Parents' Ethnotheories of their Bicultural Children and of Parenting:
Interpretive Case Studies with Three Intercultural Couples in Canada

by

Janine May Tine

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Department of Elementary Education

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ABSTRACT

I conducted three case studies spanning three different Canadian provinces to explore parental perceptions of childhood and childrearing held by parent couples in intercultural marriages in which one spouse was Canadian born and raised and the other was foreign born and raised and immigrated to Canada as an adult. The three parent couples in my study were (1) a couple with one partner born in Canada and one in Uganda who have a 1-year-old and a 3-year-old; (2) a couple with one partner born in Canada and one in The Netherlands who have a 2-year-old; and (3) a Plains Cree individual born in Canada and their Romanian-born spouse who have a 9-year-old and an 11-year-old. My intent was to explore how these parents experience raising their children as they navigate their different understandings of childhood and parenting.

Children in intercultural families are referred to as bicultural, experiencing influences from both parents' childrearing practices. My study is informed by the *developmental niche* framework, which acknowledges the role of parents' cultural belief systems regarding the nature of the child and its influence on childcare practices (Super & Harkness, 2002). Of particular importance to parents' cultural belief systems are parental ethnotheories, which include "taken-for-granted ideas about the 'natural' or 'right' way to think or act" (Super & Harkness, 2002, p. 270) when caring for children.

The participants' parental ethnotheories were explored using a qualitative research design that employed interpretive inquiry (Ellis, 1998) informed by philosophical hermeneutics (Ellis, 1998; D. G. Smith, 1991) and was attentive to cultural protocols (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; L. T. Smith, 2012; Tine, 2020). Pre-interview activities as well as interviews using open-ended questions (Ellis, 2006; Ellis, Amjad, & Deng, 2011; Ellis, Hetherington, et al., 2013), were used to gather data on parents' understandings of children and childrearing. For each case study, two

two-hour individual interviews were carried out with each partner separately, followed by a two-hour joint interview with the couple. After transcription of the interviews, narrative portraits were crafted for each couple.

The participants' accounts were then examined for common elements and then categories were created, part-whole relationships were explored (Polkinghorne, 1995), and narrative accounts were crafted. Common to all three narrative accounts were the topics of interactions in the community, safety, understandings of children, sources of parenting influence, language (examined through the construct of family language policy), and identification and identity. The topic of interculturalists is found throughout the Ugandan/Canadian-born couple's narrative account (and to a lesser extent in the Romanian/Canadian-born couple's account). Unique to the Ugandan/Canadian-born couple is the topic of time. Each participant in my study holds understandings of parenting and childhood both in common and in difference with their spouse, sometimes acculturating to their spouse's ways of parenting. Despite their differences, the couples are able to parent in collaborative and amicable ways amid both their unmet hopes of each other and their unrealized parental agendas (e.g., hopes for their children). My study offers insights into the transnational nature of intercultural childrearing in the context of immigration. My study also highlights the destructive intergenerational impact of Canada's colonial imposition on my Plains Cree participant and her family, as well as offers stories of survival (Donald, 2012).

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Janine Tine. The research project of which this thesis is a part received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board: **PARENTS' ETHNOTHEORIES OF THEIR BICULTURAL CHILDREN, No. 64986, JUNE 20, 2016.**

DEDICATION

To Elise, Viviane, Nathalie, and Lucie

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Situating the Study

For my husband and me, parenting our children together often entails different ways of childrearing as we project our own culturally constructed understandings of the child and the family onto our parenting. I was born and raised in Canada, and my husband was born and raised in Senegal. I am of French, Scottish, and Quw'utsun heritage, and my husband is Serere. I grew up in a nuclear household in an urban centre speaking English, often spending summertime with my grandpa on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. My husband grew up in a communal village speaking mostly Serere, while also spending time in the nearby city of Thies, in the region of Thies, where he spoke mainly Wolof and French. He immigrated to Canada as an adult.

Context

Mixed Unions and Migration

For the purpose of this study, an intercultural marriage/union consists of a couple where one partner was born and raised outside of Canada and immigrated to Canada as an adult and the other was born and raised in Canada. Statistics on mixed unions and migratory increase in Canada offer insight into potential trends of intercultural unions in Canada, even though mixed unions are much more broadly defined. Mixed unions are defined by Statistics Canada (2016) as "a couple in which one spouse or partner belongs to a visible minority[1] group and the other does not, as well as a couple in which the two spouses or partners belong to different visible minority

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[1] The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has criticized Canada's use of the term *visible minorities.* Many consider it to be a discriminatory term because it positions whiteness as a standard by which to be measured (CBC News, 2007).

groups" (Box 2: Concepts and Definitions, para. 3). In 68.6% of mixed unions in Canada the partners were born in two different countries: "In 2011, nearly half of mixed unions (49.2%) were composed of a person born in Canada and a person born abroad, and 19.4% of mixed unions involved two foreign-born persons from different countries" (Statistics Canada, 2016, "Diversity Within Couples," para. 1). Mixed unions have, over time, been increasing in Canada. From 1991 to 2011, there was a 79.92% increase of mixed unions in Canada, and in 2011, 4.6% of unions were mixed (Statistics Canada, 2016). It can be expected that this trend of mixed unions will continue to rise due to migratory increase: 67% of Canada's current population growth is due to migratory increase, and by 2031, it is estimated that this source could account for more than 80% of growth (Statistics Canada, 2017). The growth of Canada's population due to migratory increase, coupled with increased opportunity for global study and work, increased internet courting, and increased acceptance of intercultural marriage, is expected to result in a rise of intercultural marriages both in Canada and beyond (Bryant & Duncan, 2019; Romano, 2008). This, in turn, will result in an increase not only of biracial but also of bicultural children.

Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms

Euro-Western understandings of children continue to dominate early childhood education (Fleer et al., 2018; Moss, 2016; New, 2018), which has consistent focus on developmentally appropriate practice (NAEYC, 2020). These understandings fail to adequately take into account the child as an actor in a unique familial, social, historical, and cultural context (Højholt, 2018; Kirova, 2010; Ludlow & Berkeley, 1994; Pence & Hix-Small, 2009) and have contributed to a failure to address key issues such as cultural diversity of children and families (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2011; Pence & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2010). Increasingly diverse early childhood classrooms require teachers to have a knowledge of the range of approaches to child

socialization, both as a step to building relationships with parents[2] and as a way to support children in their learning. In the Canadian context, addressing this diversity is of particular importance to the growing populations of children of immigrants and Indigenous[3] children. Currently, 21.9% of the Canadian population are foreign-born immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2019b) and 4.9% of the Canadian population is Indigenous (Statistics Canada, 2019a). Further, the Indigenous population is young—in 2019, 26.8% of the Indigenous population consisted of children aged 14 and under (Statistics Canada, 2019a).

Poststructuralist and postcolonialist perspectives of a reconceptualized early childhood education field acknowledge that a child's own culture is integral to school success. These perspectives alert early childhood educators to the need for conceptions of childhood, curriculum, and pedagogy created through a localized rather than a dominant Euro-Western/universal lens (Cannella, 2005; Fleer & Van Oers, 2018). Importantly, the term *postcolonialist* is used conditionally in this dissertation with the assertion that colonialism is not only an act of the past but continues to be a present reality (Martin, 2018) that needs to be critically examined and counteracted. Similarly, poststructuralist views challenge Western narratives of childhood and deconstruct and reflect on universal narratives as they exist in their "historical, political, social and cultural" (Taylor, 2018, p. 94) contexts, thus revealing their repercussions on the lives of children and families. An example of this work in a Canadian context is a consideration of the linkages between the colonial policies of residential school that forcefully separated Indigenous children from their family members and the strengths of their culture and the fact that Indigenous people continue to experience inequities such as poverty,

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[2] Includes a child's main caregiver(s) such as a guardian, grandparent, etc.

[3] Often referred to as Aboriginal, includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people share in common struggles and triumphs with other Indigenous people around the world.

adverse health outcomes, social stigma, and loss of culture (Ball, 2012; Blackstock, 2016; McLachlin, 2017; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b; Wilk et al., 2017). And, of further concern regarding this continued colonialism is that Indigenous children and children of immigrants are taught based on Euro-Western ways despite their unique cultural backgrounds.

When I speak of Western thought, I am most often referring to dominant postindustrial discourses that often originate in North America and may also come from continents such as Europe and Australia. The entirety of this geography is referred to as the minority world[4], with about 10% of the world's population (Super & Harkness, 2008). My use of "Western," though, does not necessarily refer to this geographical area but rather to an overall discourse of dominance and superiority entrenched in the history of the words imperialism, colonialism, and settlement. For example, Indigenous people of Canada are geographically in the West, yet suffer from the severe imposition of Western ascendency on their Indigenous (and non-Western) knowledge systems. Further, although Canada's education systems are dominated by Western thought, Canada is home to many recent immigrants who may hold non-Western knowledge. And, it is important to note that even countries that are geographically of the West can differ broadly in their parental ethnotheories (Harkness et al., 2010). Western conceptions of childhood then are more a conception of thought with both geographical tendencies and cross-cultural variability than a construct that uniformly exists in the entirety of the Western world.

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[4] A term used by Kağitçibaşi (2007) referring to "the minority of the world's population living in industrialized (Western) countries . . . formerly called the first world" (p. 373).

Statement of Problem

In educational settings, children from intercultural families are often perceived and taught in ways that do not connect with the complex values of their family (Li, 2006). For example, educators may hold a Western or minority-world understanding of the child as "independent" even though bicultural children are often raised in a family structure that promotes independence *and* interdependence (Kağitçibaşi, 2007; Tseng, 2001). Furthermore, cultural understandings of childhood are too complex to be adequately understood through simple terms such as independence and interdependence (Harkness et al., 2013). With insufficient understandings of childhood, teachers' methods of structuring learning can detract from the educational experiences of bicultural children. With the home environment and ways of knowing differing from that of the school, bicultural children may enter school with the challenge of navigating unfamiliar territory. Research is needed that will allow teachers access to the home experiences of their bicultural students, as well as the parenting cognitions of their parents.

There is a plethora of research and literature on intercultural marriage/unions (Bryant & Duncan, 2019; Molina et. al., 2004; Lee et al., 2017; Ting-Toomey, 2008), the identity formation of biracial children (Brunsma, 2006; Csizmadia & White, 2019; Edwards et al., 2010; Ferguson, 2016; Rockquemore et al., 2009), and the language acquisition of bilingual children (Cummins, 1991; Lanza & Wei, 2016; Stone & Dolbin-MacNab, 2017). There is less research, however, on how the parents in these partnerships, who bring with them very different cultural beliefs and often different first languages, view and raise their bicultural children. How one acknowledges these parental ethnotheories in the context of the early childhood classroom is especially important in the Canadian context. This is because some children who have one or both parents who are immigrants have risk factors associated with poor school performance (Capps et al.,

2004; Volante et al., 2017) and further, Indigenous children are at risk for poor school performance given the inequities they face (Ball, 2012; Blackstock, 2016).

The increase of immigrants to Canada, and the subsequent increase of intercultural marriage, has implications for all Canadians, including Canada's Indigenous people, whose population is also rapidly growing (Statistics Canada, 2015). Even though immigrants and Indigenous people are the fastest growing segment of society, the relationship between these groups has not been articulated at the federal or provincial level. For instance, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1985) only fleetingly mentions Indigenous people, and provincial multicultural education policies fail to clearly address the relationship between immigrants and Indigenous Canadians (Kirova, 2008). Since Indigenous people and immigrants increasingly "live in close proximity with one another" (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 20) and share community spaces and early childhood education services, the ways in which these two distinct groups can work together and benefit from one another require careful exploration. Research on how multiculturalism can operate within an Indigenous context and vice versa is required (Kymlicka, 2010). Studying parental ethnotheories from the perspective of a foreign-born immigrant and their Canadian-born Indigenous spouse is an enlightening means to begin to explore this need. In light of this, I ensured that one of the Canadian-born participants in my study was Indigenous.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

There are growing numbers of bicultural children in Canada. While all children have unique backgrounds, bicultural children present an exceptional situation from the point of view of researchers and teachers. Because their parents may view and raise them in different culturally constructed ways, bicultural children have unique needs when they enter formal education settings. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of how parents perceive the child can establish

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a starting point for educators to understand the varied, often opposing, and continually negotiated understandings of the nature of the child held by couples in intercultural marriages. Understanding the locally created parental ethnotheories of the nature of the child from multiple cultural perspectives is vital to this study. As Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (2013) emphasize, "our construction[s] of the child and early childhood are *productive* . . . determin[ing] the institutions we provide for children and the pedagogical work that adults and children undertake in these institutions" (p. 46). These constructions, or ethnotheories, are rooted in the culture[5] and personal histories of each person holding them. Further, culture brings both meaning and intrinsic motivation to the process of learning, and thus must be the driving force behind early childhood education initiatives.

My research will provide educators access to knowledge that the parents choose to share regarding bicultural childhoods and childrearing and highlight the importance of forming collaborative relationships with families and communities in a cultural context (Ball & Pence, 2006; Kağitçibaşi, 2007). As bicultural children negotiate the transition from their home environment to the school environment, educators will be prompted to acknowledge parental ethnotheories. Not only will this allow educators to help children adapt to new expectations and values, but it will also allow them to acknowledge and welcome students' diverse home experiences.

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[5] The term *culture* is used here to refer to the learned shared behaviour and values, and their attached meanings, which are passed through generations and "socially transferred in life-activity settings" (Kağitçibaşi, 2007, p. 6). In using the term culture, however, I also acknowledge "the uniqueness of each individual case" (Kağitçibaşi, 2007, p. 5).

Research Question

The objective of this research is to provide new insights about the ways bicultural children are understood and raised by their parents. My research question is as follows: What are some parental ethnotheories of the nature of the child and of parenting held by parents in intercultural marriages?

In Chapter 2, I explore the theoretical and conceptual framework of my study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Exploring intercultural couples' parental ethnotheories is undertaken in this dissertation in relation to Vygotsky's (1934/2012) sociocultural-historical theoretical framework, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, Super and Harkness's (1999) developmental niche theoretical framework, and concepts from LeVine and colleagues (1994).

Sociocultural-Historical Theory

In Vygotsky's (1934/2012) sociocultural-historical view of child development, the development of a child is a "culturally mediated" (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007, p. 208) social process occurring in a historical context. Three concepts guide the theory (Bodrova & Leong, 2013). First, in the cultural-historical realm of development, the history of an individual (ontogeny) and the historical development of humans (phylogeny) mediate a child's development. Second, children's learning, in addition to using physical tools (e.g., scissors), includes the use of mental tools such as mnemonics (e.g., to solve math equations). Parents and caregivers are often the first to teach their child to use tools in the informal educational context of the home. Bodrova and Leong (2013) voice the Vygotskian belief that "one of the major goals of education—formal as well as informal—is to help children acquire the tools of their own culture" (p. 243). Based on this premise, parents and teachers then share a common goal of helping children acquire tools, yet the actual tools themselves may differ between the home culture and the school culture. The result may be a disconnect between the tools children use at home and school. Third, mental functions of development include lower mental functions (e.g., motor ability) and higher mental functions (e.g., solving a riddle). Higher mental functions, which rely on the use of mental tools, are "cognitive processes acquired through learning and

teaching" (p. 243). As children construct their learning, it is mediated by the people around them, and it is the adult's role to "amplify" (p. 247) children's learning by judiciously introducing them to new higher mental functions within their "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1934/2012, p. 200).

In his work, Vygotsky (1934/2012) distinguished between "everyday concepts" (p. 202) that children acquire in their home and community and "scientific concepts" (p. 203) acquired at school. Both concepts are relevant to children's transition from home to school in that each child comes to school with their own communally influenced "personal cultural tool kit" (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007, p. 208) that will, or will not, to varying degrees, aid them in understanding the scientific concepts presented to them at school. For instance, a child who has books in the home will go to school with prior exposure to the everyday concept of holding a book and making sense of the pictures, thus preparing the child for the scientific concept of learning to read. In this instance, their everyday concept of holding a book gives them the "advantage of familiarity" (Vygotsky, 1934/2012, p. 202) and serves as a precursor to the scientific concept of reading. On the other hand, a child who has never been exposed to books prior to entering school will have no subsequent experience to rely on and will be at a disadvantage when entering school, because books will have no sociocultural significance to them. Despite the child's cognitive competence, if there exists no sociocultural meaning in the situation, their progress in reading may be impeded (Kozulin, 2012, p. xv). Consequently, two children may experience the same situation at school (or elsewhere) differently (Fleer, 2015). For some bicultural children, there may be little continuity between concepts learned at home and concepts learned at school.

Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory focuses on the developing child in four interdependent ecological environmental contexts: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. At the center is the microsystem, which represents the setting containing the developing child, such as their home or classroom. Second, the mesosystem consists of interconnections between the single settings of the microsystem, such as the ongoing relations between a child's home and school. A child's development is enhanced, for example, when relevant experiences from the home setting are made accessible in the school setting. Third is the exosystem, where the child's development is deeply affected by occurrences in settings in which the child is not present, such as their parent's place of work (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Fourth, the macrosystem involves the consistencies that exist in all three of the aforementioned levels of the ecological environment and the underlying sociocultural contexts, histories, belief systems, and ideologies of these levels. An example of a current macrosystem influence is the proliferation of knowledge on parenting, often made available by minority world sources through means such as parenting books, manuals, websites, magazines, and parent education programs.

The Developmental Niche Theoretical Framework

Harkness and Super's (1999) *developmental niche* is an ecological framework that acknowledges the interface between children and their culturally constructed environment. The developmental niche stems from the ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979), yet it has a more distinct and all-encompassing focus on the cultural influences in the daily lives of children and families. At the centre of the developmental niche is the child, who is surrounded by three interdependent and interconnected subsystems that conceptualize the child's daily environment: (1) "the physical and social settings of daily life" (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 147),

(2) "the customs and practices of care" (p. 147), and (3) "the psychology of caretakers" (p. 147). These three subsystems have direct implications for the ways in which children are understood and raised by their parents.

The first subsystem of the developmental niche is the child's physical and social settings where daily life is constructed, as evidenced by the child's daily routine (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). It includes where children spend their time, the people with whom the child interacts, and the activities that a child is a part of (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007; Harkness et al., 2020). In Canada, two common settings include (1) a child's home where the child interacts socially with siblings, parents, relatives, and neighbours, and (2) a daycare centre where the child interacts with peers, visitors, and daycare educators. Depending on the setting, a child may be engaged in activities such as playing indoors or outdoors, playing with blocks or puzzles, colouring or painting, watching television, listening to a group story, or helping with chores or meal preparation.

The second subsystem of the developmental niche includes the customs and practices of care (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). According to Harkness, Super, et al. (2007), these are most often performed by parents or caregivers. Harkness, Super, et al. (2007) point out that childcare customs, which are culturally embedded, are

> so commonly used by members of the community and so thoroughly integrated
> into the larger culture that individuals need not particularly rationalize them. To
> members of the culture, they seem obvious and natural solutions to everyday
> problems, developmental requirements, or social needs. (p. 35S)

Customs and practices of care are extensive, ranging from how to respond to a crying baby, to what to feed a child, to how often to talk to a child, to what kind of vocabulary to use. When

researchers understand the customs and practices of care that parents use in everyday life, they are positioned to learn about the parents' "implicit ideas about the child, the family and themselves as parents" (p. 35). These implicit ideas relate to parental ethnotheories held by parents, which exist in the third subsystem of the developmental niche.

The third subsystem of the child's developmental niche is created by the psychology of the caretakers, which includes parental ethnotheories **(**Harkness et al., 2013). Defined by Harkness et al. (2013), parental ethnotheories are "culturally constructed ideas about children's behavior and development, about the family, and about parenting" (p. 148) that are often held in common by members within the same cultural community. Ethnotheories "have strong motivational properties for parents" (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007, p. 35S) as they make implicit decisions about how to care for their children and organize their physical and social settings. As part of the parents' cultural belief systems, ethnotheories include "taken-for-granted ideas about the 'natural' or 'right' way to think or act" when caring for children (Super & Harkness, 2002, p. 270). In addition to being implicit in nature, parental ethnotheories also include more consciously held decisions regarding "child development, parenting, and family life" (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007, p. 35S)—all based on the "expected outcomes" that they envision (van Schaik et al., 2020, p. 15). Parental ethnotheories, and their corresponding practices and outcomes, have significant implications for raising children in intercultural marriages, since parental ethnotheories differ from one culture to another. Further, articulation of taken-for-granted ethnotheories between spouses is often difficult.

Parental ethnotheories are independent with the other two subsystems of the developmental niche—the physical and social settings of daily life and the customs and practices of care, which Harkness, Super, et al. (2007) describe as "instantiations of parental

ethnotheories" (p. 35S). Parental ethnotheories include a "developmental agenda" (p. 38S) involving "what the parent thinks the child should be learning, and when, to grow up to be a successful member of his or her community" (p. 38). Parents choose customs of care and physical and social settings to correspond with their goal-based developmental agendas. Priority is often placed on a few aspects of the child's development, often to the exclusion of other aspects that are not seen as useful to future outcomes of the child. Developmental agendas vary from culture to culture to such a great degree that one aspect of a child's development (e.g., regular sleep) that is of great priority in one culture may be of little priority in another.

Harkness, Super, et al. (2007) outline three corollaries that result from the developmental niche and further mediate the child's experience within society. The premise of corollary one is the belief that the three subsystems of the developmental niche function interdependently as a system in a more or less consistent fashion (Harkness et al., 2013). More consistency reflects a "stable cultural environment" (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 149) in which the parental ethnotheories regarding the child are evident in the customs of care, as well as in the daily physical and social settings provided for the child. For instance, Harkness et al. (2013) refer to the common childcare custom of rural Africa, where 6- to 10-year-old daughters support their mothers in agricultural work by supervising younger siblings. The physical setting of farm life, where a mother can see all her children from afar, encourages the practice of older children caring for younger children, as do the embedded social settings that carry the expectation of young girls helping their mothers instead of going to school. Another factor enhancing the consistency of this African niche are the dominant beliefs held by community members that very young children require both a safe environment and social interaction and that older children should have the opportunity to become increasingly proficient in domestic tasks, including childcare. In

this example, Harkness et al. (2013) point out that the three subsystems of the developmental niche of these African girls—the psychology of the caretakers (e.g., parental ethnotheories), the customs of care, and the daily physical and social settings—are "operating in harmony" (p. 149).

Harkness, Super, et al. (2007) acknowledge that in corollary one, the three subsystems of the developmental niche may lack consistency despite the parents' ethnotheories and ideals of parenting. In such cases, there exist "intervening factors" (p. 36S) such as "situations or conditions" (p. 36) that prevent parental ethnotheories from being fully realized. This can include child and parent characteristics; situational variables; and competing ideas, models, and practices regarding parenting (Harkness & Super, 2012). According to Harkness et al. (2007), all parents hold, to varying degrees, a sense of content or discontent with the development of their child, based on whether or not their parental ethnotheories (or, more specifically, developmental agendas) are actualized. For example, the parents of three young siblings may be working 12-hour night shifts at minimum wage, resulting in limited energy and financial means to provide care for their children despite their developmental agenda of regularly interacting and conversing with their children. Due to the intervening factor of their work situation, these parents will be discontented with their inability to realize their developmental agendas. In another example, a parent may wish to create a physical home environment where a child can have the space and freedom to run around but cannot realize fully this when living in a one-bedroom apartment in a busy urban centre. In a final example, intercultural marriage can be accompanied by the intervening factor of "the competing press of other incompatible ethnotheories" (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007, p. 36S) between spouses. When this factor is in play, it is likely that the parental ethnotheories of both spouses will not be fully realized. A parent's ability to realize their parental ethnotheories can be hindered by the realities of life (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007).

In corollary two, "each subsystem is influenced by forces in the larger ecology" (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 150), meaning that the developmental niche is an open system, where outside factors in the wider cultural and economic environment can be influential. According to Harkness et al. (2013), as the wider culture and economy undergo change, they put pressure on some or all of the systems of the developmental niche, thus causing the developmental niche to eventually undergo its own process of change. This process can be seen in the lives of immigrants, who bring their parental ethnotheories from their home country to their new environment. For some, these parental ethnotheories may become less prominent over time (Harkness et al., 2013). For instance, Harkness et al. (2013) cite a study by Delgado-Gaitan (1994) that found that while both first-and second-generation Mexican immigrants to the USA held common expectations of children respecting others, these parental ethnotheories were expressed less rigidly by the second generation. Further, intercultural marriage, as well as intercultural contact in wider society, may result in the emergence of new customs of care (Harkness, 2007).

In corollary three, Harkness et al. (2013) explain that the elements of the developmental niche are "continually involved in a process of mutual adaptation with the individual child" (p. 150). Here, parents make judgments about their child's skills and abilities and then, based on these judgments, make decisions regarding the most suitable environment and customs of care for their child. For example, a parent may allow their 7-year-old child to walk to school alone because the child is beginning to exhibit the culturally defined qualities of responsibility and independence, which the parent believes will be further enhanced by this allowance. Here the child's age, abilities, and personal characteristics (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007), as well as what constitutes evidence of the child's responsibility and independence, are all considered in the

parental decision. When a child's personal qualities impact the decisions of the parents, the process of "mutual adaptation" (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007, p. 36S) is enacted in the three subsystems of the child's developmental niche. Parents' judgments of their child then become an inherent component of the parents' ethnotheories, which play out in both the customs of care and in the physical and social settings.

Four Points of View to Analyze Parental Behaviour

LeVine et al. (1994) present a conceptual framework for their case study of childcare and parental behaviour of Gusii mothers of rural Kenya and urban middle-class mothers of Boston, USA. Using four "points of view" (p. 16), LeVine et al. analyze parental behaviour. The first three draw from a metaphor using computer terminology—organic hardware, ecological firmware, and cultural software—and can be used to analyze and explain specific population-level parental behaviour. Organic hardware, ecological firmware, and cultural software combine to form the fourth point of view, the cultural mediation model. All four views are useful in analyzing parental behaviour at the population level, as well as comparing one population to another.

The first point of view, organic hardware, encompasses those things that, although they have evolved, are often viewed as fixed throughout historical time and in the human species in general (LeVine et al., 1994). Such things include "reproductive physiology, neurophysiology, and growth patterns" (LeVine et al., 1994, p. 16), which are all aspects of parental care. One example of organic hardware is a mother's ability to lactate and feed her infant. Whether she does breastfeed her child or not is determined by the ecological firmware and cultural software of her community.

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The second point of view, ecological firmware, encompasses the socioeconomic conditions distinct to a population. These conditions affect "the resources available to children in the form of food, protection from health risks, other material goods, and social attention" (p. 17). Ecological firmware can be seen to influence parental behaviour through an "economic utility model" (p. 19), where parents make decisions regarding, for example, fertility and allocation of emotional and material resources to children based on "economic incentives" (p. 19). In this utilitarian model, parental decisions are driven primarily by economic motivations.

A key component of LeVine et al.'s (1994) ecological firmware is the "optimal parental investment strategy" (p. 17). This strategy illustrates that parenting is not only culturally constructed but can be influenced by economic realities. The ecological environment in which parents live in a given population sets the parameters for the parental investment strategy. For the Gusii in LeVine et al.'s study, who once survived solely on their labours of food production and faced high rates of mortality, an optimal parental investment strategy was to have as many children as possible. It was essential to protect infants from sickness and death so that they could grow up to contribute to the labour required to produce food and, ultimately, to the family's economic stability. The mother, focusing on food production and the survival of her many children, had only limited energy to invest in interacting with her children. Her ecologically based strategy was chosen out of necessity, regardless of her personal level of desire to be with her children. The optimal parental investment strategy for the modern middle-class Americans in the study, who had stable incomes and low mortality rates, consisted of having few children and conscientiously attending to each one's cognitive development so that they could be successful in school, obtain employment as an adult, and be financially independent. For the Americans in the study, each child was considered a cost rather than an asset (LeVine et al., 1994).

LeVine et al.'s (1994) concept of cultural software encompasses the taken-for-granted ideas that a parent has regarding childcare. This construct is similar to Super and Harkness's (1999) concept of parental ethnotheories. Defined by LeVine et al. (1994), cultural software encompasses "the ideas that influence parents in a particular population, and give them a common-sense of what is natural, normal, and necessary in reproductive behavior and child care" (p. 18). Cultural software influences parental behaviour through a "semiotic model" (p. 19), where cultural scripts guide parenting behaviour. These cultural scripts are "derived from the traditions and popular ideologies of a particular culture" (p. 19). When driven by cultural scripts, parents do not make parenting decisions based on economic or child development influences, but rather on "conventionalized images of what is and what ought to be in the domains of reproduction and child care" (p. 19); thus they apply "ideal standards in their daily lives, and [seek] to implement an agenda derived from culture-specific concepts of virtue" (p. 19). Parents, then, behave in a way contingent on the common meanings and beliefs held in their local culture and make parenting decisions based on what they think and feel to be virtuous and ideal. Although each parent holds a cultural script that guides their caregiving behaviour and is common to their community, this caregiving behaviour is not always determined by a cultural script as some parents may choose to act otherwise.

Cultural software is further explicated by LeVine et al. (1994) by a cultural model of early childcare comprised of three parts that drive parental behaviour: moral direction, pragmatic design, and a set of conventional scripts for action. All three motivate paternal behaviour within a population. First, moral direction includes the "normative assumptions about what is best for an infant" (p. 248) and also the goals that a mother/caregiver should pursue as she cares for her child. Second, pragmatic design includes the overall strategy employed to achieve such goals,

particular behavioural means used, and the schedule for the implementation of such devices over the course of infancy / early childhood. Third, the conventional scripts for action relate to caregiving in response to specific and natural situations. For example, this includes not only responding to a baby's communication signals but also responding with "the socially expected sequences of caregiving behavior" (p. 248) expected for that specific situation. Such socially expected caregiving behaviour is considered to be innate, natural, and needed—in other words, it is taken for granted (LeVine et al., 1994). These three parts of the cultural model make up what LeVine et al. call a "commonsense folk model" (p. 248) which is often "unformulated in local discourse and is difficult to elicit from parents because it is taken for granted and seems too obvious to mention" (p. 249).) It often relies on an outsider, such as a researcher, to draw out such assumptions (LeVine et al., 1994).

Organic hardware, ecological firmware, and cultural software interact in a linear fashion—organic hardware influences ecological firmware, and ecological firmware influences cultural software—to create the cultural mediation model (LeVine et al., 1994). It is important to note that this model influences, but does not dictate, parental behaviour. In the cultural mediation model, the manner in which the organic hardware of a population will be utilized is highly dependent on the ecological firmware and cultural software of that population. For example, organic hardware provides a "basic set of parameters" (p. 20) regarding at what age a child will reach development milestones in learning to talk but does not actually determine the exact age at which the child will reach those milestones. This is because there exist ecological and cultural influences on the behaviour of parents and caregivers when they teach—directly or indirectly—their child to talk. The majority of parents living in the same cultural community may hold the same cultural script, but the enactment of the script may vary due to personal situations and

preferences. Further, cultural scripts, as well as personal choices in parenting, can change from generation to generation. Thus "central tendencies" rather than "uniformities" (p. 21) of parental behaviour are found in populations. These central tendencies are driven by cultural scripts.

Cultural models of childcare, such as those of the Gussi and middle-class Bostonians, entail taken-for-granted and culturally influenced ideas of how to best care for children, allowing mothers both the know-how and confidence to do so (LeVine et al., 1994). According to LeVine et al. (1994), cultural models, "imbued as they are with moral rectitude, pragmatic coherence, and the absolutism of conventional practice, provide mothers with a sense that they know good infant care, and perhaps even more certainly bad care, when they see it" (p. 255). For example, when the Gusii mothers were shown videotapes of American mothers responding to their crying babies in a less than immediate manner, the Gusii were shocked at the American mothers' seemingly slow response. Alternatively, LeVine et al. predict that American mothers would likely judge the Gusii practice of letting a 5- or 6-year-old care for an infant as neglectful, as well as judge the lack of maternal praise given to a child as unfortunate.

Finding fault in the parenting practices of another can result from differing moral direction and pragmatic design. LeVine et al. (1994) shed light on this fault-finding by pointing out that "each culture's model of infant care constitutes a moral and pragmatic position from which the other's practices can be devastatingly criticized as misguided, ineffective, and even immoral" (p. 256). For instance, LeVine et al. point out that the dissimilar infant care practices of the Gusii and the American middle class constitute parenting strategies and cultural scripts that are "aimed at different goals, each of which makes (or did make) moral and pragmatic sense in its own context" (p. 256). Infant care practices are most often chosen based on cultural scripts, regardless of the fact that each method of care has both benefits and costs. LeVine et al.'s

suggestion of taken-for-granted cultural models of childcare has implications for intercultural marriage and parenting, in that it may be easier to find fault in the parenting practices of one's spouse than in one's own.

In Chapter 3, I review literature on intercultural couples, intercultural couples and childrearing, the developmental niche, racial identification and identity, and family language policy.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of predominantly qualitative literature begins by examining literature on intercultural couples and, foregrounded in this context, narrows to explore the literature on intercultural couples and childrearing. Because the literature on the parenting of bicultural children is limited, my review then shifts to constructs prevalent in the literature that most closely relate, including the developmental niche (Super & Harkness, 1999), racial identification and identity, and family language policy (De Houwer, 1999; King & Fogle, 2008). Although the literature on the developmental niche does not touch specifically on parenting bicultural children, it offers a broad comparison of parenting in cross-cultural settings and provides a context for the use of the developmental niche as a theoretical construct for my study. Next, racial identification and identity and are examined, as they serve to inform the cultural identification and identity of bicultural children. Last, a review of family language policy and its relevance to the study of intercultural parenting in multilingual families is offered.

The Intercultural Couple

There is a plethora of research and literature on the challenges of intercultural marriages (Bryant & Duncan, 2019; Bustamante et al., 2011; Soliz et al., 2009; Zhang & Van Hook, 2009). Such literature, which is predominately based in the field of counselling, shows that couples in intercultural marriages often contend with unfamiliar practices, beliefs, and worldviews (Luke & Luke, 1998) and have higher rates of divorce than monocultural couples (Smith et al., 2012; Soliz et al. 2009). In their qualitative case study of 20 interracial families, Luke and Carrington (2000) revealed that intercultural couples face more challenges than monoracial couples as they grapple with each other's worldviews and cultural practices. Intercultural marriage "has the

effect of destabilizing and suspending, blurring and doubling in vision the 'lines of continuity,' the certainties of normalizing practices that exist in many monocultural relationships" (Luke & Carrington, 2000, p. 750). Given the absence of normalizing practices, cultural conflict within an intercultural marriage is probable (Soncini, 2006).

Although dominated by the challenges that intercultural couples face, the literature on intercultural unions also contains positive aspects. Lee at al.'s (2017) study of 92 Asian/American couples reveals higher levels of openness and contentiousness between the couples compared to their intracultural Asian counterparts. In her study of 35 intercultural couples, Bystydzienski (2011) found that intercultural couples who adopted a "relational identity" (p. 136)—which lies between a personal identity and a group identity—were less likely to blame their partner's negative qualities on ethnic group affiliation. Romano (2008) concludes that partners in intercultural marriage achieve personal growth by wrestling with difference and growing in self-understanding. Characteristics required to mediate such differences include empathy, acceptance, improvisation, and flexibility (Romano, 2008; Soncini, 2006). And, Molina et al. (2004) highlight the richness that difference, when accompanied by shared values, can bring to an intercultural marriage, such as being able to see multiple worldviews. The benefits that intercultural couples experience is believed to transfer to their bicultural children, who are said to be more accepting of different perspectives and beliefs and more tolerant of differences (Kuramoto et al., 2017; Romano, 2008).

