

The Cultural Integration of Adult Immigrants in Canada: The Role of Language Ability

by

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ABSTRACT

This manuscript is dedicated to researching the link between language acquisition and cultural integration. As this has overtime become a glaring gap in multiple federal integration policy instruments, we carried out both theoretical reviews as well as fieldwork to answer this question. In so far as fieldwork goes, we recruited two contrasting participants twenty-two and thirty-five years old respectively, male and female, from different cultural groups but both sharing the overall goal of integration in Canada and enrolled in the *Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada* (LINC) program. We carried out semi-structured interviews by way of a theory-based protocol and subsequently processed the data via thematic analysis techniques to arrive at our results. Empirically speaking, we synthesized our participants' lived experiences and perceptions and found that language plays four distinct roles related to culture and cultural integration. First, it is a tool with which to transmit cultural information directly (the referential function). Second, it is the carrier of a second wave of pragmatic (e.g. body language, prosody) from which cultural norms and conventions can be inferred. Third, language is a tool for group differentiation on the basis of which prototypical members (i.e. native-speakers both in the source and destination culture) at times ostracize learners based on linguistic markers. Lastly, we find that it is precisely the experience of loss of membership, disembeddedness, and lack of belonging in previous and future speech groups which then drives newcomers to cultural integration patterns which are less than additive in nature such as intersection and compartmentalization.

Keywords: Identification Patterns, Language Acquisition Theory, Language Training Policy, Socio-Cultural Integration, LINC program

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IOLS	Insufficient Official-Language Skills
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
CLB	Canadian Language Benchmarks
SPSLT	Strategic Plan for Settlement and Language Training
IRCC	Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
CIC	Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada
SPO	Service Provider Organizations
ESL	English as a Second Language
FPT	Federal-Provincial-Territorial Agreements
CCLB	Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks
CMIA	Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement
CBCCI	Canada-British Columbia Immigration Agreement
CACI	Canada-Alberta Cooperation on Immigration
COIA	Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement
CSIA	Canada-Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement
CNSCI	Canada-Nova Scotia Cooperation on Immigration
CPEICI	Canada-Prince Edward Island Cooperation on Immigration
CNBIA	Canada-New Brunswick Immigration Agreement
CNLIA	Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Agreement
CYCI	Canada-Yukon Cooperation on Immigration
MCI	Ministry for Citizenship and Immigration Ontario
CA	Cultural Acquisition
CI	Cultural Integration
SIA	Social Identity Approach
SIT	Social Identity Theory
AS	Acculturation Strategies
SCT	Self-Categorization Theory
IAM	Interactive Acculturation Model
BII	Bicultural Identity Integration
CDMSII	Cognitive-Developmental Model of Social Identity Theory
CC	Communicative Competence
ELT	Enhanced Language Training

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For Oksana B.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The present section introduces the reader to the pedagogical and policy challenges that are at the core of this project's rationale. Namely, providing language training for newcomers in a way that enhances their cultural integration. Therefore, first, we present the breath of the service demand for language training. Second, we highlight the three-part federal policy strategy that aims to address this demand and its goals. Third, we engage with the policy apparatus and, by virtue of its shortcomings, propose and engage in the current project as a step towards addressing the fundamental gap at the core of the federal strategy. We thereby establish a clear need for research on the impact of language ability on cultural integration of adult newcomers. Finally, we outline our research question and provide an overview of each chapter that follows.

1.1. The Language Training Service Demand

Historically, since at least 1978, an average of one in three new permanent residents—or about 76,680 persons per year— report not having knowledge of neither English nor French upon arrival in Canada (chart 1 and 2). Among this group with *insufficient official-language skills*¹ (hereafter 'IOLS'), spouses, dependants, family sponsored applicants and refugees figure prominently. The reason for their overrepresentation in the IOLS group is that, understandably, language skills are not a component of the selection criteria for the family reunification and humanitarian immigration classes (Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2002). Nevertheless, official-language skills remain crucial for their economic, social, political and cultural participation in Canadian society and economy as we outline below.

¹ 'Insufficient' here is used broadly to describe individuals for whom the carrying out of daily interpersonal communicative functions in an official-language context would prove difficult and often unsuccessful because of their lack of official-language skills.

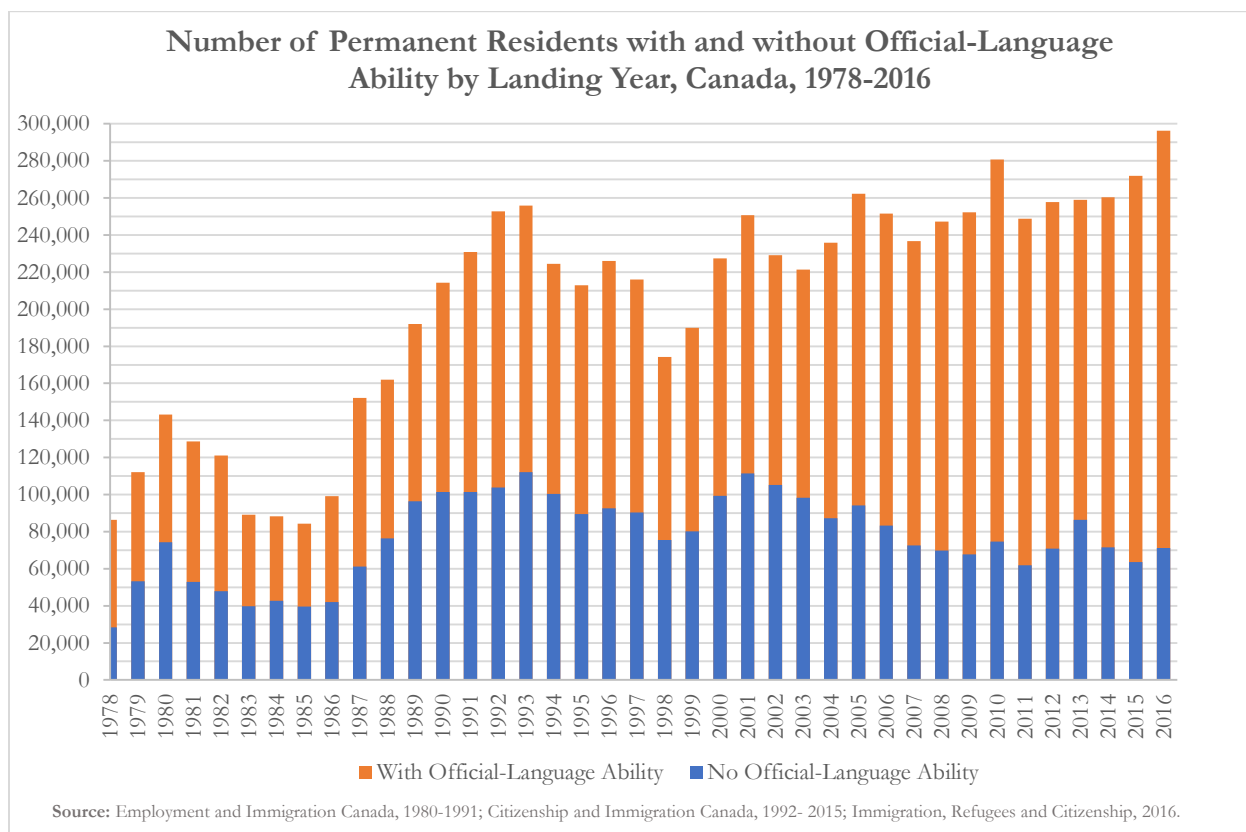


Chart 1 – Number of Permanent Residents with and without Official-Language Ability by Landing Year, Canada, 1978-2016

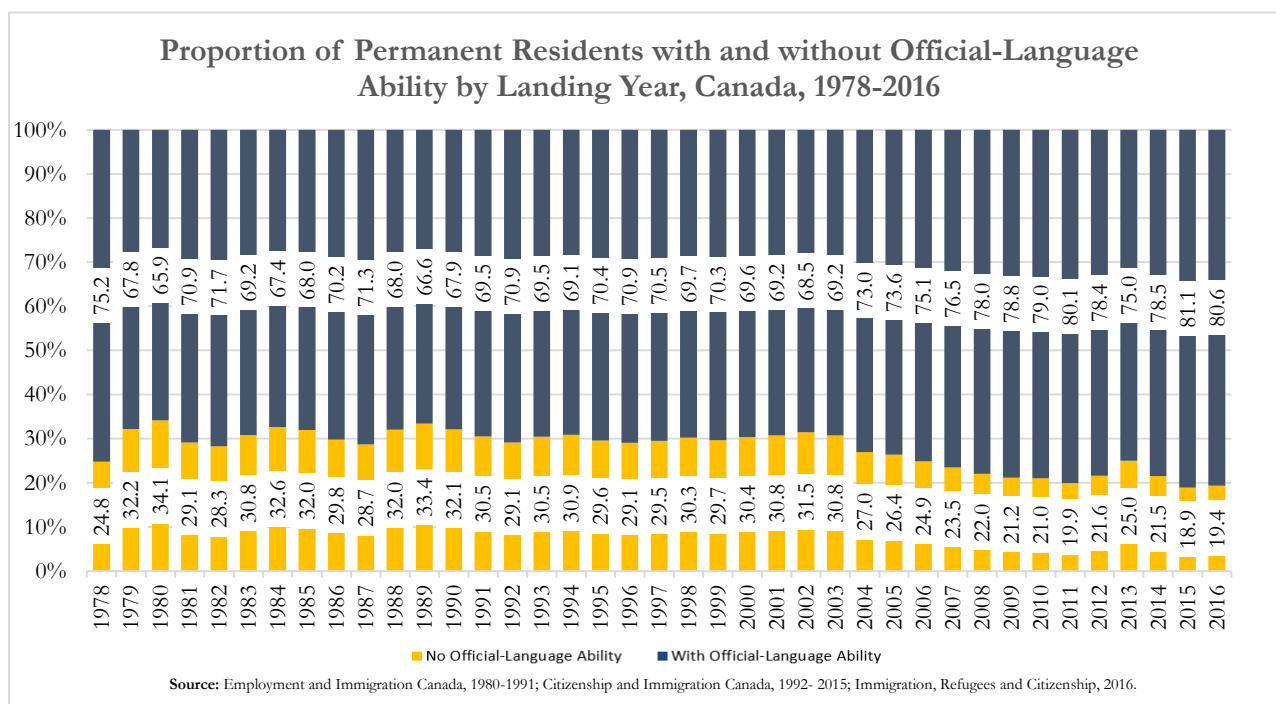


Chart 2 – Proportion of Permanent Residents with and without Official-Language Ability by Landing Year, Canada, 1978-2016

In fact, the economic, social, political and cultural costs of IOLS for newcomers in Canada can be high, as can be gleaned from the evidence below. For example, without basic official-language skills newcomers are at risk of earning between 10% to 30% less (Carliner, 1981; Chiswick & Miller, 1988, 2003; Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005; Ferrer, Green & Ridell, 2006; Nadeau & Seckin, 2010), suffering from lower employment rates and reduced access to jobs (Grondin, 2005; Godin, 2008), fewer contacts with nationals (Esteves & Sampaio, 2013), poorer health (Ng, Pottie & Spitzer, 2011), often experiencing residential segregation (Balakrishnan & Kralt, 1987), while being formally excluded from naturalization, voting and public office (Citizenship Act, 1985). Further still, language skills play an important role in opening up both intragroup and intergroup social networks and thereby improving information exchange among and between cultural groups (Mu, 2014) – In other words, language affects social integration. Overall, newcomers' IOLS presents a challenge to public policy because, as the evidence above suggests, language is directly implicated in economic, social, political, and cultural integration processes and outcomes. Indeed, from the evidence, it would seem that the lower a newcomer's capacity for communicating in the official language the lower the chance for positive integration outcomes.

1.2. The Language Policy Response: Program, Framework, Plan

Aware of the implications of IOLS for newcomer integration, the federal government put in place several initiatives beginning in the 1990s which have evolved overtime. These early solutions include a national language training program (i.e. Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada - LINC), a national language ability framework (i.e. Canadian Language Benchmarks - CLB), and an articulated policy strategy for Ontario (i.e. Strategic Plan for Settlement and Language Training -

SPSLT)². In regards to the latter policy strategy, we single out Ontario because “Ontario makes up the overwhelming majority of LINC clients...[at CLB level 8]” and therefore this single policy would affects a large number of newcomers. Indeed, in 2008, for example, there were 1,086 clients with completed LINC 6-7 training in Ontario compared to 34 in the Atlantic Region and none in the rest of Canada (Dempsey, Xue & Kustec, 2009: 20-21).

The federal LINC program and CLB framework, along with the Ontario Plan each address different aspects of the language training challenge. For example, the LINC program tackles language training, the CLBs address placement, assessment, and credentialing requirements while the Ontario Plan provides a provincial macro policy direction that helps in curriculum design, program delivery, and administration. In the section below we briefly describe each initiative to provide a policy context to our research project. More importantly, the federal-provincial language training policy apparatus provides us, by virtue of its shortcomings, with a strong rationale for our project.

² More recently, the federal government piloted a Settlement Outcomes Survey and intends to implement a Pan-Canadian Framework for Settlement Outcomes. We do not include these policy instruments here since the Federal-Provincial-Territorial agreement will not be finalized until late in 2018.

1.2.1. The Language Program: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)

The first initiative we focus on is the LINC program from which we recruit our participants. Launched in 1992, LINC is a federal program designed to provide language training to “facilitate social, cultural, economic, and political integration into Canada” (Evaluation Division, 2010: 1). Eligible clients include permanent residents, protected persons (as defined in IRPA, 2002: Sec. 95), and convention refugees (Funding Guidelines, 2015). At its core, the LINC program functions as a hybrid system that combines central federal administration and funding with third-party delivery. That is, IRCC retains its primary administrative role in soliciting, selecting and funding³ projects from *Service Providing Organizations* (SPOs) according to national priorities (Funding Guidelines, 2015). By contrast, SPOs—such as community centers, school boards, and colleges—are responsible for direct delivery of services to clients (e.g. training, placement, assessments, referrals, translation and interpretation) (Funding Guidelines, 2015).

Historically, the LINC program has been subject to continuous expansion and improvement. For example, in 1992, LINC offered levels 1-3, in 1997 it incorporated levels 4 and 5, then in 2006 levels 6 and 7 were included (CIC, 2003; CIC, 2010; Beckingham et al., 2007). With the rapid expansion in levels so too came a growth in clientele from 56,031 in 2008 to nearly double that figure—111,000 clients—in 2016 (Performance Reports, 2010: 28; Performance Reports, 2016: 27). To ensure the viability of the program, quantitative and qualitative supports have had to increase as well. Financially, this has meant a 98.6% increase in the budget from 141.6⁴ million in 1992, to 281.4⁵ million as of 2015 (Performance Reports, 1996; 2016). Consistency across jurisdictions was also a concern. As such, curriculum guidelines were quickly developed to guide teachers. These were first introduced in 1993

³ To a maximum of 3 years funding (Funding Guidelines CICs, 2015).

⁴ Figures are in 2018 constant dollars so as to account for inflation.

⁵ Figures are in 2018 constant dollars so as to account for inflation.

for LINC 1-3, in 1999 for LINC 4-5, revised and combined again in 2002 for LINC 1-5 and then revised and expanded once more in 2007 for LINC 1-7 (Beckingham et al., 2007: 3). Further still, several other improvements rendered the program more responsive and flexible to local needs including: Transportation subsidies, childcare services, home study⁶ and specialty classes (e.g. ESL for seniors) which were all largely implemented (CIC, 2010).

1.2.2. The Language Framework: The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)

A year after the launch of the LINC program, the federal government tackled the question of a transparent and standardized measure of language proficiency to support placement, assessment, and curriculum design. In 1993, therefore, IRCC's predecessor supported the creation of a "national advisory group to develop a language-standards framework..." (Jezak & Picardo, 2017: 13). The end-result of this initiative came in 1996 in the form of a "descriptive scale of language ability in English as a Second Language (ESL) written as 12 benchmarks or reference points along a continuum from basic to advanced" (CCLB, 2012: v). Ultimately, this framework is used for "describing, measuring, and recognizing the English-language proficiency of persons in Canada..." (Senior, 2017: 72). As such it is used in all federal language training programs—including LINC—as the primary instrument with which to understand newcomers' language ability development.

