ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

INSPIRING BILINGUALISM: CHINESE-CANADIAN MOTHERS' STORIES

BY

GINA KO, B.Ed.

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF COUNSELLING

FACULTY OF HEALTH DISCIPLINES
GRADUATE CENTRE FOR APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
APRIL, 2014

Approval Page

Approval of Thesis

The undersigned certify that they have read the thesis entitled

"Inspiring Bilingualism: Chinese-Canadian Mothers' Stories"

Submitted by

Gina Ko

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Counselling

The thesis examination committee certifies that the thesis
and the oral examination is approved

Supervisor:

Dr. Gina Wong
Athabasca University

Committee members:

Dr. Beth Perry
Athabasca University

Dr. Sherri Melrose
Athabasca University

April 28, 2014

Dedication

This thesis work is dedicated to my children, Mya and Koen, and my partner, Tom, who inspire me, every day, to be the best mother I strive to be.

Acknowledgements

There are an extensive number of individuals to acknowledge and thank from the bottom of my heart. Tears of gratitude are streaming down my face as I type this. Thank you, Dr. Gina Wong, for your kindness, patience, and dedication to this thesis work. You have been a shining light when I needed to see more than a few feet ahead of me. The infinite amount of time you spent reading, rereading, editing, and composing is momentously appreciated. I will forever take this learning with me into other academic work; I learned an unsurmountable amount from you. Thank you for believing in me. Thank you, Dr. Beth Perry and Dr. Sherri Melrose, for your devotion and feedback. It means a lot to have your varied expertise and helpful input. Thank you Dr. Simon Nuttgens, without you, I may not have thought about travelling this thesis route. Thank you, Dr. Paul Jerry, for our conversations about counselling psychology. Thank you Dr. Kathy Offet-Gartner for your words of reassurance, as a result, I am more confident and have developed as a writer.

In my personal life, I have had an inordinate support and encouragement. Thank you to Tom, my partner in life, who has supported the passing of my native language to our children with open arms. Thank you to my amazing children, Mya and Koen, for your silliness and contagious laughter, and your beautiful words spoken in Chinese. Thank you to my sister, Wendy, who I talk to everyday and who knows me inside out; you are my best friend and love me unconditionally. Thank you to my mom for taking care of my children when I need hours of time to be alone and write. Thank you to my brother, Benson, who makes me laugh and inquires about my progress regularly. Thank you to all my aunties and uncles; you have been pillars of hope in my life. Thank you to my mother-in-law for your heartening words in terms of passing on my Cantonese language to your grandchildren. Thank you to my nieces, nephews, and

cousins who have offered such young and wise words of comfort. Thank you to my co-researchers, Candace and Pauline, for spending hours of time with me in meaningful co-constructed conversations; this project would not tell such profound and fascinating stories without your involvement and participation.

Thank you to Kas, Karen, My Linh, Tina, Linda, and Connie for your heart-felt listening and your interest in the topic of bilingualism and mothering. Thank you to Garry and Hong for being my technical support. Thank you to my peers, Nina, Veronica, and Patricia, for your constant reminder for me to trudge ahead, even when I wanted to take longer breaks from this incredible climb. Thank you to Eastside Family Centre, its multidisciplinary team, and my clients who I have learned from. You have given me more insight about what it is like to be a new immigrant and refugee while living in Canada. Thank you to the most amazing ladies at the Starbucks where I sit, every day, engrossed in this project, you bring smiles and laughter always.

Abstract

The experience of Chinese mothers who pass on their native language to their children with partners who do not speak the native language, has not been explored in the literature. Consequently, the research puzzle, using a narrative inquiry approach is, "*What are the lived experiences of bilingualism from the perspective of Chinese-Canadian mothers who have passed on their native language to their children?*" Five common threads emerged as (1) mother's pride in bilingualism, (2) bilingualism matters despite the absence of emotional connection with our mothers, (3) mothering with intention, (4) linguistic hopes and dreams for our bilingual children, and (5) determination to raise our children as bilingual beings. There were also two differing threads: (1) the bilingual education of our children, and (2) angst in passing on the language. The discussion, conclusion, limitations, and future directions complete this research expedition.

Keywords: bilingualism, mothering, cognitive, cultural, narrative inquiry

Table of Contents

Chapter I: MY STORY

"Language is more than a mode of communication; it is a cultural identity" (Gina's transcript, L 135-136)

Early Years: A Frightened Chinese Girl

"Di ngor fan che (take me home)"

My base camp is in South Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City. I have no recollection of the day we escaped. Although I was born in Vietnam, I am of Chinese descent. Many years ago, both my grandfathers journeyed from China to Vietnam due to the war. After North Vietnam occupied the South in 1975, my parents and my paternal aunt decided to leave the country to find a better life. On my second birthday in 1979, we embarked on a refugee boat and days later we arrived in the country of Malaysia. Even though I have no memories of that period, my aunt shared some stories with me, and I also heard my mom talk about the experience with other people. It was an immensely serrated time of our lives, there was not enough food, the water was murky, and we all lived in tents that were too feeble to withstand wind and rain.

Six months later, we arrived in Canada after some compassionate and kind sponsors came to our aid. In terms of language, my first language is Cantonese. I explored my world solely using Cantonese up until I was five years old. Hence, I had no knowledge of the English language when I entered kindergarten. I remember feeling petrified, betrayed by my mother who left me behind on what felt like another planet - and absolutely alone. I was baffled that my teacher was Chinese and could speak Chinese, but she would not speak it with me.

> Where am I? Why are there so many children here and I don't know any of them? What are they talking about? I want to go home, mommy '*mo jow*' [please don't leave]. '*Di ngor fan che*' [take me home]. '*Been gor hi Ms. Phong*?' [Who is Ms. Phong?]. '*Deem gi herg mmm tong ngor gong Jong Mun*?' [Why won't she speak Chinese?]. I need to

> use the washroom, yes I can say washroom, one of four English words I know, besides my name, yes, and no. Is it home time yet?

The year progressed slowly and I wished to be home in the comfort of speaking Cantonese, watching Chinese movies, and joking around in my own language. I remember not having friends and would be sitting on the carpet attempting to decipher what the teacher and students around me were conversing about. Then, progressively, my ears began to absorb the English language. I would be a bit more interested during story time and school became a fact of life, with suffering being minimal as I adjusted to the routine. Thereafter, arrived another grade and I was once again moved to another unfamiliar environment. The fear returned.

> I'm in English as a second language [ESL] class in grade 1. I go to another school in order to take ESL. I just am comfortable and all of a sudden I have to go to another school. Again '*ngor ho gang tong dam sum*' [I'm scared and worried]. I prefer to talk Chinese with my aunts and uncles and mom, My Chinese is very very good, so much better than my English.

Being exposed to English every day at school, I progressively was able to speak the language. By grade three, my spoken English became rather fluent, but my written English was still not up to par. I remember a teacher telling me in grade three that my printing and cursive writing were pretty much appalling. Thereafter, she retained me during recess to help me practice, and since that grade, my printing and writing improved so much. I remember one day, I looked down and felt proud of my printed words. Ever more, I wanted to bring English to my home, because I spoke it at school and I spoke it with my siblings. However, members of my family were worried that I would lose the Chinese language.

> My family, they wanted me to keep the language so they would say, 'try your best to speak Chinese, we don't want you to lose your Chinese, try to speak it with your siblings.' Even though I spoke more English, I continually spoke Chinese with my aunts, uncles, and grandparents because I really respected their message, what they were trying to say. They wanted to tell me even though I was raised in Canada, I am still Chinese and I need to speak Chinese and it was more respectful to speak Chinese with them. I think their intention was for us to keep the language which has been a success because my brother and my sister can speak fluent Cantonese as well.

I remember feeling torn between trying to integrate and assimilate into the dominant culture, along with feeling I would lose my Chinese identity if I trekked too closely to the other side. At times I felt I had to choose and would sway my small body back and forth to feel out which side of me felt more comfortable.

Attaining a Bicultural Identity

"I know it wasn't a single moment, it was more of many moments that I realized that knowing two languages was beneficial."

I was raised by my grandmother, aunts and uncles as my parents left to travel for a period of time and my father decided to stay in Asia. This was a dejected and gloomy time in my life because, as a child, I really needed parents. I cried every day, although my paternal aunt loves me, she along with her sisters and my grandmother, did not know how to raise children in a positive environment. I remember wanting to grow up and escape the torture of life where I was not able to make my own decisions.

> I feel sad today because my parents left for Asia without us. We close the door, my sister brother and I, and tears keep running down our faces. How long will they be gone for? Why did they leave? Did we do something wrong? There is yelling on the other side, my aunt and grandmother knock loudly to tell us to get out and stop crying. I want to leave this place, get away from all this pain.

Nonetheless, there were moments that stood out that took me out of the stupor of feeling sorry for myself and helped me trudge on. At a very young age I was always asked by my aunts and uncles to be an interpreter or translator. I was six or seven years old and we lived in Chinatown. They would want me to lead the way to the shopping centre and also asked me to interpret if they wanted to ask for the price of something or return merchandise. They would say "*ah Phong, ah Phong bong ngor day*," (Gina help us, we don't know how). Consequently, I

thought it was significant and valuable to be bilingual, I was proud that I could help my aunts and uncles who did not speak a word of English when they arrived.

> I think their [my aunts and uncles] intentions were for me to feel that way, to feel it [being able to speak Cantonese] is useful and helpful, something I can be proud of. I don't think they ever said that explicitly, but when I told them about my topic, what I am researching about, they were so delighted that I have chosen to use this for my thesis. So at a young age, I know it wasn't a single moment, it was many moments that I realized that knowing two languages was beneficial.

On the other side, I have a distinct memory of not blending in concerning Chinese food. I remember my mother or aunt packed me a lunch with fried rice and spring rolls, many of the people around me plugged their noses and said "stinky." Afterwards, I told them never to pack me food like that again and made myself endure eating sandwiches, although I loathed the cold and dry texture in my mouth. The irony was that, although I had challenges learning the English language, I was desperate to assimilate and conform. However, at home I continued to prefer Chinese food.

> It is lunchtime, I am starving. Yes rice and spring rolls, smells so good. 'Oh what is that smell? Gina is eating stinky food; we don't want to go near her, get away from us.' Oh my goodness, what is going on? Why are people calling me stinky? Oh no, this is not good, I am scared again. I want to run and hide. I cover my food and feel hungry. Please stop staring everyone. I never ever want to bring Chinese food to school again!

Other instances of feeling embarrassed have to do with speaking Chinese in public, especially when we were not in Chinatown. I did not appreciate the heads and eyes turned our way and felt that people were appraising my family, our way of life, and our language. On the contrary, I was particularly confident and exultant about speaking Chinese at home.

> I do remember lowering my voice when we were in public because I didn't like to be watched or judged. People may have thought I was not being polite or talking about them. I don't know the exact reasoning, but I did think if we were in public maybe we should not go all out and speak loudly. But at home I was able to not be conscious of that. I am not sure if that is shame or noticing that everyone speaks English.

In terms of racial and prejudiced experiences, I have had very few of these memories, largely due to not understanding English at the beginning of my school years. However, there was one time that several older boys made comments about my appearance. I was scared and walked swiftly past.

> I walked by a group of boys and they called me a chink. At that time I didn't know what a chink was, but these boys were older, they were laughing, they were pointing at me, and they called me a chink. I knew that was not a good word. When I became older and looked back, I realized they were being discriminatory, not because I was speaking the language, but because of my Chinese appearance.

As the years passed, I began to feel more confident about my Chinese identity and language. It was in grade four that I realized the significance of having this special language that was not English. I made friends who were just like me, they ate Chinese food, watched Chinese movies, spoke Cantonese, and we understood each other. I finally felt like there was a place in this outer world for me and my Chinese ways.

> I was one of four girls when I attended Langevin [school] where there was a huge Asian population and we were tight because a lot of us lived in Chinatown, so I actually didn't feel self-conscious when we would speak Chinese with each other. On the contrary, it was so neat to have this secret language.

In high school I remember looking around one day and realizing I was surrounded by Asian individuals. I felt a mutual understanding with my Asian friends. It was easier because no one had to explain cultural norms. However, now that I am in graduate school I have peers from all walks of life. For that I am appreciative as through this academic connection I am learning about diverse cultures and ways of being.

> When I was growing up, it was strange, at first I had friends who were Black, White, or Aboriginal but as I became older, a lot of my friends are Chinese or Vietnamese or Asian. A lot of my friends now are Chinese and we are very comfortable speaking Chinglish, Chinese and English, more English for sure because we all grew up here but we would slip in a Chinese word here and there and we are very happy that we have found each other.

As time went on, I began to embrace my bicultural identity. For instance, when I was young, I only watched Chinese shows and movies because they were the only programs my aunts watched. Then, when my mom came home, when I was a teenager, we moved out of Chinatown into government housing and I began to explore the Western culture a bit more. In retrospect, at this time, I became more confident of my Chinese identity, while also accepting the Western way of life.

Reaching for the Unknown – Motherhood

"I want to pass on everything I know to my children, so they will also be proud of their Chinese identity"

In the year 2000 I became a teacher. Five years later I united with my partner Tom. Shortly after, when I was in my late 20s and early 30s, we were blessed with two beautiful children, Mya and Koen. I knew that I would pass on the Chinese language and I talked about this with Tom. I told him that once we start a family, I want to impart this knowledge to our children. He agreed and I was elated.

> When I found out I was pregnant with Mya, I would rub my belly and talk to her in Chinese. I would read her a story in English and then translate it into Chinese. I actually think yes it was a conscious decision, I was going to pass on the language and I talked to Tom about it. He was very supportive and it was great. For example, I watched Chinese movies, hoping she would hear them. So I would have to say yes I'm a real advocate for language learning, for children to be exposed to the native language, whatever the parents know, to pass it on as there are so many advantages.
>
> This decision has many layers; the cognitive, social, and cultural benefits are immense.

As will be evident in my literature review, the advantages of being bilingual outweigh the disadvantages. The decision has brought me to pursue a thesis about this topic. My aunts and uncles are very proud of me. One of the main reasons for this strong desire for my children to

speak Cantonese is so that they are able to, and will continue to speak the language with my aunts and uncles. The times I have witnessed this happen, my aunts and uncles smile, laugh, and praise their language skills. In turn, I also feel pride in being able to strengthen my children's relationship with those who have raised me and passed on this cultural identity which I have received with open arms.

Another layer is that my children are flourishing in their language skills. Some days it is trying to ask them to speak Cantonese back to me, but on occasions when they do reply in Cantonese without prompting, all the effort and toil make the arduous climb worthwhile. Mya and Koen are currently attending Chinese school on Saturdays, and I have thought of some fun ways to help them be more engaged with the language and culture.

> The first few years when my daughter was learning Chinese it was very hard. I was demanding of her. She was only three years old. She was in kindergarten in Chinese school and I realized that what I was doing was not effective. She was a very good student. She would sit for a long time and write and read, but because it was maybe beyond her, she was only three years old and she may not have even held the pencil properly. So when my son entered kindergarten last year he was four. I decided I would do something different because it is not fun to have your mom sitting over you and saying this line is not straight, I was not a very good teacher for my daughter. One thing I did for my son when he was preparing for a midterm was instead of having him sit and write, I made cue cards with pictures on them and we would play memory games. My daughter and I would make it fun for him and somehow he achieved a 100 percent on the midterm. My son received an outstanding academic award for Chinese school. The teacher said he's so bright and I should continue to keep him in Chinese school. With Mya I have been sitting down with her to do her Chinese homework. Everything she wrote I wrote. I'm learning Chinese too because I've lost a lot of my written Chinese because I didn't finish Chinese school. Mya actually enjoys doing her homework; she has my attention because we do it together, so that's the philosophy. By making it fun, hopefully that helps them continue to feel like [my involvement] is helpful.

As with many mothers, I do have feelings of guilt sometimes. The guilt derives from wanting to do everything perfectly, striving to achieve work-life balance, making sure I spend enough quality time with my children. At times, this guilt manifests in the form of repeatedly telling myself to speak Cantonese with my children, every minute of the day, and prompting

them to speak it back to me. Within a several minute span, if I do not use the Chinese language with them, I may berate myself and tell myself to be more intentional.

> When I speak too much English with my children I catch myself, sometimes I feel guilty. I think I do a pretty good job of being aware that I should speak Chinese with them but ah it is not easy especially when Tom and I communicate with each other in English. But he is really supportive and I have also talked to him about teaching our children Vietnamese, even though he is Chinese, he has lost a lot of the Chiu Chow [another Chinese language], and so he can speak Vietnamese. I want to have a multilingual home.

My mother takes care of my children when I need time to focus on my studies. When Mya was born, she was effective in her continual effort to speak Chinese with her. However, when Mya was about two years old, I noticed a change. She began to speak more English with Mya. I was concerned about this because I thought my mother would be the saving grace in terms of preserving our language.

> My mom started speaking English to Mya because she was watching Treehouse [a children's television program] and going to preschool. So I said, 'mom it's great that you have the chance to practice your English but we need someone in the home to let Mya know that there is one person who will only speak Chinese with her, so that Mya will know that she can only speak Chinese with *poh poh* [grandmother].' So from that day on, she has been helpful and my mom would say *poh poh* doesn't understand, even though she does, even though my children know *poh poh* understands English, I think Mya is becoming more aware that *poh poh* prefers Chinese so she tries. My son, he is younger, his Chinese isn't as developed because my daughter speaks English with him but he is also trying.

The conscious decision goes further than just speaking Chinese with my children; for instance, when my mother or I would go to a Chinese restaurant where they give out newspapers, we would take them home. The activity this generates is immense, they get to flip through every page and circle Chinese words they know. They choose their own coloured markers and would have an amusing time filling the pages. One time Mya said, "I can't believe how many Chinese words I know mommy!" Other educational and entertaining undertakings are also worth noting.

> I found some YouTube cartoons. The other day I heard at the [Interdisciplinary Approaches to Multilingual (IAM)] conference to have my children watch Chinese, have

> people around them speak Chinese, have my partner learn Chinese so I turn on YouTube and I found a cartoon in Cantonese. They were watching, they understood and they were laughing, it was neat to see that they enjoyed it. Mya also would test me using her Chinese dictation words; she enjoys it because she sees that even her own mommy makes mistakes.

There is not a moment that goes by that I cease to think about the Cantonese language, to continue this strenuous climb to the peak of this spectacular mountain. I know I have to continue to speak it every day; otherwise my children will lose the language. It is especially significant because my partner does not speak Cantonese and he would not be able to take on my role.

> If I stop speaking Chinese with them they would, I think that would be it, even if my mom takes care of them and I don't speak Chinese to them, some of my friend's grandmothers speak Chinese to their children but they don't speak it, they don't know enough and mom and dad both speak English. I would say yes if I decided one day it's too much work, I'm done with this, they are fighting it, they don't want to speak it, I know they would lose it. I have seen it happen to so many families.

Therefore, at times, even though Tom is supportive, I do feel a sense of loneliness in my journey of dips and valleys, the solo journey. This has to do with my children not yet knowing the significance of my mission. It also has to do with feeling awkward when speaking it in front of those who have not passed on their language to their children.

> It's hard, everyday it's a challenge, I feel alone sometimes, and I feel sort of isolated. I feel alone because my husband, even though he's supportive, he doesn't speak the language and if I'm not the one on it the language would vanish. But thank goodness he is supportive, but nevertheless some days I feel ah, I'm thinking about yesterday, I felt kind of sad. Sometimes I am the only person speaking Chinese, I would slip in words and sentences when we are around people who may know the language but would not use it with them. It happens often and essentially I feel I am speaking to myself. My children may say a few words here and there but it is rare. At these times I feel really alone in my journey, I talked to my husband about it. We agree it is hard work but I will continue to push through. In completing this thesis, writing, reading all these articles, and writing about my own experience is helpful too. I know I'm never going to give up, I'm never going to say I'm done, forget it, I don't ever see that day coming especially because I'm so immersed in the literature and writing.

However, there was a shining and reassuring moment that came out of the blue, when I felt I conquered a steep terrain. The majestic view from this angle and the voices of my nieces and nephews were overwhelmingly encouraging. I had no idea about their sentiments until last year when some of them gathered around me.

> One niece and two nephews approached me, they were so sweet and they said 'Auntie Gina we think you are so cool to have this passion, the fact that you continue to speak Chinese with Koen and Mya. We can't speak any other languages, we think what you are doing is so neat, to continue to speak Chinese, we support you.' They are teenagers and they brought tears to my eyes, I felt really supported.

Overall, I have to say this continues to be an uphill, solo climb, the scuffle of telling myself encouraging words, to continue on up even when the going gets tough, is crucial. I need to continue to take steps to ascend, even when I am exhausted because I am the only one propelling this undertaking some days.

> It's like climbing a mountain. So I'm climbing and at times I feel like giving up because it is an uphill climb, it's steep very steep and when I am climbing I am alone, I mean even if I have a companion, I am still on my own path, so there are moments when I feel like I can do this, it's not too bad, it's not too steep, and there are moments when I think, I'm never going to get to the top, I might as well just come down. Because it is an uphill battle, it's very challenging. On the other hand, it's also very rewarding, when I look down and see wow, I've gone this far, maybe I can keep going and reach the top.

In terms of what the view reflects from the peak, I have this vision that my children will find that the language have helped them in their lives and will continue to do so. I want for them to feel they have an advantage and a resilient Chinese cultural identity. On the other side, I do not expect them to pass it on to their children. Although it would be nice, and if they have the desire to do so, I will support them in that enterprise.

> What it looks to me is once my children say to me 'mom thank you so much for all the work you have put into us to learn Chinese. We really appreciate it, we think it's useful and we are grateful for how you have brought us up and now we are bilingual.' I think

> that would be the moment, whether they would choose to pass it on to their children I can't enforce that.