Other literature stresses that the challenges and positive aspects of intercultural marriage are symbiotic, rather than focusing on them as separate entities. First, in her study of 18 intercultural couples in Finland, Cools (2015) points out that uncertainty in an intercultural relationship "can be simultaneously both problematic, and smooth and uncomplicated" (p. 143).

Citing the relational dialectics theory of Baxter and Montgomery (1996), Cools points out that tensions are part of any relationship but are especially prominent with intercultural couples. Second, Djurdjevic and Roca Girona's (2016) study on mixed couples in Spain reveals "the coexistence of contrasting experiences" in their marriages, which allow the couples to experience constructive self-transformation as they interculturally adapt to each other (p. 397). And, Rodríguez-García (2006), in his ethnographic and quantitative study of Spanish/Senegambian intercultural couples in Catalonia, which included surveying 251 participants, considers intercultural marriage "a space in which hybridity and segregation, globalisation and localisation, change and retention are reversible and complementary, rather than competing" (p. 429). In other words, for spouses who get along, there is not only a dichotomous conflict between each spouse's culture, but also a complementary meeting of difference amidst existing tension.

The literature on intercultural couples reveals three overriding themes: intercultural marriage is (1) difficult, (2) beneficial (i.e., positive), and (3) simultaneously difficult and beneficial. This literature sets the stage to understand the complexities of childrearing in intercultural marriage.

The Intercultural Couple and Childrearing

Once a child is born—a common stress point for any couple—the marital dyad abruptly changes to a family triad. For the intercultural couple, the stress of this change is often heightened when there is variation in the childrearing practices of each culture involved (Crippen & Brew, 2007; Roy, 2019). For many people, parenting is a chief means to transmit generational cultural values and practices to their offspring (Keller et al., 2004; Navara & Lollis, 2009). Although change can occur from generation to generation (Harkness et al., 2013), such cultural values regarding parenting are often resistant to change (Keller & Greenfield, 2000). For

instance, Cote and Bornstein's (2003) longitudinal study of 86 mother participants supports the belief that "parenting cognitions are believed to acculturate only very slowly, if at all" (p. 323). And Young Yun Kim (2001) purports that a person's basic values in general are very resistant to change, and it is typically a person's "overt role behaviour" (p. 51) that will change in the face of acculturation—not their values.

Adding to the topic of acculturation, John Berry (2007) points out that a person who lives in a new environment may acculturate in four different ways. First, assimilation is used by those who wish to leave behind their culture and interact with the new culture, whereas the separation strategy is used by those who wish to maintain their original culture and sidestep interactions with others (Berry, 2007; Berry & Hou, 2017). Third, integration is employed by those who wish to hold onto their original culture while simultaneously and regularly interacting with other groups and wider society, whereas the marginalization strategy is used by those who generally do not desire to maintain their culture or relate to others (Berry, 2007; Berry & Hou, 2017). The manner in which a parent in an intercultural marriage acculturates influences not only their parenting practices, but also what culture they transmit to their children.

Kim's (2001) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation purports that while acculturation is a key component of long-term intercultural contact and communication (Kim, 2015), so is deculturation. In the process of deculturation and acculturation, some of an individual's former ways of living are replaced with ways from the new environment. Here an individual can "live and change through new experiences" as these new experiences challenge their "taken-for-granted assumptions" (Kim, 2015, p. 4) about life, such as, for example, taken for granted ideas about parenting. Kim (2015) points out that acculturation of an individual is not an automatic nor haphazard phenomenon but rather that "each individual has a degree of

freedom or control, based on his or her predispositions, pre-existing needs and interests" (p. 5). As such, some immigrants acculturate more than others, and further, an individual may acculturate differently across their environments (e.g., home and workplace; Kim, 2015).

According to Kim's (2001) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation most often requires a process of "stress, adaptation and growth" (p. 7) where, while resisting the pull of their home culture, an individual may engage in new behaviours to be in better harmony with their host environment (Kim, 2015). The result of this non-linear and often tumultuous stress-adaptation-growth dynamic is that the individual eventually becomes more flexible in their definition of self (Kim, 2015) expanding their cultural identity to more of an intercultural one. Kim (2001) terms this phenomenon "intercultural personhood" (p. 184), where an individual holds an "expanded and/or meta-contextual, universalized outlook on self and others" (p. 7). In this outlook, an individual respects and appreciates the unique beliefs of many cultures (Kim, 2015). As a larger social construct, interculturalism does not limit its concern to preserving the intricacies of a specific heritage and protecting the rights of the people who hold that heritage— like multiculturalism aims to do—but focuses on the interaction of many distinct cultures. In this interaction, interculturalism thrives on the gestalt philosophy that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Kim, 2015, p. 7). Focusing on the intercultural whole can be achieved through meaningful "cross-cultural engagement" (Elias et al., 2020, p. 17) in local settings. One example of this cross-cultural engagement in action is two parents in an intercultural marriage flexing to raise their child(ren) under the influence of both cultures.

In becoming intercultural, an individual adopts new cultural constructs from their host culture as well as creates new constructs. Through communicating with others in a new cultural environment, they move from a cultural identity once defined via childhood enculturation to a

newly constructed intercultural identity (Kim, 2001). This active construction of self (Kim, 2001) is a complex process that is emergent, gradual, and integrative. Although stressful, "adaptive challenges" (Kim, 2015), and the resulting acculturation, can be a welcome opportunity for an individual to break away from undesired beliefs and behaviours and "act beyond the confines of any single culture" (Kim, 2015, p. 10). Just as an individual can adopt new ways of parenting from their host culture, so can either spouse in an intercultural marriage adopt new ways of parenting from each other.

Intercultural couples in Crippen and Brew's (2013) study acculturated to their spouse's parenting in varying degrees through the use of five different strategies of cultural adaptation: (1) assimilation (a spouse relinquishes their own cultural values to the favour of the native-born spouse's values), (2) cultural tourism (the mother—who is the primary caretaker and of the dominant culture—invests in her culture of origin but not her spouse's), (3) cultural transition (the mother favours the husband's "dominant culture of residence" (p. 268) and relies on his family members to help her parent in their ways), (4) cultural amalgamation (the two spouses blend cultural values for the good of their children), and (5) dual biculturalism (spouses acculturate equally to both cultures). How intercultural spouses acculturate to one another's parenting influences their process of childrearing.

The choice of residence after marriage for an intercultural couple influences the cultural environment where their children will be raised (Adams, 2004; Moriizumi, 2011). A patrilocal residence may result in the male partner's culture being more accessible, whereas a matrilocal residence may result in the opposite (assuming that the couple's respective parents still live in their country of origin). A qualitative study by Adams (2004) using semistructured interviews with 37 individuals examined partners who grew up in different countries until at least the age of

16. Adams found that a couple's decision-making process about where to live is an emotional one that may be accompanied by the fear of losing one's cultural roots. It is a process that occurs in stages and is influenced by friends, family, and community.

In a study by Xiang and Colson (2018) of cross-national Asian American couples residing in the USA, 72 of the participants completed a survey and 10 engaged in interviews. It was discovered that place of residence influenced the power balance in childrearing decisions, with the Asian-born spouse having less influence on decisions than the American-born. It should be noted that the majority of the Asian-born participants were women while the majority of American-born participants were men. Xiang and Colson found that the Asian-born spouse was more likely to take on primary childrearing responsibilities, because their career credentials from their home country did not transfer over to America. The differences in childrearing practices between the Asian-born parents and the American-born parents included helping children with daily responsibilities verses fostering independence in daily responsibilities, viewing the goal of their children's academics as "endurance" versus "fun" (p. 15), and valuing respect for elders versus a focus on individualism. In addition, the couples found it challenging to achieve their bicultural and bilingual hopes for their children and noted that the responsibility to achieve this was typically that of the Asian-born spouse. This was especially difficult because extended families of the Asian-born spouse resided overseas and were unable to help socialize the children and develop their cultural heritage.

Intercultural couples often face differences in childrearing and navigate these differences in varying ways, as illustrated in the mention of various studies in the paragraphs to follow. Song and Gutierrez (2015), in their surveys and in-depth interviews with 62 "mixed-race" (p. 682) couples, found that when a particular childrearing idea differs between two parents in an

intercultural couple, rather than negotiating, one parent may self-select to prioritize their partner's culture over their own in regard to that particular situation. This is a practice Bustamante (2011) refers to as "cultural deference" (p. 160) and Bhugun (2017) refers to as the "sphere of influence rule" (p. 193). For example, Bhugun's study of 14 intercultural couples in Australia revealed how parents often manage cultural differences in parenting through the "sphere of influence rule" (p. 193) where partners acknowledge and defer in the areas in which their partner holds "cultural expertise" (p. 193). These occurrences are motivated by the desire of both partners to enrich the lives of their children. Similarly, in a study by Kuramoto (2018) with intercultural married couples in Japan, the husband often deferred to and practiced the wife's ways of childrearing, citing that his wife knew best. This resulted in an enhanced spousal partnership where spouses learned to respect each other's differences, recognizing that they did not have to always agree with each other. They were willing to change their perspectives and in doing so "transcend differences" (p. 560) in order to adopt a family culture unique to them.

Eight intercultural couples residing in the USA in Tien et al.'s (2017) study revealed through interviews that they largely moved away from traditional and cultural gender roles both due to personal preference and in order to contribute to the success of their relationship. In raising children, they found that they entered into "continuous communication" (p. 159) to find strategies that worked best for them. Having different first languages, however, was a barrier in expressing meaning to one another when communicating, especially emotional affect. Further, communicating with extended family amidst language barriers was noted to be especially difficult.

Joshi and Krishna (1998), in their study of 30 English / North American women married to Indian spouses, discussed opposing models of parenting between Western and Hindu

intercultural couples. They noted the dominant North American model of intense attachment between mother and child, which is believed by the mothers to lead to independence later in life. Conversely, they noted that the Hindu model consisted of recurrent socialization with members of the extended family, which is believed by the Hindu participants to foster the highly regarded cultural value of dependence and interdependence. The cultural cognitions of independence and interdependence (or individualism and collectivism) are overriding themes in Joshi and Krishna's study and are recurring themes in many other studies involving cross-cultural (rather than intercultural) samples (e.g., Cote & Bornstein 2003; Keller & Greenfield, 2000). The cultural cognitions of independence and interdependence have intricate and far-reaching implications for parenting beliefs and behaviours (Cote & Bornstein 2003; Kağitçibaşi, 2007) and influence whether parents foster their children's sense of self or sense of familial relations.

A study by Koide et al. (2019) showed that Japanese and non-Japanese parent couples in Japan—a country where conformity is highly valued and intercultural marriages are not the norm—experienced dilemmas around "societal pressures, language use and inner struggles" (p. 261) when parenting their children. Semistructured interviews with the 20 participants revealed that their inner struggles consisted of grappling with their desire for their children to fit in with peers rather than being marked as different. Weighing heavily on this desire for their children to fit in was the decision whether or not to teach their children an additional and nondominant language of the foreign-born spouse.

In Bhugun's (2017) study of 14 intercultural couples in Australia mentioned previously, the parents successfully negotiated differences over parenting practices and expectations of their children. For example, some immigrant parents desired more strict discipline methods for their children than their spouses, expected gendered chores of their children, such as girls doing dishes

and cooking and boys doing yard work, and expected their children to prioritize respect for their parents over expressing their own opinions. Couples noticed a disparity in the real or imagined help they received from the extended families of each spouse, with the foreign-born spouse missing the collective nature of childrearing in their country—a construct which they did not see present with their Australian extended family. Some of the Australian parents were found to praise their children often despite their spouse not doing so, and wished for their children to follow their dreams in regards to future postsecondary attendance despite the foreign-born spouse expecting their children to achieve a high level of postsecondary education regardless of their children's desires. Further, parents held different opinions on topics regarding infant care, such as sleep training, bed sharing, breastfeeding, and traditional medicinal practices. Most parents in the study compromised their values and expectations in some way to benefit their children. Due to its small sample size, and with each participant holding their own unique beliefs in certain areas, this study should not be used to essentialize certain characteristics of Australian versus foreign-born parenting; instead, it illustrates that real differences do exist in the parenting practice and opinions of intercultural spouses.

The literature on intercultural marriage and childrearing demonstrates three key points. First, spouses in intercultural marriage may acculturate to their spouse's cultural ways of childrearing to varying degrees—or not at all. Second, the choice of residence of the intercultural couples likely influences acculturation to some degree, with the native-born spouse's culture and family being more accessible. Third, intercultural couples navigate differences in childrearing in varying ways, including acknowledging their spouse's expertise by deferring to their particular childrearing practice; abandoning spousal gender and cultural roles; compromising values to benefit children; and making childrearing decisions in response to societal pressures. What is less

clear in the literature is how intercultural couples experience raising their bicultural children in the entirety of their developmental niche—the physical and social settings of childcare, the practices and customs of childcare, and, most notably, the ethnotheories of the parent caregivers.

Studies of the Developmental Niche

Super and Harkness's (1999) developmental niche has been used extensively to study and/or interpret the different ways in which the environments of children are culturally constructed. Although their work does not specifically address bicultural children, they offer extensive insights into culturally constructed parenting in the context of the developmental niche. For example, Harkness et al. (2009) found wide variation in Italian and Dutch parents' opinions regarding which behavioural tendencies of children are thought to be most difficult to deal with. Italian parents expressed great concern if their child often exhibited "negative moods or intense reactions" (p. 185). In comparison, Dutch parents "appreciated" (p. 185) a child who cautiously entered new situations but found highly active children to be challenging to "manage" (p. 186). In another comparative study, Harkness et al. (2000) found that the American parents most valued individual qualities such as intelligence in their children, whereas Dutch parents valued social competence. And in a study by Harkness et al. (2009) of Kenyan families in a rural community, almost all children less than 6 years of age were perceived by adults as not having a unique personality. Instead, they were thought to be the same as all other children within their clan. Differences in personality were only noticed between clans.

In a study on infant sleep practices and beliefs of American and Dutch parents, Harkness and Super (2006) found differences in how the parents interpreted the child's need for regular sleep. The American parents would sometimes favour "special time" (p. 72) with their children over regular sleep, while the Dutch parents were wholly committed to adequate sleep managed

by a consistent sleep schedule. Further, Dutch parents viewed all children in need of the same large amount of sleep, with predetermined regularity, whereas American parents viewed sleep as individualized and "perceived themselves as captive to the individual child's behavior style" (p. 71). The work of Harkness and Super supports the idea that parental understandings of the nature of the child are largely cultural constructions—even when discussing organic hardware such as sleep, which is influenced by ecological firmware and cultural software (LeVine et al., 1994). This is highly relevant to the parenting of bicultural children, where cultural constructions of the parents are likely to interact in some way.

Identification and Identity

The concepts of cultural identification and cultural identity and are integral to this study, and thus require an explanation of (1) their meaning and (2) the literature that I use to mobilize them. First, I use *identification* to refer to the way in which parents understand, socialize, or identify their child (Csizmadia et al., 2014; Rockquemore et al., 2009) and *identity* to refer to a child's individual—yet socioculturally mediated—self-identity based on their own self-understanding and choice. Second, due to the lack of conceptual frameworks regarding bicultural children's cultural identity and their parents' cultural identification of them, I draw on biracial concepts for this study (Edwards, 2017; Rockquemore, 1999). I do this while acknowledging that racial identity concepts "do not reflect the complexity of cultural spaces in which mixed-race people move" (Rockquemore et al., 2009, p. 25). Consequently, I expand and go beyond biracial identification and biracial identity constructs to focus on cultural identification and cultural identity, which may include things such as ethnic, linguistic, and historical backgrounds (Kim, 2008).

The literature from the 1930s forward regarding the identification and identity of biracial children focuses largely on race (Rockquemore et al., 2009; Soliz et al., 2009) and, more specifically, racial identity, rather than culture or a conceptualization of the bicultural child. The term *race* historically has been used in a biological sense to refer to a group of people characterized by distinct physical features, such as skin colour (Tseng, 2001). More recently, some authors have acknowledged that race is a socially and culturally constructed category rather than a marker of biological differences (C. C. Park, 2011; Tseng, 2001). Ghosh and Abdi (2013) argue that rejecting the biological definition of race and adopting a cultural definition of race results in a shift from "overt to covert" (p. 55) forms of racism. They believe that this rejection of race, rather than addressing racism in society, has made racism less visible.

The multiple perspectives on the racial identity of biracial individuals can be characterized as "pro-race" and "post-race" (Caballero, 2005). In the pro-race category, predominantly influenced by Robert E. Park's (1928) marginal man theory, it is assumed that mixed-race individuals will be confused or marginalized unless they are raised as one race or the other. For instance, under this thinking, an individual of white and black parentage should identify as black rather than non-black. This hypodescent identification stems from the one-drop rule where "individuals with even 'one drop' of black blood must be categorized as black" (Rockquemore et al., 2009, p. 14). Stonequist (1937) expanded on the marginal man theory by arguing that a person may, at some level, identify with both groups, but that such an orientation is coupled with the development of personal problems.

Rockquemore (1999) outlines a conceptual model of racial identity with four outcomes; the first three are pro-race and the fourth is post-race: (1) a singular identity (i.e., black or white); (2) a border identity (i.e., biracial); (3) a protean identity (i.e., shifting between black, white, and

biracial); and (4) a transcendent identity (i.e., transcending race). In the pro-race border identity, which emerged in the mid 1980s (Rockquemore et al., 2009), mixed race is viewed as a valid racial identity where all the heritages of the person must be acknowledged (Edwards et al., 2010; Root, 1992). In the protean identity, shifting back and forth between identities is also seen as a valid racial identity. In both the border and protean identities, individuals are believed to be capable of developing healthy biracial or multiracial identities. In contrast to the pro-race perspective, Rockquemore's (1999) post-race perspective of a transcendent identity aims to go beyond the notion of race and racial boundaries to encourage a "sense of self beyond race" (Edwards et al., 2010, p. 951). Luke and Luke (1998), key contributors to this perspective, acknowledge that identity is "always in the moment of immanence and becoming" (p. 750). Using an ecological lens, the post-race perspective focuses attention on the context surrounding identity development rather than on racial identity outcomes (Rockquemore et al., 2009).

Expanding on Rockquemore's (1999) model, Edwards (2017) offers three main types that parents catalyze in relation to identifying their children's belonging in "multi- and bicultural racial projects" (p. 185). The types, which are created socially over time in both individual and collective ways, are "mix collective, stressing both or all of the racial and ethnic identities of the parents as important as ascribed affiliations for children; single collective, treating one part of a child's racial, ethnic or faith heritage as their intrinsic identity; and open individual choice, where choices of identity are regarded as plastic and transcending race" (Edwards, 2017, p. 185). Notably, the open individualized choice, which unlike mix and single collective is post-race, includes two distinct strands: the open individual and the national collective. First, in the open individual, parents do not impose race onto their children but rather present identity and belonging to their children as an open and individualized choice or negotiation of affiliation.

This affiliation transcends racial boundaries. Second, in the national collective, parents focus on their children's part in the whole of the national collective where everyone, including their child, is affiliated with, for example, being "Canadian." Edwards's (2017) types are useful to my study, because not only does Edwards employ the types as racial constructs, but she acknowledges them as ethnic constructs as well.

Through the cultural identification of their child, parents may influence—perhaps in unexpected ways—their child's self-identity, at least in the child's early years (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Padilla, 2006). As children grow, they may take on more agency in their identity, despite their parents' identification of them. Sanchez (2010) refers to "racial identity autonomy" where biracial individuals have the freedom to choose their racial identity versus "forced choice dilemma" where "there is either an implicit or an explicit message that they need to pick one racial identity over another" (p. 1659). Forced choice dilemma exerted by parents has been noted to be a psychological stressor for children (Durrant & Gillum, 2018; Sanchez, 2010). However, when parents of biracial and/or bicultural children acknowledge both/all of their races/cultures, it has been found to result in healthy identity development (Crippen & Brew, 2007; Edwards & Caballero, 2008; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005).

Some literature on racial identity explores the ways in which parents identify their children or view their child's identity. In Kuramoto et al.'s (2017) online questionnaire of 158 participants in Japan, many intermarried Japanese/non-Japanese couples viewed their child's racial and cultural identity as the child's choice despite the couple's previous identification of their children's race and culture. A common concern among parents was the societal pressure to have their child fit into the traditionally homogeneous society of Japan. The means to achieve this was by allowing the child's wish to identify as Japanese rather than biracial, even though

one parent had their culture excluded. In a study by Song and Gutierrez (2016) of 62 interracial parents in Britain, the majority identified their children as cosmopolitan rather than claiming a specific heritage. And a study by Edwards et al. (2010) with 35 parent couples from different racial, ethnic, and faith backgrounds explored views on dealing with difference and belonging when bringing up children. Prominent in this study was the finding that parents tended not to fall solely into one of Edwards et al.'s (2010) three types in identifying their children as open individualized, mix collective, or single collective but rather moved sinuously among or between the types and their subsets. Despite identifying types for their children—of which "collective pro-race" types were the most popular—many participants ultimately felt that the child's identity should be the child's choice.

How children choose their cultural identity as they get older can be influenced by the values that their parents render to them. For instance, a child is more likely to choose a more individual choice identity if their upbringing includes a focus on independence (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Doucet et al., 2019; Edwards et al., 2010). Edwards and Caballero (2008) explain that "as people feel more responsible for their 'project of the self' and the search for self-fulfilment, they are less likely to follow the traditional life pathways laid down by their forebears" (p. 42). In light of this, parents and children may be more likely to choose an identity that is different than what their extended and intergenerational family might expect of them, and different from what various cultural traditions might dictate. Interestingly, the value of independence is common in middle-class families in, for example, North America and Britain (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Edwards et al., 2010) regardless of ethnic background (Edwards et al., 2010). With this independence comes a greater possibility of a child from a middle-class family choosing a transcendent identity (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Edwards, 2017). Identity choice by children of middle-class families,

however, is also influenced by wider societal factors that expand beyond, yet may remain connected to, class.

A parent's identification of their child and the child's identity can be influenced by the perceptions and expectations of others who, under the influence of cultural, historical, political, and social forces and boundaries (Edwards, 2017; Rockquemore et al., 2006), may ascribe biracial people to certain categories (Butler-Sweet, 2011). In this case, choice—or how a parent chooses to identify their child or how a child chooses to identify—is not necessarily without restraints and consequence. For example, there are societal expectations of biracial people to identify with their minority background (Butler-Sweet 2011; Csizmadia & White, 2019). A black/white biracial person, for example, as a result of structural forces such as racism, may be expected to identify as black, and if they identify as white this may be "interpreted as a social-cultural transgression" (Csizmadia & White, 2019, p. 233). Further, how one identifies can shift based on the influence of the social setting that they are in. For example, black-white biracial males in a study by Durrant and Gillum (2018) "reported shifting how they expressed their racial identity during different periods of their lives and in diverse social settings" (p. 382). Identity choice and restraints, then, are influenced by social settings.

Identification and identity choice can also be influenced by contextual factors such as racial discrimination due to skin colour and other phenotypic traits (Brunsma & Rockquemore, 2001; Lou & Lalonde, 2015), gender (Rockquemore, 2002), and geographic location (Brunsma, 2006). Racial identification and identity choice are therefore influenced by the ecological context in which they develop (Root, 2003). Regardless of the ideals that a parent holds for the identification of their child or the hopes that a child holds for their desired identity, there are constraints and allowances in the society in which they live (J. W. Berry, 2007). Just as the

ecological environment influences racial identity and identification, so does it influence cultural identity and identification. Parents' cultural identification of their children is important because parents influence which culture(s) a bicultural child may be exposed to and therefore what identity they may pursue.

Family Language Policy

Family language policy is defined as explicit and overt planning in regard to language use and management among family members in the home (King & Fogle, 2008). It encompasses interactions between parents/caregivers and children and the subsequent development of the children's language (De Houwer, 1999). In multilingual couples, such as the three couples in my study, family language policy often entails the complexity of maintaining a heritage language or languages (King & Fogle, 2017). Fogle and King (2013) point out that "while family language policies initially might be explicit and overt (e.g., initial decisions about which language parents will use with the child), there are often implicit modifications and negotiations over time" (p. 2). In this way, family language policy is not always easily articulated and part of it may be held subconsciously.

Inherent in the transmission of an additional language in the home are parents' language ideologies, which are beliefs regarding language (King & Fogle, 2017). Parents' language ideologies include what language parents choose to use with their children, their "rationalization or justification of their perceived language structure and use" (Silverstein, 1979, p. 193), and how and under which conditions (King & Fogle, 2008) they see language teaching and learning best occurring. De Houwer (1999) explains that in order for children to develop active early childhood multilingualism, a prerequisite is that parents must have a positive attitude regarding

the languages involved and towards achieving multilingualism. This attitude is part of the parents' language ideologies.

Family language policy has increasingly been identified as a sociolinguistic (rather than only psycholinguistic) construct shaped by the ecology of the family and the wider environment (King et al., 2008; King & Fogle, 2006; King & Lanza, 2019; Spolsky, 2009). For instance, parental ideologies are "linked to broader societal attitudes and ideologies about language(s) and parenting" (King & Fogle, 2017, p. 316). As such, individual, political, historical, social, and cultural influences on parents' beliefs about language and parenting influence their structuring of language in the home (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). These family and societal influences may include anything from parents' own positive or negative childhood language experiences to the social or economic benefits that they perceive their children incurring by mastering a particular language (Nakamura, 2019). In speaking to the benefits that parents perceive, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) suggests that language ideologies are "language users' evaluative perceptions and conceptions of language and language practices, based on their beliefs and assumptions about the social utility, power and value of a language in a given society" (p. 695). Experiential in nature, parents' language ideologies often result in the formation of lay theories (Moin et al., 2013; Nakamura, 2019) that explicitly or implicitly guide language interaction in the home.

De Houwer (1999) points out that a language ideology is not enough for active bilingualism to develop in the home: An additional requirement is that parents have an impact belief regarding their own engagement in the process of their children's language acquisition. De Houwer defines impact belief as:

> the parental belief that parents can exercise some sort of control over their
>
> children's linguistic functioning. An impact belief can be very strong, and may

include the notion that the parent has an important exemplar function to fulfill, and that thus the parent's own language use has a direct influence on what the child will learn to say. (p. 84)

Despite good intentions, parents' impact beliefs "do not easily translate into effective bilingual parenting practices" (Piller & Gerber, 2018, p. 1). For instance, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) points out that even if parents have mastered a heritage language, a variety of particular strategies are needed to transmit the language to their children, such as providing the correct input in the minority language in response to a child's use of the dominant language.

Parent impact beliefs run on a continuum from strong to weak. Stronger impact beliefs, despite not always materializing, typically result in better linguistic outcomes for children than weaker impact beliefs. As De Houwer (1999) points out, parents' weak impact beliefs "may consist of just the loosely held conviction that in general children will pick up language from the environment" (p. 85) and that the parents have little direct influence over their children's language development. Such loosely held beliefs of parents often result in language shift from the minority language to be learned to the majority language (Fogle & King, 2013; Gafaranga, 2010; Pan, 1995; Smith-Christmas, 2016). As a consequence, children do not acquire the intended language.

The way in which parents perceive family language instruction in the home, and the actual language instruction that they engage in, may be contradictory. In a study by De Houwer and Bornstein (2016) of 31 bilingual mothers trying to enact the one-parent one-language policy in their home, observations showed that half of the mothers did not stick to speaking a single language with their children all of the time, despite saying—and believing—that they did. As the researchers described, "self-reported language choice data tend to express an idealisation and

represent a strong attitudinal component" (p. 689) and, further, that switching to another language can occur without awareness on the part of the speaker. Curdt-Christiansen's (2016) study, entitled "Conflicting Language Ideologies and Contradictory Language Practices in Singaporean Multilingual Families," illustrates such an idealization. Observation and conversation with three participating families revealed the complexities and contradictory nature of what families "do and do not do and what they claim to do and not to do" (p. 695) regarding language instruction in the home. Amidst the complexity of teaching language to their children, parents are not always accurate in their analysis of their own language practices, despite being articulate about their ideologies.

To summarize this literature review, the literature regarding parenting experiences in intercultural marriages or unions is limited, although useful. First, the literature that I reviewed on intercultural couples, intercultural childrearing, and acculturation (Berry, 2007; Kim, 2001) serves as a starting point to learn about the ways in which these couples reconcile differences in childrearing practices (Bustamante et al., 2011; Crippen & Brew, 2007; Molina et al., 2002). Second, the studies I reviewed by Harkness et al. (2009) and Harkness and Super (2006) regarding parental ethnotheories in a cross-cultural context suggest the possible utility of studying parental ethnotheories in an intercultural marriage context. And third, the literature on racial identification and identity (Edwards, 2017), and the literature on multilingual language acquisition and family language policy (King & Fogle, 2008), serves as an impetus to address the gaps in literature on cultural identity, as well as the gaps in the literature on additional language acquisition of bicultural children as a sociolinguistic construct. In sum, parents' experiences raising their bicultural children is underexplored in research. As noted by a number of researchers (Bornstein et al., 2011; Cote & Bornstein, 2003; Dachyshyn & Kirova, 2008; Keller

et al., 2004; Uayan et al., 2009), more studies that are focused on the daily life experiences of the mother-father-child triad (or parent-parent-child triad) in the context of intercultural marriage are needed. More specifically, the available literature does not specifically address the ethnotheories of parents of bicultural children in the context of the developmental niche.

In Chapter 4, I cover the methodology, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations of my research.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

I conducted three qualitative case studies (Ellis, 2009) of three intercultural married parent couples residing in three western Canadian provinces. Through the use of open-ended interviews, I gathered information regarding the parents' experience parenting their bicultural children. I sought to interpret, understand, and coconstruct their parenting experiences and come to an understanding of the "thinking and feeling" (Ellis, 2006, p. 113) behind their actions by means of our participant/researcher relationship. My goal was to "develop insight" in such a way that it transformed my understanding and allowed me to "think more richly and act more usefully in relation to the problem or question studied" (Ellis, 2006, p. 114). In this chapter, I share the methodology, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations of my research.

Constructivist Research

In the constructivist paradigm, reality is believed to be a construction rather than an absolute truth. According to Richardson (2005), the constructivist paradigm is based on the nondualist ontology that "realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature . . . and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions" (p. 232). In other words, realities are constructed within the individual and are products of human intellect. Local and specific in nature, constructions are based in one's personal and social experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Constructions are not fixed but can be altered. Subject to change, "constructions are not more or less 'true,' in any absolute sense, but simply more or less informed and/or sophisticated" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). In an epistemological sense,

constructivism is subjectivist and transactional in nature, and findings and knowledge are *literally created* through the interaction between the researcher and participants (p. 111).

Methodology that is based on constructivist ontological and epistemological beliefs is hermeneutical and dialectical. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), interaction between the participant and the researcher results in "the reconstruction of previously held constructions" (p. 111). The constructions are then interpreted through the use of hermeneutical techniques and "compared and contrasted" (p. 111) through dialectical conversation—conversation that seeks unity between the understandings of the researcher and the participant.

Scholars of the constructivist paradigm who are informed by postmodern sensibilities do not deem one discourse to be more important than another. According to Richardson (1991, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), postmodern scholars "doubt that any discourse has a privileged place, any method or theory a universal and general claim to authoritative knowledge" (p. 2). Postmodern sensibilities distrust and question all previous paradigms and are guided by the belief that "there is no single interpretive truth" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 15). Rather, "qualitative interpretations are constructed" (p. 15) and the text is a result of the researcher's effort to understand and interpret the experiences of the participant. Lived experience, then, cannot be exactly duplicated, but instead, is created in the writings of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Such constructions or creations are influenced by factors such as language, identity, cultural meanings, and social values (Schwandt, 2007).

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), researchers adopting a constructivist approach strive to be well versed in three main criteria for conducting constructivist research: the nature of knowledge, the use of dialectical conversation, and the role of the researcher. The nature of knowledge in the constructivist paradigm is far from the positivistic belief that there exists a sole

and objective reality. Rather, in a constructivist ontology, people are active in constructing reality as they experience living in the world (Patterson & Williams, 2002). As Ellis (1998) explains, "knowledge is the product of human activity" (p. 7). In this way, knowledge is created as opposed to being found (Ellis, 1998). Because individuals or groups construct meaning and assign it to the environment around them in unique ways, multiple realities exist (Patterson & Williams, 2002). As Guba and Lincoln (1994) explain, "knowledge consists of those constructions about which there is relative consensus (or at least some movement toward consensus) among those competent (and, in the case of more arcane material, trusted) to interpret the substance of construction" (p. 113). When two equally adept and accepted interpretations differ, the existence of "multiple 'knowledges'" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 113) is possible. Such differences can be due to the dissimilar social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender influences of the interpreters (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The dialectical nature of constructivism becomes readily apparent when dissimilar constructions are brought into juxtaposition through conversation and then compared and contrasted through further conversation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This often results in continuous revision of constructions, collaboratively carried out by the researcher and participant (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The dialectical conversation is deemed most successful when consensus about a construction is reached and the agreed-upon construction is "more informed and sophisticated" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111) than any of the antecedent constructions.

The role of the constructivist researcher is to be a highly involved participant in the research process rather than a distant observer. The researcher shares in the research process with the participant by facilitating and orchestrating the "'multivoice' reconstruction of his/her own construction as well as those of all other participants" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 115). The

researcher acknowledges that their values play a role in creating research outcomes—that is, they are "a highly subjective maker of meaning" (Boostrom, 1994, p. 63). Acknowledging their subjectivity, the researcher "understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his/her own personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 3), and those of the participants. Further, by understanding etic and emic influences such as current political, social, and economic structures, a researcher can better interpret the experience of their participants.

Common criteria for evaluating the trustworthiness of constructivist research include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These criteria, which are also used for grounded theory, were developed to add rigour and quality to qualitative research and, in many ways, to parallel the criteria used in positivistic research (e.g., credibility parallels internal validity). Bhattacharya (2007) warns that such criteria "are shifting, contingent concepts" and that if this shifting nature is not acknowledged, these criteria run the risk of promoting universalized understandings (p. 1008). This potential risk of universalized understandings is problematic to the ideals of constructivism since constructivism is based in a nondualist rather than a positivist ontology.

Questioning the above criteria, Guba and Lincoln (1994) diverge from the need to mirror the criteria of quantitative research and suggest an additional set of criteria used for evaluating qualitative research conducted with postmodern sensibilities: *authenticity criteria.* These criteria include "fairness, ontological authenticity (enlarges personal constructions), educative authenticity (leads to improved understanding of constructions of others), catalytic authenticity (stimulates one to action), and tactical authenticity (empowers action)" (p. 114). In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) suggest that proponents of the constructivist paradigm "seek

alternative ways of evaluating their work, including verisimilitude, emotionality, personal

responsibility, an ethic of caring, political praxis, multivoiced texts, and dialogues with subjects"

(p. 5). Verisimilitude, which is a key criterion for evaluating constructivist research, "draws

readers into the experiences of respondents in such a way that those experiences can be felt"

(Schwandt, 2007, p. 313). Although it may have "the appearance of truth or reality" (Schwandt,

2007, p. 313), verisimilitude is not a way of establishing truth but rather an alternative to truth.

