Heritage Language Maintenance Through Political Shift: Vietnamese Montrealers' Perceived Role of Language in Their Cultural Identity and Heritage Social Networks

Thao-Nguyen Nina Le

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By: Thao Nguyen Le

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_____ Chair

_____ Examiner
Dr. Sara Kennedy

_____ Examiner

_____ Thesis Supervisor(s)
Dr. Pavel Trofimovich

_____ Thesis Supervisor(s)

Approved by _____
Dr. John Capobianco Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

_____
Dr. Pascale Sicotte, Dean

ABSTRACT

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Thao-Nguyen Nina Le

Immigrants feel pressure to integrate into the host society, and so often find it challenging to pass their heritage language (HL) on to next generations. Immigrant children's HL skills, particularly speaking, often depend on the family's language patterns, their social networks, and beliefs about how strongly language shapes their identity (De Houwer, 2007; Wong Fillmore, 2000). Another important yet largely overlooked factor is the sociopolitical circumstances that trigger immigration (Perera, 2015), such as whether immigrants relocate due to economic hardship or political turmoil. This study therefore examines whether sociopolitical reasons for immigration (in addition to immigrants' social identity and social networks) predict immigrant children's ability to speak the HL.

Participants included 76 first- and second-generation Vietnamese Montrealers (38 parent–child pairs) from the first wave of (conflict-driven) Vietnamese immigration (1975–1999). The parents identified their reasons for immigration (economic, political, both), and all participants completed ethnolinguistic questionnaires (capturing the role of language in identity) and social network surveys (measuring size, intimacy, and interconnectedness of HL use). Participants' informal Vietnamese speech (M_{length} = 52.33 seconds, SD = 10.42) was rated by four native Vietnamese speakers for accentedness, comprehensibility, and fluency (α = .86–.91).

Results showed that Vietnamese use by both generations was a positive predictor of HL maintenance. For the political immigrants, the parents' willingness to preserve the language and culture showed positive association with the HL ratings of their children, while for the economic immigrants, it is the parents' pride in the current Vietnam that revealed positive associations. Social network analysis showed that in the political group, the children's social network size was associated positively with their HL ratings, while their network intimacy showed negative associations. In the economic group, the children's network size did not contribute strongly to HL maintenance; however, their network intimacy did, with a positive association. Findings suggest complex interactions of various sociopolitical factors in their relevance to HL maintenance.

Keywords: Heritage language maintenance, Vietnamese community, sociopolitical viewpoints, social network intimacy, acculturative stress

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Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1. Introduction

Faced with the pressure to integrate into the mainstream culture of the host society, immigrants often find it challenging to preserve their heritage language (HL) for their children and grandchildren (Fishman, 1991; Wong Fillmore, 1991, 2000). In Canada, a HL refers to a language which is neither English nor French, which are the country's two official languages, nor an ancestral/indigenous language which has historically been spoken by one or more First Nations communities in Canada (McIvor, 2020). An HL is a language spoken by immigrants and their children (Cummins, 1992; Montrul, 2009). In recent years, Canada has officially recognized various languages and cultures not just as a valuable resource for individuals but also as a great benefit for the entire nation in providing it a competitive edge in international communication (Government of Canada, 2021). According to the Action Plan for Official Languages, Canada is investing $149.1 million yearly between 2018 and 2023 to support HL education with a focus on building more HL schools and facilitating the dissemination of knowledge, methods, and tools to support HL educators. As a result, through government-led initiatives and grassroots movements, HL maintenance has been promoted across Canada to various degrees of success. For example, Manitoba has incorporated several HLs into its education curriculum (The Manitoba Government, 2021), and Edmonton and Calgary have been running 50/50 English and HL bilingual programs in American Sign Language, Arabic, Mandarin, German, Hebrew, Spanish, and Ukrainian (Cummins, 2014).

However, formal education in other HLs, especially those that are often referred to as less-commonly-taught languages, such as Vietnamese and Korean, has not been particularly successful, with second and third generation HL speakers often feeling forced to study a language just because it is spoken by their parents and grandparents (Lee, 2002; Maloof et al.,

2006; Park, 2009). In fact, the success of HL learning is frequently predicated on speakers' sense of agency, often expressed through their desire to be associated with the ethnic group speaking the HL. Thus, unsuccessful HL learning may be the result of speakers—particularly those from smaller or underrepresented HL groups—struggling to define their sociocultural identity in relation to their home language and the languages of the broader society. Therefore, to understand HL learning and ultimately to protect and maintain HLs and the cultures they represent (Fishman, 1989; Kumar et al., 2008), it would be important to attend to the sociocultural complexity of HL development (e.g., He, 2010; Lee, 2002; Maloof et al., 2006; Noels, 2005; Park & Sarkar, 2007). To address this overall objective, this study joins a growing body of research on the sociocultural dimensions of HL maintenance and learning. By focusing on the Vietnamese community in Montreal, it aims to identify and examine three sociocultural factors—the first generation's ethnolinguistic identity, social engagement, and sociopolitical views—as predictors of HL maintenance in the second generation.

Chapter 2. Background Literature

HL Maintenance and Perceived Role of Language in Cultural Identity

It has become common knowledge that a relationship exists between speakers' identity and the languages they speak. Labov (1966) famously illustrated this association with three groups of employees working for different department stores, including the upmarket Saks, the middle-class Macy's, and the discount S. Klein. The employees from Saks and Macy's used a much higher frequency of the rhotic variety of English, with /r/ pronounced post vocalically, as this speech pattern was often associated with prestige in New York City. In contrast, those who worked in S. Klein tended to practice /r/-dropping, which was typical of working-class English, likely because they served a working-class clientele. Put differently, the speakers were aware of the prestige associated with various speech patterns and tended to express a specific identity through their speech, showing how a person's sense of identity can have implications for language use (Noels et al., 2012).

This pioneering research led to a key question of what exactly a person's sense of identity entails. According to Gee (2001), identity can be conceptualized in at least four ways: as nature identity, defined through forces in nature (e.g., being a twin); as institution identity, defined through various societal institutions (e.g., being a Canadian citizen or a refugee); as discourse identity, defined by various personality traits through an individual's interaction with other people (e.g., being a charismatic person); and as affinity identity, defined through experiences shared by various social groups (e.g., being a 'Trekkie' or a Star Trek fan). Typically, immigrants are often ascribed an institution identity based on their ethnicity (e.g., African American) whereas native-born speakers are encouraged to take on an affinity identity which is more flexible and creative. As Gee (2001) argues, confined to an assigned institution identity,

immigrants are often forced to develop an awareness of and an affiliation toward their heritage culture, which they might use as a competitive edge in their interaction with native-born peers.

For immigrants in particular, it may be impossible to separate language from culture (Guo, 2013), which implies that they might see their HL as a salient part of self-identification, especially cultural identification (He, 2010; Lee, 2002). For instance, in a study of 40 second-generation Korean American university students, the students with a higher level of Korean proficiency demonstrated greater self-concept, stronger self-esteem and confidence, as well as better psychological health in terms of adjusting to the American society than the students who had lower level of Korean proficiency (Lee, 2002). Moreover, losing a HL, at least for some cultural groups, might be tantamount to losing their culture. Focusing on the Indo-Canadian community in Montreal, Kumar et al. (2008) showed that a cultural change was beginning to emerge for second-generation speakers of Hindi who shifted in their language use from Hindi to English. By using more English in their daily lives, these second-generation Hindi speakers were losing some aspects of their heritage culture while becoming increasingly Canadian in the expression of their identity. Thus, at least for some immigrant communities, a change in language might lead to a change in culture, potentially threatening their cultural identity and existence as a group.

The potential of losing vital aspects of their heritage culture might compel at least some immigrant parents to encourage or even pressure their children to preserve and maintain their HL as a way of protecting the community's existence. For example, for Korean Canadian parents, maintaining their HL was associated with helping their children create a positive identity in the new country, strengthening the Korean community, and also contributing to the children's academic and professional success by being bilingual (Park & Sarkar, 2007). In a study of

Eastern European immigrants' attitudes toward HL maintenance, nearly all parents agreed that it was vital for them to pass on their HL as a means of transmitting their culture and traditions and reinforcing their children's ethnic identity (Nesteruk, 2010). The parents also believed that HL maintenance would help their children develop a competitive edge, compared to native-born peers, because multilingual and multicultural people are considered more knowledgeable about the world and its different cultures. It appears, then, that immigrants' willingness to pass on their HL stems from their pride in being members of their respective communities which often view HL as "a pillar of [their] ethnolinguistic identity" (Sachdev & Bourhis, 2005, p. 66).

However, not all immigrants are willing to pass on their HL, especially if they believe that their culture can be preserved through other means. For instance, Sri Lankan parents in Australia prioritize national pride and religion over language as they tend to emphasize the sense of nationalism toward Sri Lanka and the practice of Hinduism or Buddhism in their communication with children (Perera, 2015), with the consequence that HL proficiency among the second generation emerges as a by-product of learning about the country and its religions. Therefore, second-generation children in this case can identify themselves as members of an ethnocultural group without the need of speaking their HL (Hoffman, 1991).

From this perspective, then, the likelihood of a HL being passed on to the next generation of speakers depends on how strongly immigrants believe language to be a part of their cultural identity (Guitart, 1981; Hoffman, 1991). For example, for Chinese speakers in Quebec, language might be central to their identity because speaking Chinese signals group loyalty (Gatbonton et al., 2005), which implies that Chinese parents would be likely to promote the maintenance of their HL. In contrast, Korean parents in Quebec often empathize with their children's burden of learning both French and English simultaneously and therefore, avoid putting additional pressure

on them to learn Korean (Park & Sarkar, 2007). In fact, these observations align with Crawford's (1992) statistics of HL maintenance in the United States, where the incidence of a language shift toward English in the second generation is relatively low for the Chinese community (26.3%) whereas it is higher for the Korean (69.3%) and the Japanese (78.8%) communities.

Given that the likelihood of passing down the HL depends on how strongly immigrants consider the HL to be of core cultural value, compared to other means of expressing cultural identity, such as religious practices (Kumar et al., 2008; Meddegama, 2020; Perera, 2015), any investigation of HL maintenance should capture speakers' perception of the role of HL in their cultural identity. Therefore, the first goal of this study, which focuses on the Vietnamese community in Montreal, is to examine the extent to which first-generation speakers' perception of the role of the Vietnamese language in their cultural identity predicts HL maintenance in their children, second-generation speakers of Vietnamese.

HL Maintenance and Social Engagement

Family plays a major role in preserving a HL for the subsequent generations. De Houwer (2003, 2007) examined different language use patterns employed by immigrant parents to raise children as bilingual speakers. Among five different patterns, those where either one or both parents speak the HL (i.e., where the HL is strongly emphasized in the home) were the most successful at enabling the children to grow up bilingual, suggesting that a home linguistic environment is crucial for HL maintenance (Nesteruk, 2010). However, even the most frequent HL use in the home does not always guarantee that children will actively use this language. According to Wong Fillmore (1991, 2000), family is not just a place to foster HL learning, it is also a doorway to the HL community, where children can practice the language. In a study of Montreal-based Korean parents' attitudes towards HL maintenance, Park and Sarkar (2007)

showed that the family enables second-generation speakers to gain precious opportunities to practice their HL in social contexts, such as with extended family and church members. Moreover, these engagement opportunities appear to allow parents to provide their children with feedback, guidance, and support as a way of reinforcing their HL competence.

