LEGITIMIZING LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY OF AN ONTARIO PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR RUSSIAN-SPEAKING STUDENTS

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Abstract

In this ethnographic case study, I investigated how Ontario elementary school administrators, teachers, and students legitimize linguistic diversity in one Ontario private elementary school that served students from the Russian-speaking community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Pierre Bourdieu's (1991) framework of *legitimate language* was used to analyze how aspects of language practices are legitimized, for whom and under what conditions, and what this means for participants within the context of informal and formal instruction.

This study was grounded in qualitative research methodology. A total of 8 participants were involved in this study: I interviewed and observed 1 school administrator and 1 educator, I observed 1 art teacher volunteer and 5 students, 3 males and 2 females aged 9 to 11 in Grade 4/5. The research methodology of triangulation was used to make comparisons between multiple data sources. Particularly, this study relies on in-depth structured interviews, classroom observations that were conducted over a period of one month in a Grade 4/5 classroom during regular classroom hours, critical discourse analysis (CDA) of national Canadian language and multicultural policy and how it has formed educational practice in Canadian schools, and review of current research literature related to the study's research questions.

The findings revealed how student achievement was attained in instructional contexts that actively leveraged and maintained students' linguistic, cultural, and intellectual resources. School administration and educators worked in response to the dynamism of linguistic and cultural student demographics within the parameters of parental and community interests to rethink curricular practices. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that when participants leveraged knowledge of Russian as a common language and when educators integrated Russian

into their instruction, it offered opportunities for student engagement and enhancement within the classroom.

Dedication

To my mom and dad, thank you for always supporting me and never failing to believe in my abilities.

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I would like to start by expressing my deepest appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Karen Krasny for your continuous support. I am especially grateful for your trust in my capacity to grow and learn throughout this entire process. Thank you for your guidance, patience, and of course, for our lovely meetings that I am truly going to miss! Thank you to Dr. Jacqueline Lynch and Dr. Antonella Valeo, my committee members, for providing me with valuable feedback and support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Globalization forces us to evaluate new ideas, views, and aspects of language and culture. Blommaert and Rampton (2011) contend, "that over the past two decades, globalization has altered the face of social, cultural, and linguistic diversity in societies all over the world" (p. 1). Vertovec (2007; 2010) conceptualizes the global community in the context of *superdiversity*, where each individual is diverse in their linguistic, national, and cultural perspective. In response to superdiversity, there have been constant modifications around the essential ideas "(a) about languages, (b) about language groups and speakers, and (c) about communication" and therefore, how we conceptualize language (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 3). Garcia (2009) uses the term *plurilingualism* to explain that language practices today requires a different understanding due to the multiple languages that individuals are engaged in as they "cross borders either physically or virtually" (p. 54). Such migratory influences contribute to an increase in the number of students in North America whose language repertoire and practices draw from a myriad of cultural and linguistic experiences.

Krasny and Sachar (2017) reviewed federal and provincial statistics in response to the recent immigration of refugees to Canada as a result of the current Syrian crisis. By January 2017 a total of 40,081 Syrian refugees arrived in Canada, an increase of 21,438 from January 2016 where it was estimated that over half of these individuals were children under the age of 14 (Immigration & Citizenship, Government of Canada, 2017; Levitz, 2016). As of November 2016, the Government of Canada reported that a total of 2241 Government-Assisted Syrian Refugees arrived to Toronto, Ontario (Immigration & Citizenship, Government of Canada, 2017). Numerous newspapers featured stories reporting on newly arrived families who were

interested and keen on their children starting school. For example, the Toronto Star reported on the accommodation of these children and that the Toronto Public and Catholic School Boards initiated "pop-up classrooms" for those children whose families where still residing in hotels at the time of arrival (Toronto Star, Feb. 10). Additionally, to accommodate these students in English language learning schools recruited Arabic-speaking interpreters and supply teachers to work together to operate 2-hour morning classrooms. Krasny and Sachar (2017) argue that such a large intake underlines "the need and responsibility to understand how all children can successfully employ their existing language skills and knowledge as a resource to learn in mainstream English- and French-speaking Canadian classrooms" (p. 4).

Earlier research on language education in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) indicated that approximately 50% of children use a language other than English within their homes (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012). The Toronto District School Board (TDSB, 2015), one of the largest school boards in North America states, "there are over 122 languages spoken by TDSB students and their families." Approximately 46% of all students speak a language other than English, whereas "9% speak English and another language or languages" (TDSB, 2015). Additionally, in 2011-2012 the TDSB Student Census reported a demographic breakdown of the top five home languages, that were "non-English languages" spoken, which included the following: Chinese (11%), Tamil (6%), Urdu (5%), Bengali (3%), and Gujarati (2%) (TDSB, 2016). The reality of an increasingly linguistically diverse student population across schools in Toronto, leads to much discussion amongst researchers about how languages other than English should be integrated into schools with particular attention to how educators and educational ministries should respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of these students (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Schecter & Cummins, 2003).

1.1. The Problem

Guo (2012) states there are "Increasing numbers of multilingual, multicultural and multireligious learners in Canadian classrooms" (p. 4); however, Ontario classrooms are not equipped for these learners and teacher preparation programs have not "caught up to these demographic changes" (p. 5). In fact, earlier research by Schecter and Cummins (2003) affirmed similar issues with the educational system stating: "Today, when increasing numbers of school populations in North American metropolitan centers come from non-English-speaking home backgrounds, the implications of this reality for policy and pedagogy are as unclear as they were in 1988" and numerous schools are "ill equipped to provide educational services" in response to these changing patterns (pp. 2-3). For example, classroom teachers do not receive adequate training to support ESL students' academic success. Schecter and Cummins (2003) report that over the last thirty years that these programs have "inadvertently reflected the image of the generic student in the school system as white, monolingual, and monocultural" (p. 3) and few educational policies have considered *language as a right* and *language as a resource* as opposed to *language as a problem* and more recently, to *language as a privilege* (Garcia, 2009; Ruiz, 1984).

In the 1980s, Ruiz (1984) identified three predominant orientations towards language education: language-as-problem, language-as-right, and language-as-resource. Decades later, Cummins (2001) noted that while linguistic and cultural diversity described the majority of students within many school systems across North America, an approach to diversity continued be defined "as a problem" (p. 15). Garcia (2009) validates this argument and further argues that many educators continue to implement a monoglossic lens when teaching and assume that "legitimate linguistic practices are only those enacted by monolinguals" (p. 115). The adoption

of such beliefs towards language learning tend to create misconceptions whereby many educators assume that students are "*second language learners* or *second language speakers* in school" (p. 59) because of the language practices used within their homes. Such a lens, however, is counterintuitive in the twenty-first century at a time when student demographics of many Canadian schools are highly multilingual. Garcia (2009) insists that instead the language orientation framework needs to be taken one-step further. What this means is that we cannot accept or imagine monolingual schooling; however, these conceptualizations for language education planning do exist, but they are dependent on the way one approaches multilingual education. Given the linguistic profile of students enrolled in Ontario schools, it is important to investigate the reasons why or how these issues continue to resonate within the Ontario educational system, as schools remain a current place where languages are maintained and developed or are suppressed. Cummins (2012) goes so far as to characterizing the educational landscape as "*linguistic graveyards"* (p. ix).

1.2. Research Questions

This study builds upon my 2012 Masters thesis completed at York University. This school-based action research aimed at fostering the literacy development of students who were born in Canada, but raised in homes where the societally dominant language was not spoken. Where educational research and practice appears to have been slow to respond to parents who have both lingual and cultural aspirations for their children, in some cases, parents have taken matters into their own hands. The results of this have been a number of language-based schools, that teach languages other than English that may or may not reflect cultural and religious values. Having spent considerable time as a research assistant documenting the linguistic practices and experiences of students within the public elementary school system in Ontario, my doctoral

research examining how elementary educators in private Ontario schools, work in response to parental interests provides a unique context for investigation. Specifically, I conducted a case study of one private elementary school to examine how the language and cultural practices are established and organized for students from a Russian-speaking community in the GTA. The purpose of my research is to respond to the following questions:

1.) How is linguistic diversity legitimized in urban Ontario elementary classrooms through policy and practice?

2.) How are language and cultural practices enacted by students in a small private school established in response to interest from a Russian-speaking community in the GTA?

3.) How does language and culture actively inform the explicit and implicit curriculum in an Ontario private school established within a Russian-speaking community?

1.3. Background of Study

My M.Ed. thesis, *The Cognitive, Social, and Affective Dilemmas of Generation 1.5 English Language Learners: 1990-2011* examined the academic, social, and personal challenges of Generation 1.5 linguistic minority students who were born in Canada and attended school in the GTA in the 1990s, but spoke a language other than English at home. My research confirmed that the Ontario educational system was still far from being in a position of addressing the academic, social, and cognitive needs of Canadian-born ELL students, as it was twenty-one years prior when the participants attended elementary school. Specifically, policy makers, school administration, and educators lacked appropriate foundational knowledge about the cultural and linguistic factors that impact learning and academic success for minority students (Sachar, 2012; Schecter, 2012). Despite the growing degree of linguistic and cultural diversity in Ontario elementary schools, the implementation of multilingual education (MLE) within the regular day school has yet to take hold beyond French and/or English language programs and designated heritage languages. It is these findings that have set out purpose for research that needs to be

explored in greater detail to understand how multilingualism might shape languaging practices of linguistic minority students within schools.

In Fall 2015, I was introduced to Anna, a principal of a private school, who expressed interest in my work. Anna had recently established a private school that responded to the specific needs of both students and parents of a Russian-speaking community in the GTA. According to Anna, the school was established in response to parental interests. She reported that even greater than a desire for Russian-language instruction, students' parents had expressed discomfort with Ontario's new Sex Education curriculum and voiced dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of the provincial curriculum to prepare students for advanced mathematics. She also explained that many parents feared if their child opted out of the Sex Education curriculum in public school they would be singled out or bullied by their peers. Furthermore, Anna also felt that parents had a strong desire for their children to benefit from having an advance math curriculum. All but one of the students in the present study had at some point, attended public school in Ontario and Anna reported that while in public school, parents confided that they were informed their child was too talkative, hyperactive, or "misdiagnosed" with a learning disability. At the same time, Anna claimed that having a predominantly Russian speaking staff and students who could speak and understand the language offered some students a level of comfort associated with having language more linguistically familiar than English or French. These were just some of the concerns that led the small community to establish a Russian-speaking private school.

Under the advisory of the local Russian Orthodox priest and the assistance of other educators and experts from universities in the United States and London England and with the help of her mother, a professor of Mathematics, Anna established Engaging Minds Academy. In September 2015 the Ontario Ministry of Education validated the private school created under the

auspices of recruiting students belonging to the Russian-speaking community in the GTA. As a result of my meeting with Anna, facilitated through my dissertation supervisor, Anna welcomed research with the potential to inform and shape instructional practice and curriculum development in this Russian language-based school within an English-speaking milieu.

1.4. Significance of the Study

As outlined above, current language policies and practices of Ontario public elementary schools generally, fall outside of the changing demographics of student populations within Ontario schools. With this in mind, this study presents an opportunity to observe the language practices outside of policy and testing frameworks that govern or determine public schooling. Additionally, there is a documented need for a clearer understanding of the factors that underline and inform language policy and practice in Ontario elementary schools. These factors include discourse of demographic trends in Canadian immigration, consideration of scholarly research in the area of multilingual education, and one cannot ignore the historical impact of the federal commission of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (RCBB). Additionally, an examination of the philosophical proceedings to the concept of *legitimate language* (Bourdieu, 1991) is useful in illuminating the ideologies informing language learning. More specifically, this study provides information about how aspects of language practices are legitimized, for whom and under what conditions, and what this means for participants within the context of informal and formal instruction.

The present case study is intended to inform policymakers, school administrators, educators, parents, and other stakeholders in Ontario about future directions in response to linguistically and culturally changing demographics of student populations within Ontario elementary schools. This research also provides insight into how student achievement is attained

in instructional contexts that actively leverage students' linguistic and cultural resources. In this regard, this study suggests language programming and instructional strategies that include differentiated instruction to reflect the needs, interests, and experiences of all students. Furthermore, as private schools are growing in number, this study provides current information and insight into the schooling choices of parents, educators, and administrators.

1.4.1. Private schools in Ontario.

To understand the content of the study and the nuances of private schooling in Ontario, in this section I refer to the Education Act of 1990 and Ontario Ministry of Education documents.

1.4.2. What is a private school?

The Education Act of 1990 outlines a private school as:

> An institution at which instruction is provided at any time between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on any school day for five or more pupils who are of or over compulsory school age in any of the subjects of the elementary or secondary school courses of study and that is not a school as defined in this section. (Government of Canada, 1990)

The Ontario Ministry of Education further states that private schools are those schools that

> … operate as businesses or non-profit organizations and that are independently run from the Ministry of Education and in accordance with the legal requirements established by the *Education Act*. Unlike private schools in other provinces, they do not receive any funding or other financial support from the government. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016)

In this way, these are schools that the Ministry "does not regulate, license, accredit or otherwise oversee the operation of private schools" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017). The operators of private schools in Ontario set their own policies and procedures regarding the operation of their schools and are not compelled to follow the policies and procedures that school boards must follow. *All* private schools in Ontario must follow the same general requirements, but they are not required to use the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum unless they are seeking authority to grant credits toward the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Additionally,

these types of schools are not required to report on student achievement using the Elementary Provincial Report Card (for Grades 1-8) or the Provincial Report Card (for Grade 9-12) (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). All private schools that operate in Ontario must complete and submit a Notice of Intention to Operate (NOI) to the ministry, which is required by September 1 of each year. Once this information is validated, the school will begin operating and a ministry staff member will make an unannounced visit to "confirm that it meets the *Education Act* definition of a private school and that the information provided on the NOI is accurate" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017). A successful validation visit is a recommendation by the ministry staff to issue the school a Board School Identification number (BSID). The Ministry of Education differentiates two types of private schools operating in Ontario, non-inspected private schools and inspected private schools:

> Non-Inspected private schools include all private elementary schools as well as any private secondary schools that do not offer OSSD credit courses. In addition to not being inspected by ministry staff, these schools are not required to follow the official Ontario curriculum, although they must still offer instruction in any of the subjects in the elementary or secondary courses of study. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016)

The second type of private schools operating in Ontario are referred to as inspected private schools which are schools

> Seeking or have been given authority by the ministry to provide courses offering credits toward the OSSD. This includes private schools offering a combined elementary-secondary curriculum (in which case only the secondary school will be inspected) and private schools offering credits in an online environment. The inspections are conducted by ministry staff and may be scheduled or unscheduled. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017)

For both types of private schools in Ontario, principals do not need to have principal qualifications and teachers do not need to be certified or members of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). Accordingly, Engaging Minds Academy is considered a Non-Inspected school because the school administrator did submit a NOI, but at the time of research it did not offer

OSSD credited courses. Furthermore, the Ministry explains that there are ongoing requirements for all private schools which includes the following:

- A principal in charge of the school
- Control of quality of instruction and evaluation of student achievement
- Control of content of the program or courses of study
- A common school-wide assessment and evaluation policy
- A common procedure for reporting to parents
- A common school-wide attendance policy
- A central office for the maintenance of student records. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017)

My interviews with the school's principal and observations confirmed that Engaging Minds Academy followed all of the Ministry requirements.

1.4.3. Statistics on private schools in Ontario.

Despite the growing number of private schools in the province, data on private schools in Ontario is limited and/or is not current. This may be due in part, that private schools are not publically funded and therefore, not held to the same account as public schools. Nevertheless, as the ministry validates the operation of private schools, it has compiled a list of private elementary and secondary schools that are registered in Ontario. The list includes general information about each school, such as the school name, the principal's name, whether the school is an elementary school, and/or whether or not the school offers credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and where applicable, any religious affiliation and the availability of residential facilities. As of January 2017 the Ministry of Education reported that 1213 private schools, both elementary and secondary, are registered in Ontario (Ministry of Education, 2017). There are a total of 886 private elementary and secondary schools and 585 of these schools are elementary schools. The Ontario Federation of Independent Schools (OFIS) (2017) reported that 110,000 students are enrolled in independent schools and a grand total of 130,000 students in independent schools and home schools comprise for more than 5% of

Ontario's total student population. Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education compiled statistics for the number of private schools from 2003 to 2004 and 2009 to 2014. The statistics show an increase over the years in the number of private schools in Ontario at both the elementary and secondary level.

Table 1.1. Number of private schools, 2003–04 and 2009–10 to 2013–14*

	2003-04	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Elementary	477	486	460	485	497	511
Secondary	137	179	172	186	216	232
Combined **	214	212	216	219	236	265
Total	**828**	**877**	**848**	**890**	**949**	**1,008**
Included above:						
First Nations	29	26	26	30	31	35
Overseas	18	19	18	19	20	19

"* Private school information for 2014–15 was not available at time of publishing. Data includes First Nations and overseas secondary and combined schools. First Nations and overseas schools at the elementary level do not report to the ministry.
** Combined schools offer both elementary and secondary education."
(Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017).

The ministry also reported that private school enrolment for both males and females had increased from 2003 to 2014.

Table 1.2. Male and female private school enrolment

	2003-04	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Elementary	51,806	50,947	48,088	49,100	51,165	49,009
Secondary	20,311	17,994	17,756	18,840	20,707	20,506
Combined**	46,114	43,775	45,641	46,598	48,379	54,626
Total	**118,231**	**112,716**	**111,485**	**114,538**	**120,251**	**124,141**

** "Combined schools," offer both elementary and secondary education (Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017).

With an increase in the total number of private schools and student enrollment in Ontario, one questions what are the contributing factors that have prompted parents and educators to seek an alternative to public education.

1.5. Method

The present study was grounded in qualitative research methodology. An ethnographic case study was conducted in one private elementary school for Russian-speaking students in the GTA. This study relies on in-depth structured interviews with a school administrator and educators, classroom observations that were conducted over a period of one month, critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995) of Ontario educational policy, and review of current research literature related to my research questions. These approaches fulfill the mandate of triangulation, which Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) refer to as "the combinations and comparisons of multiple data sources, data collection and analysis procedures, research methods, investigators, and inferences" (p. 27). Denzin succinctly defines methodological triangulation as "the use of multiple methods to study a single problem" (as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 247).

This research aims to examine how the school administrator and educators respond to the diverse linguistic and cultural realities of their students within this language-based private school setting and how students actively engage in language and cultural practices. I was interested in knowing how the school's curriculum provides for a welcoming atmosphere by way of creating engaging learning environments and opportunities to allow students to capitalize on their diverse linguistic and cultural experiences? Bourdieu's (1991) concept of legitimate language, which he defines as normalized and standardized languages that confer symbolic power, was used to heuristically frame my examination on the status of languages in the context of the private elementary school setting. More specifically, I explored how aspects of language practices are legitimized, for whom, and under what conditions. More broadly, I examined how current educational language policy shapes linguistic and cultural practices within the classroom and

beyond and whether private schools settings can offer an alternative to Cummins (2012) *linguistic graveyards* (p. ix).

1.6. Theoretical Framework

Bourdieu's (1991) notion of legitimate language provided a critical framework for thinking about the changing communities and conditions of diversity within Ontario elementary schools. This lens was used to focus on how power and ideology intersect with issues confronting linguistically speaking students. For example, the language(s) that are promoted in schools invariably influence pedagogies, policies, and the legitimation of particular ideas and perspectives. Haque's (2012) analysis of Canadian multiculturalism within a bilingual framework demonstrates that the official language status of English and French effectively devalues the contribution of other languages and cultures. By contrast, the present study draws on the importance of orientations of *language-as-a right* and *language-as-a-resource,* but also language as cultural capital. Bourdieu defines cultural capital as "certificate of cultural competence which confers on its hold a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248).

1.7. Overview of Chapters

My dissertation is organized into the following chapters: Chapter 2 describes the various terminologies that are associated with language education and that are most often used as terms of distinction and understanding. I reflect on various literatures, past and present that have been written on this topic, while focusing on policy and practice.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical underpinnings that inform my research. Specifically, concepts including Bourdieu's (1991) notion of *legitimate language*, cultural capital, and power, will be discussed in order to better understand a framework for thinking about students' language

use in formal and informal classroom environments of an urban elementary private school in Ontario.

In Chapter 4, I describe the methodological strategies that I followed in undertaking the study, the participants and setting(s), and my evaluation and analysis strategies.

Chapter 5 explores the findings from the research data. This chapter is divided into two sections: The first part of this chapter offers an historical review and analysis of Canadian National language policies and how they have shaped educational practice in Canadian schools. In doing so, I provide an analysis of the Ontario Ministry of Education policies, curriculum documents, and texts at the elementary school level (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6) regarding linguistic minority students. I also provide a brief history on private schooling in Ontario, Canada. For the second section of this chapter, I explore the thematic similarities that were found from interviews that were conducted with the school administrator and educators who participated in this study and findings from classroom observations that took place over a period of one month within one private elementary school in the GTA.

Chapter 6 gives an analysis of the findings and connections are made to educational policy, current literature in the field, and theory.

Chapter 7 provides a discussion and conclusions from the study, which includes an overview of the study, summary of the research findings and connections to the research questions, recommendations, limitations of the study, directions for further research and concluding remarks.

Chapter 2

Definition of Terms and Literature Review

In the first part of this chapter I define various terms associated with language education and that are most often used as terms of distinction and understanding. In providing these definitions, it becomes evident that languages are not always pure or static. What this means is that globalization has constructed new ways of thinking about and using languages. As a result, it becomes challenging to uphold a single term to describe one's languaging experiences. For example, it is difficult to explain what one's mother tongue is as each individual's life experiences are varied. If an individual had learned multiple languages simultaneously while growing up, how is it possible to differentiate among one's first, second, or possibly third language learned? It is such questions that are taken up in the section Problematizing Defining Terms. Following this discussion, in the second part of this chapter I provide a literature review on various studies that have been conducted in the area of multilingualism within Toronto, Ontario. In addition, the literature review includes an overview of current Canadian statistics on language, a summary of the scholarly discussion on the power of language and its effects on identity construction and negotiation, and a focus on research on multilingualism within Ontario schools.

2.1. Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Garcia (2009) explains there are various connotations associated with the term bilingualism; however, this term is most often associated with someone who has a good understanding of two languages. Although this is a commonly used explanation, various authors from the past decade and up until more recently (Baker, 2011; Cazden & Snow, 1990) have explained that bilingualism is a much more complex phenomenon where a simple definition is

inadequate in capturing its complexity. Baker (2011) outlines various dimensions of bilingualism to provide clarity of this term and to make the distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism. Firstly, he stresses the importance of one's ability in two languages, where certain bilinguals are able to speak and write in both languages, which is referred to as "productive competence" (p. 3). On the other hand, individuals may be "passive bilinguals" and are only able to understand or read both languages; this is was formerly referred to as "receptive ability" (p. 3) although current research in language and literacy no longer distinguishes between productive and receptive processes, that is to say, aural and written comprehension is never passively receptive (Mattingly, 1972). To add to these distinctions, following Garcia (2009), Baker (2011) stresses that bilinguals may be those who are at the preliminary stages of learning a second language and are "emerging bilinguals" (p. 3).

One view conceives bilingualism as a process of balancing two languages whereby individuals who are fully bilingual are able to use two languages equally. For example, Cummins (2000) distinguishes the difference between monolingualism and bilingualism through the analogy of a cycle. He explained that monolingualism could be thought of as a unicycle and bilingualism as a bicycle, having two equally balanced wheels. However, Baker (2011) argues, "rarely are bilinguals... equal in their ability or use of two… languages" (p. 4). In fact, it is most often that one of the two languages dominates the other and this changes in the different contexts and times when language is acquired (Baker, 2011). For example, one language may be used more so at home and the other at school. Additionally, this view of bilingualism is problematic as it fails to consider communicative realities of the twenty-first century. Garcia (2009) challenges the notion of balanced bilingualism, as it does not operate with the "communicative multimodal terrain" (p. 143). What this means is that within the multifaceted ways of languaging, it is

inadequate to consider language as two balanced wheels. Instead, we need to expand our thinking about language uses in society and reconsider that it is not balanced; it is "more than two wheels," moving in all directions (p. 143).

Defining multilingualism also presents considerable challenge. Like bilingualism, multilingualism can be studied from numerous disciplines and perspectives, linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and education, to generate competing definitions. For example, according to the European Commission (2007) multilingualism is "the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives" (p. 6). By contrast, Shohamy (2006) argues that multilingual competence does not only indicate a certain number of languages, but it is also competencies that occur through a mixture and hybrids of various languages. These definitions present a multifaceted understanding of the term, but Cenoz (2013) explains that this phenomenon started with multilingual academics from various parts of Europe who were accountable for translating various texts for the diffusion of learning. For example, Greek texts were translated into Latin during the Middle Ages. More recently, multilingualism is a very common phenomenon in all parts of the world, which is evident as there are almost 7,000 languages and about 200 self-governing countries (Lewis, 2009). Cenoz (2013) adds to this by stating,

> It is not only that there are more languages than countries but also that the number of speakers of the different languages is unevenly distributed, meaning that speakers of smaller languages need to speak other languages in their daily life. (p. 3)

There are numerous factors that contribute to the existing visibility of multilingualism. Some of these factors include, "globalization, transnational mobility of the population, and the spread of new technologies" which have all contributed to political, social and educational circumstances (Cenoz, 2013, p. 4). In relation to these factors, Aronin and Singleton (2008)

compare the qualities of historical multilingualism with current multilingualism and report on seven differences, which they group into three main areas: geographical, social, and medium. For geographical, they explain that in relationship to the earlier years, "multilingualism is not limited to geographical close languages or to specific border areas or trade routes" (Cenoz, 2013, p. 4). Instead, multilingualism is more of a universal phenomenon that dispersed over various parts of the world. For social, they explain that "multilingualism is no longer associated with a specific social strata, professions, or rituals" (p. 4). Rather, it progressively dispersed "across different social classes, professions, and sociocultural activities" (p. 4). Lastly, for medium, in the earlier years, multilingual communication was usually limited to writing and postal services were slow. However, in the twenty-first century, as an outcome of the Internet, multilingual communication is multimodal and immediate. Therefore, as reported by numerous researchers (Cummins 2000b; Edwards, 2004), globalization has a constructive influence on multilingualism and in turn, speaking multiple languages has been found to have great value (Cenoz, 2013). For the purpose of this research, I define the phenomenon of multilingualism as exhibited by persons who have various levels of competence in two or more languages, where bilingualism qualifies as a case of multilingualism.

Biseth (2009) describes the complexity of multilingualism as she explains that it is the use of two or more languages, but it also encompasses both individuals and societies. For individuals, multilinguals usually arise from the need to communicate within a variety of different contexts. For example, individuals may be exposed to more than one language within the family, another at school, and another at work (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Furthermore, multilinguals can also be those who are "speakers of a minority indigenous language[s]," who need to learn the national language or languages or in other cases, individuals who have learned

languages in the course of economic migration (Cenoz, 2013, p. 3). Li (2008) also provides a definition for multilinguals as "anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)" (p. 4). Following these definitions, many different types of "multilinguals" contribute to a large percentage of the student populations of schools across Toronto elementary schools making it important to investigate how or if educators and schools are responding to these linguistic realities.

2.2. From Multilingualism to Plurilingualism: A New Linguistic Direction

2.2.1. Plurilingualism.

Krasny and Sachar (2015) explored the move from multilingualism to plurilingualism, a phenomenon that has been extensively researched in Europe over the past two decades (Piccardo, 2013). The term *plurilingualism* is a term that conceptualizes language use in the twenty-first century and is opening new perspectives in language education (Coste, Moore, & Zarate, 2009). Following Council of Europe (2007) definition of plurilingualism, Coste et al. (2009) elaborate beyond the European context to encompass a wider global community reflective of linguistically changing demographics. Accordingly, plurilingualism

> …refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw. (p. 11)

This definition recognizes and accepts one's linguistic competence in *all* languages. By doing so, this eliminates any barriers or hierarchy between the languages in one's linguistic repertoire. Various authors (Canagarajah & Liynage, 2012; Piccardo, 2013) have made reference to this by offering information on the distinction between multilingualism and plurilingualism, which

offers further understanding of what plurilingualism stands for. Canagarajah and Liynage (2012) make a distinction between multilingualism and plurilingualism by stating that, "Plurilingualism allows for the interaction and mutual influence of… languages in a more dynamic way" (p. 50). What this means is that multilingualism tends to separate one's languages, both societal and individual, and places greater importance on having command in each of the languages that a person speaks. On the other hand, plurilingualism focuses on the notion that languages are interconnected (Piccardo, 2013). Additionally, plurilingualism provides a lens that creates an awareness of other languages at work in relation to our society, but also the important connections that exist between language and culture(s) (Piccardo, Berthoud, Cignatta, Mentz, & Pamula, 2011). Moving beyond multilingualism, plurilingualism recognizes that individuals can be equally competent in more than one language across a variety of contexts (European Commission, 2007). In relation to the field of education, Garcia (2009) notes that this concept is valued because it "acknowledges that the education system needs to develop citizens who are capable of linguistic tolerance towards speakers who 'language' differently" (p. 54). By adopting a pluralistic lens towards student's linguistic repertoires, moves beyond the monolingual or multilingual contrast and understands the various linguistic and cultural resources that are used by these learners. Given the linguistically diverse student population in the GTA and in particular, the fact that Russian-speaking students, as defined by Anna, often hail from a number of former Soviet block countries, each with their own national languages (e.g. Kazakhstan, Ukraine), I was interested in observing how students might enact with their language repertoires in this student-centered curriculum.

2. 3. Problematizing Defining Terms

Educational research relies on number of terms related to linguistics and cultural phenomenon. The Canadian context yields specific terms that require some elaboration. Specifically, the definitions provided below are commonly used terms that are associated with the field of education when referring to students' linguistic backgrounds. However, through globalization national boundaries of language and culture begin to blend into a culturally dynamic hybrid. Because of this phenomenon, when attempting to define these terms it becomes evident that clear or concise definitions, with regards to languaging, are nonexistent. Blommaert and Rampton (2011) make reference to this by arguing that modern globalization has allowed for "a tremendous increase in the categories of migrants, not only in terms of nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion, but also in terms of motives, patterns and itineraries of migrations" (p. 1). For this reason, ideal speaker-listeners, which were once believed to exist are looked at more critically. Piccardo (2013) further argues, "We are now increasingly aware that such a perfect individual does not exist, no more than a stable and perfectly known language exists" (p. 604). Therefore, because of these changing linguistic and cultural demographics, to define *mother tongue*, *first language, second language*, and *heritage language, international/foreign language, standard languages*, is not straightforward.

2.3.1. First language (L1).

The term *first language* is often associated with the language that one learns first as an infant. This term is usually connected with one's mother tongue and therefore, the language that one learns from their mother (Davies, 2003). However, one issue that this term poses is for individuals who have learned more than one language as an infant or there might have been other individuals influencing one's linguistic repertoire as an infant (e.g. family members, friends,

relatives, etc.). Davies (2003) states, "Your first language is the language ('tongue') you learned from your mother, biological or not" (p. 17). He argues, however, that such a definition does not encompass many individuals who do live in multilingual societies or "multidialectal societies" (p. 17). Therefore, as seen with the definition of mother tongue, the individual is influenced by peers as well as by parents. This may be in more than one language making it challenging to decipher which language(s) was learned first. This term also raises the question of whether it is possible to have more than one first language at the same time?

The term *mother tongue* is a common concept in the literature on bilingualism. The word *mother* provides insight into how the child's first significant other is the mother. Davies (2003) explains that the mother is often the one who influences the child's linguistic repertoire and linguistic exchanges. Succinctly put, "The mother tongue is literally just that, the language of the mother and is based on the normal enough view that children's first significant other is the mother" (p. 16). In most cases, it is probably the mother who provides most of the "spoken input of the child and with whom the child identifies and wishes to exchange meanings" (p. 16). Garcia (2009) offers a further explanation of this term stating, "many minoritized language groups have adopted for the term 'mother tongue' to refer to their language practices, sometimes the language of their ancestors" (p. 57). Although these definitions may seem straightforward, various researchers have legitimate cause their use.

Firstly, the term mother tongue carries with it many uncertainties and generalizations that do not apply to all individuals. For example, for many children, caretaking might not be done by the biological mother, it may be a father, grandparent, babysitter, or even all three. Additionally, the mother could be bilingual. It would be difficult to determine what the child's mother tongue is or if there is more than one language that the child is exposed to while being in the care of

multiple individuals. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) offer an example of a child born to a Tamil-speaking mother in Malaysia who could quite possibly acquire Tamil, Straits Mala y, and/or Straits Chinese. They state,

> One may be a native speaker of a language even though one's mother was not […]. It is impossible to designate that individual's mother tongue except in the literal sense, and it is not so useful to do so […]. It is not a useful term, but it is, nonetheless […] widely used. (p. 36)

Baker and Jones (1998) provide another argument that makes this term questionable. They state,

> 'Mother tongue' tends to be used for language minorities and much less so for language majorities. The term therefore tends to be a symbol of separation of minority and majority, or those with less, as opposed to those with more power and status. (p. 50)

Such challenges of identifying a mother tongue have been categorized by Skutnabb-Kangus (1981) through the following four criteria:

Origin	The language(s) one learned first
Competence	The language(s) one knows best
Function	The language(s) one uses most
Identification	
(a) Internal	The language(s) one identifies with
(b) External	The language(s) others identify one with. (p. 18)

Skutnabb-Kangus (1981) concludes that the criterion allow for the possibility that the mother tongue may change, even several times throughout one's lifespan. What this means is that one's ability in a language tends to shift and change throughout one's lifetime, by oneself and/or by others through social interaction (Garcia, 2009). In this regard, it often becomes challenging to identify an individual's single mother tongue, meaning the concept itself can be questioned.

