his/her own understanding of his/her role as a "living part of the study" (Lincoln & González y González, 2008, p. 794). WaThiong'o (1986) explains that in order to start to decolonize our minds, teachers should start by considering their lived experiences as a platform for affirmative action in education. He recommends that since "education is a means of knowledge about ourselves" (p. 2), teachers and students should discover themselves first in order to discover the world. This scholar notes that such an education is one that gives students and teachers the ability to "study the culture and environment of their own society first, then in relation to the culture and environment of other societies" (p. 100).

Smith (1999) contends that conducting decolonizing research methodology means moving beyond the acknowledgment of personal biases and assumptions when working in settings involving cross-cultural perspectives. It also means seeking the ways in which the research participants will benefit from the study. To this end, Smith developed a set of 10 ethical questions for cross-cultural researchers to ask themselves:

> Who defined the research problem?
> For whom is the study relevant? Who says so?
> What knowledge will the community gain from the study?
> What knowledge will the researcher gain from the study?
> What are some likely positive outcomes from the study?
> What are some possible negative outcomes?
> How can the negative outcomes be eliminated?
> To whom is the researcher accountable?
> What processes are in place to support research, the researched, and the researcher? (p. 173)

I responded to Smith's questions by providing my cultural autobiography in Chapter I, and expanding upon it in this section as well as in the research process section below. It is through this process of decolonizing myself that I have gained an understanding of the importance of teaching languages in a cultural and value-laden manner in the Canadian context. As I stated earlier, it has also been through this process of personal reflection on my past and present pedagogical practices as a teacher of Spanish language and cultures and literacy, as well as academic readings that I have gained an understanding that, most of the time, teachers implement languages and cultures instruction in the way they learned them (Freeman & Richards, 1993). I am, therefore, accountable to the languages and cultures teaching community that supported this study by participating in it and providing insights into what is like to teach languages and cultures in the urban secondary schools and adult centres. Furthermore, from its early stages, this research project has aimed to benefit directly its participants by exploring with them the nature of their beliefs about languages and cultures, their own cultures, and how they perceived these perceptions as a foundation to teach these languages and cultures in the Canadian context.

In this study, my relationship with the participants was that of a researcher. I kept fieldnotes of my observations and interpretations of the processes as I investigated them. In Phase II of the study, I was a non-participant observer (Patton, 2002). The process of observation allowed for descriptive information to arise and, therefore, guided the emerging and descriptive picture of the participants. To facilitate data collection and interpretation, I kept a journal in which I constructed my reflections about the experiences taking place in and outside of the classrooms. In addition to keeping a journal, I also kept a log to describe the interviews in Phase I, the different settings in which these interviews took place, and to document my research

journey, and research process. I also recorded my autobiographical perspective on my own beliefs, teaching, and cultural identity.

Participants

The study had two phases. During Phase I, nine teachers of modern languages and cultures (two Annishnaabemowin, three French, and four English as a Second Language teachers) participated. During the year prior to beginning this study, I confirmed that ESL, French, Annishnaabemowin and Spanish courses were offered in the two school boards in Thunder Bay. In "the methodological world I desired to live in" (Russell, 2003, p. 125) back then, I expected to include teachers of all modern languages and cultures that were offered in secondary schools in Thunder Bay. However, in the "methodological world I lived in" (Russell, 2003, p. 125), course offerings in the secondary school systems vary from year to year and are dependent on student enrollment. Once the study received ethical approval from the Lakehead University REB and I had applied for ethical clearance to both school boards in Thunder Bay and to the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, I was informed by the school boards that the Spanish course was not being offered that year because of insufficient student enrollment and, as a result, I had to modify the sample I had intended to recruit for the study.

The purpose of Phase I was to gain insights into teachers' personal conceptions of languages and cultures, and their cultural identities, and their language and culture teaching in the modern languages and cultures classroom. I invited these teachers through a letter that briefly described the study and its intended outcomes (Appendix 4) and letter of informed consent (Appendix 5) which asked them to indicate their willingness to participate in an interview. Teachers who indicated their willingness to participate were interviewed at a convenient time

and place. Three teachers were interviewed at their schools and six were interviewed at an office in Lakehead University's Faculty of Education.

A total of 17 teachers of modern languages and cultures were invited to participate. They were accessed through the principals of the schools and/or directors of adult education centres where they held full-time positions as teachers. Many of these teachers indicated that they did not have the time to grant me an interview and suggested that they would participate in an interview if the board provided them release time to do so. In reality, I suspect that they felt nervous about sharing their views with an outsider and also about the prospect of being invited to participate in the second phase of the study where they would be observed in their own classrooms by the same outsider. The nine teachers described in chapter four were the ones who responded to the invitation to participate in this first phase of the study. I was able to collect fieldnotes about the classrooms of the three teachers who agreed to be interviewed in their schools. I had to rely on details provided by the other six teachers who requested to be interviewed at the Faculty of Education.

The teachers who participated in Phase I were qualified to teach either the Annishnaabemowin Language program, the Core French and French Immersion Programs, and the English as a Second Language program offered by both the Ontario Ministry of Education from grades 9 to 12 and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration in the case of the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association.

Patton (2002) notes that "since qualitative inquiry seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants, it is important to select a sample from which the most can be learned. This is called a purposive or purposeful sample" (p. 230). Participants in Phase II of the study were two of the teachers whom I interviewed in Phase I and

invited to continue to participate in this phase of the study. They were then in their fifth and sixth year of in-service teaching. In this stage, classroom observations focused on the teachers. Therefore, I observed them as they engaged in teaching over a period of three weeks.

Once Phase II of the study was completed, I met with the two teachers individually and interviewed them. The purpose of these follow up interviews was to reflect on the classes I observed them instruct, and clarify any questions I may have had regarding the languages and cultures teaching methods I observed them implement. The interviews also provided the participants with the opportunity to voice any concerns and/or recommendations they may have had.

Research Sites

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, the Lakehead District School Board, and Lakehead University are located in the traditional territory of the Fort William First Nation in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board oversees all Catholic schools in the Thunder Bay area and the townships of Gorham and Ware in Ontario. It administers education at 13 elementary schools, two junior high and two secondary schools. Two elementary schools, as well as the two secondary schools offer French Immersion programs to their students and all schools have a Core French course option. In addition, all schools have Annishnaabemowin as a second language courses. English as second language support is offered only at the elementary (K- 6) school level.

Similarly, the Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) oversees all secular English-language public schools in the Thunder Bay area and the townships of Gorham and Ware, Ontario. It administers education at 22 elementary schools, four secondary schools and an adult

education centre. It houses three Français Immersion programs in three elementary schools and one French Immersion program at one secondary school. It also offers a Core French course option to students who are not enrolled in a school where Français Immersion is not offered. Finally, the LDSB offers Annishnaabemowin as a second language courses and English as a second language support at both the elementary and secondary levels, as well as English as a second language program offered at the adult education centre.

The study focused on teachers who taught at the secondary schools or at adult education centres in the Thunder Bay area.

Methodology

In qualitative research studies, the researcher typically collects data in the form of observations, artifacts, interviews, conversations, and images and compiles them into a descriptive and interpretive account (Merriam, 1998). The researcher recognizes s/he is an active element in the dynamic and ever evolving cultural phenomenon of inquiry that changes the social context. The researcher also acknowledges that the subjective lens through which s/he views the events will influence his/her findings and interpretations. Qualitative approaches in the field of modern languages and cultures learning and teaching have enabled researchers in this field to view learning and teaching contexts as cultural constructs and thereby situate them within the larger social realities in which they operate (Beers, 2001; van Lier, 2005).

A decolonized research methodology requires listening to the voices of research participants through the research methods used (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Smith, 1999). Qualitative research methods that I used within the study included: an interview guide (Patton, 2002) (Appendix I), non-participant observations (Appendix II) and analysis of documents.

The design of Phase II took the form of a case study approach. Stake (1995) explains that case study research "is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). Van Lier (2005), a researcher in the field of modern languages research, observes that case studies focus on context and specific groups. He notes that when "we want to understand how a specific unit (person or group) functions in the real world over a significant period of time, a case study approach may be the best way to go about it" (p. 196). As well, Bogdan and Biklen (2006) explain that after experiencing success with single subjects, settings, or events, researchers may move on to case studies that focus on multiple sites or multiple participants. Therefore, case study was a particularly appropriate methodological approach for this phase of the study because it allowed me the opportunity for prolonged engagement with the participants in their classrooms.

Below I describe the interview guide, the non-participant observations and the analysis of documents.

Interview Guide

I employed interview guides in both phases of the study so that the main lines of inquiry were consistent for each participant (Patton, 2002). Patton explains that other advantages of using this type of interview in qualitative studies are: a) they allow the interviewer to carefully decide how best to use the time s/he has for an interview; b) they assist in making the process of interviewing a number of different people "more systematic and comprehensive" (p. 343) by determining the topics to be discussed in advance; and c) they help to maintain the focus during interactions while allowing participants' own viewpoints and experiences to emerge.

In Phase I, nine teachers were interviewed on site or at the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University. Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to one and a half hours; I digitally

recorded and transcribed them verbatim. As all the teachers interviewed held full-time positions at the time of the study, this process lasted four weeks. I asked the same general questions in all the interviews, but I also asked probing questions and encouraged additional comments. Finally, although the same interview guide was used with all participants, probe questions differed from one participant to another and the interviews always culminated with an invitation from the researcher to offer additional comments.

The interview guide used in Phase I (see Appendix 1) was developed prior to the onset of the study. Interview questions addressed such areas as the following:

- background experience of teachers;

- teachers' personal concepts of languages and cultures;

- teachers' personal beliefs about the relationship between languages and cultures;

- teachers' perception of their own cultural identities;

- teachers' perceptions of the place of languages and cultures in society and in their pedagogical practices;

- teachers' perceptions of the impact of their cultural identities in their pedagogical practices;

- teachers' implementation of languages and cultures in their pedagogical practices;

- teaching strategies employed by teachers;

- encouragement of students' use of their first languages and cultures in the classroom;

- supports and challenges experienced by teachers in implementation of their languages and cultures programs.

The interview guide used at the end of Phase II (see Appendix 9) was developed following the observations. This interview addressed areas such as:

- teachers' reflections on the lessons observed;

- teachers' goals for the lessons observed;

- assignments and readings selected;

- criteria for the selection of readings;

- teaching and assessment strategies employed by teachers;

- rationale for teaching and assessment strategies employed;

- links between language and culture established;

- teachers' reflections on their participation in the study.

Non-Participant Observations

The process of observation requires the observer to participate actively in a research study and at the same time separate him/herself from the setting in such way that s/he can describe the setting as an outsider. Patton (2002) articulates six main strengths of observations in the fieldwork:

- By using fieldwork observations the researcher can better understand and capture the context in which people interact.

- Firsthand experiences with a setting and the people in this setting provide the researcher with the opportunity to be open, discovery-oriented, and inductive.

- Fieldwork observations allow the researcher "to see things that routinely escape awareness among people in the setting" (p. 262).

- Fieldwork observations offer the researcher opportunities to learn things that participants would not otherwise be willing to talk about in an interview.

- Fieldwork observations afford the researcher the chance to move beyond interviewees' perceptions or understandings of the phenomenon.

- The closeness to the people being studied that direct observations offer the researcher can allow him/her to draw on personal experiences and feelings in order to understand the settings and the people being observed in such settings.

Bogdan and Biklen (2006) explain that while interviews allow the researcher to enter the interviewees' perspectives, observations afford opportunities for the researcher to enter into the worlds of the participants, getting to know them and to earn their trust while keeping detailed records of what is heard and observed. In Phase II of this study, I entered the worlds of two participants within the school settings. The observations took place over a period of three weeks.

Document Analysis

Documents collected during this study informed me of the teachers' pedagogical practices, the content of the lessons, their goals for those lessons and the strategies used to assess students' learning. In addition, these documents provided further insights into their pedagogical beliefs and values, their perceptions of the place of languages and cultures in the modern languages and culture classroom, how their cultural identities impacted their pedagogical beliefs and values, and how much they encouraged their students' use of their first languages and cultures in their classrooms. I recorded fieldnotes in my log and collected materials teachers used during the observed classes. I also included in my journal reflections on the fieldnotes of informal conversations and follow-up interviews.

Research Process

The following sections describe the research process including entry, data collection, and data analysis.

Entry

Once I was granted ethical approval by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board (See Appendix 11) and the ethics boards of the school systems (See Appendices 12 & 13), I contacted the principals of the high schools, who in turn sent an e-mail with the information regarding my study to the Modern Languages departments in their schools. I then proceeded to invite potential teachers of modern languages and cultures to participate in the study. Although this process may seem to have taken place smoothly, it involved both encouragement of and negotiation with potential participants. To illustrate, there were some teachers who needed further clarification on the purpose of the study and there were others who stated that they did not have the time to grant me an interview. One teacher inquired about the possibility of the board freeing them from class time to do an interview. After much discussion, nine teachers from two schools agreed to take part in the first phase of the study. Once I received their written consent to participate, Phase I of the study took place.

I anticipated the continued participation of a purposive sample of three teachers of Annishnaabemowin, French and English (one for each of the different languages and cultures they taught), but this was not the case. Negotiating access to teachers' classroom proved to be difficult and, in the end, only two participants accepted my invitation to participate in the second phase of the study.

Criteria for continued participation in the second phase of the study included: (i) teaching within grades 9 to twelve or at adult centres; and, (ii) teaching modern languages and cultures.

As mentioned before, two of the initial teachers (one French and one Annishnaabemowin) who had been interviewed in Phase I and were willing to remain in the study became the opportunistic sample. The remaining teachers were unable to participate in the second stage for two main reasons: (i) they felt that the presence of an outsider in their classrooms would negatively influence their students' performance; and (ii) their schedules were too busy.

Data Collection

In the literature review, I explained that in this study the term *culture* is problematized and illustrated with Kramsch's (1993) statement that: "such an approach is more interested in fault lines than smooth landscapes, in the recognition of complexity and in the tolerance of ambiguity, not in the search for clear yardsticks of competence and insurances against pedagogical malpractice" (p. 2). Patton (2002) explains that the focus of qualitative research is on participants' perceptions and experiences, and the way they make sense of their lives. The attempt is then to understand not one, but multiple realities. Smith (1999) explains that when conducting research that has as one of its main goals the beginning of a process of decolonization, researchers should think of the ways in which the research participants will benefit from the study. Throughout the study, I was very aware that the participants were careful of the answers they provided to the interview questions as illustrated by their constant search for an academic answer to these questions although I explained that I was more interested in their personal views than in a textbook-type answer. When determining the dates of the interviews, the participants expressed feelings of being time-strapped and overwhelmed by their schedules. They also expressed feeling overwhelmed by the questions I was posing in the interviews. To this end, I altered or changed the questions or order from what I had originally planned and allowed them to decide how or with which questions they wanted to start the interview. This strategy proved

successful because they felt more at ease with the subject; it gave them more ownership of the

information they were sharing with me and control over the flow of the interview. Further, this

strategy allowed them to share personal narratives that clarified their understandings and

personal views of languages and cultures, their cultural identities and how these impacted their

pedagogical practices.

Key elements in data collection and analysis stages were digitally-recorded interviews for

Phase I and follow up interviews in Phase 2, and non-participant observations also for Phase II of

the study. Early analysis of data informed subsequent interview questions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis included analysis of transcripts of interviews from Phase I and follow-up

interviews from Phase II, non-participant observations, the researcher's log, fieldnotes of the

observations and of informal conversations with teachers, and documents shared by participants

such as in-class assignments and texts such as short stories, novels, and poems the teachers used

to scaffold their students' acquisition of the modern languages and cultures they taught. The

following codes were used to identify the sources of data:

- Observation log = O.L.

- Interview Phase 1 = I.P.1

- Interview Phase 2 = I.P.2

- In-class Assignments = I.C.A.

- Course Outline = C.O.

- Texts = T

During this process, a constant-comparative approach (Creswell, 2003) was adopted and

completed upon conclusion of the data collection phase. This approach to the data collection

stage of the study facilitated the early identification of themes and subthemes and categories within these themes. Data were then organized categorically and chronologically, reviewed repeatedly, and continually coded. I also began re-reading the many different research studies I had previously cited in my literature review and new studies I had found in academic journals that dealt with the teaching of modern languages and cultures. These studies informed my coding of the data, confirming a number of themes, subthemes and categories. Once I established relationships and patterns, I started to gather quotes from the different interview transcripts under different themes. I then analyzed these quotes for similarities and differences and placed them under different subthemes and categories under the same theme.

I had originally intended to use ATLAS/ti software. The experiences of some colleagues in the PhD program and in the Faculty of Education with this software had been very positive. The prospect of a software that would facilitate the data analysis process was very appealing. However, I had participated in a research study at the Faculty of Education the year before I conducted my research study and had the opportunity to use Atlas/ti. Although it provided a high level of organization of the data, I found it to be very time-consuming and my time was constrained at the time I had to start to analyze the data for my study.

Ongoing analysis of the data informed the development of several themes, subthemes and categories (see Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 16 for Summary of Themes, Subthemes and Categories of Phases I and II, and Tables 3 through 10 in Appendix 17 for Summaries of Statements illustrating the different themes, subthemes and categories that emerged from the analysis of the data of Phases I and II). The proposals to share findings from Phase I of the study at AERA and CSSE proved to be very fruitful in terms of the feedback I received from different anonymous reviewers. Their comments informed the analysis of the existing themes, subthemes

and categories as they provided leads on research studies that related to my research study and that I had not considered up to that moment.

The use of multiple sources allowed for triangulation. This strategy was used to build a coherent justification of themes (Creswell, 2005). To illustrate, the teachers' comments during the interviews from Phase I were compared to the non-participant observations and the choice of materials that the teachers used to scaffold their students' progress in the classroom. Similarly, the same comparison was made between the Ministry of Education curriculum documents and participants' comments regarding the content covered and emphasized in their classrooms.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher has an obligation to respect the rights and needs of the participants. I submitted the proposal to conduct the research study to the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board (REB), and to the ethics boards in the school systems for their approval. Accordingly, I also completed the on-line Introductory Tutorial for the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS) (see Appendix 3 for a copy of the Certificate of Completion of the TCPS Tutorial). I received initial approval for this study in September, 2010, from the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. A copy of this approval is contained in Appendix 15. Similarly, I received ethical approval from the two school boards in December of the same year. Copies of these approvals are contained in Appendices 16 and 17.

Below I explain the ethical considerations. In the first section, I explain the procedure for submitting the ethics clearance applications and the considerations I included in these applications. In the second section, I explain the revision I submitted to the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board to make changes to the original proposal.

Informed Consent

I attended to the rights of study participants. I briefed potential participants on the purpose of the study as well as the rationale for conducting it. As stated previously, before beginning the study, I also met with the principals at each of the research sites in order to explain the purpose and description of the research. Appendices 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 contain the explanatory letters that were given to potential participants and the consent forms for both phases of this study. I also requested permission from the students of the teachers who participated in Phase II. These explanatory letters and informed consent forms articulate the following ethical considerations:

- the benefits of participating in the study;

- that there were no risks of physical and psychological harm as a result of participants' involvement in the study;

- that participants' participation in the study was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw at any time;

- that the data participants provided would be kept confidential (confidentiality);

- that the participants would not be identified in the study (anonymity);

- should there be any questions posed during the interviews, observations and follow-up interviews that participants preferred not to answer, they were under no obligation to answer them;

- that any data collected on students in participating classrooms would not be evaluated;

- that data would be securely stored for five years at Lakehead University;

- that the findings of this study would be published as a dissertation which would be available through the Education Library at Lakehead University. As well, that the

findings would be reported at national and international conferences and in academic

journals.

Requests to REB for Proposed Changes to the Study

Once I was granted ethical approval by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board, I

submitted my application for ethical approval to the local school boards. Bogdan and Biklen

(2003) explain that due to the complex nature of negotiating access to potential participants, it is

necessary for researchers to be persistent; be flexible; and be creative. The complex nature of this

process became evident for me when, after two months of waiting for ethical approval from the

school boards, one of the school boards informed me that I needed to make changes the sample

of participants whom I intended to interview because Spanish was not being offered at this

particular school board at the moment. In addition, the other school board contacted me as well

to inform me that my research proposal had disappeared and that I needed to re-submit it.

Because I anticipated that Spanish would be offered, I needed to revise the proposal to the

Lakehead University REB first; and once I received their approval I had to re-apply for ethical

approval to the school boards. Fortunately, this process was expedited by the Lakehead

University REB and the school boards; I received approval to conduct the study in December,

2010. Appendices 17 and 18 contain copies of the Request to Make Changes to Research Design

and the Ethical Approval of the Lakehead University REB.

Summary

This chapter described the research design and the methods I used to investigate the

research problem. The design and methods were informed by a decolonizing research

methodology (Lincoln & González y González, 2008, WaThiong'o, 1986; Smith, 1999).

In the second part of this chapter I described the research process, as well as the ethical procedures to obtain participants' consent to participate in both phases of the study.

The presentation of the findings is organized into two chapters. Chapter IV describes the findings from Phase I; Chapter V describes the findings from Phase II.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: PHASE ONE

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore secondary modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities and how these beliefs were embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices. The study had two phases. During Phase I, I interviewed a total of nine modern languages and cultures teachers (two Annishnaabemowin, three French, and four English as a Second Language) during the winter semester. Seven of participants taught at secondary schools and two at adult centres.

This chapter describes the participants, as well as the findings and interpretation for the first phase of this study. The first section presents a profile of the nine participants. The second section presents the findings. The third section presents the interpretation of these findings.

A Description of the Participants

The following section provides a profile of the individuals who agreed to participate in the study. The names used are pseudonyms, and were chosen by the researcher to protect the participants' anonymity and confidentiality. The nine participants were members of the Ontario College of Teachers. Seven were female and two were male. All the teachers were from Ontario and varying cultural backgrounds. They also completed their teaching degrees at Faculties of Education in Ontario. The years of experience of the nine participants ranged from five to 26 years. Some of them taught at the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 through 12) divisions at their schools and others worked at Adult Centres where the population was over 18 years of age and consisted of newcomers who needed assistance with their English language skills. They were all qualified to teach their specialization: Annishnaabemowin Languages

program, the Core French and French Immersion, or the English as a Second Language programs offered by the Ontario Ministry of Education from grades 9 to 12 and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

Olivia

Olivia was a teacher of English as a second language at an adult education centre. She had 22 years of experience as a teacher and five years of experience as an ESL teacher. She had a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education in the Primary (Grades Kindergarten to Grade 3) and Junior (Grades 4 to 6) divisions. Before working as an ESL teacher at an adult education setting, Olivia worked at a postsecondary education institution and was in charge of the Department of Trades and Technology. While in this position, she facilitated sessions on job search skills and preparing students for the job market. After completing this appointment, she taught in elementary schools for four years and obtained her ESL teaching qualifications through a Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Canada accredited online program.

Barbara

Barbara was also a teacher of English as second language at an adult education centre. She also had a total of 22 years of experience as a teacher and 10 years of experience as an ESL teacher. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Social Development Studies, a Bachelor of Education in the Primary/Junior Divisions and ESL teaching qualifications. Barbara's keen interest in working with ESL students started with her own experiences as an immigrant whose parents came from two different cultural backgrounds: Ukrainian and Polish. Although her upbringing was deeply influenced by both cultures, she identified herself as Polish. Prior to obtaining her degrees, Barbara worked as a Settlement Worker in an urban centre where she worked with a high number of Vietnamese and Polish immigrants. She explained that her experiences working

with these individuals and trying to help them with their settlement issues, including learning English as an additional language, led her to think that she could help them more if she had more specialized training. As a result, she decided to pursue a teaching career first and then obtain her TESL certification.

Leslie

Leslie was a high school Core French and French Immersion teacher. She had six years of experience. She obtained an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in French with a minor in English as well as a Bachelor in Education in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. Leslie is a descendent of Italian parents who immigrated to Canada at the ages of 26 (her father) and 17 (her mother). In her own words "I am Canadian, but I also have always seen myself as Italian because I was raised with that culture… the language, the food, the traditions, in every way." (I.P.1). She was strongly influenced by her parents' Italian language and cultures and explained that most of her cultural identity (75%) is Italian while the remaining quarter is Canadian. Her strong identification with Italian cultures intensified after her marriage to an Italian man.

Cindy

Cindy had 26 years of experience as a high school teacher at the time of the study. She had devoted 25 of these 26 years to teaching Core French and French Immersion. She had also taught Spanish and English for one year at the same high school. She studied both French and Spanish during her undergraduate studies and ultimately graduated with an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in French and Spanish and then obtained a Bachelor in Education in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. In addition to French and Spanish, Cindy can speak, read and write Italian because of her cultural and ethnic background, which is deeply

rooted in the Italian language and cultures. Cindy was born in Italy and came to Canada at a very young age. She identifies herself as an "Italian-multicultural" (I.P.1) or an "Italian-Canadian with strong multicultural beliefs" (I.P.1).

Patricia

Patricia was a Core French and French Immersion teacher at the high school level, who had 5 years of experience as a high school teacher. Prior to teaching in Canada, she lived in France for 10 years and while there, she taught in high schools and adult educational centres. She used to work for a large chain of restaurants in Canada and the United States and had developed teaching and training programs. She obtained her initial degree in Hospitality and Restaurant Industry. She then completed a Bachelor of Education in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 10 to 12) Divisions and ESL training in Southern Ontario. While she lived in France she became bilingual and she decided to pursue a teaching career. Her experiences in France enabled her to develop an understanding of what it was to teach a second language and the cultures this language represented.

Stuart

Stuart had been teaching for five years at the time the interview was conducted. He obtained his Bachelor of Education in the Junior (Grades 4 to 6) and Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) Divisions in 2006. After his graduation, he obtained basic qualifications in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. He worked as a supply teacher for one year in Southern Ontario in a school where 80% of the student population was Anishinaabe. While working at this school, a long term appointment position as a Native Languages teacher became available and, since he is Anishinaabe, spoke some Annishnaabemowin language and was very familiar with the cultural aspects of the language, he was hired. After accepting this

appointment and becoming known for the positive work he had been doing at the school, Stuart was contacted about a position as a Annishnaabemowin language and culture teacher at one of the corrections facilities in an urban area. After a series of interviews, he was offered the job and moved back to Northern Ontario. Eventually, Stuart was moved from the corrections centre to the high school system.

Stuart's work at the high schools, as with the other Annishnaabemowin and ESL teachers in the school boards, is itinerant. That is, he teaches at one of the high schools in his board for one semester and at another high school for another semester.

Marla

Marla is fluent in Annishnaabemowin and grew up in an Anishinaabe culture. She had obtained her Honours Bachelor of Arts in Native Studies and Bachelor of Education through the Concurrent Education Program in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. Although she was not a graduate of the Native Language Instruction Program (NLIP) offered at the local university, she was hired to teach the Native language program at the high schools because she was fluent in Annishnaabemowin and had graduated from the Native Studies program. In total, she has 17 years of teaching experience and has spent eight of these years teaching Annishnaabemowin language and cultures.

Gail

Gail was an ESL resource teacher at several high schools. She had obtained her Bachelor of Arts in English, with a Minor in History, and the obtained her Bachelor of Education in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions in 1994. She had been teaching for 10 years. Before becoming the ESL resource teacher at the three high schools in her board, Gail taught History and English at both applied and academic levels at the high schools.

Gail's decision to become an ESL resource teacher was influenced by her own experiences as an ESL student. She is originally from Finland and immigrated to Canada at a young age. As a child, she experienced what it was like to be an ESL student in school. These experiences coupled with those of the ESL students she had taught during her years of teaching, led her to take the Additional Qualification courses in English as a second language offered by the faculty of Education. Eventually, she was offered a position at her board.

Allan

Allan was the ESL resource teacher at several of the elementary schools and one of the high schools at the time of the interview was conducted. He had 10 years of teaching experience and had been an ESL teacher in the Junior (Grades 4 to 6) and Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) divisions at his school board for four years. His postsecondary education includes an Early Childhood Education (ECE) certificate, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Bachelor of Education in which he specialized in the Junior/Intermediate Divisions. While taking the ECE program, Allan became intrigued by how languages were acquired in early childhood. This interest led him to take ESL training in the form of Additional Qualification courses.

The following section described the findings that emerged from the interviews with the participants described above.

Major Themes for Phase I of the Research

Six themes emerged from the data analysis: Personal conceptions of language and culture; perceptions of teachers' own cultural identities; languages and cultures in the classroom; students' first languages and cultures in the classroom; teaching strategies; and challenges. Each theme is discussed below.

Personal Conceptions of Languages and Cultures

The findings regarding modern languages and cultures teachers' personal conceptions of "languages" and "cultures" are organized into two subthemes: languages and cultures are inseparable; and autobiographical narratives as touchstones. These findings are discussed below.