Verisimilitude is a powerful way of having the reader understand the experiences of the research

participants, thus increasing the reader's understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

Importantly, Guba and Lincoln (1994) stress that "over time, everyone formulates more informed

and sophisticated constructions and becomes more aware of the content and meaning of

competing constructions" (p. 113). Once the researcher and participants develop more informed

and sophisticated constructions and the reader grasps these constructions through verisimilitude,

one can assume that the research has made progress.

The Value of Qualitative Research with an Interpretive Emphasis

Qualitative case study research with an interpretive emphasis results in "thick rich

description" (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). These descriptions can be used to "illustrate, support, or

challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to data gathering" (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). At the

same time, because interpretive inquiry is by nature very emergent, the researcher may be

entering the research without a theory or hypothesis and without a sense of what they expect to

find (Ellis, 1998). If there are no preexisting theoretical assumptions when a researcher begins,

then theory or categories may be developed through inductive analysis of the thick descriptions

that are created after data is gathered. Merriam (1998) believes that research outcomes gained

from an inductive approach to research result in a better understanding of the experiences of the

participant than understandings held at the onset of the research. This understanding is a result of the researcher's constant reflection and interpretation throughout the study (Hittleman & Simon, 2006) and can serve to "illuminate more general issues" (Chadderton & Torrance, 2011, p. 53) regarding the topic of study.

Peshkin (1993) identifies a list of six possible "good" (p. 25) outcomes of interpretive research. The first outcome explains or creates generalizations. This can be done by overt explanation of categories, by loosely pointing out categories in a less forward manner, or by writing in a clear and accurate way so as to prepare the reader to make their own generalizations about the text (Peshkin, 1993). The second outcome develops new concepts, which contribute to the advancement of the field in which the research takes place, as well as generating "frameworks for directing subsequent research" (p. 26). The third outcome elaborates existing concepts, extending understanding of a phenomenon. The fourth outcome provides insights that can result in "changing behavior," "refining knowledge," or "problem finding" (p. 26). The outcome of problem finding is particularly valuable, as it results in identifying previously unknown areas for future research. The fifth outcome clarifies complexity by allowing greater understanding of part-whole relationships among the research variables. The sixth outcome, which is not common to all qualitative research, develops theory. To conclude, Peshkin (1993) asserts that while researchers may find no final solution, the outcomes should bring them into intimate contact with the phenomenon that they are seeking to illuminate.

Hermeneutics

Positioning oneself in the constructivist paradigm requires a researcher to engage in hermeneutic and narrative approaches (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The interpretive inquiry research methodology is informed by hermeneutics. According to Michael Patterson and Daniel Williams

(2002), in productive hermeneutics the researcher actively analyzes and interprets the text (e.g., through an interview with the participant and the resulting data) and helps "produce" (p. 12) meaning. This construction of meaning is not objective because "researchers cannot 'bracket' their preconceptions, nor can they truly empathize with another's experience" (p. 12). In this way, Patterson and Williams suggest, an "'utterly innocent' reading of the text is impossible" (p. 12). Situating hermeneutics as an approach to the analysis and interpretation of texts, Ellis (1998) outlines three themes central to hermeneutics developed by German philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher in 1819: "the inherently creative character of interpretation" (p. 15); "playing back and forth between the specific and the general, the micro and the macro" (D.G. Smith, 1991, p. 190); and the "pivotal role of language in understanding" (Ellis, 1998, p. 16).

In the first theme, "the inherently creative character of interpretation" (Ellis, 1998, p. 15), the interpreter employs the *divinatory* character of interpretation, which focuses on the participant as an individual (D. G. Smith, 1991). Therefore, the interpreter does not use tools such as classification systems from literature, but rather works holistically "in an effort to discern the intent or meaning behind another's expression" (Ellis, 1998, p. 15). The researcher is committed to learning the meaning connected to the participant's words or expression, thus learning about the wholeness of their experience (Ellis, 2006). To creatively interpret the participant's experience, the researcher must take into account all that the participant has said and all that the participant is, in order to actively construct the meaning of the participant's experiences. To achieve this, a researcher will often use getting-to-know-you activities or pre-interview activities with the participant.

The second theme is "moving back and forth" (Ellis, 1998, p. 15). Here, as explained by David Smith (1991), the interpreter works holistically to move "back and forth between the

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specific and the general, the micro and macro" (p. 190). Ellis (1998) further explains that "to understand a part, one must understand the whole, and to understand the whole, one must understand the individual parts" (p. 16). This back and forth movement has no predetermined beginning or end point and is conceptualized as the *hermeneutic circle* (Ellis, 1998). In this circle, the researcher uses interpretation to examine the micro and the macro—the part-whole relationships that allow the researcher to see the stories revealed in their research as "microcosms of larger macro stories" (Ellis, 2006, p. 116). Getting at part-whole relationships can be achieved through careful questioning, interpretation, and analysis.

The third theme is the "pivotal role of language in understanding" (Ellis, 1998, p. 16). Drawing on Schleiermacher, Smith (1991) describes language as playing a dual and conflicting role in interpretation, as it "both encourages and constrains a person's understanding" (p. 190). Every discourse relies on the previous thought and experience of an individual; therefore, language is formed in a manner that is unique to that individual. Yet, that individual is "a speaker who is only able to be understood within the totality of the language" (Schleiermacher, 1978, p. 2). As such, language functions as a general and broad system, as well as an individual system made up of one's speech. To acknowledge the entirety of one's language and to come to an informed interpretation of one's discourse, a researcher must go back and forth between the "specific and the general, the micro and the macro" (D. G. Smith, 1991, p. 190) of one's discourse.

The everyday language that the participant uses allows the researcher insight into the history and community of the participant. According to Ellis (1998), "since language arises from a community, reflects the influence of tradition, and marks a moment in history, history is linked with language in being understood as a condition of understanding" (p. 16). The researcher must

intently listen to the participant in order to make sense of the meanings found in the participant's language (and thus history and community) and to determine how these meanings shed light on the topic at hand. Ideally, the participant will provide the researcher with new language regarding the research problem, thus advancing the researcher's understanding. Furthermore, the researcher must be cognizant of the language they choose when interacting with the participant and writing about their experiences. According to Ellis (2006), when interacting with the participant, the researcher should "avoid introducing language that may easily be appropriated by participants, but that may not reflect their most salient ideas or most common forms of every-day sense making" (p. 117). In other words, language should come directly from the participant, so that their experiences are authentically expressed in the final (but always open to new insights) interpretive account.

When a participant uses language to recall an experience, the experience ceases to be the original experience. According to Davies and Davies (2007), the retelling of an experience is "constituted and constitutes itself through language and through the social and political landscapes in which it finds itself" (p. 1142). In other words, experiences come into existence through language and community; at the same time, language can limit one's ability to interpret an account. Language is especially pivotal in the research process when the researcher and the participant do not share a common first language. At the same time, one cannot assume that because a researcher and participant share a common language, they share the same meaning for words or concepts (Ellis, 2006).

The Purpose of Interpretive Work

Patterson and Williams (2002) employ the paradigm of hermeneutics to guide interpretive work and the collection and analysis of qualitative data. They purport that the

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interpretive approach of hermeneutics emulates three universal characteristics of science. First, although it does not use hypothesis testing, hermeneutics is empirical because the data is presented in such a way that it "provide[s] a basis for supporting, refuting, or justifying a researcher's interpretations" (p. 6). Second, the adequacy of the interpretive account is open to criticism and requires that the reader judge the interpretive work based on the researcher's conclusions, as well as based on the data provided to support the conclusions (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Third, hermeneutics is "rigorous and systematic" (p. 7) in nature. This rigour is achieved, in part, through careful selection of theory, the research problem, the research design, and data analysis (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Integral to data analysis is systematic and ongoing part-whole analysis.

The emphasis on part-whole analysis in hermeneutics is guided by the belief that phenomena are holistic units (Patterson & Williams, 2002) that cannot be understood outside of their sociocultural context. In this way, "the 'self' is not a context-free phenomenon, it is a transactional product of individuals and the situations they find themselves in" (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 16). In the process of interpretive inquiry, this context-laden experience of the participant is "coconstituted" (Patterson and Williams, p. 14) with the researcher and the participant. In this coconstitution is the recognition that the researcher brings their own forestructures and bias to the part-whole interpretation, thus allowing new insights to emerge (Patterson & Williams, 2002).

In addition to being aware of their forestructures, the researcher is careful not to "over-privilege" (Patterson & Williams, 2002) the participant by *only* including the participant's interpretations (the researcher can at times see the taken for granted beliefs of the participant that the participant cannot see; Patterson & Williams, 2002). Instead, both the participant's and the

researcher's interpretations are considered important to the inquiry. Through dialectical conversation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), the researcher and the participant seek to understand part-whole relationships of the participant's life. This shared understanding results in a fusion of horizons (Gadamer, 1989) where the participant and the researcher do not abandon their own standpoints and prejudices but rather broaden their outlooks based on their dialogical interaction (Ellis, 1998). According to Patterson and Williams (2002), such an interpretation that results from careful part-whole analysis and is supported with data is not considered to be singular and correct but rather is persuasive, insightful, and practical.

Conducting the Inquiry

Participants

My study involved three intercultural married couples who are parents. Participants were recruited through the use of university listservs and web postings advertising the project. I also asked friends and colleagues, and friends of colleagues, to recommend possible participants. For each couple, one partner was born and raised abroad and immigrated to Canada as an adult and the other was Canadian born and raised[6]; one of the Canadian-born participants was Indigenous. Having grown up on different continents and under different cultural and socio-political circumstances, each spouse within a couple had experienced a unique childhood enculturation. The couple participants in my study are (1) Celine[7] and Michael Omara, (2) Amber Meyer and Jason Smith, and (3) Chantal and Vasile Dupuis. The composition of each family is outlined in Table 1.

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[6] These criteria for intercultural marriages are more restrictive than Statistics Canada's (2016) criteria for "mixed unions" mentioned earlier.

[7] All names of participants and family members are pseudonyms that were chosen to represent, in culture and intent, their actual names.

Table 1. Participants and Their Children

Family	Canadian-born Spouse	Foreign-born Spouse	Children
Omara	Celine	Michael (Uganda)	Yvonne (age 3) Juliette (age 1)
Meyer/Smith	Jason	Amber (Holland)	Charles (age 2)
Dupuis	Chantal	Vasile (Romania)	Nicolae (age 11) Daniel (age 9)

Moving from a Research Question to Interview Questions

Before beginning the interview process, I was aware of the need for three types of questions: the research question(s), the question that would guide the data collection, and the interview questions (Ellis, 2006; see Table 2). Developing interview questions based on the question that guides data collection is of particular importance to interpretive inquiry, because it aims to get at the heart of the participants' experiences by revealing part-whole relationships. According to Ellis (2006), "the object of an interview is not simply to get answers to questions, but to learn what the topic of the research is about for the participant" (p. 113). Interview questions were selected and posed carefully to access the participants' experiences and the meaning behind them.

Table 2. Types of Questions

Type of Question	Example
Research question	What are some parental ethnotheories of the nature of the child and of parenting held by parents in intercultural marriages?
Question that guides data collection	How does _____[name], a person from _____[city], _____[country], experience parenting his/her child in _____, [city], Canada?
Sample interview question	In what ways is being a new parent different from what you imagined it would be?

The Interview Process

For each couple, my interviews unfolded as follows: (1) Each spouse completed four pre-interview activities (see Appendix A) in preparation for their own individual interview. (2) I individually interviewed each spouse twice over two 2-hour long sessions (which began by the participant sharing the completed pre-interview activities with me) using a four-group open-ended questioning process (see Appendix B for questions). (3) Each spouse completed one pre-interview activity (see Appendix C) in preparation for the joint interview. (4) I conducted a 2-hour long joint interview with the couple (which began with each spouse sharing their completed pre-interview activity with me and their spouse) by employing a four-group open-ended questioning process (see Appendix D for questions). After each interview, I engaged in email and/or phone communication with the participants to clarify and expand on information they had shared in the interviews.

Interview Locations

The individual interviews with participants took place in a private meeting room at an educational institution or public library, allowing each participant to focus without the

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interruption of family members. The public setting permitted both me and the participant to feel comfortable and safe as we did not know each other prior to the study. The individual interview occurred over two 2-hour sessions with a refreshment/snack break halfway through each interview. The joint interviews of two of the three couples took place in their homes after their children went to bed for the evening. This allowed the participants to be able to meet with me without arranging childcare (I offered to reimburse them for any childcare costs, but neither couple chose to use a babysitter). The joint interview for the third couple took place at an educational institution meeting room. All joint interviews were two-hours long. Although lengthy, these two-hour sessions were the preference of all participants. Because they were immersed in talking about their lives during the interviews, the time passed quickly.

Pre-interview Activities

To increase the chances of a successful first dialogue with the participants, I sent them the pre-interview activities a week ahead of our first meeting (Ellis, 2006). The pre-interview activities were used as a gateway to get to know each participant as a whole person, as well as a means to begin to address the research topic of childhood and parenting. Intended to add direction to the interview conversation, the pre-interview activities enabled the participants to express themselves in a mode (e.g., drawing, charting, writing, etc.) that was most comfortable and natural to them. An example of a pre-interview activity that I offered was "Draw a picture or a diagram of a place that is important to you and use key words to identify the parts or to indicate what happens in each part." (See Appendix A for individual interview pre-interview activities.) I offered a wide range of pre-interview activities (12 in total) so that the participants could select at least four that they were interested in.

According to Ellis (2006), pre-interview activities provide participants with the "opportunity to recall and select memories to share" (p. 118) surrounding the topic of interest and position the participants as the expert of their experiences. Through completing and discussing pre-interview activities in my research, the participants were able to "express perspectives, values, assumptions, and emotions that are either difficult to articulate or not consciously held" (p. 120). Pre-interview activities allowed my participants to share their experiences surrounding the topic of interest, or alternatively, a matter of importance in their life. Either way, information gathered from the pre-interview activities contributed to understanding the part-whole relationships that surround the topic of parenting. In order to get at part-whole relationships, pre-interview activities were accompanied by "openness, humility and genuine engagement" (Ellis, 1998, p. 19) on my part. Such openness readied me to "behold or contemplate life in its wholeness and complexity" (p. 19). I needed to be genuinely engaged with the participants' presentation of their pre-interview activities, so that I could come to know them better in relation to, and beyond, the research topic.

Individual Interviews

For the individual interviews, I had questions ready at the onset, all the while aware that these questions might change suddenly as I responded to, and followed up on, the responses of each participant. My interview questions were extensive (40 questions in total) and were arranged into four groups (see Appendix B). This depth was intended to get at the part-whole relationships of the participants' childhood and parenting experiences. As Ellis (2006) points out, "getting at something important is not always a straightforward matter. In most cases, participants cannot simply tell us the answer to our research questions" (p. 114). I had to be willing to embark on a winding road of questioning in order to arrive at answers to the research

question at hand. Learning about the past and present lives of the participants, then, led to an understanding of the part-whole relationships that formed their experiences. Because I wanted to learn about the participants' taken-for-granted understandings of childhood—their parental ethnotheories—I assisted participants in articulating these ethnotheories by providing them with adequate questions, and thus life experiences, to reflect on, all the while allowing the participants the freedom to choose when and what they wanted to share. Part of the hermeneutic nature of the interview was the way in which I related my own experience to that of the participants and vice versa. This collaboration allowed us to come to an understanding of the meaning behind the stories they shared (Mishler, 1986).

The four groups of questions were intended to draw out the participants' understandings of childhood and were grouped as follows: (1) getting to know what is important to the participants as people; (2) the participants' own childhood experiences in their home countries; (3) the way the participants experience parenting their own child; and (4) the way the participants experience parenting in Canada. The "getting to know what is important to the participants as people" questions led easily into discerning part-whole relationships and offered the time and space for the participants' parental ethnotheories to emerge.

During the interviews, I refined questions and asked "better and better questions" (Peshkin, 1993, p. 28) in order to get closer to a participant's meaning. This was achieved by engaging in the forward and backward arc of the hermeneutical circle, which is discussed in the "Data Analysis and Interpretation" section. Questioning led to reflection and interpretation on the part of both me and the participant, which in turn led to more questioning. In the words of Ellis (2006), I worked to "create conditions that enable[d] a participant to recall significant experiences, analyze them, and reflect on their meaning" (p. 113). By reflecting on the answers, I

took note of new topics that emerged throughout the dialogue (Carson, 1986). When following up, I asked the participant to expand on a previous answer or sought a better understanding of contradictory information (Carson, 1986).

Joint Interviews

I engaged in informal joint interviews with each couple so that their views from the individual interviews could be expanded on. Like Taylor and de Vocht (2011), I view a couple as a "system of two interacting people rather than merely a combination of two individuals" (p. 1578). Interviewing couples together, then, acknowledged the social context central to the topic of research—that is, the participants' shared experiences (and even dissimilar experiences) as both a couple in a relationship and partners in parenting. Joint interview questions were grouped as follows: (1) the participants' experience parenting their child(ren); (2) the participants' experiences of, and imagined experiences of, their child(ren); (3) the participants' experience parenting their child(ren) in Canada and in [foreign-born spouse's country of origin]; (4) the participants' practices and hopes for their child(ren) in their two (or more) cultural heritages.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The Hermeneutic Circle

During the individual and joint interviews, I engaged in the hermeneutic circle as a way of gathering the data as well as making my initial interpretations. According to Ellis (1998), the hermeneutical interpretive inquiry process, that is, the hermeneutic circle, can best be visualized as "a series of loops in a spiral" (p. 20) where the researcher attempts to better understand the phenomenon under study. Each loop in this spiral has two distinct components—the forward arc and the backward arc (Ellis, 1998). Most often, each loop represents a separate activity that resembles data collection and interpretation/analysis (Ellis, 1998). Moreover, a loop may

sometimes represent repeated efforts to reinterpret the same text or set of data (Ellis, 1998). I entered each loop with a question and made an initial interpretation of the participant's responses via the forward arc by using their preunderstandings or prejudices, including their values and autobiography, as well as their vested interest in the research. As suggested by Ellis, in the backward arc, I reinterpreted and evaluated my initial interpretation and tried to see what had previously been unseen while watching for "confirmations, contradictions, gaps or inconsistencies" (p. 27) in the data. Next, what I learned in the loop prepared me to reframe the interview question for the next loop, and the spiral process continued (Ellis, 1998). Continual interpretation and evaluation resulted in continual loops in the spiral, and continual loops in the spiral resulted in a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences. Through the forward and backward arcs, I did not attempt to find a correct interpretation, but rather "the most adequate one" (p. 27) that could be reached at that particular moment in time.

Like many researchers, I encountered surprises, especially in the first loop (Ellis et al., 2011), which was often initiated by the entry question or activity. As such, my understanding of the question underwent change (Ellis, 1998). These unexpected findings led to a sense of uncertainty, which then led to the notion of "uncovering" (Ellis, 1998, p. 22). This uncovering allowed me to comprehend the question or difficulty at hand in a new way and then restructure it in order to prepare for the next phase in the inquiry (Ellis, 1998). Explained by Ellis (1998), this uncovering is

> the return arc of the hermeneutic circle and the response to our inquiry. Thus if no surprises occur, we either do not yet "see" what can be uncovered, or we have not yet approached the research participant or situation in a way that respects the way it can show itself. (p. 23)

I approached the participants with sensitivity, openness, and humility to uncover meaningful accounts of them and their lives (Ellis, 1998). Uncoverings led to reframed questions, which then led to the next loop in the spiral, and so the process continued.

Hermeneutics: Self-consciously Interpretive Research and Self-Criticality

In hermeneutics, the interpretive process is influenced by antecedent "understandings and prejudices" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 27) held by the researcher, allowing the researcher to be both conscious and critical of their discourses. Prejudices or prejudgments are needed to achieve understanding (D. G. Smith, 1991). Being aware of my preunderstandings (also known as fore-structures) throughout the research allowed me to be self-consciously interpretive. According to Ellis (2006), self-consciously interpretive research is not only "intended to generate important insights and transform the researcher's understanding" (p. 114), but to change the researcher as "the researcher discovers inadequacies in [their] own initial pre-understandings" (Ellis, 1998, p. 29). When I acknowledged my preunderstandings (the ones that are readily apparent), I also engaged in self-criticality.

Constructing the Narrative Accounts

While analysis occurred in real time during the interviews via the hermeneutic circle, I engaged in further hermeneutical analysis as each interview transcript was completed. This allowed me to address emergent themes in subsequent interviews. I coded the participant's interview transcripts via idiographic (individual) analysis (Patterson & Williams, 2002), to see them as an individual and learn about their "values, motivations, likes, dislikes, interests, pastimes, preoccupations, fears, hopes, aspirations, significant others" (Ellis, 2006, p. 121). I also focused on how they made sense of their experiences and the experiences of others (Ellis, 2006). Using Ellis's (1998, 2006, 2009) steps to writing a narrative portrait, I then identified what was

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salient in the participant's responses and clustered the responses by topic in order to discern the meaning of the stories shared (Ellis, 2006). The result was a holistic narrative portrait of the participant that included salient childhood and adulthood contexts and experiences. Next, reexamining the data, I composed narrative portraits for each couple, which included their physical and social settings of everyday life, their customs and practices of childcare, and details regarding their courtship, wedding, and choice of residence. The narrative portraits served to highlight the sociocultural realities of each couple's experiences raising their children.

For each couple as a unit, I coded the data further via nomothetic (across individuals) analysis (Patterson & Williams, 2002) while continuing to focus on the couple's ethnotheories of children and of parenting, and what life experiences contributed to them. I then determined topics salient to the couple and explored each topic further to sketch out possible themes (e.g., latchkey kids and "stranger danger") under the topic (e.g., safety). Working with the topics and themes was not a linear process but rather a back-and-forth process of interpretation. This involved writing and rewriting possibilities via jot notes.

With the jot notes regarding each couple in hand, I employed Polkinghorne's (1995) analysis of narratives, which provides general and categorical knowledge regarding a compilation of stories. I engaged in nomothetic analysis looking across the stories of all three of the couples for "common themes or elements" (p. 10) and then created paradigmatic categories or topics. I determined that there were six common topics in total (as well as two additional themes for Chantal and Vasile). Attending to these six (plus two) topics, I then wrote a narrative account of each couple's experience parenting their children. Each narrative account is presented in its own chapter (Chapters 5 through 7). Next, through a second level of nomothetic analysis, I looked across the topics of all three couples and identified the relationships "between and among

the established concepts" (p. 10) and searched for part-whole relationships. I then wrote the final interpretive account. This holistic interpretive account, presented in Chapter 8, is a storied explanation of the human experience of my participants. Polkinghorne's (1995) analysis of narratives worked well with my methodology of interpretive inquiry and, in the words of Mishler (1986), allowed me to "arrive at a fuller and more adequate interpretation" (p. 248) of the parenting experience of intercultural parents in my study than I held at the onset of my research.

There is no definitive standard by which one can objectively evaluate an interpretive account. Therefore, interpretive researchers "must drop [the] ideal of universal certitude" (Packer & Addison, 1989, p. 290). Like Ellis (1998), I believe that when I am evaluating an interpretive account, I should attempt to determine, not whether it has "provided validated knowledge or timeless truth" (p. 30) but if it has advanced my knowledge of the research topic or new topics that have emerged from the research topic. In summarizing Packer and Addison (1989), Ellis (1998) offers six reflective questions that can be used to determine if an interpretive account has been successful:

1. Is it plausible?

2. Does it fit with other material we know?

3. Does it have the power to change practice?

4. Has the researcher's understanding been transformed?

5. Has a solution been uncovered?

6. Have new possibilities been opened up for the researcher, research participants, and the structure of the context? (p. 30)

One knows that an interpretive account has been particularly valuable when it opens up new possibilities that offer change for the better. As Guba and Lincoln (1994) point out, "change is

facilitated as reconstructions are formed and individuals are stimulated to act on them" (p. 115).

Interpretive accounts may spur action that will result in the betterment of the lives of the

participants and/or people with similar experiences.

Indigenous Métissage

My hermeneutical research is informed by Dwayne Donald's (2012) Indigenous

métissage[8], a relational research praxis that treats lives as "relational and braided rather than

isolated and independent" (p. 537). For Indigenous people in particular, relationships with land

and place are essential to identity and culture, as too are relationships with people and other

living beings. When researching cross-culturally then, Donald (2012) does not adopt the

postcolonial hybridity of a third space. Instead, the idea of place—even with its "boundaries" and

acknowledgment of "difference"—is put at the forefront because it allows for the maintenance of

"place-based traditions" (p. 540). These place-based traditions are important for Indigenous

people and are deeply tied to their existence on the land now referred to as Canada.

Indigenous métissage challenges the researcher—and in fact all Canadians whether

Indigenous or non-Indigenous—to relate to one another with "ethical relationality" (Donald,

2012, p. 536). This relationality obliges Canadians to face their shared past through "group

consciousness" (p. 537) and work towards a shared future. It also requires a willingness to live

within tension and an awareness that hegemonic colonial structures thought to be of the past

exist with great intensity today. For instance, the Indian Act's residential school system, reserve

system, and banning of cultural ceremony contribute to the inequities that Indigenous people

currently face. And, strikingly, the continuing removal of Indigenous children from their homes

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[8] In using Donald's (2012) Indigenous métissage alongside poststructural and postcolonial views of reconceptualizing early childhood education mentioned earlier in this dissertation, I act as a bricoleur (Schwandt, 2007).

into the foster care system, as well as inadequate funding for children on reserves (Blackstock, 2016), echo the aforementioned injustices.

Métissage is hermeneutical in nature. According to Donald (2012), hermeneutics "seeks to engage with difficulty and ambiguity . . . by remaining right in the midst of tensionalities rather than searching to rise above or move beyond them" (p. 545). Donald's mention of tension is in reference to David Jardine's (1992) suggestion of "hermeneutics as a restoring of life to its original difficulty" (p. 116). Amid this difficulty, new interpretations and understandings surface (Donald, 2012). Donald explains that what propels a researcher to engage in the hermeneutic circle is a "desire to understand" (p. 547) by asking more and more questions. A researcher must then reflect on these interpretations and, as D.G. Smith (1999) suggests, "propose alternative, more creative ways of thinking and acting" (p. 199), as well as reflect on the ways in which they are implicated in the stories being shared (Donald, 2012).

Ethical Considerations

Prior to my research, I reviewed the ethical practices and guidelines from the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants and received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. Because informed consent and participant feedback is a key component of ethical research, I ensured that my participants understood the information in the consent form before signing it. Also, among couples, I tried to determine as best I could that one partner was not being pressured or coerced to participate by the other partner, but rather that participation was voluntary (Mellor et al., 2013). While carrying out my case studies, I strived to show "fidelity to the participants' meaning" (Weber, 1986, p. 71) by way of my relationship with them and my attentiveness to their lived experience. Once interviews were complete, participants were invited to provide feedback on the interview

transcripts. Just as in human relationships there are no foolproof and objective ways of ensuring that people act ethically towards one another, so it is with the research process. Even with the necessary ethics carefully in place, I, as well as the participants, entered the project just as one would enter a healthy relationship—with the intention of respecting the dignity of the human person and acting in a just and gracious manner.

Bhattacharya (2007) states that a researcher must exercise "care, caution, and vigilance" (p. 1007) when deciding which theoretical framework and methodology to align with. For me, aligning with the paradigm of constructivism and the methodology of interpretive inquiry (both informed by hermeneutics) was, in part, an ethical decision because it allowed me to acknowledge each participant's multiple ways of knowing and to understand their "realities, sufferings, and accomplishments" (p. 1007). Understanding the whole person—including their realities, sufferings, and accomplishments—allowed the possibility of arriving at an informed understanding of the part-whole relationships that constituted the participant's experiences, and thus do justice to the participant and their often personal and perhaps fragile stories of experience (Bhattacharya, 2007). The hermeneutical/dialectical nature of my research provided "a strong but not infallible safeguard against deception" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 115). Carried out in continual collaboration with participants, my case study research was a best attempt to be true to the meanings of the participants.

It is important to me to acknowledge my role in the construction of the participants' experiences. Engaging in self-conscious and self-critical interpretive research was a way of acting ethically as I strived to be aware of my own fore-structures and their effect on the research. In this way, I spent time "debunking [my] own perspectives" and "pointing out their flaws and shortcomings" (Packer & Addison, 1989, p. 292). Further, I tried to acknowledge that,

despite my informed understandings of the participants' experiences, an inherent limitation of interpretive research was that I was "always making inferences on the basis of partial information" (Mishler, 1986, p. 247). This is because I could not possibly know all that the participants know. Further, I could not determine if, or how, information not privy to me might have been relevant to the participants' interpretations (Mishler, 1986). The interpretations that I came up with in my research, then, although rich and detailed, are incomplete.

In the next three chapters, rich and detailed case studies of the participants are presented: Celine and Michael in Chapter 5, Amber and Jason in Chapter 6, and Chantal and Vasile in Chapter 7. Each of the chapters is organized as follows: First, as a biographical touchpoint for the reader, the couple presented is described in brief. Then, a narrative portrait of the physical and social settings of the family's everyday life and childrearing customs and practices is provided, followed by a narrative portrait of each spouse, spanning their childhood and adulthood. Next, the couple's courtship, wedding, and choice of residence is described. Last, the couple's experience parenting is explored in a narrative account. This is achieved by outlining their parental ethnotheories organized by six topics common to each couple (with an additional two topics for Michael and Celine). Each topic begins with an introductory synoptic paragraph.

CHAPTER 5: CELINE AND MICHAEL (THE OMARA FAMILY)

Celine and Michael in Brief

Celine and Michael Omara are a married couple who reside in a large city in western Canada with their two daughters, Yvonne, age 3, and Juliette, age 1. Celine is older than Michael and they are both in the 25–35-year age range. Celine was born and raised in a small town in Canada and has French Canadian roots. English is her mother tongue, and she learned to speak French with moderate proficiency from her relatives as a young adult. Michael was born and raised in a large city in Uganda. He is from the Lango cultural group and grew up speaking Langi and English. He also speaks some Swahili. Celine and Michael are very fond of each other and get along well. Yvonne is described by Michael as "free-spirited" and Juliette is described by both parents as "calm."

Celine and Michael met in a large city in Uganda over seven years ago when Celine was doing research there as a PhD student and hired Michael, a local artist, for her project. They eventually developed a friendship and then a committed dating relationship. A few years later, when they were expecting their first child, Yvonne, they moved to a large city in western Canada so that they could have affordable quality medical care for the birth and be only a few hours away from Celine's mother, Yvonne Senior. When Yvonne was a few months old, Celine and Michael married. Michael missed his homeland of Uganda, and together Celine and Michael spent time discerning whether they should continue to live in Canada or move back to Uganda. When Yvonne was a year-and-a-half-old, they moved back to Uganda. After their planned ten-month trial period, they then returned to, and settled in, their home in western Canada. They were pleased once again to have access to affordable medical care for childbirth, financial stability, and proximity to Yvonne Senior, who was ill.

Celine works full time for a not-for-profit organization and has a PhD in education from a Canadian university. She teaches an evening course once a week at a local college and has her own visual communication design practice. Michael is currently a stay-at-home father and freelance artist. He has a degree in industrial design from Uganda, as well as a diploma in digital illustration and sequential art (i.e., graphic storytelling for comics, films, animations, and storyboards) from Canada. He plans to get his master's degree one day, but in the meantime, he is intent on perfecting his film illustration skills.

Physical and Social Settings of Everyday Life and Customs and Practices of Childrearing

This section attends to two of the three interrelated subsystems of Super and Harkness's (1999) developmental niche: (1) the Omaras' physical and social settings of everyday life, and (2) the customs and practices of childrearing provided for Yvonne and Juliette. First, the physical and social settings include who Yvonne and Juliette interact with, as well as what opportunities are provided by their various physical spaces. Second, the customs and practices of childrearing include "inherited and adapted ways of nurturing, entertaining, educating, and protecting the child" (Nsamenang, 2015, p. 841)—not only by Celine and Michael, but by other caretakers as well. Attending to these two subsystems allows a better understanding of the third subsystem— the psychology of the caretakers, particularly Celine and Michael's parental ethnotheories, which are explored later in this chapter.

The Current Place of Experience in Canada

The Setting

The family resides on the main floor of a two-storey, four-unit apartment building in a mature central area that has a public playground and school nearby and a shopping area a 12-minute walk away. The fenced backyard of the apartment building is shared with the other three

tenants of the building—a Mexican couple and their two young daughters, another couple and their young daughter and son, and a man living on his own. The communal yard allows the children in the apartment complex to play together and to share outdoor toys, such as the trampoline. Michael and Celine prefer renting over owning a house because they value the simple lifestyle that apartment living offers. They own a car but walk and bike as much as possible, often transporting the girls in a bike trailer during the hot summer months. In the winter months they use their car more because the temperatures are well below zero. There is a weekly playgroup at the local community league that Michael has taken the girls to a few times, but it is generally Celine who takes the girls there.

A Portrait of Everyday Life

A typical day for the Omara family starts with Celine getting up with Juliette and preparing breakfast and doing dishes, and then Michael and Yvonne waking soon after. Before Celine heads out to work, they all eat breakfast together. Michael then begins to cook lunch while caring for the girls and interacting with them while they play. Lunch preparation is a time-consuming process because Michael, following a Ugandan tradition that he grew up with, cooks meals from scratch. At noon, Celine walks home from work to eat lunch with the family and nurse Juliette while Michael cleans up. After Celine heads back to work, Juliette has a nap. The time at which she naps is inconsistent and does not follow a rigid schedule.

Before or after Juliette's nap, Michael often takes the girls to the playground. Both girls are happiest when they are at the playground. Michael explains, "Juliette, the youngest, likes to play in the sand, that's a joy place. Eating sand and all kinds of things. Yvonne likes being daring, she's a daredevil, climbing things and showing off." At home, Yvonne loves to jump on the trampoline, play with the water hose in the backyard, and ride her scooter. As of late, Juliette

is, according to Celine, "in her element" when she is either toddling around the house carrying a shoe that she has chosen from the shoe rack in the apartment or when Michael is playfully blowing on her tummy.

During supper preparation, Michael might allow Yvonne to watch what he describes as an educational children's TV show on the laptop. This affordance was initially a point of tension for Michael because, ideally, both he and Celine would rather Yvonne not have screen time. However, Michael has come to realize that TV allows him the time to make supper, while giving Yvonne the opportunity to learn more of her letters, colours, and shapes. After Celine returns from work, the family eats supper together. Both Celine and Michael point out that a time of discontent for the girls can occur at mealtimes, when neither girl wants to sit in her chair, neither girl is interested in eating the food provided, and Juliette is crying. Celine dismissively describes these occasions as "chaos," and this chaos is only remediated by allowing each girl to sit on a parent's lap. Sometimes, the girls will be rewarded with a treat, such as a popsicle, for eating their supper.