Currently, the CLBs (CCLB, 1996; 2000; 2012) are used not just in language training but also in integration and immigration policy more broadly. For example, they are explicitly mentioned in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (2002) as the standard for determining a lack of (<CLB 3), basic (CLB 4/5), moderate (CLB 6/7), and high (CLB 8+) ability in an official language. Similarly, the CLBs are used to set the minimum language requirements for immigration programs such as: The *Federal*

⁶ Introduced in 1995 (Senior, 2017:75)

Skilled Worker Program (CLB 7), the *Canadian Experience Class* (CLB 5/7), the *Federal Skilled Trades Program* (CLB 4/5), the *Start-Up Visa Program* (CLB 5), the *Investor Venture Capital Program* (CLB 5), and the *Caregiver for Children Class* (CLB 5) to name a few (IRCC, 2017). They are also used to define “adequate knowledge” (CLB 4) of official languages in the context of citizenship grants (IRCC, 2017). Increasingly, the scale is also being used to ‘benchmark’ occupations, which in turn provide newcomers, trainers, and policy-makers with a meaningful threshold to aim for in the context of employment (CCLB, 2005). In effect, the CLBs have played an integral part in defining and assessing official languages in immigration, settlement, education, training and employment contexts for well over 20 years.

1.2.3. The Language Policy: Ontario’s Strategic Plan for Settlement and Language Training (SPSLT)

Besides a language training program and assessment framework, federal interventions also have come in the form of a series of Federal-Provincial/Territorial (FTP) agreements beginning in 1991. The agreements tackle a variety of immigration questions such as levels planning, nominee programs, funding formulas, data exchange, and —critical to our project— settlement and language services (see below for examples).

The distribution of responsibilities and types of agreements vary widely depending on the jurisdiction. For example, in Quebec (Canada-Quebec Accord, 1991-), Manitoba from 1998 - 2013 (CMIA, 1998) and British Columbia from 1998 - 2014 (CBCCI, 1998), the provinces became solely responsible for design, administration, delivery, and evaluation of settlement programming (including language training). In Alberta’s case, Ottawa agreed to joint administration (CACI, 2007). As far as Ontario (COIA, 2005), Saskatchewan (CSIA, 2005: Sec. 5.4), Nova Scotia (CNSCI, 2007: Sec. 7.5),

Prince Edward Island (CPEICI, 2008: Sec. 6.5), New Brunswick (CNBIA, 2017), Newfoundland and Labrador (CNLIA, 2016), Yukon (CYCI, 2008: Sec. 6.5), the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the final responsibility for settlement and language training remains with the federal government (Seidle, 2010). In the case of all jurisdictions other than Quebec, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Alberta only informal consultations are required before changes to program administration are implemented (Vineberg, 2012: 51).

Uniquely among the provinces, Ontario, in the form of its Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), undertook additional consultations and produced a Strategic Plan for Settlement and Language Training (SPSLT) to guide federal spending (MCI, 2006). In the 2006 Plan, the MCI attempts to articulate what successful integration means along three strategic stages: Immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and long-term outcomes.

The immediate outcomes being targeted in the SPSLT are varied but can be understood as being equally focused on both program administration and newcomer outcomes. As it concerns newcomer language training, only one mention is made to the effect of having “English and/or French skills sufficient to meet employment and social goals” (MCI, 2006: Appendix). Under intermediate outcomes, language training is again understood to support “social and economic integration” (MCI, 2006: Appendix). Lastly, under the long-term outcomes description, language is no longer mentioned as the focus is on the final goals of ‘economic, social, political and cultural integration’ (MCI, 2006: Appendix). Presumably, at this stage language skills are no longer a primary concern for newcomers. In sum, as far as the Ontario’s SPSLT is concerned, language is a tool with which to achieve multidimensional integration goals, particularly social and economic.

1.3. Project Rationale, Questions, and Overview

Having reviewed all three policy instruments mentioned above, we find a strange paradox. On the one hand, all three initiatives variously stress the importance of culture in language learning and language learning in cultural integration. Indeed, cultural integration is an explicit target for both the LINC program and the SPSLT (CIC, 2010; MCI, 2006). On the other hand, not one of the three initiatives defines what exactly they mean by the idea of ‘culture-in-language’ or language learning in cultural integration. As a consequence of this ‘underspecification’, the idea of culture itself rings hollow and stands out as being nearly completely absent from any framework, guidelines, metric, or model associated with these initiatives. More importantly, without identifying the components of culture and the processes by which it interacts with language acquisition, how can we expect language-driven results in the process of cultural integration?

Indeed, in the case of the LINC program, for example, from the very beginning its stated mission has been to “facilitate social, *cultural*, economic, and political integration into Canada” through language training (emphasis ours, CIC, 2010: v). In other words, culture is taken to be a substantial dimension of newcomer integration like any other. However, when it comes to the actual LINC 5-7 curriculum guidelines – the ‘content manual’ so to speak – culture is treated only superficially as a ‘theme’.

In fact, across the 20 units provided in the guidelines, culture does not figure in any of the level outcomes, profiles, assessments or learner goals, to name a few (see Hajer, Kaskens, and Stasiak, 2007). In other words, culture is treated as contextual background information through which to learn other knowledge and skills and not as a distinct knowledge or skill set of its own. Even when the

concept is vaguely defined as “conventions relating to oral and written communication” (Hajer, Kaskens, and Stasiak, 2008: 7) no examples or frameworks are provided and the reader (and learner) is left with the same question: Just what exactly do you mean by culture? How can we promote an outcome for which we do not at least have a working definition?

For their part, the CLBs also mirror and in many ways worsen this knowledge gap. Where the LINC guidelines, in our view, failed to elucidate the culture concept in connection with the content, planning, and delivery of lessons the CLBs fail in specifying the culture concept in the realm of assessment, testing and benchmarking. As we argue in chapter four, the CLB’s core theoretical assumptions as found in the communicative competence model of language do not identify cultural elements other than ‘cultural references’. Further, in the explanation for this component we find Bachman and Palmer’s (2010) treatment of culture to yet again resonate with the idea of culture as contextual knowledge and not as an active skill or active knowledge set. Moreover, even for this vague component, it is not clear how it interacts with other dimensions of language (e.g. morpho-syntax, semantics, etc.). In sum, in so far as the CLBs are concerned, we are left with the same question: What is the relationship between culture and language as it applies in cultural integration processes?

In contrast to LINC program guidelines and the CLBs, the SPSLT did pay attention to the role of culture but only in so far as the initial consultation report. In that report, cultural adjustment (i.e. integration) is mentioned as a clear issue for youth and women (InterQuest, 2006: 2-5). As a follow-up, solutions such as adding “curriculum around Canadian...customs, and other idiosyncracies of Canadian culture...” are proposed (InterQuest: 2006: 3). However, the SPSLT itself does not incorporate these recommendations or delve deeper into the operationalization of the concept in the final document (MCI, 2006).

In sum, a cultural reading of the existing initiatives, we argue, readily betrays a deep gap at their core in so far as defining culture and its relationship to language acquisition and integration processes. In turn, this gap negatively feeds into a lack of concrete goals, objectives, approaches, models, frameworks, targets, performance indicators, databases, policies and strategies that would *proactively* encourage positive cultural integration outcomes. Ultimately, that there has been no attempt at the federal or provincial level to *systematically* address the impact of increased language ability on the acquisition of and integration with a new culture in spite of having cultural integration as an explicit policy goal. For these reasons, with this project we aim to begin to address this gap.

As an early step towards addressing this multifaceted problem, we argue it would be useful to elicit and synthesize the real lived experiences and perceptions of those who are expected to experience cultural integration over the course of their language training. In particular, we mean high-intermediate performing newcomers (LINC 6/7 for CLB 8) whom —if the federal assumptions are correct— are assumed to be better culturally integrated than lower-level newcomers. In this project, therefore, we seek to answer the following research question: **How do adult newcomers with high-intermediate language skills perceive the impact of their official-language ability on their cultural integration?**

To answer this question, we conducted two related lines of exploratory research: Framework and fieldwork. First, in chapter two, we carry out a review of the literature in regards to the integration construct as an umbrella concept covering structural (economic, political, social) dimensions, policies, and outcomes as well as ‘internal-existential’ cultural dimensions and outcomes. We follow this disaggregation of the integration construct by a chapter dedicated to our primary dimension of interest: Cultural integration. Specifically, we reviewed models that address the process of *acquiring* a new culture as a newcomer and *integrating* this new knowledge with pre-existing cultural repertoires

(hereafter ‘CA’ and ‘CI’ respectively). Thereafter, in chapter four, we critically examined to what extent existing models of language ability can and do accommodate cultural processes of acquisition and integration. Together, the two reviews are used to develop an initial understanding (i.e. framework) of how language ability relates to CA and CI processes.

The second way in which we address the perceived impact of language ability on CA and CI is through field work. In that regard, we first designed a battery of questions based on our framework so as to ‘extract’ data in a targeted manner. By way of this interview protocol we conducted semi-structured interviews with high-intermediate LINC students in Toronto and Ottawa. Once transcribed, the transcripts were cleaned⁷, timestamped, and coded for their content through the use of a variation on thematic analysis. For a more detailed outline of the various collection, processing, coding and analysis procedures see chapter five. Next, in chapter six, we present our results. Thereafter, in chapter seven, we engage in a discussion of the major trends and their implications and bring our project to a close by summarizing the highlights of our contribution to the field, its limitations and some future avenues for research.

⁷ By ‘cleaned’ we mean processed so as to regularize the false starts, grammatical errors, hesitations, pauses, interruptions, incomplete statements, and so on that are often prevalent in natural speech and not critical to thematic analysis of participants’ beliefs.

CHAPTER 2: INTEGRATION

The integration concept has acquired a nebulous character since the late 1970s. Indeed, Favel (2003) points to several equivalent terms being conflated or used interchangeably with the construct of integration. Some of these terms include, "...assimilation, absorption, acculturation, accommodation, incorporation, inclusion, participation, [and] cohesion-building..." (p.15). Clearly, this trend is problematic because inconsistent terminology is not conducive to either clarifying the mechanics of the phenomenon or building adequate policy interventions thereafter. One clear example is the term assimilation which implies a one-way, zero-sum acquisition of the destination culture and gradual abandonment of the source group's culture. This view stands diametrically opposed to the now prevalent view of integration as a dual balance of two cultures (e.g. Berry, 1997). In short, there are currently so many individually studied aspects of integration that it is not surprising to see some researchers routinely concede that "...there is no single, generally accepted definition, theory, or model of immigrant and refugee integration" (Favel, 2003: 12). In light of this generalized confusion, it stands to reason that a clearer picture of the cultural dimension must first be sought by way of the clear differentiation of the integration construct.

One way to understand the scope and depth of the integration construct is to parse it into its constituent parts. To this effect, we wish to make the distinction between (a) integration policy, (b) integration dimensions, and (c) integration outcomes. The first aspect denotes the ensemble of national policies used for the settlement, re-settlement, retention, and any other programs or policies that facilitate newcomers' adjustment overtime. The second aspect denotes the four primary life dimensions in which newcomers' agency and policies interact: The economic, social, political and cultural domains. The third and last aspect, refers to the multi-level effects (individual, community,

national) of the integration process – which can take various forms depending on the level of abstraction and life domain being targeted. Let us consider each of these parts in more detail.

2.1. Integration as National Policy

One way the term integration is often used is in conjunction with particular ideologies embodied in national policies and programs. In time, a set of policies can coalesce into any number of overarching state ideologies in the form of a public philosophy (Schain, 2008), policy paradigm (Favell, 1998), or reigning national strategy (Berry, 2005) which dictates a particular view and set of assumptions regarding immigrants and immigration more broadly. Examples of potential national models include French *republicanism*; British, Dutch, and Canadian *multiculturalism*; and German *ethno-nationalism* (Bertossi & Duyvendak, 2012; Lock, 2014). Given that each of these national policy models encapsulates a different approach to immigration and immigrants, we can expect each model, in turn, to be underpinned by a different set of expectations and, by extension, uphold different conceptions of what ‘integration’ should mean for newcomers. In other words, a national policy model by any name is still an integration model.

In practice, these policies are not just limited to ‘post-arrival’ processes such as settlement, re-settlement, retention, and the facilitation of adjustment but also to ‘pre-arrival’ orientation, selection and levels planning. Indeed, in many ways by exercising a particular state ideology as embodied in the specific selection criteria and programs, a nation is pre-empting integration outcomes. One example of this is Canada’s human capital model for its economic immigration class. Through this program, newcomers are selected based on characteristics (i.e. language skills, pre-existing job offer, education, labour experience) thought to shorten the adjustment period and improve the ultimate integration

outcomes of newcomers. In either case, whether through pre-arrival or post-arrival, policies and programs ultimately enact a national integration policy model which is underpinned by a particular normative view of the status, size, and overall characteristics of foreign-born newcomers.

2.2. Integration as Dimensions and Outcomes

Alternatively, the concept of integration may also refer to the economic, political, social, and cultural life domains that the national policy strategies are designed to target. In this section we tackle what we deem to be ‘external structural’ dimensions (economic, political, social) while in the next chapter we dive into ‘internal existential’ dimensions (cultural).

2.2.1. Economic Integration

By far the most researched dimension, economic integration is largely concerned with the economic well-being of newcomers relative to the native-born. To this end, researchers use measures of (un)employment, wages, occupational mobility, educational level, and housing among others to search for structural inequality in the labour market (Jedwab & Soroka, 2014). In this sense, research into this dimension is often meant to uncover and remove barriers to labour market participation given equal human capital criteria and market demand.

Empirically, in Canada, several trends stand out. Overall, the mounting evidence points to worsening income and employment rates (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005; Wang & Lo, 2005; Frenette & Morrisette, 2005; Picot, 2008) especially in the case of low-skilled jobs (Bourdarbat & Lemieux, 2010) and for certain visible minorities (Nakhaie, 2007; Pythian, 2009; Walters et al., 2006). Indeed, although

the majority of incoming permanent residents are selected for their “employability profiles and human capital” (Godin, 2008: 136), the reality suggests parity has not yet been reached.

2.2.2. Political Integration

A second important integration dimension, political integration concerns itself with any form of political engagement and exercise of legal rights in a democratic society. Political engagement or participation may be formal (e.g. voting, naturalization, running for public office) or informal (e.g. contesting or protesting). The central indicators of newcomers’ political integration are often taken to be naturalization and voting rates (see below).

Empirically, the evidence points to a strong link between the acquisition of citizenship and political participation. For example, many studies suggest that naturalization increases participation, efficacy, and political knowledge (Hainmueller, Hangartner & Pietrantuono, 2015; Jacobs, Martiniello, & Rea, 2002; Just & Anderson, 2011; Hourani & Sensenig-Dabbous, 2012). Along with naturalization, several moderating factors have also been identified including media influence (Felix, Gonzalez & Ramirez, 2008), the policy regime surrounding naturalization (Gonzalez-Ferrer & Morales, 2013), individual political orientations (Pantoja & Gershon, 2006) and length-of-residence (Black, 2011: 1166). As far as Canadian newcomers are concerned, participation in elected office and overall naturalization rates remain quite high (Mahler & Siemiatycki, 2011: 1127).

2.2.3. Social Integration

Last among the external-structural dimensions, social integration is concerned with the structure, mechanisms, and effects behind immigrants’ social connections or networks usually referred

to as *social capital*. In such a framework, social integration is fundamentally about the expansion and diversification of an immigrant's networks-of-trust as compared to the Canadian-born. These diversified cooperative intergroup social connections can extend to all relevant forms of social networks (e.g. community, religious, advocacy, professional, kinship, and friendships). Indicators include intermarriage, marital status, number and quality of friendship ties, volunteering (Berkman et al., 2004) and also residential segregation.