In my own family, I have seen my cousins beginning to show more interest in re-acquiring the language. Growing up, many did not want to speak Cantonese; they did not think it was "cool" to do so. Now their perspectives have changed and they are intentionally using Cantonese when speaking to their parents, aunts, and uncles.

> My grandmother passed away last year, I was able to deliver a speech in Chinese and in English. Many of the people that came to the service came up to me and said, 'your grandmother must be so proud of you, you are able to share memories of your grandmother in a language that she would understand.' My cousins, after my grandmother's funeral said, 'we are going to speak more Chinese with our parents, it was so neat to see you up there sharing memories of grandma in Chinese. We have lost the language.' I see my cousins, they are speaking Chinese with their parents, something I have not witnessed before because some would say, 'I'm Canadian, I only speak English,' but now they are proud they are able to pick it up because they hear it every day and it is easier than learning it from scratch, so moments like this one have helped me push on, helped me climb this mountain. My cousins are teenagers now and they have realized it's so useful to know another language.

On another note, I think self-confidence and self-esteem come into play when passing on a native language, with a partner who does not speak the same language, and in a situation when some may not do so. As a mother, it takes the conviction that this endeavour will benefit my children, and also to keep on going even when I encounter road blocks. These barriers include, when people ask me, "what is the point, they will not use it anyway, the language will die eventually." I tell myself constantly to remain strong, to do it because I believe in it and my children will eventually learn about the incremental rewards.

> For instance in my personal circle, there are many mothers, although they are fluent, may not pursue this undertaking. I have heard some say, 'it is too hard, we only need English in our society, my partner does not speak it so why bother, they might get confused, I do not want my child to have an accent.' The list goes on.

On the other hand, I have confidence that in being close to one's native language, the cultural impact is phenomenal when being raised in Canadian society. As stressed, I firmly believe that the ability to speak English and Cantonese has facilitated my robust bicultural identity. Henceforth, I also want my children to have this solid identity.

> At a young age, I remember relatives commenting on my ability to speak Chinese. They would tell me to continue to speak it because it will be helpful one day. At that time I did not think much of it, but in the last 10 years, I have reaped the benefits of retaining my native language. For instance, I landed a teaching assignment in Calgary in a school with a high number of Asian students. The principal felt they would be able to relate to me and vice versa. I am also volunteering as a community therapist at Eastside Family Centre where we serve people from all walks of life. I have used Chinese in the counselling room when clients request a Chinese speaking counsellor. These are just career-related examples; the other piece of the story would have me being able to converse with many friends of family members who don't speak English. I feel such a connection with them and have learned a paramount. I recently met a friend who lives in Hong Kong and we would text each other using the English alphabet and Chinese characters now that is amazing! What I wouldn't give for my children to have some of these incredible experiences.

In addition to all this, while on this journey, I have become even closer to my aunts and uncles. As I revealed, I am learning to read and write Chinese again and have enlisted some of their help in doing so.

> I would call my uncle; he's pretty good with both English and Chinese. My friend found a website where you can actually use a tablet to write the Chinese and it will pronounce it for you, so I've learned some of the tools. Sometimes I wait for my mom or aunt to arrive and I would ask them. My daughter knows I can't read and write very well and I tell her, 'mommy didn't go very far in Chinese school and I don't remember a lot of the written Chinese and now I'm learning with you.' I think it's really important to show our children we are also learning, we are not perfect, we are also vulnerable so we are in the journey together.

The philosophy of learning together has transpired into learning music as well. Mya and I take violin lessons together using the Suzuki method (Suzuki, 2012). The idea is that mother and daughter will learn at the same pace and help each other master a musical instrument, while

also having fun, growing together, and making mistakes together. We learn alongside each other and we are on the same team. Next year, I will begin lessons with Koen and he is ecstatic to start.

> I have been reading all these books and articles about language and music and how it develops the brain and we are not a musical family but I am willing to invest time into this. Mya is really enjoying it that is the same approach to the language; we do it together, because at the beginning when she was in Chinese school I wanted her to do it by herself. I thought she was old enough but it didn't work, she didn't show interest, she was frustrated. So now I'm hoping the violin would bring us closer, we will be at the same level and we will both be teaching each other.

No one can predict what the future holds. Something in me has a firm belief that, if nothing else, because of my passion for this, and because I have invested time and care in this expedition, they will get it one day, even when they become teenagers.

> When the kids are old enough and they can read and they can understand what they are reading, I would share my thesis with them. We would sit together, I hope the story I will share about my life and my participants' stories, the literature review, that they would think oh it's so cool and would not feel shame. I'm sure there might be moments when they may feel shame, but they may come to realize their mom had done all this and may appreciate it. So that's one way to go, I think, us reading it together, more so the sitting down and reading a page at a time because it's going to be a long document. And because my cousins are teenagers now and they have actually changed and asked for reasons why their parents did not push them to attend Chinese school, how come they were not proud and now they've changed their minds, they want to learn more Chinese and watch more Chinese movies. They are between 14 and 18 years old, all of a sudden they want to learn, that's pretty cool I think even if they are at an age when they could be rebellious, they may still want to connect with their Chinese identity.

As a mother, the way I choose to raise my children comes from being a feminist. I recently read the book, *Feminist Mothering* (O'Reilly, 2008) and nodded through each chapter, as I feel I am living these principles and values. On the same vein of climbing a mountain, I thought about passing on Chinese to my children like a moment, a specific moment when I rode my bicycle up a steepest hill in my community.

> There is this hill, my kids call it a mountain, it's quite a steep hill and last year when I first moved into my community, I could not make it up that hill. No matter how hard I try, I would give up near the middle. But one day I learned how to use the gears and I almost made it to the top. This car was trying to tell me he was right behind so he honked and I hit the curb and I couldn't keep going so I came home and I told Tom. I said I almost made it; I was so close, I guess he was trying to encourage me and he said, 'I don't think you can make it up that hill, let's bet.' It was just that morning, I biked, I worked out, I was exhausted, but because he said that to me I said, 'let's go you can come with the kids and I'm going to bike up that hill.' So Tom and my kids were in the van, and they followed me. The whole time, I said in my head, Feminist Mothering. I had those two words, that's all I had, when I looked up I was near the top, and before long, I was up there. Tom honked, they were celebrating and I was celebrating and because of those words, I didn't want my daughter and my son to see me not make it up that hill. I wanted them to see that just because I'm small, I'm a woman, I'm strong, I can make it up that mountain.

The story above is symbolic of my solo climb each day and will not sojourn no matter how treacherous the path becomes. The belief in something is enough to take risks to continue to push myself and my children to connect with our language and culture. As a child, I had the advantage of having Cantonese embrace me everywhere I turn and have reaped the rewards of being to help others as a teacher and counsellor. One day, I hope my children will use their bilingual abilities to advocate for those who need a voice and stand up for social justice endeavours. The view from the top will be breathtaking.

My Story in Context

I offer my personal experience of retaining my native language and passing on my language to my children to show the impetus or foundation of my passion behind this study. Ellis (2004) underscored the importance of feminist writers to discuss and share our personal experiences of the topic and be transparent in our research. Consequently, I have shared a piece about myself as part of the puzzle, in conducting this thesis, to involve myself in the exploration

and discovery of engaging with the lived experiences of other mothers passing on their native language.

Not only a feminist researcher, I also am a feminist mother. Feminist mothering is, "understood to have cultural significance and political purpose" (O'Reilly, 2008, p. 6). Among many things, these mothers live by honouring and teaching their children about equality and to respect others' cultural identities. Arthur and Collins (2010) expressed that feminist values often include social justice and advocacy. Social justice is when individuals in the helping profession, "consider how to improve the quality of life for clients and to effect social change" (Arthur & Collins, p. 44). As such, from a feminist and social justice standpoint, my aim is share stories of the hopes and dreams of mothers who have decided to pass on their native language, while living in Canada where English is the dominant spoken language. Given my own experience, which felt very solitary, I wondered what the experiences are like for other mothers. As a result, the research puzzle at hand is, "*What are the lived experiences of bilingualism from the perspective of Chinese-Canadian mothers who have passed on their native language to their children?*"

Canada is a multicultural society and the Asian population forms the largest group of immigrants living in our county; South Asians form the greatest portion of visible minority, followed by the Chinese population (Statistics Canada, 2011). Many are refugees, immigrants, first generation, second generation, and beyond. Researchers in the counselling profession have conducted studies to further understand Asian immigrants regarding various aspects of their lives (Arthur, Merali, Djuraskovic, 2010; Berry, 2005).

I am currently volunteering at Eastside Family Centre as a community therapist. In my practice, I have heard from clients that their children do not understand them, as there is a

generational and cultural gap; they feel it is important for their children to keep the language and attend Chinese school. These youth have asked their mothers to allow them to withdraw from Chinese school to make space for other activities. This has caused great rift and stress in families when children are more acculturated than their parents (Berry, 2005). Thus, in reading about the lived experiences of mothers who are passing on their native language, this may help counsellors understand this phenomenon more fully. Additionally, it can shed light on this experience for other mothers and individuals who strive to keep their native language in a society where English is the dominant language. As Arthur and colleagues (2010) conveyed, counselling the refugee and immigrant population requires understanding of the issues faced by these minorities. In this respect, counsellors who are more fully aware of concerns faced by clients of Asian ancestry, in turn, these clients may feel supported and understood. Therefore, my thesis topic of bilingualism in the Asian context may assist counsellors in understanding the trepidations that parents and mothers, specifically, may have in the losing of one's native language.

Thus, in conducting this study, I want to learn about my co-researchers' personal story of growing up in Canada, and their experiences with their family and friends as bicultural beings speaking their language. Further, the moments of when they felt proud of this ability, or moments when they felt shame or embarrassment will be examined. The factors that helped them decide to pass on the Chinese language to their children will be considered. As is evident in the first chapter, I have shared my own story in order for readers to learn about my experience as a mother who has passed on my native language of Cantonese.

A literature review follows where I focus on bilingualism and how language plays a part in connection within the family and culture. The cognitive aspects of bilingualism are included,

as much research has been dedicated to this aim. Embedded in the review are the roles that Chinese mothers partake in the family and in language teaching. Thereafter, the two co-researcher's stories, discussion, conclusion, limitations, and future directions will bring the thesis to a close.

Chapter II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review will provide a consolidation and consideration to the phenomenon of mothering and of bilingualism. The topic of bilingualism, as defined by Merriam-Webster (2014) dictionary as, "the ability to speak two languages; the frequent use (as by a community) of two languages; and the political or institutional recognition of two languages" has been well established in the literature, especially in the cognitive realm, in the last several decades. In this literature review the first aspect of Merriam-Webster's definition of bilingualism will be of focus, which is the ability to speak two languages. Additionally, for short-hand purposes, the word "bilingual" refers to individuals who speak two languages.

I begin the review with the methodology of the literature search. Then, I share perspectives related to Chinese mothering by examining the cultural aspect of bilingualism. I address the cognitive domains of benefits and drawbacks to being bilingual, and explore bilingualism and its role in developing a strong bicultural identity for immigrant individuals and families having left their country and are attempting to integrate into a vast new society. As well, the topics pertaining to parenting and mothering in Asian families is evident throughout the thesis manuscript given the focus on Chinese mothers. For the purpose of this manuscript, native language is defined as the first language spoken by parents, other than English. Moreover, references to culture will be specific to ethnic culture. Consequently, three questions inform this review:

1. How is Chinese mothering presented in the literature?
2. What are the positive and negative aspects of bilingualism from a cognitive perspective?

3. What is the significance of being bilingual in terms of developing a strong bicultural identity?

Methodology of Literature Search

In searching for articles I have used the Athabasca University library catalogue selecting psycARTICLES and psycINFO. Words such as "Chinese mothering," "bilingualism," "acculturation," "second language," "cognitive reflexivity" and "Asian immigrants" were used as keywords. Once I found an article associated with my topic, I looked at the reference list of these articles to search out other relevant work. Furthermore, if I encountered terminology I was not familiar with I would search for these following the above initial process. For instance, I looked for, "attentional control" and "executive functioning" in order to define these terms for myself and the reader. This process helped to remain within the parameters of my topic without departing too much. Arthur and Collin's (2010) edited volume, *Culture-Infused Counselling*, greatly informed diversity aspects of my research.

In terms of the task of staying close to the central topic of bilingualism, I amalgamated literature from opposing sides: the advantages and disadvantages of being bilingual as well as considering a holistic view. I have referenced 39 sources in this literature review, 20 of which are derived from the last six years, and all of which I found to be relevant to bilingualism as experienced by immigrant individuals and families.

Chinese Mothering

In this section, I delve into characteristics of mothering in the Chinese culture. Duncan and Wong (forthcoming) explore this topic in detail in their co-edited collection, "East Asian Mothering: Politics and Practices." Further, in her work on matroreform, Wong-Wylie (2010),

same author as above, wrote about mothers who have chosen to mother significantly, "apart from ones motherline" (p. 739). These mothers have consciously decided to engage in an active process of empowerment to raise their children in a reflective and meaningful way (Wong-Wylie, 2010). Way and colleagues (2013) corroborated with the notion of matroreform although that distinct conceptualization was not used. They conducted a study involving 24 Chinese mothers living in urban China and found that many of them have changed the way they mother from how they were raised; these mothers wanted their children to perform well, taking into account their emotional and social well-being. They shared that this is in sharp contrast to Chua's (2011) ideology of the Tiger Mother where emphasis is on the directive and authoritative manner of raising children in order for them to thrive in North American society. In another quantitative study comparing Chinese-American and European-American mothers, Chang and Greenberger (2012) found that Chinese mothers were more likely to expect their college children to perform well academically and when this materializes, many of these mothers reported higher level of parental satisfaction; while in the European group there was no correlation between academic success and parental satisfaction.

Furthermore, Wang (2012) conveyed that Chinese immigrant mothers adhere to traditional practices such as being, "closely tied to the Chinese community, live with extended families, speak Chinese language, celebrate Chinese holidays, and enjoy Chinese foods, movies, and activities" (p. 3). Thus, when raising children in a North American society, conflict may arise if their children do not place the same value on these traditions. Wang found that first generation immigrant mothers were less apt to focus on emotional talk with their children compared to the native mothers living in China. This translates to children being encouraged to talk about and share their feelings. One explanation for this difference may be due to the one-

child policy in China where mothers have more time dedicated to the child since they do not have to tend to other children. Thus, they may be more focused on helping the child regulate her or his emotions, and surprisingly this adheres more to the Western way of raising children. Hence, children of native Chinese mothers may be more able to express their emotions compared to children of immigrant mothers (Wang, 2012).

Additionally, a qualitative study conducted by Cheah, Leung, and Zhou (2013) involved interviews with 50 first-generation immigrant mothers to learn about their parenting experience. The mean age of these mothers was 38.39 years old. Other inclusion criteria were that they had to have lived in the United States for an average of 10.20 years and that they had children between three to six years of age. The authors found that these mothers aimed to raise their children with traditional Chinese values, such as emphasizing the importance of familial relationships. Nevertheless, they also underscored the significance of autonomy and independence in order for their children to thrive in the American society. Thus, it appears that mothers had to alter the way they parented in relation to wanting their children to integrate successfully in the United States.

As evident, researchers in the above studies have found different ways of mothering in Chinese families. There appears to be differences depending on where these mothers were brought up, in which generation they belong, and if they were raised in the North American society (Cheah, Leung, & Zhou, 2013). Therefore, it may not be appropriate to place mothers in specific categories due to their ethnicity alone. In the next sections, I present the phenomenon of bilingualism from a cognitive and cultural perspective with issues of mothering and parenting intertwined in the cultural piece.

Bilingualism from a Cognitive Perspective

In contrast to the early twentieth century (Hakuta & Garcia, 1989), there is presently an array of research that points to the cognitive benefits of bilingualism. First, bilinguals have more choice in language expression (Gollan & Ferreira, 2009; Rodriguez-Fornells, Balaguer, & Munte, 2006). Second, proficient bilinguals (individuals who are equally as proficient in two languages) may perform above monolinguals in terms of mathematics and language classes (Kempert, Saalbach, & Hardy, 2011). Subsequently, they have higher functioning in executive control (Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2008; Kempert et al., 2011), of which will be defined below. Lastly, their brains are more fit and bilingualism may delay the onset of dementia (Adesope, Lavin, Thompson, & Ungerleider, 2010; Bialystok, et al., 2008; Mechelli et al., 2004).

The Cognitive Benefits

Rodriguez-Fornells and colleagues (2006) found that fluent bilinguals interchange from one language to the other, and are able to isolate both languages entirely without much struggle. Later, Gollan and Ferreira (2009) agreed that knowing two languages offers advantages such as the ability to communicate to a wider audience, and function in a larger diversity of language situations. They also communicated that bilinguals have the power of choice when speaking with other bilinguals; they have the flexibility of selecting whichever language most straightforwardly and distinctively convey their thoughts. In essence, bilinguals enjoy more freedom of expression when it comes to language use.

Kempert and colleagues (2011) indicated that students attending Turkish and German elementary bilingual schools had to keep two languages separate by recurrent usage and exposure. The students, who were proficient bilinguals, indicating that they were skillful in both languages, performed better in math problems with distractors, compared to students who were

monolinguals. Furthermore, bilingual students were apt to have more attentional control than monolingual students. Positive attentional control involves the degree of flexibility in interchanging attention between, and within tasks to make the most out of performance (Derakshan & Eysenck, 2009). Hence, Kempert and colleagues communicated proficient bilinguals obtained higher scores compared to their monolingual peers on these tasks. It may be significant to underscore the relationship between performing well in mathematics and also excelling in language learning.

Furthermore, bilingual children possess cognitive benefits such as executive control (Kempert et al., 2011). Pessoa (2009) defined executive control as a set of, "functions, typically believed to depend on the frontal cortex (and probably the parietal cortex), which are needed when non-routine behaviors are called for – namely, when 'control' is required" (p. 160). In other words, executive control provides one with the ability to set and reach goals, inhibit a tendency to do wrong, and keep focus when attention is needed (Hughes & Ensor, 2007). In Kempert et al.'s findings, even immigrant students with a weak grasp of the German language (language of instruction), performed at an equal level in executive control tasks compared to their monolingual peers. Therefore, even nonbalanced bilinguals (individuals who are more proficient in one language compared to the other), profit from being bilingual.

Bialystok et al. (2008) also discovered through utilizing the Stroop task, described below, that bilinguals performed better in tasks that require executive control compared to monolinguals. Miller and associates (2001) explained that the Stroop task incorporates, "asking the subjects to either read words or name the colour in which they were written" (p. 168). For example, if the word is green, however, is written in red, the reader would be asked to name the colour; this requires one to focus on only one attribute at a time. Bialystok and colleagues

discovered that bilingual subjects fared better than monolingual subjects in these tasks. In combination with other tests, they were found to have higher executive control in general. Hence, both Kempert and colleagues' (2011) and Bialystok and colleagues' (2008) studies supported the benefits in terms of having higher functioning in executive control tasks.

When one learns a second language, the grey matter in the left inferior cortex becomes bigger (Mechelli et al., 2004). This may help in the postponement of dementia for an average of four years. Furthermore, Bialystok and colleagues (2008) found that knowing two or more languages enhances the progress, as well as defers the decline, of executive control on a number of tasks; this was evident across the lifespan. Specifically these results were found in nonverbal tasks as well, which were not knowingly related to language processing.

In addition, Adesope et al. (2010) performed a meta-analysis research of 63 studies and found that balanced bilinguals were, "associated with several cognitive outcomes, including increased attentional control, working memory, metalinguistic awareness, and abstract and symbolic representation skills" (p. 207). For instance, attentional control involves the ability to focus and concentrate when engaged in tasks that require linguistic and nonverbal awareness (Bialystok et al., 2008). Further, in Adesope and associate's study, attentional control was strongly correlated with bilingualism. Subsequently, they found that these advantages were present regardless of participants' socioeconomic status (SES). Therefore, the bilingual brain may benefit from being challenged beyond mastering a single language, which increases attentional control.

In review, the bilingual brain exhibited more flexibility in that it may function in multiple language environments. In proficient bilinguals, they were found to perform more effectively in certain mathematical concepts. In regards to executive control tasks, bilinguals also

outperformed monolinguals in certain linguistic and non-linguistic tasks. As well, proficiency in two or more languages may help suspend the arrival of dementia. One's cognitive function, such as attentional control, is also enhanced.

The Cognitive Drawbacks

On the other side, there are also drawbacks to bilingualism from a cognitive perspective. Bilinguals who are more proficient in one language (dominant bilinguals) may lag behind their peers in the performance of lexical tasks (Bialystok et al., 2008; Gollan & Ferriera, 2009); of which will be defined below. When two languages differ in their linguistic structure, students may be more challenged to learn the language of instruction (Kempert et al., 2011; Yeong, Liow, & Susan, 2011). The fluency of the chosen spoken language, such as choosing to speak English over another language, may also suffer (Gollan & Ferriera, 2005).

Hakuta and Garcia (1989) proclaimed that in the early 1900s, the performance on standardized tests highly disfavoured bilingual children; bilingualism was interpreted as a mental burden that caused inferior levels of intellect. Over a century later, Bialystok and colleagues (2008) also found that bilinguals may fall behind monolinguals in lexical tasks including verbal fluency. These tasks included the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), Boston naming task, and category fluency task from the verbal task battery. Meyers and Schvaneveldt (1971) wanted to determine whether lexical decision tasks affected *reaction times* (RT) in cognition. A lexical decision task is one that asks participants to press a "yes" button if they think the word is a true word and a "no" button if it they think it is not a word (Meyers & Schvaneveldt). It was found that lexical decision RTs were considerably shorter when the second item is a word that is semantically connected to the first word than when it is unrelated. For example, the RT times were faster for words (e.g., butter) instantly preceded by other related words (e.g., bread). In

Bialystok and colleagues' study, the subjects who were bilinguals were slower in these lexical-decision tasks compared to the monolinguals. In essence, lexical tasks have shown to be more challenging for bilinguals because both languages are active; this creates the need to attend and select during these tasks, thus decreasing retrieval time.