After supper, Celine usually bathes with the girls with Michael's assistance. Next, there is often time for Yvonne to be playfully chased by Michael or to play ring around the rosy with Celine. Celine then reads the girls books in French or English, and then both Michael and Celine put the girls to bed. Once Yvonne and Juliette are sleeping, Celine's evenings are often spent preparing to teach her class at the local college. This preparation is often interrupted when Yvonne wakes up to breastfeed. Most evenings Michael does illustration work from home or at a coffee shop, and two evenings a week, he goes to martial arts training. At some point each night, Michael ends up sleeping in Yvonne's bed and Celine ends up sleeping in Juliette's, which allows plenty of time for cuddles and physical affection, unlike a crib.

Michael takes cues from the other families in his fourplex as to what activities to provide for his daughters during the day, especially in the cold of the winter season. Michael explains the usefulness of the proximity and friendship of these neighbours:

> It has been really helpful. In a way, these are the people who help me to adapt in terms of parenting here in Canada. The people who live close to me, like my neighbours who I can see. My neighbours right now, Jerry and Jean, they have a daughter that is slightly older than Yvonne. Winters are my hardest times taking care of the girls. I can see how they have a schedule of when to take the girl out to play and they dress her up well to stay warm. They are generally just nice in terms of personality. They keep the peace. They are just good to be around. I learn from them.

Michael is grateful for the opportunity to raise the girls alongside the other families in their apartment complex.

Yvonne and Juliette recently started going one full day a week to *la garderie bilingue*, an English/French bilingual day home, allowing Michael to work from home during this time. This has offered him some relief from working on his illustration projects late into the night and allows for a more balanced lifestyle for the whole family. The day home is run by a West African lady with the help of her French Canadian husband, both of whom the girls get along with well. Celine and Michael chose the day home because of the French-language immersion offered there, despite the higher than normal fees.

At the day home the girls play outdoors each day in the backyard play area or at the local playground. Inside, they do arts and crafts, play with toys, celebrate birthdays, and eat healthy snacks. Each afternoon, Juliette and Yvonne nap, even though Yvonne no longer naps at home.

This makes for a late night for Yvonne once at home, because she is not tired come bedtime. Yvonne watches out for Juliette while at the day home, caring for her and comforting her. The caregiver refers to Yvonne as "maternalistic" and a "real African big sister," which pleases Celine.

A Former Place of Experience in Uganda

Celine, Michael, and Yvonne lived in a large city in Uganda for ten months beginning when Yvonne was a year old. They resided in an apartment complex that had three other single-family units. In one of the units lived a family with two brothers, Thomas (6 years old) and Terrance (10 years old). Thomas and Terrance played with Yvonne daily, caring for her as if she were their little sister. The apartment complex had a fenced-off mansion on one side of it. The fence was so high that the occupants of the mansion were rarely seen. On the other side of the apartment complex and down the hill were women working in kiosks barely making ends meet. The women had babies with them who were strapped into strollers so that the women could work. The women would often give Yvonne a piece of fruit when the family walked by, and Michael would chat with these women daily. For work, Celine did copyediting and taught classes at the university and Michael did freelance illustration. While Celine and Michael were at work, Yvonne was cared for by a babysitter during the day. Another woman worked alongside the babysitter doing cooking and cleaning, and a third person acted as a chauffeur.

In Uganda, Celine and Michael would take Yvonne to Michael's paternal family village for visits and to get away from the city. At the village, Yvonne would have an opportunity to play with a large number of children. Celine explains:

Certainly, there's kids all over, all around and there is opportunity for play. Not

on playgrounds, but there is lots of singing and fun, and it was certainly a good

experience to go to the village and even though there was language barrier there

was certainly engagement, more comfortable than the awkwardness of like the

city life with such despair between the classes.

Being in the village was more conducive to playing with large groups of children than being in

the city. In the city, there were only a few families close by, and if Celine and Michael wanted to

take Yvonne to a playground to interact with other children, they had to pay an entry fee,

because there were no public playgrounds.

Celine's Childhood and Adulthood

Celine grew up in a small town with her mother, father, and two older sisters—one sister

two years older than Celine and the other four years older. Celine's father lived with them until

Celine was about 11 years old, and then he moved away to live with his sister in another

province after requiring a lung transplant. This move marked a permanent marital separation

between Celine's mother and father. Celine's father often communicated with Celine and her

sisters by phone or fax. Celine, her mother, and her sisters continued to reside in their house

nestled on the same quarter-section of land as Celine's maternal grandparents. Their

grandmother was second-generation French Canadian and their grandfather was second-

generation Scottish. Celine's grandmother never spoke French to Celine, however, because she

had been told not to speak French to her own daughter (Celine's mother) when she was little.

Celine's grandmother had also been told by her teacher when she was a young child entering

school to change the French spelling of her name to an English spelling, which she did.

Celine and her sisters attended a small rural school where their mother was a grade 4

teacher. Throughout elementary school, Celine remembers having to behave well at school, in

the knowledge that her mother would find out about any misbehaviours. Celine had to behave

especially well in grade 4 because her mother was her teacher. Not wanting to give the impression to the other students that Celine was being favoured, Celine's mother was strict with Celine that year at school. After school, Celine and her sisters would go to their grandparents' where their grandmother would serve them snacks as they watched TV. In the summers, Celine would spend her time at the family cabin. There, she and her sisters would waterski and swim in the lake. She recalls having a lot of freedom and fun at the cabin and staying up late each night.

As a student in both elementary school and high school, Celine continually pushed the bounds of the conventional. For example, when she started kindergarten, she got into trouble for writing her name in cursive instead of printing it. Unimpressed with the bureaucracy of kindergarten, Celine refused to attend any longer and became a "kindergarten dropout." Celine's grandmother schooled her at home for the year, allowing Celine to enter grade 1 "way ahead of the game." Throughout her remaining elementary school years, Celine's grandmother nourished Celine's creativity and ingenuity by very patiently helping her set up craft projects. Because she was continually doing arts and crafts as a child, Celine's father affectionately called her Messy Wessy. Throughout her high school years, Celine was a nonconformist, often "pushing the limits" in her school projects rather than adhering to the expectations laid out by the teacher. Celine's mother, however, would encourage Celine to first meet the teachers' expectations before going ahead and putting her own creative spin on her work.

Celine describes high school as "kinda serious years" because her father, grandparents, and dog all passed away. Despite these trials, Celine excelled in high school. After finding grade 9 to be monotonous and the small school population confining, she switched high schools in grade 10 so that she could have the opportunity to take an art class and play volleyball. While in high school, Celine was eager to go to university so that she could "go on and see bigger things."

In the meantime, Celine was in her element going to university sports games or social functions with her older sisters.

Celine is an independent, content, and adventurous woman who, for a long time, had no aspiration to get officially married. Before she met Michael and had children, Celine travelled extensively. Celine explains:

I travelled a lot independently. I went to Senegal, I went to Mali, I went to

Uganda, lots of places on my own and lived in Quebec, and I was very passionate

about understanding other cultures and I was quite independent. I was

comfortable doing things on my own, which I still am, so I flew a lot, I travelled.

Because this life of independence and her tendency to, as Celine describes it, not be one to blindly go with the "status quo," it was a shock to Celine's mother and two older sisters when Celine announced that she and Michael were expecting a baby. They were shocked again when she and Michael announced their engagement. Just as she had been happy with the independent single life of her past, Celine is also happy with her current reality of raising children with Michael.

If Celine had more free time she would spend it writing and reading as well as dancing. For instance, she wishes that she had more time to read academic publications, collaboratively write and publish academic papers, and work on a book contract that she currently has. She would also like to spend more time dancing, as she enjoys lindy hop, swing, country, polka and salsa. She explains, "I just like to express myself. I think if I were to start all over again and be reincarnated, I'd love to be a dancer." For a while, Celine was taking Yvonne to a yoga studio on Friday evenings for a freestyle dance gathering called Dance Temple. Celine enjoyed the

spontaneity of Dance Temple and wishes that her days were more suited to spontaneously dancing throughout the day as she experienced with the Senegalese people in West Africa.

Michael's Childhood and Adulthood

Michael grew up in the centre of a large city in Uganda with his father, who was a senior police officer, his mother, and his 12 siblings. He was the seventh child. Michael was especially close to his brother Frank, who was only a month older than him. Langi was Michael's mother tongue, but English was also spoken in the home and the community, as well as at school. When Michael was about 8 years old, his mother left to live in a nearby village, and eventually Michael's stepmother joined the family. Michael grew up living in a single house in the barracks which sat among many fourplexes. Just beyond the barracks were an elite private high school, a girl's high school, a mosque, and a market. Michael and his friends who lived with their families in the police barracks walked 30 minutes to the primary school.

Michael describes his childhood day-to-day life as "kinda simple, nothing too complicated." His one chore was to fetch water from the well after school, leaving lots of time to spend with friends, who were all boys. They liked to watch TV, play marbles, play soccer or dodgeball, make little cars out of wire from fences, find and sell scraps of metal, buy treats, or watch a local rugby team play. When asked if the boys would ever play games such as soccer or dodgeball with the girls, Michael commented, "On a rare occasion, very rare, you'd play [dodgeball] with the girls." Michael fondly recalls viewing cartoon shows after school at 6:00 p.m., and the characters in these shows often served as Michael's inspiration for his many drawings as a child.

Most of Michael's childhood memories are of exploring the neighbourhood that he grew up in. He was an adventure seeker who liked to hang out with the other boys from the barracks,

his brothers among them. Sometimes they would all sneak away from home to climb trees and steal jambola fruits from the "fancy area where the rich people live," only to be chased away by barking dogs or angry landowners, or to steal sugar cane that grew in local school yards. On occasion, Michael and his friends loved to venture far from the barracks to explore the forbidden downtown core. They found the lingering possibility of getting caught by their parents, or, better yet, getting lost, to be exhilarating. Each time they would venture farther and farther into the city. Michael recalls seeing his father from afar a few times and frantically diving out of sight.

Michael remembers his father taking him to the downtown core on occasion and showing him landmarks that Michael had already seen on his delinquent adventures. Michael would nod politely to his father's words, pretending that the experience was new. He always had a flair for covering up his mischievous ways, and although Michael's father would consistently describe him as a "good boy," Michael's stepmother would insist that he was a "silent burner," likening him to a flame that burns without a sound. Although she believed in Michael's goodness, she was aware of his ability to—albeit rarely—sneak things that weren't his or forge his father's signature without getting caught.

After completing primary school, Michael attended a state-run secondary boarding school an hour's drive from home at age 13. The school was officially a Muslim school, yet there was a Protestant church service held at the school each Sunday, which Michael attended. Both the Christian and Muslim students got along with each other, often having debates in their dormitories over whether Islam or Christianity was the "true" religion. The school was one for which his father had to pay tuition, but it was cheaper than the elite private schools that were closer to his house. Boarding school was an adjustment for Michael, because he missed his friends from the barracks. Family members would visit twice a month, and Michael would return

home in the summers. At boarding school, Michael continued to hone his drawing skills by taking an art class. He recalls the positive impact that this art class had on his life: "It was a saviour for me really. Sometimes my grades were not so good, but art would be like an A or a B. Give me a boost always." Michael also fondly remembers the crushes that he had on girls in high school and recalls hanging out with the girls and his friends on the outdoor bleachers after school. Another fond memory of high school was playing baseball with equipment donated by missionaries.

Relationships with various family members were central to Michael's childhood. His mother was "a constant" in his life, and when she left to live in a village a 30-minute walk away, Michael felt dismayed and depressed. Desperately missing his mother, he ran away to her village to see her, but soon after Michael's father sent his siblings to fetch Michael and bring him back home. Michael's father, despite his anger at Michael for running away, made sure that Michael was able to visit his mother more frequently from then on. Michael fondly remembers having lunch and special treats at his father's office, as well as outings with his uncle (his father's brother), who would often bring Michael and his brother Frank to his office or to the village. Michael's uncle always made a special effort to spend time with Michael, knowing that Michael's father was busy. Michael also fondly remembers time spent with his family eating meals. They would eat their usual posho (maize flour bread) and beans during the week, and on Sunday a special meal with meat. Sunday was a day for going to church together and a day of rest.

As an adult, relationships are still an important aspect of Michael's life. When asked if there is anyone he admires, Michael speaks of his brother-in-law: "He's a very caring father from what I've seen. He makes time for his children and loves his wife." Michael admires friends who

make it a priority to regularly relate to and spend time with their own children, as well as his daughters. Michael considers a good friend to be a person who is willing to invest time in a relationship, not only with him, but with his daughters as well. This appreciation relates back to Michael's memories of his own childhood, when his uncle would take him places.

Michael's support systems are an important aspect of his life, especially since he finds it "culturally tough" being away from Uganda. He describes, in order of importance, four main support systems in his life: God, Celine, family, and friends. First, Michael describes God as his guidance, and someone who puts him in a good "mental space." He compares his spirituality to the sun, which is bright, warm, and life giving and shines on all aspects of his life. His favourite pastime in Uganda was to go sit on the top of a hill and reflect on life and pray. Second, Celine provides him with moral and emotional support. He describes her affectionately as a queen, vibrant and royal like the colour purple. Third, his family in Uganda and his in-laws in Canada encourage him to be a good person and to respect others, as well as nurture his personal growth. Michael particularly admires his father and his brother-in-law—his father because he is very hardworking, owns cows, and has always provided a home and food for his 13 children, and his brother-in-law because he is a very caring father and husband who spends time with his children. Fourth, Michael's Canadian postsecondary friends are a source of support for him as they encourage him in his work as a digital illustrator. He also really values his childhood friends in Uganda—so much so that if he could spend a week doing anything he wanted, he would spend it in Uganda hanging out with them.

Michael's mother, Akello, recently passed away, and a significant and current preoccupation for Michael is his regret that he did not spend more time with her when she was

alive. He wishes that he had phoned her more often from Canada and that he had been able to offer her financial more support, as a Ugandan son is expected to do. Michael explains:

> Yeah, I wish I spent more time with her. I mean I'm at this age, I'm at the point in my life where I'm supposed to be helping. I wasn't doing enough. Supposed to make enough money to send it to her just to better her life, her way of life, the way she was living. And the last time she spoke to my father that's before she passed, she called my father and asked him, have you heard from my son in Canada, I want to talk to him. Yeah, that time I wasn't really calling her, in a way I was sort of dodging calls 'cause you know every time I talk to her I feel so sad just imagining all this kind of hardship she's going through. She wasn't, she was poor. So, I always called her when I had something to give her, like some money. So that's why I took so long without calling her.

The Courtship, Wedding, and Choice of Residence

In the early stages of dating Celine, Michael opted to keep their relationship a secret from his family so that he could discern the relationship in quiet. But this plan was foiled when Celine and Michael were on a date at a restaurant and a local TV channel, promoting a beer company while covering the topic of a Swahili song, interviewed Michael and Celine. Michael's father saw the interview on the daily evening show while he was eating supper. He was surprised to hear Michael use Swahili words during the interview, and even more surprised to see him on a date with Celine, whom he had not known about previously. Eventually Celine met Michael's family at Michael's graduation. Like Michael, Celine also surprised her family with her and Michael's courtship, by bringing him to Canada for a visit without announcing ahead of time that they were dating.

Michael and Celine were married in Canada, even though, according to Michael, "culturally it's supposed to happen in Uganda." Michael explains the conflict that he felt when they decided to get married in Canada despite his preference to get married in Uganda:

> So, that's the conflict I had in my head. We have to do this thing in Uganda
> properly, culturally do an introduction, Celine's family goes to Uganda and they
> sit down with the head of our house and discuss terms and things like that, a huge
> ceremony, but that didn't happen, so we, so yeah, I thought let's get married here,
> we'll just get to know ourselves, travel more back to Uganda and visit family. But
> I did ask for my father's consent to get married and he gave it to us, blessed us.
> So, that kinda also made it possible.

Celine recalls the decision to marry being made somewhat hastily when they realized that being officially married would help Michael navigate the immigration system more easily. Celine was content to get married in Canada, as they were able to get away with having a "low key" wedding with only 40 guests—and family Skyping in from Uganda for the ceremony—as opposed to a big celebration in Uganda with many guests.

Michael recalls their decision of whether they should reside in Uganda or Canada once married:

> Oh yeah, that was hard, had some arguments between me and Celine. There was a
> time I was, yeah okay, I'm fed up with this place [Canada], time to go back. I was
> just stressed with thinking I should be in Uganda and you know just missing home
> and friends.

To ease this stress, and to discern where they should live, Celine and Michael went to live in Uganda for ten months when Yvonne was a year-and-a-half-old, before deciding to settle in

Canada. Although they were willing to live in Uganda, a factor in choosing to be in Canada for Celine and Michael was the free medical care for the birth of their first child, as well as being closer to Celine's mother, Yvonne Senior, who was ill. Michael explains the decision to settle in Canada: "And I've come to just you know conclude that, okay, let's be in one place. It's too much moving around. Let's just be here and grow, and that's what we decided for now." Celine is quick to point out that living in Canada was a pragmatic decision based largely on finances, and points out that Uganda would also have been a good place to raise her family. Presently, Michael and Celine are content living in Canada.

Parental Ethnotheories: Exploring the Omaras' Experience Parenting Their Children

This section on parental ethnotheories (Super & Harkness, 2002) acknowledges the role of Celine's and Michael's cultural belief systems regarding the nature of the child and its influence on the day-to-day care of their children. These parental ethnotheories comprise implicit and explicit culturally constructed understandings of the child, such as the child's roles, abilities, and needs—all in the context of, and instantiated by, the daily physical and social settings and customs and practices of care attended to earlier in this chapter (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). Below I discuss eight topics that comprise the Omaras' parental ethnotheories and relate them to their experience raising their children.

Topic 1: Interactions in the Community

In this section, Celine's views on adults relating to children are presented, followed by Michael's. Celine illustrates her views by focusing on her experiences in Uganda, while sometimes comparing them to her experiences in Canada. Michael illustrates his views by reflecting on his experiences in Canada and how these experiences are much different from his experiences growing up in Uganda.

Celine: Adults Engaging with Children

Celine thinks that it is important for adults to engage with children when out in public places. For example, Celine appreciates it when cashiers greet and talk to her children when she is shopping with them. She finds such interventions to be a rare occurrence in Canada, yet wishes that this wasn't so: "I would rather it be more like, oh there's Mister so and so and he talks to you because he sees you every time we come in and it's more of a community thing than a big corporate machine." In comparison, when Celine was in Uganda and went to the local market with Yvonne, people would affectionately interact with Yvonne. Celine explains: "Everyone knew Yvonne and she'd always get a free piece of fruit. You didn't have to buy the fruit—because she was special she got a free fruit. They engage."

When Celine first arrived in Uganda with Yvonne, it took Celine a while to adjust to the value of adults being attentive to children. Celine remembers Yvonne's uncle wanting to take Yvonne, who was only a baby, the moment he met her. Celine felt nervous about this because she did not know the uncle well at all. Celine soon learned to appreciate this willingness of Ugandan people to engage with her baby. She notes that in Uganda "everyone has time" to interact with children, and that, although it is not socially acceptable for Yvonne's uncles to babysit Yvonne, they were still "super engaging and interactive with her." In Celine's experience, adults in Uganda take the time to engage with children whether or not they know them.

Michael: "There's a General Village that Can Raise a Child"

Michael found it "a slight culture shock" when he came to Canada and observed the limits that exist for parents, or adults in general, when they interact with other people's children while out in public. Michael explains: "Well, since I started living here and I had kids, it's been

hard to interact freely with other people's children." He goes on to explain that when it comes to "culture, religion, general social behaviour you can't go out and start teaching someone's kid anything. You'll probably offend the parent." For example, Michael feels very hesitant to correct a child's social misbehaviour because he worries that he may upset the parent. Further, he has come to learn that not only should he avoid teaching another parent's child about what is right and wrong, but, more notably, he should avoid teaching another parent's child what is right and wrong within a religious context—that is, within the context of his belief in God. Michael explains, "Some parent over there might be, 'oh don't teach my son that or my daughter that.' You know that might make them [the parent] mad."

According to Michael, adults in Uganda are expected to freely teach or correct a child in the community. Michael states:

> And if I remember well, I don't think there's ever been such a big confusion about
> what other parents can teach your child as a community. To me the way I see it,
> like, over time, as the cultures grew [in Uganda] it was all perfected in the certain
> details of the teaching that the actual family of this child would do from in the
> house. While outside the house there's a general village that can raise a child.

It is this "general village" that allows for the communal parenting that Michael finds absent in Canada. This communal parenting includes correcting children's behaviours.

Michael reflects on the ease with which adults in Uganda can correct children who are not their own.

> Back in Uganda I wouldn't be mad at another parent you know, telling my kid
> what to do, because 90 percent of the time they are telling the child the same thing
> that I would, because if that happens it's probably on the basis that they [the kid]

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are playing and messing with something they shouldn't be doing. It's just

generally what someone naturally says—'oh you shouldn't do that'—so, either

me or that parent over there would stop the kid.

Offering a more specific example, Michael explains that if a child in Uganda were to swat

another child on the head, it would be completely acceptable for any adult present to strike the

child who swatted. Michael points out, however, that there are limits to how adults can "parent"

other children. While an adult can certainly discipline another child, they cannot grant another

child permission to do certain things. Michael elaborates:

So, like if I was a kid and I wanted to run away and play at a certain field at a

school maybe 30 minutes away, and let's say I happen to be in the supervision of

the neighbour, she won't grant that. It's my parents that have to do that.

Living in Canada and not being able to rely on a communal raising of children is a social

obstacle for Michael. Having learned that his tendency to correct other children when out in

public is generally not welcome by their parents in the Canadian context, Michael feels

somewhat restricted in getting to know parents. This is because much of his energy is spent on

evaluating how he should, and should not, interact with other people's children. He explains this

dilemma: "So, I always find that space that I shouldn't cross . . . it greatly hinders relationships,

just getting to know people more, freedom . . . hinders connection . . . being free with people."

This hindrance stems from Michael not quite knowing what he can or cannot say to other

children without offending the parents, as well as not knowing when he should intervene when a

child needs help or is misbehaving. This is in contrast to his experience in Uganda, where he

would walk Yvonne down the hill to the kiosk and interact with the Ugandan ladies and their

babies with ease.

Michael concludes that in Canada it is acceptable for him to intervene—physically or with a verbal warning—if a child is in immediate danger of getting injured. He comes to this conclusion from his own experience with his daughter at the playground. Michael explains, "Like at the playground you'll see Yvonne hanging on the jungle gym about to fall down, some parent will go run and hold her so she doesn't fall while I'm doing something, maybe attending to Juliette." Other than helping a child in immediate danger, Michael cautions that one should carefully consider whether or not they should intervene when it appears that a child may need assistance. He explains, "You have to really think about it before you do it." As Michael sees it, a vocal intervention instead of a physical intervention is preferred by Canadians *if* the verbal warning is sufficient to steer the child from harm's way. He suggests, though, that in Canada the verbal warning be done with sensitivity.

Topic 2: Safety

Both Celine and Michael note differences in the concept of children's safety in their two countries of origin. Celine is taken with the ways in which children in Uganda watch out for the safety of children younger than them, because she has not witnessed this occurrence in Canada. Michael's reflections related to safety are part of a larger conversation regarding the interactions between adults and children in public and the unspoken and rigid limitations surrounding these interactions.

Celine: Watching Out for Children

Celine has noticed that the ways in which children interact with and watch out for the safety of those younger than them in Uganda is quite different as compared to Canada. Celine talks of a "community village perspective" in Uganda where older children care for and watch out for the safety of younger children. "From what I've observed, if you're 6 you watch out for

the 5-year-old, and you kinda have a lot of responsibility, whereas I feel kids in our culture here [in Canada] don't as much." Celine says that in Uganda, if there was a baby on a trampoline or in a splash pool, all of the children would remind each other to watch out for the baby's safety. In Canada, however, Celine notices that children generally do not watch out for other children but are more insular in their concern for safety. In Uganda it is not uncommon for a 6-year-old girl to carry a baby on her back, whereas in Canada, babies are usually cared for by adults, typically the parent. Celine values the care and concern that Ugandan children show towards each other as they watch out for each other.

Michael: Watching Out for Children

In regard to the safety of children, Michael reflects on the ways in which he can and cannot interact with other people's children (as previously and more extensively discussed in the Omara family's "Interactions in the Community" section). In his experience in public places in Canada, such as playgrounds, the only time that he can exert his communal parenting—where everyone in the community helps raise a child and watch out for them—is if the child is in immediate danger. Otherwise, the care of children is each individual parent's concern. This is in stark contrast to his experience in Uganda, where adults watch out for and care for children even if they do not know the children.

Topic 3: Understandings of Children

Both Celine and Michael are very articulate when expressing their understandings of children, that is, how they view children's abilities and needs and what images come to mind when they think of caring for their child. Celine talks about the needs that her children have in the context of the parent-child relationship and as individuals. Michael talks about his children as moving through "levels of growth," as well as his children as wider reflections of himself against

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the backdrop of his Ugandan family and community. Both Celine and Michael articulate the role of the parents in their understanding of children.

Celine: Children in Need of Care, Children as Individuals with Innate Needs, and Children as "Co-Creators"

Celine makes sense of her understandings of her children by listing their needs and then organizing these needs into three categories: (1) needs that are fulfilled for the child by Celine as a parent, (2) needs that are innate to the child as an individual, and (3) needs that are provided by the parent to the child and the child to the parent. First, Celine explains that in her role as a parent she must "provide care, create safety, and provide encouragement and nourishment" for her young children. She provides emotional and physical care to her children, placing her in a hierarchical position for the purpose of caregiving. Celine sees the emotional need for encouragement to be as important as the need for physical nourishment and safety.

Second, Celine describes characteristics of her children that are "innate" to them and something that she can foster in them. According to Celine, these characteristics include the need to "discover" and "play," express one's "spirit," have "freedom," experience "growth," and be "unique." Beyond their dependence on her, Celine believes that her children must have the opportunity to express themselves and the freedom to play and explore—needs that exist regardless of her parental influence. Further, Celine sees her children as unique individuals, even at a young age. This is evident when she describes her 10-month-old Juliette's personality as "more easygoing" than Yvonne's.

Third, Celine describes needs that are "mutual" between her and her children. For example, she explains that she provides love for her daughters, just as they provide love for her. According to Celine, this love, is "cocreated through a collective energy." Celine goes on to

describe other needs that are cocreated, such as warmth, belonging, communication, togetherness, and community:

> Warmth, so, I have always carried my girls and we cuddle, and we have a lot of
> warmth and closeness, like we both need that, so we are both contributing to that.
> Belonging, I feel like I need that sense of belonging in the family, and I feel like
> that's everyone as well. And the communication has to go both ways. And then
> we collectively make it a community through our togetherness . . . the sum of our
> existence together is more than the parts.

This interdependent relationship is expressed, for example, by Celine carrying her girls on her front or back in a baby carrier when they are babies, Celine and Michael cosleeping with the girls, and Celine, Michael, and the girls spending time together as a family. Celine sees her relationship with her children as not simply a hierarchical one, where the parent provides for the child, but also as an interdependent and mutually beneficial one, in that Celine provides affection and warmth to her children, and they provide it to her as well.

Michael: "Children as Growing" and "Children as Reflections of Parents"

Michael's sense making of his children is embedded in an unrestricted continuum of time, as evidenced in two examples. First, he talks of Yvonne "developing a character of not feeding so well" and admits that this new eating habit of Yvonne's is somewhat frustrating. Reflecting on this he concludes, "Yeah, giving it time. Maybe as she grows it will get better." Here, he sees no need to intervene with Yvonne's eating, as the passing of time will, perhaps, serve as its own intervention. Second, Michael refers to his children's "levels of growth." These levels of growth occur by sequence—moving from one level to the next. Michael reflects: "The other thing is I enjoy you know just watching them grow, just little things change into the next

phase of, you know the levels of growth." He talks of Yvonne and her engagement with books: "Like especially Yvonne, she can sit there and flip through a book nowadays. Yet, before I would read it to her, she would just sit and look through the pictures, spend about ten minutes there. That's good too." Michael is pleased to see his children growing and learning new skills in their own time.

Michael's children are, for him and his family in Uganda, a wider reflection of himself as a father and of his parenting. He is proud to follow in the footsteps of his father by having children, and he considers becoming a parent to be an "achievement." Michael talks of how he wants his girls to learn the cultural value of behaving with "humbleness and respect" in front of elders. He expects that, in time, they will learn "how to speak to people" using an appropriate tone rather than a rude tone, and to not talk back (i.e., reply insolently or defiantly) to adults. He talks about how he has observed children in Canada talking back to their parents and points out that talking back is "not really tolerated back in Uganda." Michael explains further, "If Yvonne was to talk back to say my brother like that or my father, they would come back to me saying, 'How have you been raising your daughter?'" In such a scenario, Michael would be considered by others as "careless" in his childrearing, and this carelessness would "raise big concern" in the community. Michael concludes: "So, there is a huge responsibility in terms of presenting your children to your family back at home in Uganda." Michael's children are a source of pride, not only for him, but also for his family in Uganda, and he hopes that his children will "reach their cultural value in terms of behaviour, humbleness, respect." This cultural value will be considered an achievement for his whole family.

Topic 4: Sources of Parenting Influence

Celine and Michael learn about parenting from various sources, the most salient being those around them. They often make decisions on how to parent by observing other parents when out in public. For instance, they decide what *not* to do, or, on the other hand, what to do, based on the undesirable or desirable parenting choices of people they encounter.

Celine: Observation and "Gleaning from Various Sources"

Celine describes learning about the "how to" of parenting from other parents:

It's like kinda knowing what the norm is in Canada and then getting exposure to the ways other people do it, and I'm always interested in alternative ways of parenting because I am critical of the norm. So yeah, it's kinda like gleaning from various sources and then being critical and then trying things out.

Celine talks about being "attentive" to the ways in which others around her are parenting, and being "reflective" in determining if that way of parenting is suited for her or not. Also informing Celine's actions as a parent is her reading about pedagogy for her PhD in education, as well as reading general material on parenting. She notes, however, the fatigue and uncertainty of actively choosing (insofar as she is aware) the manner in which she parents: "One of the surprising things about being a parent is just that there are so many models and there are so many ideals that we have, but yet it's like figuring out which ones."

Michael: Observation and "Do Right with My Kids"

When it comes to parenting, Michael most often "goes with the flow," responding to his children in the present moment rather than anticipating future outcomes. Due to his self-described "kicking back" mindset, he doesn't often engage in deliberate preparatory work for parenting, such as reading parenting literature or inquiring with other parents regarding their

methods. Despite his relaxed attitude, Michael is quite attentive to his role as a parent, and his prime means of acquiring parenting information is through casually observing other parents whom he encounters. Michael explains: "I'll notice more what parents are doing wrong so that I do right with my kids." For instance, he recounts a situation at a summer festival that he was attending in Canada where a mother was angrily scolding her child from afar. Michael remembers thinking how, if he were the parent, he would have used physical proximity to gain the child's attention, rather than yelling. Seeing what parents are doing "wrong" gives Michael the conviction to do what is "right."

Observing what other parents are doing well in their parenting motivates Michael to emulate their parenting. For example, Michael recalls living in Uganda with Celine and Yvonne for ten months when Yvonne was a baby and the influence that the neighbour boys, Thomas (age 6) and Terrance (age 10) had. Michael says that he and Celine admired Thomas and Terrance's care for Yvonne so much, and the fact that they were so disciplined, that Celine and Michael now aspire to raise their own children to be like Thomas and Terrance. Michael explains:

> In fact, those kids inspired us to teach our kids to be like them. They were 6 and 10, but they would take care of and play with Yvonne nicely and make sure they don't hurt her. They see her going to hurt herself, they take away something. They just loved her and took care of children younger than them.

Yvonne was so fond of Thomas and Terrance that once she was back living in Canada, she would wake up from a dream in the middle of the night calling, "Thomas! Terrance!" Michael says that Thomas and Terrance's family had a "good impact" on him and that it was "a good experience learning from that family."

Michael says that if he were to ever need timely parenting advice, he would ask a friend rather than consult the internet or a parenting book. He recalls asking a friend about parenting only once and decided to approach this friend because of his sound character: "He seems to be very happy. He's a funny father. You know he has a good sense of humour, so you know he's always making his kids laugh and his wife and stuff. I admire that." Michael does not seek parenting advice from his family in Uganda. He explains: "I'm not so open with my father, you know, it's because of the distance. He's in Uganda, I'm in Canada. Talking about such things over the phone doesn't feel so right. So that was out of the question."

Topic 5: Language

English is the primary and common language spoken in the Omara household. Celine, however, does teach the girls some French by reading and speaking to them in a fashion that she describes as "hit and miss." Although Michael has taught Yvonne a bit of Langi, Langi language learning is a point of tension in the Omaras' marriage. This tension stems from Celine's intense desire for the girls to learn a lot more Langi, juxtaposed with Michael's infrequent teaching of it.

Michael: "The Language Thing is a Bit Confusing Sometimes"

Michael's mother tongue is Langi, a native language of Uganda. He has been teaching Yvonne to count to ten in Langi and to respond to simple commands such as "Come here." Celine wants Michael to teach Yvonne and Juliette more Langi than he is, but Michael has not fulfilled her request. He explains:

> Yeah, I guess the language thing is a bit confusing sometimes 'cause it's more a
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> demand from my wife and family back at home to make sure they [Yvonne and
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> Juliette] learn both [English and Langi] languages, but definitely the Langi
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> because that's the one in danger right now in terms of them not learning because I

think it's just because sometimes I find myself speaking in English with Celine

and they pick that up every day. Just once in a while I'll speak in Langi when I

call my sisters or I decide to talk to them. It's not always happening, so yeah, it's

just confusing, yeah how am I supposed to do that? So, I've been trying to get my

sister to come here so that I can speak to her more in Langi. We talk in Langi,

they [Yvonne and Juliette] will pick it up, just to give me a hand, hopefully that

will work.

Michael goes on to say that while he has a desire for his girls to learn Langi, it is not as strong as

Celine's desire, and he realizes that she is "not happy" that he is "not doing very much in

teaching the Langi language." He asserts, however, that "it's the right thing" for the girls to learn

Langi.

Celine: "You Can't Just Go with the Flow Because There is No Flow"

Celine would like the girls to learn both Langi and French. She believes that her and

Michael's different orientations of time, specifically whether or not they tend to plan ahead,

impact the realization of Celine's goal for the girls to learn Langi. Celine describes her husband

as "very go with the flow," not really a planner like herself but more of a "day by day, week by

week person." Celine makes this description with a diplomatic acceptance that, although

different and culturally based, both her and her husband's orientations of time are logical and

coherent. Celine considers Michael's tendency to think in the present mode rather than the future

mode like herself to be a cultural difference more than a gender difference, explaining that, "in

Uganda there's not very much planning ahead." Celine alludes to the idea that these

present/future orientation differences between her and Michael have contributed to the girls not

being exposed to as much Langi as Celine had hoped. She explains:

The point of contention for me has been the language piece and I've had this ideal

of our daughters speaking Langi and then I've really pushed it. I feel like I've

done all I possibly can being the person who doesn't really speak that language,

but my husband has just let it go and it's a disappointment for me. I think it may

be like a cultural thing. He's a kind of go with the flow. And I think to be

intentional about learning languages you can't just go with the flow because there

is no flow. Like we have to go out of our way to have French and to have Langi in

our lives because it's not in the flow because we're not in Uganda anymore and

he doesn't speak French and my Langi is minimal, so it's like we really have to

go, it has to be, we have to be very intentional about it. And I've been quite

intentional, but he's been, I wouldn't say noncooperative, but whereas he agrees

with the ideal, he's not going out of his way I guess to make it happen.