Empirically, these networks tend to be associated with several benefits –many of which fall under the rubric of positive integration outcomes. For example, extensive diverse networks can help reduce prejudice (e.g. Allport, 1954), improve immune functioning (Cohen et al., 2003), cardiovascular health (Seeman, 1996), lower rates of depression (Mulvaney & Kendrick, 2005; Mair et al., 2008) lower mortality rates (Berkman & Syme, 1979; House et al., 1982; Seeman 1996) and aid newcomer's in various other ways during the settlement process. Unfortunately, from the few extant Canadian studies, we find that residential segregation, for example, is in fact on the rise in Canadian cities such as Toronto and Vancouver and to a lesser extent in Montreal (Hierbert, 2015). For Toronto, in particular, the findings suggest that over 1.4 million immigrants reside in enclaves (p.17). The implication being that as segregated communities tend to foster more intra-group interactions, the positive outcomes of social integration would not necessarily manifest themselves in these contexts.

2.3. Conclusion

In the preceding four sections, we presented several ways of looking at the integration construct. First, we outline how it is often misunderstood and used interchangeably with other, at times, diametrically opposed concepts. All of this detracts from a clear overview of the field, let alone

the creation of effective policies, and for this reason we felt it reasonable to disaggregate the construct further into its primary constituent parts (as evidenced by a review of the literature). Specifically, we understand integration to encompass three distinct areas for research: National Integration Policy, Integration Dimensions, and Integration Outcomes. In this way, we can succinctly review the field with the understanding that certain integration policies (e.g. Multiculturalist settlement programs) are designed to improve specific integration outcomes (e.g. wage parity, language proficiency, etc.) within a given integration dimension (economic, political, social, and cultural) where, by and large, domain-specific factors and processes operate (e.g. market demand, naturalization regime, etc.).

Furthermore, having investigated the variety of integration dimensions and outcomes, we felt it necessary to make one final distinction and aggregate economic, political, and social dimensions under the label of ‘external-structural’ dimensions – as they are concerned largely with a newcomer’s interaction with the social world ‘out there’. On the other hand, we understand cultural integration as ‘internal-existential’ as the units of analysis and processes targeted are largely in the mind and therefore tied to social cognition which often *defines* an individual, his motivations, expectations, belief systems and – ultimately – his behaviours. Consequently, because of these differentiations, partitions, and regroupings of the larger integration construct, we are now in a better position to address our main integration focus on the cultural dimension.

To some extent, we had already accomplished a review of the policy environment for language training and cultural integration in Canada in chapter one. Therefore, in this chapter we remained focused on concrete outcomes across economic, social, and political dimensions with somewhat negative results being exhibited across economic and social outcomes and overwhelmingly positive outcomes in the political realm.

CHAPTER 3: CULTURAL INTEGRATION

A century of research⁸ on cultural integration phenomena has inevitably produced a large number of terms, concepts, models and approaches across various fields. Nevertheless, if we are to engage with our research question in concrete terms, our first task is to define our terms and models of cultural integration.

Before proceeding further, however, we would like to make three preliminary clarifications on scope and terminology for the sake of future efficiency and brevity. First, on the matter of conceptual scope. It is understood that cultural integration involves many actors (e.g. newcomers, destination-country nationals, policy-makers, educators, etc.), simultaneously engaging across several levels (e.g. intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, societal) and co-creating long-term (i.e. intergenerational) effect chains based on evolving, interconnected, multifactorial webs of proximate and distal causes (e.g. personality, reasons for migration, policy environment, etc.). For our purposes here, however, we constrain our review on cultural integration as it refers to *changes in the cultural repertoire of first generation immigrants at the intrapersonal cognitive-affective level* whereby culture is considered to be a packaged *schemata of shared beliefs, values, and behaviours* most adaptive to functioning in the group that produces this ideological aggregate (e.g. on ‘culture as a shared belief system’ see Rokeach, 1968, 1973; Triandis, 1972; Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1992). This view is prevalent largely in the field of psychology, and it is through this lens we view the bulk of cultural processes and models we highlight in the chapter⁹.

⁸ Indeed one of the first treatises on the subject were produced as early as Park and Burgess’ work in 1921.

⁹ This is not to say that the psychological perspective is the only one. Indeed, anthropology and sociology have their own legacy of contributions. Some of the key entries in these fields include Park and Burgess (1921), Gordon (1964), Portes and Zhou, (1993) as well as the various socioconstructivist schools which spouse frameworks such as performativity theory, positioning theory, and so forth.

Secondly, it is clear that the field has not yet coalesced into general consensus. Indeed several terms have been proposed for similar or identical processes¹⁰. Therefore, so as to avoid confusion, we use the term *cultural integration* to refer to a newcomer's overall process of acquiring and integrating a new culture with a pre-existing cultural schemata or repertoire in the broadest sense. By contrast, for integration as a 'micro' cognitive stage in a longer sequence of transformations we use the term *harmonization* process.

Lastly, it also understood that there are social and political issues tied to the taxonomy of groups in integration studies. For example, to refer to a destination-country group as the 'majority' or the 'host' group often ignores both the changing demographic weight of that group depending on the locale (e.g. a national majority can be a local minority) and the legitimacy of groups who settled the region in earlier times (e.g. aboriginal groups). Conversely, to name an immigrant's initial cultural group as the 'heritage' group relegates the newcomer's culture to a secondary passive role which is often an inaccurate depiction in light of potentially strong transnational ties. Therefore, to neutralize these problematic depictions, we make use of the terms 'destination group' or 'target in-group' for 'Canadians' which includes all individuals born and socialized in the country and 'source group' to refer the newcomer's 'original'¹¹ cultural group.

With these considerations in mind, we structure our review around the following key questions: How is cultural integration defined in terms of key dimensions? What are some of the

¹⁰ See for example: *Cultural chameleonism* (Downie Koestner, ElGeledi, & Cree, 2004; Downie, Mageau, Koestner, & Liodden, 2006), *merger* or *transcendence* (Roccas & Brewer, 2002), *cultural hybridity* (Oyserman, Sakamoto, & Lauffer, 1998; Phinney & Alipuria, 2006: 213), *fusion* (Chuang, 1999), *blendedness* (Padilla, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), *bicultural competence* (LaFramboise & Rowe, 1983) *oppositional identities* (Cross, 1995; Ogbu, 1993), *3CK* (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009), *acculturation* (Berry, 2009) and *double-consciousness* (Dubois, 1961).

¹¹ Being also, of course, fully aware that newcomers may already possess multiple cultural repertoires and be, in effect, already multicultural.

possible mechanisms that underlie cultural integration? Lastly, what are the possible patterns of cultural integration?

3.1. Social Psychology Approaches to Cultural Integration

A partial answer to questions on dimensions and mechanisms appeared in the form of the *Social Identity Approach* (SIA) of the 1970s. Initially, SIA emerged as a set of two co-evolving theories called *Social Identity Theory* (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) and *Self-Categorization Theory* (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1986; Turner et al., 1994). These two theories focus on explaining how individuals categorize their social world (i.e. social categorization) and themselves (i.e. self-categorization), and how these categories are internalized (i.e. depersonalization) ultimately providing “a basis for regulating behaviour” (Turner, 1982: 213). These models are very relevant to research on *cognitive* group formation, that is to say how newcomers come to mentally see themselves as part of a social group. In turn, understanding how individuals socially categorize themselves can inform how they may ‘integrate’ with more than one cultural group—our present goal. Therefore, we describe below the major theoretical points and how they help define our conceptualization of cultural integration.

The first step in the processes Tajfel and Turner describe is the categorization of the social environment. The argument is that raw sensory inputs need to be classified “in order to systematize...simplify [the environment]” and be able to understand these inputs (Tajfel, 1974: 80). At this stage, newcomers will categorize their social world into ‘groups’ of persons that share a meaningful set of characteristics. Exactly *how* individuals categorize the social world can be described according to the operating principles of *relative accessibility* and *fit* (Turner et al., 1992).

Turner and colleagues defined the *relative accessibility* of a category as “a person’s past experience, present expectations and current motives, values, goals and needs” (Turner et al., 1992: 4). Effectively, this includes every previously held cognitive schemata that would predispose an individual to categorize a set of stimuli as a group. In principle, the more accessible the social category, the more readily it comes to mind, while also being more resistant to change and more predictive of behaviour (see Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2005). As per *fit*, Turner defines two types: *Comparative* and *Normative*. *Comparative fit* refers to the “degree [to which] average intragroup differences are less than average intergroup differences” in a given context (Turner et al., 1992: 5). In other words, the extent to which stimuli are perceptually more similar than different. By contrast, *normative fit* refers to the fact that “similarities and differences must be consistent with our normative beliefs about...the social category” (Turner et al., 1992: 5). In other words, normative fit relates to our expectations of the social category. Together, accessibility and fit determine whether a given person categorizes social stimuli as part of a group or not.

Thus far, we have only described categorization processes in relation to the external social world. However, to enable group behaviours to emerge, individuals also apply perceived group categorizations to themselves as a way to socially define and differentiate ‘who they are’ from other groups (i.e. *self-categorization*). Broadly speaking, the SIA literature refers to this process as *depersonalization* which is defined as “the subjective stereotyping of the self in terms of the relevant social categorization...” (Turner, 1992: 5). In this way, *self-categorization* and *depersonalization* help individuals to construct a social self-concept understood as a ‘social identity’. In turn, it is this social identity which provides the normative guidelines for group life and social behaviour because it encompasses all the *perceived* shared characteristics of a group. Indeed, Hogg (2010) notes, “when we categorize ourselves, we view ourselves in terms of the defining attributes of the in-group (self-

stereotyping), and because these prototypes also describe and prescribe group-appropriate ways to think, feel, and behave, we think, feel, and behave... prototypically” (p. 730).

Given the abstract nature of these notions, let us pull back a moment to consider how these principles could apply to the Canadian context of cultural integration. For example, as we mentioned in chapter one, an average of 76,000 newcomers arrive every year with insufficient official-language skills. They arrive to a social world where 21.9% of the population is born abroad and collectively represent more than 250 ethnic origins and speak 215 different languages (Statistics Canada, 2016). Newcomers are then urged and encouraged to ‘integrate’ across all life dimensions, including the cultural one, by way of targeted policies and programs.

If Tajfel and Turner’s axioms hold, then they would predict newcomers proceed by: (a) Identifying similarities and differences in the aggregates of people they encounter (comparative fit); (b) Comparing these to their pre-existing expectations of these categories (normative fit); and (c) subjecting the net result to scrutiny according to their previous understanding of these categories (relative accessibility). At the end of this process, newcomers should have socially categorized other residents in Canada as part of any number of cultural groups. Thereafter, once these categories are formed, categorization principles can then be applied to the newcomer’s own notion of his social self (depersonalization) thereby producing his own social identity.

In our critical review of this approach we found two principal shortcomings. The first limitation is the ‘zero-sum’ view of identification both theories adopt. Our reading of the key cognitive mechanisms finds that although both SIT and SCT allow for movement between any number of categories (e.g. French, Chilean, Canadian, etc.) and at least three levels of abstraction (e.g. intragroup, intergroup, societal) they do not account for *simultaneous* self-categorization into two or more cultural

groups (e.g. Spanish-Canadian), or, by extension, the emergence of new *superordinate* levels of categorization (e.g. North American). Because of this, the SIA mechanisms (fit and accessibility) cannot explain how persons integrate multiple social identities let alone how they resolve differences between two or more inconsistent or contradicting cultural identities. The latter aspect of integration is particularly important in light of the added dissonance and stress that inconsistencies create for newcomers (see Festinger, 1957).

The second shortcoming we perceive is the lack of stability and continuity in SIA's views on the social self-concept. Reading the original theoretical papers gives us the impression that contextual forces are all-powerful and that individuals constantly position themselves in the best favourable light—enhancing self-esteem—by choosing different identities according to their context regardless of the long-term continuity of their self-concept. We find this position to be disingenuous, primarily because this ignores the level of attachment individuals have towards their social identities. Additionally, if individuals changed their identities as quickly as contexts, is there not also the high probability of long-term inconsistency between these different self-categorizations? And if so, would this dissonance not negate any benefits newcomers get from adopting a new group as their own? We feel, therefore, that the SIA view of categorization runs counter to cognitive dissonance theory which postulates that overall consistency of the self-concept (and all its beliefs structures) is a strong motivational drive (see Festinger, 1957)

Nevertheless, for our purposes, *self-categorization* and *depersonalization* remain conceptually useful. They specify how a person's knowledge of shared group characteristics becomes the boundary around which a 'group' is conceptualized and later 'identified' with. In turn, the individual's identification with a social group—or in our study a cultural group— provides a normative reference point for that individual's social behaviour (e.g. groupthink, etc.). The specification of these

mechanisms, to some extent, answers our second question regarding the underlying processes that drive cultural integration. This being said, it is still not clear how SCT or SIT would address categorization into several cultural groups as is the case in cultural integration. Therefore, in the next section we turn to different perspectives which account for several combination patterns of cultural identities directly.

3.2. Cross-Cultural Psychology Approaches to Cultural Integration

Cross-Cultural approaches to cultural integration began emerging concurrently in the 1970s. In this section we review three such approaches: Berry's (1970) *Acculturation Strategies* (AS), Bourhis and colleagues' (1997) *Interactive Acculturation Model* (IAM) and Benet-Martinez and colleagues' (2002) *Bicultural Identity Integration* (BII) model. Unlike the SIA approach, these models of intercultural change place their focus on the arrangement and combination of multiple cultural repertoires (i.e. social identities), their interaction with policy environment or host attitudes, and the effects for individuals.

Of the three models reviewed, Berry's Acculturation Strategies (1970) was one of the first bidimensional 'fourfold' models to appear. A fourfold model like Berry's posits a cross-tabulation of acculturation 'strategies' based on two separate dimensions. The first being the degree to which a cultural group values the *maintenance of its culture*. The second, the extent to which a person values *cultural contact with the outgroup*. The resulting cross-tabulation yields four possible 'strategies'. For instance, when immigrants chose to favour the host-society culture over their own the *assimilation* strategy is defined. Conversely, when they favour their own heritage culture over the host-society's the *separation* strategy is defined. Where neither culture is valued the *marginalization* strategy is defined. Lastly, when both cultures are favoured the *integration* strategy is defined (Berry, 1970).

Berry's model has been credited as a conceptual advance over earlier unidimensional models like *Classic* or *Segmented Assimilation* (e.g Gordon, 1964; Alba & Nee, 1997; Portes & Zhou, 1993) that see cultural integration as an inevitable and irreversible process of *assimilation*. Beyond dimensionality, this framework also complements categorization approaches like SIA in that it does not contravene the categorization principles yet it accounts for multiple categorization.

Nevertheless, it has also been criticized as it ignores how the host-society constraints immigrants' choices via the prevailing host attitudes, policy, or existing structural constraints (Rudmin, 2003). Or in other words, the initial model assumes that immigrants are free to choose their acculturation strategy, which is not always true. In response to this critique, **freedom of choice** was added to the model (Berry, 1974) producing eight distinct outcomes rather than four (Berry, 1974). However, this new addition still did not take into account host-attitudes directly.

In an attempt to address the integration process from the ingroup and outgroup sides, Bourhis et al. (1997) built on Berry's model and produced their own version called the *Interactive Acculturation Model* (IAM). In this new model several new additions were made. For example, Bourhis et al. (1997) differentiated the *marginalization* strategy into two parts: *anomie* and *individualism*. This disaggregation accounts for both positive and negative polarities of not identifying with a social group. A second refinement is the actual cross-tabulation of both host and immigrant attitudes, which gives twenty-five different outcomes classified as: (a) *Consensual* if they were beneficial; (b) *Problematic* if they were at odds; and (c) *Conflictual* if they were in direct conflict (Bourhis et al., 1997: 382). Both of these advances prove successively more nuanced and help to more completely specify what integration patterns could look like.