Languages and Cultures are Inseparable

The participants strongly believed that "languages" and "cultures" were inseparable and, as such, that there was no difference in the two. Further, the participants' responses suggested that their personal conceptions of "languages" and "cultures" were mediated by their lived-experiences as teachers of students from different cultures. As Stuart explained:

> I see you have here *language* and *culture*. I don't think there's a difference. I see them as the same. *Language* is the *culture*, *culture* is the *language*. You have to have them both. Even if you touch the language a little, you have to have the culture. It could be a simple prayer; it could be a simple *Hello*, or if you're talking about the Medicine Wheel, discussing the teachings in some form of the language. I just finished a unit on the Medicine Wheel and a lot of the unit was done in English, but we were focusing on the seasons in Ojibway. So, there you have both. They have to go together. (I.P. 1)

Marla shared Stuart's conception in regards to the interrelation between "languages" and "cultures" and observed:

> They're *[language and culture]* both side by side and they're meshed with each other. You can't have one without the other. So there's a lot… especially with the Ojibway language, there's a lot of spiritual learning, teachings, learning that you need to get the concepts… This one is hard to explain too because the teachings that you learn, for example, from Mother Earth, you have all those teachings behind you. Say you're learning about Earth, it's not just Earth, it's Mother Earth. It's all those teachings that you have been given. So like in the spiritual sense, in the land sense, the actual land, taking care of the earth. So, it's not just one word, it is a lot of teachings that go behind it. That's what I mean about culture and language. (I.P. 1).

For Stuart and Marla, the cultural aspects of the Annishnaabemowin language were a priority and, therefore, they both emphasized teaching different aspects of traditional Indigenous

knowledge such as the Medicine Wheel. Stuart taught these concepts in English so that the cultural teachings were understood clearly.

Similarly, Allan was very concerned with his ESL students' development of comprehension skills in English. He considered the teaching of meaning as an important part of his work. Further, Allan pointed to the cultural relevance of diagnostic assessments, which he used to ensure that his students understand the new vocabulary that's being introduced and any expressions, phrases, metaphors that have a cultural reference to them:

> When we come to start reading something a lot of the language we use without thinking about it is culturally embedded. So, a lot of the phrases that we use, even in casual reading, all of them have cultural references or have an added meaning to what you are reading […] One place where I run into it is when we have diagnostic reading assessments in both systems and this is done twice a year to keep track of how well they're reading. I find that with our ESL students if we give them a piece of fiction and they begin to read that, I have to go through it with them at first and make sure they understand the new vocabulary that's being introduced and any expressions, phrases, metaphors that have a cultural reference to them, I have to make sure they understand what that means […] So, those things I have to watch out for my students so that when they come to read this it makes sense. Back to your original question, language is a transmission of culture. They're one of the same. (I.P. 1)

Leslie suggested that "languages" and "cultures" were intricately intertwined:

> I think of them *[languages]* as a means of communication. Language goes into not just speaking, but also people's cultures. The way they think and how they live their lives. Language goes way into history and the way people think, it affects your thinking. And your outlook on life. So, language is very much part of everything you do. (I.P. 1)

Autobiographical Narratives as Touchstones

A strategy that the participants used when they found it difficult to express the interrelation between "languages" and "cultures" was to provide autobiographical accounts of their own lives as members of minority groups, as newcomers to Canada, visitors to other countries, or their own lives as teachers of modern languages and cultures in Thunder Bay. According to their comments, these personal accounts functioned as a validation or "touchstone"

of their personal conceptions of "languages" and "cultures". For example, as I explained at the beginning of this chapter, Gail was an ESL teacher at the high school level and originally from Finland. She explained that for her to define "language", she also needed to define "culture." She used the following anecdote to explain her need to keep her Finnish language alive in order to preserve her Finnish culture and the connection to her ancestors:

> […] the other day my daughter was asking me: "Why do you always speak Finn with Oma?", which is my mother. "Why can't you all speak English so that we can all understand you?" She understands a little bit, but not much. And I said to her: "Well, because that's my connection. We still celebrate some of the traditions and customs, but, to me, the key has been to hold on to that language because if I lose that, I feel like I'm going to lose my understanding and my connection with my past; it's so important to me to hold on to it." And she went: "Oh, o.k." Right now my mother is the only person that I can speak Finnish with because I don't see her friends that often and my grandma is in Finland, but I don't speak to her that frequently. So, to me it's really important because it ties into everything that I feel is Finnish about me. So, again, language and culture go together, you can celebrate all these cultures and I always do this with my students. I always value and celebrate their backgrounds. But to feel that connection, I think language plays a key role. You know words and things you associate with that culture. (I.P. 1)

Similarly, Barbara's experiences, first as an immigrant from a European country whose parents came from two different European countries and second as a Newcomer Settlement Worker, had a major influence in the way she thought of "languages" and "cultures." For example, she thought of herself as an additional language speaker and cultural being. According to her:

> I am an immigrant… I came from [name of country], but there I was exposed to two cultures of my two different parents, one was Ukrainian and the other one was Polish. There you have two different learnings; not only the language, but different customs of two different cultures, and then I came here. Then I worked with hundreds of people from many different countries and I kind of liked their ideas of culture, their customs and traditions. So, all of this is kind of influencing my own concept of culture and perhaps changing in a way too as we grow in maturity and develop new ideas. So, my own concept of culture would be…. My culture is the language I speak. (I.P. 1)

Other participants thought that "languages" were a means to communicate with other people. They also thought that, depending on the way we interacted with other people, this communication could be oral or written. To illustrate, Patricia and Allan explained their experiences by critically reflecting on different moments in which they have been in contact with different cultures and languages. These contacts were either direct or through mass media:

> I learned that through my exposure to different cultures, like I've been to Africa a few times, that language becomes important for almost *everything* [emphasis in the interview]: expressing joy, sadness, happiness is expressed in music in Africa, whereas in France happiness is not necessarily expressed in music. And I think that in Canada the language is not necessarily expressed in music, for example. So, I think language is everything, it's a way of communication, and it's a way people express their being, their cultures as well, it's expressed *through language* [emphasis in the interview]. (Patricia, I.P. 1)

> I think language is an extension of the culture. For example, I don't understand Arabic at all, but when I hear translations of what people are saying in protest marches, it doesn't come across at all the way I would envision people in North America protesting and speaking at the same time. Their culture comes through in the way they express themselves. We can all protest and speak, but the way the words that are spoken in some of these countries, express a different culture completely. It's an entirely different way of speaking that I wouldn't have envisioned saying or taking part in a group that would march on the government here. So that's something that fascinates me, the way cultures speak, the way cultures express themselves, they're very different. (Allan, I.P. 1)

Other participants also indicated that "languages" did not only go into the act of speaking, but also into people's cultures, and, as such these two concepts defined who they were as individuals.

Perceptions of Teachers' Own Cultural Identities

Barbara viewed herself as an immigrant who was influenced by two languages and cultures. She referred to the impact of her life experiences working with newcomers to Canada to illustrate how her cultural identity is a combination of both her home and work environments. Because of the individuality of responses such as Barbara's, participants were asked to describe

what they perceived their cultures to be. Their responses revealed that they held very personal

beliefs about their cultural identities, particularly in relation to two subthemes: I am a

multicultural Canadian; and cultural identities are individual.

I Am a Multicultural Canadian

Six of the participants noted the multicultural dimension of their identities. Olivia and

Allan saw themselves as predominantly Canadian even though their ancestors had immigrated

from different European countries. To illustrate, for Olivia, having been born in Canada made

her more Canadian or North American than any of the cultural influences she had while growing

up:

> Well, my culture, I think of it as being Canadian or North American and I also
> bring some cultures from my ancestors depending on which country they come
> from. So, people who have immigrated have a culture from their homeland that is
> the way they do things, but myself being born in Canada, I think of a Canadian
> culture. (I.P. 1)

Allan saw himself as predominantly Canadian regardless of the different cultures he experienced

growing up with a Scottish mother and an Irish father. He noted that these experiences

predisposed him to be sensitive towards different cultures. He considered himself as part of a

group of Canadians who were trying to find out what it meant to be a "Canadian." However, he

was certain that part of being Canadian was to be accepting of different cultures and what these

cultures brought to Canada. According to Allan, such openness to different cultures defined

much of his cultural identity:

> I would call my own culture *Canadian* and in that I'm part of my own
> background, but I welcome what other people bring to Canada and so that to me
> forms my culture... We can say that in Thunder Bay we have more Finnish-
> speaking people than any other place outside of Helsinki. In Toronto, we can say
> that Bollywood is bigger than in any place else in the world outside of New Delhi
> and these kinds of things. So, we have these cultures coming in, we have the
> Caribbean festival in Toronto, all of these things coming in forming part of our

identity and I think we have a richer, fuller cultural identity because of that. (I.P. 1)

Other participants saw themselves as individuals who were deeply influenced by their parents' cultural heritages and by growing up in Thunder Bay, an area of the country that was (and still is) predominantly Anglophone and white. For example, when asked what her cultural identity was, Cindy defined herself as "Italian-Multicultural" (I.P. 1.) or an "Italian-Canadian with strong multicultural tendencies" (I.P. 1). She explained that these "multicultural tendencies" were evident in her openness to all cultures, "to all ways of living, different literatures, different experiences, different foods, everything that comprises society" (I.P. 1). She further explained that her culture was one that was based on a deep respect for different cultures and a deep need to understand them: "It would entail getting to know the culture, becoming familiar with the culture, learning about the culture, experiencing as much as possible the culture as a native would. You know, not superficial." (I.P. 1)

Similarly, Patricia saw herself as an American-Canadian-Italian due to her cultural background and the different experiences she had had in her life. When asked what her culture was, she said:

> My culture is a mix and match of everything. I am an Italian-Canadian, but, in saying that, I have, I suppose, some elements of Italian culture, but not everything. Some elements that I've incorporated that are Canadian, or North American or maybe American. American-Canadian-Italian and my years spent in France have certainly given me a better feel for French culture. So, now I feel like I'm a mixture, even to the extent that I go to a lot Native things now like Powwows, Native cultural events. I almost feel that my culture has become more diluted. As I'm going along my culture is extremely diluted. I would say that from the time I was a small girl to now it's become a bit of everything now. (I.P. 1)

Leslie, who did not have a French background, was very keenly aware of how this situation put her in a special position when it came to teaching about Français cultures in her Core Français classes. Such self-awareness was illustrated by a disclaimer she used before she

responded to the question regarding her own culture: "I am not of a French background. Both my father and mother were born and raised in Italy" (I.P. 1). As she proceeded to explain her cultural identity, it was evident that, like Cindy's, Leslie's cultural identity was deeply rooted in the values that her Italian parents had passed down to her, as well as her marriage to an Italian man. Further, Leslie saw herself as having very unique bicultural experiences that set her apart from someone whose parents had been born in Canada and did not possess the experiences she possessed:

> I am Canadian, but I also have always seen myself as Italian because I was raised with that culture, you know? The language, the food, the tradition, in every way… I'm going to have to say this is my culture. It plays as 75% of me in that and 25% in me is Canadian because I also married someone who was born and raised in Italy. For example, I feel like as in my ethnicity, I always say when people ask me: *I'm Italian*, even though I was born in Canada. The reason I say that is because it makes up so much of who I am. The language I speak at home, I would say a lot of the time with my parents and now being married with my husband who is Italian. We try to maintain a lot of the values, whether it is the cuisine, Italian cuisine… it makes up a large part of who I am […] I'd also say in my daily life I do the things that Canadians have been known to do, let's say winter activities, like some of the foods, that's not how I was raised. So, though I speak English and I'm very happy to live in Canada, I love the way the country is run, I would say my daily practices are more geared to the culture that my parents pushed upon me. Whether it was like, again, from foods, Christmas Carols in Italian to so many little things, that maybe somebody else that didn't have that wouldn't know. Maybe they were just born in Canada, their parents were born and raised in Canada, I don't know. (I.P. 1)

For Barbara, her cultural identity included taking what she believed to be the best from both her parents' cultures and the new culture she had adopted as hers when she was brought to Canada as a child:

> … as immigrants we are kind of puzzled here. Do you want me to tell you how I evolved since I came from another country and now I've adopted another culture? Something that came out of it is probably a combination of both. Hopefully, I have taken the best from my previous culture and accepted the best from the one that I am in now and value the system that I have developed. (I.P. 1)

Although participants described their cultures as ones that resembled the multicultural character of Canadian society, the same responses also appeared to be very personal and influenced primarily by the individual characteristics of their lived experiences. The second subtheme, cultural identities are individual, provides an illustration of the individuality of participants' cultural identities.

Cultural Identities are Individual

For Gail, her culture included not only the customs she had inherited from her parents, the Christmasses and the traditions she celebrated, but also the values of hard work, self-worth as a woman, and religious values that her family had instilled in her. She described her own culture thus:

> The things that I learned at home and that were important to *them* [referring to her parents] and that sort of defined them. Still my mom would say: "In Finland we valued hard work and this, and this, and this" I mean, those things whether they hold true or not now, those are things that are still embedded in me. You know, how the Finnish culture views work and especially when it comes to a woman, that's even something that my husband has noticed over the years. I mean, Finland has a female president. Finnish women have been known for being independent for a long time; they've had a lot of voice and part of the feminist movement. Even though there were three girls before my brother was born (we were all born in Finland), my father instilled into us that: "If you're strong woman, you're going to be educated, you're going to take care of yourself, you never have to rely on a man" and all that stuff, and that stuff is from how he saw his mother, she was a strong woman. Again, that's valued in that society and it defines me who I am. I am a strong-willed woman who can stand on my own two feet and that's something that my husband says that I am a role model to my children to both my two daughters and my son…So, it's things I've learned from them. It's definitely the language what's important. Religion came along side and even though it has not played a strong role in my life, it's there. The beliefs, they passed that along. (I.P. 1)

Stuart had a similar approach to defining his own cultural identity. For him, his cultural identity was very much determined by his personal experiences as an Aboriginal person who grew up in an urban centre and attended the Catholic school system. He noted that people's own

cultural identities were going to change "'cause everybody is different" (I.P. 1). For much of his childhood and adolescent years, Stuart rejected his Aboriginal heritage because of the racist environment he grew up in. He grew up not wanting to be identified as an Aboriginal person because of what he had seen his mother endure for being an Aboriginal woman:

> I grew up not telling anybody that I was Ojibway. That's how I grew up. It didn't benefit me to say that I was Ojibway and, watching my mother, she went through a hard time at work. She was harassed for being Ojibway and all things like that and so I didn't tell anyone, neither did my sister. Since we looked the part [referring to their light skin colour], we didn't say anything. (I.P. 1)

Because of this situation, Stuart admits to having distanced himself from anything that represented his cultural heritage like Powwows or other public celebrations of Aboriginal cultures. His experiences were also influenced by attending the separate school system and the Catholic Church, which are part of his cultural background as well. It was not until he had graduated from university and moved to a different city in Ontario that he started to see his own cultural heritage from a more positive perspective. He then began a long-life commitment to reclaim his Annishnaabemowin language and cultural heritage and reconcile it with his Catholic religious beliefs:

> When I was a kid, I didn't like to go to church like any other kid and I guess when I started Grade 8, I stopped going to a Catholic school and I stopped going to church altogether. And then, as I got older, I found myself going back to the church and understanding the bible more and understanding more the teachings from bible as well. And then I started the connections between the Bible and Aboriginal culture. There are a lot connections and a lot of similar beliefs. The Grandfather Teachings, those are rules that the Catholics live by as well. We have our Ten Indian Commandments as well, kind of… I don't know how old are those, but we have our own version as well. There are a lot of stories, the creation stories… but I find myself, important to me as well to hold on to the Catholic values as well […] I don't know why I feel like I'm drawn back to the church. I go to church more than I ever had in my entire life, probably. I don't know if it's both sides of me that want to do that. My Ojibway side wants to do that, I mean,

do the Ojibway culture and there are also parts of Catholicism that I also believe in and I don't want to lose that, I guess. (I.P. 1)

Marla also believed that cultural identities were individual, even within the Anishinaabe culture. As a result, it was difficult for her to generalize the ways Anishinaabe people expressed their cultures. For example, she explained that within her culture there were different ways that Aboriginal people celebrated traditions:

> One example would be that this community might not celebrate, say, fall hunting. They might not celebrate it as a whole community; they might celebrate it as just the one family. So, that's my culture. That's how I was raised, doing it that way". (I.P. 1)

Allan believed that, although many ethnic groups shared some ethnic characteristics such as food, clothing, and customs, there were many other factors such as socio-economic status and religious beliefs that also comprised a person's cultural identity. Allan explained that cultural identities are personal:

> Part of that schema we carry with us and *culture* in itself is that shared experience that might be shared with an identifiable group that you're in. But then there's also not just the broader culture that you're familiar with based on shared experience, but then there's also family culture that brings in your socio-economic status and everything you learn from your past experience all of it comes in as part of that schema. When you look at it, culture is one layer of that schema you're bringing in. (I.P. 1)

Participants' comments offered a clear indication of their conceptions of languages and cultures, and how closely they are intertwined. Further, their comments in regards to their cultural identities demonstrate how these cultural identities are personal and, thus, have been informed by their individual experiences.

Languages and Cultures in the Classroom

In contrast to their personal views on languages and cultures, most participants gave a priority to languages over cultures in their practices. They observed that if they did teach culture

in their lessons, they did so incidentally or inconsistently. Such views are illustrated through the subthemes: Language study over culture study, and incidental study of cultures versus planned study of cultures.

Language Study over Culture Study

All participants explained that they placed a priority on the study of grammar over the study of cultural aspects of the languages they taught. According to them, learning languages meant being able to master grammatical rules; and such mastery would lead to the improvement of their students' speaking, listening, writing and reading abilities. For example, Barbara explained that she never considered the cultural perspective of what she was teaching to her English language learners because her priority was the language acquisition needs of these students. Similarly, Olivia noted that since what she was teaching was the language, "you have to know the language you are teaching. I mean, you have to know the grammar, the history about it, the technical part of the language" (I.P. 1). She also indicated that she personally needed to know the culture of the English language so that she could introduce it to her students; and they, in turn, would be able to "fit in their new country" (I.P. 1.). Stuart's and Olivia's languages and cultures teaching philosophy became clear when each explained how a typical period was organized:

> Well, usually we start with one of our themes; let's say we're discussing "clothing", so we will probably have some pictures of clothing. We learn our vocabulary, how to pronounce it, how to write it, how to spell it. Students will get work sheets. They have to label them. From there we might expand onto the next day on clothing: "O.K. let's talk about, o.k., use the verb 'to wear'. The word 'to wear' is used when we talk about clothing. We conjugate the verb "to wear"; I wear, I am wearing. So we talk about what you're wearing and you describe: I am wearing pants, so we go like that. And we'll have a lesson on grammar itself […] So, it could be talking about clothing and then we go straightly to grammar and maybe if we're working on pronouns, working on adjectives or things like that. So, do a subject on grammar. (Olivia, I.P. 1)

> This is what we'll have for the whole year and I'm going to hit this, this, and that and I'm focusing on grammar as well as first person and third person, and how to put together sentences – not just nouns, but the language is mostly a verb language, a description language, an action language. (Stuart, I.P. 1)

Similarly, when reflecting on her experience at the school where she was teaching when the interview took place, Patricia felt that the teaching of the French language was determined by the transmission of grammatical rules and the occasional communicative activity that uncovered the students' inability to communicate in the language at the end of their high school studies. She explained the pedagogical priority of the teachers in her department: "Grammar, grammar, grammar. When I ask to see their exams, their final exams, because I wanted to see if I was doing the right thing, I thought: "Oh, my God, it's grammar. That's why no one can speak the language when they're finished." (I.P. 1)

In contrast to the priority all participants placed on languages over culture, five participants also explained that they addressed culture incidentally in their lessons; several, however, also planned ways to incorporate "culture" in their lessons. Their comments are addressed in the following subtheme.

Incidental Study of Cultures Versus Planned Study of Cultures

Some participants indicated that they addressed cultural aspects of the languages they taught incidentally. However, other participants explained they had planned activities for their students to practice their language skills through the study of cultural aspects of the language they were teaching.

Leslie explained that it was impossible for her to just teach grammar and never talk about the French culture. However, her responses suggested that cultural aspects of the French language did not have the same priority as the grammar that the curriculum guidelines for the Core French program mandated that she teach. For her, cultural teachings or explanations

happened incidentally and, when they happened, they happened spontaneously. She gave one

example related to her Italian culture:

> While I instruct, I always try, whether it's a grammar lesson, or whether we're studying a poem in French, there will be things that come out of there and all of a sudden kind of make you diverge and discuss something culturally […] So, I often say if I was French instead, and let's say I was born and raised in Paris, I'm sure there will moments throughout my lesson when things would come into play when I kind of throw some tidbits or some facts to them about culture, you know? (I.P. 1)

On the other hand, other teachers explained that they explicitly addressed cultural aspects of the

languages they taught. They took advantage of the themes that were suggested in curriculum

documents to combine language (form) and culture in their teachings. For example, Barbara used

the theme of "Winter in Canada" from her ESL curriculum document to teach about the Inuit

culture:

> The unit is part of my elaborate library about winter in Canada. It is part of a Canada unit as well in the curriculum, but this particular unit, mini-unit, it was just a couple of lessons, we did on Arctic weather and then we talked about different vocabulary related to snow, and then we talked about the Inuit culture and what they do, their animals, how important is the walrus for them, for example. We had a little reading on walruses, and then we discussed the Inuit's unique way of living in the North where they have to experience winter most of the year, so we are not so bad here in [city]. (I.P. 1)

Cindy and Patricia shared a similar view on how they taught languages in a cultural

manner. Cindy observed that for her students to better understand the French language, they

needed to study different current cultural aspects of this language. To this purpose, she

mentioned that she usually asked her Grade 12 French Immersion class to do an independent

study at the beginning of the year. For this independent study, the students had to select a literary

work of their choice and explore a theme from this literary work. Cindy explained that because

of the age of the students, this type of assignment gives the students the freedom to select a book

that they are interested in. For example, she shared this story regarding one of her students:

> One of my students is a student trustee for our board and he went to Montreal and Ottawa; to Ottawa for a conference and he went to Montreal to see what it was like to go to McGill University and while there he bought a French book 'cause he thought it would be interesting to read for his independent study and then he came and said: Oh, my God, Madame, the French book is all full of sex and it's all this stuff and I said, well, yes, French people are not embarrassed about treating sexual themes and they're very open and they're… just like the French magazines we have at the back. You can see the difference between an Anglophone society where it's more conservative and as you see the French magazines, they're much more open to discuss various themes, difficult themes, nudity. It's not a problem. (I.P. 1)

Patricia, on the other hand, made use of technology and the French speaking community to have her students experience different French cultures from around the world:

> At the beginning we looked at some of this poet's work. I didn't tell them that I knew this poet. We started to look at some of his work. We started to examine what this poetry meant or what they felt the poetry meant and then when we finished that study of the unit I said to them: "I'm trying to set this conference with this author. You have to prepare three questions, one about a specific work that he's written because we have been interpreting his work, but I want you to see what you can find out about him". Another question would be about his own personal life and another question about his music or whatever. So, that was the preparatory stage. They all prepared questions and I made sure they were different. They would read the questions in class, so we made sure that everybody didn't have the same kind of question. Then, he gave the conference. I think the most enlightening thing was they got to hear him explain certain works. That was very interesting for them. That was a very good part for them. It enlightened a little more about what he was saying. And after the conference was over we had a de-briefing on it and we analyzed what our expectations were going into it and what we felt coming out and if it achieved what they hoped to achieve. So it was more of a de-briefing. Then when we went back to looking at those poems again they had a better feeling for what he was trying to say. So that's where we kind of left it. They wanted to do another conference with him and some of them are now friends with him on Facebook. (I.P. 1)

It became evident that for these participants, the use of works by the target language's authors and their own cultural background were part of their practices. Their comments illustrated that they would include, whenever possible, cultural aspects of the target language as a teaching strategy to scaffold their students' understanding of the cultures related to the target

language. It also became clear that, for other participants, the teaching of cultural aspects of the languages they taught happened incidentally.

Similarly, the priority that languages and cultures had in the participants' programs was also reflected in their consideration of their students' first languages and cultures. The participants' views of the emphasis in their students' first languages and cultures are explored through the next theme.

Students' First Languages and Cultures in the Classroom

In response to the question regarding how the participants built upon their students' first languages and cultures in their classrooms, they adopted two main stances: a) some participants considered their students' first languages and cultures to be effective tools to aid their students' understandings of the target languages and cultures; and b) others believed that for their students' to learn the languages and cultures they were teaching, their students' first languages and cultures were less important than the ones they were learning. These two stances are described below.

Gail, Allan, Stuart and Marla stressed the importance of the use of their students' first languages and cultures in their classrooms as a way to affirm their students' cultural identities. Further, Gail and Allan encouraged their students never to lose their first languages because they were in an Anglophone environment. They strongly believed that, by encouraging their students to speak their first languages, they were contributing to their students' success in learning English as a second language, while at the same time maintaining their cultural identities through their first languages and cultures:

> A lot of it is to try to make them understand that their culture is important. "Don't lose your first language," I say that to all my students. "Continue speaking your first language because that's important, that's valuable." I think they appreciate that and I learn how to say some of the words in their languages like how to say

"hello" and these kinds of things. I try to learn a little bit from them as well. (Allan, I.P. 1)

I also like to ask them how to say things in their languages just to always include their languages in their learning. I always use dictionaries and I'm always helping them look up words. I always encourage them to write the words in their books or on their papers in their first language so that they're seeing it. I also encourage them to use their first languages socially with the other ESL kids. Like I said we have a large group of Karen kids [people from Burma] and I love it when they speak and I am the only one who doesn't understand. That puts things into perspective for me and they're laughing and joking and I don't understand them, but that's what they deal with every day. (Gail, I.P. 1)

In Marla's case, her students were at a beginners' level. She explained that she had a number of students who could understand Annishnaabemowin, but who could not speak it. Therefore, she encouraged them to use English as a way to ensure that they felt at ease in her classes. As she explained: "It [English] keeps them talking. It keeps the communication going in the classroom. I don't think they would be confident to speak full-immersion type of thing" (I.P. 1).

Stuart focused on the challenges experienced by Aboriginal youth in the school where he worked:

[I consider my students' native language and cultures] 100%. I'd say 80% use English. Their cultural background is a mixture. For instance, you have students who don't do anything in cultural stuff and then you have students who are very involved. It's a mixture, for sure… I'd say 50/50 at best might lean towards the traditional stuff… They are a lot like myself who grew up even though an Aboriginal, you don't do Powwows, you don't do ceremonies and things like that. The ones that grew up on the reserve, they're more familiar with those cultures, but even those they don't participate. I think a lot has to go back to Residential Schools. For years, years and years they were told it was evil, that it was wrong. (I.P. 1)

Olivia, Patricia and Cindy, on the other hand, believed that for their students to learn the languages they were teaching, their students' native languages and cultures were less important

than the ones they were learning. For example, Olivia allowed her ELLs to speak their first

languages in her classroom only if it was to talk about the lesson that was being taught; but if this

conversation was about something else, she would not allow them to do so. Although she

acknowledged that speaking their first languages in the classroom gave her students confidence

and helped them, she was strict with an "English Only" rule in the classroom and considered that

if her students didn't understand something, they could just say "I don't understand" (I.P. 1).