2.3.2. Second language (L2).

Davies (2003) explains that defining a *second language* poses similar challenges as it does to defining a first language. A second language is "defined in term of a language which is

learned after the first language (or the mother tongue)" (p. 23). In an educational setting this term is most often used to define a circumstance in which the child is being instructed in a language standard "which is not the home language" (p. 23). In the same setting, this language can also be referred to as a *foreign language*. However, with both of these terms there is an essential message that indicates that the second or foreign language(s) that one speaks, is secondary to that of the first language. Additionally, the term foreign language has an underlying message that appears to imply that only those who acquire it can interact with foreigners, meaning it is considered as a language "outside of one's native environment" (p. 24). In this regard, various critical questions, such as those asked by Garcia (2009), begin to arise. She asks, "What is the difference between a second language speaker and a second language learner? At what point does one remain a second language speaker?" (p. 59). To add to these questions, one also wonders are those with accents second language speakers? Who decides what one's first language(s) and second language(s) are and/or which language is a foreign language? By posing such questions, it becomes clear that these definitions are not universal and they do not always fit into each person's linguistic background. Instead, when thinking about language learning it is important to understand that it can occur at different times, places, and with certain individuals (Garcia, 2009). This argument becomes even more important when considering the online community and how languages factor into this space. For example, Ivkovic and Lotherington (2009) argue that "no language can be viewed as independent of its environment: biological or digital, local, micro-or macro-linguistic" (p. 27). This suggests that all languages are related even in "deterrorialised digital space," the languages that are used, "programming language" which is built using the Roman alphabet, also factor into the hybridity of languages that makeup our multilingual world (p. 27). In this sense, as multilingual proficiencies continue to expand through

digital communications, adding to the ongoing challenge of defining one's first and second language; however, these realities make it even more so important for various institutions, such as the educational system, to recognize that there is no end to language learning, but also to understand and accept the multiplicity of languages. In this regard, Garcia (2009) states, "language learning is a continuous developmental process that occurs throughout a lifetime and is recursive and circular" (p. 59).

2.3.3. Heritage language/International language.

In Canada, the languages that are learned *outside* of school and are not English or French are referred to as *heritage languages* or *international languages*. More specifically, these terms are often associated with "languages spoken by ethnic communities" (Garcia, 2009, p. 60). For the Canadian elementary school system these terms are especially important because they represent educational programs that the government created after the multicultural policy came into effect during the 1960s (Garcia, 2009). Baker (2011) explains that these programs focus on the "preservation of the ethnic language, ethic culture, and in many cases, has a large preponderance of language minority children" (p. 236). Although these programs stress the importance of preserving one's identity, these terms continue to pose an issue, as they do not adequately describe an individual's linguistic experience. For example, to learn a heritage/international language does not give any information about one's already existing linguistic repertoire, what languages are already known and spoken. In this way, these terms fail to reflect one's life history and experiences. Garcia (2009) also reflects on some issues that these terms present as she argues that heritage language creates a sense of "old, ancient, in the past, when in fact, we are speaking about languages of the future" (p. 60). In this case, these terms to not do justice to what they are hoping to accomplish, that is compensating one's linguistic

background. Some of these issues and further details about these programs will be discussed in greater detail in the following two chapters.

2.3.4. Community language.

Clyne (1991) coined the term "community language" in the mid-seventies and has since been employed in Australia to "denote languages other than English and Aboriginal languages employed within the Australian community" (p. 3). Clyne (1991) explains that this term was developed to give recognition to "Aboriginal languages" within Australia (p. 3). Additionally, community languages take into consideration that other terms, which have been used to explain individual's languaging practices, have been discriminatory and inaccurate of Australian life. A few of these terms include *foreign languages*, *migrant languages*, and *ethnic languages*. For example, Clyne (1991) argues that the term *migrant language does* not consider the languages used by "Australian-born generations" (p. 3). Another important factor of community languages is that it comes under the term Languages other than English (LOTE), which considers some community languages and languages that are "spoken by only small communities in Australia" (p. 35).

Australia has strongly invested in community languages, having introduced them into both national and state language policies that have been geared towards education. For example, for the Victorian Certificate of Education there are 43 languages approved as subjects that can be taken by students in their last two years of secondary education (Clyne, Rossi, & Isaakidis, 2010). Clyne et al. (2010) explain that in addition to the regular day school, students have access to "after hours part-time schools" that are administered by "ethnic communities" (p. 35). For example, the Victorian School of Languages offers students access to study languages that are not available during their school day. Aside from the educational system offering community

languages there are many other institutions that offer these languages. Various radio stations and TV channels are multilingual and are broadcasted in numerous languages; various public libraries provide resources that cater to community languages; and community organizations function in community languages.

The terms presented above are difficult to uphold and many (e.g., first language, mother tongue, etc.) are fundamentally monoglossic. Monoglossia is a condition where language is stable, not impervious to meaning (Bakhtin, 1981). With the complexity of today's superdiverse global community, these terms are unable to explain the actual language behaviours of individuals. For example, Garcia (2009) discusses how terms like *mother tongue* and *second-language* are unable to accurately describe individuals whose linguistic experiences are complex and varied. She states that such terms, "rob the child or adolescent of [their] bilingual identity and translanguaging possibilities by insisting on one language" (p. 60). These terms also convey negative connotations that fail to consider the real world complexity of individuals, as they are unable to capture the essence of how an individual uses language. Therefore, it becomes challenging to identify a universal definition for one individual rather than understanding language as a process of communication that is dynamic and malleable, not categorical.

2.4. A Review of Literature

2.4.1. Statistics Canada results on language.

The most recent comprehensive statistical research that has been conducted and reported on in Canada regarding Canada's linguistic characteristics is the 2011 Statistics Canada analytical report. Firstly, the report concluded that Canada's linguistic diversity was evident by the fact that more than 200 languages were reported as a home language or mother tongue in the 2011 Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2012). Close to 6.6 million persons reported

speaking a language other than English or French at home. Particularly, in 2011 80% of the country's population reported speaking an "immigrant language (i.e., a language other than English, French or an Aboriginal language)" typically at home, lived in one of Canada's six largest cities (Statistics Canada, 2012, p. 5). Specifically, for Toronto, Ontario the 2011 Census found that approximately 1.8 million out of approximately 2.6 million people spoke an "immigrant language" primarily at home (p. 7). The census found and stated, "this population was two and a half times larger than the corresponding population in Vancouver… among those speaking an immigrant language at home in Toronto, about one-third spoke one of five languages:" Cantonese, Punjabi, Chinese (n.o.s. "refers to persons who reported 'Chinese' without further specifying in their response to the question on language spoken most often at home"), Urdu, and Tamil (pp. 7- 9). Table 2.1, which has been provided by Statistics Canada (2012, p. 8), gives further information to provide a sense of the size and percentage of the population who reported speaking one of the top immigrant languages which was most often spoken at home in Toronto, Ontario.

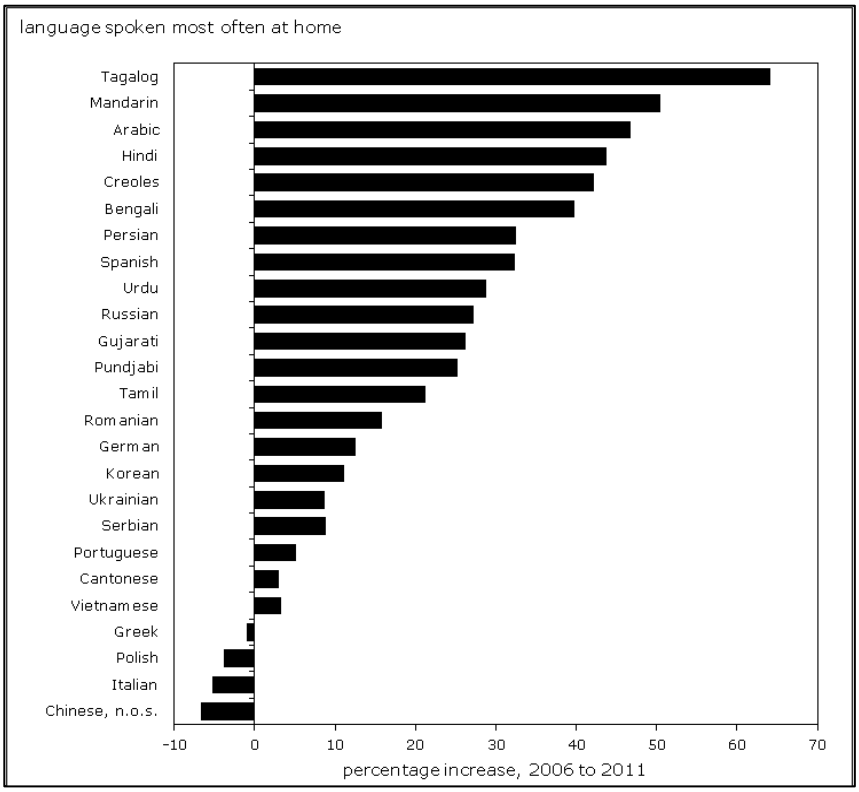
Table 2.1. 2011 Size and percentage of top 12 immigrant languages most often spoken at home in Toronto, Ontario

Toronto		
Language spoken most often	**Number**	**Percentage**
Cantonese	156,425	8.8
Punjabi	142,345	8.0
Chinese n.o.s.	124,960	7.0
Urdu	105,545	5.9
Tamil	102,700	5.7
Tagalog	99,980	5.6
Spanish	94,315	5.3
Mandarin	91,670	5.1
Italian	81,390	4.6
Persian (Farsi)	69,570	3.9
Portuguese	65,810	3.7
Russian	64,700	3.6
Other immigrant languages	587,590	32.9
Total	1,786,995	100.0

Note. Adapted from "Linguistic Characteristics of Canadians: Language, 2011 Census of Population" by Statistics Canada. 2012. *Statistics Canada,* p. 8. Copyright by the Minister of Industry.

Additionally, Figure 2.1. which has been provided by Statistics Canada (2012, p. 6), further illustrates the growth in population in Canada from 2006 to 2011 for individuals who reported on speaking one of the top 25 immigrant languages most often spoken at home. Relative to the present study, it is important to note an increase in the languages most often spoken at home in languages from the former Soviet block countries, including Russian.

Figure 2.1 Population growth (in percent) in number of persons who reported speaking one of the top 25 immigrant languages most often at home, Canada, 2006 to 2011



Note: Adapted from "Linguistic Characteristics of Canadians: Language, 2011 Census of Population" by Statistics Canada. 2012. *Statistics Canada,* p. 6. Copyright by the Minister of Industry.

Another language trend that has been evident from the early twenty-first century up until more recently is that Canadian homes in large city areas have shown a decline in speaking French and English at home. Particularly, the data from the 2011 Census revealed that in both Toronto and Vancouver, the use of only English at home showed a continual decline, which

between 2001 and 2006. Specifically, in Toronto, 55.0% of the population reported speaking only English at home in 2011 compared to 59.1% in 2006 and 62.5% in 2001. Additionally, whereas the population that reported speaking only English or French at home had grown between 2001 and 2006, these percentages declined in 2011 (14.3% in Toronto) (Statistics Canada, 2012). The percentages of languages spoken at home from 2001, 2006, and 2011 in the Toronto area is shown in greater detail in Table 3.2, which has been provided by Statistics Canada (2012, p. 19).

Table 2.3. Languages spoken at home, Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA), 2001, 2006, 2011

Language(s) spoken at home	Toronto CMA					
	2001		2006		2011	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
French only	9,875	0.2	11,040	0.2	10,560	0.2
English only	2,902,975	62.5	2,996,010	59.1	3,045,505	55.0
Other only	693,025	14.9	812,160	16.0	835,120	15.1
French and other Note 1	4,570	0.1	5,225	0.1	7,980	0.1
English and other Note 2	962,630	20.7	1,167,170	23.0	1,530,670	27.6
English and French Note 3	49,545	1.1	54,340	1.1	64,800	1.2
Other combinations Note 4	25,340	0.5	26,130	0.5	47,245	0.9
Total	4,647,955	100.0	5,072,075	100.0	5,541,880	100.0

Note. Adapted from "Linguistic Characteristics of Canadians: Language, 2011 Census of Population" by Statistics Canada. 2012. *Statistics Canada,* p. 19. Copyright by the Minister of Industry.

Although the Census data shows that Canada is increasingly linguistically diversified, its two official languages French and more so English continue to have hegemonic influence on society. Particularly, as these languages have been considered as official languages in Canada for a long

period of time and therefore they are considered as "languages of convergence and integration into Canadian society," but even more so "as languages of work, education, and the provision of government services to the public" (Statistics Canada, 2012, p. 11). In fact, Cummins (2012) states, "Few would deny that Canada's cities are vibrant multilingual and multicultural environments; yet these same cities are *linguistic graveyards* for the home languages of countless children" (p. ix). For example, when children enter school in preschool or Junior Kindergarten they might be fluent in their home language(s); however, this fluency becomes challenged by the premeditated or involuntary messages they receive when they enter school (Cummins, 2012). At time, such views can influence parents' attitudes about their child's language use and choices with a view to their child's academic success. In her case study of three Chinese-Canadian first and second graders' biliteracy and trilingual practices in the home, Li (2006) found that some parents altered their home language practices to match those of the school in order for their child to be successful. In Li's study, Anthony Chan's parents wanted him to "learn real English" and for this reason, chose to speak to him in English at home even though he was learning Chinese. On the other hand, the parents of Alana Tang, another child in Li's study, wanted her to maintain learning Chinese as they believed that the skills learned for Chinese would help her in learning English and cited the applicability of textbook instructions and other Chinese literacy instruction methods (Li, 2006). Although these examples demonstrate the different views that parents have towards English learning various studies have found that schools are quick to make assumptions that only one language is legitimate in such institutions and society, disregarding one's home language(s) (Cummins, 2012; Schecter & Cummins, 2003). Therefore, although the statistics evidently show that Canada is multilingual and that

English and French are beginning to be spoken less so in Canadian homes, this trend is not fully being considered within the educational system in Toronto, Ontario.

2.4.2. The power of language: Identity construction and negotiation.

Antonio Gramsci (1988) argues, "Each individual is the synthesis not only of existing relations but of the history of these relations. He [*sic*] is a précis of the past" (p. 326). In this way, identity is constructed through our histories, but it is also constructed and negotiated through our social interactions of our everyday lives through language. In fact, Thorne and Lantolf (2007) describe a view of language as a

> Historically contingent emergent system, one that provides a repertoire of semiotic devices that people can use to realize their communicative intentions, to interpret the communicative intentions of others and, perhaps most importantly, to foster the conditions of possibility for transforming self and community. (p. 189)

This idea of "transforming self and community" has taken place as a result of globalization, where individuals have taken on a more fluid positioning of identity because of the expansive language practices that they are immersed in. In fact, Heller (2006) points out that linguistic minorities take advantage their "multiple linguistic and cultural resources in order to participate in a globalized economy" (p. 5). In regards to children, they too are immersed in language practices of "very different worlds-those of the family and those of the school" and it is within these communities that they construct their identities (Garcia 2009, p. 100; Wenger, 1998; Lave & Wegner, 1991).

Pennycook (2007) argues that it is not so much that individuals use language based on their identity, but rather "we perform identity with words" (p. 73). This performativity of language becomes even more important and an essential for children to be given opportunities at school to invest in their own linguistic practices. Norton and Toohey (2001) agree with this point by arguing "language choices available to children and their parents, as well as the discursive

practices that are encouraged and supported in school, have an important impact on children's identity…" (p. 310). In this way, it becomes even more important for educators to be conscious of the various connections between language and identity and how students "perform multiple identities" through their language (Garcia, 2009, p. 83). Although this would be ideal for educators to consider, for many linguistic minority students within mainstream schools, issues of identity and power intersect with issues of learning and instruction (Cummins, 2006).

Affirmative learning experiences for linguistically and culturally diverse students are dependent upon the responsiveness of opportunities that are provided for identity investment during the learning process (Schecter & Cummins, 2003). Particularly, when students feel a sense of approval in respect to their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, from both their teachers and peers, this in turn generates a sense of belonging to a community. One way that students can gain this awareness is through pedagogy that is student centered and that provides them with motivation and a sense of self. In turn, this confirms their identities and motivates their cognitive engagement. Schecter and Cummins (2003) agree with this view by explaining that the discussions that are "broadcast[ed] into the classroom… directly affects how identities are negotiated between teachers and students" (p. 9). For example, if the discourse of the classroom emphasizes that students need to conform to a certain linguistic style and abstain from their language practices that they use within their homes, "if they want to succeed in the society," this view generates a sense of language as a problem and "communicates to students that they should leave their language and culture at the schoolhouse door" (pp. 9-10). However, when educators offer students opportunities to "activate [their] prior experiences" and knowledge, such as making connections to their linguistic backgrounds, this affirms their identities by conveying to them that "what they already know is important" (Cummins, 2001, p. 72). Furthermore, to take

such a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning challenges the status quo of the dominant societal structures that infringe on the educational system in ways that dismiss students' linguistic identities and "lifeworld experiences" (p. 72). Therefore, recognizing and implementing students' linguistic and cultural experiences can have a positive influence on how students' identities get negotiated.

There has been a significant response by the research community demonstrating the importance of student affirmation, but also how the processes of student learning are embedded in instructional practices and through classroom interactions. It is through language that these interactions are made possible, but these interactions also "construct the roles, relationships, and identities" within the school context (Gibbons, 2006, p. 63). In doing so, the interactions that take place between educators and students are even more important as it is a determining agent in a student's educational success (Schecter & Cummins, 2003). It is through interactions that educators communicate, "to students regarding their identities-who they are in their teacher's eyes and who they are capable of becoming" (Schecter & Cummins, 2003, p. 14). Alternatively, if educators ignore or convey messages of indifference to students' linguistic and cultural practices used within their homes, these actions communicate to them that their identities are not valued within the classroom context. On the other hand, when educators incorporate students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds into their pedagogy, this communicates to them that their identities are respected (Schecter & Cummins, 2003). Therefore, it is crucial for educators to "create classroom conditions for maximum identity investment in the learning process" (p. 16).

2.4.3. Research on multilingualism within Ontario schools.

Extensive literature reports on empirical studies pertaining to multilingualism in Ontario elementary schools. One of the main findings from this research has shown the positive outcomes in elementary schools engaged in constructing multilingual language pedagogies. Feuerverger's (1994) study of an inner city Toronto elementary school investigated the development of a multicultural literacy project. The primary objective of the project was to promote children from both culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to acquire literacy not only in English or their second language, but also their first language. This project also focused on the development of student pride in their backgrounds by allowing them to use "language/bilingual books" from the school library within the classroom and to be taken home to be read to their parents (p. 123). The outcomes of this project were evident through student interviews. For example, Alex, a student from Bulgaria who had been in Canada for nine months, spoke about his positive experience of reading a book to the class in his home language. He stated, "They asked me all kinds of questions. One boy said he wished he could have the book; another asked whether he could have it…some of them tried to say the words in Bulgarian but they couldn't" (p. 137). From this interview it is evident that the student showed self-confidence and pride in this his home language as he was given the opportunity to share aspects of his culture and identity within the classroom settings. Another student, Nabila, spoke about her interest of being able to read and write in Urdu, which allowed her to keep ties with her relatives in Pakistan. More importantly, she was given affirmation of her linguistic identity as her classmates encouragingly responded to her reading Urdu. She stated, "because once kids know what your language and culture is like, then they won't make fun of you" (p. 138). These interviews reveal that the project was beneficial as it provided students with the opportunity to

share aspects their linguistic and cultural backgrounds at school and to their peers, which fostered an understanding of diversity.

Another important objective of the project was recognizing that schools play a great role in encouraging and accepting children's home languages and cultures (Feuerverger, 1994). In this way, the literacy project was intended to illustrate the significance of constructing opportunities of identity investment, where students are able to engage in their prior understandings and background knowledge. The effectiveness of this objective was presented through teacher/librarian interviews. For example, one of the librarians spoke about dual language texts and the connection that the children felt when they were able to identify with their own language, especially those who were new to the country. She stated, "…Its overwhelming. You feel helpless. So I can understand how children feel when they first arrive. Everything is a different alphabet, so to see their own language really means something for them" (p. 133). Another interview response from a teacher also revealed that the bilingual books were one way for the children to embrace a Canadian identity and in doing so it meant being able to embrace a Canadian identity that was less exclusionary. Feuerverger (1994) states, "In the past becoming Canadian meant giving up on one's ethnicity; now becoming Canadian means building one's ethnicity into the Canadian identity" (p. 136). As a result, the findings from this study confirm the positive outcomes that develop for students when schools and educators validate and provide opportunities for students maintain their linguistic and cultural identities. More specifically, the implementation and intervention of students' languages within the curriculum allow for home and school connections to be made as students' are given the opportunity to invest in their linguistic identities.

Cummins et al. (2005) reveal the instructional possibilities and positive outcomes that

emerge when students' multilingual identities are affirmed. The Dual Language Showcase project was implemented in several schools across the GTA in which teachers enabled students to create "identity texts" (p. 5). These are texts that the researchers used to refer to students' bilingual writing. They were products of students' work that they create either through "written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic, or combinations in multimodal form" (Cummins, 2007, p. 235). The initial school site that implemented this instructional approach was Thornwood Public School, a Kindergarten to Grade 5 school in the Peel District School Board. All children at the school became involved in creating dual language books, which become an effective tool to support the integration of newcomer and ELL students (Chow & Cummins, 2003; Schecter & Cummins, 2003; Cummins et al., 2005). Particularly, students were given the opportunity to create books in their first language (L1), a language that they are most comfortable with. These books allowed students to demonstrate their literacy skills, but it also allowed them to communicate their own ideas, feelings, and understandings to teachers and their peers (Cummins et al., 2005). These books were then placed in the classroom and school library for students to take home to share with their families.

Similarly, in Perminder Sandhu's Grade 4 classroom at Coppard Glen Public School of the Toronto's York Region District School Board, she integrated students' language and culture into the curriculum (Cummins et al., 2005). These students created dual language or multilingual books in partners and many times received assistance from their parents. The students later shared these texts with other students of the school. The finding from this study revealed that through the writing process, students were able not only to build on their prior experiences and identities, but they were also able to cognitively and affectively engage with literacy. This project was valuable to the research on multilingualism as it provided an alternative set of

pedagogical practices that teachers took transforming the learning experiences of bilingual or multilingual students by encouraging them to build on their pre-existing knowledge, allowing them to invest in their identities, and to be fully involved in the learning process. Additionally, as students received assistance from their parents, this allowed for home-school relations to be built. Ms. Sandhu provided feedback of this project by acknowledging that there are positive outcomes of promoting students' linguistic and cultural capital. She explains,

> It informs my practice through and through. It runs in the bloodstream of my classroom. It's all about relationships, how we validate students' identities, how they accept their own identities. That ethos is fundamentally important—it's not an add-on. It takes less than two extra minutes of my time to get students to see the humanity of another human being at a most basic level. Because once they begin to see their own and one another's vulnerabilities, inhibitions, and realities, they connect. (Cummins 2007, p. 7)

Lotherington's (2007; 2011) project-based approach in an elementary public school in Toronto, Joyce Public School (JPS), is yet another example of a study that explores how alternative pedagogies in response to multilingual learners has positive outcomes for language learning and awareness. For several years this project focused on students rewriting traditional stories (e.g. fairy tales, fables, myths, and traditional folk) and creating new narratives from the students' own cultural and linguistic position while using digital technology. These multilingual story activities supported students' home languages, but it also allowed teachers to investigate "multiliteracies pedagogies" (p. 242). For example, in a Grade one class, students created storyboards using plasticine to illustrate their rewritten versions of *The Three Little Pigs*. Using the storyboards the students then used multimodal forms of expressions, such as creating movies and bilingual and multilingual soundtracks with the assistance of teachers and parental interpretation of translated material. The various pedagogies that teachers used throughout this project, that aimed to focus on multiliteracies, revealed to be useful in providing children with practice for literacy development, creating connections between home and school literacies, and

introducing students to the "multilingual and cultural realties of their lived experience" (p. 252). Additionally, the study found that reader-text relationship was developed, allowing the individual agency of the narrative.

Similar to the project at JPS, within other Toronto elementary schools there has been a significant amount of research that has moved towards constructing multilingual literacy programs using different modalities. For example, as part of the extensive Toronto Multiliteracies Project, Stille (2011) examined the outcomes of students who were involved in the construction of multimodal identity texts using digital technology tools. Particularly, Stille focused on the use of digital video to document students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds as they focused on issues of food and sustainability while working on the creation of an edible school garden. The findings of this project revealed that filmmaking enabled students to express themselves and invest in their identities in a different form. Additionally, students were given the opportunity to showcase their work to their parents, teachers, and other students. The project also served the purpose of generating discussions on students lived experiences, which further provided discussions on "understanding and social activism" (Stille, 2011, p. 101). Furthermore, the project found that when possibilities are re/created from already existing resources within schools that go against the existing norms of what counts as literate identities, students are able to expand on their own meanings, from their own communities, creating possibilities for change while listening to students ideas.

The case studies presented above is a representative of the research conducted in Ontario that reflect the social and educational importance of integrating students' linguistic repertories into the classroom setting. Schecter and Cummins (2003) further describe this importance by stating that educators need to develop appropriate foundational knowledge about the "social,

psychological, cultural, political and economic forces" that affect the teaching and learning processes for linguistic minority students (p. 82). Specifically, there is a continuous need to enhance the status of multilingual children by creating a context within schools where they are given the opportunity to share aspects of their culture. Within this context, my research seeks to examine how one private elementary school in the GTA is responding to students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds through formal and informal instruction. In this way, although these projects do demonstrate and embrace pedagogical interventions that engage in and embrace multilingual realities of students from Toronto school contexts, they are limited to a select number of schools where these projects take place. What this means is that there is a continuous lack of response to the multilingual pedagogies that these studies offer, as policies and curriculum does not fully reflect these pedagogical initiatives. Furthermore, the question continues to arise of how it is possible for those who are key agents in shaping language practices, educators and school administration, to continuously cater to *all* students' multilingual realties and lived experiences, despite policies and curriculum that fail to support such inclusion?

2.4.4. Research on continued issues confronting Ontario multilingual school contexts.

As multiculturalism and multilingualism have come to define major cities in Canada, such as Toronto, the public educational system is far from reflecting these trends. This is evident as this space continues to reflect "ideologies of the state" that are associated with "social cohesion" (Basu, 2008, p. 1). In fact, within these spaces "social and cultural differences are explored, negotiated, and comprised in multiple ways through linguistic diversity" (p. 1). These differences have been particularly evident through a long tradition of Anglo-conformity within the Canadian educational where there was strong oppositions against the use of minority

languages; however, remnants of this tradition are still evident today (Cummins et al., 2001; Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007; Schecter & Cummins, 2003).

In fact, research from the 1990s acknowledged that multicultural educational policies were created; however, these policies tended to obscure an assimilationist view within the educational system, specifically in regards to multilingual educational practices (Cummins & Danesi, 1990). During this period, with the rapid increase of students who were multilingual, there was significant discussion among those engaged in the debate about the role that minority languages should play within schools and classrooms. Many of these individuals, teachers, school administration, and policy makers believed that minority language use and maintenance would impede students' learning of English and "the primacy of English and/or French as the languages of power in Canadian society" (Cummins & Danesi, 1990, p. 21). For an extensive period these individuals believed that rapid assimilation, which came about by eliminating languages other than English, was a necessity to learn English and to attain Canadian values (Cummins & Danesi, 1990). More recently, research (Baker, 2006; Cummins, 2001; Schecter & Cummins, 2003) has in fact pointed out that these issues and views are still persistent within our educational system today.

Research from the 1990s that revealed views against minority language use within schools can still be found within Ontario classrooms. Baker (2006) argues that similar to the United States and United Kingdom, where assimilative practices exist to coerce individuals into the mainstream society, Canada uses similar approaches for official language preservation. As French and English are the two official national languages of Canada, they are also two languages that serve the purpose of advancing one's opportunities at all levels of society within Canada (social, political, economical, educational, etc.). Specifically, it is within the school

system where these assimilative approaches begin and continue to exist as children are forced to learn English and French. Baker (2006) agrees that such measures do exist within the school system by explaining that such practices help to assimilate or preserve languages to "reduce conflict and obtain increased harmony between language groups through bilingualism" (p. 121). Additionally, children in Canada learn these languages to be "integrated into Canadian society" (p. 121). Such statements reveal that Canadian schools, and society at large, continue to place a significant emphasis on maintaining English and French despite the linguistic realities that make up many of these schools. In fact, research has shown the positive cognitive, linguistic and social outcomes of allowing students the opportunity to communicate and invest in multiple languages and encouraging them to utilize these languages within the classroom settings (Cummins, 2000; Duff, 2007; Lotherington, 2011; Schecter & Cummins, 2003). Despite these results, the continued emphasis on maintaining these two languages presents an underlying message, which suggests that languages other than English and French are secondary and that in order to be successful within Canada, these are the *only* languages that are needed. Such messages are not far from those that researchers such as Cummins and Danesi (1990) were discussing during the 90s. Specifically, Anglo-conformity continues to be entrenched within these organized structures despite the induction of policies around multiculturalism that consider multilingualism.

Although the work by Cummins and Danesi (1990) was reported on more than a decade ago, current research has reflected that the Canadian educational system has presented new orientations towards accepting children's languaging practices. For example, a recent study by Chumak-Horbatsch (2012) reported that over the last decade there has in fact been a shift away from assimilative or Anglo-conformity orientations, which rejected and/or coerced children from speaking their home languages at school. Instead, there has been a move towards, what she calls

a "supportive approach to children's home languages and cultures" (p. x). This approach, which is also referred to as "intercultural…recognizes and values cultural and linguistic difference, acknowledges the importance of home languages…. and supports immigrant children as they navigate and reconcile their two cultures" (p. 38). Therefore, this approach moves away from assimilation and places an emphasis on adopting multilingual practices within the classroom. In adopting these practices, educational policies are largely instrumental in making changes. The Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum documents have begun to communicate constructive orientations towards the maintenance of children's home languages (e.g., Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006). However, despite these good intensions, the supportive approach still remains fixed in monolingual practices that fail to address linguistic minority children's languages (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012).

Chumak-Horbatsch's (2012) study, which focuses on the importance of implementing a new classroom practice known as Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP), shows the benefits of integrating children's home languages and dual and multi-language learning into the classroom. Despite the implementation of this practice, the study reflects on the negative experiences of emergent bilingual children. For example, for one student she "internalized the sense that the school [was] an English-only zone and [that] no other language was legitimate within the space" (p. x). Particularly, the student was apprehensive about speaking her home language at school when her teachers were around. This example raises many important questions and one particularly critical one of why the child felt that the classroom was an English only speaking zone despite the "supportive approach" that the ministry and the school had outlined? This question suggests then that the school, and more broadly the Ministry of Education, is far from being adequately receptive to confronting the devaluing of student's home

languages and creating a supportive space for these individuals to share aspects of their identities. Therefore, the research provided by Chumak-Horbatsch (2012) offers a window into how institutions, such as schools, continue to sustain their power, which works against the supportive approach to language learning.

It is through policies and classroom practices that power and various ideologies intersect into what language(s) should be incorporated into the school system. Cummins (2012) alludes to this issue by stating that such resistance to "linguistically appropriate practice is likely to be rooted in ideological concerns" (p. xii) that "underline assimilative approaches" (p. xii) to education. He further explains that these ideologies are most often misleading "when they lurk unacknowledged and unrecognized in policies, educational practices, and assessment instruments" (p. xii). Lotherington, Holland, Sotoudeh, and Zentena (2008) also take up these issues when their study at Joyce Public School (JPS) in the Greater Toronto Area explored emerging pedagogies that incorporate and acknowledge the languages of linguistically diverse students in urban settings. Particularly, the study focused on collaborative action research where researchers and teachers constructed pedagogical approaches to emergent literacies that involve multilingual, multicultural, and multimodal perspectives. The findings from this study reveal that although the student population was linguistically diverse, as a number of languages were spoken within the homes of these students, when these students entered into formal education the language choices offered are constricted to only English and French. Programs that did offer other languages were taught outside of the regular school hours. This meant that there was a gap between the regular day curriculum and work of the classroom compared to other language programs (Lotherington et al., 2008). In this way, although the classrooms within Ontario are

linguistically diverse and some schools have incorporated projects that reflect this diversity, there continues to be a lack of support and recognition in the regular school day curriculum.

The failure of schools to acknowledge and incorporate languages other than those that have been deemed official has been undertaken through various studies on early education in Ontario (e.g. McCain, Mustard, & Shankar, 2007; Pascal, 2009). For example, these studies reported that the Early Development Index (EDI) was used to measure the quality of children's language development in the early years and the impact of intervention programs; however, this "instrument focuses only on children's language development in *English* (or other dominant languages in different societies) ignoring the impact that home use of other languages might have on the accuracy of assessment" (Cummins, 2012, p. xii). From such studies, it can therefore be said that regardless of the ever-growing realties of children's use of languages other than English within their homes, there is a continued absence of these realities within policy. Cummins (2012) makes reference to this issue by stating,

> In a context such as the Greater Toronto Area, where 50 percent of children use a language other than English at home, this omission is neither accidental nor intentional. Rather it constitutes an example of willful blindness to issues that are not visible through the dominant policy lens, which is monolingual in focus (p. xii).

Educators and school administrators are key agents who either enact on or appropriate policy, it becomes crucial to investigate how linguistic diversity is being legitimized within the Ontario school system through policy and practice.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Underpinnings

In this section I focus on Bourdieu's notion of *legitimate language*, which provides a theoretical framework for thinking about multilingualism. I also make connections to various theorists' viewpoints, including Bourdieu and Saussure, on language and power and how these ideas can be used as lens to explore issues confronting linguistic minority students in Ontario elementary classrooms.

3.1. What Is Language?: A Sociological Perspective

Attempt at a clear definition of language reveals that any definition is complex. Graddol (1994) argues that "language is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon…[which] is an important part of our individual identity and private experience, yet it also seems to exist 'out there' as a public entity" (p. 1). He further explains that this complex approach means that we cannot look towards a single inquiry, but instead "many forms of inquiry to picture language" (p. 1). Various scholars have attempted the concept of language and provide a coherent explanation of how it works. These explanations are found in a variety of disciplines besides linguistics, such as linguistic theory, cultural studies, and anthropology. Structuralism dominated much of the twentieth-century linguistics with Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky as the predominant theorists in attempt to define, examine, and explain the complex nature of language (Graddol, 1994).