Besides the family, HL schooling appears to enhance children's socialization in their HL, although the role of schooling in promoting HL competence is often limited. For instance, Maloof et al. (2006) showed that attending a Vietnamese HL school in the United States contributed little to second-generation speakers' HL competence or their desire to be associated with the HL culture. Similarly, Lee (2002) found that the majority of second-generation Koreans who attended supplementary Korean language schools rated themselves as having low proficiency in Korean, compared to those who were more involved in family or church socialization. It appears, then, that second-generation speakers cannot depend entirely on schooling for HL maintenance. Instead, HL development through schooling might depend on children's already existing interest in HL learning and culture, which is likely enhanced through family and HL community engagement (Maloof et al., 2006).

HL children's willingness to use their language is likely determined by the quantity and quality of HL contacts. The early work of Milroy (1987) hypothesized that speakers with more ethnic ties would maintain their HL better because they come across more opportunities to use it, ensuring that it is passed down across generations. In other words, if speakers interact with more people from the same ethnic background in their network, the chance of them transmitting the group's language to their children will also be amplified. Several studies have in fact shown that an ethnic network's features, such as size, density, proximity, and range, positively correlate with speakers' HL competence (Mitchell, 1969). For example, in the United Kingdom, the Chinese

speakers who were embedded in a strong Chinese-based network predominantly chose Chinese over English for communication (Li, 1994). In a study of Croatian immigrants in Italy, those who remained in a more predominantly Croatian (rather than Italian) social group reported better Croatian maintenance (Kosic, 2004). A common thread emerging from this work is that a person's social network size predicts that person's success at HL maintenance and learning. However, in a study of the Filipino community in Oslo, Lanza et al. (2007) clarified that HL speakers' language choices are not solely governed by the size of their social networks, but also by person- and context-specific factors, such as the participants of a given conversation and its situation, theme, and purpose. Thus, besides the size or density of a speaker's network, there are other finer-grained elements of social engagement to take into account in predicting HL maintenance.

One element of social engagement that can impact HL maintenance is communication-related acculturative stress, which refers to a HL speaker's subjective stress reaction when facing communication difficulties when interacting with native speakers of the HL (Ducerain, 2015). The children in the study by Lanza et al. (2007), who actively determined which language to speak and with whom, might have experienced communication-related acculturative stress. Instead of using their HL, they opted to speak the majority language (Norwegian) to communicate with their parents, likely as a means of negotiating a more favourable identity of a fluent speaker (Auer, 2007; Bourdieu, 1991) and a way of avoiding feeling stressed, frustrated, and eventually inferior to their parents. According to Ducerain (2015), acculturative stress may be caused by speakers feeling unsupported emotionally and socially by their community, which could hinder their willingness to use the language (MacIntyre et al., 1998) and ultimately making it less likely that it would be passed down to the next generation. It appears that a community's

interconnectedness, which encompasses a high degree of trust and interdependence among its members (Coleman, 1988; Kadushin, 2012), can reduce communicative stress and can in turn stimulate language learning (Ducerain, 2015). For instance, second-generation Korean speakers in Lee's (2002) study wished to have a more socially accepting and supportive environment as they believed it reduced their stress and frustration when speaking their HL. Existing research, thus, is pointing to the interconnectedness of a speaker's social network and the speaker's stress level as predictors of HL acquisition and maintenance.

To summarize, family and its network ties play a key role in HL maintenance as they provide a supportive and safe learning environment for second-generation speakers. Formal HL schooling, however, may not be as effective, especially because HL speakers might experience communication-related acculturative stress in conversations with teachers and peers. Following prior work on social network's interconnectedness and speakers' communication-related stress, the second goal of this study is therefore to examine how these variables predict HL maintenance by obtaining measures of HL speakers' communication-related acculturative stress and their social network size, intimacy, inclusiveness, and density.

HL Maintenance and Sociopolitical Views

HL speakers—and particularly immigrants—often experience, consciously or unconsciously, various sociopolitical issues and challenges affecting them as individuals and as a community, such as immigration and settlement, discrimination, and separation from extended family (Montrul, 2009). Therefore, HL maintenance for speakers from a specific cultural group is also likely to be influenced by the group's sociopolitical history. For instance, when HL speakers of Welsh heard an attack on their Welsh identity, they reacted by speaking with a heavier Welsh accent in English to assert their Welshness, which was particularly the case for

those who deliberately chose to engage in learning Welsh as a way of embracing their cultural heritage (Bourhis & Giles, 1977). Thus, upon hearing a direct attack on their language, the speakers may have felt protective of their culture, especially because the attack was delivered in British English, the language associated with the British colonial power.

Similarly, Smolicz et al.'s (2001) extensive review of HL maintenance by the Greek, Latvian, Italian, and Chinese communities in Australia highlights how the sociopolitical pressures in the homeland may have provided a stronger impetus for the ethnic Latvians to maintain their HL compared to the other three groups. Between the 1940 Soviet takeover of Latvia and the 1991 restoration of independence, Latvian was a minority language in Latvia, which compelled many immigrants to take on an active role of maintaining the language to prevent it from going extinct, passing it on along with the group's history and values (Ozolins, 1995). However, after Latvia regained its independence, Latvian was no longer in danger of being lost, which likely contributed to the decline in the fervour with which Latvian HL speakers approached language maintenance (Smolicz et al., 2001).

Conflictual and traumatic events might also contribute to HL maintenance (or attrition) through speakers' direct experience in these events. For many HL speakers, for instance, immigration is a direct consequence of particular conditions in the homeland prior to immigration (Perera, 2015). It is therefore necessary to examine the reasons that push people to the point of leaving their country because it might determine whether they will pass the language down to their children in a new environment. For example, a study of German Jewish wartime refugees currently residing in English-speaking countries revealed that the main factor that influenced their HL loss was not how old they were when they left or how long they resided in the new country. Instead, the main factor was the traumatic events that they experienced as the

victims of the holocaust (Schmid, 2002). Even though German was the language of the homeland, it was also the language of pain and trauma, which deterred the survivors of the holocaust from passing it down to the next generation. As poignantly noted by an Austrian British writer Jakov Lind, whose mother tongue was German, "German gave me the creeps… [it] had nothing to do with the people who wrote and write it—as it wasn't what they *said* but that they said it *in German*" (Steinitz, 2013, p. 38, original emphasis). It is clear that languages do not exist on their own; rather, they are embedded in people's particular historical and geopolitical experiences which affect their feelings and perceptions (Horner & Weber, 2018), including whether or not they pass on their HL.

Dramatic (and often traumatic) sociopolitical shifts, such as wars and invasions, can have a negative impact on HL maintenance even after many years following such events (Schmid, 2002). Since the communist takeover of South Vietnam in 1975, which united Vietnam as one country but under communist rule, about a million Southern Vietnamese fled their country and settled abroad (Barnes & Bennett, 2002). They carried with them not only the war trauma of losing kin and possessions but also the postwar shock of life under the new regime, which included spending time in re-education camps, a name given to prison camps focusing on repression and indoctrination. Above all, after moving to the new home, these first Vietnamese immigrants established themselves as members of the "imagined" nation (Anderson, 1991) of South Vietnam, which was no longer in existence, and passed this identity on to the next generation. In a qualitative study of second-generation refugees in the United Kingdom, Bloch and Hirsch (2016) found that the majority of the surveyed Vietnamese youths differentiated between South Vietnam and North Vietnam from a young age, with one participant noting, "it's been ingrained into me, you are Southern… you come from generations of Southern people, and

Northern people were different" (p. 2451). Thus, instead of avoiding HL use and being reticent to pass it on to the next generation of speakers, possibly for fear of being associated with communist Vietnam, the South Vietnamese community abroad may instead have strengthened their ties to their language and culture, likely as a consequence of the traumatic events they experienced around immigration.

Previous research has shown that there is a link between HL speakers' sociopolitical views and the strength of their identification with their heritage culture and language after immigration, which might impact the likelihood of HL maintenance within the family. The role of HL speakers' sociopolitical views in their HL learning and use is likely especially salient for communities that have experienced various forms of social and political conflict or trauma, compared to those that have little experience with political shifts (Perera, 2015). Because the Vietnamese community currently residing in Canada experienced war trauma prior to immigration, this community appears to be particularly suited for extending prior work on HL maintenance to explore the role of HL speakers' sociopolitical views in their HL learning and use. Therefore, the final goal of this study is to examine to what extent first-generation Vietnamese speakers' sociopolitical views factor into their post-migration identity and extent of social engagement in relation to HL maintenance in second-generation speakers.

The Current Study

For immigrant parents and their children who are actively (re)imagining themselves as members of a given ethnolinguistic group in the context of the mainstream culture in the host country, HL maintenance appears to be shaped by various forces, including the degree to which first-generation immigrants view language as a core aspect of their ethnic identity, the extent of their engagement in various HL social networks, and their sociopolitical views stemming from

immigration experiences. While many studies have investigated HL maintenance in relation to first-generation HL speakers' expression of ethnic identity (e.g., Maloof et al., 2006; Park & Sarkar, 2007; Kumar et al., 2008; Nesteruk, 2010) and social engagement (e.g., Li, 1994; Kosic, 2004; Lanza et al., 2007), to the best of my knowledge, there has been no research about how immigrants' ethnic identity and their social networks intersect with their sociopolitical views to determine the likelihood of HL maintenance. Therefore, the goal of this study is to examine the role of ethnic identity, social networks, and sociopolitical views in predicting the extent to which first-generation Vietnamese immigrants in Montreal (i.e., those who immigrated to Canada between 1975 and 1985) passed their HL to their children. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Is the perceived role of language in the cultural identity of first-generation Vietnamese speakers associated with the likelihood of HL maintenance among second-generation speakers?
2. Are first-generation speakers' HL social networks (e.g., in terms of their size or interconnectedness) and the second generation's acculturative stress associated with the likelihood of HL maintenance among second-generation speakers?
3. Are first-generation speakers' sociopolitical views (e.g., opinions about the Vietnam War) associated with HL maintenance? If so, how do these views relate to first-generation speakers' expression of their cultural identity and their engagement in HL social networks?