Patricia and Cindy explained that in their French Immersion classes, their students were

allowed to students to use English only in extraordinary circumstances. They described their

stances in the following way:

> In the Immersion class we try to speak French all the time. However, if there was
> a real blockage like we were studying another work, I mean, it's fine, but it was a
> Grade 10 Immersion class, we were studying *Cyrano de Bergerac*. It's a play, but
> I was surprised that they would ask us to study it at that level. It's more involved
> in French, probably at the level of Grade 12 or first year university. It's a difficult
> piece; it's written in very old French and the way that they spoke then in France
> was completely different. So, there were times there when we had to speak
> English to understand what we were getting from that, but generally in Immersion
> we try to stay in the language. But there were moments when a few words would
> escape people or even when they said: "I don't know how to say this" and then
> they would say the word in English. (Patricia, I.P. 1)

> No, no English, especially for the Immersion class. It's rare that I would allow
> them to use English to discuss. For example is there's a concept that is really
> obscure we'll beat around the bush to get to that meaning. Sometimes our
> resources are not available in French. Then if I do use an English resource, all the
> work related to that particular theme is in French; they may use something in
> English, but the rest will be in French. (Cindy, I.P. 1, p. 15)

Leslie also commented on the difference in instruction when it came to teaching French

Immersion classes and Core French classes. She explained that, while French Immersion classes

demanded a "French Only" rule in order to communicate in the classroom, the Core French

classes were more relaxed when it came to allowing students to speak English in order to express

certain meanings. When asked about the place of her students' first languages and cultures in her classroom, she stated:

> At the Core level, in Grade 9, at first there is always that goal to go there and speak French, but you try your best to do that, but when you see that, especially after reading, you know, and you want to encourage that discussion, I ask questions and there are blank faces. No teacher wants to see blank faces; no teacher wants to see no hands up, so then I have to kind of… what's the word? Push them along with a little bit of English and sometimes they'd say: "Madame, I do have something to say, but I don't know how to say it in French". So I tell them: "Give me your idea, express yourself". So, I do allow them to use English if need be. (I.P. 1)

Barbara made an effort to include her ESL students' first cultures in her classroom by inviting them to present experiences and traditions from their home countries in relation to specific days such as Valentine's Day. According to Barbara, the unit she had developed on Valentine's Day lent itself very well to discussion with her students on courting traditions in their home countries. She used the same approach when it came to celebrating her Chinese students' cultural backgrounds by holding a Chinese New Year party where everybody in the adult centre was invited. For Barbara, these presentations allowed her students to get to know each other, celebrate each other's heritage and validate those experiences. At the same time, Barbara believed that her students would ultimately have to assimilate to what she believed to be the Canadian culture if they wanted to succeed in this country: "Sometimes to be successful you have to accept this culture and behave in a certain way to be understood in a certain way. If you want 100% adjustment and feel like a Canadian and act like a Canadian…" (I.P. 1).When I asked her whether she thought that a newcomer needed to become someone different in order to succeed in Canada, she replied:

> No, no, you cannot erase many years of your life. It always comes with you. You can change, you can reshape things, rethink things, you can get a new perspective on things, but you cannot leave that, it never leaves you. (I.P. 1)

In the discussion above, participants explained the emphasis they placed on including their students' first languages and cultures have in their programs. They adopted two main stances: a) some participants considered their students' first languages and cultures to be effective tools to aid their students' understandings of the target languages and cultures; and b) others believed that for their students' to learn the languages and cultures they were teaching, their students' first languages and cultures were less important than the ones they were learning. Their comments provide a glimpse at the complexity of implementing a modern language program in a cultural manner, as well as how to take into account students' first languages and cultures in these courses.

Participants also provided insights into different teaching strategies they implemented in their programs. These strategies are discussed in the following section.

Teaching Strategies

Participants had the opportunity to talk about the teaching strategies they implemented in their programs. The selection of these strategies was influenced by the nature of their work and their understandings of the mandated provincial curricula for modern languages and cultures programs.

Allan and Gail, the two ESL teachers at the middle and high schools, observed that because of the itinerant nature of their jobs, they did not have much time to structure a lesson or a unit that would be similar to a lesson or unit that could be developed for a steady group of students in one school. For example, because the ESL student population was not large in their school board, there was not a specific ESL program of instruction for these students. As a result, Allan and Gail travelled to different schools during the day to offer support to these students on a one-on-

one basis. Their work consisted mainly in helping ESL students with their homework and

preparing them for exams.

Despite the special circumstances of his teaching appointment, Allan's comments

suggested that he followed a communicative approach to his teaching. He believed in a

communicative or "natural" introduction of vocabulary and grammar in which students would

learn new concepts on their own:

> I don't think I have a typical period…What I try to do in general with my students
> is to create a situation where they want to say something and I'm looking for that
> timely introduction of vocabulary when, suddenly, they need that word, that tool
> to say what they want to say. What I look forward to is when the student has that
> "a-ha!" moment: "That's what I meant! That's what I wanted to say!" And
> sometimes I can see the relief on their faces. (Allan, I.P. 1, p. 21)

Similarly, Gail observed that the itinerant nature of her job had discouraged her from planning

lessons. Instead, she used her students' homework as a springboard for instruction. Further, like

Allan, her comments suggested that she also followed a communicative approach in her

teaching:

> I've found over the years that there's no point in planning too much because I
> work the language through whatever they're bringing to me and if not, I really
> encourage reading, I love reading with them and hearing them read and me
> reading. [I do] a lot of discussion, even if it is about little everyday stuff.
> Sometimes it is the only time of day that they're going to try to speak English.
> But usually they'll come down with content work or a test and we work the
> English and the grammar. I don't teach grammar, I'd throw a grammar sheet here
> and there. I try to teach grammar in context to what they're doing and then we'll
> have a mini-lesson or whatever. So, sometimes it's what they bring down; a lot of
> them will come down with English, which is perfect for me. I also provide them
> with support material. I have a graphic version of *Romeo and Juliet* or
> whatever…(I.P. 1)

Marla's and Stuart's Annishnaabemowin as a second language programs were similar to

Gail's and Allan's. As mentioned in the profile section of this chapter, their programs were

offered on a semester basis in which they taught the program in one school or schools in one

semester and at another school or schools in the second semester. Their comments suggested that they followed an audiolingual approach to teaching Annishnaabemowin. At the same time, Marla's approach to teaching Annishnaabemowin was very similar to that used in elementary French immersion programs in that the students usually followed a certain routine in every class and talked about their immediate surroundings such as the weather, the days of the week, the date and what they did the day before when they left school. Students were then oriented to the goals of the day's lesson:

> The students come in. They know the routine. They need to get ready or prepared to learn because we're only together for short times. So I get them right away. They know the routine. They get the materials they need. I start off with the Western calendar. That's the calendar we use today in Ojibwe. We do that. We talk about the weather. What the weather's like outside. We talk about what we did yesterday or the day before and then what we're going to do today. So I tell them that. And then we get right into the lesson and they have time afterwards to do their work. (I.P. 1,)

Marla also described other strategies she used in her instruction and that, according to her, had proven successful:

> I teach from my experience, what I've seen, what I've learned, what was taught to me. So, any of those activities I bring them to the classroom. I do use technology 'cause the students really like that. I mean, they learn quicker. I use a lot of visuals, a lot of storytelling. I put a picture up and explain simple sentences in Ojibway. I use the sound chart, the Ojibway sound chart that they learn at the beginning and then they are able to say the sound, to pronounce. I go through the different vowels. So we learn those. It's really difficult for them to grasp 'cause you don't see two vowels make one sound in English. So, we go through that. I don't teach the consonant sounds, but just the double vowels. And then we add the consonant sounds and then we make words from the chart. So, *oo-Boojoo*, those are two sounds in the chart, so we put them together. So they realize that these two sounds actually make a word. There's really culture… I think it's the sounds, in every sound, I tell them, there's a meaning for every single sound and I tell them to look it up in the dictionary, in our Ojibwey dictionary.

Stuart followed a similar approach to that of Marla's in that he also used visuals, technology and personal experiences as a student in order to engage students:

Using visuals is the first strategy. I always think growing up as a regular kid I wondered what would I want to do as a kid? What would I find interesting to learn? How would I want to learn? And then if I think I'd like that I'll try it on the kids and if it goes over well then I'll continue to do it. If not, then I'll change it up. I use Power Point for a lot for the visual stuff, pictures. When we did the Medicine Wheel, everything has a picture, [speaks in Ojibway] spring time, the word comes up and then the picture comes up on the side and then the two together always. If we're doing counting, I try to incorporate games in counting. Repetition so that they understand by learning it over and over again, so they're constantly saying it over and over again, I guess. We did the prayer [says title of prayer in Ojibway] and they re-wrote the prayer and they had to make a poster for it as well and they had to translate it into the syllabics or the Ojibway writing system. It's just a lot of it. A lot of repetition, I would say. Somebody told me once before that if you want to teach the language so they're not using a lot of English. You don't want to be converting back and forth: Well, that means "*thank you*". It has to be natural. I try to do that the best I can. (I.P. 1)

Barbara explained that she spent a considerable amount of time planning for her adult ESL program because the content she taught to her students was determined by her students' needs. However, she noted that because of the poor attendance of the students in her course, most of the time she would have to change her lesson plans on the spot and adapt what she had already planned to the students who were present. Further, Barbara seemed to strive to respond to her students' specific language needs. As a result, she appeared to know her students very well and be responsive to the different cultures she had in her class. For instance, she understood what topics to talk about in class whether she had a heterogeneous group of men and women or a homogeneous group of women:

I do spend a lot of time planning and thinking of ideas because I think of it in terms of what each group, and sometimes individual people need, but my day changes, I rarely follow my plan because I look who is present. They don't come every day. They are sick or the winter time is a difficult time for many of them. So, as soon as I see who is present, usually my plan changes. It's not that I don't take things from them, but I change the structure, I change my ideas, and sometimes a certain group or people lend themselves to interesting topics. For example, if I have just women in the classroom we may explore topics that we wouldn't when men were present. So, they would be more comfortable asking me

about certain things. So, it depends. My regular day… you never know. There is a plan, they have a general idea of what we are studying as a unit on Valentine, and perhaps some stories, and structures and language, and idioms and so forth, but depending on their attendance. So, because I have four levels, I usually start by giving instructions to one group and I have to keep in mind the timing. (I.P. 1)

Cindy's and Patricia's comments also suggested they followed a communicative approach to teaching the French language. Their comments also suggested that their teaching approaches included the teaching of cultural aspects of the French cultures whenever they thought it was possible to do so. According to her comments, Cindy believed in a "hands-on" approach to learning the language. In addition, she believed that the introduction of cultural themes and the complexity of these themes depended on the age appropriateness of these themes:

Well, if I can, it would be would hands-on. If not, it would depend on the class. For example, for the Grade 9 class it would use skits, where they're familiar, they're at ease with skits. If it's a senior class, it would be more self-directed learning where you would sort of direct them towards the cultural component that I want them to learn. Today, I had Grade 12 students who presented on different literary periods and so when they talk about the different literary periods they have to address as well the political movements within that period, the economic movement, so that they're exploring the whole society. (I.P. 1)

Similarly, as I explained in a previous theme, Patricia also enjoyed the use of technology and authentic texts to help students learn the French language and about the different cultures this language represents. In order to make the study of the French language and cultures more alive for her students, she coordinated a Skype conference with a French-speaking poet. For this conference, her students had to prepare a number of questions that focused in the poet's work and life. The activity proved to be such a success with her students that some of these students became Facebook "friends" with the poet.

Other participants who indicated that they selected themes from their curriculum documents, developed activities derived from them and followed a pre-set structure. For instance, a typical Core French period for Leslie would start with prayers since she taught at a

separate school and all the students knew the prayer by heart. Her lessons would then continue

with an activity that she called "Le Français Quotidien" *(Daily French)* in which she and the

students would talk about some aspects of the French language. She did not think that this

activity had to be related to the day's lesson because her main goal in this activity was to present

students with "some activity related to the language" (I.P. 1). These activities would range from

tongue twisters, to French riddles and idiomatic expressions:

> After that it's homework check, so I do go around and check that their homework
> was done from the previous evening. We do ten minutes of questions and
> correcting homework and then, depending on where we are in a unit, we'll have a
> lesson and the lesson is always driven around a structure [meaning, a grammatical
> structure]. So, the lesson will be about maybe 20 minutes and I try not to do much
> direct instruction. (I.P. 1)

Finally, Olivia also followed a routine in her teaching. As mentioned earlier, Olivia was

concerned about teaching grammar and pronunciation. For example, she explained that her

weeks would start with a theme. She then used this theme to teach first vocabulary on one day

and on the following day she taught the conjugations of verbs in different tenses. On another day

she taught grammar explicitly:

> We usually do four sections a day. So, it could be talking about clothing and then
> we go straightly to grammar and maybe if we're working on pronouns, working
> on adjectives or things like that. So, do a subject on grammar. Then in the
> afternoon we do some pronunciation. Just a lesson on certain pronunciation. It
> might be on the vowels, it might be on consonant length, that sort of thing and
> syllables, and stress. So we do a lesson on pronunciation and then we might have
> a computer class and then we might also have another class on maybe more
> grammar or maybe another theme. (I.P. 1)

Participants' comments regarding the teaching strategies they implemented to teach

languages and cultures ranged from communicative activities to more traditional grammar-

translation and audiolingual approaches. Some of the participants expressed that the Ontario

Curriculum documents for the languages they taught dictated how they approached their teaching.

The following theme addresses some of the challenges that these teachers expressed to face on a regular basis and which, according to them, mitigated against the successful implementation of their programs.

Challenges

Participants identified a number of challenges about teaching languages and cultures such as school board priorities when it came to the languages and cultures teaching, resources, professional development opportunities, and conceptual understandings they developed about languages and cultures teaching during their pre-service professional year. These findings are discussed in detail below.

School Board Priorities

Seven participants articulated concerns about the lack of prominence that the teaching and learning of languages and cultures had in their respective school boards. For example, Stuart felt that his school board did not really consider the offering of Annishnaabemowin language and cultures to be an important and necessary course for both Native and non-Native students. According to him, the rationale he had been given regarding the offering of these courses on a semester basis in the two schools was that there was not enough interest and, as a result, the course could only be offered once a year at each school:

> The school board does a lot of lip service to Aboriginal Education. I think there's a lot of lip service, in my opinion. That's what it's all about. They're offering the service, which is great and fantastic so that it appears on paper and, are they really concerned? No, I don't think so. That's my opinion. I don't think the Ministry backs 100% what they do. They do a lot of lip service. So, that is one reason why I don't…. I push them, I'm a very vocal person, you could say. I push them and I

> talk to administration and say you should have a Native Language teacher in all schools so you can do more than just Native Languages. (I.P. 1)

Marla, whose course was offered in the same manner as Stuart's, observed that offering the Annishnaabemowin course once a year in each school mitigated against her students' (all of Aboriginal heritage) investment in the language and the cultures of their ancestors. When speaking about the nature of her work, she explained

> that's one of the problems and it is really difficult to move. Because we don't have the resources we have to take what we have here…it doesn't give the students the time they could have and then we're gone for the semester. We disappear. In their eyes we disappear, we leave them…they rarely ask if I'm coming back…I don't get asked by too many students if I'm coming back. (I.P. 1)

Allan and Gail faced a similar situation in their ESL programs. That is, they had to travel from school to school in order to support the ESL student population in these schools. Although they both considered that their school boards had "come a long way" (Gail, I.P. 1) with respect to the services they offered to the ESL population in their schools, they noted they were still facing obstacles. Through her seniority in one of the schools, Gail had managed to obtain a larger room to offer her support to ESL students after many years of providing this service in a very small, dark and unventilated room. Allan, on the other hand, felt that although the principals he worked with had been very supportive, working conditions were very difficult. To illustrate, he shared an event that had occurred recently:

> This is something that's happened recently. A teacher needed the two computers that I needed in the resource room in the library and I had to give the computers to her class. Her class is quite large. I had to go and change my schedule… A lot of it is there's a lot of give and take. This teacher has a large class and the computer lab is next to the library where I work and in this place that I work, there are two computers. So, when she comes down she can split up her class and leave two students behind in the classroom that she has to supervise, she has no choice. That means that I have to be flexible and find some place to meet with my students or change my schedule. So, you have to roll with the punches. You're talking about culture; I'm not an integral part of that school culture. I visit it and then leave

again… Lots of times the principals will come along and say: "This is what we have left. Can you make that work?" You know, so I have to be flexible. However, I think that because I am working with smaller numbers at a time, lots of times what I'm doing kind of gets left behind on top all the others priorities that are going on in the school. It's something that I've had to accept because that's just the way it is. (I.P. 1)

Barbara's main concern was that her adult ESL classes were funded in a manner that did not allow her too much time to plan for them. Because of the different levels of language ability of the students in her class, she had to spend an enormous amount of time planning. She felt that the school board should pay her for this time as well. In addition, she also pointed at the discrepancies between the adult ESL classes offered in bigger urban centres like Toronto and small urban centres like Thunder Bay:

When I tell people that I teach four levels nobody understands me. Nobody tells me it's possible. So, there's nobody else who is doing… nobody that I've met that is doing the same. Because when I was at a couple of the sessions that I told them that I four different levels in my classroom… In Toronto they teach a *LINC or Level Benchmark 2: Listening* only class, so you only focus on Listening Level 2, very highly, highly specialized training… We don't have that luxury. (I.P. 1)

Cindy observed that the elimination of positions such as the French consultant and French programs coordinator prevented the school board where she worked to have a clear vision of the important place of French programs in the schools:

The most horrible challenge is the fact, and I have to be brutally frank, our school board, I don't think, has the vision that is required today to maintain languages. When we had cut-backs a few years ago, we used to have a French consultant, French coordinator, those positions were lost and they haven't been replaced. So, basically you have two programs, the FSL program and the French Immersion program and also the Native Language Studies that are sort of in the International Languages program that are sort of out in limbo. There's no guidance whatsoever. (I.P. 1)

Patricia explained that another factor that worked against a strong French language and cultures program was that both French and English teachers were grouped in the same department (i.e. the Modern Languages Department):

At the departmental level, we have a department head who's not French speaking. He's Anglophone. He only speaks English. That's a deterrent because if there's resources, even if we get books or anything like catalogues and say this is a great resource, sometimes it's not passed on because the value is not there or you don't … I don't think they understand the fact that you have to continue the program… (I.P. 1)

Patricia also referred to an experience she had had with her school board when she organized an activity in which her students would have had the opportunity to interview and speak with a French poet via Skype:

I got a call from the Board Office from their Public Relations guy, I've never met him and he wrote me an e-mail and said he would be there and I said: "O.K. Somebody from the Board Office is going to be there!" Nobody came. Even the technical guy from my school who set it up for me, as soon as he set it up, he took off. I invited teachers to come, the principal, the vice-principal, nobody came. And then the next day, 'cause they heard it on the CBC, nobody said anything except our Chaplain, who said: "Patricia, I heard you guys on the CBC and your students and you, it was so wonderful." And the P.R. guy listened and he called me and left a message saying: "That was absolutely fantastic." (I.P. 1)

Not one person came! So I said this is going to be a new method, that pedagogy to bring into a class… see? I'm not a permanent teacher, I'm an LTO, our principal didn't even say: "Patricia, that's a great idea."Nothing, nothing. Even though, I was the first one to do it in the whole city, apparently. CBC said I was the first one to do it. So, I'm like: "Why don't you come then?" (I.P. 1)

Finally, Leslie felt that although her school promoted the French program, it did not get as much promotion as other subject areas:

I would say that the school promotes French, but not as much as other subject matters. There is always that push on math and sciences, and English. Those are the three: Math, Science and English. And they are important, but French seems to be that course that you need that credit and that's that. So that's a challenge. I think getting everyone on board and understanding why it's important to continue on with it. I would say that's it. (I.P. 1)

Some of the participants described their limited accessibility to resources as an example of the lack of support to their programs. This challenge is addressed in the following subtheme.

Resources

Participants identified a number of resources that they considered to be essential to the teaching of their respective languages and cultures. They argued that the lack of these resources had a detrimental effect on their ability to teach and their students' to learn. Resources that the participants mentioned included videos or DVDs, language laboratories, and relevant books that the students could use.

Access to technology was a concern to most of the participants. They indicated that they were limited in their classes by the lack of access to technology and how this affected the quality of their lessons. This concern is exemplified by Patricia's comment:

> For example, the other day, I'm part of this Ministry working group. There are 16 of us from around the province who last week we went to Toronto. We were looking at the place of French in Ontario at different levels – French extended, French Immersion, Core French. One of the things we were talking about was labs like the one they have at the university. I said it would be fantastic if we had a lab here where we could get earphones to do that. I put forth that idea four years ago when I was part of the curriculum review for French, it didn't go anywhere. It's that type of situation […] that's a challenge, you know. Resources are a challenge. Sometimes the resources that we get, we get from Québec. Sometimes you have to be careful that the students understand the language 'cause sometimes it might be too much [French word] or if we get them from France you have to be careful 'cause if it's a DVD it is for Zone 2 [European DVD format], so we won't be able to use it. You see, there are many challenges. (I.P. 1)

Patricia also referred to the limited access to technology she experienced in her practice. She explained that the lack of access to technology was also determined by factors such as being a Long Term Occasional teacher. That is, if a teacher did not hold a full-time appointment in the school board, s/he would not have the same access to technology in the classroom as a full-time teacher would. In addition, she expressed concerns about the lack of training many of her colleagues had in the use of SMART boards. She also commented that the same colleagues

resisted the use of personal digital devices such as laptops and smartphones for pedagogical

purposes:

> Technology, technology, technology. Again, because I'm an LTO teacher, I don't have a SMART board. Most of the teachers; almost all the permanent teachers, not everybody yet, but almost all of them have a SMART board and they don't know how to use it. They use it to project a video on or whatever. I don't have a power point thing for presentations. I don't have that. So, technology is my number one challenge – to get them over the fact that technology is bad for some reason. They're so worried about the kids using their cell phones, their MP3 players and everything and what they should be doing is incorporating the technology into learning. I can't believe that we're not at the point yet where they could have their own laptop where I can tell them: "Access this site, we're on this site together, everybody. Let's take a look at this and let's see what you can incorporate in… anything!" (I.P. 1)

Participants expressed frustrations regarding the emphasis on grammar articulated by the

curriculum guidelines for their respective languages. Patricia considered that the curriculum

document for the Core French program was very limiting and authoritarian in terms of what the

Ministry of Education dictated was needed to be taught at different levels:

> I think the Ontario Ministry of Education has got, especially for Grade 9, has got a program where it's: "You know? This is what we want taught." I'd rather them say: "O.K. these are the broad concepts we want taught. "We want this culture brought in. "You want kids to… what's the standard? There's no standards as we want the kids to be able to speak in sentences. We just want them to know the past tense, but do we want them to put it in a sentence or anything? …Our learning expectations are grammatically-oriented. I think that my challenge as a language teacher is trying to get them to understand how you learn a language. (I.P. 1)

Leslie also referred to the limiting nature of the curriculum guidelines for the Core French

program. She considered that this document did not encourage the teaching of French in a

cultural manner. Instead, she noted that the Ministry of Education encouraged the use of themes

it considered to be of immediate relevance to the students such as "Monsters and Mysteries":

> [Referring to the textbooks used at her school] the programs, they do, basically, they cover the curriculum. So, if you go through the program, you'll know that you've almost, I would say 95% covered what you had to cover. They try to pick the interest of the students and again in Grade 9, thinking they are going to be

interested in monsters or a mystery, but, at the same time, again, there's not enough push on the cultural aspect. So, I would say they should re-look at maybe making the programs a little bit more in tune with French culture. As you go on, there was an excellent program called "Voyage" that is still being used at our school in Grades 10 and 11. It had those kinds of good little side notes and whether it's French regions, or La Francophonie [pronounced in French], different things like that, which is interesting, but usually I find it's up to the teacher to come up with some innovative ways to find how to [include cultural aspects], but is always finding those ideas on how to stick it in, instead of it being part of your everyday lesson. (I.P. 1)

Comments regarding the lack of support from their school boards and access to resources that participants identified in their programs were accompanied by comments regarding access to professional development opportunities within their boards. This subtheme is described below.

Professional Development Opportunities

Participants noted both the limited access they had to professional development opportunities, as well as the quality of the training they had received in their Bachelor in Education programs. Some of them talked about the lack of funding their boards had to pay for professional development sessions or conferences that would contribute to their professional growth. According to Allan, there weren't too many professional development opportunities available to ESL support teachers in his school board. He also expressed his frustration at the way the budget for professional development opportunities outside of the city was allocated:

What I find is that with our board there haven't been a lot of opportunities to do these things. We did have one earlier on this year because the province is introducing a new curriculum document specific for ESL and it has to do with how we are assessing ESL students to bring the language and assessment focus from the *Growing Success* document. So, what we're doing now is that we are taking what we have done before with how we assess students against a series of language benchmarks and bring it into language in a series of steps that work closely tied to the curriculum... At the end of May, there's going to be a conference in Toronto where all of the school boards are going to come along where they are going present projects that they've been working on and help people to implement this document. There is a budget for two people to go. So, Gail is going to be one of them and then they have to send a board representative

> as the second person. It ticks me off. With so few professional development opportunities, they're going to send someone who doesn't know and doesn't care... (I.P. 1)

Barbara also felt that although most professional development opportunities for ESL teachers happened outside of the city, her board did not provide funding for her to attend:

> There are millions, tons of PD opportunities outside of Thunder Bay, but the Board doesn't pay for that. They don't have any kind of money allocated for that. They don't have PD sessions for ESL teachers at my board…there are probably things on the Internet that I can access. I'm sure there are, but I haven't heard of that. There are sessions from the TESOL conference has, sessions that could be purchased… (I.P. 1)

Gail referred to the limited access to information concerning conferences or meetings. She explained that there was no system in place that would advise them of upcoming conferences or meetings that would of interest to ESL teachers:

> Professional development challenges…professional development for me has been a challenge 'cause most it is happening in Southern Ontario and most of the time I don't find out about or find out about too late. (I.P. 1)

Similarly, Marla stated that she had not been involved in many professional development opportunities because most of them happened outside of the city:

> I haven't really been too involved in professional development that has to do just with language teaching because of timing, because of being so busy that I don't access them. Most of them happen mostly out of town. (I.P. 1)

The three French language and cultures teachers expressed their frustration at the lack of professional development opportunities. Cindy noted that when she realized that it was unlikely that she would have access to these opportunities for French teachers in her board, she had taken it upon herself to search for professional development opportunities happening in Southern Ontario:

> I can't even remember the last time we had PD in-service that was provided by the board. I don't remember it. I am a member of the OMLTA and CAIT, the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers, so I take it upon myself to just go

to those conferences. I pay for most of them with my own money, except that every three years the school gives you $1000, which is not very much to go, but every three years I'm eligible to go and I've done that on my own and, as I said, I've been involved in curriculum initiatives just for personal interest. Like this Friday I will be doing… I was part of the focus to review the curriculum for French Immersion and Core French at the regional level and also at the provincial level and this Friday I'm doing curriculum feedback for things that I've done, but it's up to me, there are many people who are not doing it, so there is no in-service to say: "O.K." When we had the coordinator and the consultant, we used to get together and say: "O.K. look at these activities, there are good reading strategies, this is good to improve literacy, or, this is good to foster better communicational skills." I don't even remember it. This must've been at least ten years. It's very sad. (I.P. 1)

Some of the participants commented on their feelings of unpreparedness to teach the languages and cultures for which they had received training in their Bachelor o Education programs. For example, Leslie felt that her Bachelor of Education program with a specialization in French in the Intermediate/Senior divisions had been limited to one methodology course where the instructor of the course mainly focused on classroom management and Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. According to her, most of her learning occurred while doing her practicum:

I'm going to have to say: "No". I mean, once I reached my professional year, there was one course, one, that dealt with French instruction, which I truly think isn't really enough for a language teacher or anybody who specializes in a subject matter. So, the course was informative, the instructor was very knowledgeable… of French and pedagogy, but culturally I'm going to say we developed a portfolio at the end and one of the items in my table of contents was "Culture". So, anything that I could pull for resources I inserted into that section, but that I actually learned strategies, I'm going to have to say: "No". The course was more focused on classroom management, how to question students, of course, Howard Gardner, you know, all of that. It was interesting, but like we say, it really didn't prepare me… I mean, it gave me ideas, but it wasn't until I got into my practice teaching that my Associate really kind of gave ideas: "This is how you should organize your lesson; this is the way it should really work out to incorporate some listening, some speaking" (I.P. 1).

Olivia believed that Faculties of Education could be doing a better work at implementing courses that promoted intercultural communication:

I think they [referring to aspiring teachers] should probably learn about feeling how people feel when they come to a strange place. Maybe some more courses in that kind of thing… Intercultural communication. That would be good. Maybe more things related to empathy. Making people feel more comfortable and at ease, you know? Things we take for granted… I think that it is very important for the teachers to really be able to understand where other people are coming from and how do you do that? Can you give them a course, teach them? Maybe they will need something like that. (I.P. 1)

The findings described above relate to Phase I of the study. The themes and subthemes that emerged describe secondary and adult modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities, and how these beliefs were embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices. The findings also describe how these teachers encouraged their students to use their first languages and cultures to support their acquisition of the languages and culture they were taught, as well as the challenges they face in their practices when teaching languages and cultures. The following section interprets these findings.

Interpretation

Nine secondary and adult modern languages and cultures teachers participated in the first phase of the study. The following discussion interprets the findings presented in the previous section. The discussion is organized around the six themes that emerged from the data analysis: Personal conceptions of languages and cultures; perceptions of own cultural identities; languages and cultures in the classroom; students' first languages and cultures in the classroom; and teaching strategies and challenges.

Personal Conceptions of Languages and Cultures

In this study participants thought of languages and cultures as being inseparable. Some of the participants' conceptions of languages and cultures were informed by their lived experiences as teachers of students of other languages and cultures. For other participants, the interrelationship between languages and cultures was illustrated by autobiographical accounts of

their lives. Further, although participants were asked about their personal beliefs about "languages" and "cultures" separately, their definitions of the former always took into account the latter; they did not look at either separately.