Although not a fourfold approach, the *Bicultural Identity Integration* (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002; Haritatos & Benet-Martinez, 2002) model goes one step deeper in the conceptualization of cultural integration by treating integration on its own. Based on a factorial analysis of earlier pilot studies, Benet-Martinez and colleagues arrived at two and later three dimensions of integration. These include *cultural conflict*, *cultural distance*, and *cultural confusion* (Huynh, 2009). These were operationalized as perceptions of harmony or conflict, distance or overlap, and clarity or ambivalence regarding the individual's cultures. It is clear that by focusing solely on the integration dimension, and incorporating cognitive (e.g. distance and confusion) and affective (e.g. conflict) aspects BII represents a more targeted approach to the study of cultural integration. Nevertheless, the BII model remains limited in scope as it does not effectively capture the full range of patterns of integration that newcomers could employ. Moreover, as it was developed explicitly for biculturals there is some question as to its applicability in multicultural contexts.

For our purposes, all three of these conceptualizations of multiple categorization are useful in different ways. Berry's model, for example, accounts for four different patterns through which immigrants can adjust in a multicultural society (i.e. marginalization, separation, assimilation, and integration). Moreover, Berry makes use of at least two separate dimensions—host and heritage orientations—rather than a single unidimensional understanding. Further, Bouhris and colleagues' IAM model is also useful in answering the question of integration patterns by adding two extra patterns for the marginalization strategy. Similarly, the BII model is useful in that it treats integration as a separate dimension with its own components. To a limited extent these various models answer the question of possible patterns of identification and some of the underlying dimensions. Yet all of these models so far are fairly static and employ a cross-sectional rather than a lifespan perspective that would less closely resemble immigrants' real-life experiences. Because of these limitations, we review one final discipline concerned with cultural integration below.

3.3. Developmental Psychology Approaches to Cultural Integration

Contrary to the focus on static models in the last two sections, the developmental psychology camp takes a lifespan perspective. Under this view, cognitive-affective group formation are part of a longer process of personal development in a social world. As part of this review, we would like to briefly outline here one final model called the *Cognitive-Developmental Model of Social Identity Integration* (Amiot et al., 2007).

The CDMSII is a four-part embedded developmental classification of identity development that builds on previously described models and is heavily inspired by Roccas and Brewer's (2002) own classification. It incorporates the *integration context* (immigration, life transition, political changes, etc.), *inhibitors and facilitators* of identity development (threat, power asymmetries, adaptation, etc.), *stages of change* (anticipation, categorization, compartmentalization, integration), and *outcomes* (bias, well-being) (Amiot et al., 2007: 366).

Of the four stages, the first takes place before intercultural contact where the immigrant may project and anchor self-traits onto perceptions of new groups, in effect comparing himself to the potential new group (Amiot et al., 2007: 372). This *anticipatory categorization* takes place in absence of any real direct interactions with the target group.

The second stage, *categorization*, takes place during prolonged direct intercultural contact and provides, "a direct test of [one's] assumptions" (Amiot et al., 2007: 373). Two effects are apparent at this stage: The reaffirmation of the original heritage identity, and the emphasis on cultural differences (Amiot et al., 2007: p. 373). At this stage there is no overlap and only the source identity dominates.

The third stage, *compartmentalization*, begins with increased intercultural contact and strict separation of identities by context, thus avoiding internal conflict (e.g. Canadian at work; Spanish at home) (Amiot et al., 2007: 374). In many ways this stage incorporates the SCT focus on contextual identification, constant alternation and relative fluidity.

The last stage, *integration*, involves the conscious and effortful attempt to (a) recognize “...conflicting self-components...which produce instability in the self-portrait as well as the potential for...conflict and distress” (Amiot et al., 2007: 375) and to (b) resolve these inconsistencies so as to begin binding the separate identities. The resolution of these self-inconsistencies can be done through the creation of “emergent attributes...not present in the original social categories [which] bind the clashing attributes” (Amiot et al., 2007: 376) or by creating superordinate categories which encompass both identities into a larger whole (see Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel, & Weber, 2003). The outcome of these processes can take two forms. One form is called *restrictive integration* and refers to the situation where all identities are combined into one but *no superordinate* binds them together. During *restrictive integration* an individual may identify exclusively with those that have his specific combination of cultural identities (e.g. Spanish-Canadian) to the exclusion of the original source-groups (e.g. Spanish and Canadian). In the author’s view, this type of integration pattern is likely to lead to increased ingroup bias and a form of segregation (Amiot et al, 2007: 377).

Alternatively, an *additive integration* may take place, where a new superordinate category is created (e.g. North American) that includes and embraces all sub-identities. It must be stressed that this larger emergent entity is qualitatively different from the sum of its parts. Indeed, as an emergent synthesis of all previous traits, this stage may be considered analogous to *ethnogenesis* (Flannery, Reise, & Yu, 2001).

In short, the CDSMII is a well-rounded model that takes into consideration several key identification patterns (e.g. anticipation, categorization, compartmentalization, restrictive and additive integration) while also accounting for some antecedents and the larger context of the immigration process before and after arrival. It also begins to account for the cognitive processes that enable the binding of multiple identities (e.g. emergence and superordination).

3.4. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we return to how the insights produced by the SIA, AS, IAM, BII, and CDSMII models we reviewed help us understand, define, and refine the concept of ‘cultural integration’. To reiterate, following the SIA approach we are inclined to see cultural integration as a process of self-categorization into cultural groups. During this process, categorization principles of *readiness* and *fit* operate in a given social context to produce prototypical representations of one’s cultural group memberships and thereby situate that individual in his social world. Individuals then internalize these representations (depersonalization) and engage in cultural group behaviour accordingly.

However, unlike in SIA, (and following Amiot et al., 2007) we argue that certain patterns of *multiple* simultaneous categorization can and do happen and may be explained as patterns of identification (e.g. separation/assimilation, alternation, restrictive integration, additive integration) along a life-long developmental continuum with (1) cognitive complexity, (2) harmonization of internal conflicts, and (3) cognitive structural overlap as outcomes. This synthesis of the psychological literature provides us with a succinct tentative conceptualization of our first key concept: Cultural Integration. We now may apply the underlying mechanisms, identification patterns, and dimensions to better understand our central research question and related fieldwork in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 4: LANGUAGE ABILITY

Let us recall that the purpose of our project as a whole is to inquire as to how adult newcomers perceive the impact of their official-language ability on their cultural integration. In the previous chapter we were concerned with synthesizing an understanding of the ‘cultural integration’ concept. Consequently, the purpose of this chapter will be to ascertain how the most prevalent models of language ability account for cultural content and processes given our understanding of cultural integration.

4.1. The Communicative Competence Theoretical Framework

The *communicative competence* paradigm is an evolving theoretical framework for language ability which has come to dominate language teaching, assessment and language-related public policy in Canada. More importantly for us, it underlies the assessment of language ability in the LINC program. For this reason, in this section we will highlight its conceptual evolution overtime with a specific focus on cultural knowledge.

The communicative competence framework for language ability has its early roots in the linguistic debates of the 1960s. The term itself was first coined by Dell Hymes (1966) in reaction to Noam Chomsky’s (1965) linguistic competence (i.e. knowledge of structure) versus performance (i.e. use) distinctions (p. 4). In contrast to Chomsky, Hymes argued that the true goal of language learning is not the acquisition of linguistic competence (e.g. language structures) but rather the *appropriate* use of language in speech acts, or as he famously put it, “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes, 1972: 278). For Hymes, these rules of social interaction “[are] integral with attitudes, values, motivations concerning language...[and] the other code of

communicative conduct (viz. social interaction)” (Hymes, 1972: 277-278). It is from this contention that the idea of conceptualizing language as social communication inspired researchers for decades after, including: Mugby (1978), Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), Bachman (1990), Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995), Celce-Murcia (2007), and Bachman and Palmer (2010); each time adding modules and content. For our purposes here we focus on Canale and Swain (1980), Celce-Murcia (1995) and Bachman and Palmer (2010).

While Hymes was the first to specify some of the essential knowledge and skill modules of CC, it was not until the beginning of the following decade that other researchers took up the call. Among them, Canale and Swain (1980) began conceptualizing an expanded version of communicative competence as including grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic modules (Canale, 1983). The model was only slightly more socioculturally oriented, but still remained largely underdefined. In part, this was because the authors argued against a focus on ‘social behaviour options’, psychological dimensions, and pragmatic meaning writ large (contextual meaning) (Canale and Swain, 1980). They produced three lines of argument to bolster their view.

First, they argue there is “...no compelling reason to give primacy to social behaviour options [i.e. socio-cultural] over semantic options in characterizing what one can mean in a language” precisely because “one may choose to violate or ignore such conventions” (Canale & Swain, 1980: 19). Their second argument stems from the fact that, as Widdowson (1975) notes, it is hard to fully enumerate the range of sociocultural context-bound rules necessary to specify what is and what is not appropriate in a situation (Canale & Swain, 1980: 17). Thirdly, they argued against any psychological (i.e. cultural) dimensions because these processes tend to be applicable “in a natural and universal manner [without] requir[ing] conscious learning” and are thus not specific to language (Canale & Swain, 1980: 16).

For our part, we feel the intuitive and reasonable nature of their arguments nevertheless hides a serious limitation. In fact, we argue that to the extent that cultural repertoires (e.g. *shared* beliefs, values, behaviours) are normative in nature they can be used to enable coordinated group action in all things including communication; a kind of ‘communicative social cohesion’, if you will. Another way to think of this is to force Canale and Swain’s position (1980) to its logical conclusion. For example, if a shared, widely circulated, contextualizing ‘social code’ of communication did not underlie exchanges then would speakers not be forced into the exclusive use of semantically mapped utterances (i.e. literal meaning)? How would such a mode of communication cope with situations based on structures and genres such as humour, poetry, idioms, figures of speech, connotations and rhetorical devices where what the speaker *says* (semantic meaning) is not what the speaker *means* (pragmatic meaning)? It is clear, therefore, that despite the difficulty in mapping out social and cultural ‘codes’ of behaviour in communication, they remain an important factor in successful communication. This line of argumentation alone makes the inclusion of a culturally-determined pragmatic dimension a necessary inclusion in any model of language.

It is to this end that in Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) we see a reorganization of the relationships between the various components. Their iteration included: *Discourse, linguistic, actional, strategic*, and *sociocultural* competences (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995: 12). Among these, discourse, linguistic, and strategic competences are comparable to Canale and Swain’s (1980). Where the authors’ model makes important contributions is in terms of language functions and sociocultural content is in what they termed actional competence and how they defined sociocultural competence. For its part, actional competence, the addition, is conceptualized as “competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent by performing and interpreting speech acts and ...sets” which engages functions (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995: 9). Further, the *sociocultural* module includes: *Social contextual factors* (e.g. age, gender, status, social distance, power relations, time, place, social situation), *stylistic appropriateness factors*

(conventions on politeness, styles, genres), *cultural factors* (knowledge of the target community, awareness of dialects, and cross-cultural awareness), and *non-verbal communicative factors* (body language, proximity to the listener, paralinguistic factors, and silence) (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995: 23-26).

It is clear that adding a language function component (actional) is already a contribution. Indeed, this competence was only implicit in earlier models. But more importantly, in this new arrangement there is less of a chance of it becoming conflated with cultural knowledge and processes. In this regard, there is a subtle distinction to be made. While both functions and cultural elements can serve as contextual constraints on communication, the former serves as a personal motivational constraint (what is desired to be said) while the latter serves as a group behavioural constraint (what *should* be said in that group to be effective). Indeed, by definition, language functions describe the *purpose* of the communicative exchange not the conventions around it (e.g. sympathize, transact, apologize, etc.). Nevertheless, in spite of the added content specifications, culture in the sense we elucidated in chapter two is not entirely present. A closer look at their cultural factors reveals not the norms of group interaction but in one case knowledge of phonetic variation (dialects), and in the other two a kind of topical background knowledge writ large. This approach does not make use of culture as an active filter through which to assess the appropriateness of language.

The third model we outline is Bachman and Palmer's (2010). It is this latter iteration of communicative competence that the Canadian Language Benchmarks and by extension the LINC program adopts as its model of language ability. Language knowledge, for its part, is subdivided into *organizational knowledge* and *pragmatic knowledge*. The former is defined as "how utterances or sentences and texts are organized" (p. 45) and the latter as "how utterances or sentences and texts are related to the communicative goals of language users" (p. 45). Among these two, fourteen different types of

relevant knowledge are identified. These are summarized in the graphic below taken from Bachman and Palmer (2010).

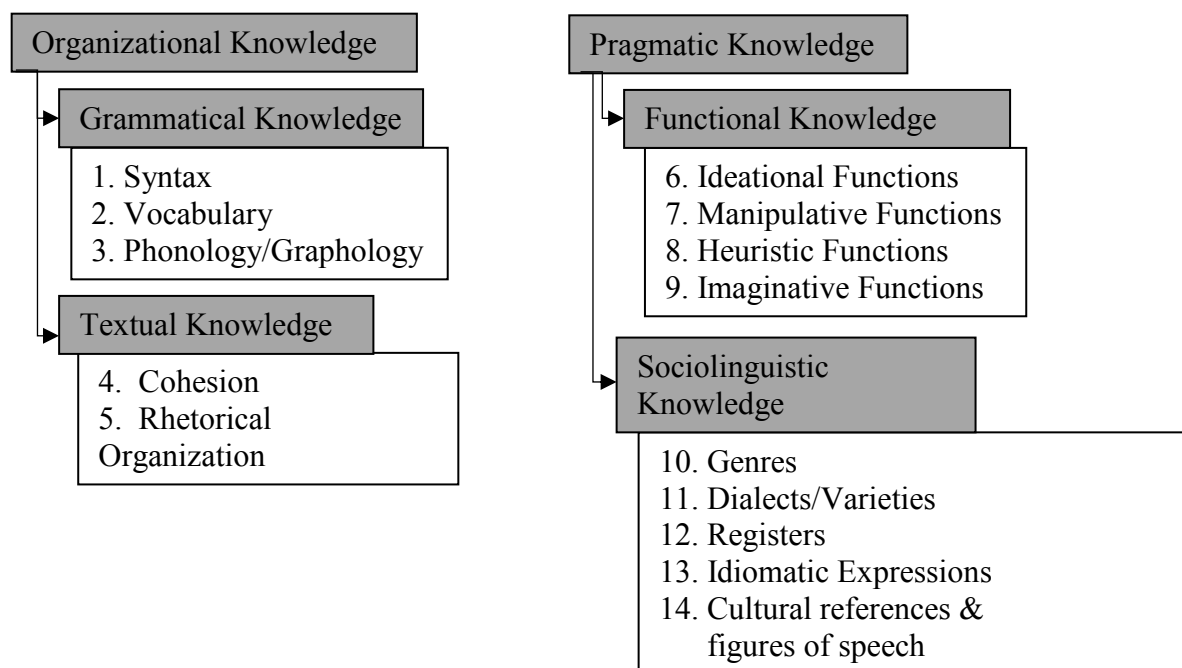


Diagram 1 – Model of Communicative Competence, Bachman & Palmer (2010)

In the authors' construct, culture is only to be found subsumed under sociolinguistic knowledge as "cultural references and figures of speech" (Bachman & Palmer, 2010: 45). However, as a body of knowledge, cultural references are only thought of as "extended meanings given by a specific culture to particular events, place, institutions, or people" (Bachman & Palmer, 2010: 48). The authors see cultural knowledge as idiosyncratic capsules of shared group history. As an example, they offer the expression "Yes, we can!" in American culture (p. 45). There is no reason to suggest that shared history of this kind would necessarily coalesce into a body of social norms around communication or interaction more broadly. Therefore, although the most complete model that we have reviewed in many respects, it is palpably incomplete in regards to role of cultural norms in normatively appropriate communication.

4.2. Conclusion

In reviewing these many models of communicative competence we arrive at three principal points. First, it is clear that no single model of language ability in the communicative competence paradigm uses culture in the active normative sense implied in social psychology. That is, shared normative schemata of beliefs, values, and behaviours which enable effective group functioning. Quite the opposite, culture is either non-existent as a standalone aspect of language as in Canale and Swain (1980) or treated as passive general knowledge as in Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1995) or Bachman and Palmer (2010).