Chapter 3. Method

Participants

Participants included Vietnamese families (parent–child pairs) residing in Montreal at the time of the study. The first few participants were contacted through the researcher's personal social networks, with the rest of the recruitment proceeding through snowball sampling. Potential participants who expressed an initial interest in the study first answered several background questions, and only those that matched the inclusion criteria were invited to participate. There were two inclusion criteria: The parent participant in each parent–child pair (a) had to have come from a Vietnamese-speaking household prior to emigration from Vietnam and (b) had to have arrived in Canada between 1970 and 1999. The final participant sample included 38 parent–child pairs, for a total of 76 individuals. The parents (henceforth, first-generation participants) were first-generation Vietnamese immigrants (30 females, 8 males) with a mean age of 59.37 years (SD = 6.98). All were born and raised in monolingual households in Vietnam and educated through primary and secondary schooling in Vietnamese prior to their emigration (between the mid-1970s and 1999). These participants, who left Vietnam as teenagers or young adults, except for one who immigrated at the age of eight, belonged to the first wave of Vietnamese migration following the Fall of Saigon in 1975, so the Vietnam War was likely a significant sociopolitical event for these immigrants, compared to those belonging to subsequent waves of migration (e.g., post-2000) (Joy, 2010). The selected parents nominated one of their children (henceforth, second-generation participants) to take part in the study, depending on their availabilities, for a total of 38 individuals (21 females, 17 males) with a mean age of 26.39 years (SD = 6.75). Thirty-two were born in Montreal and have resided there since birth, whereas the remaining six settled in the city within the first year of their life (1), between the ages of two and four (4), or at

the age of eight (1). All second-generation participants received formal primary and secondary education in Quebec in French (25), English (1), or both (12).

Materials

First, a background questionnaire was used to obtain language and demographic information from the participants. For the first-generation participants, it elicited their reason for leaving Vietnam and their immigration date and year of arrival in Canada (see Appendix A). It also asked them to react to various ethnic labels, such as Canadian, Vietnamese, Quebecer, using a 9-point scale (1 = *does not describe me at all*, 9 = *describes me perfectly*), to indicate their proficiency in English, French, Vietnamese, and other languages using a 9-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 9 = *extremely well*), to estimate (through a 0–100% scale) the percentage of time spent using these languages in their daily life both at the time of their arrival and presently, and to indicate how well their nominated children could handle Vietnamese in terms of speaking, listening, and reading skills (1 = *not at all*, 9 = *extremely well*). For the second-generation participants, this questionnaire targeted basic information about their language learning and education history, including languages used in schooling, and also elicited their reaction to ethnic labels (e.g., Canadian, Vietnamese) and their self-ratings of language proficiency and use (see Appendix A).

Second, an ethnolinguistic questionnaire (see Appendix B), adopted from Gatbonton and Trofimovich (2008), was used to assess the role of language in the first-generation participants' identity (e.g., *All Vietnamese children abroad should be taught Vietnamese and speaking it at home*), pride for their group (e.g., *I am proud to see symbols of my ethnic group displayed around me*), and political views about Vietnam's state of affairs (e.g., *Vietnam will never realize its potential for as long as it remains a communist country*) through 17 statements accompanied by 9-point scales (1 = *totally disagree*, 9 = *totally agree*). This questionnaire was not available

for the second generation, as the intention was to determine the extent to which the parents' ethnic identity beliefs were related to HL maintenance for their children.

Third, a social network survey (see Appendix C) was used to measure the size, level of intimacy, interconnectedness, and density of the first- and second-generation participants' HL networks (Ducerain, 2015). They could nominate up to 15 members of their community with whom they typically interact in Vietnamese, rating their level of intimacy with each person on a 4-point scale (1 = *not intimate*, 4 = *very intimate*) and indicating whether the nominated people also knew each other.

Fourth, a short version of the Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Miller et al., 2011) was used to elicit dimensions of the second-generation participants' acculturative stress (see Appendix D). Although the original version of this instrument contains 15 items assessing culture-related difficulties in different life domains, only nine items across the domains of communication difficulties (e.g., *I often feel misunderstood or limited in daily situations because of my Vietnamese skills*), intercultural stress (e.g., *I have had disagreements with other Vietnamese for liking Canadian/Quebec customs or ways of doing things*), and discrimination in the heritage community (e.g., *I feel that people very often interpret my behaviour based on their stereotypes of what "second-generations" are like*), all assessed through 5-point scales (1 = *disagree*, 5 = *agree*), were included in this study.

Finally, both the first- and second-generation participants participated in a 20-to-30-minute individual recorded interview organized around 15 scripted questions and relevant follow-up queries (see Appendix E). The first-generation participants were interviewed in Vietnamese and were prompted through open-ended questions to talk about their reasons for immigration and the impact of social and political changes in Vietnam on their language use,

their feelings about the role of language in their ethnic identity, and their perception of the strength and intimacy of their social networks and engagement with the Vietnamese community. The second-generation participants were interviewed in the language of their choice (e.g., English, French, or Vietnamese) and were also asked open-ended questions to further understand their patterns of language use at home, their perception of the strength and intimacy of their social networks and engagement with the Vietnamese community, and their willingness to preserve the language for the next generations. In addition, the second-generation participants were asked to respond in Vietnamese to several simple prompts (*How do you spend free time? What are your hobbies and interests? What is your favourite food?*) to record a sample of their extemporaneous speech for subsequent evaluation by external raters.

Procedure

The first-generation participants were tested in individual sessions (60–90 minutes) conducted in Vietnamese in person (15), via the phone (7), or through Zoom (16). The materials were translated into Vietnamese by the researcher who has worked in the publishing industry and translated several non-fiction books from English to Vietnamese. Because these participants varied in their familiarity and comfort with technology and because most preferred a friendly conversation to completing a paper-based survey, the researcher read each questionnaire statement aloud, and the participants provided their ratings which were recorded by the researcher. All participants completed the questionnaires in the same order, starting from the background questionnaire, which was followed by the ethnolinguistic questionnaire and the network survey. At the end of the session, the researcher engaged each participant in a brief interview.

For the second-generation participants, the researcher distributed all questionnaires electronically via LimeSurvey (https://www.limesurvey.org), where they first completed the background questionnaire, followed by the network survey, and the Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory in English. After returning the completed questionnaires, they participated in a short individual interview (15–20 minutes) via Zoom. Because the second-generation participants may have been tempted to switch to English or French when speaking with the researcher, who is similar to them in age and would be presumed to speak both these languages (especially during these participants' response to the prompts eliciting their extemporaneous Vietnamese speech), the interviews with these participants were conducted by a middle-aged Vietnamese research assistant (completely unfamiliar to them), who was provided with the interview script and was trained by the researcher.

Speech Ratings

Brief excerpts from each participant's most fluent interview response (as judged by the researcher) were excised from the interview recordings, saved as individual audio files (M_{length} = 52.33 seconds, SD = 10.42), and normalized for peak intensity (volume). For the first-generation participants, the excerpts were taken from about halfway through the interview where they discussed their strategies for using Vietnamese with their children. For the second-generation participants, the excerpts were their most fluent response to the simple prompts about their hobbies, daily activities, favourite foods, or experience with Vietnamese holidays and traditions. These excerpts were subsequently presented for evaluation to four native-speaking Vietnamese raters (M_{age} = 53.75 years, SD = 1.09). Three raters (2 female, 1 male) were born and lived in Vietnam, while one female rater had immigrated to Canada as an adult and resided in Montreal at the time of the study. The raters used 9-point scales to evaluate the recorded speech excerpts

along four dimensions: accentedness (1 = *strong accent*, 9 = *no accent*), comprehensibility (1 = *difficult to understand*, 9 = *easy to understand*), fluency (1 = *speaks slowly, with undue pausing and hesitations*, 9 = *speaks fluidly, without unnecessary pausing and hesitations*), and global knowledge (1= *does not know the language*, 9 = *knows the language perfectly*).

The raters participated in individual rating sessions conducted through the LimeSurvey interface. Accentedness was defined for the raters as the extent to which the speaker sounded nativelike. Comprehensibility was introduced as the degree to which the speaker was easy to understand. Fluency was defined as the extent to which the speaker's speech sounded fluid, spoken without excessive pauses or hesitations. Finally, global knowledge was described as the speaker's overall command of Vietnamese when speaking. Before rating the 76 audio excerpts, which were presented randomly one at a time, with only one listening of each audio allowed, the raters practiced using the scales by evaluating one unrelated recording. Apart from general instructions and definitions of the key terms, the raters did not receive any additional training or calibration practice, which is consistent with the idea that the four listener-rated dimensions generally reflect intuitive, holistic judgements (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

Data Analysis

Language Measures

The ratings provided by the four external raters were checked for internal consistency using two-way, consistency, average-measures intraclass correlations. The values were high to very high for accentedness (.91), comprehensibility (.88), fluency (.86), and global knowledge (.86), so a single score was derived per participant for each rated category by averaging the scores provided by the four raters. These rater-assessed language scores served as measures of the participants' Vietnamese speaking ability, allowing for between-generation comparisons.

Ethnolinguistic Measures

The first-generation participants' responses to the ethnolinguistic questionnaire were checked for internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), separately per response category, before composite measures (where possible) were derived by averaging across individual scale items (see Table 1). Perceived role of language in identity was defined as a mean score across four items capturing the importance of speaking Vietnamese for the maintenance of cultural identity, although the reliability value was suboptimal ($\alpha = .60$). Pride for the Vietnamese community abroad was a mean score across four items focusing on the importance of Vietnamese heritage and culture ($\alpha = .77$), whereas pride for current Vietnam was a mean score across two items eliciting the participants' feelings of pride in the achievements of the present-day Socialist Republic of Vietnam ($\alpha = .87$). Sociopolitical views about Vietnam were defined as a mean score across three items eliciting the participants' sentiment about the role of Vietnamese in the political context of the present-day Vietnam ($\alpha = .82$). Finally, the participants' response to a key item (*The Vietnamese language and the culture of Vietnam have to be preserved at all costs*) was retained as a single score to capture the participants' willingness to preserve the Vietnamese language and culture.

Table 1.

Summary of Ethnolinguistic Measures for First-Generation Participants

Measure	Scale items
Role of language in identity	1. The ability to speak my ethnic language is important in defining my personal identity. 2. People will know what ethnic group you belong to by the language you speak.

	3. All Vietnamese children abroad should be taught Vietnamese and speak it at home. 4. Learning to speak other languages is a sure way of contributing to the death or disappearance of my ethnic group.
Pride for the Vietnamese community abroad	1. I am proud to let people know that I belong to my ethnic group. 2. I am proud of the achievements of my ethnic group abroad. 3. I feel proud to see symbols of my ethnic group (such as the yellow flag of South Vietnam) displayed around me. 4. I am proud to be able to speak the language of my ethnic group.
Pride for current Vietnam	1. I am also proud of the achievements of Vietnam (the country nowadays) 2. I still feel proud as a Vietnamese to see the red flag (of Socialist Republic of Vietnam) displayed.
Sociopolitical views about Vietnam	1. Vietnam will never realize its potential for as long as it remains a communist country 2. There is a massive difference between overseas Vietnamese language (mostly spoken pre-1975) and the Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam right now. 3. The Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam now is not correct any more because of the Northern people who had migrated to the South after 1975.
Willingness to preserve Vietnamese language and culture	1. The Vietnamese language and culture of Vietnam have to be preserved at all costs

Social Network and Language Use Measures

Following Ducerain et al. (2015), four measures of the first- and second-generation participants' social networks were derived from the social network questionnaire: (a) network

size (number of friends nominated); (b) network intimacy (average intimacy rating across all friends nominated); (c) network inclusiveness (number of non-isolated friends divided by the total number of friends); and (d) network density (number of existing links among nominated friends divided by the number of possible links). Both generations also self-reported their daily use of Vietnamese, French, and English both currently and retrospectively five years after arrival (first generation) and in childhood (second generation). These measures, which were captured through 0–100% scales, were used as raw (untransformed) values.