A large body of research exists on the inseparability of languages and culture (Agar, 1995; Kramsch, 1993a; 1993b; 1996; Byram, 1989; Webber, M. J., 1987) and on modern languages and cultures teachers' personal conceptions of "cultures" in general and "culture teaching" in particular (Byram & Risager, 1999; Duff & Uchida, 1994; Kramsch, 1994, Ryan, 1998). However, there is minimal research that describes teachers' personal conceptions of both "languages" and "cultures" the way the participants in this study did. As a result, this finding extends the existing literature by providing a new lens from which to analyze the teaching of modern languages and cultures.

The close interrelationship between languages and cultures expressed by the participants also provides evidence to suggest that these conceptions are aligned to Agar's (1995) notion of *languacultures*. Agar contends that languages and cultures are so closely related that it is almost impossible to talk about one without talking about the other. As a result, an individual cannot really know a language if s/he does not know also the cultures expressed by that language. Although participants did not use the term *languacultures* in this study*,* they did describe this interrelationship by providing statements such as "language is the culture and culture is the culture" (Stuart, I.P. 1); "They're both side by side. They're meshed with each other" (Marla, I.P. 1); and "Language goes not only into communication, but also into people's cultures" (Leslie, I.P. 1).

Perceptions of Own Cultural Identities

Participants' perceptions of their cultural identities revealed that such perceptions were also influenced by their personal experiences. For example, Olivia, Allan, Cindy, Patricia, Leslie and Barbara had static notions of their cultural identities. These notions were influenced by the perceived multicultural character of Canadian society: they thought of themselves as the product of a country where everyone embraced different cultures and celebrated them. This notion was illustrated by comments such as "I think of my culture as Canadian or North American" (Allan, I.P. 1), "I am an Italian-Canadian with strong multicultural tendencies" (Cindy, I.P. 1), "My culture is a mix and match of everything" (Patricia, I.P. 1), and "I am Canadian, but I also have always seen myself as Italian because I was raised with that culture" (Leslie, I.P. 1). The insights offered by these participants are consistent with Dimitriadis and McCarthy's (2001), and Johnston's (2006) claims in regards to the impact that multicultural education has had in Canada and the United States. These participants' self-perceptions as "multicultural Canadians" suggest that their cultural identities are fixed and static, and consistent with what is considered "politically correct" in Canada. This finding is also consistent with the definition of "Liberal Multiculturalism" that Kubota (2004) articulates and which she contends constitutes the status quo in Canadian society and schools nowadays.

Although Allan considered his cultural identity solely Canadian or North American, he also believed that although many ethnic groups shared cultural practices, factors such as class and religion also determined a person's cultural identity. Similarly, other participants offered a different perspective with reference to their cultural identities. For example, they found that their cultural identities were very individual and were shaped by their upbringing and the values they were taught by their immediate families. Some of these participants' comments signaled an

emerging concept of cultural identity connected with gender, ethnicity, religion, and class which are not frequently discussed in the modern and languages teaching literature. For example, Gail's conception of her cultural identity was rooted in her upbringing in a family unit where women were expected to be strong and independent. Stuart's was marked by his Anishinaabe background, a denial of this background as child and teen because of the struggles his Anishinaabe mother experienced as a child because of her heritage, and his ultimate acceptance of this background. Stuart's cultural identity was also influenced by his Catholic background and how he reconciled this background with his Anishinaabe roots. Likewise, Marla considered that although she was an Anishinaabe woman, who grew up speaking the Annishnaabemowin language, she could not generalize the ways Anishinaabe peoples celebrated traditions.

Conversely, the individuality and autobiographical character of Gail's, Stuart's, Marla's and Allan's perceptions of their cultural identities is consistent with Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman's (1995) definition of curriculum as auto/biographical texts: "… a method by means of which students of curriculum could sketch the relations among school, life history, and intellectual development in ways that might function self-transformatively" (p. 515). In addition, these participants' comments illustrated the emergence of their voices as they related to their relationship with languages and cultures. Further, by providing their personal definition of their cultural identities, these participants displayed a sense of self and location in Canadian society, culture and politics. In the same manner, their diverse perceptions of their own cultures were also consistent with Agar's (2006) argument regarding the relational and partial nature of the term "culture". According to Agar, "culture" is a construction, a translation between ours and other cultures. As a result of this, Agar argues that in today's world

> we can no longer talk about culture in the singular when referring to a particular
> person or a particular situation. The plural is now obligatory. A particular moment

or a particular group is never just about *one* culture. It is always about *cultures*. (p. 6)

Participants' comments also illustrated how their definitions of their own cultural identities paralleled their personal conceptions of languages and cultures. For example, Gail illustrated her conception of languages and cultures by talking about her experiences of maintaining her cultural background by speaking her first language with her mother. She then referred to her upbringing as a Finish woman to describe her cultural identity. This finding supports research by Beers (2001) and Duff and Uchida (1997), who found that the participants in their studies possessed a storehouse of experiences which influenced how they viewed their own cultural identities. This finding also relates to researchers' arguement that teachers need to explore and understand their cultural identities first in order to develop an understanding and an appreciation of their students' diverse cultural backgrounds (Bérci, 2007; Davis, Ramahlo, Beyerbach & London, 2008; Lee & Dallman, 2008; Ndura, 2004; Santoro, 2009; Walker & Tedick, 1994). For example, Santoro (2009) found that participants in her study study possessed limited knowledge about their students' ethnic identities. This limitation in their knowledge was based on singular, fixed, and static assumptions about culture that led the participants to believe that students from determined ethnic backgrounds had predetermined dispositions towards schooling and, as such, would conform to certain cultural expectations. More importantly, Santoro notes that such a perception of students from diverse ethnicities "constructs the students ... and 'the way they've been brought up as *the* [sic] problem and places the blame on the students and their families" (p. 37). Santoro suggests that this perception has contributed to preservice teachers' lack of reflection on their own practices and conceptions of the *Other*, thus contributing to the marginalization of students of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the schools.

Languages and Cultures in the Classroom

Participants' perceptions of the place of languages and cultures in their classrooms also offered an insight into how their personal concepts of languages and cultures, and their own cultural identities were reflected in their daily practice. In contrast to their personal beliefs, most participants separated languages from their cultures in their daily teaching. Further, their comments illustrate that for them, to teach language did not necessarily entail teaching culture. For example, Leslie, Barbara and Olivia placed an emphasis on the teaching of grammar and vocabulary. They included cultural aspects of the languages they taught if the lesson required it and, usually, in order to develop grammatical accuracy in the languages they were teaching.

Six participants did not consider the cultural aspects of the languages they were teaching at all and only referred to these aspects in an unplanned or spontaneous manner. For example, Barbara used cultural aspects of the English language incidentally as a way to aid students to adjust in Canadian society. In addition, when she included cultural aspects in her lessons, it did not move beyond the traditional representations of cultural difference such as Valentine's Day, the Chinese New Year or the winter in Nunavut. A similar approach was used by Leslie, who indicated that because she was not a Francophone her experiences with the French culture were limited and, as a result, she did not address cultural aspects of the Français language other than superficial aspects in the form of an activity she called "Le français quotidien ."

This present finding is consistent with Cannagarajah's (2005) and Reagan's (2004) contention regarding the objectification of the teaching of modern languages and cultures. According to Canagarajah, most teachers of modern languages and cultures tend to approach the teaching of modern languages and cultures in a structural, behaviourist and positivistic manner. He notes that these three approaches are characterized by viewing the language acquisition process as the acquisition of a set of value-free grammatical rules and the teaching of a

calculated level of stimuli in order to achieve primarily linguistic competence where the appropriate conditions are created to observe and clinically test how languages are learned.

This finding also supports Reagan's and Osborn's (2002) assertion regarding the lack of progress in the field of modern languages and cultures instruction and acquisition in the ways many students are taught these languages and about their cultures. The lack of progress in the field is illuminated by the way many of the participants in this phase of the study viewed the teaching and learning of either English or French involving the development of vocabulary and grammatical correctness. Norton Pierce (1995), and Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011) suggest that the role that teachers play in deciding what to teach and how to teach it in their classrooms determines their students' investment in the languages and cultures they are learning. Further, Norton Pierce suggests that since such an investment in the language and cultures this language represents will aid students to "claim the right to speak outside the classroom" (p. 26), modern languages and cultures teachers need to incorporate the lived experiences and cultural identities of language and cultures learners into the formal modern languages and cultures curriculum.

Finally, this finding also supports Castro Prieto's, Sercu's and Méndez García's (2004), and Ryan's (1994) research findings that although the participants in their study perceived languages and cultures as closely related, they refrained from implementing this concept in their practices.

Students' First Languages and Cultures in the Classroom

Participants' comments in regards to their encouragement of their students' native languages and cultures in their practices ranged from an "English Only" or "French Only" policy to a fully encouraging students to use their native languages and cultures to support their

acquisition of French or English. For example, Barbara, Olivia and Cindy believed that implementing an "English Only" or "French Only" policy in their classrooms would only lead to an improvement in their students' communicative skills. Such an approach was founded on the traditional premise that for students to acquire communicative competence, communication in the classroom needs to happen in the language being learned (Nunan, 1991). Cannagarajah (2005) suggests that language teaching approaches such as this have led to a view of a field as founded on a "pragmatic attitude of equipping students with the linguistic and communicative skills that would make them socially functional" (p. 931). He argues, however, that this approach disregards students' first languages and cultures and the contributions these can potentially make to the learning of a new language and culture.

Allan, Gail, Barbara, Stuart and Marla, however, reported that inclusion of their students' first languages and/or cultures in their daily teaching had proven to be an effective way to connect with their students at a personal level and an incentive for them to become invested in the English or Annishnaabemowin languages and cultures. Further, Stuart and Marla considered that the types of relationships or connections they developed with their students would lead to their students' investment in the learning of the Annishnaabemowin language. They also believed that this investment would encourage their students to re-claim their Annishnaabemowin cultural background because all of their students were Aboriginal students.

Allan's, Gail's, Barbara's, Stuart's and Marla's beliefs support previous claims made by Coehlo (2004), Cummins et al. (2005), and Roessingh (2011) that encouragement of students' use of their native languages and cultures supports, rather than hinders, the acquisition of the additional language and culture. These scholars have also suggested that by encouraging students' first languages and cultures, teachers may support students' formation of an identity in

the modern language and culture, encourage them to take pride in their families and cultures and, acquire linguistic skills in this language. Similarly, they argue that by allowing students' native languages and cultures in the modern languages and cultures classroom, teachers would create the spaces to affirm their students' identities.

Conversely, Leslie's and Patricia's approach to their students' native languages and cultures varied depending on the French language and cultures programs they taught (i.e. Core French or French Immersion). Both explained that they would implement a "French Only" policy if they taught a French Immersion Program or would be more "flexible" and encourage students' to use their native languages if they taught Core French Programs. However, according to their comments, they only encouraged students to use their native languages and cultures to clarify questions or translate words as opposed to affirming their students' native languages and cultural backgrounds, supporting to develop critical literacy skills.

Teaching Strategies

The teaching strategies that participants reported implementing revealed that, for the most part, participants in this phase of the study followed a communicative language teaching approach or an audiolingual language teaching approach to modern languages instruction. For example, according to the description of their programs, Allan and Gail support English language learners (ELLs) in what is referred to as ESL Pull-out programs. In these programs, ELLs receive content instruction in regular classrooms and are usually "pulled out" of their classrooms during their language-related subjects such as English and Language Arts. Because of their teaching contexts, Allan and Gail reported not following specific lesson plans in their daily practices. However, their descriptions of a typical period or meeting with their ELLs suggest that they mainly followed a communicative language teaching approach. Further, their

approach to teaching their ELLs suggested that they encouraged their students to talk not only about their cultural backgrounds, but also about their new surroundings.

Allan, Gail, Barbara, Stuart and Marla also placed an emphasis on establishing trusting relationships with their students and developing lessons that focused in the cultures of their students. For example, Stuart's comments also suggested that he enriched his instruction by including cultural aspects of the Annishnaabemowin language such as prayers and the Medicine Wheel. Furthermore, although Barbara had previously stated that she did not necessarily consider the cultural aspects of the English language in her teaching, she indicated that she considered the cultural composition of her classroom and would tailor her lessons to this end. When referring to one the challenges she faced in her practice, Marla appeared frustrated by the itinerant nature of her program. Her concern was that she could never complete a whole program and, as a result, her students would always feel abandoned.

Marla and Stuart appeared to follow an audiolingual approach to language learning in their lessons. Marla observed that she encouraged students to talk about aspects of daily life such as days of the week, numbers and seasons before she taught the content of her lessons. During their lessons, Marla and Stuart would present new vocabulary and work on the pronunciation of these words. To scaffold their students' correct pronunciation of these words, they would use visuals and technology. In fact, Marla and Stuart used technology in their lessons because their students enjoyed it. Despite the insertion of technology in their teaching practices, their comments regarding how their teaching strategies were informed by traditional approaches to teaching languages support Graham's (2005) research findings in which the Native language teachers she interviewed were very much influenced by the same traditional approaches of teaching and

learning languages. Graham reports that these approaches hindered rather than promoted students' investment in learning Annishnaabemowin as a second language.

Challenges

Reagan and Osborn (2002), and French and Collins (2014|) suggest that in order to understand modern languages and cultures classrooms, it is necessary to consider the realities of teachers' practices. In the study, participants articulated a numbers of challenges they faced when implementing their modern languages and cultures programs. One challenge revolved around the importance given to the teaching of modern languages and cultures in their respective school boards. Another challenge was access to current resources and to professional development opportunities. For the majority of the participants, modern languages and cultures programs were not a priority in their school boards and, thus, they had limited access to resources and professional development opportunities.

Two of the ESL teachers and the two Annishnaabemowin language and cultures teachers had itinerant positions and this situation limited them in developing stronger programs for their students. For example, it had only been a year since Gail had been assigned an adequate space in which to teach her English language learners. Similarly, Allan did not have a specific room in which to meet with his students at the different schools where he worked. Many times he would have to give up his space because administration would assign larger classes to the space.

Similarly, Stuart and Marla spent only one semester at each school. This situation prevented them from establishing continuity in their programs and establishing meaningful relationships with their students. At the same time, they noted that the itinerant nature of the Annishnaabemowin language and cultures defeated the purpose of having this program which is

intended to "assist in the development and maintenance" (Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10: Native Languages, 2001, p. 3) of Native Languages.

Some of the participants' comments also pointed to the shortcomings of modern languages and cultures teacher education programs which continue to promote a view of languages as a quantifiable intellectual commodity that exists apart from the cultures that created them. Leslie and Stuart had left the Faculty of Education five years prior to the study and before their interview with me, they had never been encouraged to think critically about languages and cultures, their own cultural identities and the influences these beliefs had in their teaching practices. According to Leslie, most of her learning about how to teach French occurred during her field placements. Although she considered her instructor at the Faculty of Education knowledgeable, she thought that the time devoted to learning pedagogy for teaching and learning French was limited. Further, she commented that the only reference to culture teaching in the BEd was a portfolio in which there was a section dedicated to this topic. When asked if they wanted to add other comments at the end of their interviews, Barbara, Gail, Olivia and Allan expressed the need to include courses on intercultural communication in teacher education programs so that teachers were be better prepared to meet the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The finding described above reflects what Reagan and Osborn (2002) refer to as the institutional biases that determine which languages are offered at the schools and who takes such languages. Whereas the French language and cultures program can be taken by any students regardless of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds, the Annishnaabemowin language and cultures program is usually offered only to Aboriginal students in the schools. Indeed, analysis of the program guidelines for the Annishnaabemowin, ESL and French languages and cultures

programs indicates that their goals are different: the Annishnaabemowin languages and cultures program is in place to develop and maintain the languages and cultures; the ESL and FSL languages and cultures programs are in place to attain career mobility and, as a result, success in Canadian society.

The majority of the participants expressed frustration when it came to the lack of support they received from their boards and/or schools for resources and professional development opportunities. For example, the French teachers, the Annishnaabemowin language teachers, as well as the Language Arts teachers were all part of the Modern Languages Departments at their schools. One of the French teachers made a connection between the limited access to resources in French and Professional Development opportunities and the fact that head of this department was not a French teacher. According to her, because of this, he could not identify with the needs of the French teachers. Thus, the department head did not address French teachers' needs accordingly. The situation also mitigated against the exchange of ideas among the French teachers at the school, since departmental meetings were not related to the teaching of French specifically. Another French teacher, Cindy, paid for her own conferences in order to keep current. However, other participants could not afford to attend conferences and, as a result, did not have access to any professional development that would improve their teaching skills.

These concerns are consistent with those outlined by Reagan and Osborn (2002), and French and Collins (2014), who contend that modern languages and cultures teachers face a number of constraints that affect the effectiveness of their programs. Two of these constraints are the lack of support from institutions for the learning of modern languages and cultures and time constraints related to the length of the courses. In addition, the challenges described by the participants in this study further illuminate literature that criticizes modern languages and

cultures teachers' teaching approaches without taking into consideration the contexts in which these teachers work (Canagarajah, 2005; Reagan & Osborn, 2002). The challenges experienced by the participants indicate that professional development opportunities, access to resources and support from board and school administration are factors that indeed impact negatively the teaching of modern languages and cultures. Eisner (2002) suggests that although the shortcomings of teachers need to be identified, researchers and administration also need to ensure that possible solutions to the shortcomings are offered. Therefore, this finding illuminates and extends the existing research because it offers a possible explanation to the lack of congruence between many of the participants' personal conceptions of languages and cultures and the influence of these personal conceptions in their own practices.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of Phase I of the study followed by a discussion of the six themes that emerged from the data analysis from the first phase of the study: personal conceptions of languages and cultures, perceptions of own cultural identities, languages and cultures in the classroom, students' first languages and cultures, teaching strategies and challenges. I then interpreted these themes in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter II.

In Chapter V, I present two case studies based on Phase II of the study in which I entered the teaching worlds of Leslie and Stuart who graciously allowed me to observe them in their respective languages and cultures classrooms.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS: PHASE TWO

Overview

Chapter V presents two case studies based on Phase II of the study. In this phase, I entered the teaching worlds of Leslie and Stuart, who allowed me to observe them in their respective languages and cultures classrooms. Phase II data sources include non-participants observations and document analysis. Documents collected during this study include materials Leslie and Stuart used in their classrooms to scaffold their students' understanding of the languages and cultures they were learning. These documents informed me of the teachers' pedagogical practices, the content of the lessons, their goals for those lessons and the strategies used to assess students' learning.

Once Phase II was completed, I met with Leslie and Stuart individually and interviewed them. The purpose of these follow up interviews was to reflect on the classes I observed them instruct, and clarify any questions I may have had regarding the languages and cultures teaching strategies I observed them implement. The interviews also provided Leslie and Stuart with the opportunity to voice any concerns and/or recommendations they may have had.

I begin each case study by re-introducing Leslie's and Stuart's profiles with the purpose of providing context for the reader. The profiles are followed by a brief description of the Leslie's and Stuart's modern languages and cultures programs and classrooms, and the main content of the lessons they allowed me to observe. Next, I describe the themes and subthemes that emerged from the data collected in this phase of the study in two separate case studies: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms; patterns of modern languages and cultures implemented in the classroom; and challenges. The last theme only emerged from the

analysis of Stuart's data. I present Leslie in the first case study, and Stuart is featured in the second case study.

Case Study #1: Leslie

Setting the Context

Leslie's profile

Leslie had six years of experience at the time the study took place. She obtained an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in French, with a minor in English as well as a Bachelor in Education in the Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. Leslie is a descendent of Italian parents who immigrated to Canada at the ages of 26 (her father) and 17 (her mother). During the interview in the Phase I of the study, Leslie described herself as being a Canadian woman who had always seen herself as an Italian because her parents always instilled in her a deep appreciation of her Italian heritage. In her opinion, this heritage was not only represented by the Italian language, but also by different traditions and foods of this culture. Her strong identification with Italian culture intensified after her marriage to an Italian man.

Leslie's Core French, Grade 12, University Preparation Classroom

Leslie taught a Core French Grade 12 University level classroom. According to the description of this program appearing in both the outline she provided to her students at the beginning of the academic year and the Ontario Curriculum, Core French, Grade 12, University Preparation (1999),

> The course draws on a variety of themes to promote extensive development of reading and writing skills and to reinforce oral communication skills. Students will gain a greater understanding of French-speaking cultures in Canada and around the world through their readings of a variety of materials, including a short novel or a play. Students will produce various written assignments, including a formal essay. The use of correct grammar and appropriate language conventions in both spoken and written French will be emphasized throughout the course. (p. 17)

The Ontario Curriculum, Core French, Grade 12, University Preparation (1999) is divided into three strands: Oral Communication (which includes Listening and Speaking), Reading and Writing. The document contains overall and specific expectations for each strand. Expectations under both of these headings are clearly outlined; mastery of French grammar is the one expectation that is present in all three strands. The specific expectations in all three strands also outline a number of expectations geared to the development of critical literacy skills in French such as:

- Demonstrate an understanding of oral presentations by classmates and other speakers (e.g., by relating content to other contexts, discussing alternative viewpoints, predicting future trends). (Oral communication, listening specific expectation, p. 18),

- Demonstrate an understanding of articles, short stories, poems, song lyrics, novels and plays (a minimum of 300 pages in total) studied in class (e.g., summarizing content, interpreting meaning, analyzing information or opinions presented). (Reading specific expectation, p. 19), and

- Write a review of a text, movie, or play as an independent study, including a summary of the plot and their personal reactions and recommendations. (Writing specific expectation, p. 20)

Leslie had 14 students: 13 females and 1 male. The class met five times per week during Period 1 (8:40 a.m. – 10:02 a.m.). To address the expectations mentioned above and others not listed here, Leslie divided the program into five units:

> Unité 1: Rites de passages: Souvenirs d'enfance *(Rites of passage: Souvenirs from childhood)*
> Unité 2: Le cinéma français *(French cinema)*
> Unité 3: Rêves et Réalité *(Dreams and Reality)*
> Unité 4: Le Fantôme de L'Opéra *(The Phantom of the Opera)*.

Unité 5: Je t'aime, je ne t'aime plus *(I love you, I don't love you anymore)* (C.O. p. 1)

The observation phase took place over the period of three weeks. Leslie's classroom had posters in the French language and also had a bulletin board on which different events and news were posted also in the French language. The chalkboard had a section dedicated to the grammatical structure she was teaching at the moment.

Leslie's lessons followed a general routine. This routine consisted of a warm-up activity she called "Le français quotidien", which will be described later on in the findings section of this chapter. This activity was followed by a review of the content of the previous lesson and a reminder of future assignments, followed by prayers, which were said in French. The following is a sample of the lesson plans Leslie followed:

LESSON PLAN
Date: lundi, le *18 avril (year removed)*
Period: *(Course number removed)* (8:40-10:02)
Room: *(classroom number removed)*   Absent/Late

1. *La présence et le français quotidien*   *(Roll call and Daily French)*
2. *Devoirs : Le faire causatif (grammaire)*   *(Homework: The causative use of HAVE)*
                                                                          (Grammar)
    √ *Je comprends questions (p. 104 - #1-10)* *(Questions from 'I understand')*
    √ *La narration : Le schéma narratif*   *(Narration : The Narration Scheme)*
3. *La Parure : Deuxième Partie p. 103-111*   *(The Necklace: Part 10)*
    √ *tâche de lecture*   *(Reading task)*
    √ *lire et compléter les questions*   *(Read and complete questions)*
¤ *Reading assignment - to be handed in at the end of class*
¤ *Remind them about their fiche biographique*

Figure 1: Sample lesson plan

Leslie taught units 3 and 4 during the observation phase of the study. In these units, Leslie's students read and analyzed the short story "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant and an adapted version for intermediate students of Gaston Leroux's "The Phantom of the Opera" (Milani & Collet, 1991). In "The Necklace", Guy de Maupassant describes the lives of a lower

middle class couple: Monsieur and Madame Loisel. Monsieur Loisel worked as a clerk for the Ministry of Education in 1880s Paris and Mathilde Loisel was a housewife. Mathilde was a beautiful woman who desired an affluent lifestyle. As a result, she felt unhappy with her life. As she prepared to attend an elegant party at the Ministry of Education, she borrowed a diamond necklace from her friend Madame Forestier, then lost the necklace and had to work for ten years to pay off a replacement. Her one night of affluence cost her and Monsieur Loisel any chance for future happiness only to find out, 10 years later, that the necklace she had borrowed from her friend was worthless.

"The Phantom of the Opera" tells the story of a disfigured musical genius, hidden away in the Paris Opera House, who terrorizes the opera company for the benefit of a young protégée whom he trains and loves. He drives the lead soprano crazy so that she leaves and Christine, his protégée, is able to sing lead one night. However, the soprano does not want her show stolen and comes back. The Phantom demands they keep giving Christine lead roles. Meanwhile, Christine falls in love with the Raoul, Viscount of Chagny, a childhood friend, but The Phantom is also in love with Christine. He is outraged by their love and kidnaps Christine to be his eternal bride. The Phantom eventually frees Christine and dies.

The following section describes the findings that emerged from the data analysis.

Themes

Two themes emerged from the analysis of the data on Leslie: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms, and patterns of modern language and culture implemented in the classroom. Each theme is described below.

The Roles of the Teacher in the Modern Languages and Cultures Classroom

Leslie adopted a teacher-centred approach to teaching. This approach was embodied in the role of an expert in the French language that she adopted during the lessons I observed. This role became evident in the selection of "The Necklace" as the short story the students would read in her course. When I asked her why the students were reading this specific story, it appeared that one of the reasons why she selected this short story had been informed by her personal experiences as a French language learner and the different authors she had been exposed to during her years in elementary and secondary school, and university.

> […] in looking at some of the literature, "La Parure" *(title of the story in French),* I recall reading it in high school and I know that I studied it in university and I thought it to be a great short story. First and foremost, for its form or structure. I think it's a very traditional short story that has all those types of short story elements that I wanted to expose them to like "la situation initiale", the inside force, climax, all of that. I also wanted to expose them to Guy de Maupassant. It is a Grade 12 class, so there are going to be students either majoring, minoring or taking French as an elective. I want to know that when they hear "Maupassant", it's not going to be something foreign to them, you know? They're going to go: "Oh, yeah! He was that great short story writer". And the last thing is the theme. I thought they would be really interested in it and would be able to apply it to today. How do appearances affect us today? Are we always wanting more? Do materialistic things make us truly happy? Etcetera, etcetera. So, I chose it for many reasons. (I.P. 2)

Leslie firmly believed that students who took French had to be exposed to what she considered classic authors who represented French literature:

> It's a classic and I think in high school, especially in Grades 11 and 12, they should be exposed to some classic literature […] When I say "the classics," we're talking Molière, Gaston LeRoux, Guy de Maupassant, we just finished doing Pierre de Ronsard, a poet. That's something you would want to address more. (I.P. 2)

Leslie's role as an expert became apparent in the strategies she implemented while reading the stories. During the read alouds, she would read portions of the story aloud and would stop to give students her personal interpretations of the events being described or to translate into

English the words or passages that she considered her student did not understand. She adopted

the same approach when implementing group readings. During these, Leslie and her students sat

in a circle and she gave them the opportunity to read aloud portions of the story. Once each

individual student finished reading their segment of the story, she would provide her

interpretation of the events or would fill in what she considered gaps in the text. (O.L., p. 16)

Similarly, at the beginning of every lesson, Leslie implemented the "français quotidien"

activity. This activity had a cultural focus that not always related to the content of the lesson.

When describing this portion of her lessons, Leslie noted:

> The "Daily French" activity is, for the most part, not connected to what I'm teaching. So, I might be doing "Le Phantom de l'Opera", but the "Daily French" is just an activity, 10 minutes, of anything that deals with the language just to get them thinking in that language and present them with something different. I guess that here I'm not an Elementary teacher, but I've supplied at the Elementary level and they have what they call "Bell Work", which means that when the kids come in, for the first five minutes they know that there is something that they have to do. Whether it is making a few trivia questions, maybe some Math questions, etc. I think it's just a nice start to the class before we jump into, say, Chapter 3 of "Le Phantom" and they really enjoy it. Sometimes the "Daily French" is directly linked to what I'm teaching. For example, this past week we finished up poetry, some of the "Daily French" was an autobiographical poem and it wasn't for marks, it was just getting them to look at the structure of a poem, writing about themselves, we presented it and they loved it and we moved on to the lesson. So, I guess that it enhances my lesson, but it may not be directly connected. (I.P. 2)

During one of these activities, Leslie dealt with vocabulary related to booking a room in French,

taking a taxi in France, the difference in education between France and Canada, and breaking

down stereotypes associated with the French people. In one of these activities, she addressed

briefly the difference and importance of using the formal "YOU" in French and the importance

of producing a guttural "r" as a mark of authentic Français. She explained to her students that, in

her experience, this correct pronunciation of the "r" was a way the French used to tell whether a

person was a French speaker or not. She added that "although there is nothing wrong in not

pronouncing in this way, it is good to do so" (O.L., pp. 11-12). Later on, during the follow-up

interview, I asked her about her decision to make this distinction in the pronunciation of the "r".