When ESL students have a weak understanding of the language taught in school, their academic success may be negatively affected (Kempert et al., (2011). Yeong and colleagues (2011), in a six-month longitudinal study, found that children with Mandarin, as their first language, favoured syllable awareness as opposed to phoneme awareness. For instance, in Mandarin, each character forms a word, and knowing each syllable, by memorization, helps in reading, whereas in English, children are encouraged to sound out the letters of the alphabet which form words (phoneme system); these differences are fundamental to note when teaching Mandarin-speaking students the English language. This aforementioned study incorporated 50 kindergarten participants, whereby English was their first language, and 50 kindergarten participants, whereby Mandarin was their first language. During the first trial, the children were administered the parallel version of the English and Mandarin tasks; subsequently, the second time around, their spelling intricacy scores were computed from a 52-item experimental task. Since English is phoneme-based, this makes it more difficult for the Mandarin speakers to learn to spell in English. This speaks to the importance of Chinese ESL learners being exposed to oral English in the early years, as opposed to children who have a grasp of language with a comparable linguistic organization, such as Spanish and French. In essence, some may hold the perspective that it is a disadvantage to teach children more than one language due to this disadvantage during primary school age years.

Furthermore, according to Gollan and Ferriera (2009), bilinguals face the challenge of needing to choose to only speak one language when conversing with monolinguals or multilinguals (with different language combinations), although both languages may be useful to communicate the envisioned meaning. In this study, 73 Spanish-English undergraduate bilinguals were asked to name as many pictures as possible, shown on a computer, without making mistakes. The Spanish group was allowed to name the pictures in Spanish only, the English group, in English only. One group was allowed to choose the language of choice. Researchers demonstrated that bilinguals may have a more difficult time when needing to retrieve synonyms and having to completely eliminate one language when speaking the other. The cost of voluntarily switching from one language to another was substantial in that retrieval time was slower. In this light, bilinguals may have an obvious disadvantage in terms of fluency, when required to only speak one specific language at a time.

In brief, bilinguals, who are not balanced (more proficient in one language, compared to the other), have a more difficult time completing lexical tasks. Furthermore, when the native language, such as Mandarin, is completely different in syllabic and phonemic organization compared to English, the Mandarin speaker may lag behind in learning English. Lastly, in summary, bilinguals may fall behind compared to monolinguals in terms of language fluency skills.

Bilingualism from a Cultural Perspective

When immigrants come to Canada, they have to make a decision regarding the extent to which they wish to preserve their cultural uniqueness (Arthur, Merali, & Djuraskovic, 2010). In addition, they need to decide how much they want to connect with others who do not share their cultural traditions. In this section, the cultural aspect of being able to communicate in one's

native language will be explored. By being familiar with one's native language, it may help one remain bicultural (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Kim & Omizo, 2006; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). In addition, retaining one's native language impacts the acculturation process of each family member to proceed more smoothly (Boutakidis, Chao, & Rodriguez, 2011; Costigan & Dokis, 2006). The ability to speak the family's native tongue, may aid individuals to connect more deeply with their ethnic culture (Boutakidis et al; Costigan & Dokis). It may also assist in reducing the generational gap experienced by immigrant families (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Boutakidis et al., 2011; Wu & Chao, 2011).

The Cultural Benefits

Biculturalism is "the integration of the home and host cultures in terms of both lifestyles and interaction patterns" (Arthur et al., 2010, p. 289); the aim is to remain in the midpoint between isolation from other groups, and complete assimilation into the greater culture. Fillmore (1991) suggested a cost of learning a second language which is the eradication of the first language due to children not realizing the significance of retaining it. In the larger society, with teachers, peers, media, and the like using the English language, it makes sense that children may lose their first language. Fillmore indicated that the earlier children become exposed to schools, where English is the dominant language, the quicker they may not use the native language to communicate. Therefore, when Asian immigrants immerse their children in their native language, whilst continuing to encourage them to learn English, it may create an optimal balance in terms of preserving both languages. According to Costigan, Su, and Hua (2009), adolescents that are part of an ethnic minority may be insisted to abide by their cultural heritage on the one hand, but may also feel tension from the dominant culture to integrate, on the other hand. Overall, these authors found that "behavioural involvement in the ethnic culture may nurture

ethnic identity development" (p. 269). Likewise, Costigan and Dokis (2006) examined the relationship between parent and children of immigrant Chinese families and the rates of acculturation as well as individual and family adjustment in the host country. According to these researchers, it is vital to offer programs to uphold immigrant children's sustained participation in their ethnic culture, while at the same time attending to skills necessary to blossom in the new country.

In addition, Kim and Omizo (2006) voiced that developing an affirmative Asian American identity is connected to engaging in Asian behavioural norms. Consequently, this may include the use of the Asian language. They also suggested that Asian Americans should participate in European American norms to remain bicultural. In an earlier study, Kim and Omizo (2005) using 156 participants, found that Asian and European Americans who have a strong bicultural identity had more positive collective self-esteem. LaFromboise and colleagues (1993) also advanced that it is essential to hold both cultural groups in a positive light. They relayed that, without positive views about both groups, one may be inhibited by the ability to feel good about interacting with both cultures. In essence, the teaching of a native language to preserve the ethnic culture, and the encouragement of learning English, may embolden children to appreciate both cultures.

Moreover, some immigrants may be more acculturated (Berry, 2005); whereas others may be slower to adapt to the greater culture or may lack the desire to be acculturated. Berry defined acculturation as, "the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members" (p. 698). In this respect, acculturation involves the progression of how one becomes comfortable with living in a new and foreign environment. The rate of acculturation is different for each

individual and each family who immigrates. Costigan and Dokis (2006) found that immigrants who settle in Canada generally fair well. In this study, families were drawn from the community and acculturation was measured with independent results from parents and children. In general, the children participants reported low intensities of struggles, low depressive indicators, and high achievement incentive. This occurred despite different experiences of acculturation compared to their parents. Furthermore, immersing children in their native language strengthened the bond of the family. For instance, when children adjust to the Canadian culture at a faster rate, their parents may feel they are losing their ethnic identity. However, with the common spoken language of Chinese, they are able to share a more collective experience, regardless of the rate of acculturation (Boutakidis et al., 2011).

On another note, there are many words in the Chinese language that are not equivalent in meaning with the English language. When individuals speak English with parents, the connection may not be as profound, as there are many ways they are not expressing the exact sentiment. A study conducted by Boutakidis and colleagues (2011) agreed with this assertion. They found that Chinese and Korean adolescents, who were able to communicate with their parents in their native language, had a better understanding of their native culture. This is because they were, "able to understand and express these values within the cultural and linguistic context in which they originated, further aiding their understanding of the parent's values and perceptions" (Boutakidis et al., p. 130). In this light, language is more than a medium of communication; it offers a deeper level of sharing within a culture.

Accordingly, when parents and children are able to share their native language, the process of learning about their customs and traditions may become more ingrained. Costigan and Dokis (2006) relayed that when mothers speak Chinese, and the children do not,

communication becomes more challenging as expression of emotions become more difficult. On the other hand, children who were more analogous to their mothers in adhering to the Chinese culture, such as showing a willingness to learn and speak Chinese, may experience more support in their families (Costigan & Dokis, 2006). Hence, this study emphasized the emotional benefits of being able to communicate in a native language.

Likewise, a quantitative study conducted by Ghavami and colleagues (2011) using high school students, post-secondary students, and adults explored minority identity achievement, identity affirmation, and psychological well-being among ethnic minority and sexual minority individuals. African Americans, Asians, and Latinos were included in the ethnic minority group. They found it is positive when one feels an involvement in his or her minority group and have a meaningful minority identity. These positive feelings include knowing one's history and connection to this minority group. Ghavami et al used various measures of well-being such as satisfaction with life, self-esteem, state anxiety, and depression. One may contend that the ability to communicate a native language may strengthen one's relationships, connection, and identity development within his or her community.

Costigan and Dokis (2006) communicated that mothers in Chinese families are more likely to be responsible for teaching children the Chinese language, since the fathers are usually the disciplinarian. Thus, the role of teaching may land heavier on the mother. Likewise, the benefits of being able to speak the native language may transpire into communicating more effectively with parents. As indicated above, Berry (2005) voiced that older and younger people may acculturate at different rates. For example, parents may lag behind their children in terms of becoming acquainted with the host culture. Consistent with this perspective, Wu and Chao (2011) found that second-generation adolescents experienced higher levels of adjustment

problems when they answered questions regarding parental warmth, when compared with European Americans. The difference was not indicative when comparing first-generation adolescents and European Americans. In addition, second-generation adolescents were more prone to experience internalizing symptoms.

Overall, there was a greater degree of cultural dissonance in the second-generation group, such as in parental warmth and open communication; there was also an increased rate of behavioural problems for these Chinese youth (Wu & Chao, 2011). For this group, greater discrepancies were associated with generational gaps encompassing two types of stress. These were, "acculturative pressures and normative generational gaps" (Wu & Chao, p. 503). As indicated above, when adolescents were able to share a common native language with their parents (Costigan and Dokis, 2006), and were able to communicate fluently in the native language, it was possible for the adolescent and the parent to share a collective sociocultural perspective (Boutakidis et al., 2011). In essence, bilingualism may support more unity, and therefore may decrease the generational gap experienced by adolescents.

Similarly, Nagata, Cheng and Tsai-Chae (2010) found that grandmothers reported feeling alienated when their grandchildren did not understand them and they did not understand their grandchildren because they were not able to communicate in the same language. These grandmothers may be the caregivers of the grandchildren during the day but their main roles were to feed them, take them to school, and keep them safe. Some grandmothers voiced that when the parents returned home after the work day, they were busy communicating with one another and took over the caretaking role. Sadly, some grandmothers expressed they felt lonely and, at times, wished to return to their home country. This sense of isolation may have to do with thinking the younger generation do not have a deep understanding of who they are. This

may create a greater generational gap that may affect connection. The grandmothers may further feel their grandchildren do not understand them, equally, the grandchildren may feel a similar way (Nagata et al., 2010). As such, the benefits of being able to speak the native language may transpire into communicating more effectively and having a more profound relationship with grandmothers to strengthen ties through the generations (Nagata et al., 2010).

In summary, from a cultural lens, when individuals in immigrant families are able to retain their native language, the possibility of bringing the rates of acculturation closer for the parent and the child increases. It fosters the youth's biculturalism to a greater degree. In addition, the sense of connection to their family members becomes more resilient. Moreover, it may help to close up the generational gap experienced by many immigrant families.

The Cultural Drawbacks

Although the cultural benefits are apparent, still some researchers found drawbacks of insisting children speak a native language (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Hwang, Wood & Fujimoto, 2010). For instance, parents and children may disagree on the value of retaining the language (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Hwang et al., 2010). Young people may be self-conscious to speak it for fear of being judged by people from the host culture (Weyant, 2007). When people from different ethnic cultural backgrounds unite and form a family, they often decide to only teach English to their children (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011; Hynie, Lalonde, & Lee, 2006; Mok, 1999).

Insisting children speak a native language may cause a rift in the family if children resist doing so. Some young people may not see the value in keeping their native language. Hwang et al. (2010) introduced the term *acculturative family distancing* (AFD). This is the distancing that transpires among immigrant parents and their children; it is triggered by breakdowns in

communication and cultural value differences. This may be due to the different degrees with which parents and children obtain characteristics of the host culture at different rates (Berry, 2005). Berry found that larger numbers of youth and mothers reports of AFD were associated with higher depressive symptoms and risk for clinical depression in both groups. Therefore, enforcing the native language to be spoken may cause further distancing between the parent and child. Evidently bilingualism, language preservation, and attainment of English as a second language are complex psychological, cognitive, and social processes that need further examination.

Consequently, Costigan and Dokis (2006) relayed that when Chinese Canadian parents were more adamantly in favour of the Chinese culture and desired to speak Chinese, a decreased level of Chinese cultural and linguistic participation by the children was related to instability in the relationship. In other words, when parents and children do not assign the same value to learning and speaking Chinese, disagreements may ensue. In the long run, these disagreements may cause the family to be divided.

Children may not desire to speak a native language due to not wanting to deviate from individuals from the host culture. The younger generation may feel that speaking a native language may not be an acceptable way to communicate. Weyant (2007) found that participants favoured people who speak English without an accent. After listening to an audiotape of various speakers with different accents, they rated the pure English speaker higher in areas of ability and accomplishment. Hence, participants thought they were more intelligent than the speakers who spoke with an accent. Young people may notice this stigma and feel self-conscious about speaking their native language. Therefore, when parents push for them to learn and use the language, they may further resist doing so.

In unions in which one partner does not speak the language, the couple may choose not to teach their children one of the parent's native languages. This may be due to thinking that a language barrier between one parent and the children may be unfair. For example, AhnAllen and Suyemoto (2011) found that when Asian women and White men date, they experience barriers such as reconciling how to communicate effectively, facing unacceptance by family members, and the weighing of having to challenge racism. When marriage becomes a reality, it may be more difficult to navigate whether to teach children a native language, since one partner would not understand the language.

According to Costigan and Dokis' (2006) study mentioned earlier, Chinese women were more likely to teach language. Hence, when a Chinese man marries outside of his ethnic culture, the likelihood of preserving the native language may be lower. However, women may still have the tendency to immerse their children in the language, due to wanting to preserve the culture. In interracial relationships, the dynamics are different since one partner would not speak Chinese (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011). Again, it becomes more challenging to decide whether to teach the Chinese language, out of consideration for the spouse who does not speak or understand it.

Furthermore, Hynie and colleagues (2006) suggested that Chinese immigrant parents and children may be at odds with one another about their choice of partners. Parents in this study preferred their children to marry someone with traits related to the traditional family construction, function, and role. Subsequently, they wanted their daughters to marry someone with a higher status. Many children in this study aligned with their parent's views, and when this occurred, conflict was absent. In addition, Mok (1999) found that the probability of Asian Americans dating White Americans is partial to higher levels of acculturation rather than lower levels of ethnic identity. One may question, if the acculturation level of an individual is more

acculturated, would deem him or her less likely to appreciate their native language. Further studies may be needed to address this point. In essence, these studies speak to the conflict that may arise in interracial families when deciding whether or not to introduce, teach, and immerse children in a native language.

In summary, in families where the parent speaks a native language, and is diligent in enforcing this spoken language to their children, the children may feel less need to comply, since mainly English is spoken in the host culture. This may cause conflict of interest in the family. Some young people may feel self-conscious when others hear them speak another language; they may feel that they are not blending in with the host culture. In addition, in interracial relationships, one partner may not want to enforce a native language due to not wanting to exclude the other partner.

Bilingualism Supports a Strong Bicultural Identity

The literature presented so far, has indicated the various benefits of bilingualism. In this section, the emphasis of the benefits of bringing up a bilingual individual (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; LaFromboise et al., 1993) will be explored. Moreover, as mentioned above, the level of communication may be enhanced when the parent and child both view the importance of preserving the native language (Hwang et al., 2010).

LaFromboise et al. (1993) found the multicultural model to be a positive representation of one who is bicultural. He deemed that an individual can uphold an affirmative identity as a participant of his or her ethnic culture of origin, while concurrently cultivating a positive identity by engaging and partaking in activities with other cultural groups. In addition, the pressure to resolve internal struggles caused by bicultural stress does not need to result in undesirable psychological impacts, but could, instead, lead to personal and emotional development.

Therefore, one may reason that keeping two languages active may have promise in achieving this growth.

It is important to note that parents who want their children to learn their native language do not negate the importance of learning English. Knafo and Schwartz (2001) found that many immigrant parents want their children to succeed; this includes their encouragement for children to master a host language, and be familiar with the host culture. This could be achieved simultaneously with speaking the native language at home. Moreover, LaFromboise et al. (1993) suggested that to successfully meet the demands of the majority culture, one should have the ability to communicate in both cultures. This underscores the significance of keeping the native language alongside learning English.

In 2010, Hwang and colleagues found that programs that target the improvement of parent-child communication barriers may help decrease family struggle. When adolescents take the initiative to learn more about their ethnic culture, family conflict was likely to decrease. Moreover, when a spouse in an interracial marriage teaches children Chinese, it provides a greater opportunity for the other spouse to learn a new language. Language acquisition is possible across the lifespan (Rodriguez-Fornells et al., 2006). In summary, the benefits of bilingualism are immense. The literature indicates that the family is more united and young people benefit from speaking the native language, as well as learning English.

Summary of Literature Review

As presented in this literature review, there are numerous benefits in being bilingual. From a cognitive perspective, the brains of bilinguals are offered more choice in ways to communicate. Bilinguals, who are proficient in both languages, have shown to fare better in mathematics. They also perform better in executive control tasks compared to monolinguals.

With the added benefit of slowing down the onset of dementia, these cognitive rewards may be well desired. On the other hand, students who are less proficient in one language, such as the language of instruction, may fall behind in performing lexical tasks. When the two languages are quite different in syllabic and phonemic structure, students may experience a more difficult time when learning to spell in English. In situations where the individual is only required to speak one language, it may inhibit the fluency of conversations.

Within the cultural perspective, the benefits include, fostering a strong bicultural identity in that both the Asian and Western cultures become important to one's development. It helps confront the challenges in different rates of acculturation experienced by the parent and the child. The feeling of connection becomes more ingrained when grandparents, parents, and children share a common language that celebrates their tradition. It also works to close the generational gap. On the other side, the drawbacks are also supported by research. The parent and the child may have different views in what each party values, thus disagreements may arise. The young person may feel uncomfortable and awkward when speaking the native language in public. In interracial relationships, one partner may not pursue this teaching with the child, due to not wanting to leave out the spouse.

Above all, however, being bilingual may help individuals form a stronger bicultural identity when they are able to communicate and connect with both cultures. When individuals learn to be less self-conscious about how society, at large, views their spoken language, there is more room for growth. The family may bond more intricately when each member is able to share more than one language.

One limitation of this literature review is that not all studies are specific to Asian immigrants. In addition to studies explicit to Asian families (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011;

Boutakidis et al., 2011; Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Hynie et al., 2006; Kim & Omizo, 2006; Mok, 1999; Wu & Chao, 2011, Yeong et al., 2011), in several sections, bilinguals who speak Spanish-English (Gollan & Ferriera, 2009; Rodriguez-Fornells et al., 2006), German-Turkish (Kempert et al., 2011), and Hebrew-Russian (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001), were included. The reason for including these studies pertains to the fact that the bilingual experience and bilingual brain may have similarities. On the other hand, there are also differences such as the language structure of Chinese and English are completely different from one another. Therefore, one may not take this review and generalize it to the Asian experience.

In several studies (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011; Gollan & Ferreira, 2009; Hwang et al., 2010; Hynie et al., 2006; Kempert et al., 2011; Yeong et al., 2011; Wu & Chao, 2006), the sample size may not be sufficient to make the findings generalizable. For instance, in Wu and Chao's project, there was a relatively smaller sample size of the Chinese American youths, particularly the first generation group. In addition, this was a questionnaire based on the adolescents' reports and neglected to ask the parents for their perspective. In the future, both sides should be represented to gain a better picture of the parent-child relationship. Moreover, further longitudinal studies addressing age-related variations are warranted.

Additionally, outlining strategies for parents who want to teach and support their children to retain their native language would be beneficial. In addition, gender differences need to be acknowledged, since there is an assumption that females acquire language at faster rate than males. The learning differences between genders would help parents foster a positive learning experience for both girls and boys. Likewise, there lacks research on whether bilingualism benefits children with special needs. One may come to question whether adding another language would support or hinder children's development if they already have learning

challenges. Moreover, in the aforementioned study by Costigan and Dokis (2006), they indicated that Chinese mothers were more likely to teach language; however, the literature has not addressed the lived experience of mothers who have grown up being bilingual, with a partner who does not share the same native language, and have passed on their language. How have they lived through their bilingual journey and arrived at the decision to do so? Hence, a first-hand account using narrative inquiry may glean light into this phenomenon. In light of these limitations and future directions, this literature review explored and presented numerous benefits and some drawbacks pertaining to bilingual identity.

Chapter III: NARRATIVE INQUIRY

In the last 30 years, narrative inquiry has gained acceptance in the social science community (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). These authors conveyed that the positivistic paradigm infiltrated and dominated social sciences; however, through the exploration of history and the use of stories as raw materials, narrative inquiry became well-established. At the beginning of this narrative paradigm shift, narratives were used in anthropology research where observations were composed as personal letters or stories (Lieblich et al., 1998). Likewise, in the recent past, the broader culture has embraced narratives as seen in the genres of creative nonfiction, memoirs, reality television shows, and social media sites, as these have given individuals opportunities to share their narratives (Pinnigar & Daynes, 2007). Doctorow, as cited in Morris (2013), articulated that there no longer exists a rigid boundary between fiction and non-fiction work, as all writing falls into narrative forms of expression.

The research puzzle, "*What are the lived experiences of bilingualism from the perspective of Chinese-Canadian mothers who have passed on their native language to their children,* will be addressed throughout this section. I begin with a description of the theoretical assumptions surrounding narrative inquiry and how these influence the conceptualization of the study. Thereafter, I will discuss the prestudy tasks to uncover the activities researchers need to attend to prior to conducting narrative inquiry. Next, I will explore access and data collection followed by ethics and rigour in design. Afterward, I will cover thematic analysis and write-up and lastly quality, trustworthiness, and limitations in using narrative inquiry will be shared. The words narrative inquirer is used to replace researcher, as this title is found in the texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2013), and the terms resonates with me as well as this journey of

inquiring about my co-researcher's lived experiences. The review of narrative inquiry will be clear and relevant in accordance to the research puzzle presented.