In his work on structural linguistics, *Course in General Linguistics,* Saussure (1983) made the distinction between the historical approach (diachronic) to language and language at a particular moment (synchronic approach). He explained that if one wants to understand how language functions or the "mechanisms of language" they need to understand that "the former

being only the counterpart of the latter" (p. 108). Saussure (1983) emphasizes that speakers do not hold onto the knowledge of their language history, but rather language changes overtime through the varying relations. In this way, there exists a social agreement between language and speakers of a speech community, where over time social forces influence language. To add to this Saussure further argued that language is not something that can be acquired, modified, and articulated, but rather it is a collective entity that is shared by all members of speech community. Saussure (1983) states,

> Language exists in the form of a sum of impressions deposited in the brain of each member of a community, almost like a dictionary of which identical copies have been distributed to each individual. Language exists in each individual, yet is common to all. (Saussure, 1983, p. 19)

In this regard, Saussure was emphasizing that languages are equally attainable and distributed to all members of the same community, which he regarded as treasure. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) elaborate on this point made by Saussure by explaining that he borrowed this metaphor from Comte, who described "that language is 'treasure,'" and that "the relation of individuals to language as a sort of mystical participation in the common treasure universally and uniformly accessible to all the 'subjects who belong to the same community'" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 146). Although this analogy of language and treasure that Saussure and Comte emphasize presents language as homogenous to all community members, it fails to recognize how power relations intersect with language. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) provide a further critique arguing the notion of an entirely homogenous language or speech community do not exist in reality. Instead, it is a fabricated idea of what Bourdieu calls "the illusion of linguistic communism which haunts all of linguistics" (p. 146). This illusion assumes that all members of a community share language equally and that all of their voices will equate to the same amount of power. In this way, a sociolinguistic analysis is needed to understand such a relation, as

linguistics tends to only acknowledge that language is namely made for communicating, understanding and interpreting. To add to this Bourdieu (1991) argues that to accept this Saussurian ideal that "the social world as a universe of symbolic exchanges and to reduce action to an act of communication" (p. 37). Again, as argued by Bourdieu (1991), one must understand that power is embedded within these linguistic exchanges. To explain this further, Bourdieu (1977) offers a sociologic critique of linguistics to what he defines as "a threefold displacement" (p. 646). He states,

> In place of *grammaticalness* it puts the notion of *acceptability*, or, to put it another way, in place of "the" language (langue), the notion of the *legitimate* language. In place of *relations of communication* (or symbolic interaction) it puts *relations of symbolic power,* and so replaces the question of the *meaning* of speech with the question of the *value and power* of speech. Lastly, in place of specifically linguistic competence, it puts *symbolic capital*, which is inseparable from the speaker's position in the social structure. (p. 646)

Therefore, Bourdieu's concept of legitimate language provides a critical framework for investigating the legitimacy of linguistics diversity in classrooms as it compels us to examine language within the context of power structures.

3.2. Legitimizing Language: Bourdieu's Socio-historical Connection

Bourdieu (1977) argues that language is not merely "an instrument of communication," it also represents a form of power (p. 648). He suggests that sociologists and anthropologists are mistaken when they accept "the core intention of linguistics, namely, the *intellectualist philosophy* which treats language as an object of contemplation rather than as an instrument of action and power" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 37). Bourdieu demonstrates that language is itself a socio-historical phenomenon because language practices are the result of historical events and social conditions. He argues that accepting "a particular set of linguistic practices as a normative module…the linguistic produces the illusion of a common language and ignores the social-historical conditions which have established a particular set of linguistic practices as dominant

and legitimate" (p. 5). In fact, this notion of legitimate language is the consequence of an issue between language(s) that are deemed dominant and those that are disregarded or of less importance. To explain this further Bourdieu (1991) offers the example of the establishment of French as the legitimate language after the French Revolution. The common language, which was developed in Paris, was "promoted to the status of official language," which was used for writing (p. 46). During this period, the role of the French Revolution was policy of "linguistic unification," where language was a means to which the upper classes could impose authority rather than to communicate (p. 48). Bourdieu states,

> Only when the making of the 'nation,' an entirely abstract group based on law, creates new usages and functions does it become indispensable to forge a *standard language,* impersonal and anonymous like the official uses it has to serve, and by the same token to undertake the work of normalizing the products of the linguistic habitus. (p. 48)

One might agree that the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism similarly promotes the official status of English and French in Canada. It is such historical events that underlie the forces of a language, where "political processes of unification" lead "speaking subjects… to accept the official language" (p. 45). Therefore, Bourdieu (1991) argues, "to speak the language... is to tacitly accept the *official* language of a political unit" (p. 45). As a result this language is enforced on the entire population as the ultimate legitimate language. This language then becomes mandatory for official events and in official places (e.g. schools, public administrations, political institutions, etc.) and this language becomes the "theoretical norm against which all language practices are objectively measured" (p. 45). The legitimization of language however speaks to a fundamental concern for linguistic minority education as it perpetuates such questions as who is education for? Who has the rights to be in school and whose interests are being served?

3.3. Linguistic Competence as Cultural and Linguistic Capital: Relations to the Market

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) state, "every linguistic exchange contains the *potentiality* of an act of power and all the more so when it involves agents who occupy asymmetric positions in the distribution of the relevant capital" (p. 145). In order to distribute relevant capital, *linguistic capital* and *cultural capital*, *linguistic competence* is essential. Bourdieu (1977) explains that competence is the capacity to command a listener, to be listened to and understood, but it is also to be "believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished" (p. 648). Additionally, being able to use language effectively increases one's wealth as it allows one to effectively interact with others in numerous social settings (Garcia, 2009). In this way, linguistic competence suggests "the power to impose reception" and it is essential as it functions as capital in relation to a certain market (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). Bourdieu's (1991) notion of linguistic capital is also applicable to the field of education, where education can be viewed as capital.

Garcia (2009) states, "at school students obtain cultural and linguistic capital through knowledge, abilities, and strategies related to the *presentation of self*" (p. 12). Bourdieu (1973; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) explains the culture that is disseminated within the educational system (e.g., habits, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc.) are most often those that are closer to the dominant culture and therefore considered as an important mechanism in the reproduction of education and social hierarchy. In this way, the educational system becomes a mechanism where inequalities are created through the transmission of pedagogy, which is engrossed with the dominant culture maintaining and legitimizing in the process. Therefore, inequality is transmitted through the educational system as it reproduces cultural capital, which is the dominant culture.

To acquire cultural capital the student must have the ability decode it; however, schools do not provide ways to decode culture, although it demands it from students (Bourdieu, 1973).

Bourdieu (1973) states, "the educational system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give," that is familiarity with both cultural and linguistic competence. As a result, the acquisition of this competence depends on that which is practiced and transmitted by the family. In short, the educational system has an influence on families as it transmits and confirms their control of the dominant culture, and thus their control of that culture. Bourdieu (1973) states,

> …The transmission of this competence is in direct relation to the distance between the linguistic and cultural competence implicitly demanded by the educational transmission of educational culture (which is itself quite unevenly removed form the dominant culture) and the linguistic competence inculcated by primary education…. (p. 81)

Therefore, there are two primary factors that contribute to legitimate competence, the family and the educational system. Bourdieu also proposes that we view legitimate competence as *linguistic capital*.

Bourdieu (1991) argues that legitimate competence operates as linguistic capital within the linguistic market and it produces "*a profit of distinction* on the occasion of each social exchange" (p. 55). What this means is that the social significance of linguistic outcomes is only placed on them in their relationship to the market. In this way, "dominant competence" operates as a linguistic capital fortifying "a *profit of distinctiveness,*" which creates a divide between other competences where only a select groups of individuals "who possess it are capable of imposing it as the sole legitimate competence" within the linguistic market (e.g. education, administration, high society) (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 654). Specifically, the educational system plays a crucial role in controlling different languages, but it also has power over the "production of producers/consumers, and therefore in the reproduction of the market without which the social value of linguistic competence depends, its capacity to function as linguistic capital" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 57). The educational system plays a fundamental role in the student's capacity to build linguistic capital, but more importantly they have great power in regulating and legitimizing

students' language (Garcia, 2009). For these reasons classroom discourse merits our attention to how linguistic diversity gets legitimized and the consequences for individuals in these settings.

3.4. Legitimizing Language and Linguistic Authority

The "unequal distribution of linguistic capital" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 57) in school classrooms generates a space where some communicative styles are reproduced and others are considered to be discrete. Bourdieu (1991) explains what this means for the field of linguistic production is that there are specific legitimate varieties and conducts which are more authoritative and are considered to be "examples of 'good usage,' confer[ing] on those who engage in it a power over language and thereby over the ordinary users of language, as well as over their capital" (p. 58). Therefore, this process tends to lead to the production of legitimation of official language(s) and the educational system plays a significant role (Bourdieu, 1991).

Language and power are inevitably bound to educational practice where certain discourses are privileged over others. This is a core idea behind Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *legitimate language*, which he formulated:

> Thus we can state the characteristics which legitimate discourse must fulfill, the tacit presuppositions of its efficacy: it is uttered by a legitimate speaker, i.e. by the appropriate person, as opposed to the impostor (religious language/priest, poetry/ poet, etc.); it is uttered in a legitimate situation, i.e. on the appropriate market (as opposed to insane discourse, e.g. a surrealist poem read in the Stock Exchange) and addressed to legitimate receivers; it is formulated in the legitimate phonological and syntactic forms (what linguists call grammaticalness), except when transgressing these norms is part of the legitimate definition of the legitimate producer. (p. 650)

He further states that legitimate language is then a "semi-artificial language which has to be sustained by a permanent effort of correction, a task which falls both to institutions specifically designed for this purpose and to individual speakers" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 60).

There are two main characteristics of legitimate languages: distinction and correctness. Distinction would be the diversion from the original language "the most frequent, i.e.

'common', 'ordinary', 'vulgar', usages" (p. 60). On the other hand, correctness is associated with a set of standards on how language is to be carried out by certain individuals and within certain institutions. It primarily focuses on whether the language being used is right or wrong. There are two main principals of correctness, prescriptive verses descriptive, where schools are authoritative and hold highly prescriptive views of correctness in language use while sociolinguistics are more prescriptive and hold progressive views of education. However, both of these characteristics contribute to the safeguarding and/or controlling legitimate language. In fact, Bourdieu (1991) argues that it is through various groups of people, such as educators, "who fix and codify legitimate usage… impose and inculcate it through innumerable acts of correction" (p. 60). Furthermore, he contends that legitimate language, which strongly focuses on correctness, not only contains power but it reinforces its own authority by ensuring a continuous "monopolistic power to impose the legitimate mode of expression, [that] can ensure the permanence of the legitimate language and of its value, that is, of the recognition accorded to it" (p. 58).

3.5. Legitimate Language in Schools

Following Bourdieu's argument of legitimate language, which are normalized and standardized languages that confer symbolic power, Garcia (2009) argues that the language promoted in schools has been termed as "standard academic language" (p. 35). As this language has most often been created through socio-political more so than it does linguistic criteria, the language of the educational system therefore is the "ultimate creation" (p. 35). As a result, schools insist on using this language in the construction of curriculum, teachings, and in the "legitimation of particular ideas and perspectives" (Walsh, 1991, p. viii). Bourdieu (1977) alludes to this as he explains that in many multilingual or bilingual situations in order for one

form of speech or dialect to impose itself as the "only legitimate one" among others, "to be a recognized (i.e. misrecognized) domination, it is practically measured against the legitimate language" (p. 652). Furthermore, by participating in such a "linguistic community," which is "(equipped with coercive instruments to impose universal recognition of the dominant language-schools, grammarians, etc.), of hierarchized groups having different interests," in turn establishes relations of linguistic authority (p. 652). What this means for many educational systems, is that such language practices become governing mechanisms where supporters and utilizers of official language policies (e.g. teachers and school administration) often maintain monoglossic ideologies that fail to reflect students' languaging[1] practices and identities. Walsh (1991) provides the example of how some supporters in the U.S. context argue, for instance, how "…English affords unity to diversity, that English somehow ensures a shared system of cultural values and, as a result, it should be the only language taught in our public schools" (p. ix). It is such views on the unity of language that tends to create categories of exclusion and legitimization, where only certain experiences and meanings are valued while others are disregarded and excluded (Walsh, 1991; Garcia, 2009). Therefore, Bourdieu (1977) argues that the language of educators

> Is an artefact, but, being universally imposed by the agencies of linguistic coercion, it has a social efficacy inasmuch as it functions as the norm, through which is exerted the domination of those groups which have both the means of imposing it as legitimate and the monopoly of the means of appropriating it. (p. 652)

[1] The term Languaging comes from Garcia (2009) who explains that it is the "fluid ways in which languages are used in the twenty-first century." It allows us to understand the changes that need to be made when thinking about language to support children's language practices in the classroom (p. 23).

Chapter 4

Method

The following chapter provides an overview of the methodology of the study, the participants, and discusses the research design and procedures taken while collecting and analyzing data for this study.

4.1. Study Overview

The intention of this study is to contribute to the existing work on multilingualism in Canada within the elementary school context, by focusing on teachers' perspectives, practices, and experiences of working with culturally and linguistically diverse students and how they come to either implement and/or appropriate existing educational language policy. Specifically, despite the results of research supportive of bilingualism and multilingualism, Canadian schools continue to privilege the language(s) of instruction to the exclusion of other languages as a number of researchers have observed (Cummins 2007; Cummins & Early, 2011; Lotherington 2007, 2011; Toohey & Dagenais, 2013). As a result of this problem, researchers have focused on exploring alternative pedagogical practices and policies that encourage the cohabitation of languages as a way to support and recognize language diversity in society (p. 293). However, a gap continues to exist between the research on these practices, educational policies, and those disseminating them, educators and/or school administration. Lotherington (2011) argues that while countless research has shown that "languages *open doors;* that limited linguistic proficiencies close them," the Canadian educational system continues to focus on one or two national languages, which is an inadequate educational response to the linguistically diverse educational system in Ontario (p. 154). From this disjuncture a crucial question begins to develop: If linguistic diversity is evident in the Ontario school system, when and/or where is

language inclusion in these linguistically diverse classrooms?

4.2. Research Questions

As outlined in the problem section of the introduction and above, there is need for critical analysis of various key aspects that underline and inform multilingual policy and practice in Ontario elementary schools. This study investigated the following research questions:

1.) How is linguistic diversity legitimized in urban Ontario elementary classrooms through policy and practice?

    To address the first question a comprehensive literature review and analysis of current research was provided in Chapter 2.

2.) How are language and cultural practices enacted by students in a small private school established in response to interest from a Russian-speaking community in the GTA?

    To investigate this question I conducted classroom observations within a Grade 4/5 classroom of one private elementary school for a period of one month.

3.) How does language and culture actively inform the explicit and implicit curriculum in an Ontario private school established within a Russian-speaking community?

    To address this question I gathered data from interviews with the school administrator and educators to gain an understanding of the attitudes towards leveraging students' linguistic and cultural resources within the context of a private school setting. Additionally, data collected from classroom observations was further used to respond to this question.

4.3. Methodology

To investigate the issues outlined in the dissertation problem, the study adopted a qualitative research methodological approach. Creswell (2013) explains that qualitative research "begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 44). In order to research this problem, qualitative research uses an emerging approach to inquiry, data collection in a *natural setting* that is sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive which forms themes or

patterns (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, this qualitative study is an ethnographic case study.

Toohey (2008) explains that during the late 1960s to the early 1970s ethnographies of schooling became more common as there was greater concern around ethnic and linguistic minority students in educational institutions. For example, Toohey (2008) explains that studies such as Heath's (1983) paved the way for understanding "sociolinguistic means and practices of diverse communities," in which schools could recognize and implement relevant instruction for the students they serve (p. 178). Following this idea, my ethnographic case study examines a small group of individuals who share a common linguistic background and who attend the same private school within Ontario. Creswell (2013) elaborates, "ethnography is a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, and language of a culture-sharing group" (p. 90). Furthermore, Duff (2014) explains that case studies, which are explained as ethnographic case studies, often pay more attention to "*cultural patterns,* meanings, and socialization in sociocultural groups and communities" over a period of time (p. 234). This study uncovers and describes the beliefs, values, and attitudes of how educators and school administration are actively supporting students' achievement by encouraging them to capitalize on their diverse linguistic and cultural resources at school, but also supporting their parents' choices of preserving a type of learning and teaching that they accustom to.

Patton (2002) explains that qualitative findings cultivate out of "in-depth, open-ended interviews, direct observation, and written documents" (p. 4). Following this explanation, the types of data collection used in this study included the following: in-depth semi-structured interviews with one school administrator and one teacher from a private elementary school in Ontario, Canada (see Appendix A and Appendix B), classroom observations were conducted in

Grade 4/5 class over a period of one month during regular classroom hours (see Appendix C), critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Ontario educational policy, and review of current research literature related to my topic. These approaches fulfilled the mandate of triangulation, which refers to "the combinations and comparisons of multiple data sources, data collection and analysis procedures, research methods, investigators, and inferences" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 27). Denzin (1978) succinctly defines methodological triangulation as "the use of multiple methods to study a single problem" (p. 215, in Teddlie & Tashakkori). This strategy also allowed me to use multiple sources to code and compile various themes and therefore, richer data to be collected. Creswell (2013) explains the process of using triangulation "involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective" (p. 251). By following this method for this study, when analyzing the data and finding different themes throughout the multiple sources used, this provided validity of my findings.

4.4. Research Design and Procedures

One of the characteristics of qualitative research methodology that I used to structure my study was emergent design flexibility. The emergent design stems from a naturalistic inquiry, which Patton (2002) states "that the extent to which this design is naturalistic is that it will take place in real world settings" and unfolds naturally in that it has no predetermined course established by the research, such as that which would occur in a controlled setting (e.g. laboratory) (p. 39). Creswell (2013) explains that the process of research is emergent, meaning the initial plan cannot be rigid, but rather all phases of the process may shift and change as one begins to collect data (p. 47). For example, the questions may change, data collection may be altered, and the individuals studied and sites visited maybe modified during the process of conducting the research. In this way, while conducting my study my aim was to have an

openness of adapting inquiry as my research developed and situations changed and/or emerged. This process allowed for emerging possibilities to develop, as I learned about various aspects of my participants' experiences, but also the school and classroom setting where I conducted my study.

Following Creswell's (2013) "five qualitative traditions of inquiry": narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study, my research follows a phenomenological, ethnographic case study approach. The phenomenon of interest studied was the changing superdiversity of the global community, which has altered the student demographics of the Ontario educational system resulting in an increase of linguistically speaking students or students who speak a language(s) other than English and/or French. This approach allowed me to use a qualitative research and an emergent design to inductively and holistically understand the experiences of the teacher and school administrator, as they commonly shared experiences in the context of the school, classroom, and teaching to this specific demographic of students. Additionally, Patton (2002) explains that phenomenology focuses on both philosophy and sociology, while providing an understanding of the phenomenon through the actor's own perspective, how she or he examines how the world is experienced. He argues that this approach requires methodologically, carefully, and thoroughly capturing the experience of some phenomenon, that is how the individuals "perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, number it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 2002, p. 104). Following Husserl (1913), I believe that this methodological approach is important as it allowed me to capture firsthand the experiences of those who are working with linguistically speaking students and how they describe certain occurrences through their own words. Husserl (1913) states, "*we can only know what we experience* by attending to perceptions and meanings that

awaken our conscious awareness" (p. 105). In this way, we must understand the experiences of our participants, but it must be further described, understood, and interpreted through the researcher's lens.

In order to investigate and answer my three research questions, I designed an ethnographic case study that was conducted over a period of one month, within one Grade 4/5 classroom of a private elementary school in Toronto, Ontario. The participants for my study were one school administrator, one teacher who taught the Grade 4/5 class English, world geography and gym, two teacher volunteers with instructional responsibilities--one served as the math teacher and the other, the art teacher, and a Grade 4/5 class that consisted of 5 students who were between the ages of 9 to 11. The school administrator and one teacher were interviewed on a series of questions that were categorized into four sections, which included: background information of the school, student diversity (although all of the students came from what Anna explained as a Russian-speaking community, they spoken several other languages within the home), parent and community involvement, and closing (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The interviews were conducted in English and each session was audio-recorded and then later transcribed. The interviews took approximately an hour to an hour and a half to complete and they were administered both off and on school property after school hours or at a time that was convenient for the participants.

To further answer my research questions, I also conducted extensive classroom and school observations for a period of one month during regular school hours one day a week (see Appendix C). Observational data was collected during the whole school day during a number of lessons that lasted for a period of 65 minutes and across several contexts including direct instruction, whole and small group problem-solving, recess, and lunch hours. As students under

the age of 18 were present in the classroom and school while conducting observations, they too were participants in the study and formal consent from their parents was granted before the observations were conducted (see Appendix F and Appendix G). During the time the observations were conducted, I had taken field notes of what I observed before, during, and after lessons, during the morning routine, lunch period, and at recess, while focusing on instructional methods, lesson objectives, student behaviour, connections to students' background knowledge and/or experiences, student engagement, instructional material used, etc. (see Appendix C).

4.5. Description of Participants

A total of 8 individuals were involved in this ethnographic case study which spanned over a period of one month. The individuals interviewed included one elementary school administrator, who is also a teacher at the school, and one Grade 4/5 teacher. The students from the Grade 4/5 class were also participants as they were present during the school and classroom observations and formal consent from their parents and themselves was provided before conducting any research. Additionally, the school had two teacher volunteers, a math teacher and an art teacher. Both of these individuals were present at the time of conducting research.

4.5.1. School administrator.

The first participant recruited for the study was the school administrator, Anna, after an initial meeting that took place at York University. Anna explained that she completed her education outside of Canada and earned her Bachelors and Masters degree from a state in the former Soviet Union in Russian and Russian literature. She also received her Ph.D. in Philology, with a specialty in psycholinguistics. At that time she was also working with bilingual children teaching at a school and at the university. After completing her degree, Anna came to Canada to complete her Masters degree in linguistics. During this time she was also a visiting scholar at

two universities in the United States. While working on her degree, Anna was tutoring and teaching Russian, as she had received a certificate of "Russian as a Foreign Language" from a university in Russia. She was specifically teaching and tutoring children in Russian, but also those children who had issues with reading. She explained that this was a topic that she was interested in and she continued to teach in this area.

Anna explained that her "native language" was Russian and since she was born in Kazakhstan she was required to take Kazak from Grade 1. It was in Grade 4 that she was introduced to English. During this time she grew up in the former Soviet Union where the students studied three languages and they had an option of choosing to study English, French, or German. For Anna her parents chose English for her to learn. After finishing her formal schooling, it was in university in the former Soviet Union where she had taken up Polish and she reported that because she was graduating from the Department of Russian Literature, all students were required to take any one of the Slavic languages and in her case she chose to learn Polish. Anna also studied Latin as her courses in philology dealt with historical grammar and Latin was a language that helped her with her studies. While attending a Canadian university, Anna also learned French, as the university she attended was a bilingual university. Anna reported that she is able to speak French; however, her reading proficiency is limited and she cannot write in French.

In September 2015 Anna established the private school, Engaging Minds Academy. The school caters to students from Grades 1 to 8. Anna is the school administrator and she teaches Grade 4/5 math, literature, and world history. She also conducted a morning routine with the students before the other teacher, Mr. Vitali, would arrive to the school, which consisted of singing the Canadian national anthem in English and students at times doing stretches, and she

would monitor the students during the lunch period. Anna also tutored a student who was the custodian's daughter in math a few days a week after school.

4.5.2. Teacher.

The second participant recruited for the study was Mr. Vitali, an Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certified elementary school teacher. Mr. Vitali reported that he completed his Bachelor of Arts in geography and his B.Ed. from a university in the GTA. The year that the study was conducted was Mr. Vitali's first year as a teacher. Mr. Vitali also has his Additional Qualification Certificate in Special Education-Part 1 and at the time of conducting the study, Mr. Vitali was completing an Additional Qualification course for English as a Second Language (ESL) Part 1.

Mr. Vitali reported that he is fluent in speaking, reading and writing in English. He is also able to speak Italian, but he cannot read and write in the language. He completed all of his formal schooling in Ontario, Canada.

Mr. Vitali joined the Engaging Minds Academy in the summer of 2015 after being hired by Anna. Mr. Vitali explained that came to know about the school through Anna, as he had been coaching her son in soccer. Once Anna found out about Mr. Vitali's credentials and that he was a teacher, she informed him about the school that she established and her interest in hiring a teacher to teach various courses at the school. Mr. Vitali was hired to teach for Fall 2015 at Engaging Minds Academy. The months leading up to the schools opening, Mr. Vitali was involved in curriculum development. He co-constructed the curriculum for science, engineering, English, world geography, and gym.

At Engaging Minds Academy, Mr. Vitali taught students in Grade 4/5 English, Gym, and world geography. He had initially taught engineering, but this course was later omitted from the

curriculum. Mr. Vitali came to the school on the days that he taught, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays each week and would leave once his classes were completed for the day.

4.5.3. Students.

The students that attended Engaging Minds Academy were 5 students, 3 males and 2 females, who were in Grade 4/5 and who were between the ages of 9 to 11. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the five students' background information as reported by Anna, including their language proficiency in English and/or Russian.

Table 4.1. Students' background information

Name	Age	Grade	Location of Birth	Language(s) able to speak	Language(s) able to write	Language(s) able to read
1.) Kelly	10	5	Russia	-English -Russian	-English -Russian	-English -Russian
2.) Lucy	10	5	Russia	Russian	Russian	Russian
3.) Tom	9	4	Canada	-English -Russian	English	English
4.) Alex	9	4	Canada	-English -Russian	-English -Russian	-English -Russian
5.) Lucas	10	5	Canada	-English -Russian	English	English

Anna reported that the students who attended the school from the September 2015 all came from Russian-speaking communities and all of them understood and could speak Russian. Anna explained that Russian-speaking communities are those "people who are from the former USSR, including those individuals who do not necessarily speak Russian as their native language." For example, one of the students at the school was Ukrainian and could speak

Ukrainian, but they also speak Russian or individuals could be from Moldova or Kazakhstan and can speak Russian. Four out of the 5 students attended public elementary schools in Ontario before enrolling in the private school. All of the students could read, write, and speak in English prior to attending the private school, except for one student who recently immigrated to Canada and only knew how to speak, read, and write in Russian.

4.5.4. Teacher volunteers.

While conducting my observations at the school, there were two volunteers, Anna's mother, Olga, and the Art teacher, Nina. Olga was a professor of mathematics before she came to Canada and assisted and taught math with Anna at the private school. Olga assisted with the development of the math curriculum. She also helped Anna with classroom management by watching the children during the morning routine, the lunch period, and during the afterschool program.

The art teacher, Nina, was also a volunteer, but she was also the grandmother of a student, Tom, who attended the school. Nina predominantly spoke in Russian to the students during the art lesson and at times she would respond in English. She came to the school one day a week for one period. She was not professionally trained in teaching art, but she had an interest and decided to volunteer at the school. A set curriculum was not created for art, rather each week she constructed a small project for the students to complete.

4.6. Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

4.6.1. In-depth semi-structured interviews.

Patton (2002) explains that qualitative analysis usually comes from fieldwork. He states, "during fieldwork, the researcher spends time in the setting under study – a program, an organization, a community, or wherever situations of importance to a study can be observed,

people interviewed, and documents analyzed" (p. 4). Following this explanation, my study took place in one private elementary school in a Grade 4/5 classroom setting and the preliminary strategy adopted for gathering data was in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with one school administrator and one Grade 4/5 classroom teacher. Parents were not interviewed for this study, as Anna claimed that given the recent immigrant status of many parents at the school, they were cautious about official documentation, time taken if interviewed, for some not knowing how to speak English, and my position as a researcher; they were reluctant to consent oneself and their children to an interview. Therefore, my data relies on the administrator's and the teachers' perspectives and classroom observations. Additionally, Patton states, "Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge" (p. 4). Participants were asked a range of questions from their background in teaching, their language program for their class, experiences of teaching linguistically diverse students, teaching methodologies for these students, and how language and/or which language(s) are a part of their curriculum and pedagogy (see Appendix A and Appendix B). There were three interviews in total that were conducted that each took approximately 45 minutes to an hour to complete. The first interview was conducted with the school administrator during the initial stages of the study, before conducting classroom observations. The second interview conducted was with the classroom teacher and the final open-ended interview took place at the end of the study with school administrator for clarification and accuracy of certain topics that might have risen during the observations. These interviews were all administered before and/or after school hours within in the school or at a time and location that was suitable for the participants. Each of the participants was interviewed individually. Specifically, the interviews were of the sequenced structured variety (Schecter &

Bailey, 2002); however, there were opportunities for participants to further discuss and reflect on their responses. Furthermore, I qualify the interviews conducted as semi-structured because although an interview protocol was used as a guideline for getting the participants to address various issues, if indicated, the conversational flow would at certain times diverge away from the questions. This flexibility provided opportunities for respondents to further discuss and reflect on their experiences and/or responses.

Although the interviews were audio-recorded, I had taken additional notes, what Bogdan and Biklen (2006) refer to as "observer's comments," for ideas that could possibly be generated (p. 87). Specifically, the comments and/or notes that I had taken reflected upon my thoughts/feelings during the time of the interview. Additionally, these notes consisted of important insights that come to mind at the time of the interview and that might have prompted theoretical connections, policy related insights, or were similar to the themes that might have emerged in pervious interviews. In this manner, I began the process of cross-referencing the contributions of respondents.

After the interviews were conducted, I transcribed each of the audio-recordings in full to ensure that all data collected would be analyzed and that I did not leave out certain data that might have been useful to the study's findings. The strategy that was specifically used to analyze the data from the interviews was inductive analysis. This type of analysis allowed me to look for emergent themes and/or patterns that emerged from the data. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) explain that emergent themes develop from the study of specific parts of information that the researcher has gathered. The qualitative strategy for data analysis that I used was specifically called "categorical strategies" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This strategy "breaks down narrative data and rearranges those data to produce categories that facilitate comparisons, thus

leading to a better understanding of the research question" (p. 253). Additionally, deductive analysis was also used to build themes that were examined against the data being collected. Furthermore, the data collected was informed by recursive analysis and interpretation.

Preissle and LeCompte (1984) explain that recursive analysis and interpretation allows the investigator to analyze information that is collected throughout the study, rather than transferring analysis to a period of subsequent data collection. This type of analytic process is important as Preissle and LeCompte (1984) state that this is "a process of collecting information, abstracting, comparing events, and applying past experiences, solving problems, and building ideas" (p. 167). For my own study, this research approach allowed me to compare, contrast, and make inferences from the data collected from my observations and interviews to the Ontario educational policy.

4.6.2. Participant observation.

The second form of data collection for my study was participant observation. Patton (2002) explains "observations consist of detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviours, actions, and the full range of interpersonal interactions and organizational processes that are part of observable human experience" (p. 4). Following this description, I observed the teachers interviewed and the two teacher volunteers, while they were teaching in their classrooms for a period of one month during regular school hours; however, my role as a researcher was what Spradley (1980) explains as a participant observer.

A participant observer is one who approaches the social situation for two purposes: " (1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation" (p. 54). While being an observer, I carefully watched and described my participants during their daily routines within the classroom and school, but also

examined other individuals who were present (e.g. students, volunteers, etc.) and made notes of the classroom settings and situations as they emerged. Additionally, having Ontario elementary school teacher certification, having the experience of teaching at the elementary level and conducting classroom observations during my research assistantships in Ontario classrooms, I was explicitly aware of my settings and surrounding. For example watching student, teacher, and the administrator's interactions in the classroom, lunchroom, schoolyard during recess, etc. Additionally, I took on a "wide-angled lens" while observing. Spradley (1980) explains that this approach entails that the observer takes on a much broader perspective of information. This approach consisted of having an enhanced sense of awareness and noting even things that I might have found trivial. Furthermore, as a participant observer through moderate participation I took on the position as both an outsider and insider. Spradley (1980) explains that moderate participation consists of the ethnographer taking a balance between participation and observation. For example, depending on the situation I at times detached myself from the situation and observed (e.g., during the art class when instruction was all in Russian, I did not understand what was being said, as I do not speak or understand Russian; however, I was able to observe the students working and understand most interactions amongst the students themselves), while at other times I had minimal interaction with my participants. While observing I also took detailed ethnographic field notes.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) explain that there are four implications of the participatory experience when writing ethnographic field notes:

> (1) What is observed and ultimately treated as 'data' or 'findings' is inseparable from the observational processes; (2) in writing fieldnotes, the field researcher should give special attention to the indigenous meanings and concerns of the people studied; (3) contemporaneously written fieldnotes are an essential grounding and resource for writing broader, more coherent accounts of others' lives and concerns; and (4) such fieldnotes should detail the social and interactional processes that make up people's

everyday lives and activities. (p. 15)

These field notes allowed me to also document my own activities and/or circumstances that I was placed in while observing. Emerson et al. (2011) argue that this type of documentation is important because when the ethnographer documents his/her own "activities, circumstances, and emotional responses," these elements help to shape the "process of observing and recording other's lives" (p. 15). To keep track of these observational notes and to help guide my observations, I constructed an observational checklist (see Appendix C).

The observational checklist that I created helped to guide my observations and to keep track of my notes. Specifically, the information recorded from the observations included detailed information about the sessions and the checklist allowed me to take what Creswell (2013) explains as descriptive and reflective notes (p. 169). Observational sessions include descriptive notes, which are sections that are created to keep record descriptions of various activities that help the observer to summarize the activities in chronology as they develop. For each day that I was observing within the classroom, I took descriptive notes of the specific activity objectives and the various activities as they unfolded. Creswell (2013) also explains that for observational protocols "reflective notes" should be recorded. I also included these notes as I reflected upon the lessons and recorded conclusions or further questions from my observations after each lesson/activity, which helped for theme development when analyzing the data.