She supported her decision by using one personal anecdote:

> I don't tell them to speak this French or that French. I just don't want them to sound Anglicized. You can listen to a typical Grade 9 presentation and they would be: "Bon Jour (pronounces it with an English "r")". For me, it is not more so about a dialect, but that the students don't sound like an English speaker because you want good French. Like in my personal experience, I studied French and I have taught it for five years, yet when I went to France last year, I had a 10 minute conversation with the cab driver and asked how I had done and he said: "Very good, but you should work more in your intonation". And, let's face it, intonation is the challenging part of the language because it's not my first language and my intonation was perhaps Anglicized, maybe not the sounds, but just the flow of it and I said to my husband: "I guess I gotta work on it" because I want to work on it. I still think students should be exposed to different dialects. I expose them to "Le Joule", "le français québécois"; we watched a fantastic video with analysis called "Celine en Mali". Celine was from Quebec who is doing an exchange in Mali and it was about African French and they heard the difference. I want to expose them to it and that is something I want to do more of, just so that they can hear it. One thing I will say is that first year university, when I was in my grammar class, I had a few of my friends, we were Core students and I heard other students say things and they were from Hurst, Kapuskasing, I really didn't understand them. It was whole new world to me. I hadn't been exposed to it. I often tell my students that they don't know where their professor are going to be from and that they will have to get used to that dialect because all their professors will not speak "le français standard". (I.P. 2)

Leslie was committed to teach her students "good French", which, according to what had been

taught in university, was "le français parisien":

> I do want to make sure that their pronunciation is good. I'm not going to tell you who said this, but when I finished at the university, at the department of languages, one of my professors said: "Go out there and teach good French" […] We do "le français standard", "le français parisien", that's what our focus is and that's what I've been taught. So, sure, I want them to develop their "r" because that to me that is the standard. Do I shun upon other types of French in the classroom? Absolutely not! And I think it is good to expose them, but in general, when they travel, that's going to be the French that they will want to be using. Do I want them to say "phrases" (pronounces it with an English 'r') or "phrases" (pronounces it with a French 'r'). I want them to say the second one. Now, with the "r", a lot of the romance languages like French, Spanish, Italian, they are

about the "r". You can tell if the "r" is developed or not. I do push it. I push that. (I.P. 2)

Similarly, Leslie considered that her approach to teaching was also informed by her limited years of experience as a teacher of French as a modern language and culture. According to her, teaching experience was synonymous of a teaching approach where the students took on a leading role in the classroom:

> I'm going to say that I've only been a teacher for six years and I'm still fresh in the profession. I think that as I move on and gain some experience, I'm going to feel more comfortable in giving them that freedom. I'm going to say that right now I direct a lot of the learning. I'm not going to deny that. I do give them responsibility when I give them independent projects and etcetera, but when it comes to the actual learning of the novel study, I do so, I direct a lot of it, but maybe with experience and when I gain more… I don't want to say confidence, but it does take time to let go of the teacher to put more on your students because when you're new at it you do want to be in control, you want to make sure that kids are getting things, etcetera. So I think it's going to take me time to let go, you know. (I.P. 2)

Leslie's role in her French as a modern language and classroom was also reflected in the way she implemented the two units. The following theme describes the implementation of units three and four and how she incorporated language and culture into these two units.

Patterns of Modern Language and Culture Implemented in the Classroom

Leslie followed a clear pattern in her lessons. She noted that she was a "firm believer in structure and organization and the kids appreciate that. Now they're taking French and I am going to talk about the secondary level, that's how it's been presented to them" (I.P. 2). As result, she was always prepared for her lessons. The patterns of her use of the French language and culture are described in two subthemes: scaffolding reading comprehension, and grammar, grammar, grammar.

Scaffolding Reading Comprehension

Leslie's approach to teaching literature mainly consisted in having students read texts efferently (Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978). That is, students were to read for information and to pay close attention to the grammatical structures used in these stories. This approach was illustrated by her selection of "True or False" activities and comprehension questions that encouraged students to extract the correct answers to these questions from the story or novel they were reading. As noted before, while reading the short story and the novel, she had a tendency to fill in the gaps in both stories for the students. As I noted in my observation log,

> Leslie has a tendency to lecture all the time as opposed to giving the students any opportunity to make connections on their own. (O.L., p. 6)

> When the students finish dramatizing a chapter, they are asked to do two reading comprehension activities from the textbook. For example, one activity is "True or False" and the other one asks the students to find expressions in the chapter that make reference to death […] The only speaking students do is when they read the novel. Leslie explains the author's messages. She even provides the connections (text-to-text, text-to-self or text-to-world). (O.L., p. 24)

Despite her tendency to lecture at all times, Leslie also relied on group collaboration and individual work as part of the comprehension strategies she implemented to scaffold students' comprehension of the short story and the novel. For example, she implemented small group collaboration in order to have her students clarify ideas, answers to comprehension questions and check homework. This work allowed students at different levels of language acquisition to assist each other. However, because Leslie perceived her role as being in control of the classroom, most often students waited for her to provide a guide to what she expected them to say or do in a given activity.

Leslie also promoted group collaboration to have students prepare for assignments that aimed at developing oral communication skills. She also gave her students the opportunity to

work individually if they wanted to. The implementation of this strategy proved to be effective in getting students engaged with the readings they did. To illustrate, students had two main assignments for Unit 3. The first assignment took place before students started to read the story. For this assignment students had to conduct research on one of the famous people from the Francophone world listed on the back of the assignment sheet. The list of famous people included artists, writers, musicians, scientists, politicians and actors from France, Canada, Austria and Holland. Students had to research basic biographic information on their selected famous person (i.e. date of birth, place of birth, date of death, place of death, family background, their ambitions and dreams), their contributions to the Francophone world, a key moment in this person's life, and a few facts about the person which the students considered interesting. Once the students had completed the research, they had to prepare a five-to-eight minute individual oral presentation in which they presented the information. The students were also expected to prepare a power point presentation that included pictures of their selected famous person, a sample of this person's work. They were encouraged to dress in role. Further, students were expected to be prepared for questions from the teacher after they had finished their presentations.

As a final assignment for this unit, students had to prepare individually an original ending for the story in the form of a dialogue between Mathilde and Madame Forestier after the story ended, or between Mathilde and her husband after Mathilde speaks with Madame Forestier and discovers that the necklace was not a genuine diamond necklace. For this assignment, students were expected to write a dialogue of one to one and a half pages. The dialogue had to include two examples of possessive pronouns, an example of the causative "Have" and two examples of the use of the present participle of verbs that follow the preposition "After" (i.e. after + present participle of the verb. For example, *After winning some money, I travelled to Europe*). The

students had to underline each of the above items in their typed final product. They were also given a rubric divided into three categories or descriptors. Two of these descriptors were devoted to grammar (one for general language conventions and another one for the specific grammar structures mentioned above) and one to creative thinking skills.

Leslie used a number of complementary texts and strategies to scaffold her students' comprehension of "The Necklace" and the "Phantom of the Opera". For example, for "The Necklace" the text set included:

- copy of the story;
- a grammar sheet;
- a before-reading activity sheet;
- a vocabulary sheet; and
- a movie version of the story. (O.L., p. 6)

The text set for "The Phantom of the Opera" included:

- the novel;
- a pamphlet for chapter summaries;
- video summary of the Hollywood movie based on the novel; and
- a clip on a silent movie version based on the novel. (O.L. p. 26)

As noted in the list above, before reading "The Necklace," Leslie gave the students an activity sheet that consisted of questions that encouraged students to think critically about the main themes of the story they were to read. For example, the first question encouraged the students to make predictions on Mathilde, the main character, by looking at a representation of her in one picture appearing in the story and by drawing on their background knowledge of 19th century France and the role of women in society during that time period. The second question asked the students to think of a time in which they borrowed something from a friend and explain what they would have done in case the artifact broke. The last question asked students to interpret a proverb related to recognizing the true value of material things. During this activity, Leslie walked around the classroom clarifying questions students might have had.

Once the discussion of students' responses was over, Leslie asked her students to sit in a large circle and asked them to start reading the story aloud while she provided meanings of words and her interpretations of the messages of the story. When the students finished reading the first part of the story, Leslie asked them to go back to their seats and complete a vocabulary activity in the form of a cloze or fill-in-the-blanks exercise. This activity was based on the content of the first part of the story students had just read. She used the same approach for the second part of the story. However, this second time, Leslie asked students to describe all of the characters of the story in the form of a literature map. Students had the choice of doing this activity in groups of three, in pairs or individually. Once they finished their literature maps, they read them aloud. Leslie also played a movie version of the story. However, she did not do any work with the movie. She played it on the last day of the unit and after the students had already submitted their final assignments for the unit.

Other strategies that Leslie implemented to scaffold her students' comprehension of the short story included offering incidental cultural insights as they related to the use of certain words that appeared in the text and that were no longer used in the Français language anymore, similarities between words in French and Italian, and comments regarding arranged marriages in France in the 1800s. Further, because of the relevance of the overarching themes in this story, I asked Leslie how she thought the stories related to her students' cultural backgrounds and life experiences. Leslie responded:

> "La Parure", I think it doesn't matter where you're from and you were raised, you can just relate because the whole aspect of materialism. That's why I think that maybe some of the kids related to Mathilde thinking of how many times they have put precedence on how they look, what they have, and then some other kids that maybe aren't like that would think of her as a horrible person. I thought that a lot of the girls, because we had one boy, really didn't like how demanding she was and her husband, yet, was o.k. with it. In "La Parure" there was that whole theme of judging, reality versus appearance. Should we really judge someone? Maybe

they are dressed impeccably, but does that mean they're a great person? So, I think that all the students can relate to the themes no matter where they're from or how they were raised, but they might relate to it differently based on their experiences. (I.P. 2)

Leslie followed similar approaches to scaffold her students' comprehension of "The Phantom of the Opera." The students read an adapted version of the novel. This version was edited for pedagogical purposes. At the end of every chapter, the editors had created three sections that went from an efferent stance to an aesthetic one: comprehension, communication and project. The first section contained three activities that generally focused on questions based on the information students had just read and vocabulary. The second section encouraged readers to make comments on the reading and to make connections to other readings they had done in the past. For example, one of the activities, "À vous la parole!" (Have your say!), encouraged students to make predictions on the reading, and, "Activité de groupe" (Group activity) asked students to think of a literary or film character that was famous and sinister, describe it to their partners and then have this partner guess who this person was. Since students had been introduced to Paris' Opera House in the first chapter, the third section asked students to research an historical monument from Paris and one historical monument from their country, and describe these monuments. Leslie always chose those activities in the first section.

In order to build on her students' background knowledge of serialized novels at the beginning of the unit, Leslie asked her students to look for the summaries of six detective novels by six different authors from the 1840s to 1920 at the beginning of the unit. Another purpose of this activity was to familiarize her students with the genre they were going to read in the unit. After this activity, Leslie had her students research different characters who were "ghosts" in different stories.

As the students read the novel, Leslie asked them to fill out a literature map in which her students had to record information on the three main characters of "The Phantom of the Opera": Christine Daaé, Raoul de Chagny and Erik, the phantom. After reading the first eight chapters of the novel, Leslie had her students complete a quiz that focused on students' comprehension of the novel up to that point. For example, the first question was "True or False"; the second question asked students to identify which character of the novel made different statements she had listed; and the third question focused on vocabulary in the chapters. The students had to complete sentences related to the novel with the words appearing in a list.

Towards the end of the unit, Leslie encouraged students to give personal responses to the main themes of the novel through a number of questions that required students to draw information from the novel and to provide personal opinions of their characters. For example these questions were:

1. Erik is a social outcast. What is a social outcast?
2. Are you sorry for Erik? Why or why not?
3. Why do we tend to judge people who are different from us? What do you think about people who judge others according to their physical appearance?
4. What themes are found in the novel "The Phantom of the Opera"? Make a list. (Document, Le Fantôme de L'Opera: Themes)

Another oral activity required students to discuss whether they liked classical music or not? If they had ever been to or seen an opera? What their thoughts were regarding people who wore a mask to hide their true selves? How often physical appearance influenced their first impressions of people? and whether physical appearance was important for them and why?

As noted above, Leslie had a final assignment for this unit that was divided into two parts. The first part asked the students to select one of the characters of the novel, prepare a monologue for their chosen character and present it orally to the whole class. She encouraged students to dress up like these characters. This activity proved to be successful in that it allowed students to

provide their personal interpretations of their characters, even if two students had chosen the

same character. The second part of the assignment focused on students' writing and consisted of

writing an essay in which students had to defend the position of one of the characters in the

novel.

When discussing her approach to comprehension of literary works in her French as a

modern language and culture program, Leslie considered that she had implemented a

combination of approaches that encouraged her students to adopt both efferent and aesthetic

stances. However, she also explained that because those students who were taking the Core

French program had had very limited exposure to French in comparison to those who had been in

a French immersion setting, she could not give the students more ownership of their learning:

> I did a mix-and-match of both. I always wanted to know if they were sure of what
> was going on because, a lot of times, they didn't understand what was going on,
> especially if I left them on their own. I wanted to ensure that they would go back
> and understand this is exactly what happened. You noticed that when I did not
> have them do that, I had them do a summary and then I tried to choose the activity
> called *A vous la parole* (in your own words […] I try to do a mix-and-match, but
> the comprehension is important at the Core level. I think that before you can get to
> that analysis, you're going to have to make sure they know what's going on, like
> plot and character. At the Core level, they don't, they need that little bit of
> guidance. Maybe in an Immersion class, you might just eliminate the
> comprehension activities and go straight to the high level ones, but I still wanted
> them to know what happened and so on. (I.P. 2)

During the follow-up interview, I asked Leslie how she felt about integrating social

justice topics such as discrimination based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, physical

ability all of which were present in the two stories she taught. Again, Leslie linked the

implementation of these topics to teaching experience and the "safety" this experience granted:

> Teachers like to be safe depending on your years of experience. You've brought
> on to me a whole new way of looking at that story. You've presented this to me in
> a way that I think it would be interesting. So, would I focus on it as a major
> assignment? Probably not. […] Maybe that wouldn't be my focus, but would I
> present them with that for a discussion or for us to look at it that, I think that's

interesting […] I guess I would want to prepare myself. I would like to make sure that I am presenting them with good, solid questions before I throw them something because you don't want to offend someone in the classroom or someone from outside the classroom. So, I would like to be prepared and be writing and providing them with solid questions, but maybe for me as a teacher, I may need to push myself, not be afraid to maybe tackle these topics, you know? Sometimes, like you were saying, in the second language classroom we won't push it that far because you are more so focusing on the comprehension, you know, that kind of thing, so what you are presenting is something that I'd like to try? Yeah, and maybe I will push myself to delve into these topics that I'm sure would pick their interest. (I.P. 2)

The data analysis also revealed that, in the same way, Leslie was concerned about following one of her university professors' advice on teaching "good French." As a result, she spent a considerable amount of time teaching Français grammar to her students. The following subtheme describes this finding.

Grammar, Grammar, Grammar

Leslie's lessons always revolved around the grammatical structures that the Ministry of Education Curriculum document required her to teach. As a result, she spent a great portion of the lessons explaining a grammatical structure and doing activities that, for the most part, developed habits in using these structures. For example, in one of the lessons I observed, she spent 15 minutes explaining one grammatical structure. After she finished this explanation, students proceeded to do a cloze exercise that focused on this grammatical structure (O.L. p. 15). Further, Leslie appeared to be more invested in developing her students' grammatical knowledge than in their ability to use it. However, she considered that she focused on both form and the communicative function of these structures. During the follow-up interview, she noted:

We always focus on *la formation,* how is it formed? *et l'usage,* how is it used? And I give them examples. How can it be used in writing? How can it benefit you? Since we're talking about the subjunctive, *le conjonction.* That was something so new to them and now it is something they can use. Like a word like *although* in an essay or a paragraph, common conjunction that we want to use to connect ideas, but did they previously know that the verb had to be in the

subjunctive tense when you use [word in French]? No. So, I want them to be able to know how to form it and what's the point of it: *l'usage*. And then, yeah, when they're reading, it's all going to come about too, you know. You hope that it all connects. (I.P. 2)

When I suggested to her the possibility of following a more communicative approach to the teaching of grammar, Leslie referred to the Common European Framework of Reference (2001) that would eventually be implemented by the Ontario Ministry of Education and how this new document emphasized presenting grammar in this way:

> When you look at this program, the first page won't start with *Le Subjonctif*. We look at the story first. If you read the teacher's manual, they want you to read the story first. Then, later on, let's say after 3 lessons, then it wants you to present *la concordance des tense*, so using the past tense with the *passé composé*. How do you use description or an action that's completed in the past. So, one could take it in this way. (I.P. 2)

However, Leslie did not appear convinced by this approach to teaching grammar, as she believed that students needed to be presented with the grammatical structure first, do some drilling activities with these structures, and then present them in an authentic reading:

> Students still need that scope and sequence. And you can talk to a lot of French teachers and we've taught scope and sequence as you present with it, they need to practice it, and yes, then they'll identify it later in literature. But if I just give the story and then showed them these examples, I just feel that I wouldn't be doing enough. I wouldn't be doing enough to say: *Do you really get it*? Because I know myself as a learner. Sure I would've said *O.K., here he was talking about the description, he always did, then all of the sudden the boy fell* so it would be the completed action. I do that with the kids, but they still need that structure. Maybe, again, that's just me being new in the profession. But with a lot of teachers, actually, when we went to that review section, we were talking about this whole idea of "scope and sequence." They want to move it away and let's kind of assume that by asking questions the students seem that they're going to get it. But let's face it, you have to memorize the expressions that use "Subjunctive." There is still that traditional type of learning. I mean, educators might criticize me for saying that, but if you don't know the expressions, if you don't have the verb *être*, you don't know any Subjunctive. It's not going to just come to you by reading. You have to memorize it. I'm sorry to say that. (I.P. 2)

As Leslie suggested in the quote, her emphasis on grammatical knowledge was also influenced

by her personal experiences as a language learner. This influence became clear when she

explained that although she was open to new approaches to teaching French, she considered that

the way she had learned French had also been effective:

> I am all for looking for new ways, new strategies, but sometimes we always say
> that we seem to think that back in the day things were too... we need to get away
> from that, but I often think that I came out O.K. I felt that after Grade 12 my oral
> skills weren't that strong, but I knew my stuff. Who's to say that sometimes
> writing something out is a bad thing, but it seems that now we're always trying to
> re-invent the wheel and say: "Oh, no." In my time we used to write vocab words
> ten times each. Now if we ask a student to do that they'd say: "Ten times!" My
> Grade 9s complained once. I'll end at that. (I.P. 2)

Similarly, her personal experiences as a university student in the Honours Bachelor of Arts

degree in French coupled with the expectations of The Ontario Ministry of Education

Curriculum guidelines seemed to have strengthened her position. For example, she wanted to

make sure that if their students enrolled in the French major program at the university or took

elective courses in French, they would have the level of grammatical knowledge that was

expected of them in the program or the courses:

> I want to make sure that the ones that are majoring in French, even minoring in it,
> a first year French course, with my experience and what others have told me is
> grammatically-based. So, I want to feel confident that my Grade 12 students,
> when they hear "Le Subjonctif après le sujet de conjonction" they're not going to
> sit there and say: "What?" I feel confident that they have these skills. (I.P. 2)

Conversely, at the end of one lesson, I asked her about the emphasis she placed on grammar and

she explained how overwhelmed she was by the number of grammatical structures the

curriculum expected her to teach in that specific grade (O.L. p. 26). However, during the follow-

up interview, Leslie explained the importance of following the same curriculum document:

> It's all going to be how you've been trained throughout your years of teaching.
> When I started teaching French six years ago, that's how the programs were
> presented to you. I mean, if you look at the document it says: By the end of Grade

12, students must… And when you see this list of 15 concepts you feel like it's your duty to cover them. Why? Because in Grade 11 they got all their Grade 11 concepts, in Grade 10 they got all their Grade 10 concepts and I teach Grade 9 and 12. I know that I fulfilled that. So, it's almost like you feel this duty that you're doing them a de-service if they're not taught these concepts. So, we do put a lot of importance on it 'cause right now the curriculum is just like that and, plus, we know that the final exam in my course is more of a technical type of an exam. We kind of steer away from all the literature and all that we've done in class, that I have them for their oral exam. I will ask them questions about all the various themes and they can orally comment on it. The written exam is technical, you know?: "Can you show me that you understand these structures?" "Can you show me that you can comprehend a text that you've never seen and comment on it?" and "Can you write an organized paragraph"? So, we always know what the end is and as teachers we look at what's that end product that we want the students to give us, and in a second language class currently, grammar is important. (I.P. p, 7)

Leslie adopted a teacher-centred approach to teaching. Such an approach appears to have been informed by her perceived lack of experience and by being a language and culture learner herself. Leslie's role as an expert became apparent in the strategies she implemented while reading the stories. During the reading of these stories students were to read for information and to pay close attention to the grammatical structures used in these stories. Indeed, Leslie's lessons always revolved around the grammatical structures that the Ministry of Education Curriculum document required her to teach. As a result, she spent a great portion of the lessons explaining a grammatical structure and doing activities that, for the most part, developed habits in using these structures as opposed to abilities in using them.

Case Study #2: Stuart

Setting the Context

Stuart's Profile

Stuart had been teaching for five years at the time the interview was conducted. He obtained his Bachelor of Education in the Junior (Grades 4 to 6) and Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8) Divisions in 2006. After his graduation, he obtained basic qualifications in the Intermediate

(Grades 7 and 8) and Senior (Grades 9 to 12) divisions. He worked as a supply teacher for one year in Southern Ontario in a school where 80% of the student population was Anishinaabe. While working at this school, a long term appointment position as a Native Languages teacher became available and, since he is Anishinaabe, spoke some Annishnaabemowin language and was very familiar with the cultural aspects of the language, he was hired. After accepting this appointment and becoming known for the positive work he had been doing at the school, Stuart was contacted about a position as a Native language and culture teacher at one of the corrections facilities in an urban area. After a series of interviews, he was offered the job and moved back to Northern Ontario. Eventually, Stuart was moved from the corrections centre to the high school system.

Stuart's work at the high schools, as with the other Annishnaabemowin and ESL teachers in the school boards, is itinerant. That is, he teaches at one of the high schools in his board for one semester and at another high school for another semester.

Stuart's Native Language, level 1, Open Classroom

Stuart taught a Native Language, Level 1, Open classroom for students in Grades 9 and 10 in a secondary school in an urban centre. According to the description of the course appearing in the Ontario Curriculum, Native Languages, Grades 9-10, Open (1999),

> This course is open to the entire student body and will allow students who have no prior Native language experience to develop an appreciation for a Native language and culture, to explore and experience a unique world view, and to learn to speak a Native language. Students will use the language being studied for greetings and daily routines, become familiar with its writing and sound system, and practise basic vocabulary and phrases. Students will also use information technology during course-related activities. (p. 9)

This document is divided into four strands: Oral Communication, Reading, Writing, and Grammar, Language Conventions, and Vocabulary. The document contains overall and specific

expectations for each strand. Expectations under these headings are clearly outlined; the mastery of grammar and language conventions are presented in all three strands. The specific expectations in all three strands also outline a number of expectations geared to the development of critical literacy skills in Native languages such as

- Demonstrate an understanding of Native legends and stories enacted or told with visual support. (Oral communication, reasoning and critical thinking specific expectation, p. 10),

- Use all available cues (e.g., context, language patterns, form, graphic symbols) to determine the meaning of new vocabulary; (Reading, use of words and language structures specific expectation, p. 11),

- Communicate ideas (e.g. thoughts, feelings, experiences) clearly for specific purposes. (Writing, Use of words and language structures, specific expectation, p. 12), and

- Verbs, nouns, pronouns and particles." (Language conventions specific expectation, p. 13-14)

Stuart's classroom consisted of 22 First Nations students. The class met five times per week from 12:10 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. I observed six lessons over a period of four weeks.

Stuart's lessons followed a general routine. Firstly, he asked students about their previous day. This activity was followed by a reminder of future assignments and a presentation of the content of that specific lesson. The following section describes the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Themes

Three themes emerged from the analysis of the data on Stuart: The role of the modern languages and cultures teacher, patterns of modern language and culture use, and challenges. Each theme is described below.

The Role of the Teacher in the Modern Languages and Cultures Classroom

Stuart was a teacher who enjoyed having a good relationship with his students. He tried to connect with his students by asking them what they had done the day or the morning before his lesson (O.L., p. 12). These conversations with his students contributed to the relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. As I noted in my observation log: "The classroom environment is relaxed. The teacher seems to have developed a good rapport with his students" (O.L., p. 1). Stuart confirmed this observation during our follow-up interview:

> I think I have a really good relation with most youth. I get along with most of them. I respect them all and get to know them by their first names. I care about them, I really do. I think I have a really good idea to reach and engage the students, what would interest them, how to get the curriculum across in a way that the students understand and enjoy. I think I was no different than anybody else as a kid: How would I like this? How would I enjoy this as a student? So, I think that's one my strengths as a teacher, for sure. (I.P. 2, p. 3)

Stuart's flexibility toward his students also seemed to be mediated by the fact that all his students were members of the First Nations community and his knowledge of what worked or did not work with them. This became apparent when he made a distinction between his approach to teaching the Native Language class and a Geography class:

> I'm not as strict as a lot of teachers, for sure. I'm not easy either, but I'm not as strict. I love the kids to have a lot of freedom to do things, but I think we're enabling them to stay in class and allow them to work still. If I had to teach, say, Geography, what would be my approach to that? It would be different; I think it would be different. I think that if I were teaching Geography, for example, I would be stricter and would be harder on doing this on this date and on this date. I haven't been able to do that with the students I've had for the past couple of years

because if I said that to the students I would not get anything done. They wouldn't give me any work; they would all get zeroes. (I.P. 2)

Stuart believed that being flexible was part of the key to succeed in his teaching. He did not think being flexible was synonymous with being "easy" on his students or on himself as a teacher. On the contrary, he explained to me that he held high expectations of his students and of himself as a teacher. Further, he seemed to have reflected on this belief and thought that maybe he needed to change it in order to engage his students more with the program. For example, during the follow-up interview, Stuart compared his approach to teaching Native languages to his approach to coaching baseball:

It's not that I expect too much like when I coach baseball and I tell the students that I don't expect anything less than perfection for baseball, for coaching. If you're going to play for me, you're going not to play perfectly, but at least do the best that you can. In my class too, I expect the same, I expect them to respect me… I think that could be one of the problems with them, maybe I expect too much or my expectations in my own head are too high. I am hard on myself too. I try to, but maybe I'm not the best person to… well, maybe I have to improve communication with their homes, that's something I have to improve, for sure. I should do that more often. I don't do that enough. (I.P., p. 3)

Similarly, when describing his experiences in teaching the Native languages programs, he noted:

I am not going to pat myself in the back and say: "You did the best job you could." I try to find ways in which I should've done this or that. So, I am looking back now and asking myself: "What could I have done differently to maybe have the students come to class or to keep their attention?" It's been a learning process for sure this year. It's given a lot of ideas for next year, for sure.

Indeed, it became apparent that one of Stuarts' main challenges in this program was that of students' poor attendance and punctuality. The theme "Challenges" describes this and other challenges addressed by Stuart during this phase of the study. The following theme delves into the different teaching strategies that Stuart implemented to scaffold his students learning of the Annishnaabemowin language and about the Annishnaabemowin culture.