Theoretical Assumptions

Narrative inquiry falls in the realm of social constructionism in that, "humans, individually, and socially, lead storied lives" (Clandinin 2013). In 2000, Clandinin and Connelly compared and contrasted formalist inquiry versus narrative inquiry in terms of the relationship formed with participants. They said that in the formalist lens, participants are placed and confined in categories, whereas in the narrative lens, they are viewed through their lived experience and stories. Consequently, Clandinin and Connelly noted that narrative inquiry, "tends to begin with experience as expressed in lived and told stories" (p. 40). As such, people's stories are viewed through a cultural and social lens. Likewise Bruner (1986) discussed the multiple meanings that readers may assign when reading a story, poetry or looking at a portrait. Sometimes, it may help to ask the readers to "tell back" what she or he has read or share a story about how the reading connects to her or his personal life (Bruner, 1986, p. 6), as meaning is co-constructed between individuals.

Accordingly, an influential book written by Polkinghorne (1988) described the history of meaning. In it, he shared that Wilhelm Wundt, in the late 19th century, attempted to categorize meaning using a format similar to the periodic table. Polkinghorne relayed that meaning cannot be described this way as participant's self-observations were not effective to describe all mental processes. Then, between the 1920s and 1960s behaviourism gained recognition and "direct public perception" data was of focus (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 8). At this time up until the late

1980s, cognitive science became the centre of research and the study of the mind or consciousness was emphasized, and the role of narrative schema was born (Polkinghorne, 1988).

Therefore, Polkinghorne (1988) explained that the aim of research into the construction of meaning is to harvest clear and precise accounts of the structures and forms of numerous meaning systems. He further suggested that this can be accomplished by, "self-reflections, interviews, collections of artifacts, and by drawing conclusions from these data by using the systemic principles of linguistic analysis and hermeneutic techniques" (p. 10). According to van Manen (1997), hermeneutic phenomenological research is a search for the, "fullness of living" (p. 12). The interest of hermeneutics is in the human realm as we discover it with all its multiple facets (van Manen, 1997).

Successively, narrative inquiry arises and concludes with a, "respect for ordinary lived experience" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 18). In hermeneutic phenomenology, the researcher is concerned about seeking out meaning ingrained in everyday experiences (Lopez & Willis, 2004; van Manen, 1997). Likewise, in narrative inquiry the process of forming a relationship between the narrative inquirer and co-researchers over a period of time, in a place or various places through social connections (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), in my opinion, is a more suitable methodology to fit together the research puzzle. A narrative inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Furthermore, in terms of semantics, the term "research puzzle" is more suitable than research question because in essence the researcher is formulating a puzzle consisting of storied pieces (Clandinin 2013). This means that narrative inquirers begin in, "the midst and ends in the midst of experience" (Clandinin 2013, p. 43), while

in collaboration with participants. Hence, this puzzle consists of an "experience of the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 189), which differentiates narrative inquiry, from other methodologies (Clandinin, 2013).

Moreover, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) spoke about Deweyan theory whereby narrative inquiry is concerned about the, "personal and social (interaction), past, present, and future (continuity); combined with the notion of place (situation)," consequently, this is named the "three-dimensional narrative inquiry space" (p. 50). Inherently, narrative inquiry is relational in all aspects organized across, "time, places, and relationships" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 19). Likewise Dewey's ontology is transactional rather than transcendental; the aim is to create a firsthand relation between an individual and her or his environment (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). In this way, representations ascend from experience and one must go back to that experience for validation (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007; Morris, 2013).

In referring to Dewey (1958), Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) argued that inquiries are presented as, "as a series of choices, inspired by purposes that are shaped by past experience, undertaken through time, and [that] trace the consequences of these choices in the whole of an individual or community's lived experience" (p. 40). Thus, narrative inquiry embraces a view of experience as collected and lived over time, as studied and understood as a narrative phenomenon and as represented through narrative practices of illustration (Clandinin, 2013). With a Dewey-inspired perspective, the idea is that, "experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). As a result, narrative inquiry is a method of studying human lives respecting that lived experience is a foundation of significant awareness and knowledge (Clandinin, 2013). Therefore, to understand

the lived experience of mothers who are bilingual may shed light into their stories of coming to honour their native language.

Pre-Study Tasks

As narrative inquirers tell their own stories and attend to participants telling of their stories in the inquiry, it is significant for narrative inquirers to pay close attention to who they are in the inquiry and to recognize that the self is part of the "storied landscapes" being studied (Clandinin, 2013, p. 30). Kerby (1991) agreed with this as he mentioned the impact of mounting the self in narratives as this plays a central part in personal and collective presence. Clandinin expressed the importance of an "autobiographical narrative inquiry" (p. 44), whereby the narrative inquirer begins to imagine the study before meeting participants. Hence, the inquirer become part of the co-researcher's lives and the co-researchers become part of the inquirer's life; namely the inquirer's lived experience and who he or she is becoming are vital to the research (Clandinin, 2013). In terms of the research puzzle, I have written a self-inquiry account of my journey in passing on my native language. To do so, may contribute to the research puzzle of living alongside the co-researchers' stories in a constructivist manner (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2013).

Consequently, Freeman (2007) also conveyed that narrative inquiry incorporates the autobiography of the researcher. He held that people can, "tell a cogent, believable, perhaps even *true* story of how the present came to be by looking backward and situating the movement of events within a more or less coherent narrative form" (p. 122). Here Freeman is referring to the interpretation of the past in the present by the researcher. Clandinin and Connelly (2000), likewise, expressed that all narrative inquirers bring with them personal experiences,

assumptions, and biases. Therefore, they relayed that narrative inquiry begins with the narrative inquirer sharing of their autobiographies in order to formulate the foundation to the research endeavour; hence the research puzzle could be better understood. As such, "biography, autobiography, memoir, and narrative ethnography" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 42) are some terms used to describe this process.

Access and Data Collection

Narrative inquirers organize their work by encroaching, respectfully, on people in the course of living real lives, and requesting them to help them learn something, in hopes that this learning will be helpful to others and or contribute to the understanding about facets of human knowledge (Josselson, 2007). In essence, it is asking people permission to delve deeper and more fully into their lives. The inclusion criteria for my participants are Chinese mothers, who grew up in Canada, with partners who do not speak the same native language, and who have passed on their native language to their children. I used the method of snowball sampling (Creswell, 2013), whereby I asked some peers to introduce me to participants who may be interested in this study and invited them to participate.

Narrative inquiry is a "fluid" process whereby it begins with the stories of the co-researcher's personal experience shaped by the larger culture (Clandinin, 2013, p. 33). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) discussed the various ways of collecting data, which they termed "field texts," as these are created by participants and researchers through a process of collaboration. Narrative inquirers connect and interact with co- researchers continuously to elicit stories that form the landscape of field texts (Clandinin & Connelly). These field texts are, "teacher stories, autobiographical writing, journal writing, field notes, letters, conversations, family stories and

stories of families, documents, photographs, memory boxes, artifacts, and life experience" (Clandinin & Connelly pp. 98-116).

Autobiographical Writing

As mentioned above, this form of writing is a manner of writing about the unabridged contextual story of one's life (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This can incorporate anecdotes that share a slight sliver of time and a specific event; it can even include poetry (Clandinin & Connelly). Additionally, Clandinin (2013) conveyed that this process is central to narrative inquiry as narrative inquirers need to place themselves "amid possible lives of participants" (p. 43). In this sense, the autobiographical narrative inquiry that researchers participate in forms part of their progression of creating narrative beginnings to permit them to contour their research puzzles and to begin to substantiate their inquiries "personally, practically, and socially" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 43).

Journal Writing

Journals are a powerful way for narrative inquirers to provide interpretations of their experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the form of field notes, journal writing can be detailed accounts of the day that includes reflections about how the researcher feels about certain experiences (Clandinin & Connelly). Intrinsically, this provides the researcher a space to work out their wonderings and tussles with their contacts in the field. Even if researchers may feel that these texts are insignificant or snippets too small to convey meaning, the pattern that emerges and intertwine with other texts may create a holistic picture of the inquiry endeavour (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Accordingly, as a narrative inquirer, I kept an audit trail using a journal of

the process of completing this thesis and wrote down thoughts, feelings, and actions that were derived from writing my own story and getting to know my co-researchers' lived experiences.

The Interview

Olson (2011) wrote about the intricacies involved in conducting qualitative interviews. Consequently, the research interview is an important part of narrative inquiry in that audio-tapes are transcribed, field notes could be composed as the researcher listens and re-listens to the recordings, and choices made as to what to include or not include in the writing process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Anderson and Jack (1991) wrote about the significance of having participants tell their own stories the way they choose to tell it. A technique called oral history interviews asks participants about their life story and may contain annals and chronicles (Clandinin & Connelly; Gluck & Patai, 1991). According to Clandinin and Connelly, annals encompass a list of, "dates of memories, events, stories, and the like" (p. 112), and co-researchers create time lines from the remembering of first memories (for instance) as a beginning point of reference. As for chronicles, it is an order of happenings in and around a certain topic or narrative strand of awareness, for example, the early 20s years, or the first teaching years (Clandinin & Connelly).

Moreover, Polkinghorne (1989) articulated the interview allows the researcher to interchange from description to reflection of the experience; he recommended asking open-ended questions in an unstructured way and allowing ample time for exploration from half an hour to several hours. In order to not lead the research (B. Perry, personal communication, July 25, 2013), I did not have many fixed questions prepared (see Appendix B); instead, I asked some general questions and had the co-researchers guide the way. With the research puzzle in mind, I

garnered understanding into how Chinese mothers experience speaking a native language to their children (for example). Second, the interviews were a way to cultivate a conversational connection with the participant about the meaning of an experience (Polkinghorne, 1989). This back and forth process was invaluable in digging deeper into the lived experience.

For this thesis work, data collection was acquired through face-to-face narrative conversations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I used snowball sampling (Creswell, 2013) and found two mothers through peers of mine who knew some mothers who are passing on the Chinese language to their children and fit the criteria (a partner who does not speak the native language with school aged children). These two individuals were invited to participate with whom I did not have a previous relationship with. Following ethical guidelines outlined by Athabasca University, Faculty of Graduate Studies (2013), I connected with each co-researcher. The first mother, Candace and I met at her home for part one of the interviews, and then I transcribed the interview and met her again ten days later to conduct part two.

For co-researcher two, Pauline, I met her at her house for part one of the interviews, transcribed the interview, and then met her at my house for part two a week later. After the interviews were complete, I often had text messages, telephone conversations, and email messaging with both mothers when thoughts and feelings came up regarding bilingualism and mothering. These were either initiated by me or by Candace and Pauline. The information gleaned from these experiences added to their story, and I received permission to use it as data in writing their stories.

After meeting with each co-researcher twice, I began writing their story using a chronological format as would be seen with oral histories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gluck & Patai, 1991). Thereafter, I sent each the first draft of her story and asked “is this you?”

(Clandinin & Connelly, p. 148). Each provided some feedback. Candace requested I change two details that pertained to her mother and brother. Pauline was satisfied with how she was portrayed; she also added some words regarding self-esteem and self-determination.

As for my personal story, Dr. Gina Wong interviewed me August, 2013 in order for me to experience what it may be like to be a participant in this study (Olson, 2011). Consequently, I used that information as data to write my own story. Furthermore, according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), the narrative inquiry process is a back and forth one between the narrative inquirer and co-researchers; hence, I learned of their stories and also shared my story with them. Writing my own story is a process that began several years ago when I decided to complete a thesis. I used journal notes, as well as the transcripts from the interviews with Dr. Gina Wong, Candace, and Pauline (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), to delve deeper into my own and my co-researchers' lived experiences.

Rigour

Clandinin and Connelly (1994) explained that it is significant to focus on the four directions in any inquiry; these are, "inward and outward and backward and forward" (p. 100). In terms of inward, it is about exploring feelings, hopes, and reactions; and outward is dedicated to looking at the environment. With regards to backward and forward, the narrative inquirer looks at the past, present, and future and conducts research in these four directions. Also, it is essential to ask questions about each dimension at the same time. In doing so, the narrative inquirer asks questions, accumulates field notes, develops interpretations, and composes a project that addresses both personal and social issues (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

Additionally, according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000) the three dimensional space is where the narrative inquirer and participants meet in the past, present, and future, in essence

"remembered" stories are told from a previous time, in the present stories, and each of these stories offer possible plotlines for the future (p. 60). The narrative inquirer's stories are also exposed for investigating and retelling, and works in a space with the co-researchers and self; this means that the inquirer becomes, "visible with their own lived and told stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 62). In collecting stories, field texts are rigorously kept for thoroughness and for capturing changes in learning (Clandinin & Connelly). As such, field texts were documented since the beginning of this thesis project. An accumulation was added each time I had contact with my co-researchers, where thoughts and feelings surfaced in regards to the research puzzle. I reflected on these field texts often during the analysis and writing process.

Ethics

The ethics behind narrative inquiry is not clear cut and does not have specific conclusive solutions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, 2007). The process of having ethical review boards to approve the study first may be counter to the narrative inquiry process as the relationship is an ongoing progression and consent may alter as the research develops (Clandinin & Connelly). Despite this conundrum, Athabasca University's Research Ethics Board (AU Faculty of Graduate Studies, 2013) and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2010) were followed. Furthermore, the concept of anonymity may be difficult to establish as narrative inquirers may be immersed in the co-researchers' lives and the people who are known to the co-researcher may question the inquirer's role (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Likewise, Josselson (2007), in her work about narrative research, spoke of the duty to protect participants' dignity and privacy. As such, it is crucial to navigate this terrain with care and to ensure no harm will be bestowed on these participants. In essence, Josselson conveyed

that there are two forms of contracts, one explicit, and the other implicit that are part of narrative research. The explicit encompasses the form which communicates the purpose of the study, procedures, and consent (Josselson). The other, muddier form, of the contract is the implicit which is the, "development of the individual, personal, intimate relationship between researcher and participant" (Josselson, 2007, p. 539). Therefore, given that narrative research is created in the meeting of connections and relationships, the nature of the information unveiled is influenced not by the explicit contract, but also by the rapport and trust the researcher/interviewer is able to form with participants (Josselson, 2007).

Josselson further discussed consent as the need for the researcher to be transparent about his or her curiosities in order to create a research coalition with the participant. In essence, respectable narrative practice necessitates deep partnership about the topic so that the participant can enlighten the researcher about the facets of the participant's lived experience that is of importance to the researcher (Josselson, 2007). Another crucial area is to ensure that all data is protected and the identity of each participant is protected (Josselson, 2007). The names of participants and the people they identify within their lives will also need to be altered to ensure no connections are made to the participants by readers (Josselson, 2007). In addition, the potential for harm will need to be communicated in the consent form so participants are aware of harm, if any exists, within the scope of the narrative inquiry project (Josselson, 2007).

Thus, Clandinin (2013) shared that narrative inquiry is a, "deeply ethical project" (p. 30). In this light, relational ethics forms the core of this methodology. Noddings (1984) discussed this in the ethics of care, as it is imperative for care to be present, at the beginning and throughout the process, in order to embrace that narrative enquiry is a practice committed to the building of relationships. Likewise, Morris (2013) wrote about the prominence of living

alongside participants in the living and telling of stories. Relational ethics request the practice of, "social responsibilities regarding how we live in relation with others and with our worlds" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 30). Consequently, it is important to be attentive to ending the narrative conversations in a positive and less emotional note and may end with, "how was it for you to be talking to me in this way?" (Josselson, 2007, p. 545). In this way, the co-researchers may feel that they are cared for and their feelings and voices matter. To this aim, my interactions with my co-researchers involved regular check-ins to ensure they felt comfortable, were not fatigued, and that I answered questions arising. I also provided counselling and psychological resources from the Psychologists Association of Alberta in the case they felt the need to talk to a professional.

Thematic Analysis

As researchers move from writing field texts to writing research texts, it can be manifested as a time of unease and hesitation (Clandinin, 2013). Interpretation is a continuous process as narrative inquirers spend time with co-researchers, the analysis process is a co-composing one in that a relational stance envelopes the three dimensional space of "temporality, sociality, and place" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 58). It is also important to continue to carry back intervening research texts to further involve co-researchers around relating strands of experience, and in this process both narrative inquirer and co-researchers may together create a more rich and enthralling text (Clandinin, 2013).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) compared the narrative inquiry endeavor to the making of "soup" (p. 155). Various colourful and delicious ingredients make up soup and every pot is unique in its own way. Chatman, as cited in Clandinin and Connelly explored the three forms of text which are narrative, description, and argument. In this sense the soup may contain,

> Rich descriptions of people, places, and things; other parts can be composed of carefully constructed arguments that argue for a certain understanding of the relations among people, places, and things; and still others can be richly textured narratives of the people situated in place, time, scene, and plot (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p, 155)

It may be significant to note that the audience of the text is the co-researcher in the narrative inquirer first and foremost, and then other considerations are potential journals, and the academic community (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Therefore, the "end-in-view" helps the narrative inquirer to locate where the end product will be disseminated, who would read it, and thus may guide the direction of the project (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 153).

In narrative inquiry, there exists a reductionist and formalist approach. In terms of the reductionist approach, an example provided by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) is a dissertation composed by Ivan Schmidt about participants' decision to become social workers. Schmidt wanted to be engrossed in the unique lived experience of five social workers; however he also wanted to discuss the themes that cut across all of their experiences so that he may create a "generalizable theory" about their decisions to become social workers (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 142). This way of writing is called the reductionist boundary where it is reduced downward to themes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

On the other hand, the formalistic approach will have the researcher place their participant's experiences in formalistic categories such as the dissertation written by Mary Shuster as revealed in Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Here, Shuster worked with Honduran women teachers who were second-generation immigrants. She wanted to learn about their social and economic status at the inception of the study, and at the end decided to place them at formal categories of social inequality in terms of race and gender. According to Clandinin and

Connelly, this was a difficult decision for Shuster because she ended up writing "over" her participants and categorized them as an illustrative in a formalistic research text. Therefore, it is essential for the researcher to navigate thematic analysis with care in order to ensure co-researchers' voices are heard and warranted. In this thesis, I followed aspects of the reductionist framework whereby I aimed to find themes that "cut across" my story and the co-researchers' stories, as well as incorporated the formalistic approach to understand if these themes fit into specific categories, such as, pride or shame, for example.

The Write-Up

It is important for the narrative inquirer to ask herself about the forms of research text resonates with her; for instance, be it memoirs, poetry, dramas, photography collections, reports, arguments, or others and choose the form that is close to her heart when composing research text (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). A varied assortment of the storied field text forms the research text; the task of the research is to fit all of these into a coherent narrative text (Clandinin & Connelly). When looking at the aforementioned three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, the researcher now needs to, "compose a text [that] at once looks backward and forward, looks inward and outward, and situates the experience within place" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 140).

One conundrum is the use of memory in writing. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) shared that memory is, "selective, shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experiences" (p. 142). Hence, to recall memory places an individual in looking back and interpreting that it is real when sometimes it may not be exactly as it was experienced. The act of embellishing what has happened may also be common as only the field texts bear witness to the events that took place (Clandinin & Connelly). Hence, some narrative inquirers may choose to peruse technology in

that many documents will be saved and coded using programs such as NUDIST to capture in the moment's happenings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). For this research, I did not utilize a coding program as it was not a fit for me in terms of capturing the depth connection I had with the mothers' stories.

In spending time with co-researchers in the field, and then writing their narratives, narrative inquirers may feel that they are less clear about what they have to say when they were certain about it before meeting and working with co-researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This may be a common theme as most do not feel clarity and certainty when they begin writing their field text (Clandinin & Connelly). Part of this uncertainty derives from having a deep connection with co-researchers and they are, "never only (nor even a close approximation to) any particular set of isolated theoretical notions, categories, or terms…they are people in all their complexity…they are people living storied lives on storied landscapes" (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 145). In essence, the task of writing then can be filled with tension as the researcher may struggle to write about what is "becoming" rather than "being (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 145). For myself, I listened to the audio-recordings and transcribed each one. This process was helpful in the writing process. I also contacted co-researchers periodically to ensure I have portrayed them in the way they see themselves, and the way they want to be portrayed.

Voice

In writing the research text, the narrative inquirer needs to pay attention to voice, the voice of the co-researchers, the self, other participants, and other researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In addition, it is important to be aware of the need to "speak to, and reflect upon, the audience's voices" (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 147). Thus, there are multiple voices at play and the art of writing narrative inquiry is about juggling all these voices, the voices "heard

and not heard" (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 147). I have been aware of many voices, my own, the co-researchers', and authors/researchers of studies from the literature review. In the writing process, I have reflected on all these voices in order to create the themes that emerged.

Signature

The narrative inquirer's signature relates to how thick or thin the writing is portrayed (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Thick, or vivid signatures, can run the risk of the inquirer being seen as too subjective, therefore too biased. Thin signatures may have readers feel that other theories and texts dictate, or that participants took over in the authoring of the work. I returned to co-researchers to talk about the text and asked questions such as: "Is this you? Do you see yourself here? Is this the character you want to be when this is read by others?" (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 148). These are questions of identity instead of asking "Is this what you said?" or, "Have I got it right?" (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 148). Consequently, the relationship I moulded with co-researchers informed and complimented this process.

Trustworthiness

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) expressed that the aim of narrative inquiry is not to provide generalizations; instead it is to create an art form whereby the reader can imagine their own uses and applications. The critics of this methodology expressed that this method is not theoretical enough (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). However, this methodology has anchored research in appreciating the multiple ways of knowing through resonance, authenticity, or trustworthiness (Clandinin & Connelly). For some researchers, the acknowledgment to the limits of validity within quantitative studies gives rise to a move toward narrative inquiry (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). The relational and collaborative nature of human science research, the use of the story, and a focus on careful accounts of lived experience are entrenched in narrative inquiry

(Pinnegar & Daynes). In this light, narrative inquirers, "accept and value the way in which narrative inquiry allows wonderings, tentativeness, and alternative views to exist as part of the research account" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 25). Clandinin and Murphy (2007) in their conversation with Elliot Mishler, a professor of social psychology, learned that he thinks it is problematic when narrative inquirers select a small part of the data to represent the whole. Additionally, Mishler also conveyed that the move towards visual representations will shift the focus away from traditional text-based methods of analysis, and that the reliance on technological interpretations may alter the work of narrative inquirers (Clandinin & Murphy, 2007). Thus, narrative inquirers need to be thoughtful to balance personal interpretation with the use of technology. As mentioned above, I did not use software in this thesis work, and instead used field texts, journal entries, and returned to co-researchers to authenticate and corroborate in the writing of their stories and themes.