4.6.3. Critical discourse analysis (CDA).

The third method of data collection use for this study was critical discourse analysis (CDA). Fairclough (1995) states "… the development of analytical framework for studying connections between language, power, and ideology" is called CDA (p. 23). CDA takes into consideration "(a) analysis of texts, (b) analysis of processes of text production consumption and

distribution, and (c) sociocultural analysis of the discursive event (be it an interview, a scientific paper, or a conversation as a whole" (p. 23). Using CDA for my own research, I textually analyzed the Ontario curriculum while focusing on both national polices and historical Ontario elementary school policy, including a historical review of private schooling in Ontario. While analyzing these texts I focused on the importance of how power and ideology intersects with the language that is being used to refer to linguistic minority students and how and/or if this language has changed from the 1960s to present. Fairclough (1995) explains the importance of CDA historicizing data and how present conditions are generated from the past and "what properties and shape owe to these conditions" (p. 19). He therefore argues, "…CDA ought in contemporary circumstances to focus its attention upon discourse within the history of the present-changing discursive practices as part of wider processes of social and cultural change-because constant and often dramatic change affecting many domains of social life is a fundamental characteristic of contemporary social experience…" (p. 19). In this way, the textual analysis that I conducted provided a critical analysis of how historical policy has evolved and the outcomes for linguistically speaking students in the Ontario elementary school system at present. Furthermore, for this analysis I focused on what has been omitted from these policies and the outcomes or consequences for these students. Fairclough (1995) explains that textual analysis can often generate great insight about "what is in a text, but what is absent form a text is often just as significant from the perspective of sociocultural analysis (p. 5). This analysis was ongoing and was continually revised in light of data collected. This information has been used to provide insight into implications for further research within the area of linguistic diversity language learning and teaching within elementary schools and classrooms.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

As my study included human participants, prior to beginning data collection I submitted a protocol to the Human Rights and Ethics Review Committee at York University. Following ethics approval from the university, I submitted ethics packages to the External Research Review Committee (ERRC) of three public school boards in Ontario (the Toronto District School Board, the York Region District School Board, and the Peel Catholic District School Board), as ethics approval from the school boards was an additional procedure. Due to a province wide strike, Ontario elementary teachers work-to rule, I was unable to conduct research within public elementary schools in Ontario; however, while awaiting approval from these boards, I was introduced to Anna, a private school administrator, who expressed interest in my work. Additionally, I found that private schools offered an alternative lens and a valuable opportunity to conduct my study. Therefore, I resubmitted my ethics application to York University and I refocused my research by making a request to collect data within private elementary schools located in Ontario. Upon approval from York's ERRC and formal consent being obtained from the private school administrator, teachers, parents, and students (See Appendix D, E, F, G) I then began my study. All of these forms specified the conditions and terms of the agreement to participate in the study. All forms were signed, dated, and submitted to me in person by all participants who were recruited for the study.

All participants were informed through formal consent before the interviews were administered and observations were conducted that all information from the study would be kept confidential. They were also informed that they were able to opt out of the study at any time and if they did so, any information from the study would be destroyed immediately. They were also informed and assured that their identities would be kept anonymous and that pseudonyms would

be used in relation to all research materials. Additionally, they were informed that findings from the study could be shared with others and that if the data collected from the interviews or observations were presented and/or published outside of the dissertation format, they would be notified beforehand.

I did not foresee any major risk for any of the participants, as their identities were and will be kept anonymous and I used pseudonyms on all research materials.

Chapter 5

Findings

This chapter reports on data from an ethnographic case study investigating one private elementary school in the GTA that caters to students from the Russian-speaking community. To address my first question, how is linguistic diversity legitimized in urban Ontario elementary classrooms through policy and practice? I begin with a historical analysis of the elementary educational policies from the 1960s to present day, while paying particular attention to linguistic and cultural diversity. Additionally, a brief historical review of private schooling in Ontario is also provided. To address the second and third of my research questions, how are language and cultural practices enacted by students in a small private school established in response to interest from a Russian-speaking community in the GTA and how does language and culture actively inform the explicit and implicit curriculum in an Ontario private school established within a Russian-speaking community? I report my observational and interview data. The findings are best interpreted by presenting a series of themes obtained from the analysis of the data (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Extensive observation data was gathered over a period of one month during various classroom lessons and activities across several contexts including direct instruction, whole and small group problem solving, morning activities, lunch hours, and recess. Additionally, in-depth interviews with the school administrator and educators were formerly conducted before the observational data was collected.

5.1. Languages in Educational Policy

In this chapter I analyze various national and provincial policies that focus on language and diversity in Canada. For the second half of this chapter I will provide an analysis of how the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum regards linguistic minority students at the public

elementary school level (Primary-Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6), has evolved from the 1960s to present. Lastly, I provide a historical overview of private schooling in Ontario.

5.2. What is Policy and Why is it Important to Analyze?

To provide a single definition of policy is challenging because in varying contexts this terms carries with it different connotations. Ozga (2000) argues that there are different ways of defining policy and "that there is no fixed, single definition of policy" (p. 2). Instead, she interprets "policy as a *process* rather than a product, involving negotiation, contestation or struggle between different groups of people who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy making" (p. 2). For example, in education, policies serve to control institutionalized spaces and the practices to provide a critical assessment of the educational system with the aim of making recommendations and fostering improvements at various levels of jurisdiction (e.g., school, board level, provincial ministry and federal government). Analyses aimed at understanding language policies (LP) and outcomes are particularly important in education because they can reveal how such polices are used as mechanisms of power and manipulation. Shohamy (2006) argues, "language policy (LP) is the primary mechanism for organizing, managing and manipulating language behavior as it consists of decisions made about languages and their uses in society" (p. 45). Shohamy (2006) elaborates upon the difference between *de jure* language polices verses *de facto* language policies (i.e. Language practices) (p. xv). *De jure* policies are those that are considered to be overt, are formulized, and manifested (Shohamy, 2006). On the other hand, *De facto* LP are covert polices that get formed because various hidden agendas that are created between language ideology and practice, where there are a variety of "overt and covert *mechanisms,* used mostly (but not exclusively) by those in authority" where language(s) get controlled (p. xv). What this does for language practices is it legitimatizes the

languages that are learned and used within various institutions (e.g. schools). Therefore, following Shohamy (2006), LP cannot be thought of as simply documents, but rather they are used as devices of power and manipulation. She further states, "language policy (LP) is the primary mechanism for organizing, managing and manipulating language behaviors as it consists of decision made about languages and their uses in society" (p. 45). This type of organization that Shohamy (2006) discusses is particularly evident in the LP at the Ontario elementary school level.

5.3. National Policies

This section provides an overview of various national policies that I feel are important to reflect on in order to understand how certain Ontario educational policies, acts, and curriculum, that are reflective of the cultural and linguistic diversity, had evolved.

5.3.1. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-1970).

The 1960s signified a growing recognition of diversity on the part of the Canadian federal government. It was during this period that a change in federal immigration policies brought an abundance of non-European immigrants, which increased both linguistic and cultural diversity within Ontario (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). In response to these changing demographics, the federal government implemented various policies to reflect these changes, but also to minimize rising tensions amongst various groups (e.g. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism) (Dagenais, 2013).

As Canada continued to reflect growing ethnic diversity, there was great concern regarding the status and maintenance of French and English. In 1963 the "most influential commission in Canada history" (Laing, 2013), the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (RCBB), which is commonly known as the B and B Commission, was established

under the authority of Lester Pearson (Haque, 2012). The commission's aims were directed at 1) the degree of bilingualism in the federal government, 2) the responsibility of both public and private organizations encouraging greater cultural relations; and 3) greater opportunities for Canadians to become bilingual in French and English (Laing, 2013). The commission was also to

> … Inquire and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution. (RCBB, 1968, Appendix 1, p. 309)

Mackey (2010) provides some of the commission's most general recommendations, which included the following:

> 1 English and French as de facto official languages throughout Canada
> 2 French as the language of work in Quebec
> 3 reform of the federal public service along bilingual lines
> 4 special schools for French and English official minorities and the nationwide teaching of their languages
> 5 development of a cultural policy reflecting Canada's ethnic diversity. (pp. 42-43)

In 1969 the federal government enacted on these recommendations and established the *Official Languages Act* for Canada.

5.3.2. Official Languages Act 1969.

On July 9, 1969 an Official Languages Act was established in Canada. This Act most importantly declared Canada as bilingual in two languages, French and English. Both of these languages were compulsory at both the federal and provincial level in Canada. For the educational system, all children were to learn these languages and French particularly became a mandatory part of the curriculum (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). In doing so, these two languages ensured one's ability to fully participate in Canadian society. The act was comprised of forty-one articles in ten areas

1 the status of French and English as official languages in all institutions under federal jurisdiction (article 2)
2 procedures for their use in all official documents (articles 3–7)
3 establishing the validity of texts in French and English (article 8)
4 language obligations of ministries, judicial and quasi-judicial administrative bodies, and Crown corporations (articles 9–11)
5 after every decennial census, with the collaboration of each provincial government, to create bilingual districts in places where the number of speakers of the minority official language (at least 10 percent) would warrant (articles 12–18)
6 creation of an independent Commissioner of Official Languages with extensive powers and the necessary staff and facilities for an ongoing supervision over the implantation of language laws and compliance thereto, reporting annually to the governor general and directly to Parliament; tenure, seven years (renewable) (articles 19–34)
7 Power of the governor-in-council to issue regulations to ensure compliance with the language laws in the conduct of government affairs (article 35)
8 basic terms and their meanings – "mother-tongue," "official language," "Crown corporationm" and others (articles 36–8)
9 modification of the law on regulations; must certify with the clerk of the Privy Council copies in both official languages (article 39)
10 implementation: time limits for ministries, government offices, and nominations and promotions of relevant personnel by the Public Service Commission (articles 40–1). (Mackey, 2010, p. 43)

Mackey (2010) explains that the implementation of these articles had created various tensions. For example, it was most difficult to create bilingual districts and "making the public service bilingual" (p. 44). Additionally, Dagenais (2013) explains that such a declaration can in fact, and it did, create a divide between the increasing diversity of Canada and discourage individual's linguistic practices. In 1971, in attempt to calm a number of these rising tensions, Canada embarked upon the national project known as *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework*.

5.3.3. Multiculturalism within a bilingual framework 1971.

Pierre Elliot Trudeau's liberal government launched the national project *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework* as a direct response to B and B Commission of the 1960s. The framework declared "there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than

Canadian…" (Canada, *House of Commons Debates,* 1971a, p. 8545). By making such claims, the goal of this framework was to investigate multiculturalism, but it was also a way to integrate citizens into an already existing "radicalized hierarchy of belonging and citizenship rights" (Haque, 2012, p. 6). Therefore, although the intentions of this policy were to continue and maintain bilingualism and to give recognition to multiculturalism in order to alleviate inequality, there continued to be an emphasis on a Canadian identity that all citizens were to uphold. Haque (2012) makes further reference to this by explaining that this rationale, which paved way for multiculturalism; in fact, "homogeniz[ed] all groups as Canadian" (p. 223). Additionally, the continued importance of Canada's official languages that were implemented into other constitutions and policies in later years (e.g. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Multiculturalism Act), exclude languages aside from French and English by categorizing them as non-official.

Although, the B and B Commission was established to bring coherence between English and French languages, it did create various political tensions. For example, numerous Anglophones were reluctantly forced to learn the French language (Laing, 2013). Additionally, with the growing linguistic diversity in Canada the commission failed to give recognition to non-English or non-French languages, including Indigenous community languages (Haque, 2012).

5.4. Historical Overview of Ontario Elementary Policy

This section provides a historical review of Ontario educational policies, curriculum documents, and texts regarding linguistic minority students. Specifically, this review explores how the Ontario Ministry of Educational policies at the elementary school level (Primary-Junior JK to Grade 6) regarding this particular demographic within the publically funded educational

system have evolved from the 1960s to present.[2] I will also examine and explore the types of initiatives that have been generated to foster the language practices of linguistically speaking students, while paying special attention to the alterations that have occurred in these protocols regarding positions toward linguistic minority students' home languages. As these students have been present in the Ontario educational system for an extensive period of time, it is important to underscore that in actuality these students have not been fully represented or identified within these documents.

Educational policy in Ontario has undergone significant changes over the last five decades. Specifically, changes have occurred in the educational system, which have influenced curriculum, necessities for student diversity, governance, and teacher professionalism. Although the focus of this analysis is from 1990s to present, it is important to provide an overview of educational policies that were established prior to this period in order to place in context the significant educational changes that have occurred in Ontario over the past five decades. Additionally, such an analysis serves to foster evaluation for educational improvements, but also inquiry and reflection that transmits into teacher practice.

5.4.1. 1960s-1970s.

The 1960s marked a significant period for the Canadian educational policy, as there was response by the federal government towards linguistic minority students. It was during this period that a change in federal immigration policies brought an abundance of non-European immigrants, which increased both linguistic and cultural diversity within Ontario (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). In response to these changing demographics, the federal government implemented

[2] The historical policy study presented in this dissertation has been adapted from my Masters Thesis, "*The cognitive, social, and affective dilemmas of Generation 1.5 English Language Learners 1990-2011,"* which primarily focused on ELLs; however, this study did incorporate linguistically speaking students and is of relevance to this dissertation proposal.

various policies to reflect these changes, but also to minimize rising tensions amongst various groups (e.g. Official Languages Act) (Dagenais, 2013). In 1965 following this influx in population, the Department of Education sought to make changes to educational policies in order to reflect these demographic changes. However, it took several years for these modifications to be reflected in Ontario's education system. The first document presented by the Department of Education in 1967, *Curriculum PJ, J1: Interim Revision, Introduction and Guide,* was a significant policy document for grades 1 to 6. The aims of education as presented in 1937 were still applicable and validated in this document as it was emphasized that "the schools of Ontario exist for the purpose of preparing children to live in a democratic society that bases its way of life upon the Christian ideal" (Ontario Royal Commission on Learning (RCOL), 1994, p. 19). Additionally, this policy further outlined three tasks for schools:

> To help the child understand the nature of the environment in which he or she lives; to lead the child to choose and accept as his own those ideals of conduct and endeavor that a Christian and democratic society approves, and to assist the pupil to master the essential abilities for living in a modern society. (RCOL, 1994, p. 19)

Although this policy was created with the aim of encompassing the changing demographics, it continued to reflect a policy that was distinctly Eurocentric, requiring individuals to conform to ideologies of Anglo-conformity.

It was a few years later in 1968, with the expansion of the educational system, that the Ontario Department of Education responded to these changes by publishing a report, *Living and Learning: The Report of Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario,* today better known as *The Hall-Dennis Report*. This report claimed to "modernize the education system," (p. 18) while being more student centered and focusing on students as individuals (Ontario RCOL, 1994). For example, the report outlined 258 recommendations. One of them was to focus on students' experiences and another on the

increased involvement of parents and community members in schools. Additionally, the report offered an important status in the history of Ontario education because it offered an alteration of Ontario's regulation of schools and classroom practices and instead empathized schools as being places of personal growth and development. Though the intentions of this report were to make the educational system more progressive by focusing on these areas, it had a persistent Christian doctrine. This was clearly demonstrated as the report presented instructions that when dealing with difficult students, there is no need for punishment but instead to use the "Christian ethic" to deal with such situations:

> … There is no educational advantage in pain, failure, threats of punishment, or appeals to fear … Spartan austerity, and toughening up tactics are simply illogical relics of a barbaric age. The Christian ethic of forgiving one another, of turning the other cheek, of love, of kindliness to little children is totally opposed to such brutality. (Ontario. Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, 1968, p. 57)

Therefore, as the policy was infused with a Christian approach, it overlooked the values and morals that the new immigrant communities might have brought with them, disregarding a more diverse approach to such issues (Sachar, 2011).

As Canada continued to demographically expand, there was great concern regarding the status and maintenance of two languages, French and English, in Canadian society. It was in 1963 that the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (RCBB) (1963-1970) was established under the authority of Lester Pearson (Haque, 2012). The commission was primarily developed to declare that English and French would be the languages that would serve all purposes of both federal and provincial level (RCBB, 1967). Specifically, the commission was to

> Inquire and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and

> the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution. (RCBB, 1968, Appendix 1, p. 309)

In response to the commission's recommendations, in 1969 the parliament approved the *Official Languages Act*. This act declared Canada as bilingual in two languages, French and English. Both of these languages were compulsory at both the federal and provincial level in Canada. For the educational system, all children were to learn these languages and French particularly became a mandatory part of the curriculum (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). In doing so, these two languages ensured one's ability to fully participate in Canadian society; however, Dagenais (2013) explains that such a declaration can in fact, and it did, create a divide between the increasing diversity of Canada and discourage individual's linguistic practices. Therefore, in response to these RCBB recommendations, the policy of *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework* took precedence in 1971. The policy declared "there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian…" (Canada, *House of Commons Debates,* 1971a, p. 8545). Therefore, although the intentions of this policy were to continue and maintain bilingualism and to give recognition to multiculturalism in order to alleviate inequality, there continued to be an emphasis on a Canadian identity that all citizens were to uphold. Haque (2012) makes reference to this by stating that in fact this rationale, which paved way for multiculturalism in fact "homogeniz[ed] all groups as Canadian" (p. 223). Additionally, the continued importance of Canada's official languages that were implemented into other constitutions and policies in later years (e.g. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Multiculturalism Act), exclude languages aside from French and English by categorizing them as non-official.

The mid 1970s was a more responsive period in educational history to the changing demographics in Ontario. Two documents were released in 1975 by the Ministry of Education, *The Formative Years,* and a supporting document, *Education in the Primary and Junior Divisions*. The aim of these documents was to support educators in continuing to provide an individualist approach to student learning by recognizing students' abilities and their needs (Ontario. RCOL, 1994). For example, the policy stated,

> The experiences of the early years mould the child's attitudes to learning and provide the basic skills and impetus for his continuing progress … It is the policy of the Government of Ontario that every child have the opportunity to develop as completely as possible in the direction of his or her talents and needs. (Ontario. Ministry of Education, 1975, p. 4)

The Formative Years (1975) also placed a great emphasis on educations helping students build self-worth and to recognize their value. Particularly, it suggested that children at the Primary-Junior years of schooling were to

> Begin to develop a personal value system within a context that reflects the priorities of a concerned society and at the same time recognizes the integrity of the individual … [to] become aware of the values that Canadians regard as essential to the well-being and continuing development of their society... (p. 20)

Although these expectations had the intention of educators providing a context for students to gain these qualities, they were predominantly based on Canadian values and context. In fact, there was similar strand under the "Canadian Studies" section titled, "Acquire a reasoned knowledge of and pride in Canada," that placed a large emphasis on building an understanding of Canadian culture. Only one strand of this section briefly mentioned that students should "begin to understand and appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his or her own" (p. 23). Although this policy had the intention of moving towards acknowledging children's identities and respecting the cultural and ethnic diversity of Canada, there continued to be an emphasis on student's gaining and/or maintaining an identity that they may not have been

able to identify with. This was further evident in the supporting document as there was mention of the importance of learning second language (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1975).

The supporting document did provide a section, "Learning a Second Language," but it emphasized that in Ontario schools there are only "two basic contexts in which children learn a second language: some children come from non-English speaking home and must learn English which is their schools language of instruction: others study French as a second language" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1975, p. 59). In providing this information, the ministry also emphasized that educators should not have the intention of "replac[ing] the language and culture of the child," but rather to add another component to their linguistic repertoire (p. 59). Again, although their was a genuine acceptance of students' linguistic backgrounds, the policy continued to have a firm tone that educators was obligated to maintain the societal and/or official language(s) of Canada by teaching non-English speaking students to learn English. This section also failed to acknowledge that students might be plurilingual and English and/or French might be a forth or fifth language they are adding to their linguistic repertoire. Therefore, it can be said that although Ontario educational policy during the mid seventies did attempt to recognize the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students' it "focused on the maintenance of a homogenous Canadian identity through the primacy of the societal language" (Sachar, 2011, p. 45). Also during 1975 the Ontario Ministry of Education released a new curriculum policy for Grades 1 to 6, *Multiculturalism in Action* (1977). This policy was created to give children the "opportunity to develop and retain a personal identity by becoming acquainted with the historical roots of the community and culture of his or her origin and by developing a sense of continuity with the past," but also appreciating and understanding other ethnic and cultural groups (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1977, p. 2). Although this policy focused on identity, it focused more so

on celebratory curriculum that provided students with information about festivals, food traditions, and myths and legends (Harper, 1997). These slight alterations from the previous policies did not do justice to attending to the culturally diverse populations within the educational system. Additionally, one question that arises was why this policy was intended only for students from grades 1 to 6 rather than all students within the Ontario educational system?

In 1977 there was more of a response to Ontario's multiculturalism agenda with the development of the Heritage Language Program (HLP) which started out as the federal Cultural Enrichment Programs (Baker, 2001; Garcia, 2009). These programs and policies were established by the Ministry of Education in connection with the Toronto North York School Board and established work groups who believed that there was need to addressed issues of diversity and race relations within schools, but also reserve the linguistic and cultural background of communities in Canada (Harper, 1997). For example, these individuals explored how the Toronto Board of Education Work Draft Report on Multiculturalism (1975) focused on issues such as "textbook bias, multicultural materials development, race relations, school-community relations, and the hiring and training of personnel" (Multiculturalism Canada, 1985, as cited in Harper, 1997, p. 199). Although there were good intentions of these programs, there were many obstacles. Cummins and Danesi (1990) provide a thorough analysis of the HLP and explain one of the challenges was "initial skirmishes" with various proposals that resulted in five different phases; however, each phase brought a "slight but highly contested erosion of Anglo-conformity in about public policy and public attitude" (p. 34).

The first attempt for the HLP was in 1972 when a teacher, Anthony Grande from the Toronto Board, proposed an Italian-English bilingual program. With considerable negotiation through by the Ministry of Education a Kindergarten Italian transition program emerged (Lind,

1974). During this period the Board also approved a "bicultural/bilingual immersion program" for Chinese and Greek students (Cummins & Danesi, 1990, p. 34). These programs focused on culture and some language was as taught by volunteers for 30 minutes a day, Greek was taught after school and Chinese was taught by withdrawal during the regular school day (Cummins & Danesi, 1990). Although these programs were implemented, Lind (1974) describes that the Ministry of Education during these debates were as "without clear policy, except to unbend as little as necessary to avoid confrontation" (p. 50). By 1975 The Work Group published a Draft Report and a Final Report, that recommended that the Board request the Ministry of Education to revise the Ontario Education Act to permit languages other than the official languages of Canada, English and French, to be used both as languages and subjects of instruction at the elementary school level (Toronto Board of Education, 1975). It was officially in 1977 the HLP was announced partially as a result of the international funding that the Italian Language program was receiving from Italy. Specifically, HLP involved teaching the languages that were associated with "local immigrant populations," either outside regular school hours or in the course of an extended school day for up to 2.5 hours per week (Duff, 2008). Some of the aims of HLP were to provide classes in languages and cultures of minority students to provide them with an opportunity to build a sense of understanding of their cultural background, but also to promote proficiency in the home language(s) (Feuerverger, 1997). Although these programs promoted social and cultural benefits, they were most often, and presently continue to be, offered after school or on the weekend only a few hours and lack administrative support (Feuerverger, 1997). In this regard, there was a lack of sufficient time and/or recognition of full home language development as these programs are relegated outside of the regular educational system as they

fail to be implemented within the regular school day curriculum (Duff, 2008; Cummins & Danesi, 1990). I touch upon these issues in greater detail in the last part of this chapter.

5.4.2. 1980s-1990s.

It was in 1982 that the federal government took a great step in the direction of providing *all* citizens with greater voice by establishing *The Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. In response to the linguistic and cultural diversity in Canada, it was stated that the Charter "shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (Section 27). The rights of these individuals were later instilled in 1988 with the Multiculturalism Act, which gave recognition to the cultural and racial diversity of Canada. During this period, a discussion paper, *A Proposal for Action: Ontario's Heritage Language Program* was created and after careful consideration, legislation governing the offerings of HLP in elementary schools, passed in 1989 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 3). Although the 1980s did bring changes in the implementation and recognition of non-official languages into the Canadian educational system, there were many more changes that came during the 1990s.

After a few years of the official implementation of the HLP in Ontario schools, in 1991 the Ontario Ministry of Education released a resource guide, *Heritage Languages: Kindergarten to Grade 8*. This guide provided program participants (e.g. teachers, school board personals, community members, day-school administration and staff, students on-site administration, language instructors, support service staff, and parents) information about the program, but also their specific roles and responsibilities. For example, the ministry outlined students' responsibilities and roles when taking the HLP classes. The primary goal of this guide was to focus on "meet[ing] the needs of students" by "delivering an effective HLP" that focused "all

languages other than Canada's official languages" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 2). It was a few years later in 1993 that the Ontario Ministry of Education altered the name of the HLP to *International Languages Program (ILP)* for the elementary level (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012). Tavares (2000) explains that this shift in terminology was due to "globalism on the education systems in Canada and provincial policies, as well as multicultural education policies and perspectives" (p. 157).

Another major Ontario Ministry of Education and Training policy change took place in 1993 focusing on antiracism and equity. Specifically, *Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation* (1993) was a document that came about following a 1992 Education Act amendment that required all school boards across Ontario to implement antiracism and ethnocultural policies. This policy was of great importance as it complied with the Multiculturalism Act, but prior to its existence it was not mandatory for school boards to implement such policies (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). The policy outlined that antiracism and ethnocultural equity was an integral part of all aspects of the school system. Specifically, the ministry explained that the intent of having this policy applied to all school boards across Ontario was to

> Ensure that all students achieve their potential and acquire accurate knowledge and information, as well as confidence in their cultural and racial identities. It should equip all students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to live and work effectively in an increasingly diverse world, and encourage them to appreciate diversity and reject discriminatory attitudes and behavior. (Ontario Ministry of Education & Teacher Training, 1993, p. 5)

The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1993) recognized that in previous years Ontario schools had been, and continued to be, entrenched within a European viewpoint, which limited students the opportunity to take advantage of other cultures and diverse backgrounds. Additionally, the document stated, "exclusion of the experiences, values, and viewpoints of

Aboriginal and racial and ethnocultural minority groups" was understood as "constituting a systemic barrier to success for students from those groups and often produces inequitable outcomes for them" (p. 5). The document reported that such inequities were usually associated to "students' low self-esteem, placement in inappropriate academic programs, low career expectations, and a high dropout rate from school" (p. 5). From these experiences the policy aimed to decrease inequality and inequity within schools by ensuring that students would be accepted for who they were. Specifically, this would occur by Ontario schools representing and acknowledging students' racial and cultural identities by allowing them "to see themselves reflected" in an equitable way during their learning experiences, all of which would be possible through the curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education & Training, 1993).

In trying to maintain and represent students' backgrounds, one part of the policy focused on linguistic diversity. For example, the Ministry explained that "language is a tool for learning and access to education depends on language competence" (Ontario Ministry of Education & Training, 1993, p. 13). It clearly explained, "language proficiency underlines success in most, if not all, curriculum areas" (p. 14). This proficiency, as apparent in previous educational policies, continued emphasize the maintenance the official languages, French and English. This document communicated this as it specified, "Students who have a first language other than English or French should be seen as needing to add to their linguistic repertoire rather than being seen as deficient in language or linguistically deprived" (p. 14). For educators the policy also outlined various instructions. For example, the Ministry described that educators need to identify, appreciate, and implement and/or promote the language(s) that students already spoke and recognize the importance of multilingualism. The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training

(1993) specifically provided five main points pertaining to student languages that teachers should consider:

> Students perceive that their first language is being valued by the school. Multilingualism is actively promoted. Appropriate heritage language and/or Native language programs are in place. An effective language-learning support program is in place. Consideration is given to the special linguistic challenges faced by ESL/ALF students in using regular curriculum materials." (p. 19)

In this way, the *Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity In School Board Policies* (1993) suggested a stronger commitment to recognizing and representing students' identities within the educational system as a means to eliminating and/or elevating racism within schools and in society.

The goals of the *Antiracist and Ethnocultural Equity* policy were closely connected to those expressed in *The Common Curriculum, Grades: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1—9* (1995). In 1995 the Ministry released *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9*. This document conveyed a new direction for the educational system in Ontario, as it replaced *The Formative Year* (1975). The policy was first disseminated in 1993 as a working text, which aimed "to meet the learning needs of a changing society" in Ontario (p. 4). Specifically, the new curriculum concentrated "on the elimination of inequities based on gender, disability, socio-economic background, and sexual orientation" (p. 4). The Ministry stated, "Commitment to equity requires the implementation of policies that recognize a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints so that all students may be motivated to succeed" (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 4). One way that the Ministry planned to meet these goals was by focusing on language learning and teaching.

In a section titled "Language," within *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9* (1995) document, the Ministry expressed that language was an fundamental part of

social development and that it is one of the central ways to communicate. Specifically, the Ministry stressed this by stating,

> Language, culture, and identity are closely linked. That a program which recognizes, respects, and values students' racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, as well as varieties of language, helps them to develop a positive sense of self and motivates them to learn. (p. 47)

The document further emphasized the importance of how "language, culture, and identity" are all interconnected and it is important to provide students with an opportunity to consider and "think critically about the social values" (p. 47). One of the specific areas that the documented highlighted was on language and language development. The Ministry of Education outlined the importance of both educators and parents understanding the role that first languages portray in the development of literacy in the language of instruction, but also as citizens. They state, "Becoming literate in more than one language is of benefit in a variety of ways" for the individual and for society, as "multiple languages promotes an understanding among cultures and develops multilingual citizens who can help Canada and Ontario compete in world markets" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1995, pp. 48-50). In giving such recognition to linguistic diversity within the educational system during this period, the new curriculum promoted multilingualism more so than previous years, as it provided students with an opportunity to maintain or learn a language that was neither English nor French, by enrolling into Second or Additional Language Programs funded by Ontario, this included the following programs: French as a Second Language (FSL), Native as a Second Language (NSL), and International Languages. FSL (core, extended, and immersion) provided students with some understanding of French culture and communities.

The programs offered were in various formats for different grades and/or schools. For example, the NSL program the curriculum even stated that although NSL was predominantly for

"Native students to help retain or learn their ancestral language and to develop a better understanding of their culture," non-native students were also provided with the opportunity to enroll in this program (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1995, p. 62). On the other hand, the International Languages Program (ILP) was the same program and outlined the same goals as the HLP from pervious years. The only difference was that the classes were offered through Continuing Education within or outside of the school day. Communities would choose the languages to be offered and school boards would design the curriculum with varying starting points and levels of intensity, how long the classes would run, and the hours of instruction. Importantly, compared to previous curriculum documents, *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9* (1995) also provided support programs for students whose first language was not English, or those who "[did] not have adequate command of English and therefore [were] need of special support" (p. 60).

From 1988 to 1995, there was a lack of recognition given by the Ontario Ministry of Education with regards to ESL and ESD. The Ministry of Education in 1988 only released as a resource intended for Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 10 to 12). In 1995 the Ontario Ministry of Education eventually released *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9* document, where support and recommendations were then provided students at the elementary level. The ESL programs was aimed for newcomers to the language and the ESD programs targeted individuals who could "speak a variety of English," but needed additional contact with the standard variety or ESL students "who needed special support to develop their language and literacy skills" (p. 60). The RCOL (1994) explained that the ESL/ESD program was "based largely on withdrawing the student for some part, or even all, of the school day; the student is given instruction in English while her/his classmates are learning other subjects" (p.

103). Additionally, the instructors of these programs did not know how to speak the language(s) of the students and the students may have not understood one another (RCOL, 1994). Therefore, the new curriculum did place greater emphasis on educators respecting, accepting, and promoting students' identities, through the awareness of language. However, Baker (2006) explains that this type program is similar to the Transitional bilingual education (TBE) which one of the "weaker forms" of this type of program (p. 215). Particularly, these programs are targeted towards language minority students that aim to move them from speaking the minority language to the majority language. Baker (2006) makes reference to this by stating, "Thus, transitional education is a brief, temporary swim in one pool until the child is perceived as capable of moving to the mainstream pool" (p. 221). In doing so, the instructive aims of such programs were relatively monolingual and assimilationist, as an emphasis was placed on learning the dominant majority language (Baker, 2006).

In 1997, the Ontario Ministry of Education released new curriculum documents targeting each core subject area that students were required to learn. The document *The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Language* (1997) replaced *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes Grades 1-9* (1995) language section and *all* language programs from Grades 1 to 8 were to follow and development their teaching outlook on this new curriculum. The document outlined a more "rigorous and challenging curriculum for each grade from 1 to 8" (Ontario Ministry of Education & Training, 1997, p. 3). This was made possible as the language curriculum introduced a broader range of skills and knowledge for children to learn, while the language expectations were organized into three strands that correspond to the three main areas of language use (Writing, Reading, and Oral and Visual Communication). The English program in all grades was

> Designed to develop a range of essential skills in reading, writing, and oral language, including a solid foundation in spelling and grammar; an appreciation of literature and the ability to respond to it; and skills in using oral language accurately and effectively. (p. 5)

Equally important, students were also introduced to developing their "critical and analytical skills to respond to communications media" and to "develop skills in using technology to search for and share information" (p. 5). While the 1997 curriculum incorporated many new components, the document insignificantly gave attention to ESL students. Particularly, the text focused on support for these students to acquire English knowledge skills, which would help them accomplish grade level expectations. Educators were also informed that they would need to modify their program and assessment in order provide these students with the appropriate support, which would allow them to participate in learning activities on an "equal footing with their peers, and to meet the specified expectations" (p. 7). Therefore, it can said the curriculum revisions brought about innovative prospects for students at all grade levels from 1 to 8; however, particular support that was suggested for educators with regards to ESL students was inadequate and not comprehensive (Sachar, 2011). Additionally, there was no reference or differentiation made about other types of English language learners who were in need of educational support. In fact, it was not until four years later in 2001 when the Ontario Ministry provided recognition and provision for these students and the notion of linguistic diversity was refined.

5.4.3. 2000-Present.

After the 1990s, there was a shift in policies pertaining to language education, while focusing on ESL students. Particularly, in 2001, the Ontario Ministry of Education released a new guide for educators titled *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: English as a Second*

Language and English Literacy Development (A Resource Guide). The Ontario Ministry of Education (2001) outlined that this document was created to provide

> Programs and procedures that supported students who were from countries or communities in which standard Canadian English was not the primary language of communication and who may have had difficulty meeting the expectations of the Ontario curriculum because of their lack of proficiency in English (p. 4).