Patterns of Modern Languages and Cultures Implemented in the Classroom

As noted above, Stuart believed that part of his success in teaching his program has been

his role as a flexible teacher. He always started his lessons by asking his students about their

weekends or the day before. Stuart also used these conversations to teach words in Ojibwe and to

share cultural teachings with his students or to teach them. As I recorded in my observation log:

> The class starts with the teacher asking students about their weekend and to share a story from their weekend. He took advantage of students' stories to teach them words in Ojibwe. Students were very engaged with this activity. He proceeded to share with his students that his son and he had received their spiritual names during the weekend. The students were very quiet and receptive to this story. (O.L., p. 3)

As this comment illustrates, Stuart's flexibility not only was reflected in the classroom

atmosphere, but also in his approach to teaching. As a result, although he was always prepared

for his lessons, his lesson plans would take many directions once he had enough students in the

classroom to start his lessons. In addition, he viewed the teaching of Annishnaabemowin as a

combination of speaking, listening, writing and reading activities in one lesson. When discussing

the place of each of these skills in his lessons, he noted that he and other teachers of

Annishnaabemowin

> try to do all the things every day. There's a lot of writing and reading. I would say reading and writing… speaking is number one. I try to get the students to speak as often as they want. Reading and next the writing and listening happens when I do it. Writing is probably on the bottom of the list. We think that it's more important that they learn how to speak it first. If one person calls it this way and another person calls it another way, as long as they know what it means, I really don't care and that's what happens. (I.P. 2, p. 4)

Conversely, during the lessons I observed, it seemed that the main foci of Stuart's lessons were

that of developing his students' vocabulary and pronunciation skills in Annishnaabemowin by

repeating word lists associated with culturally relevant materials. For example, he gave his

students a number of handouts that consisted of expressions for numbers in Annishnaabemowin,

and vowel length in Annishnaabemowin. He supported the learning of these sounds and vocabulary with pictures, vocabulary lists and games such as Sudoku and "The Hot Potato." In addition, there were a number of assignments that were based on the read aloud of a poem in Ojibwe titled "Niin anishnaabe (I am Anishinaabe)", "Our Father" prayer in Ojibwe, and an Ojibwe story titled "Ahkik egwa aniibiishaaboo (The pot and the tea)." This last story was presented to the students in both Annishnaabemowin and English. During the teaching of these texts, Stuart adopted an audiolingual approach to language teaching. He modelled the pronunciation of the texts and/or words, had students repeat after him, and then had students read the texts and/or words aloud by themselves. According to Stuart, his emphasis on pronunciation was grounded in the expectations established by the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum document for Native languages. He explained that

> They [i.e. the Ontario Ministry of Education] put the emphasis on writing. Up to Grade 4 you don't have to put a mark down for reading and writing, it's just oral. And Grade 4 and above is reading, writing and oral. I know there is a big push now for the vowel system. If I said a word in Ojibwe and another person says this word differently, there is a difference in the sound where the sound is either soft or hard. It's really hard for me to put that into writing.

Stuart also made emphasized conveying cultural information as it related to the Annishnaabemowin language. During some of the readings he did in class, he made a point to explain to his students the cultural relevance of the readings. For example, after students finished readings the poem "I am Anishinaabe," he explained briefly the cultural meaning the poem conveyed (O.L., p. 6). He then introduced an assignment based on this poem, for which students had to create a poster based on their interpretations on the poem. The rubric for this assignment mainly focused on use of class time, graphic/relevance, clarity of graphics used, required elements, title and attractiveness of the posters that the students were to create. These descriptors were assessed on a scale from the 1 to 4, with 4 the highest mark for each descriptor. This and

other assignments used group collaboration as a strategy to have students develop an interpretive

community and also as a classroom management strategy. Group collaboration allowed students

at different levels of language acquisition to assist each other and also to keep students on track.

This assignment did not require students to present their posters in front of the class. When I

asked Stuart about his decision to not have the students present their posters to the rest of the

class, Stuart explained that because his students were shy, he had determined to have them

present the posters to him individually:

> They read it to me in Ojibway. I got them to read the prayer to me with a partner.
> Most of them do not want to go in front of the class. I'm not going to embarrass
> them. If I feel that someone could do that, then I would. At the beginning of the
> semester it is extremely hard to get them to sit down with me and read to me,
> right? So, I would read to them a small prayer called "Thank you, grandmother",
> it's six lines, it's tiny and to get them to read that to me was hard. When you saw
> the conversations there, it took them very long to get to that point. I probably
> could have had them do "I am an Anishinaabe" in front of the class, but I didn't
> want to… I probably could the next time, though. (I.P. 2, p. 5)

The implementation of group collaboration proved to be effective in getting some of the

students engaged with the assignments. To illustrate, for one of the assignments students had to

prepare skits that consisted of dialogues based on their daily lives and present them to the whole

class. In these dialogues students had to include greetings, and talk about the weather and their

families. As part of the assignment, students had to give Stuart a printed copy of the skit in

Annishnaabemowin and in English. The students were assessed on how well they used their class

time.

Another assignment was based on the Medicine Wheel and was divided into two sections.

The first section consisted of answering questions in writing about the Medicine Wheel. These

questions required students to say a) what was the Medicine Wheel and b) describe the overall

teaching for each direction of the Medicine Wheel, starting with the East, followed by the South,

West and finally the North. The second section consisted of placing the Annishnaabemowin words provided in a list in a graphic representation of the Medicine Wheel.

Stuart also relied on a translation approach to language teaching. For example, one quiz consisted of completing a worksheet on The Seven Grandfather Teachings. In the first section of this quiz, students had to match Ojibwe words with their translations in English. The second section of this quiz relied on students' use of English to express their personal interpretations of the different teachings. The third section of the quiz asked students to re-write the Seven Grandfather Teachings using the syllabics alphabet.

While the main foci of Stuart's lessons were to develop his students' vocabulary and pronunciation skills, he also included extensive grammatical explanations in his lessons. For example, the main grammatical structure I observed him explain to his students was that of the imperative. Stuart scaffolded his students' learning of this grammatical structure by using worksheets that mainly developed habit formation in Annishnaabemowin. One of the worksheets contained images of prohibitive commands appearing in signs in public spaces (e.g. don't light a match, no swimming, etc.). The students had to provide the command for each of these images in Annishnaabemowin first and then in English. Another worksheet provided the command in Annishnaabemowin and the students had to provide the English translations of the commands (O.L., p. 10).

When discussing his approach to teaching the Annishnaabemowin culture to his students, Stuart explained to me how his own cultural identity influenced his teaching:

> We talk about the Grandfathers' teachings and kind of connect it with the Commandments. There is a poster that shows you the 10 Indian Commandments. It's very similar to the Christian Ten Commandments. A lot of it has to do with respect and what you do with respect. We talk about the connection between the two. We talk about the Creator and how as Ojibwe people or Anishinaabe people, the Creator is God. It's the same idea, just a different name. People say: "You

worship the sun" and I say: "You don't worship the sun, you don't worship the tree; you worship the power that's behind it. That's who we worship, the Creator, the one who is in charge or creating all that stuff". I don't go into that bash. Even when we do Residential Schools, we talk about the fact the 80% of the schools were Catholic schools. We talk about the partnership that the government and religion had in their role in the Residential Schools and I get in the background from their perspectives. I try to tie them in together so that they understand both and that one is not better than the other. We talk about the similarities between them. I think that's why the older I got and the more educated I got, the more I saw the connections between the two. Being an Ojibway is not a religion, right? We don't follow… we are spiritual people, not religious people. (I.P. 2)

Similarly, Stuart explained how his experiences while growing up informed much of what he did in his classroom in terms of instilling a love of learning Annishnaabemowin to his students. According to him, he wanted his students to want to learn Annishnaabemowin because of its role in keeping traditions alive, as well as a connection with the elders:

I try to do that by example. A lot of students don't have the language skills and neither did I when I was growing up. I try to tell them that [...] People want to learn a language because they think it's cool. There's got to be more than being "cool" about learning Ojibwe. There's got to be a reason why to learn Ojibway. I don't go and learn Italian because it's "cool". I want to learn Italian because I want to be able to go to Italy and be able to speak to the Italians. It's the same thing with Ojibwe; it should be about being able to speak with my parents or my grandparents, or my friends or go to the Reserve and be able to speak to the people there. (I.P. 2, p. 9)

Stuart's comment about superficial reasons to learn the Annishnaabemowin language and cultures such as "being cool" that his students may have was one of the challenges he had regarding his program. He was concerned about the place it had in his students' lives, the community and his school board. I describe these challenges in the following section.

Challenges

Stuart identified a number of challenges he faced when teaching the Native Language program. For example, he talked about attendance and punctuality issues. At the beginning of the observation phase of the study, Stuart made it clear to me that although his class officially had 22

students registered; he only had a 50% attendance rate on average (O.L., p. 1). His warning about

the low attendance rate in his class was evident during my observations. As I noted on my

observation log:

> Today the students have an assignment due. I arrived in the classroom at 12:05
> p.m. The class is supposed to start in five minutes and the classroom is empty.
> Stuart informed me that what I had seen in the previous lesson had been a good
> attendance day (there were only 10 students present in that class). (O.L., p. 2)

Stuart considered that there were many factors that promoted absenteeism in his class. According

to him, one of these factors was the legacy of the Residential Schools. He also noted that when

he had asked his students why they did not come to his class regularly, they had stated that they

just did not like school (O.L., pp. 2-3). During our follow-up interview, I addressed this

comment. Stuart acknowledged that attendance was a great problem that was enhanced by a lack

of interest from the students in learning about their own cultures: "Attendance is a big thing and

then, they don't seem to appreciate what we're trying to do in the class. That has been a huge

frustration for me" (I.P., p. 1). He also felt frustrated that this would be happening in his class,

where he thought students would not feel distanced from the content:

> I have asked them why they've signed up for the course, what are their
> expectations of this class. And they all tell you the same thing, they'd tell you:
> "Well, I want to learn the language, this and that". "I want to learn the culture"
> and then you see that it's not about that, it's about getting an easy mark or hanging
> out with friends. That's when I take it as an insult to not just me as a teacher, but
> culturally as well. In the past, some of my best students were non-Aboriginal
> because they worked hard. They wanted to learn and they worked hard and they
> came to learn the language. And they learned a little bit and they could understand
> where we're coming from, whereas the Aboriginal students were there to get a
> mark. They thought that because it was a Native language class, it would be easier
> than French: "I don't like French and I'm not taking French; I'm taking Native
> language." (I.P. 2)

Stuart compared his students' attitudes towards his program to how he would have reacted

had he had the opportunity to take his course when he was a high school student. According to

him, it is because he did not have the opportunity to take a program like this that he felt mostly

frustrated about his students' attitudes. In addition, he explained that he refused to implement

language games that perpetuated stereotypes of First Nations peoples simply because these

games would entertain his students:

> When I was a student, if I had had an opportunity to learn the Native language, I wouldn't have taken it as a joke. I took it in university for no other reason than out of interest. I didn't take it because it was an easy mark. I took it because I was interested in learning the language, not because it was an easy mark. It seemed to me that all the students ever did prior was doing games, bingo and these other games and things like that and I don't do that. I play games and I do other kinds of activities, but I don't like to play bingo. To me the "bingo" is a very stereotypical game and has a lot bad connotations to it, so I don't play it, but that's what the kids want to do every day and I can't do that because we have other things to do. I can teach them about the animals, but can they put together a sentence. (I.P. 2)

Stuart also described concerns about the involvement of the Aboriginal community and

parents in their children's schooling experience. He described what he did in order to connect

with his students' families:

> I send home a letter at the beginning of the semester with the expectations and a volunteer sheet for the parents that were interested in getting involved and do certain things. If could get a parent who could do regalia, come on in! If I could get a parent who could teach on storytelling, come on in! And I reiterate that through the semester. I have invited everyone to come on in. I call home and talk to parents, but that's part of the problem. The parents of the students with attendance issues aren't emphasizing the importance of the school, never mind my class, just school. The kids that are missing my class, they're missing the whole day. There is not a connection between school and doing well after school. I feel that has a lot to do with what happened in the past with residential schools, whatever, parents who went to residential schools. A lot of the parents themselves don't have much more education than a high school education. So, they don't see the importance yet. I think this generation and the next generation is getting better, but still there's a lot of work to do right now. So, that's part of when I call home to the parents and tell them: "Your son hasn't come to school", they say: "I know, I can't get him to school, this and that. He or she stays at home". But I don't accept that: "Get your kid to school and talk about the positives of going to school and how it is going to change you". I'm frustrated with the parents, too. (I.P. 2, p. 3)

Stuart also believed that it was not only the parents' responsibility to encourage their children to attend school regularly. He believed that the school board also had the responsibility to develop the resources that bridged the gap between the school and the Aboriginal community, and to provide more funding for professional development opportunities. For example, during our follow-up interview, I asked him whether there was an Aboriginal person who would act as a liaison between the schools and the community. He explained

> I definitely wish there would be something like that. [--------] was more of a resource person than anything else, I guess. If you needed an elder she might be able to help you out, but [---------] and [---------] are two counselors and I'd like to see that as their job and [name of person removed] communicates with parents, but I don't know how much success he has. (I.P. 2)

Similarly, Stuart was part of the Modern Languages departments in the schools where he taught. These departments consisted of language arts and French teachers. He felt that because of this, when the department was allocated some funding to purchase resources, this funding was not divided equally among all three sections of the department:

> There are some good websites as well that I have used in the past, but some of the best resources you have to pay big dollars for them and I don't have the money for it. Like I have to pull money from my department, the English or Moderns department and to pull money from them is always a pain [expletive]. For example, the English department got all this grant for textbooks. They got "Life of Pi" and this and that. I just want to get some money to get resources and I have to pull teeth to get that. I feel guilty for doing that and I shouldn't feel like that. (I.P. 2, p. 11)

This situation was made more difficult by a lack of access to funding to attend professional development opportunities outside of Thunder Bay:

> To go to a conference to Fort Frances was a huge deal. To send me there for three days… up to this year there was no problem because it was only two days and it cost me money to go there. I am only allowed $1000 a PD every two or three years. So, that was my $1000 dollars. It cost me $400 to go there, so $1000 was gone right away. So, it cost me $400 of my own money to go there. This goes back to our first conversation, the whole idea of Aboriginal education, I'm nervous about it. The elders are nervous about it. They see it as a flash in the pan:

This year we're going to save this many kids. And I am nervous about that. Once the money runs dry, that's it, go back to the old ways.

At the end of our follow-up interview, Stuart shared his feelings of frustration towards the lack of support the Native Languages program received from his own community and school board:

I am going to tell you personally as a teacher who is very passionate towards… Like I said, I just don't want to see them graduate. That cannot be the goal anymore. It has to be to want the students to be more productive and be successful and be independent. We can't allow them to have excuses for not doing any of those things. You can't give them excuses for not coming to school. You have to reach them somehow [...] Aboriginal people across Canada understand that their languages are in trouble. I think that a percentage of them does not care. Then there's another percentage that does care. There is a Wiki Heritage Organization that is putting together all this vast amount of money in creating all these resources for language. But I don't see the Board getting resources for us, getting the speakers for the kids. It looks good that we have all these classes, but I don't think that they're really serious about it. You know what? You can team-teach. Have two people in there. Have an elder who can do the language and have a teacher that can do the classroom management and the marking and all the things that the elder can't do or doesn't have the training to do. There are other ways to go around it, I guess. (I.P. 2)

The two case studies described above are based on the observation of the teaching worlds of Leslie and Stuart. I began each case study by re-introducing Leslie's and Stuart's profiles. The profiles were followed by a brief description of the Leslie's and Stuart's modern languages and cultures programs and classrooms, and the main content of the lessons they allowed me to observe. I then described the themes that emerged from the data analysis: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms; patterns of modern languages and cultures implemented in the classroom; and challenges. The last theme emerged from the analysis of Stuart's data.

The interpretation of both cases is presented in the next section.

Interpretation

This section presents an interpretation of the themes that emerged in this phase of the study: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms; patterns of modern languages and cultures use in the classroom; and challenges. These findings are then connected to the existing literature.

The Roles of the Teacher in the Modern Languages and Cultures Classroom

Beers (2001), Chacón (2009), and Morgan (2004) describe the modern languages and cultures classroom as a special linguistic setting with specific rules for talking and interacting. Reagan (2004) suggests that one of the consequences of the existence of these specific rules is the emergence of the language instructor as an authority and model of the language he/she is teaching. Further, Craig (1995) explains that when the modern languages and cultures instructors assume authoritative and expert roles in the classroom, such roles position them as experts in the field of inquiry or as expert speakers of a language, "someone who has more knowledge than his or her students have" (p. 41). Because this knowledge exists outside of those who know it, explains Craig, "it can be given, or taught, to the learners by the teacher-expert" (p. 41).

Leslie and Stuart adopted different roles when teaching French and Annishnaabemowin; however, their roles confirm the above scholars' description of what I witnessed in both of their classrooms. For example, Leslie adopted a teacher-centred approach to teaching. This approach was evidenced not only in her concern for always being in control of what was happening in the classroom, but also in acting as an expert in the French language. This finding confirms Reagan and Osborn's (2002) contention that the role modern languages and cultures teachers have traditionally adopted in their classroom is that of a guide to the target language. The final interview revealed, however, that Leslie's adoption of this traditional role had been informed by

the teaching models she had been exposed to as both a French language learner in elementary and secondary school, and university. For example, she firmly believed in the teaching of Parisian French as the standard variant of the language. Further, she mentioned that when she graduated from her French program in university, one of her professors had advised her to go and teach "good French." These experiences led her to, a) place an emphasis on having her students produce a Parisian "r" as a mark of authentic French; and b) select the same classic French literature she had been exposed to during her years in primary and secondary school, and university. Therefore, this finding confirms Lortie's (1975), Numrich's (1996) and Woods's (1976) findings where teachers reported their previous experiences as students as determinant in how they approached teaching.

Similarly, Leslie considered that her teacher-centred approach to teaching was also informed by her perceived limited years of experience as a teacher of French as a modern language and culture. This finding illuminates existing literature that has scrutinized the work of modern languages and cultures teachers in Canada and abroad (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Kubota, 2004; Pierce, 1995). Further, this finding extends this literature as it provides insights into what informs these teachers' roles in the modern languages classrooms. For instance, Kubota (2004) claims that frequently modern languages and cultures teachers' own western cultural values help promote hegemony in language teaching. This hegemony, in turn, promotes inequality in the classroom. However, as this finding suggests, Leslie had only been exposed to a teacher-centred approach to language teaching throughout her years as a student of French as a modern language and culture. As a result, she mirrored this role in her own teaching. Further, Duff and Uchida (1997) suggest that modern languages and cultures teachers, who are not aware of communicative language teaching approaches often resort to adopting an authoritative figure in

the classroom. This approach in turn affords them classroom control. As this finding suggests, neither Leslie nor Stuart had received much exposure to critical communicative language teaching strategies during their pre-service years.

Interestingly, although Leslie had indicated that she was open to new ideas, she also noted that she was not to be prepared to take risks to experiment with new ideas. She excused herself on the grounds that, although she had had five years of experience, she was a beginning teacher. This finding is consistent with Knoblauch's and Woolfolk Hoy's (2008) work on teachers' self-efficacy. These scholars explain that teachers' sense of efficacy regarding their teaching capabilities or teaching experience can have a considerable impact not only on their effectiveness in the classroom, but the educational process as a whole. These scholars contend that these beliefs influence many aspects of a teacher's career, such as the effort they put into their work and the goals they set for themselves. As demonstrated by Leslie's comments, her experiences as a French language student in primary and secondary school, and later on in university led her to view the teaching of French language and culture from a limited perspective in which the teaching of the canon in French literature and grammatical structures were to be emphasized. Further, although she expressed feeling overwhelmed by the number of grammatical structures mandated in the curriculum document, a close analysis of the same document reveals that it leaves ample room for what Eisner (2002) calls the "teacher's imagination."

Guskey (1998), and Stein and Wang (1988) explain that teachers with a high sense of efficacy are open to new concepts and new methods to ensure the diverse needs of their students are being met. These teachers are also inclined to demonstrate better planning and organizational skills, show a greater enthusiasm for teaching, and are more likely to remain in the profession. Bandura (1997) proposes that efficacy may be most flexible in the early years of teaching and

could be crucial to the continuing development of a teachers' sense of efficacy. Unfortunately, although Leslie indicated some agreement with my suggestion to approach her teaching of French literature from a critical stance, she appeared to be satisfied with how she taught it and was unwilling to change.

Stuart took a more relaxed approach to his teaching. This role appeared to be informed by his knowledge of the First Nations community and which teaching approaches worked or did not work with his students. However, in the final interview Stuart explained to have reflected on the academic year that was about to conclude. He concluded that he needed to change this approach in order to engage his students more with the program. The research on modern languages and cultures teaching to support this finding is minimal. Stuart's realization of the need to work on his approach to teaching is similar to Graham's (2005) finding that instructional methods such as memorization of word lists that the teachers in her study were using led students to respond negatively to these instructional methods. As a result, they started to miss class or refused to participate in classroom activities. Similarly, this finding also echoes Duff and Uchida's (1997) findings. Like one of the participants in their study, Stuart really cared about his students and truly wanted to make a connection with them. As a result, Stuart thought that by adopting relaxed approach to his teaching, he would make a stronger connection with his students. However, only a handful of students came to his class on a regular basis.

Patterns of Modern Languages and Cultures Implemented in the Classroom

In Phase I of the study, both Leslie and Stuart described the relationship between languages and cultures as one inseparable unit. Comments such as "language goes not only into communication, but also into people's cultures" (Leslie, I.P. 1) and "language is the culture and culture is the language" (Stuart, I.P. 1) illustrated this interrelationship for them. During the same

Phase, Leslie and Stuart explained that they emphasized language or culture in their programs. In Phase II, the patterns of modern languages and cultures implemented in the classroom confirmed this finding from Phase I. The strategies that Leslie and Stuart used to scaffold their students' understanding of French and Ojibwe placed more emphasis on language than culture in Leslie's case or vice versa in Stuart's case. For example, Leslie always led the readings of "The Necklace" and "The Phantom of the Opera". During the reading of these literary works, she would scaffold students' comprehension exercises through activities that encouraged her students to adopt an efferent position towards these texts. Similarly, Stuart adopted an audiolingual and a grammar-translation approach to his teaching of Annishnaabemowin. He used culturally relevant texts and would do repetition and translation activities with his students.

Although Leslie and Stuart adopted mainly traditional approaches to teaching languages, they both used aspects of communicative language teaching such as group work, oral presentations, and authentic texts. Further, Leslie made use of literacy strategies that attempted to enhance her students' comprehension of the literary works they were reading. Stuart also implemented strategies that encouraged their students to use their aesthetic skills when working on one of the assignments. In addition, some of Leslie's assignments encouraged her students to offer personal interpretations of the literary works they were reading. Interestingly, it was when the teachers implemented these student-centred strategies that the students appeared to be most engaged with the lesson's content. To this effect, Boyd-Batstone (2002) contends that

> when a teacher establishes an efferent stance, the classroom environment becomes a place for accommodation to the culture of the teacher and for subordination of the culture of the students. However, if the teacher is predominantly interested in connecting the text to the students' lives, aesthetic reading comes to the forefront. (p. 133)

Leslie's and Stuart's teaching strategies were also informed by the expectations of the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum guidelines for their programs. Leslie claimed to be pressured by the numbers of grammatical structures mandated. However, the final interview revealed that although it was true that the guidelines required her to teach a number of grammatical structures, her own view of language teaching gave preference to this expectation. Further, although the same document contained expectations that dealt with cultural aspects of the French language, she chose to deal with superficial aspects of the French culture via an activity she called "Daily French." This finding confirms Kramsch's (1993) assertion that "language teachers are so much teachers of culture that culture often has become invisible to them" (p. 48). Leslie's overt preference for the teaching of Parisian French, her selection of literary works that she considered classics and representative of French literature, her treatment of French culture from a tourist perspective, and her choice of teaching approaches are examples of her culture teaching. She was not aware of the degree to which she was always negotiating her own cultural identity with the students. Stuart, however, appeared to be aware of and committed to conveying the cultural and spiritual aspects of the Annishnaabemowin language and culture to his students. This finding also supports Reagan and Osborn's (2002) assertion that, although modern languages and cultures teachers in public schools face a number of constraints that affect their effectiveness of their programs, they still have control over how to approach their teaching practices. Further, this finding supports existing literature that directs our attention to the role of the modern languages and cultures teacher as a mediator of cultural values (Duff & Uchida, 1994; Kramsch, 1995; Norton Pierce, 1993, 1995; Reagan & Osborn, 2002; Kubota & Li, 2009). These scholars argue that for modern languages and cultures students to develop critical language awareness, their teachers must get to know and understand their own cultures. As

demonstrated by the findings discussed so far, although Leslie and Stuart strongly believed in the close relationship between languages and cultures and the individuality of their cultural identities, they implemented approaches that emphasized acquiring linguistic competence over cultural competence or vice versa.

Challenges

Stuart voiced a number of concerns in regards to his students' absenteeism in his class, the involvement of Aboriginal parents with the school, support from the local school board and access to resources and professional development opportunities. During the observations, the first challenge became evident. I never got to meet all 22 students in Stuart's Annishnaabemowin language and culture class. Stuart considered that he needed to change his relaxed approach to teaching. This finding resonates with Li's (1999), Norton Pierce's (1993), French and Collins (2014), and Graham's (2005) findings. In his study, Li explains how the role of the modern languages and cultures instructor became problematic when the instructor attempted to implement pedagogical approaches without considering the cultural relevance of such approaches to the context in which they were being implemented. In Norton Pierce's study, one of her participants stopped attending her ESL evening classes because she found these classes unengaging even though her instructor had tried to include her students' life experiences in her teaching. In their study, French and Collins found that the majority of the participants stated that their students were unable to recognize the importance of the language and culture they were learning. Graham found that because the Native languages instructors were implementing traditional approaches to teach these languages, students stopped attending their lessons. Although Stuart wanted to make a connection with his students by being relaxed, this approach did not have the results he expected.

Stuart also considered that for the Native Languages and Cultures program to be successful, he needed the support of Aboriginal parents and the school board. He attributed his students' absenteeism to the lack of support and encouragement from his students' families. According to Stuart, his students did not see a purpose for learning Annishnaabemowin and he considered this a contradiction to all the efforts he and the Aboriginal community at large were making to revive this language and maintain its culture. Stuart believed that the school board assumed that because the Native Languages and Cultures program was being offered, it had fulfilled an expected mandate from the Ministry of Education. This finding informs Reagan's and Osborn's (2002) assertion that before scrutinizing modern languages and cultures teachers' instruction, we have to analyze the teaching contexts of these teachers and understand the public justification for having modern languages and cultures programs in the schools. These scholars explain that modern languages and cultures teachers face a series of constraints that affect the effectiveness of their programs. Examples include: time constraints related to the length of the courses; the lack of significant support from institutions for the learning of modern languages; institutional and individual biases that determine which languages are offered and who takes which language; and the public justifications for modern languages education. Unfortunately, twelve years after Reagan and Osborn outlined these constraints; they seem to hold true for the participants in this study.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented two case studies based on Phase II of the study in which I entered the teaching worlds of Leslie and Stuart. The case studies were interpreted and connected to the existing literature. Chapter VI presents the conclusions, implications and recommendations for this study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of my study was to explore secondary and adult modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities, and how these beliefs were embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices. The study also explored how these teachers encouraged their students to use their first languages and cultures to support their acquisition of the languages they were taught. The study was conducted in two phases. The nine teachers interviewed in Phase I were teachers of modern languages and cultures in secondary school and adult education settings. The two participants in Phase II were teachers selected from Phase I.

The design of the study was qualitative and emergent and was informed by a decolonizing research methodology. The use of multiple data sources such as digitally recorded interviews, my observation fieldnotes, log and reflective journal portraying classroom's observations, samples of in-class assignments and texts used by the teachers to scaffold students' learning, and Ministry of Education documents allowed for triangulation.

Six themes emerged from the data analysis in Phase I: Personal conceptions of language and culture; perceptions of teachers' own cultural identities; languages and cultures in the classroom; students' first languages and cultures in the classroom; teaching strategies; and challenges. Three themes emerged from the data collected in Phase II of the study: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms; patterns of modern languages and cultures implemented in the classroom; and challenges. Although challenges were not the focus of the three research questions, the analysis of the data revealed that the teachers considered that challenges were a critical piece in the success of the implementation of their programs.

In the first section of this chapter I present the conclusions for the study. This section is followed by a discussion of the implications for teacher education, practicing teachers and school boards. Finally, I offer a number of recommendations for future research.

Conclusions

There is a consensus on the relevance and need of teaching languages and cultures as the inseparable unit they are (Beers, 2001; Byram & Risager, 1999; Ryan, 1998; Sercu & Méndez García, 2004; Sercu, Méndez García & Castro Prieto, 2005; Morgan, 1998, 2004; Sercu, 2006). Scholars such as Kramsch (1994, 2004) and Morgan (2004) contend that special attention should be paid to how languages and cultures instructors' depoliticized multicultural approaches fail to recognize their own positions as cultural identities. They argue that this hegemonic view has influenced how diverse cultures are addressed in teaching in general (see also Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001; Johnston, 2006; Zine, 2005) and modern languages and cultures teaching, in particular (see also Kubota, 2004; Morgan, 1998). However, as noted in Chapter II, there is a gap in the literature in regards to why modern languages and cultures teachers continue to implement such approaches. The findings in both phases of this study address this gap in the literature and provide some insights into this question. For example, participants had had experiences that informed their personal conceptions of "languages" and "cultures," their place in the classroom, and their perceptions of professional support they were given by their schools, their school boards and the Ministry of Education.