Limitations

The concerns specifically related to narrative inquiry as a methodology, as expressed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) are associated with, "ethics, anonymity, ownership and relational responsibilities, how researchers are storied, the distinction between fact and fiction, and the possible risks, dangers, and abuses" (p. 170). Ethics was explored above, in terms of anonymity, as it may be difficult to provide complete anonymity when narrative inquirers are in the field and others may inquire about the his or her role. In addition, some co-researchers may decide to be named or become co-authors, in this situation the researcher has a duty to share the risks involved in doing so. In terms of ownership, the question becomes who owns the story, the inquirer or the co-researcher? It may be helpful to use a relational stance as when trust is established, co-researchers may often provide narrative inquirers with 'free range' to write what

they find to be suitable. When looking at how the narrative inquirer is storied, co-researchers of the study may often form stories about the inquirer. It is significant to be aware and warrant these stories as narrative inquiry is a relational methodology. In relation to fact and fiction, a discrepancy between these two can be blurry. In the genre of writing memoirs, it could be both fact and fiction. In narrative inquiry people may ask if the accounts are memory creations, and if so would these be facts? Lastly, when delving into risks, dangers, and abuses, the audience in narrative inquiry may wonder if stories have been smoothed over. It is important to be aware of the "I" in that the context of the work is imperative as narrative inquirers do not work in a vacuum. Therefore, the inquirer needs to be "wakeful" and "thoughtful" throughout the entire process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

I asked both co-researchers to provide their own pseudonym, which they did; however, both requested that I change it and that I choose it for them. Their concern was that readers could recognize their nickname and associate it with their stories. Both co-researchers bequeathed much trust in myself and the research process.

Summary of Methodology

The exploration of narrative inquiry contributed to a deeper understanding of this methodology and how it supports the understanding of the lived experience of bilingual mothers who have passed on their native language to their children. The progression of building a relationship with co-researchers as they share this lived experience is central to narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I have addressed a detailed exploration of this methodology in working with the research puzzle: *"What is the lived experience of bilingualism from the perspective of Chinese-Canadian mothers who have passed on their native language to their children?"*

Narrative Inquiry is an intensely relational methodology, and I have shared my personal journey of passing on my native Cantonese language as the first chapter of this thesis. In working with my co-researchers, I used some general questions, and encouraged them to guide the pathways of conversations. In turn, I have shared aspects of my life with them; this, I felt, created multi-layered and more fluid conversations. I have kept in my mind relational ethics, kept precocious journal entries and field texts. This was to ensure I captured my own as well as my co-researcher's stories vividly and vibrantly. As is evident, narrative inquiry is a most suitable methodology for this research puzzle.

Chapter IV: CANDACE'S STORY

"Passing on language is like passing on a family heirloom" (Candace's Transcript, L 276-277)

Early years: A Refugee New to Canada

"I go to class and I can't converse and what do I do?"

Candace was born in Vietnam. At the age of five, she escaped her country with her mother, father, and two brothers in 1978. On a day like any other, Candace's parents told her they will need to pack up and leave the only place she knew. The communist party from North Vietnam took over South Vietnam for several years and many of them did not favour Chinese people. Quickly they gathered their belongings in trifling bags and left for a slight refugee boat. The first one was broken and they had to board another boat that had been built in World War I. The size intended for 500 had to hold over 1500 people. The one item that kept her rested was a hammock that was wisely packed by her parents. She has distinct memories of a woman who died of extreme hunger and was thrown overboard.

> It was so sad, every day, every person, every family had '*yut bow jik sik meen*' [one package of instant noodles]. So they used water to cook it and the water was contaminated with gasoline, I remember the taste, I remember, carcinogenic right so I remember clearly who fed me, my mother, my father would feed me, I would take a small bite, my mom would say take a bigger bite girl and then I took a bigger bite and slowly swallowed it. When I turned around for more, '*mo si*' [there wasn't any more] because there was only one bite. The adult each took two bites, '*ngor sik yut dam*' [I took one] and I have two brothers, there were a total of five of us.

Candace and her family lived through some challenging months in Hainan Island and Hong Kong before sponsors from Canada took them in. She remembers her early years of being immersed in the Canadian culture. Her parents worked vigorously to support the family and Candace was left to go to school on her own, go home for lunch, and return to school. She would have over 60 late days in the course of a term because she was left on her own and could

not tell time. Her teacher would yell at her in the English language but she would not understand her words.

> I didn't realize I had to be at school by a certain time, I got yelled at by the teacher. She pulled me out of class because she got fed up with me walking into class late and shook me by the shoulder and saying why are you always late did you sleep in? I remember crying because I didn't understand why she was so mad about.

Candace had little knowledge of the English language when she entered grade one after attending kindergarten for a few months. She especially felt lost in learning math due to the language barrier. Hence, the grade one year was tumultuous with her not comprehending math because her teacher taught everything in English. It was not until grade two that she began to understand what people were saying around her.

> So I remember distinctly this whole language barrier with math. I was given '*yut ga yut*' [1 plus 1] or 6 plus 0, I couldn't do math because I didn't understand what was being taught. I'd copy my classmate and she'd say 'no no!' And then you have to take your work up to the teacher and she'd check the work, she'd mark you right then and there and tell you what was wrong.

Candace was able to grasp math concepts once she told her mother, who explained everything in Chinese. After that, math came easily to her. Candace's teacher had no idea that it was a language barrier and so she was not able to be very understanding or helpful in terms of Candace's challenges in learning.

> Wouldn't it sink in their heads that I didn't understand the language? I don't think I realized I was not being supported. I go to school because I am told to. I go to class and I can't converse and what do I do? I don't think I really realized I wasn't performing and it's a language thing. I don't think it was until grade two that I finally clued in.

At a young age, Candace spoke Cantonese, exclusively at home. It was a major part of who she was. Therefore the Chinese part of her was more prominent compared to the Western part of her.

> With the language thing, being that Chinese was my major language at home, whenever I wrote English, I found that I was always translating from Chinese into English, [in] my thoughts. I remember distinctly in my stories I was writing in language arts - awkward, awkward wording!

Throughout her childhood, Candace's parents expected all their children to speak Cantonese at home. Her mother was worried that they would lose the language and culture. Candace learned Vietnamese up until she was two years old because her father's parents raised her. Thereafter, her mother took care of her, partly because she wanted Candace to speak Cantonese. Currently, Candace is most fluent in English, then Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Mandarin. She is multilingual and has realized the benefits of knowing so many languages. At home, as a young child, when Candace and her brothers ceased to speak Chinese, something would be taken away.

> It was a rule once we step into the house, we must speak Chinese. Every sentence of English, we get a dollar taken out of our allowance. So that's not very many dollars. It was funny because we'd be tattling on each other, mommy he just spoke English, he said sit or something.

However, as soon they are outside of the home, Candace and her brothers would revert back to English. Candace's brothers, at young ages, rebelled against the Chinese language. Nonetheless, one of her brothers travelled extensively and now wants to learn Mandarin. The other brother is more fluent in Vietnamese than Candace is. This intergenerational expectation and the young generation wanting to assimilate is a common phenomenon in our society (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Costigan et al., 2009). However many do want to reclaim their Chinese identity when they become adults, as is evident in Candace's story.

> But as soon as we are out of the house, full-fledged English, so my brother the youngest actually struggled. He'd stutter in his Cantonese, and his Vietnamese was non-existent for quite a few years. He hung out with a lot of Asian friends but they also hung out with a lot of non-Asian friends. So they would just speak less and less. But now with their travels, my youngest [sibling] said, 'I really want to learn Mandarin Candace.' The

> youngest, this is the guy who couldn't stand Chinese school, he didn't want to listen but he really wants to learn Mandarin now.

When Candace was a child and teenager, there were many moments when she was glad and proud that she could speak Chinese. She met a Chinese friend in grade 3 and then continued to have many Asian friends as she grew older. In elementary school, she encountered some girl friends with whom she was able to converse in Chinese, she soon realized there is this other secret world, where others who are not Chinese, would not understand their language. Thus, she would feel more connected to her Chinese friends and felt comfortable speaking the language at school and in the playground. Candace did not feel shame speaking Cantonese. In fact, she said there are so many benefits in knowing another language.

> Just the fact that I could speak with my friends in Chinese and have some other people not understand, it was kind of cool. In grade five or six you, I met a group, and there were four of us girls. We always hung out together and did everything together. Every recess, we'd play together and that was when all the Chinese just came out. There were so many of them, and especially where we grew up, that makes the biggest difference.

Nevertheless, as a young Chinese person growing up in Canada, there were moments of feeling embarrassment. However, it was not associated with speaking the Chinese language.

> Not for the linguistics side, it was more of the poverty, like the financial side. My parents being new immigrants, having to work these assembly line jobs, or truck driving jobs, or taxi driver jobs. It's not so much shame, but kind of embarrassed to have people over to have friends over. So it had nothing to do with linguistics, it was just the new immigrant thing.

As the years passed, Candace began to use English more and more, and eventually became fluent in speaking, reading, and writing English. She began to integrate into the Canadian culture and felt comfortable attending school and participating in Canadian society as well as holding on to her Chinese culture and language.

Striving for Adulthood

"And once, in a while I'd think, oh my God I haven't spoken a single word of Chinese, I'm going to call my mom."

Candace had many Asian friends as she grew up in the southeast area of her city, where there was a large refugee and immigrant population. She naturally gravitated towards people who share her cultural background. However, for high school, her mother decided to enroll her in a school in the southwest. This was because the high school in the southeast area had a debauched reputation in the media. This other high school had a respectable standing academically, as it offered the international baccalaureate (IB) program. Candace's mother hoped for her to excel academically. Although there were not as many students who were Chinese, Candace continued to spend time with friends who were mostly of Asian descent. On the other hand, it was not the ethnicity of the individuals she drifted toward. The friends she chose were kind-hearted people, with whom she shared common interests.

> There was only one [Chinese speaking individual] and I didn't even know she could until many years later. She didn't speak it but she understood it and I never knew that. I did eventually find another click but they were a grade behind me, and they were the Chinese who could still speak some Chinese, and they were willing to, in general, outside of school. We did karaoke. I hung out with mostly Asians. There were many of them there, it was just how it turned out and I don't think it mattered to me truly if they were White, Brown, Black or whatever, as long as you were a good person, and you had the same mentality, which was fairly serious, studious, and generally hard working.

Candace moved to a new city and attended university to study engineering. She did not meet many peers of Chinese decent, especially Chinese women; this is due to the dominance of male students in the field of engineering. The ones who enrolled did not speak Chinese, this may be due to various reasons that she has now come to understand. At this time, she met J, who is now her partner, and who does not speak Cantonese. So, she used very little Cantonese, as people around her did not speak it, and she was focused on her studies.

> As I got older and especially in the field that I was in, it was mostly guys and really there was less time and space for conversing. Because I went to Edmonton, and then J went a year after so I wasn't even home and I definitely didn't watch Chinese TV, I didn't have time for that.

Consequently, there were moments when Candace felt she had lost some of the Chinese language because she was not able to practice enough on a daily basis. Candace realized this and felt she needed to practice using it in fear she might lose it.

> I remember J sometimes would say I'm sorry I'm not the best Chinese [speaker]. J would once in while make comments such as, I'm sorry you are losing your Chinese connection. And once, in a while I'd think oh my God I haven't spoken a single word of Chinese, I'm going to call my mom. I was in school and go to lectures and no one is going to speak Chinese with me.

Candace's desire to keep her Chinese identity was evident as she transitioned from elementary school to university. There were moments when she knew she needed more connection with the Chinese culture or she might become too Westernized. Her desire to have a strong bicultural identity plays a part in her mothering role.

Soaring into Motherhood

"I think it was just ingrained because I can, because I can speak it, and I can pass it on, so I will. Why would you choose to not impart some knowledge to your children?"

In her twenties, Candace and J united, and now have three lovely daughters; they are her pride and joy. Because of her resilient Chinese identity, she knew she would pass on Cantonese to her children. Candace's journey of passing on language does not entail a defining or "light bulb" moment; rather, it has been a gradual ascending process.

> I am of the mindset that maybe before I even had kids, I don't know at what point in time. I don't think I made a formal decision to myself that I am going to pass this on, I think it was just ingrained because I can, because I can speak it, and I can pass it on, so I will. Why would you choose to not impart some knowledge to your children?

Candace decided to stay home after her experience of a successful career as an engineer. This had to do with wanting to accomplish more work-life balance, as she found she did not spend enough time with her daughters. She was not able to entirely focus on her career because her mind was with her children during the work day. At the time of the interview, Candace indicated that it continues to be a challenge due to feeling isolated some days. However, she believes her effort as a mother has paid off. Her children understand more Cantonese, and can say words they otherwise would not with another caregiver. For instance, Candace noticed her youngest child is learning more of the Chinese language because she stayed at home since she was born.

> So my baby, she's speaking, she says words like '*po-po'* [carry], she says it kind of wrong because she's baby, she's saying '*gor gor'* [that one], and would say '*been gor'* [which one], '*yee gor'* [this one]? '*gor gor'* [that one]? And then um '*ni ni'* [milk], She's picking up more of the Chinese because I am home. I am seeing the difference and also because I am at home with the middle one, she is saying '*jow tow'* [good night], every night she says '*jow tow'* mommy and they use a bit more. The middle [child], I think her comprehension is quite good and once in a while, A, she will spew out a Cantonese word.

As part of this decision, Candace's mother had some influence, as she has pushed her to pass on the language. It is because her mother has a focus on education that Candace also finds it significant to work hard every day to impart the Chinese language to her own children. Moreover, there is also the relationship factor that comes into play; Candace's mother wants to be able to converse, with her grandchildren, in a language that is dear to her heart.

> She [mother] finished night school and finished grade 12 here. This is from a woman who came in her 30s and didn't speak a word of it. I think it's because she knows more, her parents are *Hak Ga* [a Chinese dialect], and she's Cantonese, and having been married to my dad, she picked up Vietnamese, and she is fluent in it. I mentioned she taught Mandarin, I think it's because she's already got the background, she picked up English. Partially because that is their most comfortable form of communication is Cantonese, and they [mother and father] want to be able to have some sort of a relationship with their grandkids right?

Candace endeavours to understand whether her decision to pass on the language is because her parents, especially her mother, is so passionate about it. She thinks it can be akin to the "chicken or egg" dilemma.

> If they weren't as forceful, I wouldn't have retained as much and I certainly wouldn't be trying to pass it on. I think if they were not as stringent on teaching us the language and hence the culture, that it isn't just language we pass on, that it is also culture, an aspect of culture.

Candace's mother has gone beyond and wants Candace to teach J, her partner, Cantonese. She thinks this would foster her granddaughters' success when both parents speak the same language. However, Candace believes this to be a strenuous process and is not in agreement with her mother.

> Sometimes it's hard because my mom makes comments like 'you have to teach J first.' *Ah ma lay mm ming bak, yut churt si dow yee ga herg mo gong gor yut gerg Jun Mun, ngor deem yorg gow herg ah* [You don't understand the process, from the moment he was born until now, he only spoke one language. How am I going to teach him?] My mom would say 'oh why bother if you want to teach your daughters, you first must teach your husband.' How can I teach him in this day and age, I'm not his mother, I can't parent him.

Nonetheless, there are instances to rejoice when her children do use the Cantonese she has passed on them. For instance, there is a moment of celebration when two of her daughters were testing their father on some Cantonese words. Candace is proud and ecstatic when these moments come up out of the blue. This is without her having to prompt her children to do so; they have taken upon themselves to teach J Chinese.

> Today at dinner they were trying to teach J. Last week A tested him and said 'do you know how to say butterfly?' She asked today, 'daddy how do you say butterfly" and before he answered, B, who sat next to him, she said "daddy do you know how to say Kleenex, daddy I'm going to teach you how to say Kleenex.' Yah I was thinking okay this is interesting so I was silent. She said '*jee gun*' perfectly. She was trying to teach J, each one word, *woo deep* [butterfly] and *jee gun.* I was impressed, not so much with A because I know she knows butterfly and I know she was trying to teach him last week but B she never, like once in a while she says '*jow tow*' [goodnight] ah *jow tow.* I was impressed with her, anyways it has a lot to do with me being at home cause it's repetition.

Additionally, Candace's partner is supportive of her in passing on a language he is not familiar with. He would join in and ask their children what Candace has said, and the process has been a profound one for him.

> But I think if it wasn't because he's open-minded enough and that he is seeing how the kids understand me and are now translating for me to him. And he will do it sometimes as a test right? I'll say something fully, like the entire instruction is all in Cantonese or explanation and he'd ask, 'what did your mom just say' as a test. And he's amazed that they understand me because he didn't have that right?

On the other side, there are times when it is not easy for Candace's partner J when he does not understand the language. Here is an incident when J became aggravated due to this, and in turn the feeling became projected onto Candace. Consequently, it may be easier if J speaks the same native language, as it would result in more unity and common understanding.

> When he's frustrated about something, like we are running behind for an important appointment meeting, or something stressful and I say something in Chinese, he just doesn't have the patience. He would say 'I don't understand that.' He has done that and then I get upset and then I get frustrated.

Candace speaks Cantonese half the time and English half the time with her children. She is able to speak more Cantonese when there is time and they are not rushed to do something or get anywhere. There are also moments when she asks them to speak it back to her so they will have practice doing so.

> I noticed the difference because I'm at home I think that makes the world of difference and they are saying a bit more. I don't know if they mean it as a mockery, maybe to my six year old it is, but they can, like my six year old I will ask her, 'A, how do you say butterfly in Chinese?' [She would say] '*woo deep*.' Sometimes I'll test them, I would say 'okay you want a lollipop? Okay what colour is this? Whatever colour you want, you have to tell me that colour in Chinese and I'd give it to you.'

On the other hand, the passing on of the Cantonese language has transpired not without challenges, as speaking the language is not as natural to Candace, compared to when she was a child. She has knowledge of the words to everyday undertakings, but does not have the formal

vocabulary as she would if she had been raised in Asia, and in their school system. In addition, there is this cultural backdrop of not having had deep conversations with her parents as a young child and an adult.

> It's a challenge for me to continue [to speak Cantonese to my daughters] to because every day I have to make a conscious reminder to maintain the Chinese communication. Growing up, and I don't know if it is because of the Asian culture, but my parents and I barely conversed. The conversations that we had would be related to chores; we don't have emotional conversations. My conversations with my kids, it's so much easier to just speak English, because my vocabulary compared to Chinese is incomparable. Growing up I was trying to translate my Chinese into my English, before I would write it and hand it in, but now it's reversed. It's a conscious decision and one I almost have to remind myself to do every day.

Sadly, Candace has other challenges in passing on the Cantonese language that involve her mother and father-in-law. One of the reasons is they do not speak Cantonese. For a short period, they took care of A, and made it obvious that they did not support her in passing on the language. This is a crushing reality and Candace continues to be baffled by their comments. When friction exists because her in-laws would express disagreement, it is frustrating to comprehend their points of view. At times, this has caused a rift in their relationship because this mission is so important to Candace and she feels she is climbing uphill all alone. She believes that when individuals are raised in Canada, they become immersed in the dominant culture and their own culture may be lost. She thinks it is important to keep that cultural connection.

> My in-laws they were against it. When I was teaching A, she comprehended, she was counting in Cantonese, I got her to count when she was a year and a half. My mother-in-law was babysitting my oldest for ten months. I actually had this big sheet that was translating for them. When she says '*ni ni'* it means milk, when she says '*bow bow*,' it means bread because she was learning them right? My mother-in-law said that when A goes to school, she would be confused.

As a result, for Candace it has been an "uphill battle," as it could feel isolating when others are not on the same path in this journey with her of passing on her heirloom. This has

derived from not having enough support from her mother and father-in-law. Although it would appear that they have changed their mindset since the children have grown up and are speaking perfect English. However, though Candace has felt discouraged at times, she feels the strength to continue to impart this knowledge.

> When I was first teaching A Cantonese, I felt it was a uphill battle because my in-laws were against it and kind of making comments like what did you just say, as in why aren't you speaking English in front of me? It's almost an undertone like well it's kind of rude for you to be speaking to my grandchild in front of me in a language I don't understand. I've felt a bit uncomfortable, but I have support, J's support and so I just kept going because I know if I don't teach them now, they would not know it. I know the potential consequences if I don't expose them now and so I just kept going even though I was frowned upon. When we have those gatherings and I'm the only one speaking Chinese, it does feel kind of awkward because I don't want them to feel like you were saying something bad about them, I don't want to be rude, but at the same time, this is my right, as a mother to pass this on too. My in-laws, now that the kids are older, I think they realized the kids have no problems with English. I think they are proud even though they won't tell me because the comments have stopped.

Moreover, the days could propel forth hastily with Candace having to make breakfast, drop off A and B at school or at other activities, ensure her youngest gets her nap, make lunch, dinner, clean up, and the list goes on. At times, it can be challenging to consciously translate her English thoughts into Cantonese, when it would be so much easier to simply speak English.

> I'm explaining to her the piano today, she was supposed to go on and practice and she got frustrated. For me, to stop myself it takes a lot of work, stop and translate everything all my thoughts, I would first waste a lot of time. Second, it would probably come out wrong. I shouldn't give up but sometimes I find that it's just so much easier to just go and say 'A, you have to do this because dah dah dah dah,' and done. But if I'm translating it back into Chinese, she might not listen to me, half of the time she wouldn't take it in and digest any of it, *yup yut yee and churt yut yee* [in one hear and out the other ear]. Even when I am telling her in English, as if she is digesting me lecturing her on why she has to read her notes.