The Ministry further stated that this document would help educators provide the necessary accommodations and modifications in order for students from a "variety of linguistic, ethnocultural, and educational background to participate as quickly and fully as possible in all program areas and to achieve the expectations of the Ontario curriculum" (p. 4). One significant part of the document that focused on moving towards meeting the needs of this particular demographic was that the Ministry refined their definition of ESL. They stated that these were students who

> Enter[ed] Ontario schools, [who] have little or no previous educational experiences in their own countries. Others may be Canadian-born students who are from homes and/ or communities in which English is not widely used and who therefore have limited proficiency in English. (p. 5)

Additionally, from the previous curriculum documents, English support was also provided to students who were labeled as ESD; however, the new resource guide replaced this term with English Literacy Development (ELD). The title was given to students who "[had] had limited access to schooling and who [had] significant gaps in their education" (p. 6). These individuals were also considered as ELD if they had "come from countries in which English [was] not spoken, or in which standard English [was] not the official language but other varieties of English [were] in common use" (p. 6). However, unlike ESL learners, these students had not had opportunities to develop "age-appropriate literacy skills in their first language" (p. 7). As oppose to previous educational policies, the reason why the ESL/ELD support document was useful for

educators and administration was that it provided a support program or intervention rather than a separate curriculum subject, as what was provided in previous educational policies. The Ministry outlined that the reason for these changes by stating that since a "student's language proficiency affects their achievement in all subjects, teachers need[ed] to incorporate appropriate ESL/ELD approaches and strategies into all areas of the curriculum" (p. 6). Additionally, this document was useful as it provided realistic strategies and examples for integrating language and content instruction for ESL/ELD students. For example, information was provided regarding factors influencing second language acquisition, acculturation of students, orienting new students to the school, and sample adaptations and modifications for selected teaching units (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001). Although the document was a valuable resource guide for teachers, it unsuccessful provided a "solid foundation for educators to fully feel confident in supporting the needs of these students" (Sachar, 2011, p. 53). Additionally, it failed to identify social, cognitive, and affective dilemmas surrounding students who were identified as ESL or ELD. With an absence of this information came a lack of strategies provided for educators to productively assist these students (Sachar, 2011).

After four years from implementing its last policy, it was in 2005 that the Ontario Ministry of Education released a supporting document for educators titled, *Many Roots Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom*. The purpose of this document was to support teachers, principals, and other educational professionals at both the elementary and secondary level in successfully working with ELLs. One component of the document, which was usually dismissed in previous policies, was that it provided many practical practices and strategies that could directly be applied and utilized within schools and classroom settings (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005). For example, the guide was beneficial as it

provided three categories for educators to follow, which included the following: "Insight (facts, concepts, and suggestions backed by solid research), Effective Practice (effective instructional strategies that have been shown to achieve positive results), and Try it Now! (Practical techniques and activities that would allow educators to use immediately in the classroom or school)" (p. 5). In providing this support the Ministry also provided additional resources and references that educators could utilize. For example, various books and articles pertaining to research on ELLs were included. Furthermore, the guide was intended to be useful and practical as it provided information on how to create a more inclusive learning environment that supported the success of linguistic minority students, but it also offered information on how the entire school team (educators, principals, support staff, and community members within the school) needed to work together to provide support for parents too. In this way, this was one of the first ministry documents that were more responsive to this particular student demographic. In fact, this document was very useful that it was employed for the revised version of *The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Language* (2006).

The revised Ontario Language curriculum was one of the first revisions made to the document since 1997, which focused on "up-to-date information and give even greater importance to literacy, language, and language curriculum" (Sachar, 2011, p. 54). The modified Language curriculum also promoted that educators integrate the study of language(s) into the other subjects being taught. This revision demonstrated great progress for the Ontario educational system as it now recognized the importance of how language is integral to other areas of learning, but it also gave greater emphasis to students' linguistic and cultural identities. For example, the Ontario Ministry of Education stated, "students in Ontario come from a wide variety of backgrounds, each with his or her own set of perspectives, strengths, and needs" (p. 5).

In recognizing this, it also emphasized how language is an essential part of one's "identity and culture" and in this regard, when students' identities are reflected in their learning process they learn best (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, pp. 3-4). In response to this, the instructional approaches and resources that were provided to educators reflected diversity as they focused on building identity investment through language learning. Another one of the significant change to the curriculum was a focus on providing support for ESL/ELD students. For example, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2006) provided thorough background information about these students' educational needs, while presenting specific and rational strategies, classroom modifications, and resources which educators could use to help students meet grade level expectations. Lastly, the document offered a section, "Antidiscrimination Education in the Language Program," that offered information on the importance of "implement[ing] antidiscrimination principles" in *all* parts of education (p. 28). In particular, greater emphasis was given to values that related to the language curriculum as it was stated that the "learning resources that reflect the broad range of students' interests, backgrounds, and experiences are important aspects of an inclusive language program" (p. 28). Teachers were given recommendations on how to generate such a program, as it was suggested that they use resources that reflected the linguistic and cultural diversity of their students. Therefore, the revised Ontario curriculum offered a new focus for education by highlighting linguistic and cultural diversity, but also recognizing the diverse types learners and the necessary support needed to ensure academic and social success.

The year 2007 was notable one for the Ontario educational system for ELLs as it was the first time the Ministry of Education officially differentiated who ELLs were and began to express attentiveness to the specific type of support that these students needed. The policy document

released was titled, *English Language Learners ESL and ELD programs and service: Policies and procedures for Ontario elementary and secondary schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*. The rational for this document was to "[set] out policies and procedures for the development, implementation of programs, and supports for ELLs in English language elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, from Kindergarten to Grade 12" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 4). The document stated that although many previous policies may have had components that pertained to this demographic, the 2007 document complemented the previous provincial policies. Specifically, the new policy was described by the Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) as a

> Language-acquisition policy designed to help all English language learners in the province by engaging them in learning that enables them to develop their talents, meet their goals, and acquire the knowledge and skills they will need to achieve personal success and to participate in and contribute to Ontario society. (p. 7)

In this way, although this policy attempted to be personal and to meet the needs of these students, there were reminisces of the historical policies as an underlying tone to the document still connected back to the nation building. This was further revealed as the main goal of the policy for ELLs was to provide expectations and support that would help these students meet their academic needs, which generally meant developing proficiency in English (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). The policy assisted school boards in meeting these needs by:

> Providing a definition of English language learners; describing effective procedures for reception, orientation, placement, and programming for English language learners, in order to accelerate their acquisition of English for academic purposes; describing procedures for initial and ongoing assessment of English language learners and for reporting to parents; clarifying procedures for the identification of English language learners who are to participate in large-scale assessments; defining the roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators and providing opportunities for them to develop the skills they need to support English language learners effectively; clarifying procedures for collecting data related to English language learners and for monitoring and tracking their progress, to support public accountability. (p. 11)

After the 2007 policy and procedures pertaining to ELLs, one year later a the Ontario Ministry of Education generated a guide for Ontario educators titled, *Supporting English Language Learners: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators Grades 1-8* (2008). This guide provided specific information and a clear definition of who English Language Learners (ELLs) are. It stated:

> English language learners are students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools, and who may require focussed educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English. These students may be Canadian born or recently arrived from other countries. They come from diverse backgrounds and school experiences, and have a wide variety of strengths and needs. (p. 5)

This guide was essentially produced as a resource "to assist classroom teachers in supporting the growing demographic" of Canadian born linguistic minority students within Ontario schools in learning English (p. 3). For example, this document offered educators specific background information about who ELLs were and their educational needs. By providing this information the document offered support to educators on how to adapt and modify the Ontario curriculum to cater to the specific academic needs these students. For example, educators were given support on how to provide listening and speaking, reading and writing and in doing; they provided detail information based on level of ability (e.g. early beginner, late beginner, early intermediate level, later intermediate level, etc.). Although the document provided such support, the Ministry emphasized the qualities that these learners bring to the classroom. For example, the document states that these students "face their own unique challenges but, more importantly, [they] present a rich resource in classrooms through the province" (p. 3). Therefore, the ELL resource guide for educators was a valuable guide as it fostered a positive learning experience where students were

able to obtain the support they need to meet ministry requirements, but it also gave recognition to their unique identities.

In 2012 the Ministry of Education came back to the ILP and released a resource guide, the *International Languages Elementary (ILE) Program*. This guide focused more so on the elementary level of school in Ontario and intended to provide educators with resources and tools to support linguistic and cultural diversity (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012). In doing so, the document outlined that it was created to ensure that students would be provided with support to "maintain and develop their heritage language, or first language" (p. 3). By providing this information, it demonstrated a slight gesture towards acknowledging the importance of students' linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education made the distinction that

> This guide applies to all languages, other than Canada's official languages. It is open to all students in elementary schools in Ontario whose parents want them to learn a language in addition to English or French, where enrolment numbers permit. (p. 2)

Furthermore, the Ministry generated various types of ILE programs that school boards are mandated to create and maintain: *Weekend Programs, Integrated Extended-Day Programs, After-School Programs, Late-Afternoon and Evening Programs, Before-School and Lunchtime Programs, and Summer School Programs*. It is primarily the boards decision to make as to which program they would like to implement into various schools or the board could also "receive a request from the community for language instruction," where a minimum of 23 students would need to be present for the ILE program to be offered (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 10). Although this resource guide is progressive from previous policies and documents pertaining to the recognition of linguistic minority students, there continues to be a divide and less of an integration of languages aside from English and French into the mainstream classroom. For example, there is a false impression that some of these programs are directly integrated into

the regular school day. The *Integrated Extend Day Program* is one example of this as the resource explains that there is a positive impact of having these programs offered during the regular school day as it allows for and/or encourages all students to participate. However, these programs are not truly integrated into the regular school day curriculums; the regular school day teacher is not teaching the course or may not even be present when the ILE instructor is teaching, and there is a cap of 30 minutes in total of instruction for this program (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012). Additionally, the Ministry makes a clear distinction that these programs are open to all students; however it is only for those parents who wish to enroll their children and nor would all educators use this resource, only ILE instructors. Therefore, there essentially is no connection of these programs to the regular school day and the curriculum is not in anyway aligned to regular school day. In this way, by identifying these program faults a few questions arise: How do these programs truly cater to *all* students if it is not mandatory for all children to enroll? Are these programs an indication of how the Ontario Ministry of Education equates equal representation of languages in comparison to the official languages that are so deeply rooted in our educational system?

5.5. Multiculturalism Through Multilingualism in Ontario Schools- Is It Working?

Basu (2008) states, "In multicultural societies, publically funded schools provide a forum to examine the practice of integration and diversity through the lens of linguistic policy" (p. 7). This "lens of linguistic policy" that Basu (2008) refers to has been particularly evident in the Ontario elementary school from the 1960s to present, as federal documents and provincial curricula have highlighted the shifting linguistic and cultural demographics. For example, researchers Duff and Li (2009), explain that from national policies, such as the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 and the Official Languages Act of 1989 have aimed to be more responsive to this

situation. Particularly, these policies have focused on the

> Status of Indigenous and other languages that are spoken by many Canadians-or that Canadians aspire to learn, often for reasons of cultural affiliation, personal identity, and connections to both their past (imagined and real) and to their future aspirations for themselves. (p. 1)

However, with the current and growing degree of linguistic and cultural diversity in Ontario elementary schools, one would expect there to be programs implemented, such as multilingual education (MLE); however, this is not the case.

Tollefson (1995) states, "… language policies and education around the world are linked with the distribution of political power and economic resources" (p. 1). This statement is particularly true for the Canadian educational system at the elementary level, as there has been a continuous emphasis on official languages regardless of the linguistic and cultural diversity. Burnaby (2008) alludes to this as she argues that Canada's language emphasis in policy needs to be reevaluated given demographic trends. Particularly, despite immigration and the array of languages that are spoken in Canada, when one observes these policies "[they] would scarcely believe that Canadians speak languages other than English and French" (p. 334). In this way, as these policies continue to be guided by political interests of educating children into the Canadian way of life, fragments of Anglo-conformity from Canadian history continue to shape the educational system today. For example, Cummins (2001) communicates that policy makers and many Canadian educators might accept research information regarding the benefits of multilingualism and language teaching; however, they may not "override the programmatic (and interactional) implications of this information because of their strong Anglo-conformity orientation" (p. 223). Additionally, policies such those that reinforce multicultural education continue to contribute "a surface veneer to Canadian identity," an identity that is still profoundly "rooted in Anglo-conformity" (Cummins & Danesi, 1990, p. 15). One area of the Ontario

curricula that this is evident in since the 1970s is the ILP.

The nature of various language programs in Ontario are created and implemented in such a way that they are separate from the official languages. For example, the ILP in Toronto are part of the Continuing Education Programs, which implies that the classes are not necessarily held during school hours, but also after school and on weekends. Additionally, instructors do not necessarily need to have an Ontario Teaching Certification. In fact, following Cummins and Danesi (1990), Taylor (2009) continues to argue, "the attempts to place [home language based] instruction of minority languages into the instructional day have been thwarted since the 1980s" (p. 178). This view is further perpetuated by a recent incident in an Ontario school board in a town in Southern Ontario where one of the public schools tried to take initiative of implementing "Arabic-medium" into a kindergarten class for children whose home language was Arabic (p. 178). Although this initiative was to respond to linguistic diversity of the students, in attempt to do so, there were issues of public upheaval and the board being penalized by the Ontario Ministry of Education for investing in this initiative (Valpy, 2007; Wolfson, 2007). This example demonstrates that although schools and boards have taken the initiative of focusing on students' linguistic backgrounds, there is a continuous lack of support and restrictions by the Ministry. In this way, such initiatives were more so regressive than being progressive. In fact, various research in Ontario has focused on innovative culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Cummins, 2007; Lotherington, 2011); however, these strategies are confined to the classroom setting and fail to consider the other programs directed to areas of language teaching and learning (e.g. ILP). Following Taylor (2009), to make matters even more complex, this leads one to question why French immersion is the only language program that the Ontario Ministry of Education approves in regular day school? In this way, there continues to be

mention of the positive impacts of multilingualism and various pedagogies that educators can use to help assist these students, but this does not do justice. Particularly, the official languages of Canada continue to overpower and constrain any other language(s) from fully entering the regular classroom setting. Haque (2012) addresses these fundamental issues by explaining that there continues to be an emphasis on official languages and separate languages, which serves as a justification for creating a hierarchy of group membership according to official designations as English, French, Aboriginal, and Multicultural. What this means is that although these policies and programs have been created, there continues to be a lack of clarity around multilingual education. Following Basu (2008), much of this confusion comes about as power relations continue to be directly rooted in "understanding multicultural governance…that *multiculturalism* does not necessarily translate into a unified recognition or practice of *multilingualism*- the diversity of language acquisition and its maintenance is a contested terrain particularly in the public domain" (p. 8).

The first part of this section provided a historical policy analysis of the elementary educational policies from the 1960s to present day, while paying particular attention to linguistic and cultural diversity. Over the past five decades the governments of Ontario and the Ministry of Education have shown a more responsive approach to students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds; however, there continues to be an underlying tone of the preservation of the official languages of Canada. More importantly, there is still a distinctive gap that lingers within the educational system as a multilingual policy has yet to be acknowledged and implemented within schools.

5.6. A Brief History of Private Schooling In Ontario, Canada

This second part of this section provides a brief history of the development of private schooling in Ontario. Due to the limited historical information on private schooling in Ontario, this section predominantly reports on the information that has been provided by the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario Bernard J. Shapiro (1985).

5.6.1. 1780s-1850s.

During the late eighteenth century Ontario's first private schools were not constructed on "class-based privilege," religion, nor was the government involved in the process, rather, they were considered an obligation (Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro, 1985, p. 195). Private schools became essential for families that wanted schooling for their children. The most common type of establishment was made in the "school master's" own home or rented housings and they advertised their services and fees. Once children enrolled and one was able to make a decent income, school commenced. It was also reported that at times establishments came from parents, religious, and/or philanthropic groups, but it was always through the private sector (Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro, 1985, p. 195).

In the late 1780s, private schools began to appear throughout Upper Canada (Ontario), as Loyalist and other immigrant groups began to settle in the region. In fact, in 1816 establishments became wide spread across the province with the demands of the growing population. For example, one traveller reported that 125 private schools were opened in Norfolk County and another estimated that 200 private schools had opened across the province. With the growing number of private schools, in 1791 John Graves Simcoe, the lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, proposed that the government subsidize schooling for the upper class, while leaving the "lower class" to "fend for themselves" (Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro,

1985, p. 195). He believed that "proper schooling" should be selective and provided for a few children, as they would be the ones who would become the "country's leaders" (p. 195). Furthermore, he believed that with the inadequate resources of the nation, they should be focused on a few individuals rather than distributed "thinly" amongst the entire population (p. 195).

In 1807, Simcoe's ideas were enacted through the District Public (or Grammar) School Act. This was "the first piece of educational legislation enacted by the parliament of Upper Canada" (p. 195). This Act gave a yearly "grant of 100 pounds for one grammar school in each of the province's eight administrative districts" (p. 195). One of the critiques of the act was the attentiveness on schooling for the "gentlemen's sons" while disregarding schooling for the population. Another criticism was a religious tone from the Church of England through the teaching staffs and leading boards. As a result of such criticisms arose "private academies" that offered another form of "middle-class schooling" (p. 195). These schools differed as they offered a more democratic impression as they were diverse in their religious orientation and their aims were more realistic. This marked the developed Ontario's first private schools of "protest" (p. 195).

In 1829, Upper Canada College was established under the lieutenant governor John Colborne. This school had more of an elitist approach to public education, but it was believed that the colony needed a "first-class preparatory school" before establishing a university. Upper Canada College began with a "Church of England headmaster, its British-trained staff, its classical curriculum, and its birch-rod style of discipline" (p. 195). The school was funded through public donations and grants, but usually wealthy parents were left with high tuition fees. Upper Canada College later became a notable independent school in Canada and was regarded a "the archetypal private school" (p. 195).

From 1815 to 1846, there was an increase in the number of private schools, but distinction between non-aided and grant-aided schools continued to cause issues. Additionally by the "middle third of the nineteenth century" individuals who favored public schooling confronted private schooling approaches. For example, educational activists such as Egerton Ryerson in Upper Canada and his colleagues in North America and Western Europe believed that with urbanization and initialization society needed "more highly schooled citizenry in order to advance the public good" (p. 196). It was in 1850 that both "common and grammar" schools were brought under public control and funds were raised to assist all schools in the community. In this way, there was no longer a division created between non-aided and grant-aided schools. Officially, the 1871 the act changed the name from "common" to "public" school and old grammar schools were taken under "full public financing and control as high schools and collegiate institutes" (p. 196). The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Bernard J. Shapiro (1985) therefore reported, "with public schooling now readily available and accessible, the private school as a school of necessity waned and then died" (p. 196).

5.6.2. 1850-1990.

As once considered schools of necessity, private schooling took on a new meaning during the 1850s onward and became connected to private boarding schools of Ontario that were considered "as the elite among the independent schools" (p. 197). These schools were described as being "stimulated by a variety of motives, not needs of the province's youth" (p. 197). These boarding schools also had attached with them factors of "Religious idealisms, sentimental attachment to old English institutions, patriotic and imperialistic notions, the desire to create a leadership class imbued with the ideas of the Christian service" (p. 197). Additionally, these schools supported parents who were looking for a type of learning environment for their children

that was more superior, with specialized teaching, and more "social advantages," which were benefits that were not offered by the state schools (p. 197).

The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Shapiro (1985) reported that religious initiatives lead to the establishment for many of these private schools. For example, Roman Catholic groups opened St. Michael's College School in Toronto in 1852 and Anglican groups within the Church of England led to Trinity College Schools in 1868. These schools operated as residential units and provided a "home-away-from-home" (p. 197). As the years went on during the late nineteenth century, the more long-term private schools chose the "elitist English model of Upper Canada College" (p. 197).

The private schools of the late nineteenth century upheld features of the English boarding schools which included the following: "clerical headmasters, staffs with high proportions of British-trained teachers; strong emphases on sports and games accompanying the highly academic work of the classroom" (p. 197). Additionally, these schools were promoted as having a "well-rounded education within a Christian framework," with an indication of "leadership training for young men and refinement for young ladies" (p. 197). All of these schools charged fees and with each year these fees increased. By the end of this century private schooling was officially the schools of the privileged. It is important to note the "sexually segregated private girl's schools" during this time. The girl's schools were more so modeled as schools of necessity rather than schools of privilege. It was not until the end of the 1860s that girls were admitted on equal terms with boys to the "classical course of the grammar schools, the course that was prerequisite into universities and the professions" (p. 197).

5.6.3. 1900-1960.

The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Shapiro (1985) reported that by the end of the nineteenth century private schools that were of religious denominations were replaced by independent entrepreneurs. These founders were displeased with the public educational system in Ontario and believed that the private domain would provide youths with moral, academic, and professional needs. These new private schools were experimental and were an alternative to the old private and public schools.

One development of the experimental private schools was the independent business college. The business college was popular amongst both young men and women because they offered training that the public high schools did not provide. Additionally, there was no educational attainment level for admission as the schools offered "flexibility in terms of entry and exit points over a twelve-month school year." As these schools focused on vocational learning, there was no theory or "abstract instruction" (p. 199). These schools lasted from 1880 to 1920 as a decline began to occur for various reasons, one of the main ones being the public schooling system began to offer business and commercial education and with the increasing expense of technical and commercial education programs enrollment began to decline (The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro, 1985).

During the 1950s, private schooling was not given much importance by the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario. The Commission "identified 134 approved private schools in the province" (p. 200). These were schools that were appropriately registered with and accredited by the department of education. From 1947 to 1948 it was reported that approximately 4,700 students were enrolled in the elementary grades and 13, 500 in the secondary grades.

During the 1960s, the environment of private schooling in Ontario was changing and "out of place" with the changing demographics of an increasingly multicultural population (p. 200). Sociologist John Porter stated, "the private school does not belong. It is something associated with the aristocratic societies of Europe and is rarely thought of as being a significant feature of Canadian life" (The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro, 1985, p. 200).

5.6.4. 1960-1980.

The decline of private schooling in Ontario was a short phase. As the Hope Commission identified 134 private schools from 1947-1948, the number increased to 242 from 1969 to 1970, 335 from 1977 to 1979, and 551 by 1984. In fact, the Ministry of education statistics revealed that 83,463 students were attending private schools, which was four times the number of students during the 1960s (The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario & Shapiro, 1985). This time in Canadian private schooling saw more "religious and philosophic diversity" than in any of the previous periods (p. 201). The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Shapiro (1985) reported, "31,881 pupils in Roman Catholic private schools, 9,383 in schools belonging to the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, 2,616 in Mennonite schools, 8,700 in schools of other religious denominations, and 18,545 in non-sectarian private schools" (p. 201). The Catholic schools were the largest with 37 percent of Ontario's private school enrolment.

Catholic private high schools were usually situated in a greater urban center, where substantial Catholic population and "well-established separate school system" were able to recruit for Grade 11, as public financing for Catholic separate schools ended in Grade 10 (p. 201). It was in the 1970s that Catholic high schools entered into less urbanized regions of the province. One reason was the creation of county-sized school boards of education. Additionally, in 1971 Premier William Davis decided not to spread public funding to Catholic schools past

Grade 10. This provided an increase in fundraising for the private sector. During the 1970s, Jewish schools had also become important participants in the private schooling sector.

The first Jewish endeavor was the Hebrew Day School, where the regular Ontario curriculum was added "with studies in Judaic religion and culture, and with Hebrew as a living language" (p. 201). Comparably, Engaging Minds Academy followed parts of the current Ontario curriculum, with added studies based on the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the Russian-speaking community. From 1983-1984, enrolments in these schools increased to 2,885, which made it the largest Jewish day school in the world. In fact, from the 1960s to the 1970s these schools increased tremendously throughout Ontario to "accommodate Orthodox, Conservative and Reform diversity within the community" (p. 201). The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Shapiro (1985) explain that the Jewish transfer into the private schooling system was not something against the teaching of public schooling, but it was more so a "move against the perceived submergence of Jewish identity into a process of homogenization that Ontario's postwar schools seemed to represent" (p. 201). Additionally, the public school system proposed very few prospects for transferring their linguistic and cultural traditions that are important to this community. Furthermore, other communities such as the Old Order and Amish Mennonites also became involved in the private school sector during this period.

With an increase in the number of religious private schools that took precedence post 1960s, Ontario's education also saw an increase in schools with no religious affiliation. These schools were established either for educational purposes or philosophic reasons. Similarly, the present study found that Engaging Minds Academy focused on maintaining a connection to the Russian-speaking community and an emphasis was placed on teaching math enrichment and logic. In September 1983 the Ministry of Education reported 18,545 students in "non-sectarian"

private schools (p. 202). Therefore, with the changing demographics of the 1980s and varying motives from parents, private schooling in Ontario was more favorable then the public schooling system. In fact, The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario and Shapiro (1985) reported that these schools were not entirely classified as "schools of necessity, or schools of privilege, or schools of protest" rather like public schools "they became schools of diversity" and "schools of Ontario" (p. 205).

The historical review on private schooling in Ontario, Canada provided above demonstrates the growing number of schools and various trends that took place from the 1780's to the 1980s. More recently, the data on private schooling in the province has also shown a continued increase (see Chapter 1Table 1.1); however, the data reported by the government, compared to the publically funded school system in Ontario, is limited. What has been communicated is that as of January 2017 the Ministry of Education reported 1213 private schools, which are schools not funded by the government, both elementary and secondary, are registered in Ontario (Ministry of Education, 2017). There are a total of 886 private elementary and elementary/secondary schools and 585 private elementary schools. In this way, this study provides current information and insight into the schooling choices of parents, educators, and administrators.

Findings: Observation and Interview Data

5.7. Enhancing Student Engagement in the Classroom

5.7.1. Languages used in the classroom.

The classroom observations and interviews that reported on both Anna and Mr. Vitali's perspectives revealed that language use and the ability to speak a common language in various contexts offered students the opportunity to use their language backgrounds as a resource to

participate within the classroom. At the time of conducting research, all of the students at Engaging Minds Academy were from the Russian-speaking community and knew how to speak and/or understand Russian and English, except for one student who was learning English. Students and teachers conversed mostly in English, but approximately 30% in a day Russian was used as the language of instruction with approved teacher direction. Nevertheless, students and teachers opted to converse throughout the day mostly in English alternating with Russian in response to various contexts and in instructional and interpersonal communications with certain individuals (e.g. the art teacher where instruction was all in Russian and during math class when helping the student who was learning to speak English). Even in problem-solving contexts resulting from Russian instructors, students spoke English.

Observational Data: Whole Group Lesson and Recess

For the first classroom observation of a gym class, two students, Lucy who is still learning English (ELL), and Kelly, conversed in Russian. Mr. Vitali explained that the activity for the day was based on drills and where students had to be aware of their speed, control, body function, and probability. He looked at Kelly and Lucy and said, "You need to aim for the dart" and then Kelly turned to Lucy and translated the instructions in Russian. While explaining these instructions she also demonstrated the activity (e.g. showing the action of how to throw the dart to the target). Throughout the activity, the two students encouraged each other out loud in English, but when discussing strategies for the game they conversed in Russian. Additionally, I also noted that although Mr. Vitali did not speak Russian, this did not impact his interaction with the student learning how to speak English (e.g., he still encouraged and praised her in English during the activity).

During the same day at recess, I encountered a similar incident of code-switching between the two students. For recess, all of the students stayed in the classroom for a fifteen-minute break. The boys moved to the back of the class and the girls stayed at their desks. At this time, I had the opportunity to ask Mr. Vitali about the group dynamics during recess and languages spoken within the classroom. He explained that the boys usually remained together and at times they may exchange a few words with the girls, but they usually moved to separate areas of the classroom and conversed in English. When I asked about the languages spoken between the girls, he explained how Kelly usually conversed in Russian to Lucy. Mr. Vitali also explained how he accepted Lucy speaking Russian and wanted her to participate in the class on her own terms and did not want to pressure her. He stated that he wanted her to "find her own way when she's comfortable." Mr. Vitali's outlook on leveraging students' linguistic comprehension was further reiterated during the interview.

Interview Data

When I asked Mr. Vitali about the linguistic dynamics between the students and how they communicate with the Lucy, he explained how he encouraged the students to speak Russian.

> **Mr. Vitali:** Yeah and I mean … the boys rarely speak-communicate with Lucy
>
> **Sonya:** Right.
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** … I think it's just that language barrier. You know what, I also don't know if they're very comfortable or they're confident in their own … way of-of speaking that language [Russian].
>
> **Sonya:** Right.
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** … I mean I don't really hear them… it's really Kelly or Alex that translates for Lucy.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay.
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** Don't really hear Tom or Lucas … speak it.

Sonya: Okay.

Mr. Vitali: But that's just you know when-when I'm around (laughter) —

Sonya: — When you're around exactly. Okay and do you encourage … these languages to be used within the classroom and other places on the school property?

Mr. Vitali: Mm-hum (agreeing sound).

Sonya: If so, like how and when is it?

Mr. Vitali: Yeah, I mean … any participation from our ESL student —

Sonya: — right —

Mr. Vitali: — is participation-is good participation, right? You know you want her to have that confidence, right? … That's the most important thing.

Therefore, Mr. Vitali legitimized speaking Russian within the classroom, as he conveyed that it was a way to ensure that students feel comfortable and to promote their participation and learning. This idea was further discussed with Anna during our interview.

Throughout my interview with Anna, there were numerous times that language use within the classroom was discussed and how the school promoted students' backgrounds through language. For example, Anna explained the importance of using Russian during the learning process to support students and to make them feel comfortable:

Sonya: … I can see … Luigi as well going onto Google. [Your] finding additional resources [for] really supporting the student … bringing [in] the Russian as well. It's not saying [to students] leave … Russian and here is English...

Anna: — And you can't —

Sonya: —You can't (agreeing) —

Anna: — … it's hard, for example for me during my history class to translate, but on the other hand you want the student to understand and keep the level because you don't feel comfortable that a student doesn't understand what's going on in the classroom.

Sonya: Right, you want them to transition and feel comfortable.

> **Anna:** Feel comfortable (agreeing). We even-I even allow my student to respond in Russian when she doesn't … know something, I just told her the lack of English doesn't necessarily mean that you do not know the subject.

She further stated, "It's better rather than-otherwise they will be struggle[ing] then it's a lot of frustration … A lot of frustration and I don't want them to feel lost." In addition to making the students feel comfortable by allowing them to speak Russian within the classroom, Anna allowed Russian to be spoken as a means for students to support each other's learning.

When I asked Anna if the student's spoke Russian amongst themselves, she stated,

> A few words here and there, I heard … with the new girl at school they help her and they address her in Russian … they try to address her in Russian that even those students who … hardly speak Russian they still try to find Russian words to involve her and try to communicate and be-they try to be nice to her … The girl tries to speak English when (laughter) —

I further probed Anna and about the students supporting one another:

> **Sonya:** … at least they support each other, right? That's what they need when they are coming in …
>
> **Anna:** — that's exactly what we are looking for.

The examples presented above from the classroom observations and interviews revealed how the teachers and school administrator legitimized language use aside from English within the classroom and how students' language backgrounds were used for the purposes of supporting their academic success and fostering peer interaction.

5.7.2. Language as cultural capital.

Classroom observations and interviews indicated that the teaching strategies and resources used at the school reflected students' cultural backgrounds. Although English is the language of instruction at the school, the integration of Russian and references to students' cultural backgrounds was considered a legitimate tool for learners' participation and at times a

student's primary language was deemed as "cultural capital." The data also revealed that a student's particular knowledge and competency in a language is legitimate in a given context and it impacts the way the students construct opinions and portray themselves in the classroom.

Observational Data: Whole Group Instruction

Lessons taught were constructed with the express knowledge that students could readily access Russian and it was a accepted and welcome means of engaging students in learning, that is to say there was no resistance to Russian on the part of the students. Russian served a means of building intertexual and interlinguistic connections. For example, during the fourth classroom observation of a whole group instruction, I observed how students build intercultural connections across languages in a language arts class, where instruction was in Russian. I arrived at the school in the morning and I had noticed that Lucy arrived early to school and was in the staffroom. Anna and her mother were present and they were working on preparing lessons for the day. Lucy was practicing her reading and presentation of a poem, which was written in Russian. Later that day during "Literature Class" Lucy was asked to present the poem to the class in Russian, the original language the poem was written. The students were learning about World War II and were about to begin reading a novel about the war titled *Number the Stars,* written by Lois Lowry (1989). The poem is about a soldier who was about to go to war and the emotions that he was going through. The poem was used to introduce and engage students in a new unit. During the presentation, Anna stood at the front of the class beside Lucy and after each paragraph was read in Russian by Lucy, Anna translated it to English. This activity was useful for Lucy because it used repeated reading as technique to build comprehension. Additionally, by hearing the poem in both Russian and English it allowed the students to make sense of the

discursive language practices of the classroom and offered them the opportunity to establish language skills in a language aside from the one used at school.

Interview Data

The interviews further showed how the teacher and school administrator's outlook on dual language maintenance perpetuated students' success and provided them with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities. For example, I questioned Anna about the languages used within the classroom and the support that was provided for the ESL student, Lucy. She explained that Russian and English were being used within the classroom and Russian was even being integrated into lessons and activities to assist students. She stated,

> Well she started responding in English, she started…doing well. She understands, which is the most important thing. When you understand it you feel more comfortable. You know I think it's, it's there, but … during … the class and it's the biggest challenge for myself. For example, now it's less [than] it was at the beginning, because we introduce a lot of terminology in different subjects….For example botany or physics, I had to teach… literally in two languages. So, I was saying the same thing in English … and then briefly translating it into Russian … In the classroom, I want to make sure that every single child understands what's going on …That's why sometimes we repeat the same thing about 13, 14, or sometimes 18 times (laughter)…. And at the end of the class, I ask children again repeat it back to me, so to reflect what they liked, what they didn't like …

Additionally, Anna explained that they were not only translating and using phonics books to help the student, but both her and Mr. Vitali used dual language books in Russian and English. By using these books they found improvement in the student's literacy skills and development of concepts in English, but the maintenance of Russian helped the student. The interview revealed this further:

> **Anna:** … But, we noticed a lot of progress because the child who could hardly read at the beginning … I was doing a little bit of phonics with her, we were memorizing certain things now, I think she can read significantly better. She's confident and she was working between two of us [on] a little grammar because he was asking me [and] we found a few good books and fantastic books, which were written in two languages …
>
> **Sonya:** — Dual language books?

Anna: Dual language books.

Sonya: Okay —

Anna: — …with a lot of activities. This is nice books of different… authors.