As I noted in Chapter I, when referring to the increasing importance of research on what are considered non-mainstream modern languages and cultures in Canada, Duff and Li (2009) express the need for initiatives that take into account languages and cultures such as Indigenous languages and cultures as part of the reinforcement of the "recognition of the linguistic diversity

and richness of Canada and of its crucial significance in contemporary society and in language education across the lifespan" (p. 7). My research study marks the first time that the perspectives of Annishnaabemowin language and cultures teachers on languages and cultures instruction were considered together with those of other modern languages and cultures instructors. As a result, this study provides new insights into the ways Canadian secondary modern language teachers in an urban setting integrate language and culture teaching and to recommendations related to modern languages curriculum planning, development, and implementation. While I acknowledge the social, historical, political and cultural differences between Indigenous languages and cultures and their European counterparts, the findings from this study contribute to a dialogue among modern languages and cultures teachers and scholars about barriers that distinguish between "modern languages and cultures" and "Indigenous languages and cultures." As illustrated by the findings in Phase I of the study, all teachers of modern languages and cultures at the secondary level implemented similar approaches to languages and cultures teaching, particularly the teaching of grammatical accuracy. In addition, they all indicated that they faced similar challenges whether they taught French, English as a second language or Annishnaabemowin.

The study also informs the theory and content of preservice and professional development courses designed to give modern languages and cultures teachers the opportunity to develop a decolonized Canadian perspective on teaching languages and cultures. Some of the participants' comments pointed to the shortcomings of modern languages and cultures teacher education programs which continue to promote a view of languages as a quantifiable intellectual commodity that exists apart from the cultures that created them (Canagarajah, 2005). Leslie and Stuart had left the Faculty of Education five years prior to the study and, before their interviews

with me, they had never been encouraged to think critically about languages and cultures, their own cultural identities and the influences these beliefs had had in their teaching practices.

In providing detailed accounts of modern languages and cultures teachers' understandings of languages and cultures teaching, beliefs about their cultural identities in the Canadian context and how these influenced their practices, this study contributes to and extends the existing literature on modern languages and cultures teacher preparation for teaching such languages and cultures. For example, participants in Phase I thought of languages and cultures as being inseparable. Some of the participants' conceptions of languages and cultures were informed by their lived experiences as teachers of students of other languages and cultures. For other participants, the interrelationship between languages and cultures was illustrated by autobiographical accounts of their lives. Further, although participants were asked about their personal beliefs about "languages" and "cultures" separately, their definitions of the former always took into account the latter; they did not look at either separately.

Although a large body of research exists on the inseparability of languages and cultures (Agar, 1995; Kramsch, 1993a; 1993b; 1996; Byram, 1989; Ryan, 1998; Webber, M. J., 1987) and on modern languages and cultures teachers' personal conceptions of "cultures" in general and "culture teaching" in particular (Byram & Risager, 1999; Duff & Uchida, 1994; Kramsch, 1994, Ryan, 1998), there is minimal research that describes teachers' personal conceptions of both "languages" and "cultures" the way a number of the participants in this study did. For example, as I explained in Chapter IV, the close interrelationship between languages and cultures expressed by the participants provided evidence to suggest that these conceptions were aligned to Agar's (1995) notion of *languacultures*. Although participants did not use the term *languacultures* in this study, they did describe this interrelationship by providing statements such

as "language is the culture and culture is the culture" (Stuart, I.P. 1); "They're both side by side. They're meshed with each other" (Marla, I.P. 1); and "Language goes not only into communication, but also into people's cultures" (Leslie, I.P. 1). Furthermore, some of these participants' comments also signaled an emerging concept of cultural identity connected with gender, religion, and class. These concepts are not frequently discussed in the modern languages teaching literature. As a result, this finding extends the existing literature by providing a new lens from which to analyze the teaching of modern languages and cultures.

The concerns described by the participants extend those outlined by Reagan and Osborn (2002) who contend that modern languages and cultures teachers face a number of constraints that affect the effectiveness of their programs. In addition, the challenges described by the participants in this study responds to literature that criticizes modern languages and cultures teachers' teaching approaches without taking into consideration the contexts in which these teachers work and the support they receive from the students' parents, their schools and school boards (Canagarajah, 2005; Reagan & Osborn, 2002). Although teachers' self-efficacy regarding the improvement of their teaching practices plays an important role in the success of a school program, the support that these teachers receive from institutions such as the school boards in the form of professional development opportunities also plays an important role in the success of a program.

Participants in this study displayed a sense of self and location in Canadian society, culture and politics by providing their personal definition of their cultural identities. In the same manner, their diverse perceptions of their own cultures were also consistent with Agar's (2006) argument regarding the relational and partial nature of the term "culture". According to Agar, "culture" is a construction, a translation between ours and other cultures. As a result of this, Agar argues that

in today's world "we can no longer talk about culture in the singular when referring to a particular person or a particular situation. The plural is now obligatory. A particular moment or a particular group is never just about *one* culture. It is always about *cultures*" (p. 6).

The roles adopted by the participants in Phase II confirm Reagan and Osborn's (2002) contention that the role modern languages and cultures teachers have traditionally adopted in their classrooms is that of a guide to the target language. The final interview with Leslie revealed that Leslie's adoption of this traditional role had been informed by the teaching models she had been exposed to as both a French language learner in elementary and secondary school, and university. Stuart's adoption of a more relaxed role in his classroom was informed by his knowledge of Aboriginal students and his own experiences as an Aboriginal student. This finding confirms Lortie's (1975), Numrich's (1996) and Woods's (1976) findings where teachers reported their previous experiences as students as determinant in how they approached teaching. Similarly, Leslie considered that her teacher-centred approach to teaching was also informed by her perceived limited years of experience as a teacher of French as a modern language and culture. Therefore, this finding also illuminates and extends existing literature that has analyzed the work of modern languages and cultures teachers in Canada and abroad (Chacón, 2005; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Kubota, 2004; Pierce, 1995) as it provides insights into what informs these teachers' roles in the modern languages classrooms and to what extent their former experiences and role models constraint their experimenting with new teaching approaches. Duff and Uchida (1997) suggest that modern languages and cultures teachers who are not aware of communicative language teaching approaches often resort to adopting an authoritative figure in the classroom. This approach in turn affords them classroom control. As this finding suggests, neither of the participants in Phase II had received much exposure to critical communicative language teaching

strategies during their pre-service years or through professional development organized by their school boards.

An important insight in this study is that of Leslie's unwillingness to experiment with new approaches to teaching French. As illustrated by her comments, although she was open to new ideas, she noted that she was not prepared to take risks to experiment with these new ideas. She excused herself on the grounds that, although she had had five years of experience, she was a beginning teacher. This finding is consistent with Knoblauch's and Woolfolk Hoy's (2008) work on teachers' self-efficacy. These scholars explain that teachers' sense of efficacy regarding their teaching capabilities or teaching experience can have a considerable impact not only on their effectiveness in the classroom, but the educational process as a whole. Bandura (1997) proposes that efficacy may be most flexible in the early years of teaching and could be crucial to the continuing development of teachers' sense of efficacy. Unfortunately, although Leslie indicated some agreement with my suggestion to approach her teaching of French literature from a critical stance, she appeared to be satisfied with how she taught it and was unwilling to change. Stuart, on the other hand, appeared to have a higher level of self-efficacy. This was demonstrated by comments in the follow-up interview. After reflecting on his experiences during that academic year, he had arrived at the conclusion that, despite the external challenges he had faced, he might need to change the way he taught Annishnaabemowin in order to motivate his students.

The participants in this study articulated a number of challenges they faced when implementing their modern languages and cultures programs. One challenge revolved around the importance given to the teaching of modern languages and cultures in their respective school boards. They considered that this lack of importance given to their programs was reflected in limited access to current resources and to professional development opportunities. In addition,

two of the ESL teachers and the two Annishnaabemowin language and cultures teachers had itinerant positions. The conditions of their teaching appointments limited them in developing stronger programs for their students. Similarly, the two Annishnaabemowin language and cultures teachers added that this situation prevented them from establishing continuity in their programs and establishing meaningful relationships with their students. They noted that the itinerant nature of the Annishnaabemowin language and cultures program defeated its intended purpose of assisting in the development and maintenance of Native Languages. In addition, the French teachers, the Annishnaabemowin language teachers, as well as language arts teachers were all part of the Modern Languages Departments at their schools. One of the French teachers made a connection between the limited access to resources in French and professional development opportunities with the fact that the head of this department was not a French teacher. According to her, because of this, he could not identify with the needs of the French teachers. Thus, the department head did not address French teachers' needs accordingly. The situation also discouraged the exchange of ideas among the French teachers at the school, since departmental meetings were not related to the teaching of French, specifically.

In addition to the itinerant nature of the Native Languages and Cultures program, this study offers a greater insight into the specific challenges that these teachers experience and which mitigate against its success. During the follow-up interview in Phase II, Stuart voiced a number of concerns that were not addressed during Phase I in regards to his students' absenteeism and the involvement of Aboriginal parents with the school. Stuart considered that for the Native Languages and Cultures program to be successful, he needed the support of Aboriginal parents and the school board. He attributed his students' absenteeism to the lack of support and encouragement from his students' families. According to Stuart, his students did not see a

purpose for learning Annishnaabemowin; he considered this a contradiction to all the efforts he and the Aboriginal community at large were making to revive this language and maintain its culture.

One of the main contributions of my study is the inclusion of approaches and perspectives that are not usually discussed in the modern languages and cultures teaching literature. In this study I drew upon:

- Sociocultural constructivist and sociolinguistic theories of learning (Bainbridge, Heydon, & Malicky, 2009; Freire, 1985; Iser, 1978; Roessingh, 2011; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978);

- Eisner's (2002) conception of curriculum as *Cognitive Pluralism*;

- Pinar's, Reynolds's, Slattery's and Taubman's (2005) conception of curriculum as a autobiographical, biographical and phenomenological text, modern languages and cultures learning and acquisition theories (Brooks, 1960; Chomsky, 1959; Ellis, 2001; Hatch, 1978; Lado, 1964; Krashen, 1982; Pica, 1994; Segalowits, 2003); and

- Modern languages and cultures critical pedagogies (Cannagarajah, 2005; Luke, 2004; Morgan, 2004; Norton and Toohey, 2004; Reagan and Osborn, 2002).

The application of this theoretical framework to the teaching of modern languages and cultures lends itself to the development of a model which is discussed in the following section.

Implications

The implications of this study do not (and should not) offer a clear path to a solution or solutions. Rather, they align with Kramsch's (1994) assertion that when the teaching of modern languages and cultures is problematized in the manner in which it has been problematized in this study "such an approach is more interested in fault lines than smooth landscapes, in the

recognition of complexity and in the tolerance of ambiguity, not in the search for clear yardsticks of competence and insurances against pedagogical malpractice" (p. 2). I begin with a discussion of the model I have developed as a frame for the construction of modern languages and cultures curricula and a lens for critical analysis of programs. I then describe implications for pre-service teacher education and professional development.

Teacher education is a complex process as teachers engage in identity exploration and construction (Britzman, 1991; Hammet & Bainbridge, 2009). The theoretical framework I propose might serve as a model for the development of such identity construction and exploration. To illustrate, sociocultural constructivist and sociolinguistic theories describe literacy and language development as processes involving individual and social constructions of meaning within various sociocultural settings (Bainbridge, Heydon, & Malicky, 2009; Freire, 1985; Iser, 1978; Roessingh, 2011; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978). As demonstrated in Chapter II, the analysis of psycholinguistic, linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives of how languages are learned illustrated that there has not been a shortage of approaches to teaching languages. However, these approaches and their limitations call for an examination of the conceptual base of modern languages and cultures teaching. An analysis of these conceptions of teaching languages can play an important role in extending our understanding of modern languages and cultures teaching. Further, exploring teacher candidates' understandings of cultures, languages, their own cultural identities, and how they influence their practices might afford them opportunities to actively engage in critical reflections of their future pedagogical practices and take more ownership of their programs. I argue that curriculum as autobiographical and biographical text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995) and a curriculum ideology based on cognitive pluralism (Eisner, 2002) provide a starting point to commence such exploration.

Eisner (2002) notes that the first consequence of implementing cognitive pluralism might be an extension of the term *literacy* to include a vast array of ways in which students and teachers use to produce and convey meanings. Such an expansion of the term *literacy* would lead to "the expansion of educational equity in the classroom" (p.82). This expansion of educational equity in the classroom would then lead to the implementation of the concept of "voice" proposed by Pinar et al. (1995). Figure 1 offers a graphic representation of this theoretical framework.

Faculties of Education and teacher educators need to pay closer attention to the kinds of beliefs and assumptions pre-service modern languages and cultures teachers' cultural identities bring to their studies and how these inform or impede their future practices. Reflecting on these beliefs and assumptions would allow these teacher candidates and instructors to consider critically on how languages must always be considered in relation to the different cultures that birthed them. A deep analysis of teachers' cultural identities from racial, gender and ethnic perspectives may facilitate a deeper understanding not only of the interrelationship between languages and cultures. Teacher candidates must be introduced to current theories of modern languages and cultures teaching as well as, curriculum planning, development, implementation and assessment, as well as strategies to implement in their practices. Indeed, some of the comments offered by the participants in this study pointed at the need to include training in intercultural communication in Faculties of Education and specialized professional development opportunities for teachers of modern languages and cultures. Several Canadian Faculties of Education presently place an emphasis on teaching with a focus on social justice. This is promising. The implementation of new courses and instructional approaches with a social justice focus within teacher education might serve to challenge pre-service teachers' beliefs on languages and cultures.
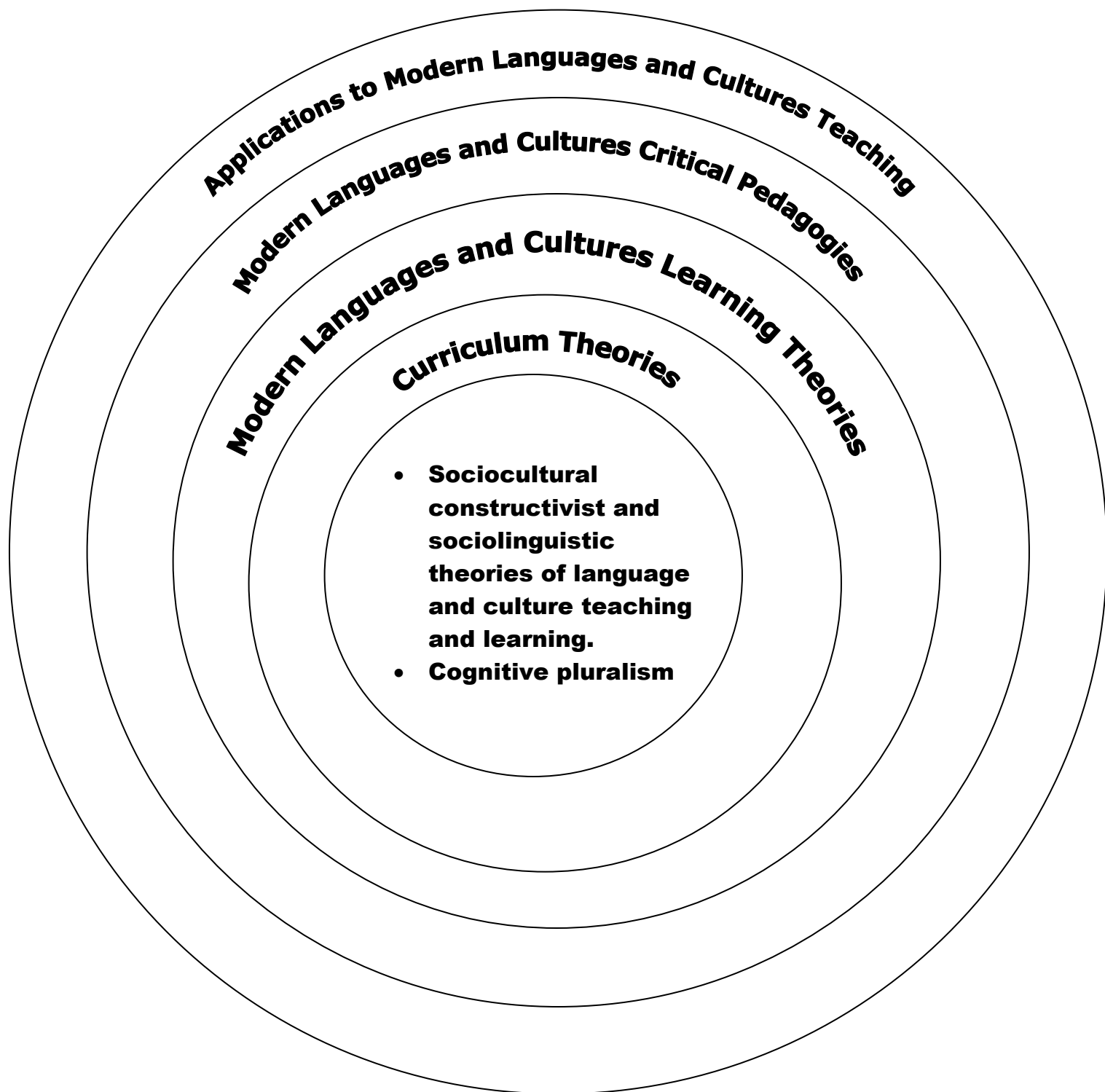
Figure 1: Theoretically based modern languages and cultures curriculum planning: A model for modern languages and cultures teaching *(Adapted from Courtland's Model for literacy teaching and learning)*

Practicum placement experiences might also aid students in this process. Teacher education programs, teacher educators, and associate teachers must provide opportunities for modern languages and cultures pre-service teachers to reflect on their beliefs with respect to modern languages and cultures teaching, how these beliefs correspond with current theories on modern languages and cultures teaching and learning, and to negotiate challenges. In this way, these teachers will be able teach modern languages in a culturally responsive manner that promotes their students' languages and cultures learning.

Byram and Feng (2005) contend that modern language instructors have political and social responsibilities in their teaching. Beginning teachers must enter the profession with strong subject area knowledge, the capacity for reflection, and understanding of their own responsibility and resourcefulness for their own professional development. The success of the implementation of a modern languages and cultures program depends, in part, on how modern languages and cultures teachers contribute to their students' investment in the learning of languages and cultures, and how their programs are organized and implemented. It depends as well on modern languages and teachers' self-efficacy and how these teachers re-conceptualize their traditional roles in the classroom to that of facilitators, participants in the learning activity, co-authors and co-learners (González, 2006).

Similarly, the success of modern languages and programs also depends on the support modern languages and cultures teachers receive from their schools, their school boards and the Ministry of Education. For the most part, the participants in this study felt isolated in their teaching contexts and felt that their subject areas were not a priority for their boards and departments. As a result, opportunities for professional dialogue with other modern languages and cultures teachers were either limited or non-existent. The lack of support was clearly

illustrated by one teacher who paid for her own conferences in order to keep current in her teaching. However, other participants could not afford to attend to conferences and, as a result, did not have access to any professional development that would improve their teaching skills.

Eisner (2002) suggests that although the shortcomings of teachers need to be identified, researchers and administration also need to ensure that possible solutions to the shortcomings are offered. For example, Dufour's (2004) model for professional learning communities (PLCs) may be a positive first step to address this recommendation. PLCs embody social constructivist learning as teachers create meaning together. As a result, PLCs provide opportunities for ongoing professional development as teachers of a specific subject area explore academic readings; plan and develop lessons and units; take pedagogical risks to promote students' academic success and discuss pedagogical approaches. In this way, PLCs may promote modern languages and cultures teachers' critical reflection on their practices and increase their self-efficacy as they implement new ideas that encourage their students' investment in languages and cultures learning. Similarly, when referring to the revitalization of Aboriginal languages and cultures movement in North America, Gresczyk (2011) highlights the importance of the involvement of the community in the design and evaluation of Aboriginal languages and cultures programs, and of the promotion of the community's participation in activities where the language is used. Gresczyk suggests a team-approach may prove to be the most effective manner to achieve this.

In light of the implications outlined in this section, I provide a number of recommendations in the following section.

Recommendations

The recommendations are divided into three subheadings: modern languages and cultures teacher education programs, school boards and schools, and future research.

Modern Languages and Cultures Teacher Education Programs

1.   Teacher candidates specializing in modern languages and cultures must be provided with opportunities to identify and reflect on their assumptions and their beliefs about languages and cultures and how these beliefs impact teaching and learning. Most participants in this study believed in an intricate relationship between languages and cultures. Most of these beliefs were grounded in their experiences as individuals and students. However, when it came to expressing how these beliefs were reflected in their practices, the majority appeared to lack a deep understanding of what languages and cultures teaching constituted. It is critical that modern languages and cultures teacher education courses include opportunities to identify what beliefs not only of what languages and cultures are, but also how these beliefs evolve during the pre-service years. Such an approach would provide teacher candidates with the opportunities to address these understandings explicitly as a foundation for constructing new meaning.

2.   Teacher educators should implement explicit instructional approaches that align with current theories about modern languages teaching in a cultural manner. This study found that while participants strongly believed that "languages" and "cultures" were inseparable, the emphasis in their practices was on developing their students' linguistic competencies and little importance was attached to the cultures that their languages represented. The theoretical framework I described above and for which I provide a graphical representation in above might serve as a starting point towards the development of a modern languages and cultures programs that promote Agar's (2005) concept of languacultures.

3. Modern languages and cultures teachers need to be introduced to critical pedagogical approaches to teaching in their pre-service years. Most modern languages and cultures teachers receive this exposure in graduate programs. Currently, several Canadian universities offer specialization courses in English as a second language and English language development, Indigenizing education and other courses with an ant-racist and social justice focus. These courses are representative of early exposure to critical pedagogical approaches to teaching. In these courses, preservice teachers are partnered with local schools and other educational institutions for the academic year and have structured opportunities to assist and teach lessons.

4. Instructors and administrations in Faculties of Education should initiate opportunities for professional development of teacher candidates, for example, workshops, guest speakers and conferences. Such strategies would introduce the teacher candidates to possibilities for future professional development and their own responsibility for taking initiative to further their pedagogical understandings.

5. Faculties of Education need to promote partnerships with school boards to promote a seamless transition for new teachers. Novice teachers need to be able to participate in mentoring programs that support their professional development in the early years.

School Boards and Schools

The findings in this study indicate that there are three foci which need to be addressed to promote the success of modern languages and cultures programs in secondary education; professional development opportunities, equitable allocation of resources and parental involvement.

1.   Modern languages and cultures teachers should have continued access to professional development opportunities. The challenges experienced by the participants indicate that professional development opportunities and support from their boards and school administrations were factors that impacted negatively their teaching of modern languages and cultures.

2.   Resources for modern languages and cultures programs must be allocated equitably. As noted Chapter IV, a number of the participants pointed out the limited access to resources and the negative impact this situation had on the success of their programs.

3.   School boards and schools must *take more responsibility for Aboriginal student success, particularly in the area of parental involvement*. School boards need to address the challenge of student absenteeism. This might involve seeking partnerships with existing Aboriginal committees and/or creating a committee to represent stakeholders in the community.

4. Similarly, school boards and schools must *take more responsibility for the success of French languages and cultures programs*. As the French languages and cultures teachers in this study observed, school boards need to address their perceived lack importance placed on these programs and the consequences this might have for maintenance of the French language and cultures in Northwestern Ontario. As with Aboriginal communities, this might involve seeking partnerships with the French community and/or creating a committee to represent stakeholders in the community.

Future Research

The following questions might inform future research:

1. What are the entry beliefs and exit beliefs of pre-service teachers who are specializing in modern languages and cultures?

2. What are the influences on teacher candidates' assumptions and beliefs? What program and course interventions inform their understandings of modern languages and cultures teaching and learning?

3. How do Faculty of Education modern languages and cultures programs contribute to the evolution of teacher candidates' conceptions of languages and cultures teaching and pedagogical understandings?

4. What modern languages and cultures teaching theories do teacher educators in professional teaching education programs emphasize? How are these theories reflected in the teaching approaches they implement to support pre-service teachers' understandings of modern languages and cultures teaching and learning?

5. What are modern languages and cultures in-service teachers' perceptions on self-efficacy?

6. How do school boards support modern languages and cultures teachers' professional development?

Summary

This study identified Canadian modern languages and cultures teachers' conceptions of languages and cultures, and how these beliefs influenced their teaching practices. Six themes emerged from the data analysis in Phase I: Personal conceptions of language and culture; perceptions of teachers' own cultural identities; languages and cultures in the classroom; students' first languages and cultures in the classroom; teaching strategies; and challenges. Three themes emerged from the data collected in Phase II of the study: The roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classrooms; patterns of modern languages and cultures implemented in the classroom; and challenges.

The existing literature addressing modern languages and cultures teachers' beliefs within the Canadian context is scarce. This study demonstrates that modern languages and cultures teachers' beliefs on the place of cultures in the modern languages classroom has not evolved much in the past decade. These findings suggest that critical reflection on these beliefs plays an important role in the development of modern languages and cultures teachers' beliefs. In addition, this study describes what experiences shape practicing modern languages and cultures teachers' beliefs in their early years and progressing through to the teacher education program. It became evident that the participants in this study entered the teacher education program from various cultural backgrounds, which, in turn, contributed to their understandings of what constituted "effective" modern languages and cultures teaching.

Finally, the teachers in this study identified a number of challenges that prevented them from developing stronger modern languages and cultures programs. School boards need to make sure that all subject areas receive the same priorities. Indeed, if one of the mandates of our current educational system is the promotion of acceptance and celebration of cultural diversity in our country, then the modern languages and cultures classroom is one of the places where this acceptance and celebration must occur.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide
Appendix 2: Non-Participant Observation Guide
Appendix 3: Copy of TCPS Certificate of Completion
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Appendix 5: Teachers' Consent Form (Phase I)
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Appendix 11: Lakehead University Research Ethics Board Approval
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Appendix 16: Summary of Themes, Subthemes and Categories of Phases I and II
Appendix 17: Summaries of Statements

Appendix 1

Interview Guide

I.   Demographic information on participants

    ✓ Years of experience
    ✓ Years of teaching modern languages and cultures
    ✓ Degree
    ✓ Concentration

II.   What are teacher's beliefs about languages and cultures?

    ✓ personal conception of *language*
    ✓ personal conception of *culture*
    ✓ beliefs about the relation between *languages* and *cultures*
    ✓ beliefs about own cultures
    ✓ beliefs about the place of *languages* and *cultures* in society/his-her practice

III.   How does the teacher implement language and culture in the classroom?

    ✓ strategies
    ✓ first language and culture use in the modern language and culture classroom
    ✓ describe a typical period

IV.   What challenges has the teacher experienced in implementation?

    ✓ school related
    ✓ program related
    ✓ professional development

V.   What does the teacher think about the modern languages and cultures program?

    ✓ strengths/weaknesses
    ✓ best components/poorest components
    ✓ things that should be changed
    ✓ supports: school administration, school board, Ministry of Education.

VI.   Other comments/suggestions.

Appendix 2

Non-Participant Observation Guide

Background Information

Teacher Name: _____   Start Time: _____ End Time:_____

Date of Observation: _____   Grade Level: _____

Modern Language:

- **Description of the Classroom**
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Purpose of the Lesson**
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Instructional Materials**
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Introduction [focus, strategies, student involvement, etc.]**
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Body [activity(ies) in which students are engaged; role of the teacher; groupings, etc.]**
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Closure [follow-up lesson]**
  _____
  _____
  _____

Appendix 3

Copy of TCPS Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that

Ismel González

has completed the Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics'
Introductory Tutorial for the
Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS)

Issued On: November 30, 2009

Appendix 4
Explanatory Letter to Teachers (Phase I)
Lakehead University
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Dear Teacher,

My name is Ismel González and I am a modern language instructor for the Languages Department at Lakehead University. I am currently completing my PhD in Educational Studies in the Social, Cultural and Political Contexts of Education stream of the Joint PhD Program offered by Brock, Windsor and Lakehead universities. I would like to invite you to participate in the study which I am conducting for my dissertation. The title of the study is *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy*.

The purpose of this study is to explore secondary modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities and how these beliefs are embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices. You have been selected for this study because you are qualified to teach the International languages programs, the Native languages programs or the ESL program offered by the Ontario Ministry of Education from grades 9 to 12. In addition, you possess different life experiences that have shaped your individual beliefs on languages and cultures and your cultural identities.

Data will be collected for a period of twelve weeks in total and the study will have two phases. Phase I will entail an in-depth interview in order to obtain insights into your understanding of language and culture, your beliefs on your cultural identity, and the relation between your cultural identity and your teaching of modern languages and cultures. I shall digitally record and transcribe these interviews. The interviews will last from one to two hours.