The girl's lack of Langi learning in the home is a point of disillusionment for Celine.

Reflecting further on the language ecology of her family during a subsequent interview,

Celine acknowledges the difficulty that Michael faces in teaching their daughters Langi. Celine

explains: "The language stuff is more difficult that one would think. In principle, it's really,

really great, but it's hard." Celine goes on to acknowledge that Michael does not have a "system"

to rely on like she does, such as the French/English day home or French immersion schools:

I've been hard on him, but I also need to be hard on myself because I could speak

more French. I do read French books, but you know, I should be doing more. I

also find myself swaying towards the dominant way of doing things which is like,

okay, well, let's rely on the system to help, which is harder for him because there

is no system for him. It's so much more alternative to teach them Langi because

it's not offered at the school down the road.

While Michael is in the challenging position of being the sole Langi speaker in their home and

social circle, Celine is in the challenging position of wanting Langi learning experiences for her

daughters that she cannot provide.

Topic 6: Identification and Identity

Michael identifies the girls as Lango and French Canadian, whereas Celine identifies

them more broadly. Michael believes he and Celine should foster their daughters' French and

Lango cultural heritage through time spent with family. While Celine agrees, she strives for her

children to explore their wider African and Canadian cultural identities. Her desire to explore a

broad African identity is, in part, intended to compensate for what she sees as a lack of Lango

cultural influence on the girls' daily experiences. Despite this lack, the names that the Omaras

have chosen for their girls honour their Lango as well as their French Canadian heritages, thus

identifying them in both heritages. Celine and Michael hope that their daughters will eventually

develop a strong cultural identity that acknowledges both of their parents' heritages.

Michael: Time Spent with Family

Michael believes that his children will develop their cultural identity through parental

guidance—that is, by him teaching the children about his Lango culture and Celine teaching

them about her French Canadian culture. Michael explains that exposing the girls to their

cultures requires effort on the part of both him and Celine: "It's the effort we make that makes it

happen." In addition to this parental influence, Michael believes that it is important for the girls

to spend time with their relatives. He is confident that the girls get to regularly experience

Celine's family's culture because they always celebrate holidays with then such as Christmas

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and Easter where they visit and eat meals together. Michael, though, thinks that they could spend even more time with Celine's family, especially Celine's sister who speaks French but lives out of town. As for the girls spending time with their Ugandan relatives, Michael says: "It would do good for us to travel more and take them back to Uganda. . . . I think that would help build the culture." When the girls get older, Michael hopes that they will take the initiative to earn and save their own money in order to travel to visit family in Uganda.

Celine: "A Diversity of Cultures"

Celine believes that the girls will experience their French Canadian and Lango cultures through the "firsthand" experience of spending time with their family in both Canada and Uganda. People, Celine asserts, are the "best resources" in terms of learning about culture. In addition to this, Celine wants the girls to experience "a diversity of cultures"—still connected to her Lango identification of them—such as various African cultures. To do this, Celine relies on relationships between the girls and others, such as a couple from Cameroon and Senegal who they visit with often. Further exploring the broad range of African cultures, Celine reads African children's books from the library to the girls. Celine reflects on this:

> You know, as much as I hope for them to embrace their Langi culture, I think exposure to a Senegalese book [is helpful too]. You know, Tanzanian poetry also helps so they can experience their African identity, their Ugandan identity, their Langi identity, their identity as a mixed whatever. You know there is so many different aspects of their identity.

Celine is pleased for the girls to connect with other African cultures when they are unable to access their "specific Langi culture."

As a part of their identity formation, Celine also wants her girls to understand "settler Canadian Indigenous history" as well as "have a broad understanding of all the different immigrant realities" in Canada. For Celine, her broader Canadian identification of her girls goes hand in hand with understanding the "broad spectrum of differences" that exist in Canada. Her view of her daughters' Canadian identity, then, is not limited to Celine's French Canadian roots but rather encompasses being settlers in Canada, fellow citizens and comrades of Indigenous peoples, and not only daughters of immigrants but citizens in a country with many immigrants of various cultures.

Celine acknowledges that forming an identity is a complex process and points out that this complexity is due in part to the fact that both she and Michael, under the influences of an intercultural relationship, have in some small ways taken on each other's culture—with Celine sometimes identifying with Ugandan ways and Michael sometimes identifying with Canadian ways. Celine wants her children to be able to understand "the complexity" of this interculturality. She explains:

> I don't want them to just say Daddy is Ugandan African and Mommy is
> Canadian. You know, [I want them] to understand the nuances that there is
> actually things about [Mommy] that are more African than our [Daddy] and
> there's things about Daddy that are more Canadian or Westernized than Mommy
> and that you know these identities are very complex. I don't want them to
> sensualize or romanticize their heritage or background.

In not romanticizing their heritages, it is Celine's hope that the girls will live with an awareness that there is complexity to their identities and not everything is categorical. Reflecting further, Celine acknowledges that she and Michael, through their respective cultural lenses, directly

influence their children's identity formation, but she also acknowledges that the girls have agency in forming their own identities.

Celine and Michael: Having to "Substitute" vs. "Start[ing] Them with Just Our Two Cultures"

During the joint interview, Celine shares her desire to not confine the girls to learning only about their French Canadian and Ugandan cultures but to include other related cultures as well. In response, Michael expresses his concern that the girls will be overwhelmed with this possibility:

> Sometimes I'm afraid it will be overwhelming if we load them with all this stuff. I think we should start them with just our two cultures before we spread out like palettes and stuff. I guess we will see how it goes when they grow.

Celine is quick to reply to Michael's concern:

> You know, and not to open a can of worms or whatever, but I feel like if the Langi language was spoken at home consistently and you know if we get family visiting and we have the opportunities to expose them more, then I don't think we have to substitute in Senegalese books from the library and interactions with Adama and Rico, our friends who are from Cameroon and Senegal. . . . Langi is losing out, you know?

Acknowledging Celine's concern, Michael replies: "I'm going to get some Langi books. There's some Langi books too. That's what we should be doing." Both feeling satisfied that their views are being heard, Celine and Michael move on to a different topic of conversation.

Naming

In naming their girls, Celine and Michael concede a dual cultural affiliation. First, as per Lango tradition, each girl has their own surname: Yvonne's is Apio and Juliette's is Akello. (In Uganda, the order of the names is actually Apio Yvonne and Akello Juliette—and similarly Michael's is Omara Michael.) Traditionally Lango names are gendered. In the case of Michael's family, females' surnames (chosen at birth) start with "A" and they are named after women in the family. Apio is Michael's sister's and grandmother's name and Akello is Michael's mother's name. Second, the girls' French first names come from Celine's French Canadian side: Yvonne is Celine's mother's name and Juliette is Celine's cousin's name.

Topic 7: Interculturalists

Parenting together in an intercultural marriage, Celine and Michael both willingly pay heed to each other's cultural traditions, and consequently find themselves taking on roles or practices that they never anticipated they would adopt. These practices are most often related to the traditional and largely fixed gender roles of Michael's Ugandan culture and the less blatant and looser traditional gender roles in Celine's Canadian culture. In Celine's Canadian culture, it is often socially acceptable for fathers to participate in childcare and housework, although many do not contribute equally to that of their wife (Statistics Canada, 2020). Further, adding to the complexity of the Omaras' parenting, in Celine's belief system as a feminist, there exists a resistance to traditional gender roles.

Celine: Honouring Through Naming

In following the Ugandan tradition of a woman taking her husband's last name, Celine decided to change her last name to Omara when she married Michael. Celine's sister was surprised with this decision. Celine recalls her sister saying, "I'm so surprised. You of all people,

you're such a feminist, why would you change your name?" to which Celine replied, "Yes I'm a feminist, but I'm also an interculturalist." Celine explains that, despite being a feminist, "It's also very important for me to honour and respect my husband's culture." For Celine, having the last name Omara indicates that she is married to her Ugandan husband and connected to his family—a family where men's names start with an "O" and are named after men in the family. Having the last name Omara marked Celine as being invested in the Ugandan culture rather than being an outsider carrying out research at the local university. Michael's family, as well as the locals, took great pride in Celine's Ugandan surname.

Another way in which Celine has honoured her husband's culture is through the naming of their girls with Lango surnames. Celine reflects on her desire to preserve the Lango naming tradition while still having French Canadian first names for her daughters: "I have agency around the first names but not the last name, 'cause that would totally break the whole system." Her desire to not want to "break the whole system" of Michael's Ugandan naming traditions is an example of Celine living out her identity as an interculturalist. In this interculturalism, Celine is able to find space for her feminist values in that each girl has her own surname.

Celine: Navigating the Public Eye

Celine is very aware that the way in which Michael parents his daughters is highly dependent on circumstance—that is, whether he is out in public or around his Ugandan family. For instance, Michael will only carry Yvonne on his back in a baby carrier or change a diaper while in the privacy of his home, but not while in public or around his Ugandan family. Celine explains:

> Like 'cause my husband, you know, he is a very good parent at home, but then
>
> when we would go out in public he would act a little bit differently. It's not that

he was a bad parent, but he wouldn't, for example, carry Yvonne on his back . . .

but he was still a very caring parent and then at home he was the same. Like he's

pretty much the same person at home in Uganda or at home in Canada, but it was

the public eye or family being present that would change it.

Celine explains that Michael's desire to not want to take on some parenting responsibilities in

public is a response to his Ugandan "cultural expectations." She is attentive to such expectations

by refraining from asking him to do certain things in public. For example, when they were at a

wedding at a village in Uganda with Yvonne when she was a baby, Celine did not ask Michael to

do any of the diaper changing because she understood the "pressure" Michael was under "to be

less hands on" with his child. She explains further:

He'd be absolutely thrilled to change the diaper at home, but then for him to be

seen in a village setting in Uganda to change the diaper, like I gotta give him

some slack, that looks bad. I'm not saying it should, but it looks weird and it will

draw attention to him.

Celine has come to expect inconsistencies in some of Michael's parenting practices. Cognizant

of his public image as a Ugandan man, she feels it is important to give her husband "leeway"

when he is parenting in public.

While there are Ugandan cultural expectations placed on Michael, Celine also realizes

that there are Ugandan cultural expectations placed on her as well. When they were living in

Uganda, Celine would sometimes kneel down to greet her father-in-law since women there are

traditionally expected to kneel for men. Celine explains that although she would never consider

kneeling down for her husband, nor would he want her to, she will kneel for her father-in-law: "I

mean that's part of their culture . . . my father-in-law and I have a good relationship and every

once in a while, I'll do the kneel down thing. I find it performative, like I'm just performing."

Kneeling is a way of Celine showing respect, not only to her father-in-law, but also to the Ugandan community, who holds her in high regard in return.

Celine engages in other performative acts in Uganda when, for example, she and Michael are out shopping or when they have guests over for supper. First, when shopping in the village, Celine makes sure that Michael always pays for the merchandise so as not to damage his image in the public eye since he, as a Ugandan man, is expected to earn and spend the money. Second, when Celine and Michael have guests for supper, Celine does the cooking over the small charcoal stove, because in Uganda cooking is a woman's role. Part of the meal, however, is barbecued over a larger charcoal stove by Michael and the male guests—a that practice came about when Celine and Michael's Canadian friend who is a chef taught Michael how to barbecue. While barbecuing is not regularly done by males in Uganda, it is socially acceptable. As such, Celine finds barbecuing to be a practical way to "work around the cultural norms" of Michael's Ugandan culture while still keeping Michael's public image intact and still allowing him to participate in the workload of cooking.

Michael: "It's a Cultural Thing"

As a child growing up in Uganda, Michael's mother, and later his stepmother, had a "house girl" (a maid) and a female relative helping her. When Michael's father would return home from work, he would be "handed a clean baby" to play with for a little while before handing the baby back to Michael's mother. Michael remembers that his father would not partake in childcare or household chores and would never enter the kitchen. Michael explains these gendered roles of husband and wife: "It's a cultural thing. From a young age, boys are raised to generally become a head of a house, so that means that you're always out hustling, and

then you know, you got a traditional house mom who is at home, a housewife." Since childhood, Michael anticipated that he would marry a traditional housewife. Parenting with Celine in Canada, where gender roles are not as rigid in some households, has led Michael to do tasks that he never would have previously imagined doing, such as childcare, cooking, and housework. This arrangement is even in contrast to Celine's family structure of household chores and childcare in the years where she was growing up with just her mother and two sisters and her mother took on responsibility for such roles.

Michael: Helping Out of Necessity: "It Wouldn't Be Fair"

For the initial few months after Yvonne was born, Michael left the childcare tasks to Celine. This was because he believed that "mothers are supposed to do all the work. Take care of the baby." Michael explains further:

> That was the idea in my head, but that changed. I realized that, you know, Celine needs the help. She can be exhausted sometimes, and I could clearly see it. It wouldn't be fair to just let her do all that, so I'd find myself doing some of the things and that's how I learned to change a diaper.

Michael also began to help soothe Yvonne back to sleep in the early hours of the morning after Celine breastfed her. Today, Michael is pleased that he takes an active role in childcare, because he can see that it helps his children, and further, he is glad to work "as a team" with Celine.

Michael realizes that life in Canada it is different than life in Uganda and that both he and Celine have to contribute equally to the functioning of the family and household. He explains: "But you know, life here is different, it's fast paced. Both of us have to work. So, things come on a levelled ground." With Celine currently being the primary breadwinner, it makes the most economic sense for Michael to be a stay-at-home father and care for their children while also

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doing his illustration work on the side. Having a maid or nanny in Canada is expensive, and further, there is no family nearby to help. Consequently, Michael does the childcare, cooking, and housework while Celine is at work.

One particular parenting role that Michael found emotionally uncomfortable was carrying Yvonne in a baby carrier on his back. During his upbringing in Uganda, only women carried babies on their backs. Michael recalls caring for Yvonne in Canada when Celine was at class at the university: "I remember with Yvonne I used to put her on my back and walk around for her to fall asleep. Just around the house." He explains that carrying a baby on his back was something that he did not want to do, but he did it anyway for Yvonne's well-being:

Well, I don't think a guy is supposed to be carrying a baby on his back. I would

be really shy about that actually, but I had no choice. Celine had classes. I had my

classes too, so we decided to divide time up and take care of us and Yvonne. So,

this had to be done. There was no choice. I just found myself doing it.

Cooking meals for his family is another role that Michael took on in Canada, even though he had a preference not to. Michael explains:

That's the other thing I didn't want to do, I didn't want to cook, but now I cook.

Yeah. But they [Yvonne and Juliette] love it every time I do it. So, I find myself

doing it. And what I want to do is ah, what I wanted to do is maybe less of the

cooking, leave it for Celine to do. Just spend less time in the kitchen. Just 'cause

following my cultural ways and stuff, that's what I like to do. Cooking is not part

of it, a man cooking. That's just slowly disappearing, you know it's now enjoying

cooking. It's been a real change . . . yeah, it supports them. They have food to eat,

eat well and grow. I know what foods to feed them, have a balanced diet. It's been

helping them very much. Just find yourself in that spot where you have to do it

even if you're not supposed to.

Michael is committed to nourishing his family, and he meticulously prepares most meals from scratch for them.

Having responded to the necessity of helping with childcare, Michael has been pleasantly surprised by how much he enjoys spending time with his daughters as a stay-at-home father. He explains: "Yeah, but what I hadn't seen or anticipated was like how much fun it would be, just having them and enjoying being with them." Although being a stay-at-home father is not necessarily Michael's preferred role in life, he deeply cherishes the time "bonding" with his children, and, according to Celine, excels in his role. Continuing to work on his career as an illustrator when he has time, Michael plans to one day spend more time on his career, but for now he spends much of his day caring for his daughters.

Topic 8: Time and the Pace of Life

Celine and Michael have different orientations of time, which influences how they parent alongside one another. Celine is a planner and, while enjoying the present, often thinks ahead to the future. Michael, however, tends to live wholly in the present and is most often unconcerned with the past or future. He notes that his pace in life is slow compared to Celine's. Both Michael and Celine feel overwhelmed by the copious amounts of time that are involved in raising children and managing a household, and both value time spent relaxing with their daughters and relating to them as they play.

Celine: Future Oriented

Celine is very future oriented, always thinking and planning ahead. She makes sense of her future-oriented concept of time by comparing it to her husband's. "Yeah, I feel that I'm the

one with stronger ideals, like I feel that I'm more of the planner. My husband is very go with the flow, which is great, which is complementary for me." She explains further, "I am more Westernized in my mentality." Despite her tendency to quickly get things done, Celine can still find the "pace of life" while raising two young children frustrating, as a lot of her and Michael's time is spent doing chores such as cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, and preparing food. Celine explains that she and Michael, rather than doing chores, would prefer to spend downtime with the girls at home or at the playground, but in the meantime, they try to enjoy doing chores together as a family. For instance, grocery shopping trips are often a family outing where the girls ride in the shopping cart and are rewarded with a treat for good behaviour.

Michael: Present Oriented

Michael finds the pace of life in Canada much faster than in Uganda, and further, the pace at which Celine lives life to be much faster than his. He explains, "I find myself working on, like me and Celine are working on another [i.e., different] pace. She's been probably working in that same pace for a while since she's from here, but ever since I came I've had to step it up and just the speed of life makes [parenting] a bit harder." Michael acknowledges that children take a lot of time to raise, which has contributed to his busy life. He reflects back on when he was single as compared to his life now: "Before I had all the time. I had work, you know, all the time, and now I have more work and half the time and kids attached to me." He speaks of the "exhaustion at the end of the night" as a parent and explains that "time seems to be smaller than . . . it used to be." Regardless of the demands of raising children, Michael still feels that life in Canada is way busier than in Uganda.

Michael has somewhat integrated into the busy Canadian lifestyle, but he still values slowing down. He recalls his university art instructor from Uganda advising him to "go slow" in

order to produce quality drawings, and Michael holds on to these significant guiding words to this day. His "go slow" mentality allows him to live life mindfully in the present while not concerning himself too much with the future. Michael's tendency to not worry about the future was evident when I asked, "Before the birth of your first child, what did you think parenting would be like?" Michael's response was succinct: "No baby yet, so I wasn't thinking much about it." Even with significant life events impending, Michael tends to live day by day. Further, when parenting, Michael relaxes in the belief that his children will learn skills in their own time. And, when it comes to looking back on working out interpersonal conflict in his life, Michael reflects, saying "time fixed it."

CHAPTER 6: AMBER AND JASON (THE MEYER/SMITH FAMILY)

Amber and Jason in Brief

Amber Meyer and Jason Smith are a married couple who reside in a city in western Canada with their 2-year-old son, Charles. Both Amber and Jason are in the 25–35 age range. Amber was born and raised in a densely populated suburb in the Netherlands (which she referred to as Holland during our interviews). Amber grew up speaking Dutch and started English classes in grade 4, although she was exposed to English via television and radio earlier on. Jason only speaks English, although he did take mandatory French classes in grades 5 through 7, as well as two weeks of Japanese in university before dropping out. He was born and raised in small-town Canada and has Scottish and English roots. His father and mother are fifth-generation Canadians. Jason and Amber met at a wedding in Canada when they were both 15. Amber was 18 when she immigrated to Canada to attend the same university as Jason, who was by then her boyfriend, first living in residence and then moving in with Jason and his cousin. Amber and Jason then rented their own apartment downtown before buying a condo in the university area. Married at 25, Amber and Jason are very amicable and savour one another's company. They typically spend time together as a family unit of three rather than socializing with a broader group. Amber and Jason describe Charles as "happy and cheerful."

Amber is doing her child psychology residency (towards her PhD) with children and youth who have moderate to severe mental health challenges. She toils with aspirations of one day becoming a pediatrician. Jason works as a reliability engineer in a remote copper and gold mine in northern Canada. His role is to analyze statistical trends and predict when equipment is going to fail. Jason flies into a camp where he works for eight days, staying in a dorm with communal dining, and then flies home for six days off.

Physical and Social Settings of Everyday Life and Customs and Practices of Childrearing

This section attends to two of the three interrelated subsystems of Super and Harkness's (1999) developmental niche: (1) the Meyer/Smiths' physical and social settings of everyday life and (2) the customs and practices of childrearing provided for Charles. First, the physical and social settings include who Charles interacts with, as well as what opportunities are provided by his various physical spaces. Second, the customs and practices of childrearing include "inherited and adapted ways of nurturing, entertaining, educating, and protecting the child" (Nsamenang, 2015, p. 841)—not only by Amber and Jason, but by other caretakers as well. Attending to these two subsystems allows a better understanding of the third subsystem—the psychology of the caretakers, particularly Amber's and Jason's parental ethnotheories, which are explored later in this chapter.

The Current Place of Experience in Canada

The Setting

Amber and Jason are living temporarily in a rented two-bedroom downtown condo in a coastal city in Canada. They moved there ten months ago for Amber's year-long residency. The city consists of a generally well-off population as well as a constant stream of tourists. Amber and Jason are nestled in a neighbourhood of condos, offices, restaurants, stores, hotels, a library, and a museum and live one block away from a homeless shelter and several blocks from the harbour. Amber and Jason appreciate that the homeless people are friendly to Charles and interact with him, as it gives him a well-rounded perspective on life, but they are also looking forward to moving out of the neighbourhood one day because they are not keen on Charles witnessing the drug use that occurs on the sidewalks, especially as he gets older. Amber drives to work, but other than that, Jason and Amber usually walk to places with Charles in the stroller.

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They frequent the library, harbour, and coffee shops. In the warmer summer months, they spend a lot of time at the playground, and in the rainy winter months they visit the children's play area at the library.

Parenting in the rainy months is challenging, as both Amber and Jason feel "stuck inside" with Charles. Charles has a lot of energy and often touches or climbs things in their condo unit that he shouldn't, often announcing a play-by-play of his doings. Amber explains: "I find myself doing a lot more of like well just 'don't do that' or 'don't do this,' more so guiding his play to make sure he stays somewhat contained." Another challenge of being in the condo is that the neighbour downstairs has put in noise complaints about Charles, which has limited Charles to only quiet play activities. A further complication of condo living is that Charles has no backyard to run around in where there would be no worry of potty training accidents on the carpet or furniture. Charles loves going places, whether it be downstairs to the communal laundry room, grocery shopping, or to the park. His latest pleasure in life is riding in the backseat of the car with the window down and feeling the air rush against his face. He also loves going to the park to play. When Charles is playing outside, Amber appreciates that she "doesn't need to constantly . . . set limits around the things he's not allowed to do."

A Portrait of Everyday Life

When Jason is away at work, a typical day for Amber and Charles consists of getting up and getting ready, eating breakfast, and heading out the door. Amber drops Charles off at daycare around 8:00 and then proceeds with her 10-minute drive to work. She picks up Charles from daycare at 5:30 and they head home for supper. According to Amber, Charles's favourite foods are limited to cheese, blueberries, and fries, and "he is not really into exploring other foods." After supper, Amber and Charles FaceTime Jason for about an hour. Charles plays

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around the living room for much of this time, joining the FaceTime at his leisure. Next Amber bathes Charles, reads him stories, and then puts him down to bed. Although he has a bed, he often chooses to sleep beside it on the floor. Before going to bed herself, Amber has some time to clean up or relax in front of the TV. On the weekends, Amber and Charles have some TV time in the morning before getting dressed. They then FaceTime with Amber's parents or her brother or sister, followed by walking to the park or library. Charles loves the park, especially the slide, and he recently told Amber that he would like to live at the park. Charles's nap time is in the afternoon, but he won't go down for naps in his bed for Amber. Consequently, Amber will often walk Charles in the stroller during his naptime, so that he will snooze. Amber and Charles enjoy their one-on-one time together when Jason is away but also miss Jason dearly. Charles often asks about his father and looks longingly out the window saying, "Daddy not home, Daddy working." When Jason is gone, Amber finds herself lowering her behavioural expectations of Charles, since he is coping with the frustration of Jason being away:

> I think I have a harder time parenting him when [Jason's] not home. It's just
>
> busier. So, I find myself saying a lot, "Oh, it will be easier when Dad's back
>
> home, like we'll be fine. We just need to get through these days and then Dad will
>
> be home and we're all going to be happy again."

When Amber and Jason first arrived at the coastal city for Amber's residency, Jason delayed getting a job so he could stay home with Charles for three months. They found a full-time spot for Charles in a day home (even though both Amber and Jason prefer the structure of a daycare centre) before he started at a Montessori-based daycare after being on the waitlist for a year. He is in a room with 16 18- to 30-month-old children and four caregivers. Daily activities

include yoga, outdoor play, reading books, singing songs, arts and crafts, a daily nap, and Charles's favourite activity—helping to clean up.

When Jason is in town, he cares for Charles despite having to pay the daycare in Charles's absence. Jason and Charles spend their days out and about exploring the library, playgrounds, and coffee shops and returning home in the afternoon for Charles's nap. Jason intends to do housework during Charles's nap, but often finds that he will sit down to relax for a moment and then Charles is soon awake, loudly singing his ABCs from his room. Jason then prepares supper while Charles helps, or Charles plays by himself. If Charles is having a hard time entertaining himself, Jason will "cheat and turn on the TV" because the kitchen can be "a dangerous place" with items such as knives around. Even though allowing Charles to be distracted by cartoons on TV "is an easy fix," Jason tries not to let Charles watch more than an hour of TV a day, with the exception of Fridays when they have a family movie night. Every other day of the week, Jason is intent on staying below the Canadian Paediatric Society's recommendation of less than 1 hour of TV a day for toddlers. In the evenings the family eats supper together and then does Charles's bedtime routine of bath time and stories. Both Amber and Jason read the stories to Charles—the three of them snuggled up together in Charles's bed.

A Former Place of Experience in Canada

Prior to living in the coastal city, Amber and Jason resided in the same large city in western Canada that they both moved to for university at age 18—Jason moving from his home province and Amber moving from Holland. Amber and Jason owned and lived in a condo unit near the university and close to shopping, schools, restaurants, and Jason's grandma's house. Charles was born at a hospital in this city, and they resided there prior to moving to their current, coastal city. Despite having a car, Amber, following her Dutch ways, would often walk with

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Charles in the stroller to do errands in the winter. Jason recalls him and Amber taking Charles out in minus 40-degree Celsius weather when he was just an infant:

> We put him in the stroller, covered him up, and went to the grocery store, and
> [Amber] had people just like get quite angry with her for bringing her child out in
> the cold. She's like, "Well, we don't have food in the house, maybe you don't
> realize I'm just one block away."

Despite the criticism, Amber continued to walk Charles in the stroller during the winter months.

Charles was born ten months before Amber defended her candidacy for her PhD in child psychology. When Charles was two weeks old, Amber's parents came from Holland to help for a month. They intended on being there from day one, but Charles was born two weeks early:

> So, Charles was born in December and I took a two-month break. I was in the
> middle of writing my candidacy papers, which were supposed to be done before
> he was born, but I had a really rough pregnancy and was unable to work, so I
> started back up with that when he was little.

In Charles's first year, Amber had a nanny come in and watch him for four hours a week. With hardly any childcare, and Jason working five days a week, Amber did her schoolwork in the evenings until 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, as well as on weekends. Amber would take Charles with her to her lab classes and meetings at the university so that she could care for him and breastfeed him. Amber recalls:

> Well, I think for me it was hard 'cause I would be either nursing him or rocking
> him or doing something with him during meetings and I could never take any
> notes, and then afterward I'd be like I can't even remember what we talked about.

Amber recalls Charles's first year as difficult as she tried to balance the demands of nursing and parenthood with the demands of a PhD. She feels guilty for time spent on her PhD on weekends rather than with her family, but also thinks that the fulfillment that she got from her PhD—which would not have been afforded by solely being a stay-at-home mother—was good for her and her family. "Maybe that's a little story I tell myself to myself feel better," says Amber of weighing the benefits of doing a PhD and the guilt that comes with it.

Jason was supportive of Amber throughout Charles's infancy, although Amber and Jason did get into arguments, especially during the phase when breastfeeding was difficult and stressful for Amber. When Jason would go out to purchase necessities for Charles and Amber, he would get what he referred to as "panic calls" from Amber to come back and be by her side. Later into Charles's first year, Jason had every Friday off. He would care for Charles, spending part of the day at his grandma's who would help out. When Charles turned one, he attended a daycare one day a week, while Amber worked on her PhD. Jason would drop Charles off at the daycare because it was too upsetting for Amber to see Charles cry upon separation. Jason too found this upsetting, but he managed.

When Charles was six months old, Amber took him to Holland for a month. Jason joined them for some of the time but had to return to Canada for work. A year later, Amber took Charles to Holland again to attend her grandpa's funeral, but this was a short trip because she needed to return to her graduate studies.

Amber's Childhood and Adulthood

Amber grew up with her mother, her father, her sister, who was a year-and-a-half older, her brother, who was two-and-a-half years older, and her two highly active dogs. Her mother stayed at home and babysat children in her home when a neighbour was in need, and Amber's

father worked as a health and safety manager, biking each day to his office. On the weekends Amber's father worked as a dog trainer, with the help of her brother and sister. Amber and her family resided in a three-storey row house surrounded by canals. Like a typical town in Holland, streets were narrow and often one way, and front yards were very short. This tight space afforded a lot of interaction with neighbours, whether it be chatting outside or waving from the window as people passed by. Like others in the community, Amber biked or walked everywhere. With everything close by, she had no need for a driver's licence. Her dogs joined any outing, as it is not very common for dogs in Holland to be left alone at home. The close physical proximity of houses was indicative of the communal connection that existed. Amber explains: "There's a lot of interaction, there's a lot of connection with the full-on community."

One of Amber's best childhood memories is her grandparents' visits. Both sets of grandparents were about a 30-minute drive away. They would alternate visiting each Saturday afternoon and stay for supper. Amber's father's parents would often pick up French fries for everyone, as per family tradition. After supper the grandparents would put Amber and her siblings to bed. Amber remembers her father's mother, who they were very close to, reading stories before bed.

Amber was shy and anxious as a child and recalls this vividly:

I think I had a general sense of just feeling misunderstood a lot of the times. I struggled a little bit with emotional expression as a child and so just wanting people to understand me without really having to say it. There was a lot going on for me and I know that now looking back, but as a child I was like, "Why can't people just understand me or anticipate my needs?"

She remembers her mother's anxiety and internalizing it as a child. Amber took solace in her best friends, who were introverts as well and understood Amber with few words spoken. Amber also took solace in her extroverted and eccentric grandmother:

> My grandma always had this like really nice way of like making me do things that I would be uncomfortable with, but still she made it so much easier to do . . . and she was very, very artistic, so she would always get us to do art stuff and just kinda get us engaged that way. . . . There was never any judgement from her, just all positivity.

Amber's paternal grandfather encouraged Amber in her academics beginning in her elementary years, and would always review her report card. Sometimes Amber felt that this encouragement crossed over to pressure to perform well. Amber's grandfather had high expectations for Amber's academic success, in hopes of her being the first in the family to complete university. Thinking back, Amber finds it ironic that she, the child with anxiety, was the one who carried the burden of the familial pressure to do well in school.

Other childhood memories of Amber's include holidays such as Easter and Christmas. Her mother's side of the family would come on December 25th and her father's side on the 26th. There were no gifts, just a gathering. Her mother would take Amber and her siblings to Roman Catholic mass on holidays and occasional Sundays. Her father would not attend, and as Amber and her siblings grew older, they stopped attending as well. Amber remembers the gift giving on December 5th each year when Sinterklaas (Santa Claus) came in a steamship from Spain and delivered gifts to those who had been good. Another celebration that Amber looked forward to was birthdays, where extended family would come over for an afternoon and sit in a circle in the living room and visit, eat cake, give gifts, and often stay for supper. Invitations were

unnecessary—it was expected that any family would show up. Amber remembers having a

separate birthday party with her peers.

Like other children in Holland, Amber went to preschool four half-days a week at age 3,

full-day kindergarten at ages 4 and 5, and completed elementary school at age 12. She recalls

playing with friends after school up to the age of 11:

> What I remember quite heavily is after school I had two really close friends that
>
> they would typically come over for play dates. I was definitely a child that was
>
> very much so into Barbies. So, we would have our Barbie creations going on. . . .
>
> We never, or I never, did the play of actually interacting with the Barbie dolls or
>
> you know, creating their story lines. It was always just about building their houses
>
> or like their village that they were going to live in. Like my friend would have her
>
> house and then I would build mine. You know it wasn't really about having the
>
> communications between the Barbies or like such. It was just about the building
>
> . . . where they were going to live, and then you know by the time we had that all
>
> set up and had them all dressed up, then it would be like oh well, your mom is
>
> coming to pick you up.

At age 12, Amber went to high school via a six-year academic stream, while her brother

attended a four-year trades stream and her sister a five-year college stream. Although her siblings

went to a neighbourhood school, Amber had a seven-kilometre bike ride with her two best

friends to her school in a neighbouring province. She remembers her days of afterschool Barbie

play ending once high school started. Her time was now taken up with extracurricular activities

such as dance and swimming, biking to and from school, and completing homework, which

included French, German, and Spanish language study. Amber also remembers helping her aunt when she had her two babies by staying at her place for a week after each birth.

As an adult, Amber is a soft-spoken, kind, gentle, and confident woman who is content spending her free time with her husband and son. Upon seeing Charles, Amber has an instant glimmer in her eye. With the demands of being a mother and a PhD student, Amber has little time to pursue her own extracurricular interests. In addition, Jason works out of town and there are no family or friends around to babysit Charles should Amber want to go out alone when Jason is away.

If Amber had more free time she would spend it travelling back home to Holland to visit family. Ideally, she would take Charles while Jason stays back, like Jason has often done in the past. When Jason and Amber are around Amber's family—who all speak Dutch and at least some English—much of her family will try to speak English around Jason, but there are some who prefer not to. This makes extra work for Amber, who has to continually act as an interpreter for Jason. Amber reflects:

> I find it really tough when Jason does come with me to Holland, and that's not to sound mean or anything, but there is a bit of a barrier with him not speaking the language and connecting with my family. I always feel kinda caught in that space like well oh I need to translate for Jason and I need to do all these pieces to engage everybody and to keep everybody happy when really I'm sure they'd be fine on their own, but just that extra pressure of like, is he understanding, is he having a good time? It would just be easier if he was left here [in Canada]. It's terrible.

Amber points out that not only is hard for her to translate for Jason, it can be hard for Jason to be visiting with her extended family when he does not know Dutch and they do not know English well:

> My grandparents don't really speak a lot of English and then I feel like for me to drag Jason to my grandma's house, like she just stuffs him full with cookies and yells at him in Dutch because she just feels that yelling louder will make him understand her. Is that really a good use of his vacation time? Probably not.

Amber adds that although she would ideally leave Jason at home, she would, however, take Charles with her: "But yeah, Charles would definitely come, 'cause he would need some quality time with his cousins there."