Despite these challenges of having to be deliberate and conscious every day in order to pass on the language to her children, for Candace, there are many reasons to continue on the climb of passing on this heirloom. For instance, after she graduated from University, she worked

for a construction company in which she was sent to China for 12 weeks. Due to having learned some Mandarin as a young person (her mother taught at a Mandarin school), she knew the language. She was able to assume the role of interpreter for her company, and found that to be an asset. As a result, she hopes her children will also benefit from being able to speak more than one language.

> I can order [in a restaurant] and kind of converse with someone [in Mandarin], I could sort of figure out my way. I think it's a benefit on many levels - intellectually, survival maybe, maybe they'll need it one day, at least they can say 'help me,' or if someone says 'help me,' they can respond to that.

In terms of disadvantages, Candace does not think there will be any for her children like the challenges she underwent, herself, in the first few years of school in Canada. She believes her children have a strong English background, as they watch television in English, they speak in English, and they are immersed in the Canadian culture.

> My kids however, I would say no I don't think [there are disadvantages] because we balance them. My husband does, and even if he could speak Cantonese, we would still speak English. If all I did was push Chinese on them solely and leave them to their own devices to start kindergarten and grade one without knowing a single word of English, I think that might be tough for them. From what I experienced, I think that's tough. But that is not what they are experiencing; I don't see a negative at this point in time.

Candace thinks the desire to learn is up to her children, presently, she is assuming the role of helping them build a foundation. When they grow up, they may choose to develop their language skills further, however that is up to their own choice at that time. Candace also considers that there is a high possibility that her children may lose the Chinese which is a dismal thought. Nonetheless, this does not stop her from continuing to speak it to them, especially at this young age when they are able to absorb it.

> I'm proud that the baby can speak a few words, B can speak a few words, even A for that matter. But I know as a fact as they go to school, none of their friends are going to be Chinese. Even if they are, they are not going to choose to speak Chinese like I did with

> my friends. I am trying to maximize what they are exposed to at this age because this is the best time to learn.

Candace has such a strong desire for this calling; she thinks if J is not so supportive or is even against her passing on the Chinese language, the partnership would not work out. She has come to the conclusion that she would not be with someone who disagrees with something dear to her heart.

> It's more of how important it is to me to pass on the language because it wouldn't really matter if he was really really supportive, if he is sort of supportive, fully supportive, if he was against, I would have a problem with that. For what reason, why would he be against it? What logical reason can he possibly give me to negate the passing on of this? If you can then maybe okay, maybe I will consider not trying to pass it on. However, if J was against it, I wouldn't have married him. Your upbringing makes you who you are.

In terms of hopes and dreams for her children, Candace has a medical condition and there was a chance that she might not have survived the birthing of B, her second daughter. Understandably, she wants the best for her children: happiness, purpose, fulfillment, and care for one another. At that time of discovering this condition, she wrote a letter to her daughters. It was her desire to share with her daughters the things she envisioned for them

> My hopes and dreams for my kids really it's really broad. It's just that they realize their full potential that they know that they belong here, that they have a place in this world and no one can tell them otherwise. *Ngor mmm shorn herg day bay yun ha* [I don't want them to be picked on]. I want them to be strong enough that they can handle themselves, but also weak enough that they will let someone take care of them. I want them to love each other, take care of each other because I won't be there to nourish that. I want them to take care of their daddy, and just be good people. I didn't even touch on language because I would be there to teach it to them.

In regards to passing on Cantonese to future generations, Candace does not expect that her children teach the language to their children. The future is unknown and to have this expectancy could be detrimental to their relationship. When the mother has a different cultural vision from her children, disharmony may arise (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Hwang et al., 2010).

> I don't expect them to pass it on to their kids; I would be joyous if they were good enough to be able to do that. You never know, they may take a job in HK, even an internship for 12 months that would change their life. That's all it would take, but at least I have given them whatever broken Chinese I have given them.

Candace has thought about whether mothers need high self-confidence and self-esteem in order to pass on a native language, in spite of the challenges. In relation to passing on the native language throughout the generations, Candace shares her insights into what it may take to persist in teaching language.

> I think it does help to have some sense of self and a level of self-esteem. But at the end of the day, I am wondering if this whole process is largely affected by how one was raised. What we teach our children may be significantly dependent on what we were taught ourselves growing up. I am not sure that it necessarily requires much self-esteem to teach our children a native tongue, but it does likely require personal conviction to be at it and to not quit when the going gets tough. But such is life. Ironically, I wouldn't say I have particularly high self-esteem, but perhaps a certain level of stubbornness?

Candace does not have a persistent opinion about mothers who know the language, but have not passed it on to their children. Nevertheless, she does think it a "waste" when mothers do have the ability to do so, but have kept the language concealed from their children. The generational impact of not passing on a native language is significant.

> I try not to judge, I think it's a bit of a shame but it's their choice. Passing on a language is many things like how do you raise your child and it's really hard to play God sometimes and say you should be raising them this way or that way. But I think if you are fully capable, it's a bit of a lost. It's like having that heirloom in your hands and refusing and simply throwing it in the water, gone, like the Titanic, it's gone that diamond. *Hi lay gor sow shurn been, deem gi mmm gow lay gor ji lerg, jow sheern herg day mmm yew, hay ma ngor yow shorn ba herg day, lay dum herg lok horg, ho si* [it's in your hands, how come you don't hand it to your child, at least hand it over, even if they don't want it, not only did you not hand it over, you dropped it into the ocean, I think it's such a waste]. Especially if you are fluent, it's a waste. It's knowledge, that is how society has come along, so it's a piece of, it's also a piece of who you are.

Candace has considered the near future and is contemplating returning to work. One dilemma is that she thinks her children may lose their Cantonese language if she does take that path.

> I would consider a Chinese nanny as long as she fits the rest of the criteria for how to deal with children. She's got the same lines of thought and same methodology as J and I do, otherwise I am afraid the safety of my kids come first before I would go with whoever I feel is most suitable. If there were two candidates that I think is identical, of course I would get the one that is Cantonese.

I admire Candace's determination and dedication to impart the gifts of language and culture to her children. She has toiled against the steep rocks, and prevailed in this uphill battle to share with her children, this family heirloom, of the Cantonese language. The connection and bond that has taken shape between us is truly unique and extraordinary. I know we will continue to nurture it. In fact we have already become very close, living parallel lives in this journey of passing on our native language to our children.

Chapter V: PAULINE'S STORY

"The power of passing on my language will open doors for my children" (Pauline's Transcript, L 105-106)

Early Years: A Chinese Baby Born in Canada

"I have this special ability to speak that people don't understand."

Pauline's story began here in Canada; she was born in this country and has parents who emigrated from Asia. After her parents met in Hong Kong, they got married and decided to move to an English speaking country in order to start a family and provide more opportunities for their future children. Thereafter, they immigrated to Canada in the 1970s and settled in Calgary. Pauline remembers not speaking English before attending kindergarten. Even though she went to preschool, she made a Chinese friend and would converse in Cantonese, while not taking in much of the English language. Her mother was worried about her not learning English.

> She [mom] pulled me out because I was born in Canada and I couldn't understand English. My teachers in the public school system said, 'you are going to ESL.' My mom could not believe it, she wondered why her daughter needed English as a second language, she was freaking out because I wasn't speaking English, since I could understand Chinese, she pulled me out of Chinese school.

As Pauline entered another grade, the English language ultimately arose with ease, and it was there to stay. It is not difficult to pick up the language when one is so immersed in the culture, watch television in English, and has to speak English at school. This is a widespread phenomenon for many Chinese individuals raised in Canadian society (Berry, 2005; Fillmore, 1991).

> Once you are immersed in there [school] with all English you just learn, it's easy when you are young I would assume so. English is all around you; it would be difficult to not pick it up.

At a young age, Pauline knew she had a strong Chinese identity. There was a sense of power and control because she had knowledge of a language that many around her did not have. In some ways, this "secret language" has contributed to her feeling proud that she has hold of another skill. It made her feel special that she could speak Cantonese fluently.

> I remember one time when I was in elementary and this person came up to me and bugged me or asked me questions, I just got fed up and I started talking to her in Chinese. I just rambled on in Chinese and the person just walked away and I felt so powerful. I was so glad I knew a second language because now people won't come talk to me, they won't bother me and I was able to get out my feelings. I'm not holding anything in, it was all out so I was able to use my Chinese fluently and it just felt good to just let it all out and I felt powerful. I have this special ability to speak that people don't understand. Only I can understand or whoever else was Chinese around me, they could understand but there wasn't many back then.

When Pauline was in primary school, she and her younger brother accompanied her mother to visit Hong Kong; it was Pauline's first time out of the country. This was a most extraordinary and memorable trip. She rode on an airplane for the first time and voyaged to a place where she felt connected with others. She was exposed to a culture entirely dissimilar from the one she grew up in, where everyone spoke English. In Hong Kong, they all spoke Cantonese and she felt "at home."

> It was an eye-opener because when I attended elementary school here, I was a minority. I didn't realize there was a whole country of Chinese people. They all speak Chinese and I could understand every single word and I felt at home there so it was really good.

Thus, Pauline's early years were filled with memorable moments when she associated herself with being Chinese and felt proud of her Chinese language. She continues to bring strength and diversity as she navigates the realm of this English speaking society, while having a resilient Chinese identity.

Mounting up in Canadian Society

"We had our secret language, so it was kind of empowering."

In terms of language, Pauline thinks there is a discrepancy between her mother's generation and her own generation. She believes her mother was worried about her not learning English, where now she is concerned about her children not learning Chinese. She thinks with education, people now are more aware of the process of learning multiple languages, and how it would not confuse the child (Rodriguez-Fornells et al., 2006). In the past, immigrant parents want their children to be integrated (Berry, 2005), maybe even assimilated because they moved to Canada in order to provide their children with the advantage of a better English education.

> In that generation she [mom] thought, we came to this country, a country of gold, you need to know English in order to be successful in life right? Whereas as now, in our generation, the more languages you learn, the more doors you open. We hope that it will make you more successful.

Pauline does not recall feeling shame or embarrassment as a child in terms of her Chinese identity or speaking the Chinese language. In fact, she thinks the word "proud" resonates with her the most. There is much "power" in knowing a language when others around her assumed she did not understand Cantonese.

> When I was growing up in elementary, [and] in junior high there were these students from Hong Kong and they were speaking Cantonese and they thought, 'oh she's a CBC [Canadian Born Chinese], she wouldn't understand a word we say' and they were talking right in front of me and I could understand every single word they were saying. I could choose to either respond back or to pretend I didn't understand and just continued to listen in to hear what people were saying. It was very powerful that's why I said I never felt embarrassed about it because it was power, it's another tool I have and it helps.

In terms of her academic achievement, throughout her school years, Pauline's parents expected 100 percent when she would bring home a report card. This made her feel less than adequate. As a new learner of the English language, she felt it was unfair to expect her to achieve perfect grades in that subject.

> In my generation if I came home with that [90% or higher], I get no praise. It was always, 'oh you didn't get a 100 percent where is the other 3 percent?' I hated report card time, I was not an A plus plus student. I have ESL, I'm not going get a hundred percent in English!

Pauline felt that she naturally immersed in English, although she continued to feel "proud" of her Chinese self. Her parents wanted deeply for her to succeed, thus Pauline felt much pressure at school and worked hard to accomplish optimal grades. At the end, she thinks in the Chinese way, it is not possible to fully please ones parents, as long as she puts forth all her effort that is all she could do.

Leaping into Motherhood

"We never know what is in store for us in the future, but having been exposed to more things in life, my hope is that it will enlighten my children to see their own path of how they will make it up their own mountain" (Email Correspondence, January, 2013)

When Pauline was 30, she united with her partner, H, who is of Chinese descent, however he does not speak Cantonese. Today Pauline has the gift of a six year old daughter, E and a four year son, J. In terms of whether it was a conscious decision for Pauline to pass on the language to her children, she believes it is very much so.

> I find my language is a little lacking, despite the fact that I could speak it, I can't read it, I can't write it, and that's one thing I lacked when I was growing up. I hung around with a lot of Orientals, unlike me, they were not born here, they came so they could read, they could write, and I felt left out so I really wanted to learn. Because of my desire to learn, I want them [my children] to learn. My company had a partnership with a Chinese investment corporation out in Beijing. I missed out on some opportunities because upper management didn't come ask me directly, but I heard rumours, that they were asking some people who knew me if I knew Mandarin. They said, 'I don't think she does, I think she only knows Cantonese.' Little do they know, I do know a little bit but because of that it opens up a lot more doors. That was my conscious decision to say I want more doors to be open for my kids in the future. China is an emerging economic power; it's not going to slow down any time soon so why not give my children the opportunity? If they choose to, they have a choice right? They are not bound by just English and they are limited. And if they want to learn other languages I'm more than happy to have them learn.

As evident in Pauline's childhood experiences, she thinks it is substantial for a Chinese person to have strong Chinese identity. In fact, she thinks someone with this characteristic holds the Chinese culture in a positive light, practices Chinese traditions, and also speaks the Chinese language (LaFromboise et al., 1993). As a mother, Pauline believes it is imperative to have high expectations and require her children to do their best. This led Pauline to decide to enroll E into a Mandarin bilingual program and she is progressing positively.

> They don't have a choice, they are going to Mandarin immersion, they have no say in that, so that's kind of like a force right. I don't ask them, 'would you like to go to your designated school or would you like to go to Mandarin immersion?' I didn't give them that choice. I say 'you are going,' so for me that is force and same with piano. I don't force them that they have to speak to me, like I kind of say oh I don't understand what you are saying but then they get frustrated. I don't want them to get to the point where they hate the language so I don't force in that sense you know.

One of the reasons for Pauline's decision to educate her children in a bilingual program is that China is a growing powerhouse. Pauline reasons many people in the world speak Mandarin and in order to be competitive in this society, one needs to know more than one language. In addition, Mandarin is also the most widely spoken language in the world. However, this decision does not come easily because after a long day of work, she still has to push on to do homework with her daughter. Nevertheless, the rewards of this decision have been immense.

> If they want to go to another market, it's available for them. And I can see that Chinese is influencing the Western world too, people in my work force, they are offering courses in Mandarin and business people are taking these courses so I am kind of wondering oh why won't I immerse my kids at a young age cause it's a lot harder to learn language when you are older. So it's just like opening doors, giving them that choice.

In a sense, Pauline wants the Chinese language to be all encompassing, so she has immersed E in an environment to make sure she feels it is "natural" to learn Chinese. She thinks one's environment and upbringing play a substantial factor in terms of learning a language.

> I think that is key in order to instill that in them, it just will become natural; it won't be such a struggle. Because it was a struggle for the first five years to get E to speak any and

> now she's in the immersion, her friends are speaking it, it's just natural for her and that's what I want. I don't want it to be a forced effort. It helps to have people, like for me growing up, having people around me that speak the same language, have the same cultural background, it helps. Now she has friends who are all doing the same thing, I mean peer pressure and all that, it just helps, it makes it easier.

Hence, Pauline feels it is important for the desire to learn Chinese to come from her children. In this way, it is not so much the assertion from her, rather, her children will be self-motivated to climb their own mountain. She recalls a time when her cousins became more interested in learning Chinese. The key was to expose them to other places in the world, such as travel to Hong Kong where everyone speaks the language.

> My uncle on my dad's side, he brought my cousins over to Hong Kong for a month. My cousins back then, they didn't speak Chinese, they thought there was no need to speak Chinese, no one speaks Chinese here in Canada, why would we need to know it right? He brought them back and they were a lot older at the time, I think they were in high school or university. They went back for a month and when they came back, they could speak a lot better Chinese now, not to say they never spoke it in the past, but they had no interest doing so right but now they can.

Consequently, Pauline feels that it is important to bring her children back to Asia periodically so they will be exposed to the culture and language. They will be taking a trip to Hong Kong and Singapore in the spring. She hopes to nurture her children's interest in learning more languages.

> Hong Kong is a pretty safe place since I know it, just to know that there isn't just one language. And same with Singapore, that way, Singapore is more multilingual, they speak English, they speak Mandarin, they speak Malay so it will be a good experience for them as well, just to know that there isn't just one language.

One of Pauline's other aspirations is to take her daughter to Taiwan every summer so she could attend summer Chinese school. As mentioned, she has a belief in travelling and immersing her children in the culture and language. The fact that Chinese will be the dominant language in Taiwan will open their eyes to an entirely new world.

> I have even looked over summer camps in Taiwan for E where we would go over for four weeks and just it'll be like summer school for her over there. Maybe when she is 10 or 11, I will send her there maybe for two weeks on her own and two weeks with me and we might consider that option and again that will be a force maybe I don't know. We will see when that road comes right. I also think, that's not just for language, that's also for her to get immersed in the culture, because she will be in Taiwan by herself maybe it will give her some life skills as well. I fully believe in travel cause it opens up your eyes to new experiences, new cultures, you see new things, who knows what might come out of it.

Due to Pauline's resilient Chinese identity, she feels it would be less than ideal if her own children do not speak and understand Chinese. Knowledge is power. Accordingly, as a mother, it is vital for Pauline to endow her children with the choice of language so that they may have greater opportunities.

> Before I had children, I never thought of language. After I had kids because I am Chinese and I grew up in Canada and I have friends who were born here too, they are CBCs and they don't speak a word of Chinese at all like, they don't even understand it and I think it's such a pity. So I think no I would never want my kids in that position. I want them to have a choice as to whether or not they want to understand you. They can pretend they don't understand but at least they know.

To reinforce this power, earlier Pauline made reference to opening doors for her children. Because she works in the business world, she has witnessed doors being opened for those who are multilingual. She would like her children to benefit from this advantage when they enter the workforce.

There is much gratification to know E is achieving boundlessly in the bilingual program, writing sentences in Chinese, and making friends from her own culture. Pauline feels it is important for E to have these friends, as when she was growing up, she always felt more connected to people who were Asian, and Chinese, in particular. In fact she continues to have Asian friends as she said she feels more of a solidarity and connection with those from the Asian

culture. She also believes the way Chinese parents bring up children is different from the Western way.

> It's just natural, I feel more comfortable with them, I would say you share more common ideologies in terms of when you were young, how you could relate to them, because your parents are all the same, they are strict, they force you to do things, you have that commonality right. Now that we are older, the way we bring up children is also different right, we are more, I don't know how you say it, I think the way we bring kids up is different from how Caucasians are.

Hence, Pauline describes this difference between the Chinese and Western form of mothering. She believes she has a blend of both. She has high expectations on the one hand and is concerned about her children's emotions on the other hand.

> I can understand why there are time outs we care about their psychological well-being, their emotional well-being. Whereas the Chinese, we are very narrow-minded, you must perform a certain way. I think that's a little bit too rigid, I want to give a little bit more flexibility. I think the Chinese they are more routine in procedure, where you follow this way, this is the right way. Whereas Western way, they are more creative in thinking, they are more open-minded you know freedom of speech, so I kind of want that in my kids too.

Therefore, Pauline strives to be a present and purposeful mother. For instance, although she offers praise to E when she attains an optimal mark on her test, she wonders about the best method to so.

> The dilemma is oh no if I praise her too much then she's going to expect it every single time and if she doesn't [get 100%] it's going to set her up for a big disappointment. I mean I do praise her but sometimes I'm guilty of overly praising her, I think by praising her too much I set the bar too high for her. She'll always want it right, so I'm debating which the right way is.

To Pauline, she thinks anything her children learn, whether it be a language or a musical instrument, will benefit them in the here and now and into the future. At a young age, children's brains are like sponges and the more they are exposed to, the more knowledgeable they will be.

Therefore, she has enrolled her children in piano and would love for them to learn other languages if the opportunity arises.

> Both of them are in piano, E I kind of have to force her a little bit, well she enjoyed music when she was young so I thought I will put her in piano. I invested in a piano so I said you are going to do it. And then J, I guess he sees E playing and actually when I say practice time for the piano, he's always the first one to say I want to go first.

Pauline has thought more into the future, and has plans to help E foster a deeper interest in the Chinese culture. Her intentional and purposeful way of being as a mother is evident.

> That's another extracurricular activity that I would hopefully get E into in the future is calligraphy, Chinese calligraphy, cause she loves art. I'm hoping I can instill that in her. When she does the Chinese calligraphy, you have to write it in traditional so I'm hoping she will be able to learn it. anticipate

On the topic of how far she sees herself in fulfilling this language mission, although Pauline believes it is up to her children whether to pass on the Chinese language, she sees herself speaking it her grandchildren one day. On the other hand, it depends on how her children feel about this and whether their partners will be supportive of it. At the end, Pauline will make a decision when the time comes.

> That would be their choice. I know if they have children, I would be using Chinese with their kids because I've already made that conscious effort to pass it on to my kids. Why would I not pass it on to my grandkids? And I'm hoping that, with their life experience, maybe it will come naturally to them, that they will speak it. Who knows what the future holds, maybe they are going to marry European, maybe they are going to learn another language entirely right? So it will be up to them. I wouldn't tell them they have to pass it on, but I would make an effort, if my grandkids came to see me, I would speak my native language. I would still try to pass my language on but if the parents don't want me to I have to respect them because it's their kids.

Pauline hopes that when her children become older, they will understand the benefits of knowing another language. She definitely does not want to see them disliking the language, and wishes one day they will see what a gift it is to be multilingual.

> I hope maybe when they are older, like right now J is kind of rebelling against the language. But I hope when they are older and they can understand, I can actually tell

> them why I want them to learn and it will be all about opening doors, having an extra tool, it's not going to harm them, it only will benefit them right? So why are they rebelling against it? Why is it such a bad thing? Why do they think it's such a bad thing? I will ask them.

Pauline knows the English language dominates how individuals converse in our country. People may think it is enough to know one language. However, Pauline thinks the contrary and believes it is important for her children to be exposed to Chinese every day.