Secondly, as we argued previously, without a sense of a groups' underlying cultural norms, the appropriateness of an utterance and even a speaker's meaning may not be consistently interpreted. In this regard, we echo the view of semioticians like Michael Silverstein (1976) who argue that "the structural characteristics of language ...cannot really serve as a model for aspects of culture..." (p.12). In our view, this is because appropriateness is not a property of either morpho-syntactic or lexico-semantic forms which address different aspects of meaning such as: Time (e.g. present, past, future), aspect (e.g. completed, continuous, etc.), mood (e.g. necessity, obligation, etc.), number (e.g. singular or plural), gender (e.g. masculine or feminine), and referential functions (e.g. lexicon and semantics) (for French structures as an example see Léon & Bhatt, 2005). Effectively, this rift between linguistic meaning and pragmatic meaning is the difference between what *can* be said structurally-speaking and what *should* be said to achieve a specific communicative purpose in a given group.

To conclude, given the paradoxical nature of culture as a system that both renders utterances meaningful and is altogether outside the purview of the linguistic system a different solution could be devised. In our view, it would perhaps be more useful to conceive of effective intra-group communication as resting on a series of hierarchical logic-gates where each language component contributes but a part of the overall speaker's intended meaning. In such a top-down spiraling model, culture would certainly be a higher-order system contributing normative conventions of communication (e.g. social proximity, etc.) based on a group's overall shared beliefs, values, and behaviours on both the speech act *and* the content in the message. In turn, a sociolinguistic component could contribute variations in communicative conventions depending on class, gender, and power differences to name a few (e.g. politeness, register, etc.). Thereafter, the lower levels could take on, as they do, the concrete referential aspects of language (e.g. time, aspect, mode, etc.). In this way, culture can be made to play an active role in communication without being constrained or defined by it. This would also allow culture-in-language to draw from the intersection of several other social bases of group formation like nationality, religion, and so forth.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

Although we outline our methods in this chapter, before going further, we would like to reiterate in brief our unified theoretical position. First, we assume that a certain number of ‘stages’ of integration (e.g. categorization, compartmentalization, separation, assimilation, restricted integration, additive integration) exist which have defined characteristics (e.g. cognitive overlap, degree of conflict, complexity) and mechanisms for operating (e.g. categorization, depersonalization) (see chapter 3). Second, given that no language model was able to adequately accommodate these psychological (read cultural) processes we also assume that culture is at a higher level of abstraction than language working at the level of belief systems. These ideologies constrain linguistic choices ‘downstream’ – including actional, social linguistic conventions as well as morpho-syntactical and phonetic options.

With our theoretical stance outlined, this chapter proceeds by explaining how we identified and recruited participants, as well as which instruments and procedures were used for data collection, extraction and analysis.

5.1. Recruitment and Selection

An initial collection frame of sixty-six language training centers in the Greater Toronto Area and City of Ottawa was compiled from public listings. We sought the LINC program specifically because it is the only program which has the explicit goal of multidimensional integration for newcomers. Further, it excludes citizens and ensures that the participants are adults (both important criteria). However, after two months of searching, it became clear that few centers offered CLB level 8 classes in the LINC program (as opposed to Enhanced Language Training and other programs) which is clear from the extant literature on overall enrollment levels. Even so, when LINC level seven is offered it is done so as a mixed six-seven class with very few students available at the higher required

level – if any. Nevertheless, after some time, we managed to identify and recruit two participants for our study by soliciting and canvassing several dozen community centers. Our criteria was simple, we required our prospective participants to be adults, permanent residents, with a CLB 8 assessed proficiency level in English. These criteria were put in place for three reasons. First, it was important to make sure that participants were already ‘socialized’ individuals for whom Canadian culture would be their second culture (not their first as in the case of children or ‘1.5’ for adolescents). Second, we required permanent residents because, on the one hand, that is the target population for the LINC program and on the other we feared the acquisition of citizenship could change their early belief structure. Lastly, we required CLB 8 students because that is the highest competence level taught in LINC and this would allow us to test the federal assumptions on the language-integration link. In other words, it would allow us to see if by the end of the program at the highest level possible newcomers are culturally integrating as the federal government supposes.

Of the two participants, the first, Masha is a 35 year old female Cardiologist born in Ukraine. Her highest level of education is her medical degree plus additional specializations. Her residential trajectory is composed of 26 years in Kiev, Ukraine; 3 years in Boston, U.S.A.; and 6 years in Toronto, Canada. Further, her reported identities are Ukrainian and Canadian. Lastly, her reported CLB English proficiency is 8. She currently lives in Toronto.

Our second participant, Othman is a 22 year old male engineering student born in Saudi Arabia. His highest level of education is his currently on-going Engineering B.Sc. degree. His residential trajectory is spread out as 10 years in Saudi Arabia, 5 years in Egypt, 3 years in Syria and 4 years in Ottawa, Canada. He identifies as Egyptian-Canadian. His reported CLB English proficiency is also 8. He currently resides in Ottawa, Canada.

5.2. Instruments, Data Collection and Extraction

The instrument we used for data collection is a semi-structured interview protocol based on our literature on the three concepts and processes of culture, cultural integration and language ability. The content of this interview includes questions on the participant's age, residential history, education, cultural identities, meaning of culture, second culture acquisition, cultural integration, and the impact of language acquisition on cultural integration. Below we list several of the questions, however, since the full list of questions was adaptive to the understanding of each participant, sometimes we were forced to reformulate, adapt or drop questions altogether.

1. What is culture made up of in your opinion?
2. What are some differences that you perceive between your culture and Canada's culture?
3. How do you manage the cultural differences between Canada and your own cultural group?
4. What do you think about being a multicultural person?
5. What are some benefits and disadvantages of possessing two cultures?
6. Do you think that not knowing Canadian culture affects the way you live your daily life?
7. What culture do you feel you belong to now that you have lived here sometime and why?
8. How do you think language learning helps you with cultural learning?
9. Are there any cultural aspects that language does not teach you?
10. In what ways do you think language is part of culture?
11. From your experience, how do you think language learning can help you understand Canadian culture?
12. How do you think not knowing Canada's languages restricts your understanding of Canada's culture?

Several types of questions spurred the interviews forward. New topics were marked by a single, broad, open-ended question intended to prompt a free response. If the response was clear and complete then expanding questions were used to probe the subject deeper. If the response was unclear or incomplete, then clarifying questions were used to confirm the response. Lastly, if more detail was needed, then participants were prompted to provide additional examples to clarify or confirm their point. Moreover, although we followed a script, the open nature of the questions was flexible enough

to allow the participants to take the conversation where they would. Because of this flexibility the times and overall content for each of the two interviews vary.

5.3. Data Analysis

In order to go from data to insights, we chose to employ a variation of Thematic Analysis understood to:

“...focus on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, themes. Codes are then typically developed to represent the identified themes and applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis. Such analyses may or may not include the following: comparing code frequencies, identifying code co-occurrence, and graphically displaying relationships between codes within the data set.” (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012: 10)

For our purposes, the ‘ideas’ to be coded refer in fact to our participant’s beliefs on various subjects. In this sense the variation of thematic analysis we employed refers to *Value Coding* (Saldaña, 2009). Value coding extracts codes that deal with “a participant’s values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview” (Saldaña, 2009: 94). Ultimately, the goal of applying this type of coding to the data is to extract the participants’ collective thoughts or ideology on the various aspects of language’s impact on cultural integration. In this way, we attempted to extract any particular patterns that could clarify the language-culture-integration relationship including processes, new ‘stages’, and the sequences of integration pathways.

As far as the coding of beliefs themselves, it became clear that we needed a system with which to methodically categorize both the content and the relationships between beliefs. In lieu of a protracted philosophical discussion we heeded the standard psychological account of beliefs as being mental representations of the world around us expressed as true or false *propositions*¹² (Gilbert, 1991:

¹² Where propositions are the sum meaning of semantic-level, pragmatic-level, and sociocultural-level information content conveyed in a single simple utterance.

107). Consequently, “when people believe, doubt and know things, it is propositions that bear these cognitive relations...” (Zalta, Nodelman, Allen, Anderson, 2016: 1.2). Moreover, because we assume propositions to encapsulate a single belief it was important to us to examine every single distinct proposition. For this reason we coded every complete sentence in the transcripts as one potential belief. In this way we bypass the decision researchers face of discarding bits of code as inconsequential or coding entire passages with a single code and casting too wide a net.

Specifically, first, we turn every natural sentence or utterance into simple declarative propositions (subject-action-object or noun) so as to simplify a participant’s web of natural language into manageable ‘meaning chunks’. This processing of utterances makes explicit our understanding of the participants’ intended meaning and holds us accountable for the reliability of the analysis. In a second wave, we take a group of propositions that are conceptually related and look for patterned relationships. For our analysis we focus on four specific *emergent* patterns that help define our participants’ belief structure: Sequences, cause-effect, compare-and-contrast, and conditional relationships. These are defined and explained below.

Sequential propositions, as the name implies, are relationships where one statement is linked to the next chronologically giving us a timeline of a given process or event. A timeline does not necessarily need to provide specific temporal measures (e.g. days, hours, minutes) but can be inferred from the temporal *deixis* markers used (e.g. now, then, soon) or come in the form of binary ‘before’ and ‘after’ statements. Sequences are also different from causal statements detailed below because they establish a timeline and not necessarily causal relationships between each event. For example, “In class we did exercises *before* listening and *after* listening” would be coded as a sequence. In practice, however, even if there are no syntactic markers of causality this sometimes is implied from the larger context of the utterance. We code for this relationship because we understood cultural integration and language

training both to be long-term processes and over the course of the interviews certain key sequences became apparent.

The **cause-moderator-effect** or **reason-moderator-outcome** pattern denotes relationships where one proposition ‘causes’ or results in another. Additionally, the effect or outcome may be optionally ‘moderated’ by a third factor so as to heighten the effect (facilitator), attenuate an effect (inhibitor), or restrict an effect according to specific conditions (a caveat or limitation). Lastly, it is important to note that a) there can be many results for a given cause, and that b) each effect can be hierarchically ordered or segmented. This type of code relationship gives us a window into existing cognitive relationships in the participants’ ideological web. Markers used for this relationship include “because of”, “due to”, “results in”, “caused by”, “leads to”, among others. Causal relationships need not be strictly inevitable to be coded as causal. For our purposes, causal relations need only be perceived as plausible and likely in the view of the participant. For example, “I ate an apple and it led to me becoming sick” need not be causally true in a medical sense, only *likely* in the participant’s view. We primarily coded for this relationship to be able to highlight any potential factors or antecedents of cultural integration.

Conditional propositions, for our purposes, require a hypothetical condition and a consequence. The usual marker for conditional propositions is ‘if-then’ statements. However, we do not consider all if-then propositions as conditional. In fact, we expressly exclude ‘universal laws’ (e.g. if water is heated to 100C, it boils) but retain logical implications¹³, predictions¹⁴, counterfactual¹⁵, and qualified¹⁶ statements among others. Over the course of the interviews, it became clear that these kinds

¹³ For example, “If you see very dark clouds, you will need an umbrella”.

¹⁴ For example, “If oil prices fall, the country will enter an economic depression”.

¹⁵ For example, “Had I been elected, I would have not have passed that kind of law”.

¹⁶ For example, “I like apples, but only if they are green and sweet”.

of propositions were useful in the generation of alternative views without fully committing the participant to any single position on an issue.

Comparing and contrasting propositions is a common way to highlight similarities or differences between subjects. We code a propositional relationship as compare and contrast when one aspect is scrutinized across two or more propositions. For example, when apples are compared to oranges because they are both fruits but contrasted across their different flavour profiles. Some key markers for this type of relationship are words such as: ‘Whereas’, ‘by contrast’, ‘difference’, ‘on the other hand’ among others.

Having examined both the content and relationships of our participants’ ideology, in a third wave of coding, we distill propositions and the various patterned relationships into a hierarchy of succinct codes, categories, and themes composed of up to five words each. Additionally, in an effort to make the resulting narrative even clearer and more accessible we also build diagrams that illustrate a complete macro view of the participants’ belief systems on each given theme.

By way of illustration, let us pull back somewhat to consider the following fictitious example that encapsulates our approach. If the utterance reads:

“Actually, I think learning a language is tremendously important for our national cohesion both over the short-term and the long-term because I think it really increases sociocultural knowledge and phenomenally improves interpersonal understanding”.

Then, we summarize the utterance into three related propositions and one relationship type:

[Cause 1] Language learning increases sociocultural knowledge.

[Cause 2] Language learning increases interpersonal understanding.

[Effect] Therefore, language is important for national cohesion.

Lastly, we assign codes and categories resulting in the following belief structure:

- [Theme] Second language acquisition.
 - [Category 1 -Effects] Intrapersonal.
 - [Code 1] Sociocultural knowledge.
 - [Code 2] Interpersonal understanding.
 - [Category 2 - Effects] Intergroup.
 - [Code 1] National cohesion

Certain caveats to our coding scheme are also in order. First, we do not code for ‘degree’ of belief. In other words, we do not consider how strongly (or weakly) a person believes in a given proposition; only whether they do or not. To add this level of granularity would require a meaningful gradation between no belief, ambivalence, weak belief, strong belief, and so forth. However, we are not aware of any frameworks which look at this question in a systematic convincing manner, nor is this type of analysis useful to our research question. For this reason, all propositions that are not expressly false, logically or contextually impossible, are taken to be the true held beliefs of the participants regardless of ‘degree’. Second, as reliability and validity were strong concerns we made sure to submit the completed transcripts, propositional ‘processing’ and final codes to our participants to check for any errors in comprehension on my part – and in the process controlling for bias to some extent.

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS

In this chapter, we will present the results of our semi-structured interviews and what they mean for our research question according to the emerging themes: The meaning of culture, cultural acquisition, cultural integration as well as language ability and cultural integration.

6.1. Theme 1 – What is Culture?

To understand our participants' view of language-in-culture, we first felt it necessary to first elicit their understanding of culture. In this section, therefore, we outline their differing perceptions of the concept.

Overall, for Masha, culture is taken to mean both a way of understanding the world as well as the ensemble of various national symbols or cultural artifacts that are the product of a group's social life. She states that culture is a “traditional life view”, which is tied to “a place where we spent our childhood” but also related to traditional holidays, cuisine, fauna, and art (00:00:07). By contrast, when asked about what Canadian culture means to her she tended to emphasize cultural artifacts or symbols instead of a ‘life view’.

Theme 1 - Socialization and Local Artifacts

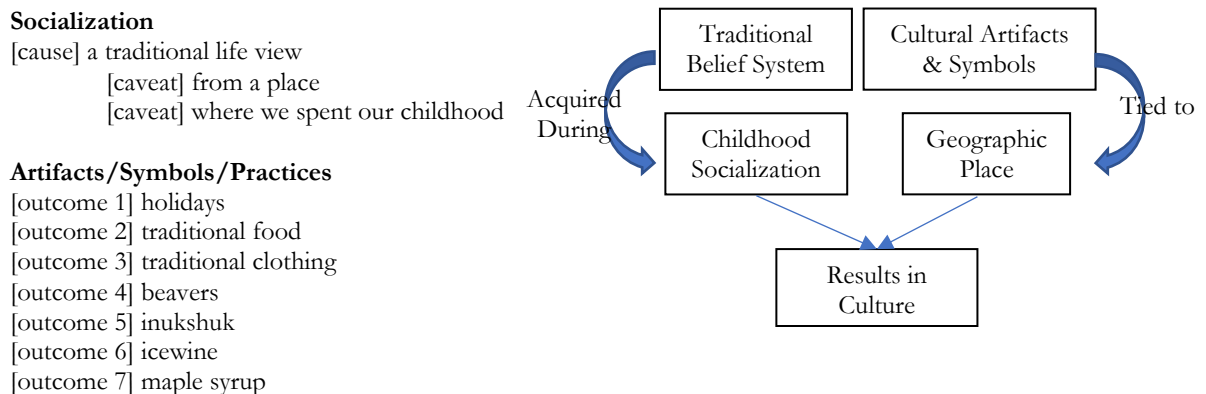


Diagram 2 – Masha's conception of the culture concept

Four elements are apparent in her understanding of culture. First, is an understanding of culture as a collection of normative beliefs—a ‘lifeview’— with which to understand the world. This view is closely aligned to our psychological rendering of the concept in chapter two. Additionally, the idea of ‘place’ also denotes the relationships between culture and a specific geographic region. Given how local fauna and traditional cuisine were historically specific to a given region, this is an understandable contention. Thirdly, Masha ties culture to an early stage in human development— childhood. That a ‘life view’ would be instilled in a child’s mind can be understood as the process of socialization. Fourth, another line of thought present in Masha’s conception of culture is that of culture being embodied by material or symbolic elements specific to the group. In her responses these include gastronomy, dress, art, fauna, and shared practices (holidays). It is also worth mentioning that the notion of an acquired ‘life view’ was not mentioned in connection with Canadian culture nor was language ever mentioned.