Amber's hypothetical wish to have a trip to Holland without Jason exists despite her love and admiration for him, and despite her steadfast desire to spend time with him. Amber is caught between two worlds that are dear to her heart but that don't always accommodate one another. Here Amber has dual allegiances, and it is through her husband's understanding that she is able to temporarily suspend her allegiance to him in order to foster her familial and cultural connections. For a time, she can rest in the comfort of fully conversing in her language without having to tend to Jason's need for translation.

Amber considers herself to be "organized." She describes her organization skills as a good trait but acknowledges that it can "withhold" her at times from really savouring life. Sometimes Amber wonders if she should be more like her sister, Carla, who is carefree, spontaneous, and really enjoys things to "the best degree." Despite this, Amber is content and happy with her life. If Amber could be freed from one worry in life, however, it would be worrying about Charles:

Yeah, so just general well-being in terms of like are we not doing this wrong, are

we not messing him up in some way, shape, or form. Or how are the things that

we're doing right now, what kind of impact will they have later on for him, you

know that I'm working right now, what will that be like for him when he's 7?

Despite this common worry, Amber is free from the anxiety of her childhood. Since she moved

away at 18, she has been able to adopt a less anxious perspective than the one that she thinks she

perhaps gained from her mother, who she loves dearly.

Jason's Childhood and Adulthood

Jason grew up with his mother, father, and three siblings in a house on the edge of a

neighbourhood beside mountainous Crown land in a remote town. His family had moved there

from another remote town when Jason was 5 years old. Jason is the youngest and has two sisters

and a brother, who are all a year apart in age. Their elementary school was 15 kilometres away

from their house and the high school seven kilometres. Jason's father was an accountant in the

mining industry and his mother a stay-at-home parent who later worked retail once Jason and his

siblings were at school.

Jason's maternal grandmother lived in the same town as them; his maternal grandfather

lived a few provinces over; and his paternal grandparents lived in the province where Jason

ended up eventually attending university. Jason has fond memories of Christmastime, when his

paternal grandparents would come and visit for a week or Jason and his family would go visit

them. Jason idolized his grandfather, who would very patiently help Jason build things from

LEGO or K'nex.

As a child, Jason spent his free time exploring the woods and enacting James Bond

scenarios with a neighbourhood boy four years older. In the summers, Jason swam competitively

for many years and trained with his siblings, who also swam. Jason remembers his father being

at every swim meet. Despite this, Jason describes his childhood as a bit lonely:

> I was a bit of a lonely child . . . like I didn't have a ton of friends and I wasn't the
>
> best at socializing either, so it was difficult for me to make friends and
>
> everything. . . . It wasn't a hard childhood by any means, it was just a little lonely.

To protect Jason and his siblings from the harsher realities of life, Jason's parents would "hide

things" from them. Jason explains: "My mom never wanted us to worry about anything, so she

didn't tell us anything. . . . To put it into perspective, I've never actually been to a funeral. . . .

It's not that people haven't died." Jason explains that his parents tried to provide him with a

childhood of "sunshine and rainbows," and attending a funeral and acknowledging death did not

match such an agenda. Furthermore, always upholding the positive, Jason's parents wanted him

and his siblings to "be dreamers" and to know that they could do anything that they wanted

career wise.

During his last years of high school, Jason was on his own because his neighbour friend

had already graduated. Jason's parents did not give a curfew to Jason despite his siblings having

one, in hopes of Jason socializing more. Instead Jason passed his leisure time at home playing

the video game World of Warcraft, practicing his tuba or drums for school band, and downhill

skiing each weekend at a nearby mountain resort with his siblings. Jason describes his life course

from the teenage years:

> On paper I'm really not the most interesting person. You know, did high school,
>
> got good grades there. Didn't do a bunch of partying. University, struggled a little
>
> bit in the beginning and stuff like that but made 'er through and everything's
>
> kinda been a little bit by the book of what I've done.

Despite the occasional struggle, Jason has often found academic success, both as a child and as an adult.

Jason is a friendly, reflective, and composed man whom Amber describes as "laid back and easy going." He enjoys his job as an engineer at a mine but is bothered by the fact that he is exploiting the environment in the process. He wishes that he had a job that allowed him to be at home with Charles and Amber each night, because he enjoys watching Charles's "change and growth" each day. Jason is "big on curiosity, understanding, learning, [and] discovery" and hopes to get his master's degree one day so he will have the skills to work with wind and power, which is more environmentally sustainable. When travelling to and from work, Jason enjoys listening to science fiction and fantasy audio books and nonfiction audio books about "soft skills" or financial management. Jason is interested in joining a judo club or an orchestra, but his out-of-town work schedule is not conducive to the weekly attendance required. Jason is content spending his leisure time with Amber and Charles and especially enjoys walking around with them in social spaces such as restaurants, coffee shops, and parks. Jason explains: "I'm certainly an introvert, but I do like to spend time with other people and go and do things." Jason, who undermines his conviviality, explains that rather than engaging in small talk, he prefers to look critically at situations and "the end goal" before coming to conclusions. He is passionate about downhill skiing and hopes to do more of it one day. Not only does he enjoy the exercise, he also enjoys the beauty and serenity of the mountains.

Jason is very happy in his role as a parent. He is content that his life completely revolves around Charles, and is not bothered at all by the lack of time that he has to pursue his own interests like he used to. He describes this change succinctly when he says that instead of stopping at the beer tent at outdoor summer festivals, he now stops at the kids' tent with Charles.

Jason finds himself talking about Charles frequently even though he didn't think that he "would be one of those parents that always talked about their kid." Although Jason is focused on Charles, he still thinks about the larger society. A self-described progressive thinker, Jason's hope for the future is that all people will have equal and affordable access to higher education and a living wage. Further, Jason wholeheartedly supports Amber's desire to pursue her PhD rather than be a stay-at-home mother like Amber's and Jason's parents wish she would.

The Courtship, Wedding, and Choice of Residence

Jason and Amber met at the age of 15 when Amber, on her second family vacation to Canada (her first was when she was 8), attended a family wedding in Jason's town. These family members, who were from Amber's mother's lineage, had immigrated to Canada after the Second World War. At the wedding, Jason was busing tables. Amber's cousins and her sister Carla, intent on setting up the two single 15-year-olds, worked diligently throughout the wedding and the ensuing holiday to ensure that Amber and Jason were present at the same group activities. Even though Jason was unaware of this setup, he and Amber grew fond of each other. When Amber returned to Holland, she and Jason stayed in touch online. When Amber was 17, she and Carla and Carla's boyfriend returned to Canada for a holiday and to see Jason.

At the age of 18, Amber moved to Canada to attend the same university as Jason. Amber told her parents that she was moving for school, whereas her main intent was to be close to Jason, her boyfriend. Eager to remove herself from the evangelical efforts of her largely Christian dorm mates, Amber eventually moved in with Jason.

Amber and Jason were legally married by an official in the same city where they resided for university. That same summer, they had a destination "wedding" in Llandinam, Wales, which was a symbolic attempt at "meeting halfway" between Holland and Canada. It was a small

wedding with 37 close family and friends, and everyone who attended the wedding stayed with Jason and Amber for three days at an old country home. The wedding day consisted of an afternoon ceremony led by an officiant who did a vow renewal ceremony. Next was the Dutch tradition of a wedding cake and a sit-down dinner. This was followed by the Canadian tradition of speeches, not typically seen at a Dutch wedding. Then, a Canadian master of ceremonies led traditional Canadian games in English, while a Dutch emcee provided Dutch translations. One game was the "shoe game" where Amber and Jason, sitting back to back, each held one of their own shoes and one of their spouse's and responded to a series of questions regarding marital responsibilities by raising the shoe of the person that they thought would be responsible for that task. After the shoe game, Amber's family engaged in the Dutch wedding tradition of comedic skits—about Amber's childhood, how Amber and Jason met, and Amber and Jason's life together. Dancing and drinking concluded the evening.

Amber and Jason first began residing in Canada because Amber moved there to start university while they were dating. With Amber still pursuing her studies, they continue to reside in Canada, where Amber is doing her year-long child psychology residency. Comparing their most recent move to their next anticipated one, Amber explains that Jason will influence where they live next:

> This move was very much for my residency and for my education and career. And so, I did say to Jason that after this it's kinda up to him where he wants to go and what would further his career.

Amber and Jason anticipate that they will end up in an English-dominant country since Jason only speaks English. Holland is not a likely place of residence because, in addition to the language barrier, Amber's future qualifications as a psychologist will not automatically transfer

over. Continuing to reside in Canada, then, is likely. Years ago, Amber's sister Carla set up Amber and Jason out of fun, but now she has a fleeting tinge of regret about her involvement in the setup because it has resulted in Amber living far away from Holland. It is through holidays in Holland, family visiting Canada, and FaceTime that Amber now sees her family.

Parental Ethnotheories: Exploring the Meyer/Smiths' Experience Parenting Their Children

This section on parental ethnotheories (Super & Harkness, 2002) acknowledges the role of Amber's and Jason's cultural belief systems regarding the nature of the child and its influence on the day-to-day care of their child. These parental ethnotheories comprise implicit and explicit culturally constructed understandings of the child, such as the child's roles, abilities, and needs, as well as culturally constructed understandings of the roles of the parents—all in the context of, and instantiated by, the daily physical and social settings and customs and practices of care attended to earlier in this chapter (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). Below I discuss six topics that comprise the Meyer/Smiths' parental ethnotheories and relate them to their experience raising their children.

Topic 1: Interactions in the Community

Amber finds the solitary nature of parenting in Canada—as compared to the communal nature of parenting in Holland—surprising, whereas Jason is quite used to and content with it. These differences are noted in the sections on babysitting, time spent with extended family, and postnatal care.

Communal Parenting vs. Parent in Charge

Amber finds her role as a parent in Canada to be very solitary, which is contrast to the communal nature of parenting that she experienced growing up in Holland. She has noticed that

in Canada, if someone other than the parents are caring for a child, the parents still have full say over any decision regarding their child, whereas in Holland, it is assumed that the caregiver can, on their own, make decisions regarding the child's care. Amber explains:

> In Holland parenting is much more of a yes, these are parents, they are the main parenting figures, but there are so many other important figures involved in parenting or guidance or caring as well. And I'm finding here in Canada it's very much so these are the parents, they do the parenting, they do the caring, everybody else has different roles or they shouldn't mess with it.

Amber recalls her experience in a mother's group in Canada where the mothers regularly asserted the idea that they "were the ones to take on the full picture of parenting"—a role that is "not shared"—and that they as parents "know best." Amber remembers one mother who shared her disappointment that her own mother fed her child food other than the peas that were explicitly set aside in the fridge for her child. Amber compares this mother's experience to her own experience in Holland, where a child's parents are not the sole authority:

> Kids spend time with other people within their family. So, grandparents are more involved, aunts and uncles are more involved in terms of time that they spend with the kids and time that they spend with the kids without the parent necessarily present as well. So, obviously during those times they take on that caregiving responsibility. Whereas in Canada I'm finding it much more like, even when you're spending time with outside family members, it's more like the parents are still supposed to be the ones doing the parenting, I guess.

Amber finds this to be in stark contrast to her experience in Holland where, if others, such as her parents, babysit Charles, they take on the parental role.

Amber recalls babysitting for Jason's cousin when Amber first moved to Canada. Amber decided to take the child out for a stroller walk and brought the dog along as well. When Jason's cousin returned, she was dumfounded that Amber had taken the child and the dog for walk without her permission. Amber summarizes the expectations of Jason's cousin and husband: "We are the parents, we decide, we make the rules. This is very much our job, nobody else can even attempt anything." In contrast, when Amber gets her mother, Deborah, or Jason's mother, Linda, to babysit Charles, she trusts them to make their own decisions regarding Charles's care. She explains:

> Yeah, I'm like I left my child in your care. In doing that, I'm giving some of my
> responsibility to you and I'm assuming that you have the capacity to kind of make
> the decisions around that as well. If I felt like you were incapable of doing that, I
> would not let you watch my child.

Amber notices a difference between the extent to which her parents and Jason's parents will discipline their grandchildren. Amber's parents discipline their grandchildren without hesitation. For example, Amber remembers when her sister Carla's children were climbing all over her mother's couch with their shoes on. Deborah did not ask Carla to intervene but rather intervened herself by telling them to get off the couch and remove their shoes, and that if they climbed the couch with shoes on again, she would get them a chair to sit on. In contrast, Amber says that at Jason's parents' house, if Charles were to be on their couch with his shoes on, Linda would say something like: "Charles, Grandma doesn't really want you to be on the couch, but let's check in with your mom and see what she thinks." In this situation, Amber thinks that Linda should take charge, since it is her home, not Amber's. When it comes to directing and disciplining their grandchildren, Jason's parents always default to asking Amber and Jason what

should be done, whereas Amber's parents take their own initiative, bypassing Amber and Jason without hesitation.

Togetherness/Closeness vs. Aloneness

Amber often refers to the "closeness" in Holland and the "aloneness" in Canada, not only in physical space, but in social space as well. Talking about Holland, Amber says: "It's a small country, everybody's very close together." Amber grew up in a neighbourhood of compact three-storey row houses. The small front lawns allow passersby to interact and wave to those in their houses. Amber recalls a really big window in her living room where people walked by and waved and "the connection with the rest of the community would happen." Amber recalls her living room as a place where she would not only hang out with her family during scheduled tea time, but with family friends as well: "The living room . . . is where we would, not host, but when people would come to visit, this is where we'd have tea together, or yeah, have that kind of togetherness time." People were always welcome to drop by to visit, and no invitation or formal hosting was needed.

With an abundance of neighbours in close proximity, Amber finds that "there's a lot of interaction, there's a lot of connection with the full-on community" in Holland. She finds this to be in contrast to Canada, where there is more space and things are more separated. Even living in close quarters in a condo in Canada, Amber notices that there is little interaction between the people in the building:

> So yeah, like I know there's lots of kids in our building, but I don't, nobody really communicates together, you know it's not that same community sense. Like if there's kids in Holland that live in the same neighbourhood, it's kinda just like, oh

yeah, these parents are going to be friends, boom. That's just kinda how this is

going to go.

In her current city, Amber misses the "closeness of community" that she feels "is so much more present in Holland." As Jason puts it, "In Europe, everything is pretty relaxed. No one is in a big hurry to do anything, particularly in the small towns," which is conducive to getting to know other people rather than rushing past people without interacting.

Jason notices that in Holland, people choose to live close to their family. He talks of how when Amber's sister Carla lived 30 minutes from her parents, it was too far, so they moved back to the same town as her parents. They see each other almost daily and eat meals together at her parents' house about three or four times a week. "In Holland," Jason says, "you are always seeing everybody else." In Canada, Jason feels that his parents are not around much, although they do come and help out whenever Jason and Amber ask. Jason explains: "Not that my family is not supportive, it's just my parents were always away from grandparents and kind of did things on their own and stuff. They certainly help out whenever we ask." Jason feels that "being sociable is a lot more a part of [Amber's] family" than it is of his. Comparing Canada to Holland, he says, "I feel like in Holland you get that more community feel," whereas "in small-town Canada you raise your family on your own. When you see other people it's a treat."

Amber's self-described "aloneness" in parenting in Canada is in stark contrast to her experiences in Holland where she is out in the community with Charles, interacting. For example, when she is in Holland, walking to the library is a social experience for her and Charles. On their way to the library, Amber and Charles run into numerous people who socially interact with Charles and several who join in on their trip to the library. Once at the library, Amber finds that people talk to other people's children, even if they do not know them. For

example, if a mother is reading a book to her child, other children will spontaneously join in, whereas in Canada, Amber has not seen this happen. Instead, she notices that at the library parents read only to their own child. Amber finds that there is a lot more socializing for mothers in Holland, not only in public spaces but in homes as well. For example, her sister will often visit over tea with a friend in one of their homes while their children play. The part-time work schedule of many mothers is conducive to such visits.

Postnatal Care

When Amber had her baby in Canada, she was intent on caring for herself so that she could "recover" from pregnancy during the postnatal months. Amber did not work on her PhD for the first two months of Charles's life: "I didn't do any work. I felt like I needed time to settle into parenthood and recover from pregnancy." However, she was surprised by the lack of postnatal care for her and Charles in Canada. In Holland, where home births by midwives are the norm, a midwife's assistant comes to a new mother's house to help for eight hours every day for the week after the birth. Amber describes the assistant's role: "They will direct moms to stay in bed for those first few days after delivering the baby to do bonding, to do connecting, to focus on feeding, to focus on health." They also help care for the baby, entertain and care for any siblings, and do laundry and cleaning. It is traditional for all family members to visit as soon as possible and eat *beschuit met muisjes*, a traditional snack served to celebrate the birth. Friends then drop by to visit the mother in her bedroom for the first week, and after that week family members regularly stop in to help the new mother. Amber compares this Dutch postnatal period to her experience in Canada: "[In Canada] I found it very much felt like, boom, you have this baby, go home, figure it out." Amber felt that after the birth of Charles, she could not slow down to focus on her rest and recovery as well as her care of Charles. Amber left the hospital 24 hours after the

birth, and the following day Jason's family came over to Amber and Jason's for Christmas

dinner. Amber was shocked that Jason's grandma expected her to sit at the dining room table and

host Christmas. Amber explains, "And so, I was just like, am I not supposed to just be in my

bedroom with my baby bonding and working on that rather than, you know, entertaining?" This

was in stark contrast to the expectation in Holland that a mother rests during the postnatal period.

Topic 2: Safety

Both Amber and Jason have noticed that parents in Canada are more safety oriented in

regard to their offspring than parents in Holland. This cautiousness extends from children's

playground play through to teenager outings.

Children's Playground Play

Jason and Amber both notice a difference between playground play in Holland and

Canada, with parents in Canada being more worried about safety. Amber explains:

> I find that in Holland there's more of a let kids explore and be independent and I
>
> find [in Canada] play is much more guided or restricted in terms of like safety. I
>
> find that parents are much more anxious it seems about like keep them safe, make
>
> sure they don't do anything they're not supposed to and like almost preventative,
>
> like oh well they could go and do this so let's even intervene ahead of time
>
> already.

Jason has noticed that there are "a lot more helicopter parents" in Canada. Jason points out that

although parents "just watch from a distance" they do so while saying "don't do this, don't do

that" to their child in order to try to keep the child safe.

While at the playground in Canada, people comment that Amber plays "too rough" with

Charles and they say things like "It's too much for him 'cause he's too little." Amber believes in

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guiding and supporting Charles through what she calls "tricky" play—that is, play that is slightly beyond his abilities. She guides Charles by, for example, telling him where to put his foot on the climbing structure so that the task is "more manageable for him." While Jason is often hands-on with Charles by helping him climb apparatuses at the playground, he says that he and Amber are "hands off" when Charles is on the zipline. Even though Jason will walk alongside Charles on the zipline, other parents comment that this is too risky. Jason refers to himself as one of the "rougher" parents at the park when playing with Charles.

Teenager Outings

As teenagers and young adults, Amber and Jason noticed a difference in the amount of independence that their parents would expect of them when they went out with friends drinking. In Holland, the legal drinking age was a few years younger than where Jason grew up. When Amber went out with her friends, she would be responsible to return home on her own. Amber explains: "If you choose to go out, you choose to be independent in that sense to also come home." In contrast, when Jason went out in his hometown, his parents would pick him up, even if it was 3:00 in the morning. This difference, though, might also be a matter of availability of transportation. Amber had access to transit and a bike, and everything was close together, whereas Jason lived in an expansive town with no public transit and only one taxi. Amber recalls her parents expecting her to get home on her own regardless of the availability of transportation:

> I remember I went to a concert when I was like 17 and we had to take a couple of
> trains and we misjudged, and the last bus left when we got off at the last train
> station. And I remember all three of me and my friends were like okay, clearly we
> have to call somebody's parents because we messed this up, and we're all like

whose parents would be least mad about this 'cause it was not something that was

ever [done].

Amber and her friends were expected by their parents to get home on their own.

Topic 3: Understandings of Children

Jason and Amber have similar, and sometimes conflicting, ideas about childhood and

about parenting. They articulately express their understandings of children, that is, how they

view children's abilities and needs, and what images come to mind when they think of caring for

their child. Amber is intent on nurturing Charles's independence and wants him to be a

freethinker. Jason too wants Charles to be a free thinker and believes that this requires both

independence on Charles's part and nurturing from parents and others. What Amber values in

early childhood education and care is very much influenced by the early childhood education

system in Holland, and what Jason values is based on his preference for structure and learning

opportunities. A point of difference between Amber and Jason is the varying degree to which

they value adhering to a daily routine for Charles.

"A Free Thinker"

Amber views independence as a basic need for Charles. She sees her role as a parent to

help Charles feel "safe and secure to be who he is and who he wants to be." She also believes

that her role is to instill in Charles "the concept of unconditional love" and to "set the foundation

for him building future relationships with others." Amber's hope is that with this security,

Charles will "navigate the world in a way that makes sense to him, not feeling prescribed by

anything." She wants Charles to have independence in discovering his own personality, whether

it entails being a creative thinker or a concrete thinker. Amber believes her role as a parent in this

is to be "open minded." She explains:

Not trying to impose my ideas or my ways of being in the world too much on him and leaving that space for him to decide. As well as just exposing him to lots of different ways of being who you want to be, so different cultures, different activities, different experiences.

Amber goes on to explain: "I'm just really hoping and wishing that my personality or the way that I am in the world won't restrict him in some way." This hope comes from Amber's own childhood, where she feels that her mother's anxiety sometimes hindered her way of being in the world. Amber concludes, "So, just really that open space for him to be who he wants to be, not who he feels we want him to be." Amber hopes that her and Jason's way of parenting will aid, rather than inhibit, this process.

Jason sees childhood's tasks as twofold: Charles has to discover and come to know things on his own while also learning from a support system such as family. Jason views experiencing life, making mistakes, enacting innocence, and experiencing friendships as something that Charles has to do as an individual—although there can be family support in this. Although Jason sees Charles as innocent, he does not plan to maintain this innocence by hiding from him the realities of life, such as death. Jason believes that a support system such as a family should provide Charles with education, affection, belonging, security, stability, openness, honesty, and experimentation. Experimentation may occur by Charles choosing his extracurricular activities from areas such as music, drama, and athletics. Jason concludes that he and Amber want to make sure that Charles is a "free thinker and problem solver." For instance, as Charles gets older, Jason wants him to be able to look at things critically and reflect before he makes a decision.

Early Childhood Education and Care: Structure and Experiences

Both Amber and Jason understand the child to be one who benefits from the structure and learning experiences provided at daycare, preschool, and kindergarten. Jason prefers Charles's Montessori daycare over his previous day home because there are four teachers in the classroom at daycare and "they don't tolerate any bad behaviours." At the day home, Jason believes that Charles learned some bad behaviours from the older children. Jason feels that with four teachers at daycare, the children are always closely supervised. Jason explains his preference for daycare:

> Since [Charles has] been at daycare he has started eating better, he sleeps better,
>
> he clearly gets a lot more exposure to things. At home it's not like we wouldn't do
>
> a good job or anything. When you are at home you are not following any sort of
>
> curriculum or structure.

Jason goes on to say that when Charles is at home, he will take him to the park, but when Charles is at daycare, he is constantly exposed to different experiences and has "learned a lot in the short time that he's been there." Further, Jason is pleased that Charles enjoys going to his daycare.

Amber too is happy with Charles's experience at daycare despite her initial reservations about him being away from family all day. Amber reflects on the fact that Charles goes to daycare full time when Jason is out of town: "Lately he goes to daycare a lot, like he goes full time. He's only home when [Jason's] home. That's not how ideally I thought our parenting would have gone." Amber points out that in Holland, grandparents or friends typically babysit while mothers work part time. Amber explains further: "I thought I would really have a hard time with the idea of him going to daycare full time. Now I'm like advocating daycare to other people. I'm like, 'Oh, it's so amazing. He's learning so much.'" Amber also likes that time spent at daycare is preparing Charles for the routine and structure of school. She talks of daycare

providing Charles with the opportunity to follow a structured day so that when he starts school, he will already be used to the "expectations" placed on him. Amber is content with Charles being in daycare because he loves going and learns a lot there, and further, it allows Amber to do her residency, which she feels fulfilled by.

In Holland, children typically attend three or four half-days of preschool for a year starting at age 3, followed by two years of full-day kindergarten. According to Amber, kindergarten consists of played-based learning with an emphasis on socialization, and most children start reading by the second year of kindergarten. Living in Canada, Amber regrets that Charles will not have the opportunity to go to full-time kindergarten once he is 4. She values the slower start of play-based learning afforded in kindergarten, where there are "not as many expectations" placed on the children yet the opportunity exists to experience a "sense of success" prior to grade 1. In talking about her desire for Charles to attend full-day kindergarten, she explains: "He needs to be out there. He needs to be part of that community."

Routine: Help or Hindrance?

Like the rest of her friends and family, Amber grew up with her day bound by three set 30-minute tea breaks. According to Amber, "Holland is a very structured kind of a culture in terms of set times of the day that things are supposed to happen." Amber explains that when she moved out of her family home in Holland to live in Canada, she was "no longer under parental control" and much to her delight, she had tea and dinner whenever she wished. While her siblings and friends in Holland also took such liberties of a laxer routine when they first moved out of their family homes, Amber explains that they, unlike Amber, have "settled back into Dutch routines."

Amber does not miss the Dutch routine of set tea or mealtimes because, looking back, she found it "kind of stressful":

> I think when I was in it, I just knew no better, like I had no idea you could live a life that did not include tea with breakfast. And you know your lunch strictly at noon and tea at four o'clock. So yeah, I had no idea that you could live a different lifestyle, and without it [now] it's hard to go back into such a structure.

Amber describes the Dutch routines as "the things you're supposed to do." She explains:

> There's just so many kinda unwritten rules almost. And those almost seem to come ahead of parenting or children's needs. Like if it's coffee time, that doesn't matter if that coincides with somebody's nap time, the coffee time will come first.

Amber goes on to explain that in Holland, "they will schedule children's naps around the routines that are set in place for the culture." These set routines, such as teatime, are for the adults. Naptimes for children, then, are secondary, and are scheduled around teatime.

Amber says that she tends to place little importance on the structure of routine in her parenting, especially when it comes to the time of day that things occur. Ironically, Amber points out that "Jason keeps trying to impose [routine] back in." For example, Jason has a set time of day for Charles's lunchtime and nap, whereas Amber is more flexible in her timing depending on what she and Charles are up to that day. Amber and Jason, however, both stick to Charles's bedtime routine of bath time, reading stories, and a regular time to go to bed. Reading stories at bedtime is important to both Amber and Jason as it is something that they both grew up with as children.

Jason compares Amber's lack of structure to her parents'—Mr. and Mrs. Meyer's—very structured days:

Ah, her parents aren't really similar to her. It's funny, they have such a structure in their day, they have tea first thing in the morning, coffee a few hours later, and it's all very structured, but when there is a child around, they are not flexible in that structure at all.

When Amber's parents were visiting, Jason and Charles would spend the day with them while Amber was at work. Jason would want to take Charles to the park, but Amber's parents would want to sit in a coffee shop instead. This meant that Jason would have to contain Charles, who was intent on walking around the coffee shop exploring. Because of the time spent at the coffee shop, Charles would miss his time at the playground, as well as get down for his nap late.

One time Jason suggested to Amber's parents that they take their coffee to the park so that Charles could play at the playground. Jason recalls that they thought this idea was "blasphemy," insisting that Charles would be fine sitting in the coffee shop. The next day, however, Jason did convince them to have their coffee at the playground. Charles, however, was still late in getting down for his nap due to the set and inflexible time of the coffee break. So, while the location changed that day, the time did not. Jason reflects: "Everything revolves around their tea and coffee times. You don't stray from those tea and coffee times." And Amber's parents certainly would not stray from their tea and coffee times to accommodate their grandchild's schedule. This is in stark contrast to Jason, whose own schedule now revolves around Charles's, so much so that Jason has even let go of his own interests to focus his attention on Charles. Jason explains this succinctly when he says matter of factly: "We have a child. No more hobbies."

Topic 4: Sources of Parenting Influence

Jason's and Amber's sources of influence on how to parent are multifaceted and overlapping and include their parents, books, the internet, their pediatrician and nurses, and

Amber's knowledge as a child psychologist. Amber also acknowledges her own upbringing as another source that influences her parenting of Charles. Jason often concedes to Amber's parenting preferences, but does avow his own opinions as well.

Advice from Parents, Books, the Internet, Pediatrician/Nurses, and the Child Psychologist

Jason and Amber sometimes seek parenting advice from their parents. For example, Jason says, "We'd ask my mom and then decide whether or not we'd do that." Often, though, Jason's parents revert the question back to Amber and Jason, saying "I wonder what you think?" and refrain from giving their opinion. Amber's parents, on the other hand, freely share advice, especially if asked. When Charles was an infant, Amber would seek advice from her mother on how to physically care for him, as well as advice from her sister—advice that she would not enact if she didn't agree with it. Amber seeks advice from her mother and sister less often now that Charles has passed the demanding infant stage.

Amber and Jason sometimes find themselves disregarding the parenting advice of their parents. Amber feels that living way from both her parents and her in-laws is advantageous when it comes to dealing with their, although mild, unsolicited opinions:

> I think being on our own and removed from parents or other family members, I
> feel like it has really allowed both me and Jason to create our own sense of
> parenting and what we value or how we kind of want to raise Charles without as
> much influence from other people. I mean obviously this is me speculating
> because I don't know any different, but I'm imagining had we been in a town
> closer to my parents or in a town closer to his we maybe would have been more
> influenced in terms of what we should be doing, or encouraged to try some
> different things, whereas yeah, both here [and in our previous Canadian city] we

were on our own, so I feel like that's really a lot of getting a groove of what we

find [works best].

Amber continues: "I feel like this is like an accomplishment that we came up with on our own. Yeah, we as a couple together made decisions and really trying to find ways that work for us." Amber notes that her sister Carla lives near their mother and often has to navigate their mother's parenting advice. Even though Carla is confident in her parenting, she doesn't quite know how to tell her mother not to interfere. Reflecting on her sister's predicament, Amber says: "So, I'm like, oh, maybe it is easier that we are not in those kinds of situations and we can just make up our own minds." As for her mother-in-law, Amber finds it easy to deal with her very rare parenting advice, which most often occurs via FaceTime. Amber politely replies "sure" to the advice and then disregards it once the FaceTime conversation has ended.

In Amber and Jason's joint interview, Jason reflects on how he often defaults to Amber's parenting expertise. Jason explains, "If other people would tell me how to do things, I'd just kind of ignore them and tell them Amber told me to do something. I wouldn't do anything else." His reason for this is succinct: "She's the expert. Child psychologist." In response to this statement, Amber questions Jason as to why he calls her the expert when she started parenting at the same time as him. Jason replies that Amber can look at any parenting advice more critically than he can because she can "vet it a lot better" than he can. Amber replies that she wants Jason to have a bit more freedom in parenting decisions rather than solely rely on her opinions, to which Jason jokes that he does have freedom "within set parameters"—parameters based on what he perceives Amber's opinions to be. Regardless, Jason is generally content and confident in following Amber's opinions and is sure to emphasize his own opinions when it really matters to him. In addition to relying on parenting advice from Amber, Jason has in the past gleaned a lot of

parenting advice from a child development book that they were given at the hospital when Charles was born. Jason explains: "Mostly as he hit the milestones, I'd read the next chapter, what do I do for the next phase?" Jason read the book faithfully until Charles was 2 years of age.

One area where Jason and Amber initially differed in opinions in parenting was in the area of "crying it out"—a largely North American sleep training method where a parent leaves a child to cry in their crib without continual comfort so that the child will "learn" to fall asleep on their own. Very recently, Charles's pediatrician suggested that Amber and Jason try the cry it out method with Charles at bedtime. Since a pediatrician had recommended the method—and influenced by an online article that promoted the cry it out method—Jason was interested in trying it. Amber, on the other hand, was against the method. She explains: "In my head that's not how I work, from attachment-based therapy or emotion-focused therapy . . . letting him cry it out is a complete opposite of how I provide." Amber says that when she read the same online article as Jason, her response was "Oh my god no, we can't do this" because of the impact that it would have on attachment. In the end, out of what Amber describes as desperation and Jason as "for our own sanity," they tried a modified method for two nights at bedtime. Jason reflects on the experience: "And even then, when we did the cry it out thing, it was like, 'cause it's supposed to be five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen minutes. We did like one, three, and five." Jason goes on to explain how he and Amber decided to abandon the method: "Whatever Amber wanted went. . . . Amber's the expert, so that's where we went."

Amber was against the cry it out method despite the fact that during her own upbringing, the method was used in part. In the method her mother used, the child would be put in their bed, and if the child started crying the parent would take a wait and see approach before going back to check on the child. If the child was not yet ready for sleeping, they might be brought downstairs

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for a while to do some calming activities before trying bedtime again. Jason's mother, Linda, on the other hand, rocked her children to sleep. Interestingly, Jason's desire to at least try an adapted cry it out method was in contrast to his mother's way, and Amber's desire to avoid any form of the cry it out method was in contrast to her mother's—a way that Amber, and even Jason, very casually describe as "cold."

Amber: Her Own Upbringing, Her Professional Knowledge, and the Opinions of Others

Amber sometimes defaults in her parenting to how she herself was raised, and other times she reflects on her child psychology knowledge. Amber explains: "Obviously work and education around childhood is hard to ignore. I think my own childhood is more so what influences my instinctive approaches with parenting, and then my education is probably what I think about more so afterwards." Other times, instead of first defaulting to the way she was raised as a child, Amber's profession is at the forefront of her parenting decisions. Amber finds her knowledge as a child psychologist to be helpful, but acknowledges that it can, at times, make parenting "so much more difficult" because it prompts her to consider various lifelong outcomes for Charles that may result from her parenting.

With Amber's specialized child psychology knowledge also comes a sense of guilt because she gives advice to parents at work all day but admits that she does not always follow her own advice. Amber explains that although she "technically" knows how she should be parenting, she doesn't always do it. Jason too feels strain from his own process of analyzing how he might best parent Charles. Jason refers to this process when his talks about "the stress around like which method, or not necessarily method but tactic, to follow and whether or not that's going to be good for [Charles] later in life instead of just kinda getting through the day on occasion."

Amber navigates her parenting decisions amidst the knowledge and opinions of medical professionals such as nurses and those of her husband and her mother. For example, when Charles was born, the nurses at the hospital warned Amber and Jason not to use any items such as blankets in Charles's crib and not to place Charles on his stomach to sleep so as to avoid sudden infant death syndrome. This advice was in contrast to Amber's experience in Holland, where babies were wrapped in blankets and placed in a crib on their stomachs, a hot water bottle tucked beside them. When Amber would suggest placing a hot water bottle beside Charles to keep him warm in his crib, Jason would remind her that it wasn't allowed. On the other hand, her mother—who was a healthcare aid in Holland prior to having her own children—would contend that Charles *should* have blankets and a hot water bottle to keep warm, but Amber would not heed her mother's advice. Amber recalls: "I think my mom was trying very hard not to intervene. The blanket thing frustrated her a lot." In this situation, the insistence of the nurses and Jason's wish to follow their advice took precedence.