Sonya: Right.

Anna: Like for example, currently our student is trying to read Mary Poppins, so it's a … abridged, of course, version for ESL students —

Sonya: Right.

Anna: But, there are a lot of translations into Russian for her.

Sonya: Okay.

Anna: I first believe these books are a must in every … school.

Sonya: Right.

Anna: But, the problem is you have to find it for students, but they feel very, very comfortable.

Sonya: Right.

Anna: It was a … basically like a discovery for all of us. The student felt significantly better. I give you another example of what we are doing.

Sonya: Sorry, did you find the books yourself?

Anna: Yeah, I myself found them.

Sonya: You went out and found the resources?

Anna: Yeah, I found them —

Sonya: — Okay —

Anna: — And it's … in my opinion fantastic books, it's called … *English Club*. In our case it was called, but for Russian speaking students. I think it should be a must for every single school.

Anna further explained a particular activity during English class where the students were introduced to classic books, such as Rudyard Kipling's (1902) *The Cat Who Walked By Himself*. For Lucy, Anna found abridged version of the book with Russian translations. Once the students read the book they decided to create a play, but each student discussed and created versions of the story in their own words. Anna specifically explained how Lucy was thoroughly involved in the activity and she created her own part in the play in English. Anna discussed this further during our interview:

> **Anna:** …We studied a little bit of classics and we introduced children to…Rudyard Kipling … *The Cat Who Walked By Himself*.
>
> **Sonya:** Right
>
> **Anna:** A very [famous]-and just old stories …
>
> **Sonya:** — Right —
>
> **Anna:** — I found … a book and I asked all the students in our school … to read it. Students enjoyed it-it's very easy and at the same time they give… classics and Rudyard Kipling is a must for everybody, I think. … And we found exactly the same story [in] an abridged version for ESL students with a Russian translation. After that we wanted to involve students … So, what we did after that we offered students to do a play.
>
> **Sonya:** Oh wow!
>
> **Anna:** But, each student discussed it in their own words.
>
> **Sonya:** Right.
>
> **Anna:** … if you would like next week when you come to school.
>
> **Sonya:** Yes.
>
> **Anna:** I will show you a quick video they created their own video of what they've done and you will be able to see…our ESL student will be in the middle and who managed to create that story with her own words and who was able to participate and yes you can hear an accent, but you see a lot of participation and it's like a mini play. Students love to be writers and they asked me to create another play.
>
> **Sonya:** Right.

Anna: So we will be doing another play.

Sonya: Do you co-construct it with the students or do you create the play?

Anna: No. What I said I help them pick the book —

Sonya: — books? —

Anna: — the book parts and I told them how about each of you … will write … and each of them wrote in his or her own words [on] what they wanted to say —

Sonya: Oh wow!

Anna: … [students said] we don't want to do it as exactly in the book. I said, no, no, no …

Sonya: Do what you want?

Anna: Do what you want… they created … as they want[ed].

Sonya: I would like to see that. I'll look at the video …

Anna: You're more than welcome to … I have the permission to share it … we created it and [on] our Facebook we posted a little bit of it.

Sonya: You see, you get to see the transition of the student of not being able to speak the language and moving —

Anna: — and now you can see a student approximately in a month and a half, you will see that she's happy, she's there, she's apart of the play and … it's how we are trying to make this transition.

The interview with Anna demonstrated how the student's language, which differed from the dominant language used at school, was integrated as a resource to support and develop the student's competence in a second language. Additionally, by using Russian as a medium of instruction and promoting the student's linguistic and cultural capital, the student was able to engage with the literacy lesson and participate with the class. Furthermore, I found that during my interview with Mr. Vitali, he too, explained how he employed various strategies using the language practices of the students.

When I asked Mr. Vitali about the types of support provided to the ELL student, he explained that aside from Anna translating and speaking in Russian to the student during her lessons, a language he was unable to speak, he used Google Translator. In doing so, the student was able to understand the lessons, but it also generated a means of verbal communication. This specific teaching strategy was discussed in greater detail during our interview:

> **Mr. Vitali:** … There was earlier times when I was working with her one-on-one … I would actually use … my computer and … go on Google Translate. I would type in, you know, whatever I'm asking her … and translate it in Russian and … what she would do is she would look through a book and kind of look through the pictures and answer the questions, like kind of point … that was kind of my… way of building a relationship with her.
>
> **Sonya:** Right, exactly.
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** Right, so I found out that that was kind of useful, it kind of … helped me understand what she knew… what she was understanding. … I mean … I don't think I've really mentioned it, but I don't mind if she uses Russian … to write-to help. You know? … as long as she understands the topic or grasps what I'm asking, speaking in Russian is not a big deal, right?

Mr. Vitali explained the use of Google Translate further when I asked about other strategies that he used to accommodate Lucy:

> **Mr. Vitali:** At first I actually translated my work sheets into Russian.
>
> **Sonya:** Oh wow!
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** I literally just put them into Google Translate … just because I mean I don't know if that would help her. I don't-I mean obviously looking at, you know, English words … I saw she was really intimidated, coming in, so I tried my best to kind of translate for her. It didn't work.
>
> **Sonya:** Right (laughter).
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** Well, yeah obviously you know, but I had to try it … and then obviously I used Google Translate just to kind of know to go on a one-to-one type thing where she could kind of point to the answer. So that was a start in that way … and then having her friends kind of translate for her.
>
> **Sonya:** Right.

Mr. Vitali: It seems to be working a lot more, so we are kind of working with that right now.

Sonya: And did Anna ever come to the classroom … and translate, did she ever come for her at any point?

Mr. Vitali: To translate for her? No.

Sonya: No, okay so it was just her in the classroom doing that and … I know that there's elementary books like phonics books or anything, did she start off other than with Anna coming into the room to do lessons?

Mr. Vitali: Yes, the-the phonics books … they're more of like … daily activities.

Sonya: Okay.

Mr. Vitali: So … clothing, seasons, months, those are the things we kind of worked on and have her point to them and that's when we used the Google Translate.

The examples presented above reveal that when teachers and school administration valued and integrated the language backgrounds of their students, it offered them opportunities to leverage student engagement and enhancement in the classroom.

5.8. Community Based School Atmosphere

The data showed how the school upheld a strong sense of community. Specifically, the observations and interviews demonstrated how the school's locality, connections to community members, and the services it provided created a community environment.

Observational data: Preliminary Research

One example that demonstrated how the school maintained a sense of a community-based atmosphere was the locality of the school. Before conducting formal research and being given a tour by the school administer, I had taken an observational walk around the school community. The school was situated near commercial businesses and services (e.g. jewelry store, car dealership, auto body repair, restaurants, etc.) and was in close proximity to a university.

Although the school was situated in a busy area, the building was isolated and away from a main intersection. Across the main entrance of the school I had noticed a church, which I was later told was where the school was established. The school operated from the church basement for a short period before it moved to the current location. Although there was no affiliation between the school and this particular church, by selecting the church as the initial location for the school fostered a sense of a community building as connections were made between the members and organizations from the neighboring community. Additionally, this connection continued to resonate with the school as it is presently situated in a building that is owned and operated by another community organization catering to youth sports.

During my initial observation, I felt a sense of community at the school as members from the sports club entered the building and had brief conversations with Anna. For example, individuals came into the building to drop off enrollment forms and cheques for their children to play sports, and phone calls were being made by those inquiring about the school or other members from the Russian-speaking community asking questions about upcoming events.

Another example of how the private school promoted a community-based atmosphere is an afterschool math tutoring service that Anna provides to individuals from the community (see below for interview evidence). During my final observation at the school, Anna received a phone call from a parent notifying her that her child would not be able to make it for tutoring that evening. Anna told me that she offered afterschool math tutoring to the daughter of the sport club's custodian who found out about the Engaging Minds Academy while working. She asked Anna to tutor her daughter to help her improve her math skills because she was not doing well in the math program the public school was offering. Anna spoke about the tutoring service further in the interview.

Interview Data

Evidence from my interview with Anna revealed how the school promoted a community based atmosphere because of its current locality and a connection they shared with other members of the community. Anna stated,

> We managed to find an inexpensive spot, which is a big issue for any private school or any business period in Ontario, Toronto. We were lucky that we found the place from GTA Sports Club, as you know, you've been there, you've seen it … And, so we started from there.

I further asked Anna about the affiliation between GTA Sports Club and the church where the initial idea of opening a private school came from she stated,

> No it's absolutely not…. No they are not affiliated at all, but … they also are catering towards children, towards students. They are not completely [a] non-profit organization, but they are something I should something between … they want to do something …. for the community, especially for children.

As mentioned above, the school also maintained a sense of community by offering tutoring services to individuals outside of the school.

When I asked about the school demographics and if all of the students at the school were from the Russian-speaking community, she explained, "Right now with tutoring we started having students outside of the Russian-speaking community so, we having something like that." I further asked if these individuals learned about these services through word of mouth and Anna stated, "Through word of mouth, they found us through the club…that we are renting out and we just say okay … Please come! ... please we are open to everybody we don't … differentiate."

The examples presented above demonstrate how Engaging Minds Academy fostered a sense of community as the school continued to maintain connections to organizations that cater to children or those that provide services to the wider community and it was open to providing

services to community members. However, it was found that an even stronger connection and preservation was made to the Eastern European community.

5.9. The School's Preservation of the Eastern European Community

The data demonstrated how the school promoted a sense of community through its establishment, but it strongly promoted the preservation of the Russian-speaking community. Engaging Minds Academy initially targeted students from the Russian-speaking community and it continued to maintain a community atmosphere where students' language, culture, values, and beliefs were maintained and implemented. For example, from the parents influence on the development of the school, the recruitment of the school staff, curriculum development, and the school's atmosphere, traces of the Eastern European community was evident. This fostered and created a space where cultural and community preservation took precedence.

5.9.1. Parents influence on the school preserving their community.

Although parents were not interviewed for this study, Anna claimed that they had an interest in the school preserving their cultural background. As all of the students were from the Russian- speaking community, the school already had a strong tie to this community. School faculty reported that parents of Engaging Minds Academy cited similar reasons for enrolling their children in the private school, and that the establishment of the school occurred through a common community connection. Anna explained that the school was formed by parents who at some point addressed their concerns with a Russian Orthodox priest about the direction the public educational system was moving towards and expressed their desire to opt out of this school system. Through the discussions and meetings that occurred amongst parents, the priest, and Anna, the private school was formed and it continued to preserve an identity to the Russian-speaking community and parents continued to have a strong influence on this preservation.

Interview Data

Anna claimed that there are contentious political issues that parents requested to be kept outside of the classroom. This was further discussed when I asked Anna about students addressing their own culture and background in the classroom. She stated,

> … students more often ask about Europe … and as a result we had to introduce … a part in our World Geography [where] we talk about Europe as well. So, what countries are there? … Very often students [ask] me, are we going to talk about Russia? And I said, because this country… played an important role ... You don't want to talk about politics … but … it's there. We will be introducing Russia as a part of … a curriculum in Grade 6 … As a part of the Medieval Times. What I mean by Medieval, because a lot of modern countries … play an important role in the modern society, were formed during the medieval times and the medieval times starts … in the 5th century basically. So, that's where we're starting. We will be talking … about major milestones of those countries.

Another example, as explained by Anna, that demonstrated how parents requested for the preservation of their community was their influence on the school's curriculum.

Anna explained how Russian was first taught at the beginning of the year, but it was removed from the curriculum when they decided to restructure the school's program. Although Russian was removed from the curriculum, parents requested a separate subject aside from World Geography that focused on their Russian background. Anna explained that this course might be offered and if it was going to be it would only be for those students who are of the "Russian and Ukrainian background" and who are interested in learning about this subject. She also made the emphasis that Russian would still be part of the regular curriculum for all students and part of the World History curriculum. The interview provides details of this of this discussion:

> **Anna:** Next year, it's again one parents request, parents ask[ed] us if we will [be] going to teach a separate subject called the history of the Russian empire in the afterschool program and we said we are thinking about it. We didn't say yes, but we didn't say no, depending on a … different situations.
>
> **Sonya:** In Grade 6?

Anna: Yeah, for those students because they would like to study … a separate subject, in addition to what they will be studying.

Sonya: Okay

Anna: Something like that afterschool, but it's particularly to children of a Russian and Ukrainian background.

Sonya: And it will be afterschool?

Anna: Afterschool, yes, but … it will be specific subject only, you know, for those students.

Sonya: Only for those students, right.

Anna: But, again, the history of Russia will be part of the …

Sonya: — part of the Curriculum?

Anna: Well part of the world history curriculum … just major … milestones.

Sonya: Yeah, so you keep … the smaller milestones within the regular day school and then the more intensive —

Anna: — the intensive in an afterschool program for those students who would love to learn that.

Another example of the parents influence on the school maintaining their cultural connections, as conveyed by Anna, was their request to have various materials that they were accustomed to incorporated into their child's learning. For example, when I asked Anna about the literature and classroom resources that the school had and incorporating materials from another country, she explained how parents wanted their children to have a similar educational experience. The interview revealed the following:

Sonya: … I remember before when we were talking about the literature about the ... the British literature or the classic literature, have you ever tried … other than … British or American [authors], have you ever thought of maybe incorporating from another country? Have you looked into that?

Anna: Yes, we looked and we really want to do that because a lot of kids came from Europe —

I: — Right —

Anna: — and a lot of European … books, I should say … European literature [were] translated to into Russian. It's like only 10% of literature in other languages was translated into English…And parents want to feel that books that they heard before could [be] incorporated —

Sonya: — right, incorporated (agreeing).

Anna: We actually found a few interesting books … Russian authors that were translated to English and we decided to read them in English.

Sonya: Right.

Anna: And [I] ask students … for example this ESL student, to compare and give us an idea of how do you read with it? Was it bad? Was it good? How would you translate this word? So, we are planning … little bit … and … even if it is a short story, doesn't matter, it's Grade 5. Even short stories, you know… we are planning to do something like that —

Sonya: — and incorporate[ing] it. And the parents … really want their community to be reflected?

Anna: That's right —

Sonya: — and they want their children to kind of … have that background of maybe when they were in the former USSR? —

Anna: —… Exactly, exactly, what we are trying to do. That's why this semester I will be teaching literature myself.

Anna further explained how parents wanted a school where someone from their community provided support to their children. She explained that this was one of the reasons why they chose this particular private school.

Anna: Only one of them has a hard time. She recently came from Russia, I should say in January. One of the reasons they didn't want to go to a public school because they didn't have an ESL teacher … who could speak Russian. The major concerns, yes a student can gain…English skills, but wont gain, as much in terms of other subjects and … that's why they were looking for a school where we can keep the level … in all respects —

Sonya: — subjects —

> **Anna:** — in all the subjects as well (agreeing).
>
> **Sonya:** Yeah, because I'm sure, maybe this is not right, but do the parents feel that … if the child was put into an ESL public classroom they'd be stuck in only English learning and then they wouldn't get the other subjects, right?
>
> **Anna:** That's exactly … what it was … And plus some of those ESLs (sic) are not reflecting what they wanted to do, to see, that's what … the major concern was.

Anna also stated from a "cultural viewpoint" using Russian "gave the ESL students an opportunity to read in their own language and translate and compare." In this way, Anna explained that parents wanted to ensure that the school had the cultural and linguistic resources in order to support their children while maintaining a community connection.

5.9.2. The student recruitment process and community outreach.

The school's recruitment process of staff and outreach strategies are additional examples of how the school preserved a connection to Russian-speaking community.

Observation Data: Preliminary Research

During preliminary research, I located the school's website and discovered it uses social media, such as Facebook and Twitter to provide current information for parents, potential students, and individuals from the Russian speaking community. I found that Russian was the language predominantly used to convey information to parents and the community. For example, the content on the school website and Facebook page was written in Russian. After translating some of the content to English, I discovered that the school made announcements to parents and the wider Russian speaking community about upcoming events that they were hosting, information about what the school had to offer if anyone was interested in enrolling their child, and information about what the students were currently learning. For example, there was an announcement about an upcoming event being hosted at the school on the topic of astronomy,

information on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education, and a photo and information about a recent play presented by the students. All of this information was featured predominantly in Russian. I looked into the school's recruitment process and community outreach further during my later interview with the school's administrator, Anna.

Interview Data

The student recruitment process is another example of how the school maintained a connection to the Russian-speaking community. For example, when I asked Anna about how the school came to be and her mentioning a church in our initial meeting, she explained,

> I was also had a friend … who … was a very interesting person, I didn't know him as an Orthodox priest, he became an Orthodox priest and he basically was concerned and he was approached by a lot of people in his church and he introduced us to a lot of parents and … we started from there. So those people were their friends, our friends, something like [that], and we started from there.

I also asked Anna about who can enroll in the school and if the students have to be English speaking and/or Russian speaking:

> **Anna:** We're welcoming, but the problem is when we started a private school and it's- you cannot cater to everybody at the beginning and it's a very important thing. That's why when we started the school and we had an advisor who was helping us to go through the entire process, he always kept telling us [to] choose certain cultural groups. In our case we chose a Russian-speaking community. The reason I would like to make a special note here …why a Russian-speaking community … we are not including only ethnic Russians. These are people from the former USSR; including people who are not necessarily speak Russian as their first native language. We are talking about Ukrainians, actually in our school we have Ukrainians they speak Ukrainian and they speak Russian. It could be people from Moldova, it could be people from Kazakhstan, like myself ... For example, currently working with the … Tatar community, they lived in [a] different part of the Soviet Union —
>
> **Sonya:** — okay —
>
> **Anna:** — they speak Tatar, one of Turkic languages, and they lived in Kazakhstan, in Uzbekistan, in Russia, in Tatarstan, so —
>
> **Sonya:** — but it's a community right? —

Anna: — but, again it's not necessarily Russian, but I just want to focus, it's a Russian-speaking Community (disturbance) …

Sonya: Russian-speaking community, okay.

Anna: Russian-speaking community. It's one of the reasons, so because you have to focus…and you have to click with a certain community.

I further asked Anna about the specific methods they used to recruit students and to make individuals aware of the school:

Anna: — Word of mouth-we realized that the best way to do it-because currently, for example regular newspapers do not work anymore. We noticed that people of younger generations use Facebook, so we do it through all kinds of social media. What I'm talking about we post it on Facebook, a little bit on Twitter-mainly on Facebook … we have a website, so people are always welcome to do this. We also started organizing different events and because of our…building opportunity we invite other people who do events in our school and we are acting as a sponsor and at the same time as a —

Sonya: — it's working together?

Anna: Yes, and it is free for us, but at the same time it's working this way for us and of course, word of mouth it's … the only way and … it's [the] most reliable way to go.

Sonya: Exactly.

Anna: To be quite honest, sometime like last year we spent a lot of money on using regular newspapers, mainly Russian newspapers. The result was zero point zero one percent (laughter) —

Sonya: — (laughter) very small.

Anna: — So, we didn't hear …. —

Sonya: — much? —

Anna: — much, yeah. Mainly from people who come to school, they spread you know —

Sonya: — to their friends? —

Anna: — to their friends and slowly-it's a very slow process we have to mind that people are very conservative, they don't want to change anything and very … I should say reserved and cautious.

The school maintained a community connection by targeting students from the Russian-speaking community through their method of recruitment and community outreach. Furthermore, as Anna spoke about the events the school hosted and as found during my preliminary research that the information and advertisements on Facebook were all in Russian; I further prompted her about this during our interview.

I asked Anna about the details about the workshop for parents that was posted on Facebook and if it would be a problem to translate to English or if it was open to anyone else other than those who understand Russian. This further revealed the preservation of the Russian-speaking community, as these events catered to those who could speak Russian. She stated,

> — twenty-seventh, it will be the first …and it will be exclusively in Russian, we decided to have it … We would love to do something in English … Because [its] the first one we wanted to see … who's coming. We want to try…to figure out if there's going to be much interest or not.

I further prompted her by asking if it was a workshop and/or if it focused on parent involvement in the school or "family care," another workshop that Anna had mentioned during the interview:

> **Anna:** We want to outreach … to the community and just not only with the parents it's going to be more towards new … comers.
>
> **Sonya:** So, it's like an open house basically?
>
> **Anna:** Some sort of, yes.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay, so to recruit or to get people to show what the school is about, to show what's happening?
>
> **Anna:** Absolutely, absolutely.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay.
>
> **Anna:** Something, some sort of, not completely like reopen house, but just to discuss what upsets them … what they are dealing with and … we really hope they're going to be more interested.

In this way, the school continued to preserve a connection to the Russian-speaking community as the school administrator, parents, the priest, who initially was part of establishing the school favored the recruitment of individuals from the Russian-speaking community. Additionally, the methods used for recruitment and events that the school hosted were directed to this particular community.

5.9.3. Community maintenance through the school's cultural traditions.

Another example of how Engaging Minds Academy sustained a community connection was through the school's cultural traditions it followed. For example, when I had asked Mr. Vitali about if there was an introduction made on the first day of the school Mr. Vitali stated,

> There was like an opening ceremony type thing … they followed with a European tradition where they…you know rang bells and … you know let balloons go and all that. So all the parents came by and all the students were you know dressed up, they brought flowers. It was really unique, I've never seen it before, really cool. It kind of brought everybody together…and then there was like a kind of meet and greet type thing.

Additionally, Mr. Vitali elaborated on the school's opening ceremony when I had asked about community members' involvement in the school. He stated,

> … I know when we were at the … the other school … that first day, that opening day, we had … an MPP come in… His name was Constantine … I'm sure he was Russian (laughter) … He was a Russian MPP …kind of gave some publicity I guess … to open the school … and that's pretty much the … community member that I can recall.

Therefore, this example demonstrates how the school administrator set an environment for the school that followed what Mr. Vitali classified as a "European tradition" and even included an important figure from the Russian-speaking community. Furthermore, the observation and interview data showed the how a community connection continued to resonate through the selection of the school's staff.

5.9.4. Staff recruitment.

Observation Data: Initial Observation and Whole Group Lesson

The observation data showed how a sense of community persisted through the staff that worked at the private school. During the initial observation I had arrived at the school and was taken to the staffroom. I had noticed another woman who Anna later introduced as her mother, Olga. Anna explained that Olga was a Professor of mathematics and she helped at the school with constructing the math curriculum, daily lessons, teaching math to the students, and marking completed work and tests. Anna also explained that because of limited amount of money the school had, being in its first year of opening, it was necessary to have family volunteers and support. That same day, I witnessed Olga present during a whole group math lesson. I noticed that she first taught the lesson in Russian and Anna translated the lesson to English. Anna reported that all of the students understand Russian, but not all of them have the ability to fluently speak and/or understand Russian. In this way, the students would respond mostly in English, with a few words in Russian, including Lucy who was learning English during the time of conducting this study. Additionally, the worksheets provided to students focused on word problems that were all written in Russian by Anna's mother and then later translated to English by Anna. During the observational period I also noticed Olga assisting during the morning routine by helping students settle in, during the lunch period, and the afterschool program. For example, Olga warmed food for students that needed assistance or made tea for those who wanted tea. Again, during these interactions Olga conversed predominantly in Russian with the students.

During my observations, I also witnessed a teacher volunteer, Nina, the art teacher. Nina was also the grandmother of a student who attended the school. She taught art for one period and

during her instruction she conversed in Russian. For example, during the first observation of a whole group art lesson, I noticed that Nina modeled how to complete the activity, but throughout the class she encouraged the students and explained various techniques in Russian. Nina did know to speak English, but I found that she predominantly spoke in Russian to the students. The use of family as instructors was elaborated on during the interviews.

Interview Data

Aside from Anna discussing the community and cultural connection the Russian Orthodox priest had with establishing the private school, she also spoke about a similar role that the staff members exhibited. For example, she spoke about the role her mother had at the school. She stated,

> So … the idea was to accommodate those students at the same time (laughter) to find something cheap, to be something! The only option was…to involve myself as a teacher, to involve my mother, because she is a Professor of mathematics …

When I asked Anna about Olga teaching the math course and Anna translating the information to English, because Olga predominantly spoke Russian, Anna stated, "Yes, I'm just translating, yes."

Another staff member that Anna spoke about was Mr. Vitali, the teacher for English, World Geography, and Gym. I asked Anna how Mr. Vitali came to know about the school and how he became the teacher for these subjects:

> **Sonya:** Mr. Vitali was chosen … did you select him as a teacher?
>
> **Anna:** We … absolutely by chance … my son attended one of [the] camps and he was there and he had an OCT [certification] … I've been trying to deal with a few more…English teachers before and something didn't clicking. We realized that it is very difficult to have … he himself, although he was born here, but his parents are originally from Italy —
>
> **Sonya:** — Right —

> **Anna**: — And you need to...be a little bit of an immigrant to understand the … —
>
> **Sonya:** — experience? —
>
> **Anna:** — right, the experience, it's-it's something. That's why it was one of the reasons I realized that he has a little bit chemistry with the students here.
>
> **Sonya:** Right.
>
> **Anna:** He is very enthusiastic and we also liked it too, so (laughter) —

In fact, during my interview with Mr. Vitali, he too explained his connection to the school, not because of his ability to speak a language other than English, Italian, rather his familiarity with what he explained as a "European based [way of] learning" that the school follows:

> **Sonya:** … knowing Italian, well obviously the English because it's an English speaking school, that has obviously helped, but how about knowing Italian has that ever come into use within the classroom?
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** Not necessarily. I know that the school is more-has a European based learning ways, I guess and … I am a little bit familiar with how that structure is, so that's kind of helped me. In terms of the language not, not so much though.

Another individual who was a member of the school, who also had a connection to the Russian-speaking community, was an educational consultant that Anna hired to develop part of the English curriculum. Anna explained Professor Tula's role and her reasoning for selecting her as a consultant when I had asked about the type of literature the students were being taught:

> **Sonya:** Exactly. So you guys do bring in [inaudible]-English literature, British … literature?
>
> **Anna:** British literature. Even if it's … classics in abridged [version], but then there are novels and when we were working on this curriculum, actually I was working with a very interesting professor of children's literature from Oxford University, her name is Professor Tula…Why we decided to work with her? She's … Russian, she is from Russia herself, she emigrated from Russia one time ago.

Therefore, these examples provide insight into how members of the school were either family of someone at the school and/or they shared a sense of a community connection through language

and/or similar traditions. Although the school had staff that could either speak the language and/or were from the community, the interviews further disclosed how Anna and Mr. Vitali's perceptions of having additional support in the school from someone who had a community and/or language connection to the students.

When I asked Anna about her familiarity and views on the current Ontario Ministry of Education's language policies she explained the following:

> Absolutely. Yes. I look at them, of course, in our case it's significantly easier, because (laughter) we don't-only have, first of all 20 children … in the [classroom] or 30 children I should say in the classroom with 20 different … groups. In our case it's more … homogeneously class… But … what … upsets me, right now we are working-we are dealing a little bit with an issue. I don't think the ministry they proposed wonderful policy. I'm not against it, it's there … What I think is missing here … ESL teachers, especially ESL teachers who have exactly the same background as students in the classroom. Even if I would say 20 students from different countries, there are still predominant countries and you can always see it. I know in most public schools, where children come predominantly, let's say from Russia ... But I've never seen an …ESL teacher who speaks Russian.

Anna elaborated on her views by discussing her experience of living in the United States and the types of support that she saw was offered to ESL students. She stated,

> I lived in the United States for a while and I know that there … it's a must, to have an ESL teacher, who knows language of the community and they usually have it or for example, I know schools where there are children who mainly speak Mandarin, I haven't see an ESL teacher who speaks Mandarin …This is what is really missing in that language policy… you have to train teachers and … and it must [to] be connected to teachers colleges as well.

Mr. Vitali expressed similar views as he provided an example of the type of support that he believed would be useful for the ESL student who currently attended the private school:

> **Mr. Vitali:** I believe-I think Lucy would benefit a little bit better working with someone who can speak —
>
> **Sonya:** — the language —
>
> **Mr. Vitali:** — Russian with her… she's doing great, but I think she would excel a little more having that … Russian speaker with her all the time.

These examples reveal how the staff members and educational consultant the school administrator had chosen were either family members of someone at the school and/or had a cultural connection or familiarity to the community. Additionally, the school administrator and educators elaborated on their views of having a community member who can speak the same language(s) as students in order to provide them with support. The data also revealed how the school maintained the community's background through the curriculum.

5.9.5. The school's curriculum followed an Eastern European framework.

Anna had spoken about the curriculum the school followed and how it used a "European framework," including curriculum ideas from the United States. In fact, the school's webpage and Facebook page, which was created and monitored by Anna, also reiterated this and states, Engaging Minds "is a progressive, forward-thinking school, with curriculum developed on the basis of the best American, Canadian and European programs." Anna elaborated on this topic during our interview and targeting individuals from the Russian speaking community to enroll in the school, but also how they selected a model of education that was based on familiarity to these individuals. She stated,

> … Because the model of education we chose … [is] familiar to people who came from that part of the world. So we are talking culturally clicking with somebody … It's not only the language, it's also the culture. Also, [inaudible] another thing … we [are] also currently are focusing on people from Eastern Europe…So something that will be more, for example, senior to them. Again, culturally maybe linguistically … so something like that. We're not expecting to have … students from Canada right away [inaudible] … The whole idea is a little bit different.

Furthermore, when discussing the current curriculum used at the school, particularly the "math enrichment" program, Anna stated, "Also we go a little bit beyond and we offer a little bit of a curriculum used in the Republic of Kazakhstan." Additionally, as mentioned above, Anna explained that parents requested integration of an Eastern European framework in the

curriculum, but Anna also reported on how parents requested the continuation for this type of curriculum for the future:

> **Anna:** Next year, it's again one parents request, parents ask[ed] us if we will going to teach a separate subject called the history of the Russian empire in the afterschool program and we said we are thinking about it. We didn't say yes, but we didn't say no, depending on a … different situations. Not likely we will be introducing it as a part of —
>
> **Sonya:** — in Grade 6?
>
> **Anna :** Yeah, for those students because they would like to study … a separate subject, in addition to what they will be studying.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay.
>
> **Anna:** Something like that afterschool, but it's particularly to children of a Russian and Ukrainian background.

Therefore, the school curriculum followed an Eastern European model, but according to Anna, parents further demanded Russian to be taught in the future even if it was offered as an afterschool program.

5.10. STEM and "Math Enrichment"

According to Anna, Engaging Minds Academy initially promoted the idea of educating students in four disciplines, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). The school administrator chose to focus on these areas, particularly "math enrichment," as Anna claimed that parents expressed their dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of the provincial curriculum to prepare students for advanced mathematics. The school and classroom observations and interviews with the school administrator and teacher revealed how the school emphasized math enrichment, but also how problem solving and inquiry based learning was implemented.

5.10.1. STEM programming at Engaging Minds Academy.

Observational Data: Preliminary Inquiry

Anna explained that Engaging Minds Academy focused on STEM programing, but math and science were the main focus. She explained that the curriculum developed for the private school was based on models of education and programs from Europe and the United States. The school's Facebook page, which was controlled and monitored by Anna, claimed, "… curriculum developed on the basis of the best American, Canadian and European programs." This was further clarified on the school's website that explained the school was "mainly based on STEM," but "Engaging Minds Academy places a particularly strong emphasis on Science and Math, but we do offer more advanced training in Technology and Engineering for Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers beginning in grade 8."

Additionally, Anna expressed the importance and benefits of STEM education for preparing students for the future. The school's website reiterated this idea as it stated,

> Mathematics is needed even in non-STEM courses in high school such as geography and social sciences, but also in non-STEM university courses heavily dependent upon statistics, such as economics, psychology and sociology …. Besides the importance of numeracy in industry and business, it is essential in daily life, including doing basic budgeting, taxes, and certain tasks at the workplace.

Therefore, the private school focused on STEM, but according to Anna, math and science were given greater emphasis. The interviews further revealed this information and what the school offered students.

Interview Data

For my first meeting with Anna, she discussed her own views and conveyed what parents had told her regarding their dismay of the current Ontario math curriculum and what Engaging

Minds Academy had to offer. This topic was later addressed during our interview when I asked her how and why the private school was established. She stated,

> The second concern was, and again it's quite known, … poor quality when it comes to math programs. We know that … the Ministry of Education was talking about [how] they tried to do something, but never came up with certain ideas, so something like in my opinion … later on I will be talking about why I disagree, where I disagree, what can be improved. … so that's why parents were concerned, they were looking for an alternative …

Additionally, when I asked about student registration at the school and how they accepted students, Anna further elaborated on the specifics of the math enrichment program. She explained,

> The first year we just basically let it go and accepted students just because they wanted to come to school, but beginning this year we started implementing a new program … we realized that … the level of math, especially math we are talking about because in the school we are focusing on-we have a math enrichment program …we are not looking for gifted students, not at all, but we are looking for… parents and students we can work together because this is a huge issue … we realize-it's a lot- a huge misconception-oh its because of a student. No! It's actually because of a parent. We know parents are here, if I call them … academically inclined parents (laughter) not academically inclined students any longer because… what is behind a good student are usually parents, especially if parents are interested. If they want … their children to go ahead they have to be on the same page with us. We believe that very often it is not about gifted students; it's about parents and students who want to work together with us … We are here for something academically intensive. We have let's say 5 sessions a day, but they are so intensive that we believe that … it's something that we are looking for parents that are on the same page with us —

Anna also spoke about how the school focuses on math enrichment through the STEM program and the specific courses offered to students. She said, "… during … the school [year] we offer mathematics and … when [we] tried to do the curriculum we went beyond [the] Ontario curriculum. We tried use the maximum because…the school was initially … formed as a STEM school." Mr. Vitali further elaborated on the intensity of the math program that was offered at the private school during his interview. He stated,

> Yeah, so the curriculum [has] ... changed … quite a bit. I know that the math program has changed all together. They are learning, you know…all that different topics that probably don't get introduced until about maybe Grade 6 and up, which is great for them. … just the format of how the classes work, we have longer classes … So, there are fully 55 minute classes verses the 40 minute class from a normal traditional school.

Mr. Vitali also provided his input about the math program, which further demonstrated the advancement of school's math program. He explained, "… I mean I think … their math program is fantastic. They're learning a lot of … things that you know that are taught … you know late, late elementary or sometimes high school years." Although the school followed a STEM program, Anna declared how they used parts of other math programs from various countries to support student learning.