Acculturative Stress

The second-generation participants' responses to the short version of the Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory yielded three sets of measures (see Table 2). Communication difficulties were defined as the participants' responses to three separate items, since a composite measure was impossible due to low reliability across these items ($\alpha = .45$). Intercultural stress was operationalized as a composite score across the three items targeting intercultural conflict ($\alpha = .71$), whereas discrimination was defined as a composite score across the three items targeting perceived discrimination in the HL community ($\alpha = .73$).

Table 2.

Summary of Acculturative Stress Measures for Second-Generation Participants

Measure	Scale items
Communication difficulties	1. It's hard for me to perform well in work related to Vietnamese because of my Vietnamese skills. 2. I often feel misunderstood or limited in daily situations [with parents/parents' friends] because of my Vietnamese skills. 3. It bothers me that I have an accent when speaking in Vietnamese.
Intercultural stress	1. I have had disagreements with other Vietnamese (e.g., friends or family) for liking Canadian/Quebec customs or ways of doing things. 2. I have had disagreements with Canadians/Quebeckers for liking Asian customs or ways of doing things 3. I feel that my particular practices (mix of Vietnamese and Canadian/Quebec) have caused conflict in my relationships.
Perceived discrimination	1. I have been treated rudely or unfairly because of my "Vietnamese born abroad" background. 2. I have felt discriminated against by other Vietnamese because of my "Vietnamese born abroad" background. 3. I feel that people very often interpret my behaviour based on their stereotypes of what "second-generations" are like.

To address the research questions, which focused on whether the first-generation participants' beliefs about the role of language in their cultural identity, their social network properties, and their sociopolitical views are associated with HL maintenance by the second-generation participants, Spearman correlations (two-tailed) were carried out between each set of measures. Correlation strength was assessed using field-specific guidelines (Plonsky & Oswald,

2014), where correlation coefficients around .25 are considered weak, coefficients around .40 are medium in strength, and coefficients exceeding .60 indicate strong relationships.

Chapter 4. Results

HL Maintenance and Role of Language in First Generation's Cultural Identity

The first research question asked if the perceived role of language in the cultural identity for first-generation Vietnamese immigrants was associated with the likelihood of HL maintenance among their children (i.e., second-generation speakers). The key variables for this analysis were the first-generation participants' composite score targeting the perceived role of language in their identity and rater-assessed measures of the second-generation participants' spoken Vietnamese. The first-generation participants generally showed moderate agreement with the statements on their beliefs about the importance of Vietnamese for them (M = 7.24, SD = 1.43, where 9 = *strongly agree*). With respect to the participants' Vietnamese skills, as summarized in Table 3, the first generation's speaking skills were similar across the four rated dimensions, all approaching the top of each respective scale. However, the second generation's speaking skills were rated lower, generally within the midrange of each scale. A comparison of 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the mean values, which is considered an alternative (and often superior) practice to traditional null hypothesis significance testing (Cumming & Calin-Jageman, 2017), confirmed that all CIs for the mean values of the first- and second-generation participants were distinct and clearly non-overlapping. Thus, insofar as the four rated dimensions of the participants' speaking performance were concerned, the speech of the child generation was more accented, less comprehensible, less fluent, and was generally indicative of less command of Vietnamese than the speech of the parent generation. Among the four dimensions, the accentedness rating seemed to have revealed the most numeric difference between the generations.

Table 3.

Summary of Rater-Assessed Vietnamese Measures

	First generation (n = 38)			Second generation (n = 38)		
Variable	*M*	*SD*	95% CI	*M*	*SD*	95% CI
Accentedness	8.46	0.59	[8.25, 8.64]	5.86	1.00	[5.55, 6.17]
Comprehensibility	8.43	0.55	[8.24, 8.60]	6.58	0.82	[6.32, 6.81]
Fluency	8.28	0.68	[8.05, 8.50]	6.13	0.95	[5.87, 6.40]
General knowledge	8.53	0.35	[8.43, 8.65]	6.93	0.67	[6.72, 7.13]

As shown in Table 4, Spearman correlations between the first-generation participants' responses to the four language-in-identity items (composite score) and rater-assessed measures of the second generation's Vietnamese speaking revealed no associations which approached the benchmark for a weak relationship.

Table 4.

Correlations Between First-Generation Participants' Responses to Language-in-Identity Items and Second-Generation Participants' Vietnamese Language Ratings

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Accentedness	—				
2. Comprehensibility	.93	—			
3. Fluency	.90	.91	—		
4. General knowledge	.94	.91	.88	—	
5. Language in identity	–.08	–.08	–.15	–.01	—

HL Maintenance, First Generation's Social Networks, and Second Generation's Acculturative Stress

The second research question asked if the first generation's social network and the second generation's acculturative stress were associated with the likelihood of HL maintenance among second-generation speakers. The key variables for this analysis were the first- and second-generation participants' social networks (in terms of their size, intimacy, inclusiveness, and density), along with their daily use of Vietnamese, French, and English (summarized in Table 5), all in relation to rater-assessed measures of the second-generation participants' Vietnamese. Although the first generation's social network was nearly double the size of the second generation's network, the two generations did not appear to differ in the intimacy, inclusiveness, and density values of their networks, which were all relatively high. A comparison of 95% CIs for the mean values across the two generations confirmed that all CIs for the mean values of intimacy, inclusiveness, and density were nearly identical. Nevertheless, as shown through self-reported percent of daily language use, the first generation tended to use Vietnamese more frequently than the second generation, whereas the second generation tended to use English and French more often than the first generation, which is a pattern consistent with a switch from Vietnamese to English or French as the dominant language in the second generation. However, in the interviews, all participants confirmed that Vietnamese was the language spoken mostly if not exclusively at home.

Table 5.

Summary of Social Network and Language Use Measures

	First generation (n = 38)			Second generation (n = 38)		
Variable	*M*	*SD*	95% CI	*M*	*SD*	95% CI
Network size	13.47	2.84	[12.63, 14.26]	7.88	4.72	[6.32, 9.53]
Network intimacy	3.60	0.57	[3.34, 3.78]	3.22	0.60	[3.04, 3.43]
Network inclusiveness	0.96	0.10	[0.93, 0.99]	0.98	0.11	[0.96, 1.00]
Network density	0.81	0.24	[0.74, 0.89]	0.83	0.25	[0.73, 0.91]
Daily use of Vietnamese	51.05	32.20	[41.32, 60.79]	35.53	29.66	[26.56, 45.81]
Daily use of French	48.68	25.59	[41.32, 56.05]	71.05	29.85	[61.32, 80.58]
Daily use of English	35.79	27.37	[26.56, 45.53]	64.21	30.64	[55.07, 72.37]

In terms of their reported acculturative stress, as summarized in Table 6, the second-generation participants reported medium to average stress levels in response to the three questions capturing their communication-related acculturative stress (M = 2.26–3.61) and the two composite measures of their intercultural stress (M = 2.27) and perceived discrimination (M = 2.13, where 5 = *agree*), although standard deviation values indicated that there was variation in stress levels experienced by individual participants.

Table 6.

Summary of Acculturative Stress Measures

	Second generation (n = 38)		
Variable	*M*	*SD*	95% CI
It's hard for me to perform well in work related to Vietnamese because of my Vietnamese skills.	3.61	1.37	[3.16, 4.11]
I often feel misunderstood or limited in daily situations [with parents/parents' friends] because of my Vietnamese skills.	2.58	1.37	[2.21, 2.97]
It bothers me that I have an accent when speaking in Vietnamese.	2.26	1.33	[1.87, 2.68]
Intercultural stress	2.27	1.11	[1.94, 2.61]
Perceived discrimination	2.13	1.06	[1.78, 2.52]

Spearman correlation analyses focusing on the associations between social network variables and rater-assessed measures of the second generation's Vietnamese revealed several weak associations. As summarized in Table 7, a larger first generation's social network was associated with higher ratings of the second generation's overall Vietnamese knowledge (.28). Similarly, a larger but less dense second generation's social network was associated for this generation with more nativelike Vietnamese accent, more comprehensible and fluent Vietnamese speech, and greater rater-assessed Vietnamese knowledge.

Table 7.

Correlations Between Participants' Social Network Measures and Second-Generation Participants' Vietnamese Ratings

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Accentedness	—											
2. Comprehensibility	.93	—										
3. Fluency	.90	.91	—									
4. General knowledge	.94	.91	.88	—								
5. Parent's network size	.18	.23	.21	.28	—							
6. Parent's network intimacy	–.09	–.02	–.08	–.09	–.06	—						
7. Parent's network inclusiveness	–.11	–.16	–.18	–.02	.08	.07	—					
8. Parent's network density	–.17	–.19	–.13	–.09	.02	.37	.48	—				
9. Child's network size	.29	.31	.33	.31	.21	.12	.17	.06	—			
10. Child's network intimacy	.10	.12	.12	.06	.24	–.12	–.14	–.00	–.24	—		
11. Child's network inclusiveness	.17	.14	.09	.06	.40	–.07	–.30	–.11	.20	.16	—	
12. Child's network density	–.32	–.32	–.34	–.35	.23	–.08	–.16	.07	–.69	.35	.31	—

As for associations between the participants' daily use of Vietnamese, French, and English, and the second generation's rater-assessed Vietnamese, as summarized in Table 8, there were eight moderate relationships between the participants' reported daily use of Vietnamese and the second generation's Vietnamese ratings. In all cases, greater daily use of Vietnamese by the first- and second-generation participants was associated with higher Vietnamese ratings for the second generation. The associations were particularly pronounced (exceeding the benchmark of .40 for a medium-size relationship) between the first generation's use of Vietnamese and the second generation's accentedness rating (.45), and between the second generation's use of Vietnamese and their Vietnamese fluency (.47) and general knowledge (.45) ratings.

Table 8.