Data collected during these interviews will inform the second phase of the study. In Phase II, I shall select a sample of four teachers from Phase I. After receiving consent from these four teachers, I shall observe them for a period of approximately eight weeks, to explore how their beliefs about their cultural identities are embodied in their teaching. Classroom observations will focus on the teachers; however, data may be collected on the students if their activities and/or assignments provide insights into the teachers' practices.

There are no risks involved in your participation. Involvement in the study has potential for helping modern languages and cultures teachers become more reflective of their practices. The findings of this study may have the potential to inform the development of education programs and language and cultures courses. In addition, the findings may lead to improved understanding of the successes and challenges experienced by teachers in modern languages and cultures teaching/learning and may illuminate ways in which to support professional growth through the development of induction / mentoring programs.

The study respects the following ethics considerations articulated by the Research Ethics Board (REB) at Lakehead University:

- Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to you as a result of your involvement in the study.
- You will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data you provide will be confidential (confidentiality).
- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University for five years.

- Should there be any questions posed during the interview that you prefer not to answer, you are under no obligation to answer them.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at national and international educational conferences and in academic journals.

I shall provide a summary of the findings to you upon completion of the data analysis and interpretation phase of the research.

This study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board (REB), and the school boards.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (807) 343-8786, or at igonzale@lakeheadu.ca. Alternately, you can contact my supervisor, Mary Clare Courtland, at (807) 345-4695 or via email at mccourtl@tbaytel.net. You may also contact the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board at (807) 343-8201.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ismel González
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education
Lakehead University
(807) 343-8786
igonzale@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix 5

Teachers' Consent Form (Phase I)

Lakehead University

Thunder Bay, Ontario.

My signature on this sheet indicates that I have received an explanation about the nature of the study, its purpose and procedures, and agree to participate in a study conducted by Ismel González, PhD Candidate, entitled *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy* and that

- My participation is voluntary. I may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to me as a result of my involvement in the study.
- I will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data I provide will be confidential (confidentiality).
- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University for five years.
- I understand that I may refuse to answer any question(s) during the interview.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at national and international educational conferences and in academic journals.

_____
Print name

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix 6

Explanatory Letter to Teachers(Phase II)

Lakehead University

Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Dear Teacher,

During Phase I of the study, I explained to you that the purpose of this study is to explore secondary modern languages teachers' beliefs about language and their cultural identities and how these beliefs become embodied in their programs and pedagogical practices.

During Phase II, I would like to conduct follow-up in-class observations over a period of eight weeks of four of the teachers who participated in Phase I. The purpose of this second phase is to observe your teaching and interactions with students in order to gain insights into how you implement your beliefs on language and culture teaching, and how your beliefs about your cultural identity are embodied in your teaching practice. Classroom observations will focus on the teachers; however, data may be collected on the students' activities and/or assignments in the classrooms if they provide insights into the teachers' practices.

Once Phase II of the study has been completed, I shall meet with each participant in Phase II individually and interview him/her. The purpose of this interview will be to reflect on the classes I observed you instruct, and clarify questions I may have regarding the languages and cultures teaching methods I observed you implement in your classrooms. The interviews will also provide you with the opportunity to voice any concerns and/or recommendations you may have.

There are no risks involved in your participation during the second phase of the study. Involvement in the study has potential for helping modern languages and cultures teachers become more reflective of their practices. The findings of this study may have the potential to inform the development of education programs and language and cultures courses. In addition, the findings may lead to improved understanding of the successes and challenges experienced by teachers in modern languages and cultures teaching/learning and may illuminate ways in which to support professional growth through the development of induction / mentoring programs.

I shall contact you to confirm your participation in this second phase of the study, and to decide on mutually convenient times and days to observe in your classroom.

Should you agree to participate in this second phase of the study, the ethical guidelines followed during Phase I of the study will be kept consistent during Phase II:

- Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to you or your students as a result of your involvement.
- Your students and you will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data you provide will be confidential (confidentiality).
- Should there be any questions posed during the observation and/or the follow-up interview that you prefer not to answer, you are under no obligation to answer them.

- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University for five years.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at national and international educational conferences and in academic journals.

I shall provide a summary of the findings to you upon completion of the data analysis and interpretation phase of the research. This study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board (REB), and the school ethics boards. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (807) 343-8786, or at igonzale@lakeheadu.ca. Alternately, you can contact my supervisor, Mary Clare Courtland, at (807) 345-4695 or via email at mccourtl@tbaytel.net. You may also contact the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board at (807) 343-8201.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ismel González
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education
Lakehead University
(807) 343-8786
igonzale@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix 7

Teacher Consent Form (Phase II)

Lakehead University

Thunder Bay, Ontario

My signature below indicates that I have received an explanation about the nature of the study in general, and about Phase II specifically, its purpose and procedures, and agree to participate in the second phase of a study conducted by Ismel González, PhD Candidate, entitled *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy* and that

- My participation is voluntary. I may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to me or my students as a result of my involvement in the study.
- My students and I will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data will be confidential (confidentiality).
- Should there be any questions posed during the observation and/or the follow-up interview that I prefer not to answer, I am under no obligation to answer them.
- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University by the researcher's supervisor for five years.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at national and international educational conferences and in journals.

_____

Print name

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix 8

Explanatory Letter to Students 18 years and Over

Dear Student,

My name is Ismel González and I am a modern language and culture instructor for the Languages Department at Lakehead University. I am currently completing my PhD in Educational Studies degree. I am conducting a study for my dissertation under the title *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy*. The purpose of my research is to explore modern language instructors' understandings of their cultural identities and how these understandings influence their instructional practices of language and culture teaching in the Canadian secondary school context.

Participants in this research are Annishnaabe, French, English as a Second Language, and Spanish secondary language teachers. There are two phases. In Phase I, I conducted interviews with the participants. During Phase II, I shall follow four of the teachers from Phase I for eight weeks to observe their teaching and interactions with students in order to gain insight into how they implement their programs. I ask your permission to collect information about your participation in activities and/or assignments that help me to understand how your teacher implements the program. This information might include class discussions, small group interactions, activities such as drama or art, etc. through which your teacher is promoting your understanding of language and culture. These data will not be used to assess your learning. I do not anticipate any risks for you from participating in this study. You will be free to ask that your information be excluded from the study at any time during the study.

If you give your consent, it is important that you understand the following ethics guidelines from Lakehead University's *Ethics Procedures and Guidelines for Research Involving Humans*:

- Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to you as a result of your involvement.
- You will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data you provide will be confidential (confidentiality).
- Your grade will not be affected by participation in the study.
- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University for five years.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at national and international educational conferences and in academic journals.

There are several benefits to this research. Firstly, it may have the potential to inform the development of education programs and language and cultures courses so that programs become

increasingly integrative with stronger connections between theory and practice. Secondly, your involvement in this study has the potential for helping secondary school teachers of modern languages and cultures to reflect on their practices.

This study has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through the Ethics Research Board at Lakehead University, and schools ethics boards. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (807) 343-8786, or at igonzale@lakeheadu.ca. Alternately, you can contact my supervisor, Mary Clare Courtland, at (807) 345-4695 or via email at mccourtl@tbyatel.net. You may also contact the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board at (807) 343-8201.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ismel González
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education
Lakehead University
(807) 343-8786
igonzale@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix 9

Students 18 and Over Consent Form

My signature below indicates that I have received a verbal explanation about the nature of the study, its purpose and procedures, and agree to participate in a study conducted by Ismel González, entitled *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy*. The investigation and my part in it have been fully explained to me and I have received answers to any questions I may have about the research procedure. I understand that:

- My participation is voluntary. I may withdraw at any time.
- There are no apparent risks of physical or psychological harm to me as a result of my involvement.
- I will not be identified in the study (anonymity).
- The data I provide will be confidential (confidentiality).
- My grade will not be affected by participation in the study.
- The data will be stored securely at Lakehead University for five years.
- The findings will be published as a dissertation thesis which will be available through the Education library at Lakehead University. As well, the findings will be reported at educational conferences and in academic journals.

I agree to participate in the study.

_____

Print name

_____   _____

Signature of Student   Date

Appendix 10

End-Of-Study Interview Guide

    I.   Teacher's reflections on the lessons observed;

   II.   Teacher's goals for the lessons observed;

  III.   Assignments and readings selected;

  IV.   Criteria for the selection of readings;

    V.   Teaching and assessment strategies employed by teachers;

  VI.   Rationale for teaching and assessment strategies employed;

 VII.   Links between language and culture established;

VIII.   Teacher's reflections on their participation in the study.

Appendix 11

Lakehead University Research Ethics Board Approval

Lakehead
U N I V E R S I T Y

September 18, 2010

Principal Investigator: Dr. Mary Clare Courtland
Student Investigator: Mr. Ismel González
Department of Languages
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Rd
Thunder Bay ON P7B 5E1

Dear Dr. Courtland and Mr. González:

Re: **REB Project #: 131 09-10 / ROMEO #1461188**
      Granting Agency name: N/A
      Granting Agency Project #: N/A

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I am pleased to grant ethical approval to your research project entitled, "Rethinking modern languages and cultures instruction as decolonizing pedagogy".

Ethics approval is valid until **September 18, 2011**. Please submit a Request for Renewal form to the Office of Research by **August 18, 2011** if your research involving human subjects will continue for longer than one year. **A Final Report must be submitted promptly upon completion of the project**. Request for Renewal and Final Report forms are available at:

   http://research.lakeheadu.ca/ethics_resources.html

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms must not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

Completed reports and correspondence may be directed to:

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of Research
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1
Fax: (807) 346-7749

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Maundrell
Chair, Research Ethics Board

/sw

cc: Office of Research
       Faculty of Graduate Studies

Appendix 12

Lakehead Public School Board Ethics Approval

Lakehead Public Schools

2135 Sills Street
THUNDER BAY, ONP7E 5T2
Telephone 625-5100
Fax 623-5833
www.lhbe.edu.on.ca

Director of Education: Catherine Siemieniuk

December 13, 2010

Mr. Ismel González
Faculty of Education
LakeheadUniversity
955 Oliver Rd.
Thunder Bay, ONP7B 5E1
Viaemail : "Ismel Gonzalez" <igonzale@lakeheadu.ca>

Dear Mr. González:

On behalf of the Lakehead District School Board, I am pleased to grant you permission to carry out your research entitled, *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy.*

The Lakehead District School Board looks forward to cooperating with you and to receiving your final report. Please contact the Principals at the schools planned for your research, or contact me, and I will provide assistance should you require it.

I will return the signed application package to you by mail.

Sincerely,

Charles Bishop
Education Officer
Lakehead District School Board

Appendix 13

Catholic School Board Ethics Approval

THUNDER BAY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

CATHOLIC EDUCATION CENTRE – 459 VICTORIA AVENUE WEST,– THUNDER BAY, ON P7C 0A4 – PHONE (807) 625-1555 – FAX (807) 623-0431

JOHN DE FAVERI
Director of Education, Secretary & Treasurer

December 8, 2010

Mary Clare Courtland, PhD,
Professor
Lakehead University
Faculty of Education
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7B 5E1

Dear Dr. Courtland:

This correspondence is to advise you that the Executive Leadership Team has approved your request for Ismel Gonzalez to conduct a research study within the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board for *Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as Decolonizing Pedagogy*. I wish to advise you that any and all costs associated with this research project are to be funded by Lakehead University. While we have approved the research to be conducted in our high schools, I also wish to remind you that participation in this study by our staff is voluntary and it will be up to the professional judgement of individual teachers as to their involvement.

Your contact for this research study will be Mr. Rob Kruse, Superintendent of Education. He can be reached by email at rkruse@tbcdsb.on.ca or by telephone at 625-1590. Please contact him to follow up with the details of this study.

Sincerely,

John De Faveri
Director of Education

cc.   Rob Kruse, Superintendent of Education

Appendix 14

Request to Make Changes to Research Design

Ismel González
Faculty Education
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, On. P7B 5E1

November 24th, 2010

Dr. Richard Maundrell
Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of Research
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1

Re: Request for Amendment to a Project Approved by the Research Ethics Board
REB Project #: 131 09-10 / ROMEO #1461188
Project Title: Rethinking Modern Languages and Cultures Instruction as
Decolonizing Pedagogy.

Dear Dr. Richard Maundrell:

        I am writing to inform you about two changes to the originally proposed research study. Because of the lack Spanish language and cultures teachers and/or course offerings this academic year in the Thunder Bay region, my supervisor and I have decided to include only Native, ESL and French languages and cultures teachers in the proposed study. In addition, because of the small number of ESL teachers in high schools in the Thunder Bay region (at present there is only one ESL teacher for all public high schools in Thunder Bay and the Catholic School Board does not offer ESL programs at the high school level), we have also decided to include ESL teachers from the Lakehead Adult Education Centre and the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association. Overall, the design and the methods stay the same as articulated in the original research proposal submitted to your office.

        Please find attached copies of the revised Information/Cover Letters and Consent Forms with the changes indicated above.

Please feel free to contact me should you need any further information on these changes.

Sincerely

Ismel Gonzalez

Appendix 15

Lakehead University's REB Approval to Make Changes to Research Design

Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Office of Research

(807) 343-8283
(807) 346-7749

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 26, 2010

To: Mr. Ismel Gonzalez, Mary Clare Courtland

From: Dr. Richard Maundrell

Subject: Amendment for REB Project #131 09-10 / ROMEO #1461188

Thank you for your request for amendment for your project entitled, "Rethinking modern languages and cultures instruction as decolonizing pedagogy".

Your request to eliminate Spanish language and culture teachers and/or course offerings and include only Native, ESL and French languages and cultures teaching in the study is acceptable to the Research Ethics Board. Also acceptable is the inclusion of ESL teachers from the Lakehead Adult Education Centre and the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association.
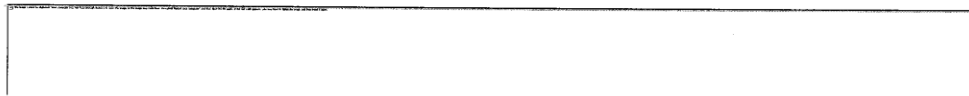
Please continue to advise us of any future changes to this project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Maundrell
Chair, Research Ethics Board

/scw

Appendix 16

Summary of Themes, Subthemes and Categories of Phases I and II

THEMES	SUBTHEMES
1. **Personal conceptions of languages and cultures**	a) **Languages and cultures are inseparable** b) **Autobiographical narratives as touchstones.**
2. **Perceptions of teachers' own cultures**	a) **I am a multicultural Canadian** b) **Cultural identities are individual**
3. **Languages and cultures in the classroom**	a) **Language study over culture study** b) **Incidental use of cultures vs. planned study of cultures.**
4. **Students' first languages and cultures in the classroom.**	
5. **Teaching Strategies**	
6. **Challenges**	a) **School board priorities** b) **Resources** c) **Professional development opportunities**

Table 1: Summary of Themes, Subthemes and Categories, Phase I

THEMES	SUBTHEMES
1. **Roles of the teacher in the modern languages and cultures classroom**	
2. **Patterns of target language and culture use in the classroom.**	a) **Scaffolding reading comprehension**
	b) **Grammar, grammar, grammar**
3. **Challenges**	

Table 2: Summary of Themes and Subthemes

Appendix 17

Summaries of Statements

Theme: Personal conceptions of languages and cultures
Subtheme: Languages and cultures are inseparable
• "I see you have here *language* and *culture*. I don't think there is a difference. I see them as the same. Language is the culture, culture is the language. (Stuart, I.P. 1) • "I would say that language and culture are integral to each other; you can't separate language and culture, in my opinion they're one."(Cindy, I.P. 1)
Subtheme: Cultural autobiographies as touchstones
• "The other day my daughter was asking me: 'Why do you always speak Finn with Oma?', which is my mother. 'Why can't you all speak English so that we can all understand you?' She understands a little bit, but not much. And I said to her: 'Well, no, because that's my connection'. We still celebrate some of the traditions and customs, but, to me, the key has been to hold on to that language because if I lose that, I feel like I'm going to lose my understanding and my connection with my past; it's so important to me to hold on to it. (Gail, I.P. 1) • "Say you're learning about Earth, it's not just earth, it's Mother Earth, it's all those teachings that you have been given. So, like in the spiritual sense, in the land sense, the actual land, taking care of the earth. So, it's not just one word, it a lot of teachings that go behind it. That's what I mean about culture and language." (Marla, I.P. 1)

Table 3: Summary Statements, Phase I

Theme: Perceptions of teachers' own cultural identities
Subtheme: I am a multicultural Canadian
• "…we find ourselves fighting to find ourselves and it's a little difficult. I welcome what other people bring to Canada and so that to me forms my culture." (Allan, I.P. 1) • "My culture is a mix and match of everything. I am an Italian-Canadian, but, in saying that, I have, I suppose, some elements of Italian culture, but not everything. Some elements that I've incorporated that are Canadian, or North American or maybe American. American-Canadian-Italian… I feel like I'm a mixture, even to the extent that I go to a lot Native things now like Powwows, Native cultural events."(Patricia, I.P. 1)
Subtheme: Cultural identities are individual
• "My culture is the language I speak, it's the traditions my family has, it is the system of values that I treasure, that I believe that should be upheld. It's the way that I feel we should be interacting with people, responding to people, the way we should nurture each other, the way we should pursue our goals and ideals. All of that would be my culture." (Barbara, I.P. 1) • "I feel like as in my ethnicity. I always say when people ask me: *I'm Italian*. Even though I was born in Canada. The reason I say that is because it makes up so much of who I am. The language I speak at home, I would say a lot of the time with my parents and now being married with my husband who is Italian. We try to maintain a lot of the values, whether it is the cuisine, Italian cuisine… it makes up a large part of who I am. It is, it does."(Leslie, I.P. 1)

Table 4: Summary Statements, Phase I

Theme: Languages and cultures in the classroom
<u>Subtheme</u>: Language study over culture study
• "…whatever I teach I don't look from the cultural perspective, I look from the language acquisition necessities or needs in my classroom and as that I develop my lessons and then whatever unit we are studying I try to put these together."(Barbara, I.P. 1) • "This year I changed up my strategy 'cause when I was at the other school I said: 'This is what we'll have for the whole year and I'm going to hit, hit and hit that' and I'm focusing on grammar as well as first person and third person, and how to put together sentences not just nouns, but the language is mostly a verb language, a description language, an action language." (Stuart, I.P. 1)
<u>Subtheme</u>: Incidental use of cultures vs. planned study of cultures.
• "While I instruct, I always try, whether it's a grammar lesson, or whether we're studying a poem in French, there will be things that come out of there and all of a sudden kind of make you diverge and discuss something culturally." (Leslie, I.P. 1) • "I try to make it culturally relevant in all my lessons as much as I can. Just to bring that cultural component and make it livable for the students as much as I can."(Cindy, I.P. 1) • "Let's say I don't spend a lot of time thinking about the concept of culture in what I teach, although I shouldn't say that because it happens every day. I think it's something you can't really separate because when I teach language I teach from the Canadian perspective…" (Barbara, I.P. 1)

Table 5: Summary Statements, Phase I

Theme: Students' first languages and cultures in the classroom.
• "A lot of it is to try to make them understand that their culture is important. 'Don't lose your first language', I say that to all my students. 'Continue speaking your first language because that's important, that's valuable'. I think they appreciate that and I learn how to say some of the words in their languages like how to say *hello* and these kinds of things." (Allan, ESL teacher, I.P. 1) • "Sometimes to be successful you have to accept this culture and behave in a certain way to be understood in a certain way. If you want 100% adjustment and feel like a Canadian and act like a Canadian…" (Barbara, I.P. 1) • "It's rare that I would allow them to use English to discuss. For example, if there's a concept that is really obscure, we'll beat around the bush to get to that meaning. Sometimes our resources are not available in French, then if I do use an English resource, all the work related to that particular theme is in French; they may use something in English, but the rest will be in French."(Cindy, I.P. 1)

Table 6: Summary Statements, Phase I

Theme: Teaching Strategies
• "One thing that I like to use is wordless books. There's one by Mercer Meyer called *A boy, a dog and a frog*." (Allan, I.P. 1) • "I try to as much as possible to include several activities in a week where they all have to participate. Whether it is a game, and we've done the Jeopardy game the other day where I put the words at four different levels, everybody was able to participate… little word games, … spelling simple words."(Barbara, I.P. 1) • "For the Grade 9 [Core Academic] we did an activity, I had a quiz for them on verbs and then I did a mini-lesson on the 24-hour system. Just telling time in French. How do you tell time in French? We had activities with that and then, today, at the end of the class as well, I started talking about different body parts, and talking about adjectives because that will build my lesson for tomorrow." (Cindy, I.P. 1)

Table 7: Summary Statements, Phase I

Theme: Challenges
<u>Subtheme</u>: School board priorities
• "The School Board does a lot of lip service to my program. I think there's a lot of lip service, in my opinion. That's what it's all about. They're offering the service, which is great and fantastic so that it appears on paper and, are they really concerned? No, I don't think so." (Stuart, I.P. 1) • "They don't understand and they kind of leave us alone. It's kind of nice on one hand because I can make program modifications based on what my students need and I don't have somebody who doesn't have half of an idea coming along and telling me how to do my job, there's some freedom and I own the program. That's nice. But on the other side, they come along and they don't understand and then say that because they are making a change from ESL to ELL, you bring along the Aboriginal students. But we're not equipped to that." (Allan, I.P. 1) • "The most horrible challenge is the fact, and I have to be brutally frank, our school board, I don't think, has the vision that is required today to maintain languages. When we had cut-backs a few years ago, we used to have a French consultant, French coordinator, those positions were lost and they haven't been replaced." (Cindy, I.P. 1)
<u>Subtheme</u>: Resources
• "I'm part of this Ministry working group. There are 16 of us from around the province who last week we went to Toronto. We were looking at the place of French in Ontario at different levels, French extended, French Immersion, Core French. One of the things we were talking about was labs like the one they have at the university. I said it would be fantastic if we had a lab here where we could get earphones to do that. I put forth that idea four years ago when I was part of the curriculum review for French, it didn't go anywhere." (Cindy, I.P. 1) • "Lack of resources. I need a lot resources, whether it is stuff to make our projects, relevant books that students can use. The ones I'm using, yes, they are outdated."(Marla, I.P. 1) • "*[Referring to the textbooks used at her school]* Well, as I said all the programs are on the Trillium List. That means that once they're on the Trillium List that means they've been approved by the Board and by the Ministry, I should say. So, the programs, they do, basically, they cover the curriculum. So, if you go through the program, you'll know that you've almost, I would say 95% covered what you had to cover. They try to pick the interest of the students and again in Grade 9, thinking they are going to be interested in monsters or a mystery, but, at the

same time, again, there's not enough push on the cultural aspect." (Leslie, I.P. 1)

<u>Subtheme</u>: Professional development opportunities
• "I find that in our situation, we are a very small group. It's just Gail and myself. We'll do some on-line research, we'll do some reading, I've taken a number of AQ courses, so I've done my Reading Specialist, my ESL, Special Education. I keep on going back and taking more courses. That's professional development."(Allan, I.P. 1) • "There are millions, tons of PD opportunities outside of Thunder Bay, but the board doesn't pay for that. They don't have any kind of money allocation for that. They don't have PD sessions for ESL teachers at my board."(Barbara, I.P. 1) • "I can't even remember the last time we had PD in service that was provided by the board. I don't remember it." (Cindy, I.P. 1)

Table 8: Summary Statements, Phase I

<u>**Theme**</u>: **The Role of the Teacher in the Modern Languages and Cultures Classroom**
• "I don't tell them to speak this French or that French. I just don't want them to sound Anglicized. You can listen to a typical Grade 9 presentation and they would be: "Bon Jour (pronounces it with an English "r")". For me, it is not more so about a dialect, but that the students don't sound like an English speaker because you want good French". (Leslie, I.P.2, p. 11) • "I do want to make sure that their pronunciation is good. I'm not going to tell you who said this, but when I finished at the university, at the department of languages, one of my professors said: "Go out there and teach good French" […] We do "le Français standard", "le Français parisien", that's what our focus is and that's what I've been taught". (I.P. 2, p. 12) • "The classroom environment is relaxed. The teacher seems to have developed a good rapport with his students" (Stuart, O.L., p. 1). • "I think I have a really good relation with most youth. I get along with most of them. I respect them all and get to know them by their first names. I care about them, I really do. I think I have a really good idea of how to reach and engage the students, what would interest them, how to get the curriculum across in a way that the students understand and enjoy. I think I was no different than anybody else as a kid, how would I like this, how would I enjoy this as a student. So, I think that's one my strengths as a teacher, for sure". (I.P. 2, p. 3)

Table 9: Summary Statements, Phase II

Theme: Leslie's Patterns of Modern Languages and Culture Use in the Classroom
<u>Subtheme</u>: Scaffolding reading comprehension.
"When the students finish dramatizing a chapter, they are asked to do two reading comprehension activities from the textbook. For example, one activity is "True or False" and the other one asks the students to find expressions in the chapter that make reference to death […] The only speaking students do is when they read the novel. Leslie explains the author's messages. She even provides the connections (text-to-text, text-to-self or text-to-world)". (O.L., p. 24)   "The comprehension is important at the Core level. I think that before you can get to that analysis, you're going to have to make sure they know what's going on, like plot and character. At the Core level, they don't, they need that little bit of guidance. Maybe in an Immersion class, you might just eliminate the comprehension activities and go straight to the high level ones, but I still wanted them to know what happened and so on". (I.P. 2, p. 4)
<u>Subtheme</u>: Grammar, grammar, grammar.
"…right now the curriculum is just like that and, plus, we know that the final exam in my course is more of a technical type of an exam. The written exam is technical, you know?: "Can you show me that you understand these structures?" "Can you show me that you can comprehend a text that you've never seen and comment on it?" and "Can you write an organized paragraph"? So, we always know what the end is and as teachers we look at what's that end product that we want the students to give us, and in a second language class currently, grammar is important. (I.P. 2, p. 7)   "Let's face it, you have to memorize the expressions that use "Subjunctive". There is still that traditional type of learning. I mean, educators might criticize me for saying that, but if you don't know the expressions, if you don't have the verb *être*, you don't know any Subjunctive. It's not going to just come to you by reading. You have to memorize it. I'm sorry to say that". (I.P.2, p. 8)

Table 10: Summary Statements, Phase II

Theme: Stuart's Patterns of Modern Languages and Culture Use in the Classroom
"The class starts with the teacher asking students about their weekend and to share a story from their weekend. He took advantage of students' stories to teach them words in Ojibwe. Students were very engaged with this activity. He proceeded to share with his students that his son and he had received their spiritual names during the weekend. The students were very quiet and receptive to this story. (O.L., p. 3)   "I try to get the students to speak as often they want. Reading and next the writing and listening happens when I do it. Writing is probably on the bottom of the list. We think that it's more important that they learn how to speak it first. If one person calls it this way and another person calls it another way, as long as they know what it means, I really don't care and that's what happens". (I.P. 2, p. 4)

Table 11: Summary Statements, Phase II

Theme: Challenges
• I have asked them why they've signed up for the course, what are their expectations of this class. And they all tell you the same thing, they'd tell you: "Well, I want to learn the language, this and that". "I want to learn the culture" and then you see that it's not about that, it's about getting an easy mark or hanging out with friends. That's when I take it as an insult to not just me as a teacher, but culturally as well. In the past, some of my best students were non-Aboriginal because they worked hard. They wanted to learn and they worked hard and they came to learn the language. And they learned a little bit and they could understand where we're coming from, whereas the Aboriginal students were there to get a mark. They thought that because it was a Native language class, it would be easier than French: "I don't like French and I'm not taking French; I'm taking Native language". (Stuart, I.P., p. 2) • I feel that has a lot to do with what happened in the past with residential schools, whatever, parents who went to residential schools. A lot of the parents themselves don't have much more education than a high school education. So, they don't see the importance yet. I think this generation and the next generation is getting better, but still there's a lot of work to do right now. So, that's part of when I call home to the parents and tell them: "Your son hasn't come to school", they say: "I know, I can't get him to school, this and that. He or she stays at home". But I don't accept that: "Get your kid to school and talk about the positives of going to school and how it is going to change you". I'm frustrated with the parents too. (Stuart, I.P. 2, p. 3) • I don't see the Board getting resources for us, getting the speakers for the kids. It looks good that we have all these classes, but I don't think that they're really serious about it. You know what? You can team-teach. Have two people in there. Have an elder who can do the language and have a teacher that can do the classroom management and the marking and all the things that the elder can't do or doesn't have the training to do. There are other ways to go around it, I guess. (Stuart, I.P., pp. 10-11)

Table 12: Summary Statements, Phase II.