Anna explained how the school tailored their math program to further student thinking. She explained,

> So right now … you know we followed … Massachusetts's standards so that's one of the reasons. Also, we go a little bit beyond and we offer a little bit of a curriculum used in the Republic of Kazakhstan…. it's a little more math enrichment program and we … try to do something a little bit deeper ... So we had to change the curriculum itself. …we didn't exclude certain … things, let's say probability in math or graphs, but we gave just one or two lessons about it, but when it comes, for example, to fractions we gave more. For example, everything possible about fractions, rather than … let's say spending-even schools spend no more than a month or two weeks on .... this maximum..… We have been spending [a] good four months ….

Another unique part of the STEM curriculum that the school offered was the integration of math into science. Specifically, how math was integrated into botany. Anna spoke about the program as she explained,

> The third subject instead of doing Science, we divided it between different subjects. We introduce it as botany, we introduced physics and we introduced geography, but geography is better to describe it as geography and earth science … it is spread amongst three subjects … Instead of it being just a little bit about … living life … the life cycle or whatever … We decided to give it as botany, it's only about plants, how they live ... We take them…during classes right now not … But, let's just say September, October, and even November outside and show them how it works. What you can collect and they see the, the connection with … with nature. In physics they can understand, for example, the

> study of speed, about acceleration … about time and again, we connect … it to botany with mathematics … Because we see that connection … that's again part of the STEM program.

In this way, the school not only offered an intensive programing through STEM, but also cross-discipline learning.

Although both Anna and Mr. Vitali spoke about the intensity of the math programing and how students were learning topics that were beyond their grade level, it's important to note that changes to the STEM program did take place due to students understanding of concepts.

Anna addressed her awareness and the importance of students' level of understanding and ability to grasp concepts. Anna explained,

> So it's science, technology, engineering, and math, but currently we are doing partially because we realize the children are still young or … STEM can be partially used. It is not necessarily to jump into it and-and do it right away.

In fact, Mr. Vitali also spoke about the many changes made to the school's curriculum, specifically how the engineering course that he taught was removed.

I had noticed engineering on the timetable and it was scheduled to be taught for one hour, but during my observations it was never taught. I had asked Mr. Vitali about this and he stated, "No we don't have it anymore. We had it for the first term … from September to December … unfortunately, I'm not entirely sure what happened. I believe it's due to the number of hours." At a later time, I had also noticed that the school updated its webpage and indicated that importance it placed on math and science and how they "do offer more advanced training in Technology and Engineering for Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers beginning in grade 8." In this way, the school did focus on teaching advance courses and topics, but Anna conveyed that at times being a start-up school and in the first year of operating, other factors (e.g., the lack of classroom

resources or the changes to the school staff) were considered and changes were continuously being made to the curriculum.

5.10.2. Inquiry based learning and problem solving through math instruction.

The school's website states, "[Engaging Minds Academy] STEM is a progressive, forward-thinking school ... " The observational data and interviews uncovered how the private school followed this philosophy and how it concentrated on inquiry based learning and problem solving where students' knowledge and understanding of various concepts was enhanced as they were given the opportunity to engage and foster their own learning process.

Observational Data: Whole Group Math Lesson

Anna explained that the school's philosophy was based on of preparing students to build their self-esteem and confidence through problem solving and collaborative learning. This philosophy was evident during my classroom observations, particularly during the math lessons.

All of the math lessons observed were led through whole group instruction with a facilitator always present. Students were immersed in the learning process as they were given the opportunity to collaboratively problem-solve through the lesson. For example, during the first classroom observation of a math lesson, students were all at their desks with Anna at the front of the room and her mother at the back of the classroom. Anna started the lesson with a review of fractions by writing a question on the whiteboard. She asked Alex to explain how he would go about solving the question. As he worked through the problem, Anna reminded him to "use math terminology" to solve the question. In detail Alex told step by step how to solve the problem while Anna wrote the steps on the whiteboard. Simultaneously the other students wrote in their notebooks. When Alex came to a part of the problem that he was unsure of Anna stated, "Show me what you don't get." As he explained his thinking and what he found challenging, Anna

asked the other students to “come to the board and try the question.” As they all worked through the problem, they are able to solve the answer with each other’s assistance. Additionally, Anna continuously ensured that all of the students were on the same track by asking them if they were “all okay?” or “all on the same page?” She also repeated to the students “not to guess” and “to think the question through.”

During the same lesson Anna suggested that the students have a “competition” where everyone at the same time tried the same math problem. She stated, “This is a more challenging one.” Although it was a “competition” and the question was more complex, Anna and the students who finished first openly assisted and encouraged the other students. For example, Kelly spoke in Russian and helped Lucy with the question. Additionally, Anna walked around the classroom to make sure everyone was on the same page and stated, “if it’s wrong don’t be picky, it’s a simple line issue,” meaning the answer might be wrong, but it is just one step that might be off.

Furthermore, I had also noticed collaborative learning during the same lesson when Anna showed another example to the class on the whiteboard, but miscalculated the results. One of the students corrected Anna and she used this opportunity to work with the whole class to solve the problem. They all worked backwards, step by step to see where the error occurred and to solve the equation correctly. Therefore, collaborative learning to problem solve was evident throughout many of the classroom observations. The importance of inquiry based learning and problem solving was further discussed during the interviews.

Interview Data

Anna emphasized the intensity of the overall program constructed for the school, but she emphasized how importance was placed on problem solving, where students were given the

opportunity to thoroughly investigate and understand the processes of their work. For example, Anna spoke about a math test that students were given. She said,

> The second thing that we are introducing this year … is a math test … but, during the math test we are not looking for multiple … choice questions, no not at all because very often we can guess … we are here not for guessing, we are here to see what's going on. Another thing is, we are not into multiple-choice questions, or questionnaires, or whatever tests … Very often a student can let say… (sigh) fail a test, just because he made a small arithmetic mistake. We want to see how he came up to this conclusion. Was he able to start where he a made a mistake … that's where we want to see … students who are able to think a little bit, to stretch their thinking, not too much, but … at least…a baby step … And if we see that, that of course we are more than happy to work with those students.

I prompted this further by asking if they are "looking at their thought process, how they are coming to this conclusion —." Anna agreed and stated,

> … how they are coming to this conclusion… It's not like we are judging them and of course, even if-okay [they are] not doing well, but you here to work with us …

Anna further elaborated on problem solving when I asked her about testing before students moved to the next grade level:

> **Anna:** Yes, basically we've been doing our-we created our own tests —
>
> **Sonya:** — Okay—
>
> **Anna:** — with a lot of word problems …what we've been doing basically, in December they … were writing a test that was based on … all their … topics they studied for … four months … and they were tested … on all of that. At the end of the year we're planning to have the full test and I'm talking about like it's an hour test, even just maybe a little bit longer than an hour, where they will be tested on everything they studied during the year.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay.
>
> **Anna:** So it's just basically something with a lot of word problems, with … different types of problems.
>
> **Sonya:** Okay, and its math focused right?
>
> **Anna:** Math focused.

It is important to note that although this test seemed to be rigorous, Anna did explain the importance of students understanding the concepts and providing them with opportunities to succeed. She stated, "I just decided if a student, let's say fails a test or something, we will always give him or her an opportunity… to do it again … We don't want them to feel uncomfortable about it." In fact, the school's website further stressed how the school's administrator and teachers believed that knowledge cannot be achieved without instilling students with principals such as "confidence, diligence, leadership, responsibility, and perseverance." Through these principals, they believed in moderation of encouragement and "due diligence" where students are "encouraged to do their best, without overtaxing themselves." Additionally, the school focused on a "balance between active and passive learning." Therefore, the data reveled that students were provided with the opportunity to collaboratively work together to solve problem and to explore new topics that at times were challenging. Additionally, if students were working on lessons as a whole class and/or on math tests, they were encouraged to think through the thought process, rather than focusing on obtaining the correct answer. Furthermore, a sense of competition and challenging students to excel their thinking was evident, but educators instilled what they believed was a sense of "healthy competition," allowing students to explore new challenges.

5.10.3. Negotiating language while problem solving.

During the observational period of this study it was found that both students and the teachers negotiated languages, between English and Russian, to collaboratively problem solve. Specifically, each class was very interactive as teachers and the students worked to problem solve, but there was a fluidity of language use between Russian and English during this period.

Observational Data: Whole Group Math Instruction

During the second observational period of a whole group math lesson, students were reviewing math word problems using fractions. Both Anna and Olga were present in the classroom, with Anna instructing and her mother at the back of the room assisting. Olga distributed a handout with the word problems that she created for the lesson. The word problems were originally written in Russian was translated to English and that day one question was translated incorrectly to English. Anna told the students to scratch out part of the word problem that did not make sense and Olga repeated what to do in Russian. Anna asked one student to come to the board to work with the class on the first word problem. Tom was selected and he read the word problem aloud and then tried working through the word problem on the whiteboard. After Tom finished reading the word problem in English, Anna then translated it to Russian for Lucy. She stated, "I will translate for Lucy to get her to understand." While working through the word problem, the other students from their desk assisted Tom ensuring that he completed each step correctly. In fact, at one point when solving the word problem he stated, "I need help," and Anna stated, "go back to the old lesson, do you remember?" Additionally, Kelly told Tom that he had written the wrong answer and where he had made an error. They worked backwards and tried to correct the error. During this time I had noticed that Olga also conversed with Tom in Russian about the word problem. He responded back to her in Russian and Anna had also said something in Russian to Olga. Anna reassured the students that it is okay to get the wrong answer and encouraged them by stating that we "all make mistakes." Once Tom completed the word problem, another student was given an opportunity to work on solving the next question. Throughout the lesson I had noticed that the students and teachers openly conversed in the two languages as they problem solved.

Another example where students' negotiated languages to problem solve was the third observational period of a whole group math lesson. The students were working on problem solving using fractions with divisions. Anna again translated the questions for Lucy and she explained what the task was for the day; however, throughout the lesson I found that Lucy and Kelly would converse in Russian sharing their answers and if Lucy needed assistance Kelly would assist her in Russian. During the same class, I also noticed that Lucy was more confident when responding in English during the math class, as oppose to when she was in other classes (e.g. gym, English, and world geography). For example, all of the students were called upon and involved in sharing their work with the class. When it came time for Lucy to share her answer she confidently came to the whiteboard and showed how she solved a problem. Not only did she speak in English, but she also wrote the concluding sentence in English. Although she solved the problem correctly she wrote 34 sheeps and was corrected in English by the students and Anna to erase the s. These observations demonstrate how in problem-solving contexts where Russian instructors and a student who was learning English were present, students negotiated their language use and were not told to use English constantly or inclusively.

Interview Data: Negotiating Languages

During our initial meeting Anna told me that Olga is a Professor of mathematics and she co-constructed the school's math curriculum. When I asked Anna if her mother was the one who taught math at the private school and she explained that her mother taught the math program in Russian and she was a translator. She stated, "Yes, I'm just translating, yes … Basically, that's, that's how it works." However, during my observational period it was noted that Anna was teaching the math class and her mother was present assisting within the class. Additionally, when I asked Anna about her translating and if her mother helped with translating in the classroom she

explained, “Yes, some terms and I have to-to work hard… you look through Google Translate to find the right math terms because I wasn’t familiar with that, but … (laughter) what can we do?” In this way, educators at the school openly used and spoke Russian to help make sense of what they were teaching.

5.10.4. Repetition and review of work.

The data revealed how the school administrator and teachers emphasized the importance of repetition and review of work particularly within the math program.

Observational Data: Outside of the classroom context and whole group math instruction

When researching background information about the Engaging Minds Academy on social media it was found that the school emphasized the importance of student’s reviewing learned material. Specifically, Anna conveyed how the school followed an approach to learning called the “Incremental Approach to Learning.” The website explains that this approach is used for “knowledge acquisition” and it requires that educators review important concepts on a “regular basis.” This approach is different from the “Mastery Approach” where concepts that students learn may not be revisited until the following year. Furthermore, the school implemented a model of education called “Classical Education Model.” The website stated that this model follows more of a “systematic approach to studies rather a scattered approach.” In this way, students are provided with information, they learn how to organize the information, and then they communicate what they learned and make inferences. The classroom observations revealed how these approaches to teaching and learning were applied to various math lessons.

During each math lesson, I had found that the educators first reviewed what was taught from the previous week. For example, in the first week of classroom observations of a math class, before learning a new lesson the students reviewed working with whole number fractions.

Anna asked Alex to give an example of a whole number fraction and to solve the equation. He provided an example and explained each step to solve the problem. Anna then asked the class if they all agreed with the answer. Anna then provided a few other examples and each student came to the whiteboard to solve the problem. I found that at times if a student was having difficulty Anna would say, "go back to the old lesson, do you remember?" Additionally, before moving on to the next lesson Anna asked the students if they were "all on the same page?" or "did you understand?" I found that the review of material was evident in all of the observations that took place during the math class. Repetition and review of material was further addressed during the interviews.

Interview Data

The interview data also disclosed how repetition and review of materials was an important strategy that the teachers used. Anna explained,

> In the classroom I want to make sure that every single child understands what's going on … That's why sometimes we repeat the same thing about 13, 14, or sometimes 18 times (laughter) ... And at the end of the class, I ask children again repeat it back to me, so to reflect what they liked, what they didn't like…what they would do … so they reflect back …

Anna further explained the importance of repeating material, but she also agreed with me regarding the importance of feedback from the students. She stated,

> I get the feedback (agreeing) … and if they feel that they didn't understand, then we have to spend more time. Sometimes we have to plan the lesson you see okay they (snap finger) understand and want to stay on this [but], we have to move on.

Therefore, repetition and review of materials learned was an important strategy used to ensure student success, but student feedback was also an important tool that teachers used.

5.10.5. Preparing students for the future through STEM education.

Engaging Minds Academy placed a large emphasis on preparing their students for the future. Specifically, the math and science programs the school offered were a significant area of learning that the school administrator, teachers, and parents felt were necessary for students to grasp in order for them to succeed. Examples from the preliminary observations and interviews demonstrated how this was evident.

Observational and Interview Data: School's Website and Facebook Information

Anna reiterated the importance of STEM learning and how math enrichment is essential for students to have in order for them to build connections with the global community and to better their opportunities in the work force. The schools Facebook page further conveyed Anna's idea as the first posting was a caption, "Inspiring all students to learn science and math from a young age will set the stage for important 21st century careers in a variety of fields!" and a link to an article titled, "Top 15 Benefits of a STEM Education-STEMJOBS." The article provided fifteen benefits of STEM education and included examples from people who were working at major corporations where STEM was integrated into their work and additional facts on STEM.

The school's website also reaffirmed the importance of preparing students for the future through "networking," which is important for the "job market." Specifically, the school promoted the idea of "networking" and students being "connected" with other people, which would increase the chances of success and "opportunities … in a competitive job market." Examples of this philosophy were also revealed during the observation period. For example, instruction and learning predominantly took place through students collaborating and interacting with one another. This was particularly recognized during the math lessons as students interacted with one another in order to problem solve.

Another example of how the school prepared students for the future and daily life through the promotion and implementation of the math enrichment program. Particularly, the school taught areas of math that were applicable to workplace environments and/or everyday situations. The school's website reiterated this as it explained that the school offered a math enrichment program, but how math applies to the workplace environment and other fields of life. It stated, "Besides the importance of numeracy in industry and business, it is essential in daily life, including doing basic budgeting, taxes, and certain tasks at the workplace" and even when selling products within a "competitive world." Additionally, mathematics is needed for statistical purposes and how it is also necessary for "researchers in the social sciences and humanities." Evidence of these ideas were observed in the classroom as students worked on word problems pertaining to real-life situations. For example, one question given to students on a math worksheet was "Jeanette was practicing for a 13 kilometer mini-marathon race. She set up a practice track that was $2\frac{3}{5}$ kilometers long. How many times must she run around her practice track to run 13 kilometers?" Another example was "Confectionary factory produces 120 tonnes of candies a day. Of all the candies 1/6 are chocolate, 1/4 are caramel, and the rest are lollypops. How many tonnes of lollypops does the factory make?" In this way, as expressed by Anna, the areas of math the students were learning were practical and applicable. Furthermore, with certain areas of math that the school administrator and teachers believed were critical for student's learning and that would provide them with opportunities for their career, more time was provided for teaching and review. For example, the schools website, which conveyed the ideas and goals that Anna envisioned for the school, states, "We offer an in-depth approach to the study of Mathematics. That is why Algebra and Geometry are studied as separate subjects from Grade 4 onward." These examples illustrate how the school promoted STEM education and the

importance it has on preparing students for the future and its connection to an (Eastern) European model of education.

Chapter 6

Analysis

This chapter is an analysis of the research findings from my ethnographic case study and an illustration of the connections among research data. Specifically, the findings highlight important themes in relation to Ontario educational policy, educational theory, and literature in the area of language learning.

6.1. Legitimate Languages and Linguistic Authority

Participant responses during the interviews and classroom observations demonstrated how Russian was promoted and "allowed" to be used at Engaging Minds Academy. Following Bourdieu's (1977) notion of legitimate language, which he formulates as:

> … we can state the characteristics which legitimate discourse must fulfil, the tacit presuppositions of its efficacy: it is uttered by a legitimate speaker, *i.e*. by the appropriate person, as opposed to the impostor (religious language/priest, poetry/poet, etc.); it is uttered in a legitimate situation, *i.e*. on the appropriate market (as opposed to insane discourse, *e.g*. a surrealist poem read in the Stock Exchange) and addressed to legitimate receivers; it is formulated in the legitimate phonological and syntactic forms (what linguists call grammaticalness), except when transgressing these norms is part of the legitimate definition of the legitimate producer. (p. 650)

The data from my study evaluates these ideas, as the private school promoted English as the language of instruction; however, Russian continually influenced pedagogies, policies, and the legitimization of particular ideas and perspectives. The interviews revealed how the school administrator and teachers emphasized that Russian was part of their instruction and how languages were negotiated as a way for students to construct meaning and understanding within the classroom. Additionally, students were not told to use English and/or Russian continuously or inclusively. In this way, Bourdieu's (1977) notion of legitimate language allows one to further understand how languages were legitimized at the private school, as a means of supporting learning within the classroom and how language became a resource. Bourdieu (1991) argued

how power is embedded within linguistic exchanges and how official languages become the "theoretical norm against which all language practices are objectively measured" (p. 45), as English was the standard language of the private school, Russian was given value by critical discourse analysis of interview data suggests that English was ultimately upheld as the "theoretical norm." For example, instruction and conversations amongst the teacher and students during the art class were predominantly in Russian. These interactions were similar during the math class, as students' negotiated languages in order to collaboratively problem-solve. In relation to previous studies that affirm the importance and benefits of incorporating student's languaging practices within the classroom (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Cummins, 2012; Lotherington et al., 2008; Lotherington, Schecter & Cummins, 2003), these studies predominantly focused on the public schooling system, where fixed policies continue to govern what is taught and learned within the classroom. In this way, my study offers a unique perspective as the school administrator and teachers appropriated such policies to recognize language aside from the standard, to leverage student engagement and enhancement in the classroom, and to meet what Anna conveyed as parents' expectations and desires of a curriculum that they anticipated for their children.

The failure of schools recognizing and integrating languages other than those that have been deemed official, has been undertaken by various studies on public schooling (e.g. Cummins, 2005; Lotherington, 2011; McCain, Mustard, & Shankar, 2007; Pascal, 2009). Cummins (2012) argued, "In a context such as the Greater Toronto Area, where 50 percent of children use a language other than English at home" educators have disregarded these realties, which is "neither accidental nor intentional. Rather it constitutes an example of willful blindness to issues that are not visible through the dominant policy lens, which is monolingual in focus" (p.

xii). As addressed in detail in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, Shohamy (2006) reports that these language policies are considered *De facto* language policy, which are covert polices that get formed because various hidden agendas that are created between language ideology and practice, where there are a variety of "overt and covert *mechanisms,* used mostly (but not exclusively) by those in authority" where language(s) get controlled (p. xv). Similarly, Bourdieu (1977) explains that educators are those who have linguistic authority, who can impose language as legitimate through "law", and who have the ability to appropriate it. This was evident as the private school administrator and educators were key agents who appropriated language policy in order to provide a function for the language that students brought into the classroom. Consistent with my interviews, Anna and Mr. Vitali spoke about adapting and "not following" the Ontario curriculum, rather "going beyond the curriculum" to meet the students' needs and incorporating their linguistic and cultural backgrounds into the curriculum, both during the regular school day and possibly through an afterschool program in the upcoming school year. Although the school administrator and educators appropriated the Ontario curriculum to meet what they believed students needed, they continued to have linguistic authority and the ultimate power of what language(s) were legitimized at the school and the types of curriculum that would be used within the classroom and school. Furthermore, where instruction in the Ontario public school system is in English and/or French, some classes at the private school were instructed fully and/or partially in Russian (e.g., the art class was fully instructed in Russian). In this way, the private school offered alternative curriculum and a school environment from the public schooling system; however, while the school's effort to use Russian was congratulatory, one particular point of concern is about the school's choice of focusing on Russian-speaking students and excluding

other ethnic languages that these students may have had and students from other ethnic language backgrounds (e.g., Ukrainian, Kazak, etc.).

6.2. Linguistic and Cultural Capital

Haque's (2012) analysis of Canadian multiculturalism within a bilingual framework demonstrates that the official language status of English and French effectively devalues the contribution of other languages and cultures. By contrast, my study detected the importance of orientations of *language-as-a right* and *language-as-a-resource* (Ruiz, 1984), but also language as cultural capital. In relation to the institution, Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as,

> With the academic qualification, a certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture, social alchemy produces a form of cultural capital which has a relative autonomy vis-à-vis its bearer and even vis-à-vis the cultural capital he effectively possess at a given moment in time. (p. 248)

The educational system has a fundamental role in constructing students' competence to build cultural and linguistic capital; however, students must be provided with the right tools in order to do so. Bourdieu (1991) explains how the educational system has a vital role in controlling language and it has the power over the "production of producers/consumers, and therefore in the reproduction of the market without which the social value of linguistic competence depends, its capacity to function as linguistic capital" (p. 57). In this way, he argues that cultural capital involves familiarity of the dominant culture or language, which is reproduced by the educational system (Bourdieu, 1977). Coherent with the observation and interview data, educators at Engaging Minds Academy provided students with access and resources to build their cultural capital through language; however, aside from the official languages of schooling in Ontario, Russian was equally used within the classroom. Educators provided students with the opportunity to capitalize on their linguistic and cultural backgrounds in order to make sense of

classroom material and/or to support students' learning. This was seen during various math lessons at the school, where Russian at times was used to problem solve. In this way, although English was the medium of instruction for most courses, Russian had hegemonic power within the school and it was leveraged as a common language to enhance learning. Additionally, teaching occurred across languages for literacy engagement. Similar to previous research (Chow & Cummins, 2003; Cummins et al., 2005; Lotherington

2007; 2011; 2017; Schecter & Cummins, 2003;) that found instructional possibilities and positive outcomes that emerge when students' linguistic and cultural identities are incorporated into learning, educators at the private school followed this pedagogical method. One example was of Anna finding an abridged version of a book with Russian translations. After students read the book, they created different versions of the story in their own words and presented their work as a class play. This activity allowed all students to capitalize on their linguistic backgrounds, but it offered the student who was learning English to develop competence in a second language and it afforded her the opportunity to participate with her peers. As educators nurtured the "wealth" of languages within the classroom and promoted *language-as-a-resource*, students were able to effectively interact with their peers, enhancing their academic success. Following the schools philosophy, these pedagogical methods were also selected with the intent of preparing students for the future.

Bourdieu (1991) argues that speakers who exhibit linguistic capital of particular market afford them symbolic power. He states, "The constitution of a linguistic market creates the conditions for an objective competition in and through which the legitimate competence can function as linguistic capital, producing a *profit of distinction* on the occasion of each social exchange" (p. 55). Public schools in Ontario have promoted the comprehension of Canada's

official languages, English and French, in order for students to enhance their opportunities in society. Alternatively, my study found that the private school encouraged a pluralistic view of teaching whereby English and Russian were incorporated into classroom. This method of teaching came from one of school's philosophies as constructed by Anna who had the intent of preparing students for the "competitive job market" through networking and collaborative learning. Particularly, students used languages to collaborate and network with one another, to advance their understanding of a subject or for social purposes within the classroom. This was predominantly evident during the school's math lessons where students worked as a class and negotiated languages in order to problem solve. In fact, students and educators in varying situations code-switched between English and Russian. In this way, students were able to increase their cultural and linguistic capital and prepare for the future, as they openly used languages to network with one another. Bourdieu (1991) stated, "… all speech is produced for and through the market to which it owes its existence and its most specific properties" (p. 76). Furthermore, the school also placed an emphasis on the cultural and intellectual perpetuation of the Russian-speaking community.

6.3. Cultural and Intellectual Reproduction

The educational system and the educators, who are part of this system, are the key agents of cultural and intellectual reproduction. Bourdieu (1977) states,

> Every institutionalized educational system (ES) owes the specific characteristics of its structure and functioning to the fact that, by the means proper to the institution, it has to produce and reproduce the institutional conditions whose existence and persistence (self-reproduction of the system) are necessary both to the exercise of its essential function of inculcation and to the fulfillment of its function of reproducing a cultural arbitrary which it does not produce (cultural reproduction), the reproduction of which contributes to the reproduction of the relations between the groups or classes (social reproduction). (p. 54)

Bourdieu emphasizes how cultural reproduction though schooling perpetuates power and

inequality, as the institution promotes various ideologies of a particular society and ideas of the dominant culture. As educational policy and programming construct how an institution is managed and the pedagogic practices that educators reproduce, these ideologies continue to be reinforced. Bourdieu (1973) states,

> An education system which puts into practice an implicit pedagogic action, requiring initial familiarity with the dominant culture, and which proceeds by imperceptible familiarization, offers information and training which can be received and acquired only by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and of the inculcation of the culture…. (p. 80)

Similarly, these issues have been apparent in Ontario elementary school policy and programs that have continually failed to consider language diversity and the changing demographics of a "linguistically heterogeneous" (Lotherington, 2017, p. 184) student population. Specifically, Lotherington (2017) states,

> We are teaching to a social and linguistic map of the country that is out of date; the preparation of real schoolchildren for the society of the future needs to be urgently forged. Much of this falls to the school: to the school administrator and the classroom teacher." (p. 187)

Although this has been the case with public schooling in Ontario, elementary private schools have allowed authority figures to move away from dominant ideologies that get reproduced through policy and practice and instead they have flexibility in what they would like to implement. The data revealed specific examples of how the educators promoted cultural and intellectual reproduction that was reflective of the student demographic at the school.

Engaging Minds Academy strongly emphasized the importance of maintaining the cultural and intellectual life of the Russian-speaking community. As discussed in Chapter 5, during the 1970s, Jewish private schools that were established due to the public schooling system having few prospects for transmitting linguistic and cultural traditions that were important to this community. Similarly, the interviews with the school's administrator indicated how the school

maintained a strong connection to the Russian-speaking community through curriculum. Not only was Russian openly being spoken in the classroom to enhance the learning and teaching experience, the curriculum established for the STEM program adopted a framework that Anna conveyed was constructed from the former USSR This included the implementation of math enrichment and learning topics and strategies that went beyond what the current Ontario elementary math curriculum offers. According to Anna, this framework was also one that parents were accustomed to back home and requested that it be taught to their children. Although Russian was initially taught as a subject during the regular school day and was later removed due to the restructuring of school's curriculum, the cultural maintenance of the Russian-speaking community continued, as Anna claims parents requested that their children be taught Russian history in upcoming years.

Anna claimed that the discussions and meetings that occurred amongst parents, the priest, and Anna herself, the private school was established and continued to maintain an Eastern European identity through the parents' strong influence. According to Anna, from the initial stages of establishing the school, parents' choice to seek the advice of the Orthodox Russian priest can be construed as a traditional practice and exhibits continuing faith in the religious patriarchy in assisting and directing with family and educational affairs.

Furthermore, the school also actively worked to maintain a cultural connection by recruiting staff members who were either from the Russian-speaking community and/or of a European background. For example, the teacher volunteers were from the Russian-speaking community and the English teacher's background was Italian. These examples demonstrate how the school administrator and educators were proponents who transmitted and maintained ideas and pedagogies that were reflective of the cultural and intellectual student backgrounds.

6.4. Inquiry Based Learning and Problem Solving Through Translanguaging

While the private school professed itself as a "progressive, forward-thinking school" through STEM programing with a specific focus on math enrichment, this was more aspirational than practically achievable given the limited resources available to students, which limited this type of learning essentially to collaborative learning as students used translanguaging practices. Garcia (2009) explains that translanguaging is an "act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential" (p. 140). Furthermore, the term is used to explain when individuals switch between "the language mode in bilingual classrooms" in order to construct meaning (Garcia, 20019, p. 45). The data also revealed how educators concentrated on inquiry-based learning and problem solving where students' knowledge and understanding was enhanced as they were provided with opportunities to collaborate with their peers to meet learning goals, but to also improve the learning experience. This type of learning and teaching follows a Deweyian pedagogical framework of inquiry-based learning, whereby students at the school collaboratively problem solved; however, the school's framework of learning and what Anna reiterated in her interview about the schools math curriculum, is not necessarily in accordance to a North American vision of progressive schools.

6.4.1. Progressive education and experience.

Engaging Minds Academy's vision of offering students a "progressive, forward-thinking school," is a similar educational philosophy formulated by John Dewey (1938). Analyzing both "traditional" and "progressive" education, Dewey (1938) argues, "neither of these views applies the principles of a carefully developed philosophy of experience" (p. 1); however, he further argues that some "experiences are mis-educative" (p. 25) and it is the educators' responsibility to

create an effective educational experience where both of these views are incorporated when facilitating. Similarly, educators at the private school focused on students being able to capitalize on their past experiences and familiarity of topics in order to make sense of what they were learning. Additionally, as Anna emphasized that the curriculum for the math enrichment program had the objective of providing concepts that went beyond what the Ontario curriculum presently offers, creating experiences for students that were practical and to prepare them for a "competitive job market." Similarly, Dewey (1938) stated, "…every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. That is the very meaning of growth, continuity, reconstruction of experience" (p. 47). The notions of experience and education were perceived in the school's implementation of inquiry based learning and problem-solving. Additionally, language and culture were tied into the experience-based model, as students negotiated languages and used translanguaging practices while collaboratively problem-solving.

6.4.2. Inquiry based learning and problem solving.

The private school focused on inquiry based learning, as students collaborated while problem solving during various math classes. Anna spoke about the importance of following a process of teaching and learning whereby students were taught a topic, they would then review what was learned to make sure they understood the lesson, and later apply what was learned. Additionally, the school emphasized that it followed an approach of "knowledge acquisition" that required teachers to review important concepts on a "regular basis" and using a "systematic approach to studies rather a scattered approach." This method for problem-solving was what Dewey referred to as "experimental practice of knowing" (1929) and "reflective inquiry" (1933). Dewey (1933) presented five phases or features of reflective inquiry:

> In between, as states of thinking, are (1) *suggestions*, in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution; (2) an intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has been *felt* (directly experienced) into a *problem* to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought; (3) the use of one suggestion after another as a leading idea, or *hypothesis*, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in the collection of factual material; (4) the mental elaboration of the idea or supposition as an idea or supposition (*reasoning*, in the sense in which reasoning is a part, not the whole of inference); and (5) testing the hypothesis by overt or imaginative action. (p. 107)

Similar findings were found during my observations of mathematics instruction, as students would collaboratively work together to solve word problems step-by-step. In fact, students were involved in the learning process as they would at many times take responsibility of their work by sharing their results with their peers by explaining and justifying the methods used to problem solve. For example, students would individually volunteer to instruct the class on how they found a solution to a problem. Consistent with these observations, Dewey (1933) states,

> One of the most important factors in preventing an aimless and discursive recitation consists in making it necessary for every student to follow up and justify the suggestions he offers. He should be held responsible for working out mentally every suggested principle so as to show what he means by it, how it bears upon the facts at hand, and how the facts bear upon it. Unless the pupil is made responsible for developing on his own account the *reasonableness* of the guess he puts forth, the recitation counts for practically nothing. (p. 271)

Additionally, collaboration was seen when students would seek assistance or alternative methods from their peers on how to solve the problem. Students would also ask each other questions while problem solving to ensure that they were on the right track or if they needed clarification. Students collaboratively engaged in the learning process to problem solve, but more importantly, they were able to experience the subjects being taught through discussions, trial and error, and asking questions when or if needed. In fact, Dewey (1933) states,

> Probably the most frequent cause of failure in school to secure genuine thinking from students is the failure to insure the existence of an experienced situation of such a nature as to call out thinking in the way in which these out-of-school situations do. (p. 99)

The data reveals a number of important pedagogical and learning outcomes that occurred

when educators maintained students cultural, linguistic, and intellectual abilities; however, with the limited resources and materials and inconsistent staffing for long-range implementation, this framework of learning presents issues of inconsistency to student learning and experience.

Chapter 7

Discussion and Conclusion

7.1. Overview of the Study

As a result of global migration, we can conceptualize language in the context of schooling in Ontario, Canada through a pluralistic lens; however, the policies that govern our educational system have failed to reflect this reality. Krasny and Sachar (2017) argue,

> … a plurilingual approach to language education can provide a partial corrective for the homogenizing effects of long-standing multicultural policy that, in our view, continues to tacitly perpetuate cultural categorization and a linguistic hierarchy that has served to subjugate languages other than French and English. (p. 39)

Researchers have concentrated on investigating alternative pedagogical practices and policies within Ontario public schools that have encouraged the cohabitation of languages as a way to support and recognize language diversity in society; however, current language policies and practices of Ontario public elementary schools generally continue to disregard the changing demographics of student populations. This study presents an opportunity to observe the language practices outside of policy and testing frameworks that govern or determine public schooling. Specifically, for my study I have examined how school administration and educators in Ontario elementary private schools work in response to the dynamism of linguistic and cultural student demographics and how they also work within the parameters of parental and community interests to rethink Canadian classrooms.

In the previous chapters, I explored how aspects of language practices are legitimized, for whom and under what contexts, and what this means for participants within the context of informal and formal instruction. The following research questions were used to guide my inquiry:

1.) How is linguistic diversity legitimized in urban Ontario elementary classrooms through policy and practice?