Topic 5: Language

The primary and common language spoken in the Meyer/Smith household is English. Jason speaks only English, although he is interested in learning Dutch one day. Both Amber and Jason want Charles to be bilingual. While Jason speaks English consistently to Charles, Amber tries to speak Dutch to Charles consistently by using Dutch phrases and words, but she does not speak enough Dutch for Charles to achieve active bilingualism.

The Challenges of Jason Trying to Learn Dutch

Jason does not speak Dutch. He has tried to learn some Dutch from Amber, but their efforts were short lived due to frustration on both their parts. Amber describes her attempts to try to teach Jason Dutch as "hard." She explains: "My husband has been very clear that I'm not the

person to teach him Dutch. . . . It's not going very well." Jason feels judged when Amber tries to help him and corrects his pronunciation, and they both get their defences up. Despite this, Amber still hopes that Jason will pick up Dutch so that he can converse with Charles in Dutch. Amber explains: "But yeah, it would just be helpful if Jason knows some of the basics so when Charles is talking, he's not just standing there being like, I can't respond to you, I have no idea what you're saying or talking about." For example, the other day when Amber was on her way out the door, she told Charles in Dutch to get Jason to brush his teeth, and Jason did not know what Amber was saying. Jason is confident that he will one day learn Dutch. He explains, "It's just a matter of taking the time. Anybody can learn anything right?" He then goes on to say that he would consider moving to Holland, which further affirms his willingness to learn Dutch at some point.

The Challenges of Achieving Active Bilingualism

Amber and Jason would like Charles to be fully bilingual in English and Dutch. Their desire is for Amber to speak only Dutch to Charles and Jason only English. Speaking Dutch to Charles since he was a newborn, Amber tries to speak Dutch to him often, consistently using Dutch names for various items that he uses daily. In response, Charles uses Dutch for words such as *kaas* (cheese) and *purper* (purple). Despite her desire to speak only one language—Dutch—to Charles, Amber speaks a lot of English to him. Jason, on the other hand, consistently only speaks English, which requires little effort since English is Jason's native and sole language.

For Amber, trying to speak her native language of Dutch with Charles and avoiding her additional language of English requires sustained effort. This is because she is in an English-dominant country with an English-speaking husband. Further, it takes conscious effort and discipline for Amber to switch to speaking Dutch when she gets home from work. While Amber

intends to speak to Charles *only* in Dutch, she doesn't, and her reasons for not doing so

contradict at different times during her interviews.

At one time during the interviews (Scenario A), Amber says that she speaks mostly

Dutch to Charles when Jason is in town but ends up speaking mostly English to Charles when

Jason is out of town. Amber's reason for this is that Charles is upset in Jason's absence and

speaking Dutch can escalate his feelings. At another time during the interviews (Scenario B),

Amber says the opposite—that she speaks mostly English to Charles when Jason is in town so

that Jason can be included in the conversation and she speaks mostly Dutch to Charles when

Jason is out of town. Each scenario (See Table 3) on its own is sensible to Amber, because each

exists with the purpose of addressing the emotional well-being of her family. Despite Amber's

intentions to speak Dutch consistently to Charles, one can see that she does not, favouring

instead the emotional welfare of her family. Each scenario is explained in greater detail in the

paragraphs below.

Table 3. Amber's Self-Reported Language Use with Charles

	Jason in town	Jason out of town
Scenario A	mostly Dutch	mostly English
Scenario B	mostly English	mostly Dutch

In Scenario A, Amber says that she tries to speak Dutch as much as possible to Charles

when Jason is in town but ends up switching to speaking English once Jason is out of town for

work. Amber explains:

> Yeah, since Jason has been working away it's been a lot more difficult just
>
> because Charles had some behavioural outbursts as a result of Dad being gone,
>
> and so I'm finding that me adding on Dutch has been kinda escalating things
>
> further so I've been sticking a little bit more with just English with him, but the

ultimate goal is for just me to speak Dutch and Jason to speak English to the true

bilingual piece.

Amber reflects on her decision to scale back on the Dutch with Charles when Jason is away:

"There's a lot going on in terms of Jason doing fly in and fly out and like knowing—I think my

background in like child development and child psychology just makes me overthink these

things." Amber works with a lot of parents where one spouse works out of town. She tells her

clients that when families are separated for work it's a lot of change for the children and they

"don't necessarily have the emotional regulation skills yet" to deal with the change. Following

her own advice, Amber tries to be easier on Charles when Jason is away. For her, being easier on

Charles means speaking more English than Dutch to him. It is Amber's intent when Jason is

back home each month and Charles is more settled again to pick up speaking Dutch to Charles.

In Scenario B, Amber says that she speaks mostly English when Jason is in town and

switches to more Dutch when he is away. She explains this switch:

I find it really hard to stick with Dutch when there's somebody else [Jason] in the

home that doesn't understand it. There's like little side conversations that I'll do

with Charles that are in Dutch, but most of it is in English once Jason's home.

Amber doesn't want to exclude Jason from conversations by speaking Dutch to Charles in front

of Jason. "When we're both home in the evenings it should be family time and not like you and

me and then you and you." By this Amber means Charles and her conversing in Dutch and then

Jason and Charles conversing In English.

To even further complicate things, as Charles gets older and is talking more, Amber finds

it more challenging to speak to him in Dutch. She explains: "Before I had no troubles

continuously speaking Dutch to him when he was just cooing back to you and it doesn't really

matter. But now I speak Dutch to him and he speaks back to me in English." With Charles's English responses, Amber finds it challenging to speak Dutch consistently. She finds it hard to distinguish whether he is not understanding her and she should repeat herself, is ignoring her like a typical 2-year-old might, or is too overwhelmed at that moment by the Dutch language.

Topic 6: Identification and Identity

Both Jason and Amber have hopes for Charles's cultural identity formation and both identify him as Canadian and Dutch. Currently, Jason is content in that Charles is experiencing his general and loosely defined Canadian culture. In the future, both Jason and Amber would like Charles to experience immersion in the Dutch language and culture with relatives in Holland. In naming their son, Amber and Jason acknowledged Jason's Canadian heritage, but not Amber's Dutch heritage.

Jason: Poutine and Maple Syrup, Moose and Bears

Jason, when asked about his hopes for Charles in experiencing his cultural identity, responds with humour and candor, "As long as he likes poutine and maple syrup he's fine . . . he already loves moose and bears." Moose and bears are common in Canada, especially in the area where Jason grew up. Further, Canada is famous for its poutine (French fries covered with gravy and cheese curds) and also its maple syrup exports. Jason feels that by simply living in Canada, Charles is learning about his Canadian culture. Beyond his general Canadian culture, Jason does not express a desire for Charles to develop an English or Scottish identity from Jason's side of the family. Instead, Jason is most concerned about Charles experiencing his Dutch culture by visiting Holland more frequently.

Amber and Jason: Cultural Immersion

Amber believes that the most important factor in Charles connecting to his Dutch culture is being immersed in and learning to speak the Dutch language. For Amber, then, the fact that Charles cannot yet speak Dutch is, for him, "a barrier to connecting and being in the [Dutch] culture." Amber believes that an extended trip to Holland for a few months would be the best way for Charles to learn Dutch—an idea Jason is on board with even though he will have to stay back in Canada part of the time to work. Amber looks forward to the possibility of Charles playing with his cousins in Holland, who, through language, "will play a big role in helping him connect" to his Dutch culture.

One particular conversation during the joint interview with Amber and Jason—about ways to immerse Charles in his language—shows their differing understandings of what authentic immersion in the Dutch culture entails. Jason mentions that a way for Charles to learn about Dutch culture is by Charles speaking to Amber's family through FaceTime, as well as attending the Dutch pavilion at the summer heritage festival. Amber refutes this, saying that FaceTime does not allow Charles to play and socialize with his cousins his age, and that the festival exhibits "a whole different kind of culture" than Amber's. Jason quickly agrees with Amber, saying, "Yeah, that's not real, it's more traditional" and that "it's like Dutch from the [19]50s." Amber agrees that the Dutch portrayed at the festival is not the Dutch that she grew up with. She believes that there is a marked difference between *teaching* and *experiencing* culture, the latter being more important. She points out that Charles will best experience his Dutch culture with Dutch-speaking family members in Holland. Opportunities to have Charles experience the culture while in Canada, Amber concludes, are limited.

Naming

Amber and Jason chose the name "Charles Oliver Smith" for their son with ease. Preferring traditional names, they chose the English first name of Charles because Jason could easily pronounce it. Amber's family, however, struggles with pronouncing Charles because, according to Amber, the name Charles "does not flow naturally in Dutch." The middle name Oliver was chosen after Jason's middle name; Jason, in turn, was named after his paternal grandfather, to whom both he and Amber were very close. Grandpa Oliver passed away on their wedding day one year prior to Charles's birth. Charles has Jason's surname of Smith, and Amber plans on taking on Jason's last name as well. However, it was too difficult to do so after their wedding, because Amber's passport with her maiden name was attached to both her student visa and her permanent residency card.

CHAPTER 7: CHANTAL AND VASILE (THE DUPUIS FAMILY)

Chantal and Vasile in Brief

Chantal and Vasile Dupuis are a married couple who reside in a city in western Canada with their two sons, Nicolae, age 11, and Daniel, age 9. They are in the 45–55-year age range, and Chantal is younger than Vasile. Chantal was born and raised in a city in western Canada. She is Plains Cree and French Canadian. Her mother tongue is English, and she knows a little Cree from her own childhood and adulthood. Vasile was born and raised in Romania and is Romanian with some newly discovered Jewish heritage. He and his parents lived in a moderate-sized city until Vasile started kindergarten, at which point they moved to a larger city for his father's work. Vasile grew up speaking Romanian. He began taking English classes in grade 2, Russian classes in grade 4, and is now fluent in English. He also understands a little bit of French and Italian. Five years after Vasile immigrated to Canada, he and Chantal met online, where they learned that they were both attending the same university. They were married three years later, bought their first house, and three years after that, had their first child, Nicolae. Chantal and Vasile are a strong support for each other in their daily lives and have an ongoing admiration for one another. Vasile describes Nicolae, their oldest, as "responsible," having a "sense of duty," and an "introvert," and Chantal affectionately describes Nicolae as "militant." Daniel is described by Vasile as an "extrovert" and by Chantal as "soft" and "sensitive."

Chantal works full time as a teacher in a high school named pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik (Thundering Spirit School) that is centered around Plains Cree culture. She has her bachelor of science in physiology and a master's in education. She is a seamstress and beader and has her own business selling Indigenous clothing and beadwork. Vasile is an engineer with a degree from Romania as well as a master's in engineering from Canada. He also

has a bachelor of education and a certification in special education. Despite available engineering positions, Vasile is pursuing his passion of teaching and works regularly as a high school substitute teacher.

Physical and Social Settings of Everyday Life and Customs and Practices of Childrearing

This section attends to two of the three interrelated subsystems of Super and Harkness's (1999) developmental niche: (1) the Dupius's physical and social settings of everyday life, and (2) the customs and practices of childrearing provided for Nicolae and Daniel. First, the physical and social settings include who Nicolae and Daniel interact with, as well as what opportunities are provided by their various physical spaces. Second, the customs and practices of childrearing include "inherited and adapted ways of nurturing, entertaining, educating, and protecting the child" (Nsamenang, 2015, p. 841)—not only by Chantal and Vasile, but by other caretakers as well. Attending to these two subsystems allows a better understanding of the third subsystem— the psychology of the caretakers, particularly Chantal's and Vasile's parental ethnotheories, which are explored later in this chapter.

The Current Place of Experience in Canada

The Setting

Chantal and Vasile and their two sons reside in a three-bedroom bungalow that they purchased two years ago in a city in western Canada—the city where they have lived since dating, and where Chantal has resided all her life. The house is in a mature neighbourhood on the edge of the city. It has a front yard and an expansive backyard with a vegetable garden and large trees which are home to birds and other small animals. The neighbourhood consists mostly of houses, with a few schools, parks, playgrounds, a convenience store, and a small industrial area

nearby. Chantal and Vasile share a vehicle to get to work, and the boys take the school bus to school.

A Portrait of Everyday Life

A typical day for the Dupuis family commences with getting ready for work and school. Chantal gets up at 6:00 a.m., gets ready for work, and then spends from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. preparing breakfast and lunches—both based on the boys' requests of what they want to eat. When Chantal and Vasile leave for work, the boys walk a block to the school bus stop where they take an almost hour-long ride to École St. Denis, a kindergarten to grade 8 French immersion school. At the end of the day they take the bus home. They each have a key to the house to let themselves in, and Chantal and Vasile arrive home from work soon after. Chantal cooks supper most nights—or puts it in the slower cooker in the morning—and sometimes Nicolae will help. If Chantal is late from work Vasile will make supper, and once in a while Chantal will tell everyone to "fend for themselves" instead of making the meal herself. Vasile will do the dishes after supper—not because he enjoys it, but because he wants the boys to see him contributing. For this same reason, Vasile cleans the bathrooms when needed. Vasile's housework has resulted in Nicolae helping often with the dishes as well as cleaning bathrooms.

After supper, the boys do homework, sometimes practice piano, and then play video games or play outside. Some evenings, if the boys are bickering, one is sent outside to play while the other stays inside. This is difficult to do in the winter, however. According to Vasile, "bad days occur more often in the winter" because the boys are cooped up inside all day and because of the cold, "you cannot send them out to play." Other days the boys get along well and play together. Video games have been a point of contention in the home, with the boys extremely insistent on playing them and Chantal and Vasile often lacking the resolve to enforce a more

stringent limit on time played. Consequently, the boys play more video games than the parents would like. When the evening ends, Chantal or Vasile will tuck the boys into bed and then cuddle Daniel until he falls asleep. This is Vasile's favourite part of the day. Weekends are spent at a slower pace and the boys often spend time playing video games, especially in the winter.

A Former Place of Experience in Canada

Vasile and Chantal purchased their first house right after getting married and three years before they had their first child. It was in a mature inner-city neighbourhood known for its beautiful trees, proximity to the river, and high poverty and crime rates. The neighbourhood consisted mainly of houses and some apartments, as well as parks and playgrounds, and was a ten-minute walk from downtown.

Daily Life Throughout the Boys' Early Years

Before becoming a parent, Vasile remembers the trepidation he felt regarding the impending birth of their first child, as he was worried about the responsibilities that lay before him. Chantal felt more confident, having already had the experience of helping raise her niece and nephew when she was a teenager. Chantal and Vasile got along well parenting their young children together. They both contributed to childcare during the day whenever they were home. Vasile preferred caring for the older child, leaving what he refers to as the "maternal care" of the baby to Chantal. Often up in the night breastfeeding, Chantal almost always did the nighttime parenting, such as soothing and diaper changing, and was pleased to do so. The boys slept on Chantal's side of the bed with her for their first few years. She was contented that they "felt safe" beside her and likens the alternative of a crib to a "jail."

When their first son, Nicolae, was seven months old, Chantal went back to work and Vasile stayed home with him. Vasile recalls this solo parenting as being "a bit scary at first," but

he soon became confident in the routine of diaper changing, feeding, and stroller walks. When asked how the experience of parenting was, Vasile replied: "I think if you asked me then it was hard and if you asked me now it was fun." Starting at age 1, Nicolae went to a Tribal Council daycare affiliated with Aboriginal Head Start for a few years, and then at age 3 attended an Aboriginal Head Start preschool for a year, during which time Chantal was on maternity leave with Daniel. After Chantal's leave, Nicolae and Daniel were ineligible to attend the Tribal Council daycare or Aboriginal Head Start preschool because the Dupuis income was too high for the subsidized program. This was disappointing to Chantal because she appreciated the connection to Indigenous culture that the program provided.

With Aboriginal Head Start no longer an option, Nicolae and Daniel started going to a day home run by a Russian lady named Anna, whom the children referred to as Ma'am. Chantal recalls memories of Anna, who was "very, very strict":

> She would be like, "I'm going to put hot sauce on your mouth if you are saying
> bad words" and like those kinds of things. And ah, "I'm gonna take my stick after
> you" or whatever. She never really did but she just had this loud, booming
> voice . . . I trusted her, she never hurt them, and the kids wanted to see her all the
> time.

Chantal reflects on what she liked about Anna: "She just seemed like she was very structured in what she did, she gave them snacks, like healthy snacks, it was in her home, they got to play outside." Daniel and Nicolae both were both cared for by Anna until they completed kindergarten.

The location of Chantal and Vasile's house offered a distinct parenting challenge, because it was in an inner-city neighbourhood known for poverty and crime. Some residents in

the neighbourhood were drug users, and Vasile and Chantal strongly suspected that the people living in the house across from them were drug dealers. Vasile remembers both the responsibility and drudgery of always having to meticulously check for needles before allowing the boys to play outside, something he says he never would have had to do in Romania. A precaution that Chantal took was not allowing the boys to go to the playground a block away from their house alone, because she was afraid that the boys would be in harm's way of a "gang banger" or a bully. Chantal explains that many of the children in the neighbourhood were "going through a lot," and so there was always the possibility of them being mean to Nicolae or Daniel.

Given the high crime rate of the Dupuis's neighbourhood, their belongings, such as bikes, would often get stolen from their yard. Two years ago, a missing broom from their deck was the impetus for Chantal deciding that it was time for them to move out after a ten-year residence. Chantal explains:

> At one point my broom went missing. I had a straw broom that we would use to clean off the leaves from the picnic area and you know all this stuff and it went missing and I got so mad. And I was like, who the fuck steals my broom? I said, "That's it! We're moving." . . . They took my broom and that was just the straw that broke the camel's back.

Chantal and Vasile listed their house for sale, and within a month and a half it sold and they purchased their current home. Right before the move, Chantal learned that her broom didn't actually get stolen. Nicolae had used the broom to push something out from underneath the deck and inadvertently left it there.

A Former Place of Experience in Romania

Chantal and Vasile and the boys went to Romania for six weeks when the boys were 4 and 6 years old. They stayed with Vasile's mother in her apartment in a small four-storey building inherited from Vasile's paternal grandparents—the same apartment where Vasile spent many adolescent summer holidays with his cousin and his family. The low-profile apartment was very close to a major park in the city and built on the remnants of an old forest, making for an atypically quaint urban Romanian setting.

Chantal's Childhood

Chantal grew up with her mother and her father and her three sisters in a house in a residential neighbourhood at the edge of the city with parks, schools, and a small shopping area. Chantal's father is French Canadian but did not speak French in the home unless French relatives were visiting. Otherwise he spoke English. Her mother is Plains Cree and also has French heritage. She spoke English in the home, only speaking a select few Cree commands to Chantal and her siblings. English, then, was the primary language spoken in the Dupuis household. Chantal's father owned a construction company and took pride in providing financially for the family. Chantal, who got along well with her father, recalls him to be "a workaholic" who was "rarely home" and when he was home, he was "loud on the phone making the next deal." Chantal got to know her father by working for him occasionally as a child and then more regularly as a teenager. Chantal's mother helped with administrative work for the family construction business in addition to being a stay-at-home mother.

Chantal attended a Catholic neighbourhood elementary school from kindergarten (half-days) to grade 3. She remembers her grade 3 teacher repeatedly scolding her for her speech,

saying, "Chantal, you can't talk properly because your mom's an Indian[9]." Chantal's mother, fed up with the teacher's relentless poor treatment of Chantal, eventually transferred Chantal and her siblings to the neighbouring public school. Chantal recalls her mother instructing her to conceal the fact that she was "an Indian" prior to attending the new school. Chantal explains:

> Before we went to school Mom said, "Don't let anybody know that you're an Indian, hide it if you can." And so, we would hear other kids talking about "oh those dirty Indians" and what not, and we just had to pretend we didn't know anything about it.

Chantal explains that her mother's motive in instructing Chantal and her sisters to conceal their Plains Cree identity was to "prevent" the girls from "getting treated badly." Acting on this fear of being treated badly, Chantal recalls not wanting her mother to ever come to the school because her mom looked "Native[10]."

Returning home each day after school did not always offer Chantal relief from the prospect of racism. Chantal remembers the neighbour children directly south of her house throwing garbage into her backyard sandbox as well as making racist comments towards Chantal and her siblings. Maintaining her resilience despite the racism she faced, Chantal would attempt to escape these harsh realities of life through activities such as bike riding. She fondly remembers solo bike treks to anywhere in the city she wished, such as her frequent 30-minute ride along the river to the university.

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[9] The term *Indian* was coined by Christopher Columbus, an explorer who falsely claimed Canada as his discovery. When he met the Canadian First Nations people, he called them "indios" which is Spanish for "Indian" as he mistakenly believed that he was in the East Indies. Some Indigenous people today freely refer to themselves as "Indians" although the term is, among other things, inaccurate. The term is still regularly used in the Canadian legislation of the Indian Act (Indian Act, RSC 1985).

[10] An outdated collective term referring to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, now often replaced by the term "Indigenous." Some Indigenous people, however, still refer to themselves as "Native."

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One of Chantal's favourite childhood places—where she spent time all four seasons of the year—was an expansive park east of her house lined with pine trees. There, Chantal and her friends spent the warm summer days at the paddling pool, taking breaks to pick apples and voting on which were the tastiest. Chantal fondly recalls standing in the park in the windy days of fall communicating with the wind: "I would stand and pretend that the winds of the earth like to speak to me and then the wind would blow really strong." In the snowy winter, Chantal and her friends and siblings would sled on the hill at the park on a piece of carboard or, when they had one, a wooden sled. In the spring, a low-lying area of the park would fill with large amounts of water and when a thin layer of ice would form overtop, Chantal and a neighbourhood girl would attempt to shuffle across the ice without breaking it, moving from tree to tree. One day, when Chantal was about 8, she made her way to a tree but broke all of the ice around her. Too afraid to wade through the water back to dry ground, she was trapped. Her friend went running down the street yelling, "Mr. Dupuis, Mr. Dupuis, Chantal is stuck in a tree!" Chantal's father came to the rescue, a big construction shovel in hand, stepped into the water and retrieved her.

Chantal often hung out with a boy across the street from her house. They would have irrationally fast bike races, as well as "kissing fights" where the boy would charge the other neighbourhood kids a fee to watch them kiss. Chantal remembers watching movies with the boy in her basement and her mother making them popcorn. One time when her mother grabbed the pepper shaker instead of the salt shaker, Chantal's house instantly became the place to get her mother's infamous "peppered popcorn." Sadly the boy died in a car accident from reckless driving when he was 18. Chantal was devastated but did not attend the funeral because she "can't handle funerals"—only wakes. Chantal explains that this is because at wakes, people "visit and

enjoy each other's company" and "tell stories of the one that has passed," while funerals are filled with only sadness.

When Chantal was 10 years old, her 15-year-old sister Jill had her first of five children. Chantal, by using a baby carrier on the back of her bike, would take her new niece on bike rides to soothe her. When Chantal was 11, an age at which she describes herself as "really bad," she ran away from home and lived with Jill, during which time Jill had a baby boy. Jill struggled with an alcohol and drug addiction, and Chantal recalls being "basically the mom" and caring for the two children daily. Chantal lived there for a full year and then on and off for two years after that before returning to settle back in at her parents' home. She felt terrible leaving her niece and nephew in a less than optimal living situation, but she did not want to keep enabling her sister. Chantal keeps in regular contact with Jill's children, providing them with nurture and encouragement.

Despite Chantal describing herself as "really bad" as a preteen and teenager, she does not reveal any of her transgressions. It is evident, though, that she did a lot of good, being a constant source of hope and support for her sister's children while also focusing on her school work. With no high school in Chantal's neighbourhood, she bused across the river to a public high school for grades 9 to 12. In her later years of high school, Chantal worked as a delivery driver for a local fast food place.

In addition to her childhood friends, Chantal recalls her extended family being a source of support. She remembers her mother's eight siblings fondly, especially her uncle who would bug her and her siblings but was also kind and encouraging. One day Chantal was crying because some children had called her fat, and her uncle responded to Chantal affectionately, "You're not fat, honey, you're just fluffy." With these words, Chantal was instantly consoled. In addition to

her mother's siblings, Chantal also had five aunts and uncles on her father's side, but she rarely saw them—or her paternal grandparents—because they all lived a few provinces away.

Chantal saw her maternal mosôm and kohkom a bit more often than her other grandparents, because her mosôm and kohkom lived only one hour away on amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân (Beaver Lake Reserve). Chantal's mother would only bring her and her siblings to the reserve if a relative was dying or there was a wake to attend. The only time that Chantal was exposed to Plains Cree cultural ceremonies growing up, then, was at wakes—the one place where Chantal heard drums being played as a child. Chantal still remembers going to wakes as a child, especially her 40-year-old mosôm's wake when she was 3 years old. Other Plains Cree cultural gatherings, such as powwows, traditional feasts, and sweats, were never a part of Chantal's childhood, because her mother had not yet regained them as a part of her life due to her and her parents' negative experience at residential school.

Chantal recalls visiting her kohkom at her yellow house by the slough on the amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân. There was no running water, only outhouses for toileting, no telephones, and only some people had electricity. With no running water on the reserve, Chantal and her sister would walk to the well to get water. When they lowered the bucket, they could hear sloshing and splashing. As they walked back to the house, lizards would leap out of their pail.

Chantal explains that when her kohkum passed about 25 years ago, the reserve "took back the house" to pass on to someone else. Chantal explains:

> You don't have anything to give to your family . . . [the house] doesn't belong to the community, it belongs to the government. It's like they are our parent and anything that gets returned back to them is to give to the next person.

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The next occupant of the house, then, would have to have been someone who made the decision to reside on the reserve. This most certainly would not have been Chantal's mother, Denise, because Denise did not want to ever live on the reserve again, and as a matter of fact, to this day does not even like visiting there. To understand her dislike, it is necessary to first understand Denise's childhood experience, on and off the reserve.

Chantal's Mother's Childhood

Denise lived on amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân with her parents and siblings for a short time before being taken away with her siblings to a residential school in a nearby community run by the Roman Catholic church. Chantal explains:

> She was taken when she was 3 years old and put in residential school, and when
>
> they found out how old she was she had to stay in the corner and wait until she
>
> was old enough to participate, so she sat there and watched. And she wasn't
>
> allowed to be around her siblings because they separated everybody, and the nuns
>
> kept her in their room with them.

Denise attended residential school until grade 3 or 4 when she and her siblings were moved to a day school on the reserve. The day school was also run by the Catholic church with the same colonial government objective of residential school, but the students were allowed to go home each evening.

When Denise was in grade 8 or 9, the principal of the day school promised her that she could receive a home school education if she moved to a city an hour away to be a live-in babysitter for the children of the principal's son, who was an RCMP officer. Denise did not want to go, but the principal threatened to kick her out of school if she didn't, so she complied. Once she realized that the principal's son was not going to give her an education, she returned to the

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reserve. The principal, however, spiteful due to Denise's broken commitment to babysit, forbade her from attending the day school.

Not only was Denise shunned by the principal, she was also shunned by many others on the reserve for having left in the first place. The reason for Denise's new outsider status was multifaceted. First, people were upset that Denise had been allowed to leave the reserve to babysit the principal's grandchildren at a time when everyone else on the reserve was forbidden to leave unless granted a pass by the Indian agent. Second, because they incorrectly thought that Denise was getting paid for babysitting, they thought that she was getting a "leg up" by being a babysitter off reserve—an opportunity for freedom from the constraints of the reserve and a chance to get a financial and career start in life that the rest of them were not afforded. Last, people on the reserve thought that the principal favoured Denise because she had a slightly lighter skin colour than others on the reserve, and they accused Denise of using her skin colour as a way to try to get ahead. What they did not realize, however, is that Denise was being taken advantage of by the principal at the costly expense of her education and her relationships with those on the reserve. Ultimately, those on the reserve suspected that Denise was becoming less Indian and, in turn, acting white.

To make sense of what Chantal describes as her mother's situation of being accused of "acting white" and the "racism within a First Nation," Chantal refers to Beatrice Mosionier's book, *In Search of April Raintree* (1983):

> They talk about an apple: red on the outside but white on the inside. It's so true.
> So, if you are striving to get further ahead or anything, it's basically like you
> don't need to be here [on the reserve], like you're nothing to us type of thing. So,
> and my mom always, like my grandpa would tell her it's bad medicine, there's a

lot of bad medicine here on the reserve. Like you know if somebody didn't like

you, they'd put bad medicine on you.

Although Denise looked Indian (red on the outside, although a bit light), those on the reserve

thought that she was acting white (white on the inside) and therefore being a traitor to her people.

No longer feeling like she belonged, no longer comfortable on the reserve because of people's

reactions to her, and having no option of attending school, Denise left to the city.

Once in the city, Denise eventually met Chantal's father, and when Denise was 18 years

old, she became pregnant with their first child and they got married. Once married, Denise lost

her Indian status due to the colonial government's Indian Act of 1876 (Indian Act, 39 Victoria

1876), which stipulated that if a woman married a non-Indigenous person, she would be

involuntarily enfranchised and lose her status. This meant that her child was involuntarily

enfranchised as well (Indian Act, 39 Victoria 1876). Over a decade after getting married, Denise

completed her community-based adult grade 12 education. When Bill C-31 came into effect in

1985 (An Act to Amend the Indian Act, SC 1985), Denise applied for reinstatement and was

given back her status despite still being married, making way for her children to apply for status

as well if they wished. Chantal applied for her own status at the age of 16.

To this day, Denise still avoids going to the reserve unless someone is dying or there is a

wake to attend. Chantal is currently encouraging her mother to submit her stories of day school

in order to apply for (what is referred to as) compensation via a class action lawsuit against the

federal government. The lawsuit was filed by students who were subjected to emotional,

physical, and/or sexual abuse while attending a day school under the care of the Canadian

government (APTN National News, 2019; Deer, 2019; Tasker, 2019). Chantal says that her

mother, however, is having "difficulty putting that kind of stuff down on paper." Chantal

explains further: "My mom, she has difficulty sharing that information even now, like sharing what happened to her and how it made her feel, and she still struggles with it like quite, quite a bit." Chantal is intent on being available to support her mother should she pursue submitting her day school stories.

Chantal's Adulthood

Chantal started learning about her Plains Cree culture when she started attending university in her late 20s after working for her father for years as a tandem axle truck driver. While pursuing her bachelor of science degree in physiology, Chantal would attend powwows on campus and be instantly uplifted by the sound of the drumbeat. This sense of belonging and hope was strikingly different from her past experiences of only hearing drums at wakes, where, although united with others in sharing good memories of the deceased, her reaction was to weep with grief. Chantal found a further sense of belonging in her Plains Cree culture when she started her bachelor of education degree through the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) at the university. Chantal reflects:

> And just being connected there with all of the people and having teachings that
>
> weren't like you know, you shouldn't be an Indian, like don't let anybody know.
>
> It was way better in terms of figuring out my place, where do I fit, right?

Opportunities to learn about and celebrate her culture at university were transformational for Chantal and set her on a path of immersing herself in her Plains Cree culture in the years to come.

ITEP is a program for First Nations students—on traditional Plains Cree territory— distinct from the teacher education program that exists for Métis students. For Chantal, learning specifically about her Plains Cree culture at ITEP was important. Although her father is French

and her mother is Plains Cree, Chantal is quick to point out that she is Plains Cree, not Métis. Some people, however, upon hearing that her father is French, will ask Chantal if she is Métis and her response is swift and sure:

> No. Métis has their own traditions. So, they have Michif language. They do square dancing, like they jig. I identify as First Nations. . . . I attend powwow. . . . And I follow traditional spirituality, so where we think of the Creator and we think of all of the like, the medicines and the Cree language, the nêhiyawêwin language. So that's how I identify.

Chantal explains further: "Métis people have their own distinct culture, so a Métis person has the sash, the Métis person has the infinity symbol, they have the Red River cart." When Chantal and her sisters were growing up, the few cultural activities that they were part of were distinctly Plains Cree. They attended wakes on amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân, and their mother spoke bits of Cree to them—not the Métis language of Michif.

After completing her degree, Chantal worked for the tribal council as an Aboriginal Head Start program coordinator and also took a temporary position as the health centre director on the university campus, where she dealt with situations such as suicide and sexual assault. Next, she worked as a safe house coordinator for the tribal council. At the safe house she provided emergency care for youth who were living on the streets and who were involved with prostitution and drugs. Chantal enjoyed the job, but she eventually tired of being on call 24 hours. Consequently, she then worked as a teacher on the nearby kihêw-tipahaskân (Eagles Reserve) for four years, after which she began teaching for her current school board in the city. She has worked for this school board for the past nine years, during which time she completed her master's degree in education.

Chantal's favourite pastime, by far, is spending time outside connecting with Mother

Nature. She explains:

> It's being connected, like you can hear the birds singing. . . . My backyard's
>
> amazing, smelling the flowers, smelling the different plants that are growing.
>
> Listening . . . the wind through the trees. The birds. We have chipmunks, squirrels
>
> that just make a whole bunch of ruckus when we're in their space.

For Chantal, nature is a place of rejuvenation and calm. This appreciation of nature is reflected in

the blue and white colours that she sewed on her ribbon skirt—in addition to the yellow, orange,

and red power colours given to her when she received her Indian spirit name. Chantal reflects on

the addition of the blue and white ribbons:

> So, I added blue for water because when I'm by the water—if I'm having a really
>
> rough day, I go and sit by the water. And I think about how the water goes by and
>
> if I just put my troubles there and they are gone. And I put white because I think
>
> about clouds. Clouds will come and then clouds will go.

Like clouds, Chantal realizes that her troubles come and go. Despite any adversity in her life, her

connection to nature sustains her and brings her calm. In addition to spending time outside, often

with her boys, Chantal enjoys spending time with her mother, sisters, and her work colleagues.

Vasile, however, is Chantal's ultimate source of support and calm: "He's my cheerleader and the

one who picks up my pieces when I've fallen apart. . . . He's my puzzle maker."

Chantal's current workplace of pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik (Thundering

Spirit School) has been a source of cultural learning for her. She interacts daily with Elders,

language keepers, and other Indigenous teachers and attends regular powwows and feasts hosted

by the school. Each day Chantal engages in cultural activities with her students, such as

Women's Circle, sage picking, and medicine walks. On her medicine walks, Chantal shows her students plants and describes their medicinal uses: snowberries used for soap and lotion; white powder from trembling aspen bark used as an insect repellent or sunscreen; salicylic acid from the boiled inner bark of trembling aspen used to treat skin irritations; parts of cattail to start a fire; and cattail to eat as snack.

In addition to her workplace, another source of cultural learning for Chantal has been an Indigenous medicine camp that she attended with her family this past summer in a nearby province, where she learned about the traditional medicinal uses of plants. At the end of the camp, Chantal participated in talking circle and was presented with medicine bundles by an Elder, signifying her journey to becoming a medicine keeper. Chantal shared about what the camp experience meant to her. She reminisces:

> And I was given my bundles of medicine and I said that you know a couple days
>
> before I came to medicine camp, I saw on Facebook this meme that came up and
>
> it said "I practice my culture because my ancestors were not allowed to." And I
>
> said, this means so much . . . because now my mom can be proud of being who
>
> she is, right? I can show her all these things that she was denied.