Othman’s view of culture was more focused. In fact, as we show in the belief hierarchy below, in his conceptualization we see only culture as transmitted “experience” either learned from or explicitly taught by parents and the community at large as a kind of accumulated heuristic (00:01:59). Like Masha, Othman sees this as something that a “child” goes through and does not mention this process in relation to adult newcomers like himself. Unlike with Masha, we do not find the idea of culture being tied to a certain geography or including specific cultural artifacts. Similarly, language is not mentioned.

Theme 1 – Culture is Socialization

Socialization

[condition] the child learns what parents learnt

[condition] (the child is) taught experiences

[consequence] acquisition of parental experience

[consequence] acquisition of community experience

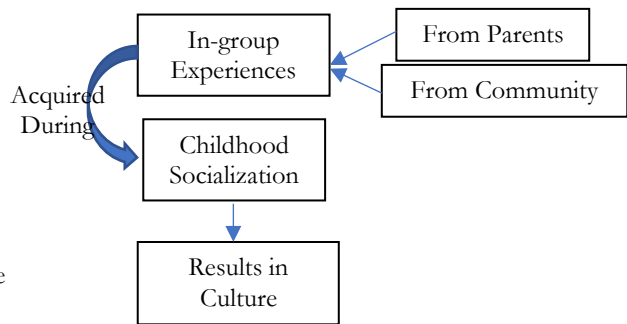


Diagram 3 – Othman’s conception of the culture concept

6.2. Theme 2 – Acquiring a New Culture

After soliciting their understanding of culture we elicited their views on the acquisition of a new culture. This line of inquiry affords us a view of the obstacles, facilitators and outcomes newcomers face when attempting to include Canada’s culture(s) in their repertoire—and before integration takes hold.

Masha generally feels that acquiring a new culture is a positive additive process which reduces stress and improves social functioning. Prior to acquisition, she contends, one can only have a “single standard” and a “single view” (00:01:35) which creates “stress” (00:14:35). This heightened state of stress is due to the reality of the source cultural repertoire which does not help with understanding “how everything is organized” in Canada (0014:30). She notes that not having this destination cultural awareness creates confusion as “you do not know what is going on” and this costs newcomers lost opportunities where “you can miss some things” (00:16:27). This confusion and maladaptation is gradually overturned by the acquisition of “more views and more experience” associated with the destination group (00:01:58).

In terms of what triggers the improvements in acquisition and awareness, she attributes it all to the expansion of her social networks. In fact, she states, “after[wards] you understand, you meet people, you meet friends, they help you and explain everything” (00:14:45). In her view, it is the social network which fills in the gaps in her cultural knowledge. This knowledge, in turn, allows her to understand the behaviours and intentions of the outgroup, reducing stress in the process. In short, Masha’s conceptualization of cultural acquisition seems to be network-based and additive in nature. Elements are incorporated as the network highlights them but these are not necessarily harmonized in relation to the existing repertoire. The whole sequence can be summarized as follows in the diagram below.

Acquiring a New Culture

[Sequence 1] Prior Acquisition

- [outcome] one standard
- [outcome] one view
- [outcome] no societal organizational knowledge
- [outcome] no socio-cultural awareness
- [outcome] missed information
- [outcome] high stress

[Sequence 2] During Acquisition

- [reason] meet people
- [reason] make friends
- [outcome] friends help you
- [outcome] friends explain everything

[Sequence 3] After Acquisition

- [outcome] adds world ideas
- [outcome] adds views
- [outcome] adds experience
- [outcome] adds examples (knowledge)

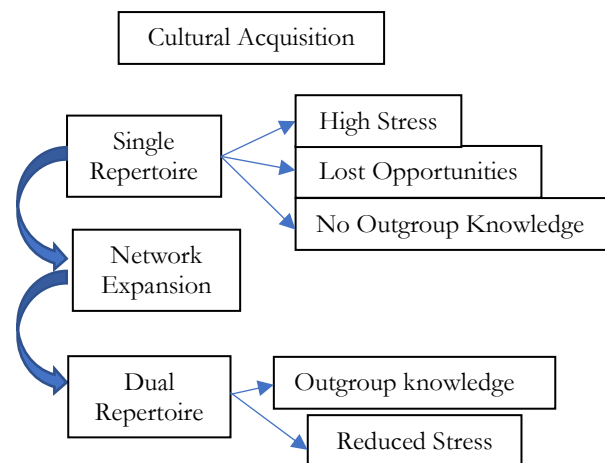


Diagram 4 – Masha’s conception of the cultural acquisition

Similarly, Othman feels the acquisition of a new culture is “positive” and “important”, even “critical” (00:07:44). His view is based on key outcomes which include (a) understanding the outgroup, (b) revising his belief system (c) and improving interpersonal relations¹⁷.

First, he says that acquiring another culture enables the newcomer to “understand people” (00:07:50). In this sense, his view is not far from Masha’s perception that acquisition adds new ideas, experience, and outgroup knowledge with which to navigate the target society. However, he admits that the source of his knowledge on the outgroup was initially biased and not based on experience. Indeed, he attests that, “my idea about any country foreign to the Middle East is what I saw on T.V.. So if I go there I [will] have these stereotypes because TV will only show you one perspective” (00:10:49). Sometime after arrival, however, he began realizing that “what I saw in [western] television was not true. And what I saw on Middle Eastern news was also not true” (00:08:37). In other words, through intergroup contact he was confronted with new knowledge of the outgroup which contradicted his previous understanding.

Othman then states that because of the new knowledge acquired, “you actually fix beliefs that were not true” (00:07:55). He illustrates his point by describing how his religious views and later his outgroup attitudes underwent some changes. On his religious views he states “what they (the source group) taught us is something but what we came to understand [in Canada] is something else” (00:09:00). Consequently, in terms of his outgroup attitudes, he notes, “before, when I wanted to help someone I would really care about who they are. But now, it’s the other way. I don’t really care who they are, because here people are from everywhere”. He continued by saying, “I used to think... that I only had to help the people that I know or the people that believe what I believe. But things changed.

¹⁷ For a discussion of belief change see Elio and Pelletier (1997).

Now, everybody has the right to be helped...not just...some group of people” (00:12:15). In short, his statements suggest that the process of belief revision resulted in reduced in-group favoritism and improvements in his attitudes to the outgroup. This belief-revision however was only triggered *after* arrival and through *direct* contact with the destination group. Othman also stresses the affective outcomes of these processes. In particular, he highlights that one of the biggest benefits of this acquisition process is being able to “be more comfortable with other(s)” (00:09:41). His thoughts on the subject can be summarized as follows:

Acquiring a New Culture

Understanding the outgroup

[reason] experience of cultural diversity

[reason] increased intergroup contact

[outcome] increased outgroup knowledge

Revision of beliefs

[reason] increased outgroup knowledge

[outcome 1] change in religious views

[outcome 2] reduction in in-group favoritism

[outcome 3] improved attitudes to outgroup

[outcome 4] more comfortable interactions

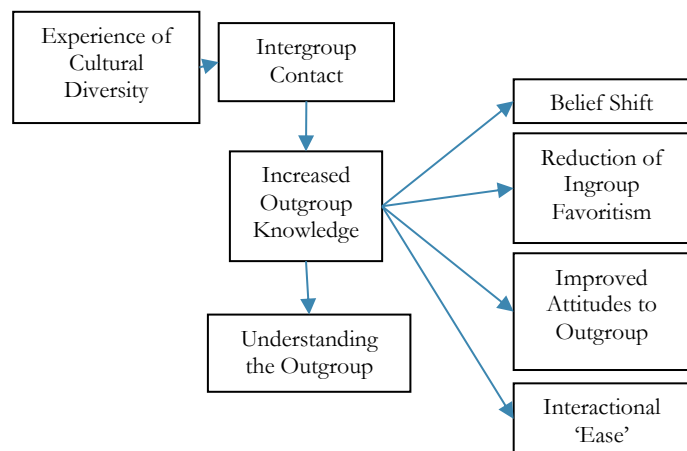


Diagram 5 – Othman’s conceptions on cultural acquisition

6.3. Theme 3 – Cultural Integration: Factors, process and outcomes

Having asked participants for their views on culture and cultural acquisition, we now asked for their conception of cultural integration itself. The purpose of doing this is to arrive at a deeper understanding of their experience of cultural integration against which we can then apply a linguistic lens in subsequent sections. In this section, therefore, we look at the factors, processes and outcomes of cultural integration – to the extent available – as perceived by Masha and Othman.

On Masha's side, her conception of cultural integration can be broken down into three distinct thematic areas for analysis: Policy factors, social network factors and the harmonization process.

In Masha's view, newcomers' cultural integration can very much be affected by public policy in nuanced ways. For example, on the one hand, she affirms that because immigrants "make the decision to immigrate...we are supposed to respect the laws and rules of this country" (00:12:21). In this statement, Masha would seem to be arguing for the existence of an unspoken quasi-contractual obligation for newcomers to acquire Canadian culture. Seemingly, this perceived obligation is based on the extent to which newcomers are personally responsible for having chosen Canada as their new home. In turn, this perceived obligation could be construed as a legitimization of public policy attempts to institutionalize integration through integration programs and policies. It is almost as if because newcomers chose Canada of their own free will, they are obliged to acquire Canadian culture to whatever extent policy deems necessary as she notes,

"Because if all immigrants decided to leave their home, sorry you don't bring rules from your home! You decided to leave and you decided to come here so you're supposed to accept everything that Canadians have and appreciate (it)..." (00:21:37)

On the other hand, not all integration policies are equal. As an example, she cites the instance of the USSR's ban on religious practice. Where, "...the USSR...did not agree with [religion]" yet,

“...people kept going. They continued these traditions quietly” (00:09:00). It is clear, therefore, that in Masha’s view the obligation to acquire and integrate a second repertoire however expressed in public policy depends on the intention of that piece of legislation.

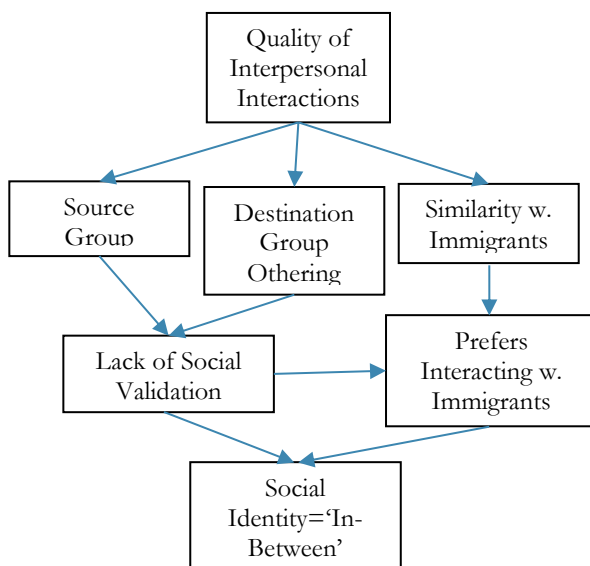
In an attempt to clarify her position further, we asked her to posit a Canada in which policies had been devised that ran counter to her own cultural norms. How would she reconcile her perceived obligation to the destination group and the conflicting nature of the demand? In light of this impasse, she quite emphatically argues, “if it’s [hypothetically] part of Canadian culture, Canadian people can follow it but nobody can *force* me to follow these things. I will stay with my own opinion and will not change it” (emphasis ours, 00:07:19). In this way, she underscores a subtle difference between integration approaches that encourage the acquisition of Canada’s culture and an altogether different approach that legislates against newcomers’ existing cultural repertoire. Presumably, integration is better encouraged by the former and not the latter approach.

For Masha, cultural integration is also affected by social network influence. As far as social network factors she pays particular attention to the external social validation of her identities. For example, when asked what culture she feels she belongs to given her on-going experience with Canada and Ukraine, she reports feeling ‘in between’ (00:18:00). The reason behind this feeling, she states, are the experiences of othering she has had by the two reference groups. On the one hand she does not feel “fully integrated in Canadian society” because Canadians “look at me and they see that I am different from them (00:17:25). On the other, she feels a gradual distancing from her source group because, she says, “[my] friends from home [have] started to tell me that I am different” often pointing out differences in “the way I talk...in thoughts... [in] life views, [and in] my reactions to some situations...” (00:17:30). She summarizes the effect of the lack of social validation on both sides as leaving her “in this period of in between” (00:18:00).

To what extent does the need for social validation affect identification patterns is unclear, except indirectly in terms of her preferences for social interaction. When questioned on the subject, Masha confesses her preference for interacting with ‘Canadians’ and *other* immigrants (not Ukrainians). Her rationale for this falls back on her perception of similarities between herself and (primarily) other immigrants. In this respect, she says,

“I think I would choose two groups. Canadians and immigrants in Canada...I think it’s because immigrants who leave their countries leave for a reason. They don’t like something back home, they don’t want this in their lives and that is why they look for a better life; for changes. For this [reason] we go and we accept something new.” (00:20:51)

Looking at her response we see that the core similarity is not necessarily shared cultural features but rather a shared rejection of their respective source cultures and the will to leave it all behind.



Networks as Integration Moderators

[Outcome] Feeling ‘In-Between’

- [Reason] Othering by Source/Destination Group
- [Reason1] different way of talking
- [Reason2] different way of thinking
- [Reason3] different ‘life-views’
- [Reason4] different behaviours

Diagram 6 – Masha’s conceptions on cultural integration factors

Going from macro policy, to meso-level interactions, right down to micro-level cognitive changes we find Masha’s third theme: The harmonization process itself. This theme addresses the question of

how Masha perceives the harmonization of her two cultural repertoires. Notably, Masha sees this as a process where “you have knowledge from your past and knowledge from your present. You will analyze both and decide what is better...the new version...or the old” (00:10:43). In other words, she sees harmonization as compare-contrast process where each repertoire is evaluated for its merits. Having this view of harmonization implies a zero-sum approach where to identify with one is to exclude the other. Whether this is limited only to individual beliefs or entire repertoires is not clear but of high importance. If a choice is made between individual beliefs, the individual need not necessarily reject his entire existing repertoire in the case of conflicting beliefs. On the other hand, if a choice must be made between entire repertoires then ultimately newcomers could be reflecting on the merits of *assimilation* versus *separation* as wholesale rejections of one cultural group (see Berry, 1970). The difference is in the levels of abstraction being alluded to. On a different note, it is still not clear what are the motivational drives behind the choice to drop one belief over another. Self-esteem? Inconsistency? Optimization? Social Influence? Masha does not address this question.

Having overviewed Masha’s conceptions of cultural integration in terms of public policy factors, social factors and the harmonization process, we now turn to Othman’s views. In Othman’s case we see his conceptualization of cultural integration as concerning primarily cultural and social factors which influence his harmonization process.

Regarding cultural factors, two points of departure stand out. First, we see that perceived cultural differences between source and destination groups for Othman were large enough to create a strong desire to repatriate. In his case, he describes having “[internal] conflicts between the way things are here (in Canada) and back home (in Saudi Arabia)” (00:45:51). Indeed, on arrival, he states, “In the beginning, I wanted to go back home. I couldn’t believe that I would stay here for years” (00:56:33). He goes on to say, “I felt like I didn’t belong because their life is so much different. The things they

(Canadians) value are different” (00:57:10). On the whole, he attributes this shock to the fact that he “did not understand the people very much” (00:57:00). Nevertheless, as he understood early on, “not acquiring the culture just leads to misunderstandings and misjudgements. It closes...opportunities because other people can always open ...more opportunities” (00:55:29). So in an effort to compromise, he says, “I came to the conclusion that I can accept things but it doesn’t mean that they have to change me... it just means that I have to understand them” (00:46:45). He further adds, “It just means that I have to understand them...[and] if I understand that, I’m going to feel way better”.