2.) How are language and cultural practices enacted by students in a small private school established in response to interest from a Russian-speaking community in the GTA?

3.) How does language and culture actively inform the explicit and implicit curriculum in an Ontario private school established within a Russian-speaking community?

To address these research questions, I used the research methodology of triangulation to make comparisons between multiple data sources. Firstly, I provided a review of current research literature related to my topic. Secondly, conducted a historical analysis of national Canadian language and multicultural policy and how it has formed educational practice in Canadian schools. While analyzing these texts I focused on how power and ideology intersects with the language that was being used to refer to linguistic minority students and how and/or if this language has changed from the 1960s to present. I have also included a historical review of private schooling in Ontario, to provide background information of how this schooling system was established. Lastly, I conducted an ethnographic case study of one private elementary school in the GTA. In doing so, I conducted in-depth structured interviews with the school administrator and two educators and classroom observations were conducted for a period of one month, one day a week during regular school hours. Below, I offer a summary of the research findings in relation to the initial research questions. I will then provide a discussion and concluding remarks on the overall findings of the study, and lastly offer comments on implications for practice and research.

7.2. Summary of the Findings and Connections to Research Questions

The findings from this study provide an outlook on how a school administrator and educators responded to the linguistic and cultural background of students from the Russian-

speaking community whose parents and members from the community had specific desires and needs that they felt were being neglected in the public schooling system in Ontario.

To answer the initial research questions, the findings showed how the school administrator and educators considered languages aside from English and French as capital within the classroom. Educators integrated Russian into their instruction on numerous occasions and it was used to leverage student engagement and enhancement within the classroom. For example, Russian was not only used to support a student who was learning English, teachers openly used it during instruction and interaction with their students. Even in situations where the teacher who taught English does not speak Russian or understand it, he integrated the use of technology by using Google translate to assist the student, generating a means of communication and interaction between teacher and student. In fact, the school administrator and teacher also conveyed their opinions of classrooms having additional ELL support staff who can speak the same language(s) as the ELLs. Furthermore, instructors did not insist students speak in Russian exclusively or consistently. Students negotiated languages as a way to support each other's learning through collaboration and they chose to openly it in informal contexts (e.g. recess and lunch).

Another important theme that was consistent throughout the research findings was cultural, linguistic, and intellectual maintenance. The school administrator claimed how the private school was established with parents addressing their dissatisfaction and concerns to a Russian Orthodox priest, regarding the direction the public educational system in Ontario was moving towards and their desire to remove their children from this system. By establishing the private school, the school administrator emphasized how she was advised to recruit parents and students from the Russian-speaking community. By doing so, there continued to be a presence

and maintenance of this community and more broadly, the Eastern European community. This maintenance was also recognized through the school's traditions, philosophies, curriculum, and the staff who taught at the school. Additionally, parents had a strong influence on this preservation, as Anna claimed that they requested the curriculum to focus on STEM and topics they were familiar with during their time in the former USSR.

The third theme that emerged from the findings was that the integration of Russian language and culture facilitated the implementation of a framework of inquiry-based learning and problem solving that occurred as students collaborated during math class while using translanguaging practices. Although the school followed STEM programing, math enrichment was the main focus. The findings demonstrated how students during the math class would collaboratively work together to problem-solve. They were also immersed in the learning process, as they were provided with opportunities to explain their thinking and methods used to solve word problems. This also involved the teacher and students to follow a Deweyian approach to learning called "reflective inquiry." Additionally, the findings demonstrated implementation of the school's philosophy of preparing students for "competitive job market" through collaboration and "networking" with their peers.

7.3. Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

The summary presented above describes the main findings from the present study that answered my initial research questions. Given that the study offered a unique lens on how the private school recognized students' linguistic and cultural background and the importance of integrating these qualities within the classroom, the school in fact demonstrated its ability to be flexible while working within the structures of an educational system and a society that is forever changing. Educational research on the public schooling system in Ontario has reported that

routine language practices and official language policies have become regulatory mechanisms that govern proponents (teachers and school administration) to often perpetuate dominant ideologies that fail to recognize the realities of a continually changing student demographic (Cummins, 2012; Guo, 2012; Lotherinton, 2012; Schecter & Cummins, 2003). However, various classroom based projects that focus on language learning and teaching practices (Li, 2009; Lotherington, 2007; 2009; 2017; Piccardo, 2013) have demonstrated the benefits on student learning when they are provided with opportunities to share aspects their linguistic and cultural backgrounds within the classroom and with their peers, which fostered an understanding of diversity. Li (2009) offers examples from the classroom where students showed confidence and pride when using their home language and when given the opportunity to express aspects of linguistic and cultural and identities. This also offered students the prospect to learn from their peers. Comparably, the present study found when educators recognized and promoted the use of Russian through various lessons (e.g. English, math, and art), students understood the materials being taught and this afforded them similar opportunities. For example, during an observation of an English class, students engaged in a poetry lesson using a poem originally written in Russian. The student who was learning English was directly involved in the lesson by presenting the poem in Russian to the class and later offering assistance to her peers to help them comprehend the poem. By integrating the student's linguistic competencies into the classroom it offered her and her peers the prospect of learning from each other and respecting the linguistic makeup of the classroom. Additionally, at times I noticed the student's apprehensiveness to speak during the class; however, during this particular lesson, she confidently read the poem in Russian and even answered comprehension questions. This finding offers awareness to the positive outcomes that can occur when educators alter their pedagogy and instruction and offer students' agency within

the classroom to explore their knowledge and to make connections between concepts being learned. In fact, Piccardo (2013) argues that educators will need to,

> "… help learners to become autonomous, to integrate formal and informal learning" and to "delegate some of the learning power to the students." (p. 609).

In addition to the positive effects on learning when students are given agency to integrate and invest in their linguistic and cultural backgrounds within the classroom, educators recognized the use of Russian in formal and informal contexts. During the observational period, it was found that students negotiated languages and translaguaged between Russian and English during classroom activities and the morning routine, lunch, and recess. Piccardo (2013) argues, "All forms of code-mixing and translanguaging should be seen as positive signs of progress, as the construction of proficiency. Therefore, such techniques should not be forbidden or ignored, but exploited as learning epiphanies" (p. 609). However, the use of Russian was legitimized in limited ways as the school administrator and teacher reiterated that they "allowed" or that they occasionally tolerated its use. This suggests that English continued to have greater currency, as the allowance of using Russian suggests it is outside of the classroom expectations. Additionally, according to the school administrator, she claimed that Russian language learning was initially a subject integrated into the day school program; however, it was shortly removed and parents requested the school consider offering a history course titled, "The History of the Russian Empire." This program would be offered afterschool to "children of a Russian and Ukrainian background." Again, this program would be offered outside of the classroom expectations.

The school administrator and educators expressed that they catered the school's policy and practices to meet the needs and desires of a schooling system that parents envisioned for their children. The school administrator claimed that parents were adamant that their children be provided with an education they were accustomed to from back home (the former USSR) and for

them to gain similar knowledge. Similarly, Guo (2012) and Pushor (2008) discuss the importance of integrating parental knowledge from an immigrant parent perspective. Guo (2012) states,

> Parent personal knowledge is knowledge gained from lived experience in all aspects of life-at work, at play, with family and friends, and so on…Parent knowledge includes that drawn from their own educational backgrounds, their professional and personal experiences of interacting with schools in their countries of origin as well as their current understanding of the host country's education system, their own struggles as immigrant parents, and their future aspirations for their children. (p. 7; Pushor, 2008)

The school administrator and teacher used parents' knowledge for the "math enrichment" program and the school administrated expressed that they integrated books through their literature program. She declared, "parents want to feel that books that they heard before could being incorporated." By integrating and considering parental knowledge as a useful resource within the classroom, this legitimizes different forms of knowledge (Guo, 2012; 2014; Fraser, 2009).

As discussed in the Findings Chapter, Engaging Minds Academy had similar intentions to the Jewish private schools established during the 1970s with the prospects of maintaining a linguistic and culture background of the community. However, the school was also established for a number of reasons that were very different from the Jewish private schools (e.g., the Sex Education curriculum). Additionally, renditions of the Jewish private schools were stronger, as larger numbers of these schools were established. Engaging Minds Academy had a smaller student enrollment and with the changing demographics and a lesser number of students, survival of the school is questionable. Additionally, aside from the Jewish private schools maintaining a community aspect through teaching Hebrew, these schools also maintained a religious aspect "with studies in Judaic religion and culture."

7.4. The Study's Limitations

Although parents and the Russian Orthodox Priest had a large role in the establishment of the school, I only had Anna's justifications that they were reluctant to be apart of the study due to timing and for some, a language barrier of not being able to speak English. Although parents consented for their children to take part in the study and to be observed during regular school hours, Anna claimed that they were reluctant to me directly speaking with them and to conduct interviews. Anna also cited that parents did not want politics to be discussed in the classroom and she equally suspected this was a factor of their reticent to be interviewed and for me to directly interview their children. Additionally, if I was able to speak and understand Russian, this might have afforded me an insider perspective and access to parental, and possibly student, interviews. Specifically, parental interviews would have afforded me information and answering questions regarding their own accounts perspectives on the public schooling system and their motivation for choosing the private schooling system for their child. Additionally, I would have gained more detailed answers about their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, their length of time in Canada, and their own learning and schooling experiences and how and/or if, as Anna claimed, these were similar experiences that they wanted for children. Furthermore, by interviewing students this would have afforded me information about how students see their translanguaging practices being enacted within the classroom and/or school, their perceptions on private schooling, and for some students, their perceptions of transitioning from the public schooling system into the private. Additionally, I could gain information on students' opinions on their role as learners at the school and outside of the school, where the community may be more diverse.

At the time of conducting research, the school was in its first year of operation. Although the Ontario Ministry of Education accredited the school, the curriculum and materials used were continually being altered. In this way, I had limited access to resources and materials and a more in-depth analysis of the curriculum was not possible. Additionally, the school administrator expressed her apprehension with directly sharing curriculum material for privacy reasons related to proprietary rights. Other individuals were involved in the process of curriculum development and did not want to disclose detailed information. Furthermore, the principal claimed because the school had limited funds and is a business, there was a continued fear of other private schools replicating their material. While it was fortuitous to gain access to a private school setting, information and data for the most part meted out by the schools principal and with the selective sharing of information; I was unable to speak to the education provided to the children at the school. Additionally, by relying on Anna's perspectives and views and the nature of conducting research in a private school, there was a sense of intimidation and understandable hope of promoting the school.

Furthermore, my study involved one newly established private school in the GTA; caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings to all private schools in Ontario, Canada. Additionally, it is important to note that the school had more flexibility with the curriculum compared to the public school system, the school structure, the constant changing of school staff, and the incoming and outgoing of students which should be taken into consideration. For example, how and/or if the constant changes have an affect on student learning and experience? Additionally, while conducting classroom observations, I did not observe nor was I informed of any accountability in an era reputed to be overly accountable through Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) provincial testing. In this way, it appeared that this was exempted

from the school. Although, research on private schooling in Ontario is limited, my research findings need to be added to other studies using multi-dimensional approaches that consider different ethnic categories, different age cohorts, this would then mean researching across different contexts.

7.5. Recommendations

7.5.1. Recommendations for the private school.

Evidence from this study suggests that the school has hopes and aspirations of expanding. The school's principal conveyed their openness of being welcoming to students from other communities to enroll in the private school. With this in mind, the school needs to consider the possibility of viewing curriculum from the perspective of students from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This would entail the school's continuity of viewing parents as curriculum makers, openness to parental forms of knowledge, and ongoing communication throughout the school year.

Another recommendation for the school is a reconsideration of how they market the courses offered to students in upcoming years. The school administrator mentioned the possibility of offering the course, "The History of the Russian Empire," after school to "children of a Russian and Ukrainian background." If the school has the intention of expanding, they should consider the changing student demographics and the possibility of having a diverse classroom and/or school, with the possibility of opening this course to *all* students who may be interested. This would give students the opportunity to experience the superdiverse context they are living in. Additionally, this type of class would perpetuate the school's philosophy of networking and collaborating with their peers through their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Furthermore, as the school focused on one language of dominance (e.g. Russian) from the other

countries of origin (e.g. former USSR) and excluding others, this parallels with the official language policies of legitimizing English and French and excluding others. As Anna stated that former USSR was multiethnic and multilingual, yet, the school consciously excluded other groups and languages, aside from English, to make it Russian only. In this way, the school needs to consider the possibility of incorporating and acknowledging students' linguistic lives aside from Russian, although might continue to be common language amongst students who attend the school.

7.5.2 Recommendations for policy makers and public school educators.

Evidence from the present study suggests that the Ministry of Education needs to place greater emphasis reporting on elementary private schooling in Ontario, Canada, considering an increase of private schooling establishments across the province. Although the Ontario Ministry of Education does report on the statistics of the number of accredited private schools, greater focus has been given to private schools that offer credited high school courses and/or public schooling. With statistics demonstrating a growing number of private schools establishing across the province, educational policy makers need to consider the monitoring and reporting of private elementary schools and the establishment of better criteria. This would also include reporting on of current changes that are occurring with schooling in Ontario and why parents and students are opting to move from the public educational system into the private sector. In the case of this study, as expressed by the school's administrator, if parents are looking for a schooling experience for their children that incorporates a linguistic and cultural community aspect, why have they neglected this and demonstrated their inability address parents' concerns?

Research on public schools in Canada continues to reflect a disconnection between policy and classroom practice that is not reflective of the changing linguistic and cultural demographics of our nation. Lotherington (2017) states,

> Canada like many other countries, is socially and culturally parsed in constitutional documents that no longer adequately speak to the demography of Toronto—and other cities in the country, large and small. (p. 187)

The present study on private schooling in Ontario, offers an alternative lens on how school administrators and classroom teachers can bring together the languages, cultures, and knowledge that their students already have before they enter into the classroom. This would also include parental knowledge, as they are proponents of their children's schooling. Additionally, this study confirms that formal policies that continue to govern the school system should not be a factor that hinders pedagogical opportunities. In fact, the results from this study demonstrate how school administrators and educators need to be flexible and adjust their pedagogical perspectives and implementation while working within the constraints of national and school policies, in order to acknowledge the student demographics and to foster their learning. As some studies have focused on issues with teacher training programs being outdated and not reflecting the realities of today's schools, this should not be a justification for disregarding and excluding students' diversity within the classroom. In fact, in the first year of operation and working within constraints of limited resources and as Anna claimed funds, the private school investigated drew on the support of the community through teacher volunteers who did not have formal teacher training in Ontario, in order to be responsive to their students' unique experiences and backgrounds. Furthermore, there is a need ESL teachers who are bi- or multilingual and who is proactive in connecting with students' language resources

Canadian educators appear to have recognized the linguistic and cultural diversity of

student populations and numerous studies have shown positive outcomes of incorporating students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds into the classroom. The question remains, however, as to why multilingual education has yet to be effectively implemented in schools across Ontario, Canada and supported through the development of board and provincial ministry policies. Understandably, this requires commitment of both time and resources and as my study indicates, should include the constructive us of intellectual and cultural resources of families and communities to foster and frame schools' instructional agendas within the approved curriculum.

7.6. Directions for Future Research

The study has important implications for further study. As parents have an important role in their child's schooling, the possibility of conducting a longitudinal study in a broader context within another established private school setting, would allow for a understanding of parents choices, views, and understanding of the public schooling system verses private schooling. Additionally, research on student's personal thoughts about their classroom and schooling experiences while attending the private school and their perceptions on public schooling, if they attended public schooling before their parents enrolled them into private school would add more information on an under researched area of schooling. Furthermore, a study on private schooling in another province would offer a different perspective to how private schools are established, monitored, and reported on my the Ministry of Education in that context and the types of student demographics who attend these schools.

At the time of conducting research, the private school was in its first year of operation, I am interested to investigate how the school has developed, how and/or if the student and staff demographics have changed, and the types of curricular and pedagogical changes that have taken place. For example, how does the afterschool program, "The Russian Empire" that parents

requested, be taught in upcoming years and how might such afterschool programs adapt according to changing student demographics? Does the fundamental identify of the school change, if as Anna suggests, the school successfully recruits students outside of the Russian-speaking community?

As private schools are increasingly emerging throughout the province, it would be noteworthy to conduct research of the Ontario Ministry of Education's accreditation process of these schools, including high schools, who are the individuals who accredit the schools, and the monitoring and reporting of these schools. Additionally, with each private school catering to the needs of different student populations and parental requests and interests, a comparative study of other private schools across Ontario would offer a broader understanding of Ontario private schools considering this is an under researched context in Ontario and possibly a different lens to my initial research questions.

7.7. Concluding Remarks

The research presented supports existing literature that there is a continued need of changes to policy and practice in Ontario schools, to reflect the changing student demographics. Regardless of a Multilingual Educational Policy (MLE), that has yet to be established, there are larger forces that will continue to govern and legitimize what can be taught in the classroom. Although the study found that private schools have more flexibility with the integration of policies and pedagogies, whereby students could be afforded the opportunity to use their linguistic and cultural backgrounds within the classroom, the next crucial step would be the systematic development of language policy to extend these innovative practices into schools, both private and public, across the province.

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Appendix A- Interview Questions for School Administrator

NOTE: The questions below will be used to guide the interview and prompts will be used to further the discussion.

Background information

1.) What is your educational background (degrees to date)

2.) Where did you complete your education?

3.) How many years have you been teaching in Ontario?

4.) Have you taught in any other province/country?

5.) What language(s) can you speak?

Background Information About the School

6.) How was the private school established?

Student Diversity

7.) What is your outlook on the cultural and linguistic diversity that is reflected in the student population of the school?

(Prompts)

a.) What are some of the languages that you know your students speak at home or possibly at school? How do you know this information?

b.) Do you encourage these languages to be used in the classroom or other places on school property? If so, how and when?

c.) How is the student's cultural and linguistic diversity incorporated into the classroom and/or into the school?

8.) What types of linguistic assistance(s) does the school provide to support students' linguistic diversity?

(Prompt)

a.) What types of support would you like to have within the school?

Parent and Community Involvement

9.) What types of involvement in the school do the parents of the students who attend the school have?

10.) What type of involvement does the community have with the school?

Closing

11.) Is there anything that you would like to add to the interview that you felt was left out or that you would like to comment on?

Appendix B-Interview Questions for Teacher(s)

NOTE: The questions below will be used to guide the interview and prompts will be used to further the discussion.

Background information

1.) What is your educational background (degrees to date)

2.) Where did you complete your education?

3.) How many years have you been teaching in Ontario?

4.) Have you taught in any other province/country?

5.) Have you taken any additional qualification courses since working at the school or thought of taking anything that might help you with teaching at this particular school?

6.) What language(s) can you speak? Can you also write in this language? Has knowing this language helped in your classroom in anyway?

Background Information About the School

7.) When did you start working at the school?

8.) How did you find out about the school?

Background Information About Your Classroom

9.) What courses do you teach? Were there other courses offered to you?

10.) How was the curriculum established for the courses you teach? Ontario ministry of educational curriculum?

Parent Involvement

11.) When starting off at the school, what was your understanding of why the parents chose to send their children to this particular private school?

12.) What has been your involvement with parents of the students you teach?

13.) What types of involvement in the school do the parents of the students who attend the school have?

14.) What type of involvement does the community have with the school?

Student Diversity

15.) What is your outlook on the cultural and linguistic diversity that is reflected in the student population of the school?

d.) What are some of the languages that you know your students speak at home or possibly at school? How do you know this information?

e.) Do you encourage these languages to be used in the classroom or other places on school property? If so, how and when?

f.) How is the student's cultural and linguistic diversity incorporated into your classroom and/or into the school?

16.) What language polices are you familiar with?

17.) What are your views on the current language ministry documents?

a.) What do you do within your own pedagogies to meet the goals of the language curriculum?

b.) What do you do differently?

c.) Are there any modifications that the ministry should make to the current language curriculum? If so, what?

18.) What types of linguistic assistance(s) does the school provide to support students' linguistic diversity?

b.) What types of support would you like to have within the school and/or your own classroom?

Closing

19.) Is there anything that you would like to add to the interview that you felt was left out or that you would like to comment on?

Appendix C-Observational Checklist

Date: _____ Time:_____ District: _____
School: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____
Observer: _____
Topic/Subject:_____
Length of Lesson: _____minutes New Lesson ___ Continued Lesson____

Description of Activity	
Instructional Methods (e.g. Whole group instruction, Small group instruction, pupil group work, individual, etc.)	
Lesson Objectives	
Instructional Material(s) -Non-textual visuals, such as pictures, photos, poster -Hands-on materials/manipulatives -Use of technology	
Classroom Liaison(s) Available/Present-/E.L.L. E.S.L/support Types of support being given	
Miscellaneous	

Student Observations Behaviour**,** Engagement (Responses to questions, asks questions), Understanding (e.g. learners manipulate all material(s) if used, what are they doing with it), Connections to background knowledge/experiences
Before Lesson:
During Lesson:
After Lesson

Teacher Observations Techniques used to engage participation of students**,** Lesson/activity involve learners**,** Students' personal experiences/prior knowledge and ideas addressed**,** Opportunities to process, interact, reflect, and/or respond, Strategies used to adapt instruction for students with limited English proficiency (If applicable), Languages being used (B/D/A lesson)
Before Lesson:
During Lesson:
After Lesson

Appendix D: Letter of Information and Invitation for Elementary School Principal/Administrator

Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario

Sonya Sachar
4th Year PhD Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, York University
Toronto, Ontario

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND INVITATION

Dear Principal:

My name is Sonya Sachar and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto. I am currently doing research in the area of multilingual education and student diversity in the context of Ontario elementary schools. The goal of my research is to observe and document best practices for linguistically diverse students and how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in teaching. I am inviting your school to participate in my study, *Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario*.

Purpose of Study:
The purpose of my research is to observe and document best practices for linguistically diverse students and how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are reflected in teaching.

What Participants Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:
If you agree to participate in this study, yourself and one to two teacher(s) from Grade 4 and/or Grade 5 from your school will be asked to answer interview questions relating to your administrative and/or teaching experiences and questions that focus on student diversity. There will be one to two interviews, which will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete and they will be administered within the school or a location and time at the participants' convenience. During the interviews I will take anecdotal notes and audio recordings will be administered.

Classroom observations will be completed all day for one day a week for a period of approximately one month from March to April during regular classroom instruction for those teacher(s) who have been interviewed. For these observations, I will be focusing on how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in teaching. As children under the age of 18 will be present within the classroom(s) where I will be observing, I will also ask for formal parental consent before commencing any research within the classroom. Data will only be collected and analyzed on those students for whom parental/guardian consent has been obtained and consent forms have been signed and dated. I will request that students who have been given consent to wear name tags/a form of identification (I will create the name

tags/form of identification) that will allow me to identify them apart from those students who do not have consent and to only include these students in my observations.

Interviews and observations will not infringe on instructional time and/or cause disruption to the normal operation of the school. I will take full responsibility for all aspects of the research.

Risks and Discomforts:
There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to Participants:
In light of the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math goals, my study focuses on increasing student achievement by enforcing equity and inclusive school environments in which all students can be provided with opportunities to succeed. This study will also inform effective language programming and instructional strategies that include differentiated instruction while reflecting on the needs, interests, and experiences of all students.

A written report will be submitted to the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math. If requested, I will provide feedback to parents and students about the results of the study. I would be pleased to provide professional development or informational sessions for teachers and administrators summarizing the study findings and possible recommendations for instructional practice.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in the study is completely voluntary. All participants may choose to stop participating at any time. A participant's decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship that they may have with the researcher or the nature of their relationship with York University either now or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study:
Participants can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason if one so decides. A participant's decision to stop participating or refusal to answer any of the interview questions will not affect their relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event that a participant chooses to withdraw from the study, all data generated as a consequence of their participation will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Teachers may refuse to answer questions in the interview or withdraw from the study at any time and their withdrawal will not affect their relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. Parents may refuse their child from participating in this study at any time with no affect on their child's academic status.

Confidentiality:
All information supplied during the study will be held in confidence. The school's name and the names of all participants who choose to participate in this study will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Data will only be collected and analyzed on those participants who have provided signed and dated consent forms and for students for whom parental/guardian consent has been obtained and consent forms have been signed and dated. The data that will be collected by an audiotape recording and any notes from the interview will be safely stored in a

locked filing cabinet and only I will have access to this information. The data from the interviews will be stored for up to five years. During this retention period, the data collected from the interviews might be used for the purposes of publishing academic journals, chapters of books, or conference presentations. After this retention period or even if during the five year retention period, the data collected from this study that does not correspond to my research, the audiotape recordings/electronic files, other data collected from the interviews or from the observations, will be confidentially deleted, disposed of and/or shredded by myself. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law and in accordance to accepted research ethics.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about the school or the participants' role in the study, please feel free to contact me by email (xxxxx@yorku.ca). You may also contact my supervisor, xxxxx either by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, extension xxxxx or by email (xxxxx@ yorku.ca).

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math, the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Graduate Program that I am affiliated with, Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, at the following phone number (416) 736-5018 or in person, 282 Winters College, 4700 Keele St. Toronto ON M3J 1P3. You may also contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or by e-mail ore@yorku.ca

I sincerely appreciate your cooperation and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,

Sonya Sachar
4th Year Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education
York University
Toronto, Ontario

Appendix E: Letter of Information and Informed Consent for School Administrator and Teacher(s)

Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario

Sonya Sachar
4th Year PhD Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, York University
Toronto, Ontario

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT
(For School Administrator and Teacher(s))

Dear School Administrator(s)/Teacher(s):

My name is Sonya Sachar and I am graduate student in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto. I am currently doing research in the area of multilingual education and student diversity in the context of Ontario elementary schools. The goal of my research is to observe and document best practices for linguistically diverse students and how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in teaching. I am inviting you to participate in this study.

Purpose of Study:
The purpose of my research is to observe and document best practices for linguistically diverse students and how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are reflected in teaching.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in one to two 30 to 45 minute interviews relating to your administrative and/or teaching experiences and questions that focus on student diversity. During the interviews audio recordings will be administered. In addition to the interviews, classroom observations will be completed all day for one day a week for a period of approximately one month from March to April during regular classroom instruction. For these observations I will be focusing on your lessons, interactions, and discussions with your students. I may also request yearly, term, and/or weekly lesson plans, including student handouts/activity sheets and newsletters that may have been created for the classroom/school to gain an understanding of how and/or if any connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds might be reflected in teaching through this material. These documents will allow for additional and more thorough data to be collected and documented. Interviews and observations will not infringe on your instructional time and/or cause disruption to the normal operation of the school. I will take full responsibility for all aspects of the research.

Risks and Discomforts:
There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:
In light of the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math goals, my study focuses on increasing student achievement by enforcing equity and inclusive school environments in which all students can be provided with opportunities to succeed. This study will also inform effective language programming and instructional strategies that include differentiated instruction while reflecting on the needs, interests, and experiences of all students.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to continue participating will not influence your relationship or the nature of your relationship with the researcher, your school, any other group associated with this project, and/or with staff of York University either now or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study:
You can stop participating in the study at any time for any reason if you so decide. Your withdrawal will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event that you withdraw from the study, all data generated as a consequence of your participation will be immediately destroyed.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law and in accordance to accepted research ethics. The information collected will be used for research purposes only and neither your name nor information, which could identify you, will be used in any publication or presentation of the study. All information collected will remain in my possession and will not be shared with any member of your school. All information will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet in my home. I will destroy these data after five years by confidentially deleting audiotape recordings/electronic files and shredding and disposing all documents by myself.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me by email (xxxxx.yorku.ca). You may also contact my supervisor, xxxxx either by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, extension xxxxx or by email (xxxxx.yorku.ca). This research has been reviewed and approved by the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math school's principal, and the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Graduate Program that I am affiliated with, Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, at the following phone number (416) 736-5018 or in person, 282 Winters College, 4700 Keele St. Toronto ON M3J 1P3. You may also contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Please indicate on the attached form whether you permit to take part in this study. Please email me (xxxxx@yorku.ca) a copy of the completed form by **Monday March 14, 2016.** I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you,

Sonya Sachar
4th Year Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education
York University
Toronto, Ontario

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in *Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario,* conducted by Sonya Sachar. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature:_____ **Date:**_____
(Participant)

Signature: **Date:** March 9th, 2016
(Principal Investigator)

Additional Consent:

☐ I consent to being audio recorded by the researcher.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please email me (xxxxx@yorku.ca) a copy of the completed form by Monday March 14, 2016.

Appendix F: Letter of Information and Consent for Students Under 18 Years of Age

Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario

Sonya Sachar
4th Year PhD Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, York University
Toronto, Ontario

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT
(For School Students)

Dear Students:

My name is Sonya Sachar and I am graduate student in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto and I am doing research in the area of language learning and student diversity in Ontario elementary schools. I hope that this project will lead to a better understanding of how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in the classroom. I would like to include you in this study.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:
If you agree to participate in this study, your involvement will include my observations of your classroom, which will be completed all day for one day a week for a period of approximately one month from March to April. During this time I will be observing and taking notes on how students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in the classroom.

Risks and Discomforts:
There are no known risks to participating in this research.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Only those students who have been given parental permission and who have submitted signed and dated consent forms will be involved in the classroom observations. You may stop participating at anytime and your decision to stop participation will not affect your relationship you may have with the researcher, York University either, or any other group associated with this project now or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study:
You can stop participating in the study at any time and your withdrawal will not affect your relationship with the researcher, York University, or any other group associated with this project. If you decide to remove yourself from the study, all information from your participation will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status (e.g. your grade) with your school or school board.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law and in accordance to accepted research ethics. The information collected will be used for research purposes only and neither your name nor information, which could identify you, will be used in any publication or presentation of the study. Only those students who have been given parental permission and who have submitted signed and dated consent forms will be involved in the study. All information collected will remain in my possession and will not be shared with any member of your school, including your classmates, teacher(s), and/or principal. All information will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet in my home. I will destroy these data after five years by confidentially deleting electronic files and shredding and disposing all documents by myself.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research and your role in the study, please feel free to contact me by email (xxxxx.yorku.ca). You may also contact my supervisor, xxxxx either by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, extension xxxxx or by email (xxxxx.yorku.ca).

This research has been reviewed and approved by your school principal, the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Graduate Program that I am affiliated with, Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, at the following phone number (416) 736-5018 or in person, 282 Winters College, 4700 Keele St. Toronto ON M3J 1P3. You may also contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Please complete the attached from and return it to your teacher by **Monday March 14, 2016.**

I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you,

Sonya Sachar
4th Year Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education
York University, Toronto, Ontario

Legal Rights and Signatures:

☐ I (print name)_____ consent to participate in *Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario,* conducted by Sonya Sachar. I have understood the nature of this study and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature:_____ **Date:**_____

☐ I do NOT wish to participate in the York University study conducted by Sonya Sachar.

Signature:_____ **Date:**_____

Signature: **Date:** March 9th, 2016
(Principal Investigator: Sonya Sachar)

Please return to your class teacher by Monday March 14, 2016.

Appendix G: Letter of Information and Consent for Parents of Students Under 18 Years of Age

Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario

Sonya Sachar
4th Year PhD Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, York University
Toronto, Ontario

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT
(For parents of students under 18 years of age)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

My name is Sonya Sachar and I am graduate student in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto. I am doing research in the area of language learning and student diversity in Ontario elementary schools. I hope that this project will lead to a better understanding of how connections to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are being reflected in the classroom. I would like to include your child in this study.

What Your Child Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:
If you agree to allow your child to participate in this study, their involvement will include my observations of their classroom, which will be completed all day for one day a week for a period of approximately one month from March to April. During this time, I will be observing and taking notes on how students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are reflected in the classroom. Your child's participation in this study and their interaction with me will be minimal to non-existent and it will not affect or disrupt their learning.

Risks and Discomforts:
There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to Your Child:
In light of the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math goals, my study focuses on increasing student achievement by enforcing equity and inclusive school environments in which all students can be provided with opportunities to succeed. This study will also inform effective language programming and instructional strategies that include differentiated instruction while reflecting on the needs, interests, and experiences of all students.

Voluntary Participation:
Only those children, who have obtained parental/guardian consent and who submitted signed and dated consent forms, will be involved in the study. Your child may stop participating at any time and their decision to stop participation will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you/they may have with the researcher, with York University, and their school either now or in

the future. The information that is obtained during this research project will be kept strictly confidential and will not become a part of your child's school record.

Withdrawal from the Study:
In the event that they withdraw from the study, all data generated during their participation will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Your son/daughter may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on their academic status with the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law and in accordance to accepted research ethics. The information collected will only be used for research purposes and neither your child's name nor information which could identify them, will be used in any publication or presentation of the study. Only those children, who have received parental/guardian consent and provided signed and dated consent forms, will be involved in the study. All information collected will remain in my possession and will not be shared with any member of your child's school. All information will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet in my home. I will destroy these data after five years by confidentially deleting electronic files and shredding and disposing all documents.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your child's role in the study, please feel free to contact me by email (xxxxx@yorku.ca). You may also contact my supervisor, xxxxx either by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, extension xxxxx or by email (xxxxx@yorku.ca).

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Engaging Minds Academy of Science, Engineering, and Math principal. It has also been approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Graduate Program that I am affiliated with, Graduate Program-Faculty of Education, at the following phone number (416) 736-5018 or in person, 282 Winters College, 4700 Keele St. Toronto ON M3J 1P3. You may also contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Please indicate on the attached form whether you permit your son/daughter to take part in this study and have them return the form to their teacher by **Monday March 14, 2016**. I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you,
Sonya Sachar
4th Year Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate Program-Faculty of Education
York University
Toronto, Ontario

Legal Rights and Signatures:

☐ I (print name)_____ give permission for (print name of child)_____, who is my (state your relation to the child)_____ to participate in *Legitimizing Languages in the Classroom: An Investigation into Elementary School Education in Ontario*, conducted by Sonya Sachar. I have understood the nature of this study and wish for my child to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature:_____ **Date:**_____
(Parent/Guardian)

☐ I do NOT give permission for my child to participate in the York University study conducted by Sonya Sachar.

Signature:_____ **Date:** _____
(Parent/Guardian)

Signature: **Date:** March 9th, 2016
(Principal Investigator: Sonya Sachar)

Please return to your child's class teacher by Monday March 14, 2016.