> I know because it's so so hard to speak a second language here in Canada, especially when everyone here speaks English. My main push, my main passion for them, I want them in an immersion school where they are exposed to it every day. It becomes a norm where right now it's constantly a battle right and I didn't want that.

To exacerbate this concern, the common spoken language of English is easier to use with her children because both Pauline and her partner communicate in it. There is a level of difficulty in passing on the Chinese language when her partner does not speak it. Accordingly, it does take a conscious effort to do so and keep at it even when her children prefer English at this moment.

> The children see that you are speaking English to your partner, and they may think, why am I getting a different treatment? Well I get that a lot when I try, when I ever make a conscious effort to speak Chinese to my kids, they always look at me and say, 'mommy speak English,' they give me that attitude like what is wrong with you? Why are you speaking this weird language to me that I don't really understand? They come out and say 'we don't understand what you are saying speak English,' so it makes it even more challenging right?

Although Pauline's partner, H, does not speak the same native language, he has been fairly supportive of this endeavor. He lets Pauline make the decisions regarding the education of their children. They both have a busy work schedule, and at times it may be trying to have the work-life balance. However, Pauline has pushed forth with language and music in order to assist her children so they will open their own doors one day.

> He supports me, he just lets me do it and then when I need help or anything, he helps with the English side of things. He will say, 'I don't know Chinese so I can't help with the Chinese homework.' 'I don't know piano, I don't know the notes,' well neither do I, 'well you teach them,' and I do because I have that strong desire to learn. I want to instill it in my kids so I will make that effort to help them or make it interesting for them.

On the other hand, in terms of being supportive, there are times when Pauline stresses when her partner cannot help their children, due to not having knowledge of the Chinese language. However, this is a choice she has made, and she will continue to soar upwards, even when the obstacles can be immense.

> Struggle yes, constant struggle, because he just goes, 'I don't know Chinese, you help her with the homework,' right. Coming back from work, I have to teach my kids piano, get them to practice which I have to take on that responsibility. On top of that, E has Chinese homework, and it's really stressful for me because it's like rush rush rush, and never have time to breath. So sometimes I would like him to help, but I know his hands are tied because he doesn't know the language and again it's a struggle right? But in terms of not being supportive, I don't think so. He looks at her work and he listens to what she says and what she does and he's in awe too, like I think he's proud as well of what she's accomplished so when you are amazed by what your kids can do, I don't see how you cannot be supportive.

In contrast, if Pauline's partner was not supportive of her passing on the language, she would like to know the reason behind it. To her, the benefits are immense and she would need a great debate from his point of view to be swayed into not doing so. Ultimately, she feels adamant about this undertaking and does not think anything would justify the termination of it.

> If he was not supportive there has to be a reason why and whatever that reason may be, we both have to talk about it a figure it out. I have my justifications for why I want my kids to learn, so he better have some pretty strong points as to why he would be against them to learn any language. I don't see any negatives to it. I know in the past, one of the concerns was may be oh if you teach them too many languages at the same time, they are going to be confused, they are going to be mute right? They just can't pick it up, but that has not been the case, yes it might be a bit longer for them to distinguish the differences and they might meddle it together you know, Chinglish or whatever you might call it, where people might not understand them but eventually they do get there right. It's just a matter of time and patience of how you teach them, so I don't know what would be a negative.

When her children get older and may rebel against speaking Chinese, Pauline may take a more laid-back stance. She thinks to continue to force them to speak it may have adverse effects.

> I'd let them be, if they don't want to speak it then fine. But I know at least they've had their foundation, it's not going to go away anywhere. That would be their choice, I can't force them, it's their life that they are going to live. I only provide the foundation, what they want to do with it is their choice. I'm not going to say I'm going to disown them if they don't speak Chinese. I think maybe they might rebel when they are teenagers, who knows, maybe when they are mothers themselves or fathers they would say, 'oh I want my kids to learn Chinese now too.'

Pauline's intention is to give her children ample opportunities to thrive. She will pass on everything she knows so they will have the gift of choosing what they want to do with it.

> I don't want them to be ashamed to not even know, not to come back and say, 'how come you never taught me Chinese?' I don't want them to *yeern ngor* [blame me]. It's easier for them to say, oh I'm not going to have that a part of my life now, rather than for them to come back and say, 'you didn't put it there when you had the chance.' At that point in time, it's their choice, they chose to not do it, it's not me that didn't give them that opportunity, they can't come back and argue with me.

Pauline does think it takes some level of determination in order to continue on this upward climb of passing on the Chinese language. Presently, even though she finds it a daily challenge to continue to pass on the language, she will not give up.

> I think that a mother's sense of herself and her identity is a huge factor in her drive to keep motivated to continue whatever her path is in life. For myself, I don't see myself as having a very strong self-esteem coming from my background. I have had to learn to it throughout the years and it takes me a long time to build the confidence within myself to stand up and acknowledge that I am actually good at anything in life. I am very quick to fall back into my old habits, of looking down on myself, and living for others rather than myself. However, with motherhood came the push from the children, that I must face my shortcomings because I have a strong desire for my children to be successful adults. Success being measured by them being healthy, independent and having a good sense of self-worth, the latter aspect of which I lack.

Pauline thinks that learning language, music, and other extracurricular activities compliments each other in terms of providing more areas where her children may excel. As a

mother she hopes her children will use these tools to "climb their own mountain" in the future, no matter how steep or rough it gets in order to reach the peak.

> My passion for the children to learn Chinese is very much similar to my passion for the children to learn music. It will be another tool under their belt that should they need to use it in their future - it will be there for them. It is my passion for all the lessons I put my children through - swimming, art, gymnastics - it is to enrich their lives with more skills that make them more well-rounded individuals. We never know what is in store for us in the future, but having been exposed to more things in life - my hope is that it will enlighten my children to see their own path of how they will make it up their own mountain. On a climb, you have the support of spotters, ropes, and equipment - but at the end, the climber must use their own strength to make it to the top.

In terms of hopes and dreams for her children, Pauline, as any mother would want, would like to see that her children flourish physically, psychologically, emotionally, and socially. She wants the best for her children. On top of this, she thinks it would be nice if they embrace the Chinese language too.

> I don't think it's a hope per say, I'm just saying it'll be nice [if they can speak Chinese], I won't hope for it, I'm not going to set myself up for disappointment, but whatever makes them happy. As parents we just want our kids to be happy and healthy and grow up to lead a good life right, a happy life, not suffering or anything like that.

Through the process of meeting and getting to know Pauline, there is a common camaraderie between us and we voiced the significance of not feeling alone in this journey. No matter how challenging it can be some days, because our children are too young to understand the impact of our hopes and dreams for them, we want to continue to climb this mountain for them. I appreciate Pauline's perseverance and commitment to her children, in order for the limitless opportunities they may reap as adults.

Chapter VI: DISCUSSION OF THREADS

The process of writing Candace and Pauline's stories, as well as my own story has been a cathartic and magnificent experience in terms of personal and professional learning, reflection, and growth. In looking across "time, place, and relationships" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 19) and in "restorying" each of our stories (Creswell, 2013, p. 74), embedded within all is a "thread that threaded or wove over time and place through an individual's narrative account" (Clandinin 2013, p. 132). Each story is placed alongside each other and I looked for "echoes that reverberated across accounts" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132).

Further, each mother in this study has used words that pertain to mountain climbing in telling our stories. Mountain climbing is one of the world's most ancient and most dangerous sports. In prehistoric times, it was thought that the ascent to the top brings one closer to heaven (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014). Each mother used the analogy of climbing an "uphill battle, an uphill climb, to keep going and don't look up too soon," and more. The comparison was used beautifully coming from the words of each mother. Therefore, the metaphor of climbing was intertwined in each story.

After reviewing the transcripts, writing the stories, and revising and re-reading each story, there were five common threads that emerged: (1) mother's pride in bilingualism, (2) bilingualism matters despite the absence of emotional connection with our mothers, (3) mothering with intention, (4) linguistic hopes and dreams for our bilingual children, and (5) determination to raise our children as bilingual beings. There were also two threads of differences: (1) the bilingual education of our children, and (2) angst in passing on the language.

Common Threads

Mother's Pride in Bilingualism

Pride is present in all our stories. It takes the form of feeling fortunate and appreciative for the bilingual and multilingual capabilities we each possess. As young girls, and now as mothers, we all experienced the benefits of being bilingual. Pride, as understood in Candace's narrative, is that she has the ability to pass on her language to her children. This ability is something she is proud of. For instance, she was able to use Mandarin when she was in China for her career; this she attributes to knowing how to speak Cantonese and having attended one year of Mandarin school. As a mother, knowing the advantage, there was no question about whether or not she would pass on the Cantonese language to her children. It was a natural progression from childhood, adulthood, and motherhood that she would do so once she had children. She believes this is the passing on of a family heirloom.

Pauline uses the word "power" throughout our time together, and she recognizes it was "empowering" to possess the knowledge of a language that others around her did not have. When she was in elementary school, she used Cantonese to fend off people with whom she did not want to talk to. Instead of feeling any shame that she was different, she felt superior due to this "secret language." Therefore, she wanted her children to feel this empowerment, and so she enrolled them in a Mandarin bilingual program. She hopes her pride will correspond to doors being opened for her children in the future.

For myself, I was often the interpreter for my family and realized, at a young age, how useful and rewarding my role is. Being the eldest grandchild, I am the one who everyone turns to when they need to communicate with authority, service providers, and more. I am proud of being the person my aunts and uncles can lean on when they experience frustration, confusion,

and sometimes hopelessness. This feeling of pride has transpired into me wanting my children to be close to my extended family. Therefore, I want them to speak Cantonese with my aunts and uncles. I hope that my children will have a robust Chinese identity along with a sturdy Western identity. Similarly, we all share bright moments of pride in our upbringing; and now as mothers, we are passing on the Chinese language.

Bilingualism Matters Despite the Absence of Emotional Connection with our Mothers

In my conversations with Candace and Pauline, we all share the lack of emotional talk and emotional connection with our mothers. There was quite a bit of head nodding and "me too" comments when I learned of their childhood while I shared mine with them. Even though Costigan and Dokis (2006) expressed that the common spoken language of Chinese may make emotional talk easier, this is not evident in our stories. Candace indicates that it is difficult to use Cantonese explicitly with her daughters because she never learned the formal words. The conversations she had with her mother were mostly about daily chores, routines, and surface topics. She recalls helping A with homework one evening and did not know how to say the word "hibernation" in Cantonese. She reflects that this is because she did not have "heart talks" (*gong sum see*) or discussions of any depth with her mother. Although Candace has perfect pronunciation and is fluent in Cantonese, she does not have the vocabulary for many of the formal words.

As for Pauline, she does not remember her mother ever kissing or hugging her. In their relationship, it would be most unusual and foreign if she were to give her mother a hug. Even the thought of it makes her uncomfortable. When she had her feelings hurt at school, like when she felt one teacher was being discriminatory, she never told her mother about it. She could not imagine doing so because they were not close. Similar to Candace's experience, there was no

conversing at an intimate level. Pauline also lost most of her ability to speak Chiu Chow (another Chinese language) because her mother did not pass it on. For these reasons, she believes that language is power. She has decided to impart the Cantonese language, as well as facilitate her daughter learning Mandarin.

As for my own mother, she has never been emotionally present and was also physically absent in my early years. When she returned home when I was in junior high school, I was hopeful to build some sort of a relationship with her. I would ask her questions, such as 'where did you go,' 'how does this look,' and 'what do you think about me becoming a teacher,' and so on. Each time she would say 'I don't know, I have no opinion,' or 'this is your life you decide.' Each time, I was bruised by her rejection, and so I stopped asking many years ago. Up until today, we do not share anything deeper than what my children ate for lunch or when I will be home so she can leave. On the other hand, I engage in emotional talk with my children in both Cantonese and English. It is sad, but in conversing with Candace and Pauline, we considered that it could be the old way Chinese mothers' mother. It could also be due to the generational gap. Perhaps our mothers did not know how to be open and share with us, since their own mothers did not do so.

We consciously decided to mother differently than how we were mothered. Wong-Wylie (2000) developed the concept of "matroreform" to capture this process and experience of becoming a new mother. All three of us talk to our children, ask them about their day, talk about feelings with them, apologize when we have hurt their feelings, and much more. We kiss and hug them, read them stories, and tuck them into bed. We are very involved mothers and we want our children to have what we did not have as children.

Mothering with Intention

The common thread of mothering with intention reflects how we aim to be effortful and purposeful in the mothering role. This relates to bilingualism and beyond. For Candace, it is demanding, at times, to be a stay at home mother. It could feel isolating and frustrating when she is with her daughters every day with nominal adult interaction. She thinks there is room for improvement in terms of being patient, and she also wants her daughters to approach her when they need someone to listen. She purposely desires to be a different mother (Wong-Wylie, 2006), as her own mother did not have the time and energy. She worked several jobs so that there would be food to eat and a place to live. Therefore, her decision to stay home with her young daughters is a premeditated one; a carefully thought out plan. This is so she would raise her own children with attention and care. As well, the decision provides her the opportunity to pass on her Cantonese language.

Pauline truly believes education and the desire to learn anything, including language, music, gymnastics, and art will take her children places they want to go. Some days, it could be challenging when, after a long day of work, she has to carve out time to do homework with E. She has to make sure both E and J practice the piano, and ensure they go to bed early so they will be well-rested. However, she believes as long as her children are well-rounded and content, all the pressure and stress is worth her effort. She continues to view the upward climb as rewarding, and believes the time she devotes to her children will be worthwhile.

To be more intentional, I have read books, articles, and chapters on the topics of mothering (Chua, 2001; O'Reilly, 2008; Wong, 2000) and parenting (Faber & Mazlish, 1995). Further, I attended the Interdisciplinary Approached to Multilingualism conference regarding bilingualism and shared some of the learning with Candace and Pauline. We agree that we care

very much about the well-being of our children, express that to them daily and that being intentional will help with that goal.

I knew that once I had children, I would immerse myself in the literature in order to be the best mom I could be. In retrospect, I knew and was intentional to break the pattern of dysfunction in my family (Wong-Wyle, 2006); I did not want my children to feel unheard, uncared for, and set aside. On the contrary, I want to be a present mother so I participate in my children's life while speaking Cantonese as well as English. We submerge ourselves in many activities such as doing Chinese homework, playing the violin, watching Chinese movies, creating artwork, and playing games. We are a team. This togetherness is something I never felt in my relationship with my own mother.

Thus, we each want to provide our children with what we did not experience as young girls. We aspire to be emotionally connected to our children; this includes passing on our language with intention. We hope they will continue to reach out to us when they want to share their conquests, accomplishments, difficulties, and despondencies.

Linguistic Hopes and Dreams for our Bilingual Children

We all have some aspect of linguistic hopes for our children. We think it would be wonderful if they have enough tenacity and skills to teach their own children Chinese, but we cannot enforce raising their children to be bilingual. This is due to not knowing what the future hold, whom they would partner with (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011), and whether it would be a priority in their lives. The more we try to force and reinforce the passing of the Chinese language, the more likely there may be a rift in our relationship with our children (Wu & Chao, 2011). Nevertheless, Candace wants her daughters to be able to use Cantonese to help someone if they need help, or ask for help themselves if they so need it. She does not expect them to

speak fluently, but have put forth more effort to have her daughters speak Cantonese back to her. It has worked out amazingly as her two older daughters are beginning to form sentences. She also wants her daughters to comprehend enough so they would be able to interpret for her partner, J, if he ever needs their skill. Already, J is amazed at how each daughter could understand Candace when she speaks to them.

Pauline has hopes that, with her children in the Mandarin bilingual program, they would be able to use Mandarin naturally, and would also be able to speak Cantonese in the future. She has no expectations that they will speak both languages perfectly, but she knows the foundation will take them far, if they choose to pursue a career in Asia. In light of China becoming an "economic powerhouse," her children may have more opportunities in the workforce with their multilingual skills. She believes additional languages will open doors for their future success.

I hope for my children to use their language ability to help others in any way, such as I have been able to use my bilingual propensity to help my family, people I meet, and clients at Eastside Family Centre. I do not expect them to use it to the extent I have, but even if they can help one person, this endeavour will be worthwhile. For instance, one time Mya tried to use Cantonese to help interpret what an elderly lady was saying to her cousins. I hope there will be more of these incidents in the future where my children will feel confident and comfortable enough to be of assistance to others. In essence, we want our children to choose their own path linguistically. At the moment, we find fulfillment in that we have passed on a skill that they may discover to be meaningful and useful one day.

Determination to Raise our Children as Bilingual Beings

As mothers who persist in passing on the Chinese language, we have a pronounced level of self-determination to follow through every day with this endeavour. In addition, our partners also do not speak the same native language, which may compound the exertion of doing so. Candace shares that, although she does not think she has a vast amount of self-esteem, she thinks having some and also a level of stubbornness has propelled her forward. She wants to prove others wrong when they tell her that her daughters may be confused, or that the language will not be useful. Despite these words from her in-laws and others, she has not abandoned hope and has continued to climb the ascent. She firmly believes her daughters may benefit one day because they know "more than one thing." It is not about conforming to the dominant culture; it is about passing on what she knows so her daughters will receive the cherished family heirloom.

Pauline also does not think she has particularly high self-esteem, it took her a long time to build up her self-confidence and "acknowledge she is good at anything in her life." However, she has carried forth with this pursuit because she has the determination that by exposing her children to multiple forms of education, learning is indispensable whether it be language, music, or anything else that develops the brain and gives her children an advantage. Despite times when she feels less than fervent support from her partner, she has continued to mount forth day by day so that her children will be able to "climb their own mountain."

In terms of self-esteem, for myself, growing up, I barely made it through high school. In fact, I used to think I was less than intelligent and would not do much in terms of contributing to society. My home environment with no father and an emotionally absent mother left me feeling dejected and unmotivated. However, my perspective shifted when I pursued post-secondary education and realized I was able to achieve distinguished grades when I put forth the effort.

Presently, I think I have a certain level of confidence about my language ability and I know with tenacious effort and determination, I will be able to push through the exigent times and continue to speak Cantonese with my children. Some days, I may not hear more than a few words of Cantonese coming from their mouths, but my fortitude to continue this climb tells me to not terminate this operation. I believe I will reach the peak one day and that my children may realize the potential another language may yield, of which is connected to a stronger Chinese identity.

In summary, all three of us went through experiences where we doubted our own abilities, knowledge, and competence. Perhaps self-doubt is related to us having critical mothers. It could also have to do generally with the overall challenge of the steep climb and the resolve it takes to forge ahead. Nevertheless, we have developed some degree of determination that has given us fuel to impel forth with passing on the Chinese language.

Differences Threads

The Bilingual Education of our Children

As mothers in this study, we all want our children to be jovial, well-rounded, and successful. Chang and Greenberger (2012) found that Chinese mothers are more academically focused compared to European mothers. It is evident in all three stories that we want our children to fare well academically. Of course, their well-being and happiness are top priorities. In terms of language, we each have decided to educate our children differently. Candace has not enrolled her daughters in Chinese school because the weekends are busy and sacred. Instead, she would sit down with her daughters and teach them the words she knows, and they would learn with her. She expresses they enjoy this time together and are usually engaged. She continues to ponder whether Chinese school is the route to go and will have some discussions with J about it.

Pauline has fully immersed her daughter, E, into the Mandarin bilingual program and even though she is not familiar with the simplified Chinese characters (there is a traditional system and also a simplified system of calligraphy), she is learning from E daily. She wants her children to naturally pick up the Chinese language instead of having to force them to speak it with her. So far, she thinks it has worked out beautifully. fair

As I mentioned, I enrolled Mya and Koen in Chinese school on Saturdays since they were young. My mindset is that if they start early, they would be able to grasp the language quickly and be used to the routine of attending classes on the weekends. Currently, I make sure I work alongside them when they have homework and I try to make it as fun as possible by being creative. At those times, my children speak the most Chinese because they have to use it and read the words and sentences back to me. It gives me great joy to hear their perfect pronunciation, and sometimes not so perfect ones when they are learning new vocabulary. As well, I am re-learning the written traditional Chinese characters, which gives me a second opportunity to be exposed to the written word. Hence, there exists no right or wrong way to safeguard the Chinese language in and outside of the home. Each of us has our unique ways of passing on the language and each way feels right.

Angst in Passing on the Language

As mothers in this study, we each have exerted some pressure on ourselves. Costigan and Dokis (2006) reported that Chinese mothers especially are the ones to pass on language to children. However, the pressure looks different from the perspective of each mother. Candace has been home with her daughters since her youngest daughter, C, was born. This deliberate decision was made when she spent ample time considering the pros and cons of doing so. She wants to mother by being available throughout the day with her children; one of the reasons is to

ensure they will learn the Cantonese language from her daily interactions with them. Presently, she is beginning to realize it is beneficial to prompt her daughters to speak more Cantonese if they are able to; this is especially when it is within their level of capabilities. Therefore, recently she has made more effort to provide prompts and have been pleasantly surprised that they have responded well. On the other hand, she has not experienced feelings of angst, guilt or the pressure when they do not speak it for an extended period of time.

For Pauline, the first few years of teaching the Cantonese language was challenging. Her children did not receive it well and would barely speak it back to her; in addition, they have even asked her to explicitly speak English. Her climb has become steeper and more tiresome; hence she decided to enroll her daughter, E, in the Mandarin bilingual program. Because E is immersed she is beginning to speak Mandarin magnificently. Pauline also hopes that E would also speak Cantonese one day as she still speaks it in the home. Once again, if E goes through an entire day without speaking Chinese, she does not have feelings of guilt. She believes they will be able to practice it one day, regardless of how much pressure she puts on herself to use it intentionally.