Correlations Between Participants' Daily Use of Vietnamese (VN), French (FR), and English (EN) and Second-Generation Participants' Vietnamese Ratings

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Accentedness	—									
2. Comprehensibility	.93	—								
3. Fluency	.90	.91	—							
4. General knowledge	.94	.91	.88	—						
5. Parent daily VN	.45	.39	.32	.40	—					
6. Parent daily FR	–.15	–.08	–.05	–.13	–.31	—				
7. Parent daily EN	.15	.14	.13	.17	–.24	.23	—			
8. Child daily VN	.39	.33	.47	.45	.04	.19	.08	—		
9. Child daily FR	–.01	.03	.05	.04	–.13	.43	.05	.45	—	
10. Child daily EN	–.15	–.07	–.04	–.12	–.26	.35	.16	.20	.61	—

Finally, in terms of the associations between the second generation's acculturative stress and their rater-assessed Vietnamese, as shown in Table 9, there were several weak-to-moderate negative associations involving all items capturing the participants' communication-related stress but not their intercultural stress or perceived discrimination. In all cases, greater levels of communication-related stress were associated with lower Vietnamese ratings.

Table 9.

Correlations Between Second-Generation Participants' Communication-Related Acculturative Stress (CRAS) and Their Vietnamese Ratings

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Accentedness	—								
2. Comprehensibility	.93	—							
3. Fluency	.90	.91	—						
4. General knowledge	.94	.91	.88	—					
5. CRAS Item 1	–.45	–.44	–.47	–.47	—				
6. CRAS Item 2	–.31	–.34	–.34	–.30	.37	—			
7. CRAS Item 3	–.27	–.37	–.31	–.23	.10	.17	—		
8. Intercultural stress	.15	.09	.13	.14	–.16	.04	.08	—	
9. Discrimination stress	.12	.18	.12	–.03	–.26	.09	–.05	.27	—

HL Maintenance, First Generation's Sociopolitical Views, and Their Relationship with the Perceived Role of Language in Cultural Identity and Social Network Engagement

The final research question asked if the first-generation participants' sociopolitical views and the sociopolitical circumstances that triggered immigration were associated with the likelihood of HL maintenance among the second generation. In terms of the first-generation

participants' sociopolitical views (summarized in Table 10), they tended to show a strong will to preserve the Vietnamese language and culture (M = 8.13, where 9 = *strongly agree*), they were proud of the Vietnamese community abroad (M = 7.87), but showed less pride in the present-day Socialist Republic of Vietnam (M = 4.62), and demonstrated a range of sociopolitical views about Vietnam (M = 5.66).

Table 10.

Summary of Sociopolitical Measures for First-Generation Participants

	First generation (n = 38)		
Variable	*M*	*SD*	95% CI
Sociopolitical views about Vietnam	5.66	2.37	[4.79, 6.47]
Willingness to preserve Vietnamese language and culture	8.13	1.33	[7.71, 8.50]
Pride for Vietnamese community abroad	7.87	1.14	[7.43, 8.24]
Pride for current Vietnam	4.62	2.16	[3.97, 5.22]

Because the first generation's sociopolitical views likely varied depending on the reason that triggered immigration, for this research question, this variable was considered as a between-participants factor. In total, there were 21 first-generation participants who stated that their main reason for leaving Vietnam was political turmoil, whereas 12 participants identified economic hardship as their primary reason for emigration, and the remaining five listed both reasons. Because the last group consisted of five pairs, which precluded meaningful comparisons, all subsequent analyses were therefore conducted separately for the parent–child pairs whose chief reason for immigration was political (n = 21) versus economic (n = 12).

Among the political immigrants, Spearman correlations revealed five weak-to-moderate associations (summarized in Table 11.1) which involved the first generation's willingness to preserve the Vietnamese language and culture, where a stronger agreement with the statement that the Vietnamese language and culture have to be preserved at all costs was associated with higher ratings across all four dimensions, most strongly for fluency (.42). There was also one weak negative association involving the first generation's pride for the Vietnamese community abroad, where stronger pride expressed by the parents was associated with less comprehensible Vietnamese speech by their children (–.34). Regarding the first generation's perceived role of language in their cultural identity, similar to the results in the full dataset, Spearman correlations revealed no associations involving any of the second generation's speech ratings.

Table 11.1.

Correlations Between Second Generation's Vietnamese Ratings and First Generation's Sociopolitical Views and Their Perceived Role of Language in Identity for the Group of Political Immigrants

Variable	Accent	Compreh.	Fluency	Knowledge
Sociopolitical views	.01	.06	.09	.02
Willingness to preserve	.30	.32	.42	.34
Pride for Vietnam abroad	–.15	–.34	–.09	–.12
Pride for current Vietnam	.09	.12	.01	.16
Language in identity	–.03	–.08	–.07	.06

Note. Compreh. = comprehensibility.

Among the economic immigrants, Spearman correlations revealed nine associations, ranging from weak to moderate (summarized in Table 11.2). Four weak associations involved the first generation's views about the sociopolitical context of Vietnam, where a stronger

sentiment of dislike from the parents about the current political regime in Vietnam was associated with lower Vietnamese ratings for their children, most notably for the ratings of accentedness (–.32) and general knowledge (–.31). These participants' willingness to preserve the Vietnamese language and culture was positively associated with their children's general knowledge rating (.35). The last four associations involved the first generation's pride for the present-day Vietnam, where stronger pride was moderately associated with higher Vietnamese ratings for the second generation across all four dimensions, particularly for the ratings of accentedness (.40), fluency (.45), and general knowledge (.39). As with the political immigrants, for the economic immigrants, there was no relationship between the first generation's perceived role of language in their cultural identity and any of the second generation's ratings.

Table 11.2

Correlations Between Second Generation's Vietnamese Ratings and First Generation's Sociopolitical Views and Their Perceived Role of Language in Identity for the Group of Economic Immigrants

Variable	Accent	Compreh.	Fluency	Knowledge
Sociopolitical views	–.32	–.27	–.25	–.31
Willingness to preserve	–.17	.00	.08	.35
Pride for Vietnam abroad	.03	.08	.17	.09
Pride for current Vietnam	.40	.30	.45	.39
Language in identity	–.08	–.19	–.18	–.10

Note. Compreh. = comprehensibility.

Regarding the participants' engagement in social networks and the second-generation participants' stress level, in the political group (see Table 12.1), there were nine negative associations, ranging from moderate to strong, between the second generation's responses to

communication-related acculturative stress items and their rater-assessed Vietnamese skills. Overall, greater communication-related stress was associated with more accented, less comprehensible, and less fluent Vietnamese speech, as well as with generally weaker Vietnamese knowledge. In addition, there were medium-to-strong associations between the second generation's social network size and their network's intimacy and their Vietnamese ratings, where a larger network size but lower intimacy were associated with less accented, more comprehensible, and more fluent Vietnamese speech, as well as with generally greater Vietnamese knowledge, although the associations for network intimacy were not as strong and did not involve as many speech ratings as the associations for network size.

Table 12.1.

Correlations Between Second Generation's Vietnamese Ratings, Second Generation's Communication-Related Acculturative Stress (CRAS), and Both Generation's Social Engagement Indices for the Group of Political Immigrants

Variable	Accent	Compreh.	Fluency	Knowledge
CRAS Item 1	–.49	–.50	–.63	–.48
CRAS Item 2	–.21	–.24	–.35	–.14
CRAS Item 3	–.31	–.37	–.42	–.31
Child's network size	.50	.53	.43	.63
Child's network intimacy	–.30	–.20	–.23	–.34
Child's network inclusiveness	.06	.11	.06	.03
Child's network density	–.52	–.53	–.50	–.52
Parent's network size	.13	.12	.14	.27
Parent's network intimacy	–.00	.04	–.02	.02

Parent's network inclusiveness	–.11	–.09	–.12	.03
Parent's network density	–.15	–.19	–.13	–.10

Note. Compreh. = comprehensibility.

Among the economic immigrants (see Table 12.2), there were only two associations between the second generation's communication-related stress and their rater-assessed Vietnamese skills. Greater difficulty with performing work-related communication in Vietnamese was associated for these participants with lower rater-assessed general Vietnamese knowledge, and greater dissatisfaction with own Vietnamese speech was associated with lower rater-assessed comprehensibility. In addition, as in the political group, larger network size for the second generation was positively associated with less accented and more fluent Vietnamese speech, albeit less strongly than in the political group. In contrast, whereas network intimacy was associated negatively with Vietnamese ratings in the political group, network intimacy was linked with all four Vietnamese ratings positively, with medium-to-strong associations.

Table 12.2.

Correlations Between Second Generation's Vietnamese Ratings, Second Generation's Communication-Related Acculturative Stress (CRAS), and Both Generation's Social Engagement Indices for the Group of Economic Immigrants

Variable	Accent	Compreh.	Fluency	Knowledge
CRAS Item 1	–.18	–.15	–.04	–.36
CRAS Item 2	–.16	–.18	–.21	–.16
CRAS Item 3	–.16	–.26	.07	.02
Child's network size	.33	.24	.30	.24
Child's network intimacy	.50	.48	.61	.55

Child's network inclusiveness	.41	.23	.18	.18
Child's network density	–.39	–.34	–.51	–.44
Parent's network size	–.07	–.07	–.03	–.10
Parent's network intimacy	.13	.31	.27	.13
Parent's network inclusiveness	.08	.01	.16	.19
Parent's network density	–.01	–.04	.20	.07

Note. Compreh. = comprehensibility.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The goal of this thesis project was to document how the maintenance of Vietnamese as a HL in the second generation of immigrants is related to the first generation's perception of the role of language in their identity, their engagement in social networks, the second generation's acculturative stress, and the first generation's views about the sociopolitical context of Vietnam. Generally speaking, the first-generation participants in this study were successful at passing their HL down to their children, insofar as all second-generation participants used their HL predominantly, if not exclusively, at home and were able to communicate in Vietnamese in response to simple prompts. However, the obtained pattern of self-reported language use in the second generation suggested a general shift in dominance from Vietnamese to English or French. In terms of the role of ethnolinguistic and social variables in HL maintenance, some variables, such as the first generation's perceived role of language in their cultural identity and their social network engagement, revealed no relationships with rater-assessed measures of second generation's Vietnamese. In contrast, other variables, which included the first generation's willingness to preserve their HL, their pride for Vietnam, the second generation's social network size, intimacy, and density, and both generations' daily use of Vietnamese, showed associations with rater-assessed measures of Vietnamese in the second generation. Furthermore, the specific relationships for various predictors of HL maintenance appeared to depend on the first generation's primary reason for emigration (political vs. economic), such that the same predictors often showed opposite associations in the groups of political versus economic immigrants. Taken together, these results suggested complex interactions between the first generation's sociopolitical views and both generations' social engagement in predicting the maintenance of Vietnamese as a HL.

First Generation's Sociopolitical Views

An important finding of this study is that the role of various variables in explaining HL maintenance in the second generation of Vietnamese speakers differed for families that emigrated from their homeland for political versus economic reasons. This aligns with Perera's (2015) suggestion, made in a study focusing on Sri Lankans in Australia, that the specific conditions that trigger emigration from the homeland must be examined, because these circumstances might determine whether and to what extent immigrants pass their HL down to their children. The results of this study thus confirm that the sociopolitical context of emigration does contribute to explaining HL maintenance (or loss) in the second generation.