In short, in the aftermath of his experience with cultural shock and maladaptation based on perceived dissimilarity he pushed for cultural acquisition but did not try to incorporate the new knowledge in an integrated way. To Othman, adapting to the destination culture does not imply adopting the norms or identifying with them. Instead, he opted for understanding the cultural repertoire by acquiring it as the body of knowledge that it is. This acquisition process, described in the previous thematic section, rendered Canadians and society known and familiar rather than unknown and distant for him. Or as he puts it, “because when something happens to me I [will be able to] provide a reason for why other people are like this” (00:45:51) – which makes him feel ‘way better’.

Cultural factors other than perceived dissimilarity were also at work in his cultural integration process. Specifically, we mean the experience of cultural diversity itself which overtime created an environment in which adjustment is necessary. As Othman puts it, “the more time I spent here, I realized that everyone is very different from each other, so diverse”. Interestingly, this diversity then poses implications for newcomer integration, because, in Othman’s view, “the communities here are so different and diverse, there should be respect for other communities too. That means someone should look at things from many different points of view” (00:58:10). Applied to himself, the implications of cultural diversity and the absence of a homogeneous culture mean that the acquisition of multiple cultures is to an extent most adaptive. In effect, this reality softens the perception of a

monolithic Canadian culture with which to integrate and also allows him to maintain his pre-existing repertoire.

Certain social factors were also prominent. One such factor was the social network he built in his first year in Canada. As he states, “Most people that I know and spend time with are French or from Canada” (00:50:03). Indeed, he notes, “when I came to Canada, the...first Arab guy I came to know only after a year of living here”. In other words, he did not have sustained contact with his source-country culture outside of his family for the critical initial period of settlement. As per the French and Canadian friends, he noticed that “they were so different from me, for sure” but he says, “I just got to understand them” (00:50:03). He also worked six days per week at an Indian restaurant and in that setting “most of the people that I knew were Indians” (00:50:30).

The diversity of his social environment afforded him several different perspectives which triggered some re-evaluations. For example, he says, “When I came here, I understood that everything I knew before was from my point of view” but now “I understood two points of view and changed my mind about a lot of things” (01:02:45). In some cases, he says, “[people] ask me about religion a lot, then I start to question it myself, after that I get to conclusions” (01:03:20). Given his time in Canada, he says, “now I am seeing that I do not like some things that people believe back home” and “I do not follow everything they teach us” (01:04:32). One example of his beliefs –and by extension his behaviours – have changed includes the bridging friendships he has made. Specifically, he notes, “recently, I made a new friend and I found out that he’s from Israel. I never would have imagined [this]” he goes on to say “I felt shocked a little bit because [of] the kind of situation there and how people talk about it” (01:06:51). Nevertheless he says, “I started to understand that people aren’t the same as their stereotype and it’s just good practice to get to know people yourself” (01:07:21).

In sum, the diversity of his social environment seems to have improved his attitudes to other out-groups, and created a social network based on bridging links and mutual cultural acquisition. As we note in this thematic section as well as in the previous, despite the fact that he pursues a ‘adapt not adopt’ policy to integration, Othman also confesses to several revisions to his belief system which are then expressed in different behaviours – which, in our view, is a sign of the harmonization process at work.

Early Factors & Outcomes

[Reason] Different Values

[Reason] No Outgroup Knowledge

[Outcome 1] Cultural Shock

[Outcome 2] No sense of Belonging

[Outcome 3] Desire to Repatriate

[Moderator] Length of Residence

[Moderator] Cultural Diversity

[Outcome 4] Coping by adapting
not Adopting

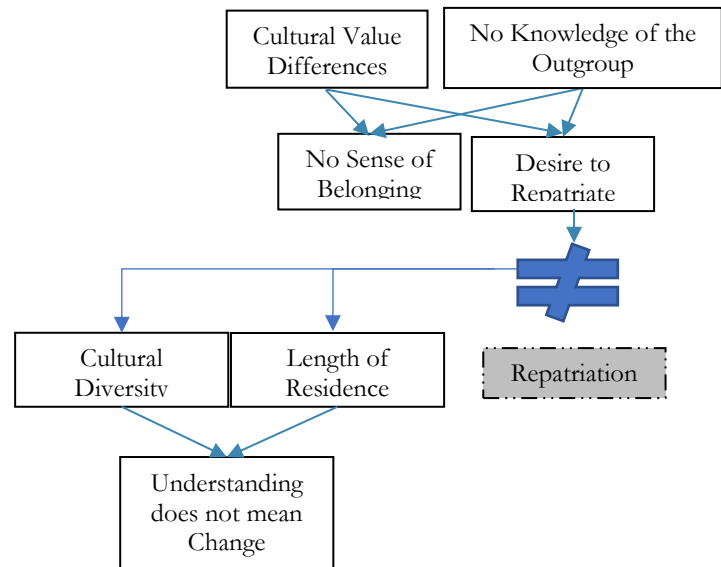


Diagram 7 – Othman's conceptions on cultural integration factors

6.4. Theme 4 – The Impact of Language on Cultural Integration

Thus far we have focused our attention solely on culture, cultural acquisition, and cultural integration. We have liberally sampled from our participants' experiences and tried to piece together an overall understanding of what it means to culturally integrate in Canada. These steps were necessary because without exploring cultural integration neither the participants nor we would be in a position to see the potential role that language ability plays in these processes and outcomes.

Having accomplished that task, however, in this section we now turn to our research question on the perceived impact of language ability on cultural integration. For simplicity we structure our findings as divided into two areas connected to language ability: (a) Source-group's access to target groups' cultural knowledge in communication (b) cultural knowledge and language features.

As we have seen in previous thematic sections, Othman holds that direct contact with the out-group is the best form of access to cultural knowledge required for cultural integration. Further, as Masha confirms, this cultural knowledge is both helpful in interpersonal relations as well as their long-term adjustment to a new society (see themes two and three). However, these direct cultural knowledge exchanges largely take place through the linguistic system. Therefore, it stands to reason that the level of language ability with which to produce and comprehend cultural information is of importance; but in what way?

For Othman the relevant linguistic features which help secure access to the target group's cultural knowledge are in fact those features that, if not mastered, have the potential to put distance between groups. For example, Othman recalls a situation in which he tried to make a request for information from a Canadian man and did not have a large enough vocabulary to understand him. He

says, “[Once] I wanted to ask someone something. I could only ask him but I could not understand what he was saying...the way he spoke wasn’t clear for me [because] of the words he chose to use” (00:18:07). He goes on to say that, “I was choosing words that you (Canadians) would never use, very academic words” (00:18:44) on top of which “I speak with an accent and can’t pronounce [words] perfectly and he can do it all perfectly. Plus the way he spoke was so fast...he acquired knowledge that I don’t have” (00:35:48).

All in all, Othman places strong emphasis on accented speech, phonological errors, breadth of vocabulary, mismatched registers, and slow or truncated rate of delivery as key linguistic features which ‘mark’ low official-language ability. While these features in and of themselves are not always critical to understanding the message, in Othman’s view, they do signal to the target out-group that this speaker is not a native user of that language. In turn, this speaker differentiation could have effects for both the newcomer and the target in-group.

In fact, Othman confirms, the effects are deeply felt. Indeed, because of his previous low-level ‘markers’ mentioned above he remembers “a lot of people correcting the way I speak... [where they] sometimes laugh at me, or look at me differently, or they would get uncomfortable because they didn’t understand me. That made *me* feel uncomfortable” (00:41:20). This general level of mutual anxiety during interactions mixed with the perceived ostracization at times made him feel that “the only place that makes me feel safe would be among my people who speak my language” (00:36:29). By extension, this retreat to the source community only fosters a level of distrust as Othman explains,

“[Newcomers] they *know* their groups and when you know something you feel you’re in control, you know? You feel comfortable. You feel like you understand them. With others, you’re afraid because you don’t know them, their point of view, their perspective...” (00:34:57).

He also points out that to a certain extent he was dependent on those who do have the necessary skills when he says “...because of this knowledge [Canadians] can actually go through any condition in this country and help themselves. But I need someone to help me” (00:36:19).

In sum, Othman sees low-level official-language ability as eroding a newcomer’s motivation to communicate with the destination group which reduces the overall knowledge of and ultimately trust in that group. In this sense, it is not so much that language ability is important in cultural integration because it allows the transfer of information. Instead, the issue seems to be the use of language as a social demarcation line or threshold level against which potential group members are scrutinized. Being consistently reminded of this differentiation between native-speakers and non-native speakers creates a perceptual rift which, in Othman’s view, pushes some less motivated individuals to retreat to their own speech communities or avoid intergroup interactions.

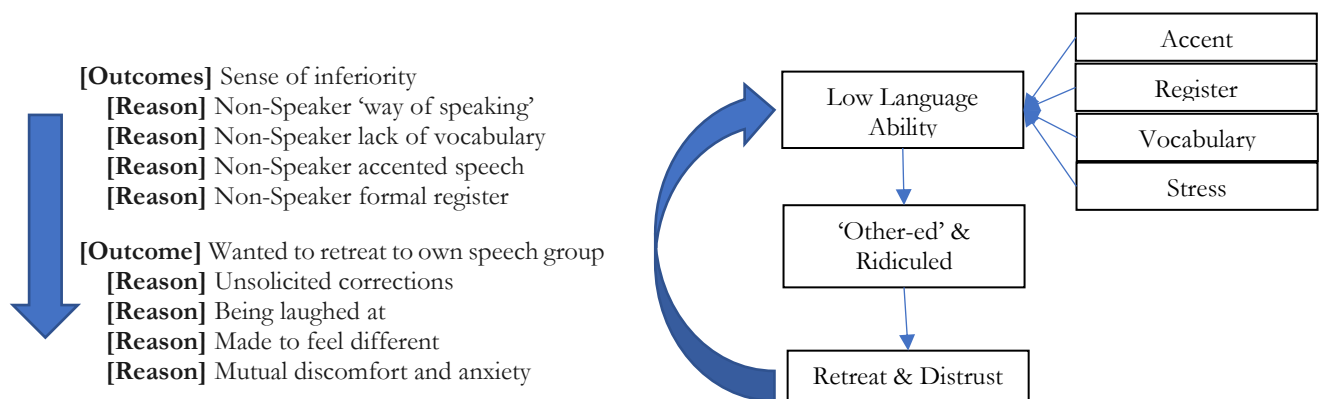


Diagram 8 – Othman’s conceptions on linguistic ‘markers’ of cultural groups

Is the situation different for high-level language users like Masha and Othman? Would their increased language ability allow them to acquire cultural knowledge in a way that low-level users may not? To answer this question, we look this time at Masha's perception of the links between cultural knowledge and language features.

Masha makes several key observations on the subject of the link between cultural knowledge and linguistic features (e.g. phonetics, phonology, morpho-syntax, lexico-semantics). For example, in any communicative exchange, she states, "you may understand the person differently or the person may understand you differently. Because something, some moment, intonation, or body language in one culture means one thing and in another it's different. So there's misunderstanding" (00:16:50). In this statement, Masha points to failed communicative exchanges based on situational context, prosodic features, and body language (i.e. pragmatics) – not traditional phonetic, morpho-syntactic, or lexico-semantic 'structural' features of language which both speakers presumably possessed. In Masha's experience of Canada, she notes that this notion of culturally different meanings can be felt most strongly, "at the comedy club...[where] I don't understand 80 to 90% of the jokes. I understand the English language, I understand the meaning...[of]... the words" (00:13:31) and yet there is still a gap in her comprehension of the speakers' intended meaning.

Othman also makes several contributions to the link between cultural knowledge and features of language. First, he notes that acquiring a second language does not ensure comprehension of the target culture. He illustrates his point by referencing Arabic as a lingua franca in the Middle East. In this regard, he states that in terms of "the cultural side [of language], I can say something in Arabic that is funny to Egyptians but my Moroccan friends wouldn't understand it. It's because I lived the situation. So the situation is connected to the word" (00:21:42). In Othman's view, words encapsulate a group's experience rather than static universal meaning. Consequently, an individual's understanding

of a given word will be based on his group's experience of the *referent* tied to that word—his experience of the real world to which the word refers. He confirms this view by saying that, “there is a difference...I can learn a word but it doesn't mean that I understand it. I have to live it first, then I understand it. I can read something but it doesn't mean I understand it either, unless I live it somehow”. Presumably, so long as each group—even groups with the same language (e.g. Canadians and British people)—has a different experience of the underlying concept represented by a word they will have a culturally distinct understanding of it.

Othman further claims that although the cultural knowledge of a group is specific to their experience, some glimpses of it can be inferred from some features of language. Specifically, he means,

“the way Canadians put words together. It's not the same way as in any other country. The way they put words together could explain to me the way they think or perceive information. From there, I can understand whether this thing (concept or object) is actually good, not good, or funny. I don't really have to understand literally what the word or category they use means. But from the way they say it, I can understand how they perceive something; what they talk about generally, what they leave out and don't say...” (00:16:01).

Effectively, he is referring to topical valence and frequency, word choice, and prosody. In essence, Othman argues, how a person feels about a given subject in terms of his attitudes and emotions can be inferred from paralinguistic features. Whether these attitudes are part of a group's cultural repertoire would then be a matter of drawing inferences from many more speakers overtime.

6.5. Conclusion

We would like to conclude this chapter by summarizing our findings into several key points which will serve as a point of departure for the subsequent discussion chapter.

First, as we note in theme one, culture is understood by our two respondents as both a shared normative body of knowledge acquired during childhood as well as in terms of cultural and symbolic artifacts of a particular group. For her part, Masha stressed an understanding of culture which is rooted much more in external material or symbolic culture while Othman stressed the acquisition of knowledge and experience. Further, neither Masha nor Othman saw Canadian culture as the acquisition of a normative body of shared knowledge *during adulthood* and neither saw language as being part of one's cultural system at this early stage of the interview.

In light of these conceptions of culture, it is also interesting to note the reasons for and the perceived effects of acquiring Canadian culture. For Masha, culture is to be acquired –primarily by expanding her social network– because it reduces stress, shows her how society works, and increases her opportunities in it. By contrast, Othman sees cultural acquisition in terms of increased knowledge of the outgroup which in turn may improve his interactions with the outgroup, reduce mutual stereotypes and prompt a revision of his belief system.

As per the integration process, we see that Masha and Othman perceive different factors as prominent. On the one hand, Masha acknowledged the strong role of *justifiable* public policies that aim to encourage newcomers to acquire knowledge of Canada's cultural system. On the other hand, she does not support policies designed to legislate on a newcomer's existing cultural repertoire that go beyond basic law and order or human rights. On a different note, Masha also identifies social influence

in the form of social validation of her position in the reference cultural groups as a key factor in her identification outcomes. Without this validation of her membership, she does not feel integrated or that she wholly belongs to either group.

Othman highlights an altogether different set of inhibitors and facilitators influencing his cultural integration. On the side of inhibitors, he sees a perceived cultural dissimilarity with Canada's culture as a source of internal conflict which, if left unresolved, would strongly predispose him to repatriate. On the facilitator side, we find cultural diversity as a sociological reality which softens the idea of a monolithic Canadian culture. Because Canada's reality is a diverse one, Othman feels it necessary to adopt a flexible strategy that has him acquiring a working understanding of any group he encounters consistently. At the same time, this multicultural reality offers him a flexible framework that can accommodate his existing repertoire.

Lastly, as far as the cognitive aspects of harmonization process, both Masha and Othman understand it to be a process of contrast, evaluation and adjustment. Masha, for her part, acknowledges that cultural elements are compared and contrasted which are then followed up by decisions based on the merits of each repertoire or element. Othman also admits to re-evaluating his existing beliefs in light of new information—particularly through *direct* intergroup contact. The motivating drives behind this comparison, evaluation, and revision are not mentioned by the participants however.