On the contrary, I put pressure on myself to ensure I speak a fair amount of Cantonese with my children. When I neglect to speak Cantonese with Mya and Koen, I can feel guilty and antsy that I need to say the next sentence in Cantonese. These feelings also visit when my children neglect to respond back in Cantonese at least several times a day. I immediately think that they will lose it, they will forget it, and that they will not be able to pronounce Cantonese skillfully in the future. These thoughts run through my head, and I think of ways to prompt them to speak it back to me. I believe that it takes daily practice for individuals to retain a language and to speak it well. The difference is that Candace and Pauline do not have these sentiments. I

have benefited from hearing the stories of these women. Indeed I am slowly recognizing the value in placing less pressure on myself because I know it is not helpful to my aim. In summary, each one of us is striving for a parallel peak, for our children to understand and speak Chinese; however the pathway to that aim is diverse.

Chapter VII: CONCLUSION

Although, I did not know it at the time, the process of completing this thesis began when I found out I was with child back in 2005. Knowing that I was blessed with my daughter, I reflected back on my life and became aware that I would raise Mya the way I know best. I want to pass on all my knowledge to her, whether it is vast or limited, and no matter how well-versed I am in that knowledge. The decision to pursue a graduate degree in counselling comes with various motives. One of the reasons is to contribute to the profession of counselling, in order to be helpful to my clients at a time when they need someone to listen to. The other is to become a better person, a better mother, and to understand who I am and my own purpose in life. I feel I have flourished and found where my passion lies; it is in practice, research, and to continue to develop my knowledge base and counselling skills.

Therefore, in 2011, I decided to travel the thesis route and write about bilingualism in Asian families. In the literature review, I wrote about Chinese mothering, the cultural and cognitive aspects of bilingualism, and became enlightened by the literature in terms of the advantages and disadvantages of knowing two languages. In preparing the path to narrow down the thesis, I chose to focus on bilingualism from a cultural perspective and learn about mothers who grew up in Canada, with a partner who does not speak the same native language, and have decided to pass on the Chinese language to their children. In presenting the literature review in Osaka, Japan, at the Third Asian Conference on Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, I

received feedback regarding the significance of this research. The audience voiced that mothers and parents from all cultures, and all walks of life, may be able to relate to this project. Moreover, in disseminating findings at Fairchild Radio FM 94.7, a multilingual radio station broadcasted across Canada, the feedback I have received has been full of affirmative encouragement. I heard that it is rare and exceptional for a person who grew up in Canada to have such a passion for her own Chinese language, and have journeyed to measureless lengths to pass it on to her children, write a thesis about it, and disseminate findings locally and internationally.

In the search for co-researchers, I realized it is not an easy feat to find mothers who fit the research criteria. In my personal life, I have an immense number of Chinese friends who are mothers, and I was successful in securing only two mothers, within a two week timeframe, who were graciously pleased to participate. In my meetings with them, then later phone conversations, email correspondence, and text messages, I have gotten to know their lived experience genuinely and thoroughly. The mission to pass on the Chinese language has to do with passing on a family heirloom for Candace, to open doors for her children for Pauline, and for myself, for my children to have a more profound Chinese identity. The themes each story renders, results in narrative threads (Clandinin and Connelly, 2003; Clandinin, 2013), with each mother, myself included, using the metaphor of an uphill climb to describe our experiences. The daily challenges of being intentional, effortful, encouraging, when it would be much easier to speak English, continue to be a stumbling block. However, giving up on this uphill battle is not in the chapters of any of our stories. In fact, we each see that the undertaking of pushing through to the peak will never cease. Some days, we may choose to take breaks to feel refreshed and ready to climb again. Nonetheless, we continue to trudge upwards closer to the peak of our own

mountain; this is when our children may realize the benefits of being bilingual. I think that individuals who read this thesis work may find that they are able to take away something that is meaningful in their lives, such as the experience of mothering, passing on a skill, having hopes and dreams for their children, and other areas in which I may not even predict.

Limitations

The three mother's stories have offered a three dimensional perspective (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) about the lived experience of mothers who have passed on their native language. Despite the cavernous depth of each story, this study has limitations of which will be discussed herein. First, all of the mothers have a post-secondary degree and one may question whether our education has something to do with our determination and resolve. Second, we all married someone of Asian descent; hence, the stories may be considerably different if one were to marry someone outside of the Asian culture. Third, because this study is conducted in a fairly large city in Canada, it may not represent mothers from other parts of the world, or those who live in rural areas with less services and support. Further, it may not represent mothers in similar situations and context because narrative inquiry is not about generalizations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Because generalizability is not the intention of narrative inquiry, it is my hope that academics, counsellors, mothers, the general public, or those who read this thesis work would feel more of an understanding about the lived experience of mothers who pass on their language (Polkinghorne, 1988, 1989). I hope that readers will take something away that they find significant and meaningful in their own lives, as this would be the aim of the narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

Future Directions

This narrative research opens further wonderings and curiosities to the future directions of bilingualism and mothering. It would be interesting to further investigate how the other side, the children of bilingual mothers, experience this passing of language. This may shed light on the advantages and challenges from the children's point of view. Additionally, it may be worthwhile to investigate the experiences of the partners of the mothers. Their experiences of not knowing the language and whether they eventually acquire it would be fascinating. On this note, there could be another study to investigate how families, who are multilingual, experience the passing on of more than one native language to their children.

Another initiative is to work with families whose children have lost the language due to not using it growing up; however, they want to re-learn it at an older age and have enlisted their mothers' assistance. The story and process of this experience would be remarkable in terms of what the process is like, the extent that mothers can help, and the phenomenon of older children realizing they want to reach out to their own culture and gain their native language skills. This is especially interesting because the children from this study do not yet realize the benefits of being bilingual, and some may rebel against learning the Chinese language. This research may incorporate the mother and child's perspective in terms of assisting the child to re-acquire their native language. As evident, there are so many pathways to go forward and upwards, I look forward to continue to conduct research in this area, as well as read topics pertaining to mothering and bilingualism.

References

Adesope, O. O., Lavin, T., Thompson, T., & Ungerleider, C. (2010). A systematic review and meta-analysis of the cognitive correlates of bilingualism. *Review of Educational Research, 80*(2), 207–245. doi:10.3102/0034654310368803

AhnAllen, J. M., & Suyemoto, K. L. (2011). Influence of interracial dating on racial and/or ethnic identities of Asian American women and white European American men. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 2*(1), 61-75. doi:10.1037/a0023325

Anderson, K., & Jack, D. (1991). Learning to listen: Interview techniques and analysis. In B. Gluck & D. Patai (Eds.), *Women's words: The feminist practice of oral history*. New York: Routledge.

Arthur, N., & Collins, S. (2010). Rationale for culture-infused counselling. In N. Arthur and S. Collins (Eds.), *Culture-infused counselling* (2nd ed., pp. 27-44). Calgary, Canada: Counselling Concepts.

Arthur, N., Merali, N., Djuraskovic, I. (2010). Facilitating the journey between cultures: Counselling immigrants and refugees. In N. Arthur & S. Collins (Eds.), *Culture-infused counselling* (2nd ed., pp. 285-314). Calgary, Canada: Counselling Concepts.

AU Faculty of Graduate Studies (2013). Research Ethics. Retrieved from, http://research.athabascau.ca/ethics/

Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*, 697-712. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013

Bialystok, E., Craik, F., & Luk, G. (2008). Cognitive control and lexical access in younger and older bilinguals. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, 34*(4), 859-873. doi:10.1037/0278-7393.34.4.859

Boutakidis, I. P., Chao, R. K., & Rodríguez, J. L. (2011). The role of adolescents' native language fluency on quality of communication and respect for parents in Chinese and Korean immigrant families. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 2*(2), 128-139. doi:10.1037/a0023606

Brene, B. (December, 2010). The power of vulnerability [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability.html

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, December 2010. Retrieved from http://www.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf

Chang, E. S., & Greenberger, E. (2012). Parenting satisfaction at midlife among European- and Chinese-American mothers with a college-enrolled child. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 3*(4), 263–274. doi:10.1037/a0026555

Cheah, C. S. L., Leung, C. Y. Y., & Zhou, N. (2013). Understanding “tiger parenting” through the perceptions of Chinese immigrant mothers: Can Chinese and U.S. parenting coexist? *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *4*(1), 30–40. doi:10.1037/a0031217

Chua, A. (2011). Battle hymn of the tiger mother. New York, NY: Penguin Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 100-130) Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, D. J., & Murphy, M. S. (2007). Looking ahead: Conversations with Elliot Mishler, Don Polkinghorne, and Amia Lieblich. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 632-650). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 35-76). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Costigan, C. L., & Dokis, D. P. (2006). Relations between parent–child acculturation differences and adjustment within immigrant Chinese families. *Child Development, 77*(5*)*, 1252–1267. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00932.x

Costigan, C., Su, T. F., & Hua, J. M. (2009). Ethnic identity among Chinese Canadian youth: A review of the Canadian literature. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, *50*(4), 261-272. doi:10.1037/a0016880

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

Derakshan, N., & Eysenck, M. W. (2009). Anxiety, processing efficiency, and cognitive performance: New developments from attentional control theory. *European Psychologist*, *14*(2), 168-176. doi:10.1027/1016-9040.14.2.168

Duncan, P., & Wong, G. (forthcoming). East Asian Mothering: Politics and Practices. Brampton, ON. Demeter Press.

Ellis, C. (2004). The ethnographic: A methodological novel about autoethnography. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Encyclopedia Britannica. (2014). Mountaineering. Retrieved from http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/394976/mountaineering/5045/History

Faber, A & Mazlish, E. (1995). *How to talk so kids can learn*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Fillmore, L. W. (1991). When learning a second language means losing the first. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *6*(3), 323–346. doi:10.1016/S0885-2006(05)80059-6

Freeman, M. (2007). Autobiographical understanding and narrative inquiry. In Clandinin, D. (Ed.), Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology (pp. 120-145). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ghavami, N., Fingerhut, A., Peplau, L. A., Grant, S. K., & Wittig, M. A. (2011). Testing a model of minority identity achievement, identity affirmation, and psychological well-being among ethnic minority and sexual minority individuals. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *17*(1), 79-88. doi:10.1037/a0022532

Gluck, S., B. & Patai, D. (1991). *Women's words: The feminist practice of oral history*. New York, New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall.

Gollan, T. H., & Ferreira, V. S. (2009). Should I stay or should I switch? A cost–benefit analysis of voluntary language switching in young and aging bilinguals. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *35*(3), 640-665. doi:10.1037/a0014981

Hakuta, K., & Garcia, E. E. (1989). Bilingualism and education. *American Psychologist, 44*(2), 374-379. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.44.2.374

Hughes, C., & Ensor, R. (2007). Executive function and theory of mind: Predictive relations from ages 2 to 4. *Developmental Psychology, 43*(6), 1447-1459. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.43.6.1447

Hwang, W., Wood, J. J., & Fujimoto, K. (2010). Acculturative family distancing (AFD) and depression in Chinese American families. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 78*(5), 655-667. doi:10.1037/a0020542

Hynie, M., Lalonde, R. N., & Lee, N. S. (2006). Parent-child value transmission among Chinese immigrants to North America: The case of traditional mate preferences. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*(2), 230-244. doi:10.1037/1099-9809.12.2.230

Josselson, R. (2007). The ethical attitude in narrative research. In Clandinin, D. (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 537-536). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kempert, S., Saalbach, H., & Hardy, I. (2011). Cognitive benefits and costs of bilingualism in elementary school students: The case of mathematical word problems. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *103*(3), 547-561. doi:10.1037/a0023619

Kerby, A. J. (1991). *Narrative and the self*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Kim, B. S. K., & Omizo, M. M. (2006). Behavioral acculturation and enculturation and psychological functioning among Asian American college students. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*(2), 245-258. doi:10.1037/1099-9809.12.2.245

Kim, B. S. K., & Omizo, M. M. (2005). Asian and European American cultural values, collective self-Esteem, acculturative stress, cognitive flexibility, and general self-efficacy among Asian American college students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *52*(3), 412–419. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.52.3.412

Knafo, A., & Schwartz, S. H. (2001). Value socialization in families of Israeli-born and Soviet-born adolescents in Israel. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 32*(2), 213 – 228. doi:10.1177/0022022101032002008

LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H. L., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 114*(3), 395–412. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.114.3.395

Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lopez, K. a, & Willis, D. G. (2004). Descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology: Their contributions to nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research, 14*(5), 726–35. doi:10.1177/1049732304263638

Mechelli, A., Crinion, J. T., Noppeney, U., O'Doherty, J., Ashburner, J., Frackowiak, R. S., et al. (2004, October14). Structural plasticity in the bilingual brain [Abstract]. *Nature, 431*, 757. doi:10.1038/431757a

Meyer, D.E., & Schvaneveldt, R. W. (1971). Facilitation in recognizing pairs of words: Evidence of a dependence between retrieval operations. *Journal of Experimental Psychology, 90*(2), 227-234. doi:10.1037/h0031564

Miller, E. K., & Cohen, J. D. (2001). An integrative theory of prefrontal cortex function. *Annual Review of Neuroscience, 24*(1), 167–202. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*.

Merriam-Webster. (2014). Bilingualism. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bilingualism

Mok, T. A. (1999). Asian American dating: Important factors in partner choice. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 5*(2), 103-117. doi:10.1037/1099-9809.5.2.103

Morris, D. (2001). Narrative, ethics, and pain. *Narrative 9*(1), 55-77. Retrieved from http://0-www.jstor.org.aupac.lib.athabascau.ca/stable/pdfplus/20107229.pdf?acceptTC=true

Nagata, D. K., Cheng, W. J. Y., & Tsai-Chae, A. H. (2010). Chinese American grandmothering: A qualitative exploration. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 1*(2), 151–161. doi:10.1037/a0019963

Nisbett, R.E. (2003). *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently…and why*. New York, NY: The Free Press

Noddings. M. (2003). *Caring: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education.* London, England: University of California Press, Ltd.

O'Reilly, A. (2008). Introduction. In A. O'Reilly (Ed.), *Feminist mothering* (pp. 1-22). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Olson, K. (2011). *Essentials of qualitative interviewing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Pessoa, L. (2009). How do emotion and motivation direct executive control? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 13*(4), 160–166. Retrieved from, http://0-www.sciencedirect.com.aupac.lib.athabascau.ca/science/journal/13646613/13/4

Pinnegar, S., & Daynes, G. (2007). Locating narrative inquiry historically. In Clandinin, D. (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 3-34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NW: State University of New York Press.

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). Phenomenological research methods. In R. S. Valle & S. Halling (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology* (pp. 41-60). New York: Plenum Press.

Rodriguez-Fornells, A. A., De Diego Balaguer, R. R., & Münte, T. F. (2006). Executive Control in Bilingual Language Processing. *Language Learning, 56,* 133-190. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9922.2006.00359.x

Suzuki, S. (2012). *Nurture by love* (K. Seldon & L. Seldon, Trans.). Van Nyus, CA: Alfred Music Publishing. (Original work published in 1983).

Statistics Canada. (2011). Immigration and ethnocultural diversity in Canada. Retrieved from http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.cfm

Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.* London, Ontario: Althouse Press.

Wang, Q. (2012). Chinese socialization and emotion talk between mothers and children in native and immigrant Chinese families. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1037/a0030868

Way, N., Okazaki, S., Zhao, J., Kim, J. J., Chen, X., Yoshikawa, H., Jia, Y., Deng, H. (2013). Social and emotional parenting: Mothering in a changing Chinese society. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 4*(1), 61–70. doi:10.1037/a0031204

Weyant, J. M. (2007). Perspective taking as a means of reducing negative stereotyping of individuals who speak English as a second language. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 37,* 703–716. doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00181.x

Wong, G. (Ed.) (2012). *Moms gone mad: Motherhood and madness oppression and resistance.* Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Wong-Wylie, G. (2010). Matroreform and mothering. *In A. O'Reilly (Ed.) Encyclopedia of Motherhood (Vol. 2,* p. 739-740). Newbury Park: CA: Sage.

Wu, C., & Chao, R. K. (2011). Intergenerational cultural dissonance in parent–adolescent relationships among Chinese and European Americans. *Developmental Psychology, 47*(2), 493-508. doi:10.1037/a0021063

Yeong, S. H. M., Liow, R., & Susan, J. (2011). Cognitive–linguistic foundations of early spelling development in bilinguals. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 103*(2), 470-488. doi:10.1037/a0022437

Appendix A: Informed Consent form

***What is the lived experience of bilingualism from the perspective of Chinese-Canadian mothers who have passed on their native language to their children*?**

Researcher	**Thesis Supervisor**
Gina Ko	Dr. Gina Wong
Master of Counselling Student	Associate Professor
Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology	Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology
Athabasca University	Athabasca University
Phone: 403-478-8892	Phone: 1-866-442-3089 (Toll Free)
Email: gina.chau@gmail.com	Email: ginaw@athabascau.ca

This study has been reviewed by the Athabasca University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns regarding your treatment as a participant in this study, please contact the Office of Research Ethics at 1-780-675-6718 or by e-mail at rebsec@athabascau.ca.

Invitation to Participate:
You are invited to participate in this study as a Chinese-Canadian mother who has passed on your native Chinese language to your children.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gather life stories and the lived experience of Chinese mothers who have grown up in Canada, with a partner who does not speak the same native language, and have passed on their Chinese language to their children. The aim of this project is to learn about the experiences of how each participant has arrived at a decision to do so, including their triumphs and challenges.

Your participation will include questions about how you experience speaking your native language as a Chinese person growing up in Canadian society. Questions may be directed to gather various stories of how being bilingual has contributed to your bicultural identity. In addition, questions may be asked to elicit your experience of passing on your native language to your children.

Risks and Benefits:
There may be some identifiable risks such as psychological harm because some personal stories may create some emotional or other adverse effects, thereby a list of counselling resources will be provided.

Although there is no financial compensation for your participation, your involvement in this study will glean light into the experience of bilingualism, mothering, and passing on a native language. Therefore, it will add to the understanding and contribute to knowledge in the field of counselling psychology.

Right to Refuse:
You have the right to refuse to participate and to withdraw at any time, during the period in which data is being collected, before data analysis, without prejudice. You may also refuse to answer any questions due to personal or other reasons. In the case you want to withdraw from this study, send me an email message or contact me by telephone. The transcribed work on a Word document will be returned to you by mail if you so request it, otherwise, they will be shredded with the audio-recording deleted.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity
A pseudonym will be used with all identifying information altered to ensure anonymity.

The data including signed consent forms, the demographic information sheet, research memos, and electronic Word documents containing information relevant to data gathering and analysis and transcripts will be destroyed five years following the completion of this research project (end of May 2019). This information will be shared with my thesis supervisor only.

Within the five years, the above information will be centrally located in a locked filing cabinet and password protected computer at the researcher's home.

The hard-copy documents will be shredded, electronic data will be erased from the hard discs and soft discs. The audio-recording will be deleted by the researcher (by the end of August 2014).

As a participant, you will take part in the following ways:

1. To meet with the researcher for about 1.5 hours for part one of the interview and agree to be audio-recorded.

2. To meet again for about 1.5 hours for part two of the interview and agree to be audio-recorded.

3. To possibly meet with the researcher at least one other time so the researcher can check if the writing portrays what you intend to be written about you.

4. To share and disclose personal stories, of which are the focus of the interviews, and explore them in length with the researcher.

Results of the Study
The information you share will be used at conference presentations, live broadcast interviews at Fairchild Radio, and for publication purposes. Furthermore the existence of the research will be listed in an abstract posted online at the Athabasca University Library's Digital Thesis and

Project Room; and the final thesis document will be publicly available on the Athabasca University website.

In participating in this study and providing consent, this means you:

1. Are consenting to participate on a voluntary basis and you will be provided adequate time to read over the information and pose any questions you may have.

2. May withdraw anytime during the research study, as long as it is before the analysis of the data. In the case you decide to withdraw your consent, all the data collected will also be withdrawn and destroyed, given that it has not been analysed and/or published.

3. May at any time during the research project, ask any questions or cease to answer specific questions during the interview process.

4. Will be entitled to information that may be relevant in your decision to withdraw, this information will be provided in a timely manner. This pertains to any new development that may influence your decision to withdraw from the study.

5. Consent to the information collected, after the removal of identifying information, to be viewed by my thesis supervisor.

I_____ have read this consent form and understand all the information outlined and I agree to participate in this study.

Date: _____ Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____ Researcher Signature: _____

Appendix B: Sample Questions for Unstructured Interviews

1. Tell me about yourself, were you born in Canada?
2. What languages do you speak?
3. What are some of the memories you have as a young Chinese person?
4. What are some of the proud moments of speaking your native language?
5. How about moments when you felt not proud?
6. Would you say you made a conscious decision to pass on your language to your children?
7. Share times you felt support in passing on the language.
8. What are some of the challenges of doing so?
9. How do you manage to encourage your children to practice using the language?
10. What do you think are the advantages of learning another language?
11. The disadvantages?
12. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that you feel pertains to this topic?

Appendix C: Memorandum from Athabasca University Research Ethics Board

Athabasca University
FACULTY OF HEALTH DISCIPLINES

The future of learning.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 23, 2013

TO: Gina Ko

COPY: Dr. Gina Wong-Wylie (Research Supervisor)

Alice Tieulié, Acting Secretary, Athabasca University Research Ethics Board

Dr. Vive Kumar, Chair, Athabasca University Research Ethics Board

FROM: Dr. Paul Jerry, Chair, GCAP Research Ethics Review Committee

SUBJECT: **Ethics Proposal #GCAP 13-02**

"Inspiring Bilingualism: Chinese-Canadian Mothers' Stories"

The Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology (GCAP) Research Ethics Review Committee, acting under authority of the Athabasca University Research Ethics Board to provide an expedited process of review for minimal risk student researcher projects, has reviewed the above-noted proposal and supporting documentation.

I am pleased to advise that this project has been awarded **FULL APPROVAL** on ethical grounds. You have addressed all the issues noted in the October 10, 2013 Memo.

If you have any questions, please contact the Committee Chair (as above), or the AU Research Ethics Secretary at rebsec@athabascau.ca

GCAP REB