Although all first-generation participants in this study left Vietnam after the Vietnam War, this event likely affected them differently, because for some participants, their main stated reason for emigration was political instability or even personal threat, whereas for others, it was economic hardship brought on by the war. As shown through their interview responses, most first-generation participants perceived the current Vietnam's ruling regime as a source of aggravation, which for some fueled strong feelings of hatred. Nevertheless, the group that left primarily to ensure their safety and the group that left predominantly to gain economic benefits displayed two distinct patterns in relation to maintaining the HL for the second generation. Among the political immigrants, the first generation's willingness to preserve Vietnamese had a stronger association with the second generation's HL ratings (in terms of the speakers' accentedness, comprehensibility, fluency, and general knowledge) than in the economic group, where this relationship emerged only for the general knowledge ratings. The political immigrants may have established themselves as members of an imagined nation (Bloch & Hirsch, 2016)—the Republic of Vietnam or South Vietnam—which in turn may have contributed to their

willingness to strengthen their ties to the variety of Vietnamese they spoke and the Southern Vietnamese culture they wished pass on to their children. This interpretation is consistent with the pattern of HL maintenance in the Latvian diaspora in Australia, where the community's HL maintenance efforts appeared to have been stronger when Latvia was part of the Soviet Union, rather than after Latvia regained its independence, due to perceived fear that the country's history and values would be eradicated by the Soviet authorities (Ozolins, 1995; Smolicz et al., 2001). In the case of the Vietnamese diaspora, North Vietnam's takeover of the South symbolized a real threat to at least some individuals that the language and culture of South Vietnam would be lost, prompting political immigrants to take on an active role in preserving their language and culture. The fear of losing what they perceived to be the "right" Vietnamese language is encapsulated in a comment by one first-generation participant (P1), a political immigrant:

> They brought with them vocabulary from the North to the South. We don't understand those words, but they forced the Southern people to use the same words... The educated Northern people had already left the North in 1954, so the rest of them from the countryside took over governmental positions, speaking with their provincial accent. Most of them went from grade 4 or 5 [of elementary school] directly to taking over these top positions, and their children got influenced by their wrong usage, wrong pronunciation of Vietnamese.

In the political group, the desire to preserve their HL seemed to translate into concrete actions, which included the specific community-oriented projects of "building a HL school" (P7 and P19, first-generation political immigrants), establishing "cultural centres" (P10 and P31, first-generation political immigrants), and organizing "a Vietnamese youth association" (P16 and

P28, first-generation political immigrants), whose goal is to provide formal, community-centred ways of teaching Vietnamese to the next generation of speakers. It is not surprising therefore that three major community organizations dedicated to the teaching of HL Vietnamese in Montreal were all founded by political immigrants, who have used these institutions as cultural centres for the maintenance of values and beliefs that were perceived to be eroded in the present-day Vietnam.

In contrast, among the economic immigrants, it was the first generation's pride for the present-day Vietnam that had an association with the second generation's Vietnamese ratings (across all four rated criteria)—a relationship that was not attested in the political group. As some immigrants explained, their pride for the current Vietnam reflected their recognition of "the social development which is really good now" and their awareness that there are "big changes in the people" and that "[y]ounger Vietnamese generations are working really hard and passionately" (P11, first-generation economic immigrant). Economic immigrants also appeared to separate their disapproval of the current government from their pride for other aspects of the country, as described by another first-generation economic immigrant (P35): "putting aside all the politics, I know that I am still a Vietnamese, I still see it [the internationally recognized flag of Vietnam] representing me in aspects that do not involve politics." Unlike the political immigrants, the economic immigrants may not have harboured or overtly expressed a deep-seated existential trauma defining their loss of the homeland, so the children raised in the families of economic immigrants were presumably allowed and even encouraged to consume the Vietnamese culture through Vietnam-based media, such as through "watching Vietnamese web dramas on YouTube" (C14, second-generation economic immigrant) and "listening to V-Pop [Vietnamese pop music]" (C35, second-generation economic immigrant), which may have

provided these speakers with additional opportunities to use their HL in contexts relevant to their interests. This finding echoes the result observed in various Korean communities outside South Korea—a diaspora that has emigrated mostly for economic reasons—where most second-generation speakers are exposed to or are directly engaged with the contemporary Korean popular culture either individually or through friendships with Korea-born international students (Park & Sarkar, 2007; Shin et al., 2016).

It is perhaps unsurprising that the same relationship between the first generation's pride for the present-day Vietnam and their children's HL did not obtain in the political group. In fact, as revealed through the informal interviews, the parents' disapproval of the country as a whole, and not just of its regime, was obvious to their children, as for instance, shown in the comments by a second-generation participant (C25) from the political group:

> My mom says that, it's sad that we don't speak good Vietnamese, but the way she speaks about the Vietnamese culture is always inferior. I told her I would go back to study music in Vietnam, and she said that Vietnamese music offered no added values.

In another example illustrating the first generation's lack of acceptance of the present-day Vietnam, one first-generation participant (P36) who immigrated to Canada for both political and economic reasons commented:

> My son used to swim very well. His trainer once said, with [my son]'s statistics, he might not be able to participate in the Olympics as a Canadian, but there wouldn't be any problem to participate as a Vietnamese. [If he went as a Vietnamese], he could compete in the Olympics. My son got home to tell me that, and my first impulse, I said "No!"

Thus, the covert or overt disapproval of Vietnam expressed by the parents belonging to the political group, coupled with these parents' efforts to provide in-house, community-centred

opportunities for HL development, may have created pathways for their children's HL maintenance that did not rely on active cultural links with the present-day Vietnam.

In fact, sociopolitical attitudes could be detrimental to HL maintenance, as shown through negative associations between the first-generation economic immigrants' sociopolitical views (which captured their belief that Vietnam's ruling regime is a negative force jeopardizing its future potential and eroding its language) and their children's Vietnamese speech ratings. Such unfavourable opinions, expressed overtly or covertly in the home, might have discouraged the second generation from engaging with their HL in the context of the present-day Vietnam. It is noteworthy that these negative relationships emerged only in the economic group, where the parents' criticism about Vietnam, coupled with less pronounced efforts to establish and participate in community-led initiatives to preserve their HL, may have contributed to a diminished sense of belonging to their ethnic group for the second-generation speakers, who felt less motivated to learn the language. In fact, only one second-generation participant in the economic group reported studying at a community HL school, whereas more than half of the second-generation speakers in the political group reported their enrollment in these institutions. One second-generation participant's (C6) comments were particularly revealing of this situation: "I identify myself as a French Canadian... Whenever people realize that I speak super well French or English, they know that I am a Quebecker." Considering that this participant's parent (who immigrated for economic reasons) expressed strong negative opinions about the present-day Vietnam and its language, the attitudes heard in the home may have encouraged this young person to pivot his identity around French. To sum up, whereas the first generation's disapproval of the present-day Vietnam and its language in the political group was associated positively with their children's HL, perhaps due to the parents' active role in preserving their HL and culture for

their children, similar unfavourable attitudes, especially towards the current ruling regime in Vietnam, were negatively linked to the second generation's HL ratings among the economic immigrants, for whom these opinions likely discouraged closer ties with the present-day Vietnam and its culture.

Social Engagement

Daily Use

Based on prior research which shows that HL maintenance is dictated by children's HL exposure and use in the home (De Houwer, 2003, 2007; Nesteruk, 2010), it was expected that daily use of Vietnamese by both generations would be associated with greater HL maintenance among the second generation. Indeed, as shown by the findings of this study, higher frequency of using the HL by the parent correlated with more nativelike and more comprehensible speech produced by the child, which supports theoretical frameworks that posit a relationship between speech perception and production (Nagle & Baese-Berk, 2021). Similarly, greater frequency of HL use by the children correlated with more fluent HL speech, which is consistent with conceptual views capturing the practice and automaticity dimensions of language learning (DeKeyser, 2007). As Vietnamese was reported to be the language spoken mostly, if not exclusively, in the home, it created the social context for the second generation to practice the language. Some first-generation participants who self-reported speaking Vietnamese exclusively at home also emphasized "having dinners together to talk about the day" (e.g., first-generation participants P1, P9, P21, P32), and "having gatherings with extended families" (e.g., first-generation participants P7, P15, P20), which further extended both the scope and variability of HL use for the second generation. Such activities might have additionally contributed to improving the second generation's links with the Vietnamese language and culture because it

was the language in which intimate connections were made with family members, which in turn fostered an immersive environment for HL practice. This view of HL development would be consistent with socialization and sociocultural frameworks of language development (Duff & Tammy, 2011; Lantolf et al., 2015). Overall, the link between daily Vietnamese use by both generations and the second generation's HL ratings confirms the important role of intergenerational language use in HL maintenance, particularly through family-bonding activities.

Social Networks

Social network analysis showed that the first generation's HL social networks were by and large not associated with the second generation's HL ratings, except for few weak relationships between the parents' network size or inclusiveness metrics and the ratings of their children's Vietnamese. For example, the more Vietnamese-speaking friends were reported by the first-generation participants in the political group, the higher overall rater-assessed score was obtained for their children. However, given that these associations were weak, the first generation's social networks did not seem to play a major role in maintaining the children's HL perhaps because the children were primarily using Vietnamese with their parents rather than their parents' friends.

An important finding of this study is that the second generation's own social networks appeared to play a role in their HL maintenance. For instance, in terms of the network's size, the number of people the children reported having interactions with was positively associated with their HL ratings, especially in the political group. Bigger social networks in the second generation were moderately associated with better accent, comprehensibility, fluency, and strongly associated with general Vietnamese knowledge in the political group, while these

associations were only weak for accent and fluency in the economic group. One plausible explanation for this discrepancy is that the political group was more close-knit than the economic group, as described by one first-generation participant (P20):

> [T]he more influential and affluential Vietnamese came here right after the war and settled down all in [neighbourhood of Montreal], that's their area, very rich. And then the labourous Vietnamese came and settled down everywhere else.

Therefore, the community of political immigrants is likely held together by strong social and cultural ties between people who represented a more affluent and privileged social class prior to emigration. Having received better education in Vietnam, first-generation political immigrants were presumably more likely to gain employment after arriving in Canada, occupying such prestigious jobs as doctors, nurses, engineers, and businesspeople. And having settled in close proximity to other political immigrants, they may have surrounded themselves with likeminded, highly educated fellow immigrants. Thus, these circumstances may have created an ideal environment enabling the children of political immigrants to meet and befriend Vietnamese speakers with shared educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, with positive consequences for their HL maintenance.

In the case of the economic group, after emigration, these individuals were more likely to work in menial, blue-collar, or low-prestige occupations, such as performing factory jobs or working from home (e.g., sewing, cooking). And because these individuals did not typically settle in close-knit communities, there were fewer opportunities for their children to meet Vietnamese friends outside the home, which made it problematic for the children to maintain frequent interactions with individuals whose HL Vietnamese skills were similar or stronger than their own. This interpretation of the role of social network's size in HL maintenance echoes the

findings of Zhang's (2012) longitudinal study comparing the upper-class Mandarin-Chinese immigrants with the working-class Fujianese-Chinese immigrants in Philadelphia. In that study, the two groups rarely interacted with each other because of their distinct socioeconomic status, with the consequence that the children of the working-class group had diminished contact with educated HL speakers and limited opportunities for meaningful HL practice.