Given these various understandings of culture, cultural acquisition and cultural integration what can be said about the role of language ability (and its component features) on these processes and knowledge repertoires? Masha and Othman collectively offer four points in this regard. First, Othman highlights the role of features which serve to differentiate between speech groups using the

same language (e.g. native-speakers v. non-native speakers, dialects, regional variations) with a particular emphasis on pragmatic features. These features form a demarcation line between groups, which if emphasized by the target ingroup may come to discourage newcomers from interacting (due to added anxiety, linguisticism, and failed exchanges).

On the matter of culturally-bound linguistic features, Masha points to pragmatic features like prosody and body language. She notes that during exchanges where the same language is used, exchanges are differentially understood because of pragmatic features (e.g. prosody, body language, etc.). She thereby opens a distinction between semantic meaning and pragmatic meaning. Othman, for his part, points out that despite sharing a language, the *experience* of the referent behind the word is always understood differently in different groups (e.g. 'karma' in North America v. 'karma' in Tibet). While a shared experience is paramount for a similar understanding of a given word, Othman nevertheless contends that some of this shared cultural knowledge can be inferred. Particularly, through features like topic valence, frequency, word choice, and prosody Othman holds he can infer the affective attitude a speaker has towards a given subject and thereby arrive at his view. If this is then confirmed across several target ingroup speakers, then Othman surmises it is safe to assume a widely held attitude is in fact part of a group's shared cultural knowledge.

In the next chapter we will discuss the greater implications of these findings in relation to the communicative competence framework, psychological cultural integration perspectives, and ultimately newcomers' path to cultural integration in the LINC program.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this section we discuss the implications of our key findings as they relate to the larger issues that stem from our research question. Thereafter, we bring the project to a close by highlighting our overall contribution to the field and providing suggestions for further research. Before tabling our discussion, however, let us retrace our steps thus far.

In chapter one, we began by establishing the demographic demand for language training from new permanent residents arriving in Canada. We determined that, on average, 76,680 newcomers have arrived in Canada every year without the ability to use an official-language—for the past forty years. Given this substantial demand for language training, we then surveyed the federal policy apparatus designed to meet this need.

In our overview, we found a knowledge gap which, we argue, compromises the success of the language training program's goals. In particular, we mean the lack of cultural frameworks, targets, or any systematic analysis of the relationship between language and culture—*despite* having cultural integration as an explicitly stated goal of the LINC program for language training. In other words, we uncovered a critical knowledge gap which impedes the concrete articulation –let alone the implementation– of one of the program's long-term goals (i.e. newcomer cultural integration). Consequently, without proactive well-understood frameworks and targets newcomers are left at the mercy of chance when encountering challenges in their cultural integration process. Therefore, we took on this project in an effort to fill this knowledge gap at the core of the federal strategy and, in the process, attempt to improve newcomers' integration outcomes. In the following section, we will discuss what our results mean for our research question in light of our framework, literature review and results.

7.1. Cultural Outputs vs. Normative Cultural Knowledge

Our first point of departure is the distinction between ‘external’ material culture and symbols (e.g. traditional dress, cuisine, fauna, flora, national symbols, etc.) as compared to ‘internal’ subjective notions of culture including shared experience and normative shared group knowledge acquired during childhood (e.g. for an overview see Triandis, 1972). As we see from our results (theme 1) this distinction is not always made by newcomers, but whether it is done in policy and pedagogy will determine the type of interventions and outcomes we consider in cultural integration.

To illustrate, if we consider culture to be the physical and symbolic objects a group produces, then to integrate two groups would require a relatively simple exchange of ‘traditional’ cultural outputs (e.g. cuisine, dress, music, literary works, etc.). Needless to say, it is hard to think of indelible intergroup connections being forged based on these kinds of elements in isolation. Cultural outputs do not usually present individuals with an existential challenge, nor do they demand commitment and effortful management. On the other hand, a ‘subjective’ or psychological view of culture as collective group norms based on beliefs, attitudes, and values would require a different approach in classrooms.

In our view, the internal-external distinction has implications for program development. Because, if we take adaptation to be the primary goal of integration policies, then it seems much more important to familiarize newcomers with the prevalent cultural norms that inform Canadians’ behaviours than to expose them to Canadian cultural outputs. If this premise holds, then, in practice, language training curricula could be geared more specifically towards managing meaningful intergroup differences (e.g. gender relations, religiosity, etc.) rather than traditional ‘civic’ training (e.g. national symbols and institutions, etc.) for their cultural themes and modules.

7.2. Cultural Acquisition

The synthesis of our participant's experiences of cultural acquisition revealed several similarities and differences of note. In this regard, we see at least three key elements as they stand out from our data: Social Networks, Belief Change and Cultural Diversity.

First, we see that Masha quickly expanded her social network within the first year. She recognizes that the best possible source of cultural knowledge is the target in-group itself and although we do not know the exact composition of her network she does make it clear that she prefers and actively seeks out interactions with Canadians and other immigrants to the exclusion of her own source-group. It was this network of friends that provided the necessary knowledge, clarified ambiguities, and ultimately reduced her acculturative stress.

By contrast, Othman did not pursue the same strategy as aggressively and was relatively isolated from both his source-group and his target group in the beginning. To be more precise, Othman began his acquisition of cultural knowledge (and accompanying categorization of Canadians) through television programs well in advance of his arrival in Canada. Although he later highlighted the inaccurate nature of this type of source, the media remains his 'first contact' through which he began to acquire a kind cultural knowledge. Needless to say, idealized and stereotyped media portrayals are not necessarily the best type of knowledge with which to adapt in a new society. More importantly, however, is his relative initial isolation in Canada which was not conducive to positive outcomes.

A second important element was highlighted by Othman in the acquisition process. That is, that acquiring a new culture is not a benign process and has durable effects on one's identity. In

particular, the acquisition process was used by Othman to (1) better understand and subsequently (2) improve upon interpersonal relationships with the outgroup. In the process of doing this, however, Othman encountered outgroup knowledge which contradicted his pre-existing belief system. In an attempt to resolve this contradiction, he assessed both pieces of information based on his motivational drives and adjusted accordingly. In a similar fashion, we see that Masha in theme three takes a similar ‘compare-evaluate-adjust’ approach to the resolution of internal inconsistencies leading up to belief change. Consequently, it would seem that both Othman and Masha have experienced *belief change*. Belief change can be described as “the process by which a rational agent makes the transition from one belief state to another...” (Elio & Pelletier, 1997: 420) and it comes along with subtle consequences.

In Othman’s particular case, belief change resulted in his in-group favoritism dropping while his relations with the outgroup improved. This process did come after some time, however, as in the beginning his cultural shock was pronounced enough that for sometime he considered repatriation. In order to cope, as we see in theme three, he is willing to acquire new cultural knowledge to the extent that it allows him to understand the various target groups around him—but not for the purposes of defining himself. This ‘adapt not adopt’ instrumental approach to integration is most like the compartmentalization integration strategy proposed by Amiot and colleagues (2007). However, the fact that he experienced a revision of his belief system – however minor – may signal something more than the separated acquisition of multiple cultures that this stage describes.

Of particular note, however, is the peculiar way in which Othman chose to adapt in the context of a culturally diverse social environment. In particular, Othman attests to the fact that cultural diversity played a diluting role in Othman’s perception of the destination culture. Briefly, since Othman found himself in a diverse social environment he did not feel the need to adjust to the

federalist notion of Canada (e.g. ‘two founding nations’, English and French) but instead saw as his goal to remain as flexible to the dozens of cultural groups present in his social world who used English and French yet remained culturally distinct. This finding is subtle yet profound as it goes against the intuitive notion that newcomers adapt in relation to the ‘mainstream’ culture (e.g. Anglo-Canadian outside of Québec). On the contrary, Othman felt it necessary to adjust to *his immediate social environment* which was comprised of several other cultural groups and thus embraced a potentially more adaptive strategy. It now becomes clear that the fallacy of the a ‘destination culture’ versus ‘source culture’ duality we have employed thus far does not accurately reflect Othman’s experience. Looking at this phenomenon of integrating into local networks rather than into English-French dualism we are unable to find an equivalent model or construct in any of the theories we reviewed in chapter three. While the process of categorization is deemed to be at work, and the multiple context-dependent self-categorizations are reminiscent of Amiot and colleague’s compartmentalization strategy (2007), the fact remains that all of these theories were working under the assumption that there are but two cultures not a host of destination cultures. Othman, however, completely bypasses this. He chose to adapt to multiple immigrant groups at the same time.

One of the implications for language programs that stem from these various acquisition dynamics, is the provision of direct cultural knowledge coupled with Canadian-born networks who can fill the gaps. For example, language training programs could incorporate the development of newcomers’ *Canadian-born* networks as both a classroom and program goal. Targeting a Canadian-born network excludes those who developed and were socialized outside of Canada (and therefore possess different cultural knowledge) but it retains second and older generation immigrants, aboriginal groups, and so forth, so as to reflect local and national cultural diversity. This latter point is important, as we now see that it would be disingenuous to present newcomers with a single cultural group’s knowledge set as most adaptive in a *de facto* multicultural society.

7.3. Cultural Integration and Language Ability

In regards to the connection between cultural integration and language ability, two lines of argumentation stand out from our data. First, for example, Othman argues that language can encode cultural knowledge indirectly¹⁸ in communicative exchanges. In theme four, more specifically, we see Othman sharing his experiences of trying to piece together an individual's stance on a subject through topic frequency, valence, avoidance, prosodic elements and paralanguage (e.g. body language). He then argues that by piecing together these elements he can derive not only the individual's stance but also the group's stance on a subject.

In principle, this is common practice. Indeed, it seems reasonable to assume that speakers do not make their views on a subject known in every exchange and that meaning must routinely be inferred in light of contextual cues. The better question is instead how to disentangle the individual's belief system –assuming the inferences are accurate– from the shared cultural knowledge that that individual possesses. For example, how are we to know that a sarcastic tone (i.e. prosodic marker) is indicative of the attitudes of the majority of group members and not just the speaker's current emotional state? In this regard, it could be argued that the possibility for confounding the two is large. Nevertheless, repeated experiences in different contexts with different outgroup members overtime could provide a rough measure. After all, how is any group member aware of the prevalent norms if not through repeated exposure in different contexts during and after childhood development?

The second major way language is implicated in culture, according to our participants is by representing the boundary at the edge of which in-groups are defined and outgroups are discriminated

¹⁸ Here we mean other than when the referential function of language is employed. That is, except when language is used to convey the information directly as in, 'We Canadians collectively believe that...'

against. In this respect, language seems to play an important role in how these language learners are perceived by both the source-culture and the destination-culture.

In Masha's case, we find she is not social validated by either reference group precisely because of her language markers. Moreover, the reasons she lists for not being socially validated and therefore not feeling integrated have much to do with being perceived as 'different' (i.e. dissimilarity). Part of this difference as we see in theme three does indeed have to do with her manner of speech (i.e. 'the way' she talks) which ultimately encompasses all the features of speech that can be used to identify non-native speakers in Canada and language shift by native-speakers in Ukraine. These results in some small way validate the factorial structure of Benet-Martinez and colleagues' BII model which stresses the importance of perceived cultural differences and similarities. Nevertheless, for it to be a complete assessment of Masha's case both the native-born and the newcomer sides would need to be accounted for. In other words, is Masha really being ostracized or does she only perceive that she is? Either way, the resulting lack of social validation (or perception thereof) prompts her to identify as 'in between' both groups. Going back to Amiot and colleagues' (2007) stages, we see some parallels with the *intersection* integration pattern where her identity is defined by the intersection of the two groups leaving aside Canadians and Ukrainians. As evidence, we also see that her interactional preferences show a strong affinity for other immigrants who find themselves in this situation of 'in between' –all the while excluding Ukrainians and Ukrainian immigrants.

If we refer to theme four, we also find that Othman was somewhat ostracized based on the way he spoke at the time. In his case, the particular features he listed had to do with accented speech, phonological errors, breadth of vocabulary, mismatched registers, and slow or truncated rate of delivery all of which prompted members of the outgroup to laugh, correct, or otherwise ostracize him. Being made to feel different because of the way he spoke at the time made him uncomfortable enough

to retreat to his own speech group for some time and therefore back away from intergroup interactions. This is something that Gordon Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory would have predicted as not all the conditions for successful 'conflict' resolution were met in Othman's case. That is, the groups did not equal status, common goals or intergroup cooperation even though the other conditions were met.

The unifying thread between these two experiences is the reference groups' ostracization of Masha and Othman based on language. This trend, in part, discouraged Othman from continuing to engage the outgroup and prompted Masha to feel insecure as to the state of her place in the social fabric. Given these experiences it is not surprising to us that neither participant shows evidence of an *additive integration* pattern – the final stage in cultural integration – where both reference groups are not only understood but also embraced (See chapter 3).

7.4. Conclusion: Contributions and Future Research

To conclude this project, we pause to consider the broader picture. It is clear from looking at Masha's and Othman's various experiences that language plays a major role in newcomers' cultural integration. If we return to our research question laid out at the end of chapter one, **“how do adult newcomers perceive the impact of their high-intermediate official-language ability on their cultural integration?”** we can say that language ability, as it is understood by our participants, is involved in cultural integration in three principal ways.

Most notably, in our participant's view language is used as: (a) A referential tool with which to transmit cultural knowledge directly; (b) an indirect carrier of pragmatic markers of cultural norms (e.g. prosody, body language, etc.) from which inferences can be made regarding the prevailing cultural norms; and (c) as the basis for the definition of 'legitimate' cultural group members—and by extension, the discrimination of those outside of this prototypical definition. In this way, language is transformed into a tool for both cultural knowledge acquisition but also for group differentiation. In our participants' case they both acquired enough cultural knowledge to be functional but not enough to be embraced by the source group. Their experiences of repeated linguistic ostracization by *both* cultural reference groups push them to feel the loss of community, embeddedness, and belonging. In turn, this loss of belonging in either reference group becomes a determinant of the individual's possible integration patterns—which will likely not be additive. In simple terms, it is hard to feel part of a group that does not consider you a member and frequently reminds you in quasi-negative ways about it. And yet, both participants found a certain amount of 'belonging' in the form of other immigrants who were undergoing similar experiences.

If these broad patterns can be replicated at scale, there would be serious implications for the LINC program and any other integration initiative at the federal level. For example, classroom objectives and curriculum guidelines could be reviewed to include modules on pragmatic features, their interpretation, and use. Further, given the importance of networks and the reference groups' acceptance for the integration experience, the development of newcomers' networks outside the classroom could be included in the program goals so as to speed up the acquisition process and provide a buffer against potential ostracization based on linguistic markers. If a dedicated diverse group of Canadian-born cultural 'ambassadors', per se, would help newcomers find 'memberships' in the destination-group early on then perhaps their integration outcomes could be more additive thereafter.

Lastly, teachers could begin to teach for 'integration', that is, cater lessons to the reduction of variation across features of language that are used to differentiate newcomers from native-speakers (e.g. pronunciation). With these three directions, tailored pragmatics-teaching, native-born network building, and a reorientation to salient features of language that improve interpersonal interactions, we could be one step closer to fulfilling the program's original goal of culturally integrating newcomers through language.

Beyond improvements to the existing program, several avenues for future research exist. The first avenue is to replicate these findings with different subpopulations within and between cultural groups. It is very likely that different pathways and forms of integration may manifest themselves given different sociodemographic, economic, human capital, and personality variables. Indeed, in spite of an exhaustive review, our participants still managed to fall somewhat outside of the models in regards to their identification patterns.

On that theoretical note, it is obvious that an exhaustive classification of the many integration patterns has not yet been put forth. Our synthesis of the most popular integration models revealed a whole host of post-arrival patterns, including: Deculturation, separation, assimilation, compartmentalization, intersection, additive integration and ethnogenesis. With some of the operating processes including self-categorization, depersonalization and superordination. As we saw in our project, some of the relevant factors in the determination of newcomers' integration pattern are cultural similarity, the degree of cultural diversity, policy environment, as well as the size and quality of initial social networks. In this regard, it remains to be seen how these various patterns manifest themselves in different populations, contexts, and situations.

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