A novel finding of this study is the contrast between the political and economic groups in the role of the second generation's network intimacy, where a higher level of intimacy in social interactions was negatively associated with rater-assessed Vietnamese in the political group but was positively associated with it in the economic group. In the case of the economic group, the size of the network did not matter as much as the level of intimacy in relation to HL maintenance, such that the associations for network intimacy were double the strength of the correlations for network size. Based on prior social network research (e.g., Crockett et al., 2007; Schneider & Ward, 2003), the level of intimacy was expected to play a positive role in HL maintenance as speakers are more likely to acquire or maintain a language in an emotionally supportive network, which was in fact what seemed to emerge in the economic group. By contrast, the opposite finding in the political group implies a transgenerational extension of the political conflict experienced by the first-generation community. To various degrees, children are inheritors of the trauma experienced by their parents, particularly in oppressive social contexts (Baack, 2017; Leon, 2014), which could be detrimental to the children's willingness to explore the heritage for which they might harbour mistrust. The trauma that is acutely felt by the first generation could be quite subtle in the second generation but may nevertheless impact these speakers' agency with it comes to the learning and use of their HL. The following interaction between a second-generation participant and the RA (a middle-aged person previously unknown

to the participant) illustrates how intergenerational trauma could manifest itself in the second generation:

> C10: My French is really good, I have always been the best in French school. When I learn English, it was also easy. I have the sense for languages, but the guilt is that I don't know much Vietnamese… I don't know where to start, I am not exposed to communities and friends my age, all the communities I know are from my parents and the population is older. So I don't feel integrated…
>
> RA: Now that you have the contact with [the researcher from the same generation as the participant] and with me, would you be interested in participating more in preserving our mother tongue and culture better?
>
> C10: (*Quiet*) Yes, definitely. But from what I know about the Vietnamese culture in Montreal, every time I hear something, there're conflicts in between different groups. I don't know why in our community, they always have conflicts, always go against each other. There're always a lot of stories, and they're unpleasant. It makes me scared to participate, and to pick a side.

Having reported a highly intimate bond with her family who all had fled Vietnam for political reasons, this young person might have been exposed to second-hand sociopolitical conflict in the local diaspora to the degree that is both more personal and intense than that of a speaker whose social network contains less intimate familial and friendly bonds. Consequently, the conflict perceived through intimate interactions with family and friends may prevent members of the second generation from fully engaging with various aspects of their heritage, including language.

In terms of social network density, a negative relationship between the second generation's network density and these speakers' HL ratings was surprising. This result, which

was similar for both the political and economic groups, runs against a previously reported claim that denser (i.e., more interconnected) social networks provide speakers with additional social support which facilitates language learning and use (Ducerain, 2015). Similar to the HL speakers in this study, the HL speakers from the Fujianese-Chinese community in Philadelphia did not benefit from having high social network density (Zhang, 2012). That community, which was largely disconnected from the homeland, expressed little desire of returning to China. In fact, some children in Zhang's study perceived their high-density HL networks as an obscure and inferior community to the host society, and this belief seemed to discourage them from actively participating in or even exploring their HL networks, which limited their opportunities to practice the HL. In this sense, the Fujianese-Chinese speakers in Philadelphia are similar to the Vietnamese speakers in Montreal, who regardless of their stated reason for emigration generally showed strong divergence from the present-day Vietnam and may have avoided active engagement with their otherwise dense, interconnected HL networks. From this vantage point, then, for the HL groups isolated from their homeland culture, a superior social index of HL maintenance might be social network intimacy (as a measure of the quality of HL input received) rather than network's interconnectedness (density).

Finally, no associations emerged between the second generation's network inclusiveness and their HL ratings because all participants' networks did not have many isolated friends who did not interacted with the rest. The average value for inclusiveness across both generations was near ceiling, with little variance in values, implying that the participants varied little on this variable, which made it less likely for a meaningful relationship to emerge.

Communication-Related Acculturative Stress

Communication-related acculturative stress (CRAS) appeared to play an important role in HL maintenance as all three CRAS items were associated with the second generation's Vietnamese ratings. Building on Ducerain's (2015) research exploring the link between CRAS and second language acquisition, this study also included two extra measures of acculturative stress, which captured intercultural relationships and perceived discrimination, on the assumption that other context-specific factors might determine the extent of HL maintenance (Lanza et al., 2007). However, the present analysis revealed no correlations between these added variables and measures of HL maintenance, so the findings are generally compatible with Ducerain's (2015) conclusion that CRAS is the most pertinent type of stress not just for second language learning but also for HL maintenance.

In particular, the associations between all three CRAS statements and the HL ratings were more pronounced in the political than in the economic group, implying that CRAS could be more detrimental to HL maintenance for the second-generation immigrants whose parents were more likely to bring up political trauma as a reason for emigration. Perhaps this more severe role of communication-relevant stress was related to the formal ways in which the parents approached HL maintenance in this group, where socialization into the Vietnamese language and culture, besides the home, occurred through HL schools, centres, and associations, as discussed above. Because the political immigrants were more protective of their HL variety as a consequence of the political shift in Vietnam, they might have been applying more pressure on their children to speak the "right" way. Consequently, the second-generation speakers in the political group may have been more exposed to criticism or pressure (however mild) about their HL from people around them, which could potentially elevate their insecurity about how well they can use Vietnamese and make them more critical of their language ability. To illustrate, one

second-generation participant (C29) from the political group described how people's prescriptive attitudes toward Vietnamese discourage him to speak the HL:

> I have a group of Vietnamese friends in [city in Quebec], but I speak French to them as I am not confident with my Vietnamese. And I don't like hearing people saying that my Vietnamese is quite bad... I heard it too often growing up whenever I didn't know a word or didn't pronounce a word clearly... My mom sometimes said, "Just stop with the [bad] Vietnamese," so I used French instead.

In fact, a closer look at finer-grained aspects attributed to CRAS revealed that the associations with the HL ratings were the strongest for the statement capturing the second generation's concern about the adequacy of their Vietnamese for completing everyday tasks. The second strongest set of associations came from the discomfort they had experienced about their foreign accent in Vietnamese. On the other hand, the levels of stress they reported while having interactions with Vietnamese people did not seem to be associated with their ratings, perhaps because they could choose not to use Vietnamese in these interactions. This aligns well with the findings of Lanza et al.'s (2007) study, in which success (or failure) of HL maintenance was related to children's language choice in a conversation. Indeed, all second-generation speakers had a choice of which language to use (Vietnamese, French, or English) in their own social networks, so their communication was rarely compromised entirely. It is however clear that these speakers felt a certain degree of linguistic insecurity about their HL, which was reciprocally related to their HL skills. The feeling of insecurity about their HL may have discouraged speakers from using the language, while the lack of HL interaction most certainly resulted in missed opportunities for language practice, which led to greater insecurity. Broadly speaking, it appears that an excessive focus on prescriptive language use, coupled with a strong emphasis on

formal language education opportunities, could trigger acculturative stress for some second-generation immigrants, leading to feelings of linguistic inadequacy and contributing to a language shift away from the HL as a means of negotiating a more favourable identity in conversation (Auer, 2007; Bourdieu, 1991).

Perceived Role of Language in Identity

The most surprising result of this study is that there were no associations between the first generation's perceived role of language in their cultural identity and the second generation's rater-assessed HL skills. This finding does not fit with the idea implied in previous research that the more central language is perceived by the parents' generation, the greater the likelihood of HL maintenance will be among their children, presumably because of the fear of losing heritage culture (e.g., Kumar et al., 2008). Perhaps, the first-generation members of the Vietnamese community in this study considered that their culture could be maintained through other means, not solely through language, which is similar to the findings of Perera's (2015) study in the Sri Lankan community, where culture was maintained mostly through religion. For instance, one first-generation participant (P32) described this idea in the following way:

> I am 57, and speaking Vietnamese on 9 out of 9 doesn't mean I have retained all the aspects and the characteristics of the Vietnamese culture. A young person like you, like my child, say if they were born here and for some reasons, they don't speak Vietnamese because their parents were absent from home, but they could still keep the "grassroot" of the Vietnamese culture, you can't say that this person is less Vietnamese than the person who speaks the language 100%.

An additional insight from another first-generation participant (P15) explains which potential "aspects and the characteristics of the Vietnamese culture" were important to transmit to the next generation, aside from the language:

> To say if the ability of speaking Vietnamese could represent our culture, that's a bit exaggerating. Yes, I am proud that I speak Vietnamese and my children too, that we understand Vietnamese history and literature... but of course my children don't speak as well as those children in Vietnam. However, they know our traditions, our rituals, how to pay respect to ancestors, much better than children in Vietnam. Compared to a person in Vietnam, my youngest for example, she doesn't speak as well because it's not the language she speaks 24/7 but you can't say that she's not Vietnamese because her soul is completely Vietnamese. She knows everything about our culture, our people, our religions.

In addition, at least some first-generation participants were aware that successful HL maintenance did not mean that their children had acquired a heritage cultural identity. For example, a comment from P10 summarized the relationship between Vietnamese language and culture as follows:

> For me, heritage language is a tool, if you know how to use it then it's really good to help absorb our culture. What counts is the desire to know about our origin, to discover more about the Vietnamese culture... With my daughter, I feel that I have been very successful, although her Vietnamese is not too good, but I can see in her, there's a Vietnamese root that is very healthy and deep, she knows who she is.

These insights available through brief interviews with the first-generation participants, combined with the lack of appreciable associations between measures of language in identity and HL

maintenance, thus suggest that the Vietnamese language may not have been the most salient symbol of cultural identification for this community, and that the erosion of the HL was not tantamount to losing the heritage culture, which contrasts with the findings of previous research in Montreal's Chinese and Hindu communities (Gatbonton et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2008).

Chapter 6. Conclusions

Limitations and Further Recommendations

The results of this research are based on a relatively small sample of participants, so any generalization beyond the participants featured in this work requires caution. The participants were also recruited only from one location, Montreal. Although North America is the destination for most South Vietnamese immigrants arriving after the Vietnam War (Barnes & Bennett, 2002), the specific context of Montreal may not reflect HL practices of the Vietnamese diaspora around the world, especially the communities that settled in previous Soviet countries. For these immigrants, their sociopolitical views about the Vietnam War and the present-day Vietnam might be different, which in turn could result in a different pattern of HL maintenance in those communities. In addition, the Vietnamese community in Montreal resides in a French–English bilingual context, where the host community's relationship with English speakers has been historically conflictual, which may not be common to other Vietnamese diasporas around the world. While the results of this study may not be readily generalizable to other immigrant communities (or, for that matter, to other members of Montreal's Vietnamese diaspora), they are nevertheless beneficial in providing guidance for future research exploring immigrant communities whose emigration was caused by a sociopolitical conflict.

In addition, the study examined the perceived role of language in identity through only one instrument based on the ethnic group affiliation framework (Gatbonton & Trofimovich, 2008), which may not have elicited all aspects of the first generation's views about their language and identity. In fact, the selected statements for this measure did not yield an optimal level of reliability, so the results for this variable need to be interpreted with caution. In future work, it would be of interest to capture other aspects of language in identity, either through

additional items from Gatbonton and Trofimovich's (2008) instrument or by defining language in identity through a different framework, such as ethnolinguistic identity theory (Giles & Johnson, 1987), which captures people' desire to maintain the integrity of their HL because they perceive it to be at risk (e.g., due to political turmoil).

Finally, the results of this study did not fully align with various assumptions of the social network analysis, supporting instead Lanza et al.'s (2007) suggestion that a typical quantitative approach of a social network analysis must be accompanied by conversational data. While this study did include a qualitative component, these data were not sufficient to fully explain surprising and unintuitive findings stemming from social network analyses, such as the obtained negative correlations between the second generation's HL ratings and their network density and intimacy. A positive outcome of this study is that social network data must be considered not only alongside participants' qualitative comments regarding the construction and negotiation of their multilingual identities but also in relation to measures of HL speakers' acculturative stress.

Conclusion

Taking the Vietnamese community in Montreal as an example, the study's findings shed light on sociopolitical variables as important factors in HL maintenance. At the very least, the study found evidence of the complex interaction between the participants' stated reasons for emigration and their engagement in social networks, both of which appeared to play a role in how the community's HL was passed on from one generation to the next. The results reveal different, and sometimes opposite, contributions of various social, acculturative, and attitudinal variables to the second generation's HL maintenance, as a function of the first generation's stated reason for emigration, suggesting that HL development is not static (He, 2010). The HL in the same ethnic community could develop in different ways within a single generation, and HL

learning is grounded in people's participation in various social practices that are often heavily coloured by their family's unique past. This study, therefore, adds to a growing body of work whose goal is to revisit and re-evaluate various interpersonal and sociocultural dimensions of HL maintenance.

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Appendices

Appendix A.

Background and Language Questionnaire for both first- and second-generation

**Parents only; **Children only*

1. Please fill in **

Name:_____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Were you born and raised in Quebec? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, in what city? Please indicate: _____

Which language were you taught at school?_____

Did you go to a French or an English-speaking CEGEP/university?_____

2. What had triggered your emigration to Canada? Please indicate: *

- ❑ Economic benefits
- ❑ Political freedom
- ❑ Both

3. What year did you (and your family if applicable) arrive in Canada? *

4. Please rate how well each of the following labels describes you.

	Not at all								Perfectly
Canadian	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Vietnamese	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Québécois	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Anglophone Quebecer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Vietnamese Canadian	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Other: (please specify): _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

5.a. How well do you handle these languages? Please indicate (1=not at all, 9=extremely well)

	French	English	Vietnamese	Other:_____
Speaking	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Reading	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Comprehension	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Writing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

5.b. Was it different when you first arrived in Quebec? If so, please indicate how well you handled these languages at the time of immigration: *

5.b. Was it different in your first five years growing up? If so, please indicate how well you handled these languages at that time: **

	French	English	Vietnamese	Other:_____
Speaking	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Reading	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Comprehension	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Writing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

6.a Please estimate **how much you use** these languages in your daily life?

French:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
English:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
VNs:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Other:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

6.b. Was it different when you first arrived in Quebec? If so, please indicate how much you use each language at that time: *

6.b. Was it different in your first five years growing up? If so, please indicate how much you use each language at that time: **

French:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
English:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
VNs:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Other:	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

7. How well do you think your nominated child handles Vietnamese? (1= not at all, 9=extremely well) *

Fluency	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Comprehensibility (from listening)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Understanding (from reading)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Appendix B.

First-generation participants' Ethnolinguistic Questionnaire

Please rate on a sale of 9 (1=disagree, 9=agree)

A. Pride for ethnic group

I am proud to let people know that I belong to my ethnic group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
I am proud of the achievements of my ethnic group abroad.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
(sub) I am also proud of the achievements of Vietnam (the country nowadays)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
I feel proud to see symbols of my ethnic group (such as the yellow flag of South Vietnam) displayed around me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
(sub) I still feel proud as a Vietnamese to see the red flag of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam displayed.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
I am proud to be able to speak the language of my ethnic group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

B. Role of language in identity

The ability to speak my ethnic language is important in defining my personal identity.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
People will know what ethnic group you belong to by the language you speak.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
All Vietnamese children abroad should be taught Vietnamese and speak it at home	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Learning to speak other languages is a sure way of contributing to the death or disappearance of my ethnic group. (e.g., Chinese over Vietnamese)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
If a Vietnamese person speaks a second/foreign language too well, they risk sounding less loyal to my ethnic group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

A person who no longer speaks the language of her or his ethnic group does not have a right to claim membership in that group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

C. Political viewpoint

Vietnam will never realize its potential for as long as it remains a communist country	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
There is a massive difference between overseas Vietnamese language (mostly spoken pre-1975) and the Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam right now.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
The Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam now is not correct any more because of the Northern people who had migrated to the South after 1975.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
The Vietnamese language and culture of Vietnam have to be preserved at all costs.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Appendix C.

Social Network Survey for both first- and second-generation

1. Please nominate up to 15 individuals who are members of the Vietnamese community and with whom you typically interact with in Vietnamese.

2. Please rate the level of intimacy with each friend on a 4-point rating scale (1 = least close, 4 = closest).

	Name (nickname or initials are acceptable)	Intimacy
1		1 2 3 4
2		1 2 3 4
3		1 2 3 4
4		1 2 3 4
5		1 2 3 4
6		1 2 3 4
7		1 2 3 4
8		1 2 3 4
9		1 2 3 4
10		1 2 3 4
11		1 2 3 4
12		1 2 3 4
13		1 2 3 4
14		1 2 3 4
15		1 2 3 4

3. Please indicate which friends also know each other.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															
7															

8															
9															
10															
11															
12															
13															
14															
15															

Appendix D.

Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory

Stress level in the **heritage community in Montreal** (1=disagree, 5=agree) (RASI)

Communication-related acculturative stress (Stress based on heritage language skills)	
It's hard for me to perform well in work related to Vietnamese because of my Vietnamese skills.	1 2 3 4 5
I often feel misunderstood or limited in daily situations [with parents/parents' friends] because of my Vietnamese skills.	1 2 3 4 5
It bothers me that I have an accent when speaking in Vietnamese	1 2 3 4 5
Stress based on intercultural relations	
I have had disagreements with other Vietnamese (e.g., friends or family) for liking Canadian/Quebec customs or ways of doing things.	1 2 3 4 5
I have had disagreements with Canadians/Quebeckers for liking Asian customs or ways of doing things	1 2 3 4 5
I feel that my particular practices (mix of Vietnamese and Canadian/Quebec) have caused conflict in my relationships.	1 2 3 4 5
Stress based on the level of discrimination **in the heritage community**	
I have been treated rudely or unfairly because of my "Vietnamese born abroad" background.	1 2 3 4 5
I have felt discriminated against by other Vietnamese because of my "Vietnamese born abroad" background.	1 2 3 4 5
I feel that people very often interpret my behaviour based on their stereotypes of what "second-generations" are like.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix E.

Interview Questions

For the parents (first-generation)

1. Language maintenance at home

- I have heard from many second-generation Vietnamese who were born in the U.S that their parents would talk to them in Vietnamese but they would insist on answering in English. What language do you speak to your children at home? And what language(s) do your children use to reply? What do you do if they reply to you in English/French?
- Did you send them to a Vietnamese school or hire a tutor? Would you have done it?
- A friend of mine in Czech Republic taught her daughter Vietnamese through poems and some Vietnamese variety shows such as Paris by night. How did you introduce Vietnamese language and culture to your children?
- Why do you think it's important to maintain the heritage language?
- What has been the hardest part in maintaining Vietnamese?
- What would you have done better, in your opinion?

2. The community

- Before Covid, were there many opportunities for Vietnamese to get together?
- Are your children interested in these events too?
- Are you aware of any organization in Montreal that aims to preserve Vietnamese language and culture?
- Do you think that the government should do more to help preserve Vietnamese?

3. Political view and language

- Is there a difference between the Vietnamese spoken overseas and the Vietnamese spoken in Vietnam currently?
- Some people left Vietnam after the fall of Saigon and swore not to come back, so they don't find a reason to teach their children the language. What do you think of this?
- Some German say that speaking German reminds them of the war trauma. Have you ever felt the same with speaking Vietnamese?

For the children (second-generation)

1. Language pattern at home

- How much do you speak Vietnamese at home?
- What language do you speak to your siblings/cousins?
- Did you have a chance to study Vietnamese formally such as going to school or having a tutor? If so, was it effective?

- Were you interested in the language and culture first before studying it?
- A friend of mine in Czech Republic taught her daughter Vietnamese through poems and some Vietnamese variety shows such as Paris by night. Was it the same with your parents?
- I have heard from many second-generation Vietnamese who were born in the U.S that their parents would talk to them in Vietnamese but they would insist on answering in English. Have you seen the same thing in here (Montreal) too?
- I have noticed that some parents and grandparents are not happy hearing English or French spoken at home between siblings or cousins. Are your parents particularly strict about speaking Vietnamese at home?

2. The community

- Do you talk to your extended family members and/or your parents' friends? How frequently?
- A lot of people say that they manage to speak their heritage language well because their community is very supportive and encouraging. What do you think? Is it the same for you?
- Some people find it easier to speak a language over another because of the community's attitude towards the speakers. Is it easy to speak Vietnamese in the community? Is there any stigma around being Vietnamese but cannot speak Vietnamese well?
- The second-generation Koreans usually find themselves friends who are international students from Korea when attending Korean churches. How about in the Vietnamese community? Do you also have friends about your age whom you communicate in Vietnamese?

3. For the next generation

- Is it important for you to maintain the language? Why?
- Do you think the next generation of overseas Vietnamese will be able to speak Vietnamese very well?
- Do/Would you make an effort to teach your children?
- How do/would you do it?

4. Vietnamese section to extract for proficiency evaluation

- In your spare time, what do you like to do? What is your hobby? Why do you have this hobby? Is your family supportive of this hobby? Do you often watch Vietnamese movies or listen to Vietnamese music? Do you know anyone famous in Vietnam?
- What was your dream when you were a child? Are you going to school or working? What is your job / major now? What is a day in your life like?
- What food do you like the most? Can you describe your favorite food? Do you prefer to eat at home, cook or eat at a restaurant? Why?

- Have you traveled out of Quebec? Have you ever been to Vietnam? When was the last time you returned to Vietnam? At that time, where did you go and what did you do?
- Have you ever been to a Vietnamese wedding? Can I describe it to you? What did the bride wear? In what color? What did you eat then?