Since her attendance at the camp, Chantal has been teaching Denise about traditional medicinal plants. Recently, when Chantal went to visit her parents on their farm, Chantal noticed pineapple weed growing between the cracks of the concrete by the front door. Chantal rubbed the pineapple weed between her fingers and let her mother smell the tropical aroma, explaining that dried pineapple weed can be used like a calming chamomile tea. Impressed with her daughter's traditional Indigenous knowledge, Denise was excited to learn more, so Chantal proceeded to show her mother other medicinal plants growing near her house. Chantal was very encouraged

by her mother's interest in her knowledge. Chantal dreams of one day becoming a doctor or pharmacist focusing on land-based medicines, but she has set this dream aside in order to both continue her job as a teacher and spend time with her sons.

Chantal is the one generally teaching her mother about their Plains Cree culture. When Chantal was a teenager, however, Denise taught her to sew—a skill that Denise herself learned from her adult education teacher, who taught her to sew moccasins. While her mother's first project was moccasins, Chantal's first project was sewing cloth diapers at age 15 for her second-oldest sister's first born. Having since connected to her Plains Cree culture through her university experience at ITEP and through her career as a teacher, Chantal now sews ribbon skirts and other traditional Plains Cree clothing.

Vasile's Childhood

From birth to age 5 Vasile grew up in an apartment in a city in Romania with his Romanian mother and father, who spoke Romanian. He was cared for by his grandmothers from age 1 to 5 while his mother worked as a nurse. Vasile's grandmothers both lived out of town but would take turns staying at the home. Right before Vasile started kindergarten, Vasile's father, an army officer, was transferred to a large city a few hours away, and they resided there for the remainder of Vasile's childhood. The family lived in a two-bedroom unit in one of the many apartment buildings. Vasile was an only child but was very close to his cousin just two years older, who was also an only child. For two months each summer, from grade 5 to high school, Vasile and his cousin would alternate spending the summer at one of their homes. Vasile fondly remembers his maternal grandfather taking him and his cousin for long walks and remembers asking his "easygoing" grandfather to buy him candy and cake: "As long as it was a reasonable request, it was met immediately." His grandfather's spoiling was a nice contrast to Vasile's

father, who was very strict. Vasile explains, "I was told what to do and I was expected to do it." Vasile always complied with his father's orders, never coming to know what would happen if he didn't.

From kindergarten to grade 4, Vasile attended a local school and was fortunate enough to be cared for by a babysitter in his home before and after school. His babysitter walked him to and from school in kindergarten, but from grade 1 onwards, he walked alone. After grade 4, Vasile—like most children in Romania at the time—was a "latchkey kid" because his parents were at work when he departed to and arrived home from school:

> Unless you had a grandparent in the house there was no organized daycare. So,
> our generation grew up with a key on a rope around our neck. You went to school
> and you came back, unlock, and you were all by yourself in the house.

Vasile attended a school farther away from grade 4 to grade 8 due to the high enrollment in his local school, and then a high school chosen for its academic rigour from grade 9 to 12. He commuted to both schools alone via public transportation with multiple transfers. Each day after school, Vasile would enter his home using his key, complete his homework, and, when he was younger, wait for his parents to arrive home so he, like the other neighbourhood children, could receive permission to play outside.

Vasile explains that, for his generation, the "key around the neck" did not symbolize independence but rather a "lack of other possibilities and the fact that the parents could not do otherwise." The lack of possibilities included the fact that there were little or no daycare options for families (it was illegal to start a business such as a private daycare) and the reality that Vasile's grandparents were living in a different city. Vasile's situation was unlike his parents' generation, where children usually had a mother at home.

As a young child, Vasile fondly remembers playing soccer with the neighbourhood boys or playing hide and seek and dodgeball with the boys and girls in the cement courtyards among their high-rise apartment buildings. Vasile recalls "wishing to have Western toys or clothes" like the rarely seen faded Levi jeans or plastic electronic toys. Instead, he wore plain jeans and played with his many Romanian toys, which he describes as "crudely made out of metal." At school Vasile played games with boys only and recalls that the obvious difference between the boys' and girls' uniforms prompted their segregation. Vasile and the other children got along well and generally behaved at recess despite no adult supervision.

Vasile acutely remembers the emphasis put on rote learning throughout his schooling, beginning in grade 1, and the stress to "memorize" and "reproduce" facts such as "the heights of mountains and the lengths of rivers." Vasile says that curiosity and inquiry were not really fostered at school, although his parents fostered them at home. "At home it was different. If I asked a question, my parents would elaborate. I would read books. So, it was almost like a disconnect between school and at home." Vasile's parents read often, especially Vasile's father, who would often suggest books for Vasile to read. Aside from playing outside, reading classic literature from the 19th century, such as *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson, was a main form of entertainment for Vasile. TV viewing was minimal, as there were only ten minutes of cartoons aired per day among the nearly constant stream of communist political propaganda (and a few uninteresting grown-up movies). Once Vasile was in high school, his father continued to suggest books for him to read, and Vasile fondly remembers reading classics such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*.

Vasile recalls becoming "more aware of the repressive regime" of his communist country as he neared teenagerhood, thus marking his imminent loss of innocence. He explains: "Yeah,

when you're just a little kid you just play, you don't care, but then you start noticing things . . . at about grade 7, 8. And it was very acute for everybody in high school." At that point Vasile remembers being aware that he would "have to deal with eventual problems with the government," and he recalls one such instance where he and his school friend got in trouble for mistakenly showing disrespect to the president of Romania:

> We were in high school, grade 9, we were horsing around like teenagers and we were kicking the soccer ball in the classroom. And one kick managed to hit and smash the portrait of the president . . . just by accident. You know that got us in big trouble. If it was a window or anything else wouldn't have been such a big deal but because it happened to be a portrait of our beloved president, we got in trouble much worse.

Vasile explains further that phone calls home were made by the teachers to Vasile's and his friend's parents:

> The parents were called and given a speech that next time it will be politically interpreted—next time. That was the very first thing they did right then and there. And I do not think that the teachers did it because they were meanies, but because they were expected to do it. So, I think we were supposed to learn from an early age there are some things that can be done and can't be done.

From then on Vasile was acutely mindful of the authoritarian rules that he must carefully adhere to living in a communist country.

While being aware of the importance of following the rules of his country, Vasile also learned that other directives of his communist country did not have to be so carefully followed. For example, there was the expectation from the government that the Romanian people hold

atheist or secular beliefs. Despite this, Vasile's family—like many others in Romania—celebrated Christmas, sitting down to a meal at 7:00 p. m. that lasted past midnight. He fondly remembers the cabbage rolls, his grandma's desserts and, starting at age 7, being allowed to drink a little bit of wine and feeling quite important as a result.

Despite their grand Christmas dinners, Vasile's parents sometimes acknowledged the government's push for secularism. For example, Vasile's parents would give him a gift on New Year's Eve rather than on the 25th of December. This was a result of his parents following the government's prompting to remove the religious celebration of Christmas and instead focus on New Year's Eve. Regardless, Vasile explains that the government had little influence over whether or not people celebrated Christmas, because it was during the winter holidays, and the schools could not be enlisted to help discourage the religious celebration. Easter, though, occurred when school was in session and teachers at the school tried to dissuade the Easter celebration. Vasile explains: "But Easter it was not an official holiday and in order to discourage us to celebrate they would organize stupid activities at school we were supposed to come and attend, which we usually didn't." Despite not attending these activities, there were no repercussions from the government. Vasile sums up the government's somewhat lax enforcement of a secular society, explaining that in Romania, religion was "tolerated" but discouraged, as the country was "officially atheist."

Notwithstanding the varying disadvantages of growing up in a communist country, Vasile does cite advantages: "When it's a tightly controlled society there are some benefits to it. No drug dealers at the corner of the street or parents worried if their kids went outside to play." Vasile further explains that there was no worry on the part of the parents about "predatory

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adults." He lived a very secure childhood, safely getting to and from school alone and playing outside without adult supervision and no one worrying about his safety.

Vasile's Parents' Childhood

As a result of their own impoverished upbringings, both Vasile's mother and his father continually encouraged him to do well in school so that he could eventually have a career with a good income. Vasile's paternal grandfather was a prisoner of war in World War Two and was released from Russia seven years after the war ended. Vasile's father and Vasile's two uncles, then, were parented solely by their mother for many years. She found it difficult to provide financially for the family, and all three boys had to help out. Vasile describes the effect of this on their childhood:

> My father and [his brothers] had to grow up very fast and be responsible. There
>
> was lots of deprivation. They didn't at times have food. So, they had to grow up
>
> fast and they didn't have much of a childhood.

Vasile's mother grew up in poverty as well, because her father was an alcoholic who could not be depended on financially.

Vasile explains that both his mother and father grew up under the parental view that childhood was only a stepping stone to what came next in life: "They saw the childhood as a stepping stone to adulthood when you have to care for yourself and your family. So, while you're a kid you have learn and behave." Because of their childhood experiences, both Vasile's father and his mother valued the ability of a person to provide for oneself and had high expectations for Vasile's school and career success. Consequently, Vasile's father was very strict with Vasile, acting out an army-like expectation of order and excellent behaviour.

Vasile's Adulthood

As a young adult, Vasile completed his civil engineering degree in Romania in the same city in which he grew up. He worked there as a research engineer for three years before immigrating to Canada in angst after his father died. Vasile explains: "My dad died of cancer and there was, still is, very poor healthcare, and I was mad. I said, 'That's now how you treat people?'" Vasile explains his understanding behind this treatment of his dad: "Because [in Romania] if you're healthy and you can work, you're okay. The minute you are sick, you know, there are very little resources and . . . you're a liability to the country." When Vasile immigrated to Canada, he initially lived in a very large city, where he found the residents to be unfriendly. A Romanian friend convinced him to move his current city, which was smaller and more amiable. Once settled, Vasile then took his master's in engineering at the same university Chantal was attending. After seeing how Chantal enjoyed teaching, he went on to complete his bachelor of education and certification in special education. He currently works regularly as a substitute teacher.

Vasile's identity is multifaceted. He identifies as a European citizen belonging to the European Union rather than identifying as solely Romanian. Vasile explains: "Romanian culture is just a subset of European culture, and I grew up in Romanian culture but was also exposed to a lot of other cultures in Europe." In addition to his European ancestry, Vasile also acknowledges his very recently discovered Jewish ancestry, which he refers to as "important." Their Jewish ancestry came as a surprise to both him and his mother through DNA testing, and Vasile has since signed up as a member of the Jewish community in his city as a way to begin to learn about his Jewish heritage. Vasile also identifies as Canadian. He believes that since he made a conscious decision to come to Canada, he must express an allegiance to his new country and

become accustomed to its ways of being without hesitation. Alongside integrating into Canadian life, Vasile enjoys getting together with local Romanian families, where the adults visit and the children play.

Vasile's main hobby is to spend time with his sons engaging in whatever they are currently captivated with. Vasile explains:

> We go metal detecting, we go fishing. They come and show me what they built on Minecraft and I go there and even though I don't understand anything I say, "That's great." They tell me what that character does, and I have to listen and remember which character they like and which they don't.

In addition, Vasile is also content spending time with his boys learning about Plains Cree culture by, for example, taking them to cultural celebrations and participating in the Indigenous medicine camp.

The Courtship, Wedding, and Choice of Residence

Chantal and Vasile met 18 years ago when they were both going to the same university as mature students. Chantal, tired of the bar scene and hoping to find someone who she could develop a deep committed friendship with before a romantic one, put an ad on an online dating site for "someone to talk to." Vasile responded two days later, suggesting that she meet him and his friend at a lounge. Cautious, Chantal declined, afraid that the two strangers might, as she describes, "hit me with a roofie" by putting a date rape drug in her drink. Chantal and Vasile settled on meeting on campus between classes instead, with Vasile assuring Chantal that he would be wearing khaki pants and a blue shirt.

One the day of their meeting, Chantal waited at their designated meeting area. She spotted a man pacing back and forth who she suspected might be Vasile, but she was unsure

because he was wearing greenish pants, not the tan-coloured khaki pants she had anticipated. Both Chantal and Vasile eventually let go of their hesitation and approached each other. It turned out that Vasile's khaki pant marker was lost in translation. In Romania, khaki most often means a greenish colour like the army wears, not the tan colour that Chantal was anticipating. They became quick friends. After a few months of spending time together and Vasile bringing Chantal flowers and chocolates regularly, Chantal finally asked Vasile if they were dating each other and he affirmed the relationship.

Chantal and Vasile were married by a justice of the peace in the city in which they reside. They had planned to have the wedding along the riverbank, but due to rain got married in the architecturally stunning atrium of the university building where they first met. In attendance were 30 family and friends: Chantal and Vasile's local Romanian friends, Chantal's family, and Vasile's mother, who travelled from Romania. Chantal wore a long, flowing white wedding dress with a shawl and a beautiful pair of moccasins that she made with her mother and beaded by herself. The moccasins were a labour of love, initially made three sizes too big by accident, but generously fixed by a more experienced Indigenous moccasin maker. Vasile rented a traditional tuxedo after having no luck fulfilling his dream of finding a blue and yellow suit like that of the movie character Napoleon Dynamite. During the ceremony, a passage was read about a tipi, which signified the act of honouring, respecting, and supporting each other in marriage. Chantal explains the premise of the tipi passage:

> He meets me at the door and he walks me around the tipi and then when we get to
> the other side we've been found together, we may enter our new life and in to our
> home as one. . . . It was about being connected and taking each other and
> supporting one another just as a tipi supports.

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After the ceremony Chantal and Vasile and their guests shared a 13-course meal at their favourite Chinese restaurant.

Both Chantal and Vasile are pleased to be living in their current city in Canada. Vasile is particularly pleased with how friendly and small the city is and has no desire or intention at this point in his life to reside in Romania. Chantal is content to still be living in the city where she has resided all her life and is pleased with the job that she holds as a teacher. The couple sometimes dreams of winning the lottery and living in Italy, with its temperate weather, and Chantal dreams of retiring in northern Canada, where she would enjoy the serenity of nature and a "simple existence" of "gardening and fishing and hunting." For now, they are content raising their boys in their current city.

Parental Ethnotheories: Exploring the Dupuis's Experience Parenting Their Children

This section on parental ethnotheories (Super & Harkness, 2002) acknowledges the role of Chantal's and Vasile's cultural belief systems regarding the nature of the child and its influence on the day-to-day care of their children. These parental ethnotheories comprise implicit and explicit culturally constructed understandings of the child, such as the child's roles, abilities, and needs—all in the context of, and instantiated by, the daily physical and social settings and customs and practices of care (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). Below I discuss six topics that comprise the Dupuis's parental ethnotheories and relate them to their experience raising their children.

Topic 1: Interactions in the Community

Regarding the topic of interactions in the community, both Chantal and Vasile have noticed differences between their recent observations in Canada and Romania in how children relate to adults in the community, how parents relate to teachers on behalf of children, how

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adults relate to children in the community, and how children relate to each other in the community. First, Vasile and Chantal have found that in the Romanian and Plains Cree traditions, children are expected to greet adults, whereas in the wider Canadian context, children are not often seen extending such respect to adults. Second, Vasile believes that parents themselves extend disrespect to adults when they blame teachers for their child's behaviour and academic performance, thus averting the child's responsibility to be accountable for school behaviour and performance. Third, Vasile finds that in Romania, adults rarely relate to children other than their own when out in communal places such as playgrounds, whereas Chantal finds adults in Canada to more readily interact with children in the community. Fourth, both Chantal and Vasile find that children in Romania, as compared to Canada, keep to themselves in public spaces such as playgrounds rather than interact with other kids unless they know each other or their parents know each other. The exception to this, though, is in playing games such as soccer, where neighbourhood children will band together to make teams.

Children Relating to Adults in the Community

Vasile has noticed that in Romania, children are expected to greet adults with whom they are familiar on their own initiative:

> Well, if the child is known to the parent, he's the one expected to salute the older
>
> person first, customary. . . . So it's not like "Hi Johnny, how are you doing?", it'd
>
> be, Johnny would be "Hey Mister Vasile, how are you?" Not the other way
>
> around.

This respect for adults, and seeking them out to greet them, is also a part of Chantal's Plains Cree ways, especially when it comes to interacting with Elders and relatives (this is expanded on more

in the section titled "Chantal: Children as Belonging to a Cultural Community and to Next of Kin").

In contrast to her expectation of respect shown by children to adults, Chantal has noticed it to be the norm for many Canadian children to show disrespect to their parents: "In Canada there's not that fine line, like you see lots of kids showing disrespect to their parents." For Chantal, respect includes children being obedient to parental requests. "I think if it's not their own parent they do show a level of respect, like but not, they don't show that same level of respect to their own parent." Instead, Chantal says that children have the attitude of "I can do what I want when I want to do it." Chantal tries to work against this trend by expecting respect from her own children.

Parents Blaming Teachers for Their Children's Behaviour and Academic Performance

Vasile finds parents in Canada to lack ownership of, or even acknowledge, their children's behavioural or learning struggles at school. Instead of taking ownership, Vasile has witnessed that parents will accuse the teacher of not being able to teach properly and blame them for their children's struggles, thus modelling to their children a lack of respect for the teacher. For example, Vasile says that a parent, when told by the teacher that their child is struggling in class, might reply: "[My child's] a genius, but you don't understand him, and you can't reach him." This is congruent with Vasile's own teaching experience in Canada, where Vasile will often "present the fact to the parent" regarding their child's misbehaviour or learning concern in his classroom, and the parent will respond "No, no, it's not this issue, you're wrong." Such a response completely shocks Vasile. Vasile describes his disbelief of a particular situation where he phoned a parent regarding a student:

I had to phone a parent because their child was missing a lot of classes. And the

mom said, "But when he's in class are you helping him?" That was the first thing

she asked. In Romania a parent would be, "Okay, I'll look at it, or okay,

something is wrong."

Vasile reflects further:

In Romania the parent would go to the teacher's meeting and the teacher would

say this, this, this. The parent would acknowledge and may or may not follow

through, but it would be almost unheard of to fight back the teacher [by saying]

"no, you're wrong."

With this in mind, Vasile finds parents in Romania to be "more responsible" in their roles as

parents and thus more likely to readily take ownership of their child's shortcomings and

struggles. Vasile explains that even "struggling" parents in Romania will take responsibility for

their children rather than blaming the school:

Even if that parent did not deliver, they did not expect the school to take over or

to make up for their lack of parenting. My opinion here is some parents have the

mentality of "here school, take my child, raise him, it's your job." So definitely

there were failing parents back home, but they did not have the audacity to claim

it's somebody else's fault. . . . And if the teacher said that "So-and-so doesn't

learn," that was it. It was no questioning, "How come, maybe you did not teach

them," right?

Adults and Children Relating to Each Other in the Community

Vasile finds that in Romania, as compared to his experience in Canada, families talk less

with other families when in public spaces. Vasile explains, "It's not customary back home to

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walk past somebody you don't know and greet them. Not at all . . . might be perceived as even weird." During the joint interview, Vasile reflects on his experiences and observations of social interactions in Romania, for example, at playgrounds:

> It's not random interactions. The parents know the parents and the children know
>
> the children. So, it's, if it's in a park it's more likely kids are playing together is
>
> because of the parents know each other and they are there to supervise.

Chantal affirms Vasile's comments, pointing out that when they were at playgrounds in Romania with the boys, "No other kids really came to play with us" and Vasile explains that this is because when people know each other, they tend to stay in a "closed circle." Vasile says this is different from his experience at playgrounds in Canada, where parents tend to be "more chatty" with one another—even if they don't know each other—and children play with "whoever happens to be there."

When out in public spaces in Canada, such as playgrounds, Vasile finds parents more likely to interact with children other than their own. This is in contrast to what Vasile has witnessed in Romania, where he rarely sees adults interact with children who are not their own, especially when it comes to disciplining. Vasile explains:

> In Romania, unless the other kid does something really bad, other parents avoid
>
> disciplining them or lecturing them or interfering with them. . . . Unless the other
>
> kid beats on your kid . . . you stay out of it. . . . If you notice that the parent is
>
> there you will approach the parent and say "your kid is doing this to my kid."

Vasile goes on: "The parent will seek the other parent. It's not that necessarily they avoid confronting the kid, but it would be perceived as rude to bypass the other parent." He concludes:

"To summarize, we don't interact with other children. Unless something urgent, serious had to be addressed in there."

In contrast to Vasile's practice of not approaching children, Chantal, is at ease approaching other children in Canada:

> I don't know if that's just the teacher in me, but if some kid, like if something's going on, I get in there. Like I mean, I'm like, what are you doing? Or I'm trying to like make sure a bigger altercation or something doesn't happen. So trying to get them to see each other's point of view and but then kids all come and talk to me too. . . . It's more, it's open, but then maybe it shouldn't be that way 'cause of safety reasons.

Chantal, then, like Vasile, finds that adults interact with children in public more often in Canada than in Romania.

Child-led Play in the Community vs. Supervised Activities

Vasile has fond childhood memories of informally gathering together to play soccer in the courtyard of surrounding apartment buildings with other children, and he enjoys seeing other children do this when he goes back to Romania to visit. In contrast to this, Vasile is surprised at the amount of supervised activities that he sees children engaged in in Canada. For example, in his current Canadian neighbourhood—compared to where he grew up in Romania—children's days are tightly scheduled by the parents, with the children frequently attending activities such as organized sports under their parents' watchful eyes. With this close supervision, Vasile believes that "parents are more in control of their kids' playtime" and that there is "not as much spontaneous play outside" with neighbourhood peers. Instead there is the very common practice

of children's games such as soccer being refereed by adults instead of children refereeing the games themselves.

Referring to adults refereeing children's games, Vasile comments, "In Romania that's unheard of, if it's kids game, they settle the things between them. Actually, they don't even have a referee, or if it's a referee it's another kid." Vasile explains that, for example, soccer for children is "not a sport, but a play." Vasile continues, "They are playing football, that's how we actually say it, 'playing football,' so play. So, it's perceived like an actually playing." Vasile cites the term "playing football" as *jucand fotbal* in Romanian, and the word "to play" as *Joaca*. He emphasizes that this play is primarily for enjoyment and only secondarily to win. Vasile explains the children's role: "They make up their own teams. They set the plays, they set the time. It's not like the parents are following." Vasile continues:

> The kids from Building A will play the kids from Building B, something like this.
> They're not going to another neighbourhood to play with their team. It's whoever
> is outside is going to be split in two and there we have teams.

> In addition to neighbourhood soccer games, Vasile also recalls half-day soccer

tournaments in high school that were completely organized and refereed by students.

Vasile explains that even though playing child-led soccer in the school yards or on the streets is the most common in Romania, there are some organized soccer teams with sport clubs, but when children engage in an organized sport "it's no longer perceived as play, it's sport." During the games and practices children rely on one another, rather than adults, for support. For example, Vasile says that in his experience he has witnessed that parents in Romania only attend "one or two games" per season and "the training sessions never or almost never." Vasile finds this different than his experience in Canada, where parents attend much more frequently and

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often drive their children to practices and games rather than expecting them to take public transport.

Topic 2: Safety

Chantal and Vasile are intent on keeping their children safe, and their biggest concern lies in how Nicolae and Daniel navigate being out of the house without parental accompaniment. While Vasile cares about his children's safety—and like Chantal sometimes worries about the children being abducted—Vasile finds teaching the boys the Canadian concept of "stranger danger" to be unnecessary. Rather than instilling fear in the boys, Chantal and Vasile instruct them in how to stay safe and allow the boys opportunities to go out together, just the two of them. One daily opportunity comes from being latchkey kids, where the boys get to and from school alone while their parents are at work.

Latchkey Kids

As latchkey kids, Nicolae and Daniel leave the house in the morning and lock it, take the school bus to and from school, and let themselves into the house at the end of the day—most often before their parents arrive home from work. Vasile is comfortable with this arrangement, having grown up like this himself. Although Chantal grew up with her mother seeing her off to school and greeting her when she arrived home, she is comfortable with the boys being latchkey kids as well, as long as they look out for each other and stay together. Chantal explains:

> Well, they had the bus stop way at the corner and so they would always make sure that, you know, they always walk together. With all this discussion of like you know, child kidnapping . . . it just eases our mind that there's two, 'cause it's harder for two to get stolen than it would be for one.

Chantal has also thought out scenarios considerably less serious than kidnapping, and so has made sure that each boy has a house key in their school bag. Chantal explains: "If one gets in before the other one and tries to play a trick and locks the door, then the other one knows how to get in." When Chantal and Vasile arrive home, they are greeted with either peace or discord. According to Chantal: "They've [either] got themselves settled by the time we get home or they're fighting: 'Daniel did this today on the bus' or 'Nicolae hit me!'" Regardless, the time the boys spend at home alone before and after school is limited, because their school bus commute lasts nearly two hours a day.

"Stranger Danger"

Vasile thinks that in ideal world, he could let his children play outside "without worry" that they could be "kidnapped or abducted." He believes that this ideal would be possible in Romania, where he has little concern about abduction, but not in Canada. Vasile recalls when he was first introduced to the concept of "stranger danger," where Canadian children are taught by teachers and parents that any stranger is dangerous and, as such, children should not talk to them: "I was amused when I heard that young kids are being taught about stranger danger." Vasile goes on: "We don't say that to our kids. They know that if they [encounter] a stranger, there is no need to interact with them, but . . . I was not taught to perceive them as dangerous." In the Romanian context, Vasile explains that a stranger is "just somebody you don't know." Vasile reflects on how his parents prepared him to be alone in the community:

> I do not recall my parents telling me to be aware of my environment until I had to
> go to school by public transportation, and it was not necessarily "Don't talk to
> strangers" but more "Look before you cross the street, make sure the light is
> green."

Chantal and Vasile prepare Nicolae and Daniel to go out together in the community by instructing them to stay together when they go for a bike ride. Further, Chantal has recently showed the boys how to take the bus to the arcade so that eventually they can go on their own. Oftentimes, however, the boys are encouraged to stay and play in the safety of their backyard. This is in contrast to when Nicolae and Daniel were younger and the family resided in an inner-city neighbourhood. There, the boys were not allowed to play on their front sidewalk without a parent first checking for needles, or to play at the nearby park without parental accompaniment due to gangs as well as needles on the ground.

Topic 3: Understandings of Children

Chantal and Vasile each articulate the roles of children. They articulately express their understandings of children, that is, how they view children's abilities and needs, and what images come to mind when they think of caring for their children. Chantal views children as connected to the land, as belonging to a cultural community and interdependent family, and as receiving parental guidance. Vasile's understandings of children center around two core beliefs: (1) each child has unique characteristics, and so "one size doesn't fit all" when raising and relating to children, and (2) while the child is cared for at home by their parent, the child is expected to accomplish certain responsibilities. In addition to expressing their views regarding the roles of children, Chantal and Vasile also articulate the roles of parents.

Chantal: Children as Connected to the Land

Since attending the Indigenous medicine camp this past summer, Nicolae and Daniel have been very keen to learn about traditional medicines from Chantal. She takes any opportunity to teach them about local plants and their medicinal purposes, and in turn they are eager to point out plants that they recognize. Last summer, Vasile and Nicolae decided to take

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Nicolae's new metal detector to the local nude beach to see if they could detect any metal treasures in the sand. Nude Beach is known both for its native prairie vegetation and beauty and for the few people who go swimming there in the nude. Upon their return from the beach, Nicolae was extremely eager to tell Chantal what he had seen at Nude Beach. Chantal explains: "Nicolae he comes and he's like 'Mom! Mom! Guess what?' and I'm like 'What?' Like I'm just like oh my goodness, what. He's like 'Nude Beach is full of horse tail!'" The next week Chantal went back to Nude Beach with Nicolae, Daniel, and Vasile, and they harvested some of the horsetail. Chantal refers to horsetail as "joint grass" and makes tea out of it to help with arthritic joints. It can also be used to cleanse the kidneys and bladder.

Chantal's priority of connecting to the land includes teaching her boys how to survive off of the land should they ever need to. Last summer Chantal read Gary Paulson's novel *Hatchet* with the boys and they discussed how the main character survived on his own in the Canadian wilderness at the age of 13. The book was an impetus to foster the boys' outdoor survival skills such as harvesting medicines, hunting, gathering, and preserving food. Once winter came, Chantal and the boys attended a workshop where they learned how to trap animals such as rabbits. Chantal believes that learning to survive outdoors is not only a practical skill for the boys, but also a "reconnection to culture" and traditional Plains Cree ways.

Chantal: Children as Belonging to a Cultural Community and to Next of Kin

Chantal hopes that a lasting contribution to her children's lives will be them "knowing they belong" to a cultural community. Chantal explains: "I never really felt like I belonged anywhere until I started learning about my culture." For Chantal, this belonging was largely born out her experience attending ITEP at university. Chantal expands on what belonging means to her: "That whole idea of belonging, like your land, your space, your community, your family, all

those things . . . your race, your traditions." Chantal talks about how everyone in life seeks belonging, and says that everyone should be treated as equal:

> That [mentality of] "I'm better then you because you are down over here," I think that needs to change. Because there really is no need to, everybody has wants. Everybody does. Everybody has needs. But we are all people first who want to belong, we want to be connected, we want to have love, we want to be nurtured.

Chantal knows well the feeling of not belonging from her childhood: "I had to hide who I was as an Indigenous person; we were considered separate." Now, however, Chantal also knows well the feeling of belonging to a cultural community, which for her is her workplace of pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik (Thundering Spirit School) where she engages with Indigenous colleagues, parents, and students. She finds that the relationships that she has in that Plains Cree community make it "easier to connect to people, easier to raise kids" and make her a stronger parent. Pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik is also a place of belonging for the boys and Vasile, who are warmly welcomed to feasts and other celebrations.

Chantal's mother has been learning about Plains Cree culture alongside Daniel and Nicolae as they attend cultural community events together. This emerging belonging is a new experience for Denise, who, according to Chantal, grew up "never feeling like she belonged." Denise, who had only ever attended wake feasts, joined Chantal, Vasile, and the boys a few months ago for her first ever traditional feast. Chantal sewed her mother a ribbon skirt for the occasion. The traditional feast, celebrated during the change of seasons and commencing with a pipe ceremony, was held at Chantal's workplace, pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik (Thundering Spirit School). Vasile pulled the boys from school that day to attend. Prior to attending the traditional feast, Denise was apprehensive. Chantal explains:

Yeah, she was panicking . . . she is always afraid the other Natives are going to

treat her badly. Like, she has always had this fear of that she thinks she has been

anglicized, like you know? Like that she has been outed . . . ostracized.

In spite of her apprehension, Denise was warmly welcomed at the feast.

Chantal wants her boys to have a strong sense of belonging, not only to a cultural community, but also to their relatives. One particular interaction with an Elder at a traditional feast at Chantal's workplace highlighted Chantal's priority of family connection. In this interaction, Chantal, Vasile, Nicolae, Daniel, and Denise entered the gym for the feast, and the Elder insisted that all the females sit on one side of the gym and the males on the other. This was in contradiction to what Chantal was taught: "I was taught that family stick together when you do feast." Vasile asked Denise about the practice of separating males and females and Denise explained that when she went to funeral feasts as a child, her father made sure the family sat together. Denise explains that this family cohesiveness was purposefully weakened by the Catholic church when her mother went to residential school. Hence, the practice of separation at the feast at pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik was actually a practice implemented by the church long ago.

Chantal reflects on her mother's experience of being separated from her siblings while at residential school and the impact that it had on Denise as a child and later on as a mother:

[My mom] wasn't allowed to talk to her sisters, she wasn't allowed to be with her

brothers, like it was very, everything was so not together. . . . So, it was very hard.

You think about how a kid grows up, that they have this nurturing family unit and

[then] at residential school there wasn't that, you were kept from that. So, how,

when you get out of school, how do you have a family? How do you know what

you are supposed to do with your kids? So, I see that in our students that we work

with, is that their parents haven't given them the nurturing because they don't

know how to do that, they weren't given it. Their parents didn't have it because

they were taken at residential school. And kept there away from their family, so

there is no family connection. There is no "This is my brother; this is my sister."

Chantal explains that because of her mother's residential school experience of being separated

from the love of her siblings, she, as a mother, tried very hard to nurture relationships among her

own children: "My mom tried really hard to keep us all together, always together to rely on one

another." Chantal does the same for her boys, often telling them things like "You need to know

how to rely on one another" and "I want you guys to be taking care of each other." Chantal

believes that this interdependence will benefit the boys as they grow into adulthood.

In keeping the family together, Chantal also strives to be a very nurturing parent, so that

the boys will "feel that they matter," feel a strong sense of belonging and love in their home, and

treat one another with kindness. Therefore, each night before bed, Chantal cuddles with Daniel

as a way of "filling his bucket"—a reference to the children's picture book *Have You Filled a*

Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud (McCloud et al., 2006). In the book, doing kind things for

someone builds up that person with good feelings, allowing them to feel confident and happy and

extend kindness to others. Chantal most often fills Nicolae's bucket by taking him on errands to

the store, during which time he talks with her about whatever is currently salient to him. This

gives Nicolae a sense of being heard and fosters a connection between him and Chantal.

Chantal is very keen on her boys extending kindness to their relatives and nurturing a

shared family belonging by greeting them at gatherings. She explains,

The person who's older and who's like you know in your relations, or in your

connections, you need to go and say hello. . . . It's not even if they pass [by you],

it's like you need to go and find them and say hi if you're at an event or

something.

For example, when Chantal, Vasile, and the boys were at amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân (Beaver

Lake Reserve) last summer, she instructed her boys to greet their relatives—even those that they

had never met. Chantal explains:

Over the summer I had a family gathering on the reserve and my one cousin was

on day parole because he was drinking and driving. And so, it was a day we all

got together, we were going to go and clean off the cemetery, like the graves of

our relatives, one of which is his dad who died from suicide. Anyways, he was

there and so when I got there I was visiting with the relatives and I said, "Oh,

Nicolae and Daniel," I said, "I need you to go and say hello to that man over

there." I pointed to him and said he is my cousin, go introduce yourself. So, off

they went, and they went and said, "Hi, my name is Nicolae and my name is

Daniel."

Chantal believes that when the boys go and introduce themselves and shake a person's

hand, they are "showing a sign of respect" to them. In addition, Nicolae and Daniel are helping

the person to identify them in the context of their wider Plains Cree relations (i.e., "sons of

Chantal" and "grandchildren of Denise" from amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân [Beaver Lake

Reserve]). Chantal refers to most of the boys' relatives on her maternal side of the family as

cousins because, since there are so many relatives of varying ages and parentage, identifying

everyone can be confusing for the boys: "Everybody is cousins, so they don't get so confused."

Chantal: Children as Receiving Guidance

Chantal sees her role as a parent being to provide her children with guidance so that they challenge themselves to learn new skills, gradually moving towards independence. For example, when the boys "start showing responsibility" such as helping in the kitchen, Chantal will introduce a skill through a gradual process. "You start giving them small bits of time to show your independence and show your trust of that, right, to give them those opportunities so they can learn." Chantal explains: "First I show you, then we do it together, then you do it and I'm watching, and I know you are okay to do it on your own." When things don't go as planned and mistakes are made by the child, Chantal considers it part of the learning process.

Chantal recently taught Daniel how to use the microwave, but his first independent attempt resulted in a smoky kitchen as he accidentally cooked a bag of popcorn way beyond the required time. Chantal recalls her reaction to Daniel's misstep: "Yeah, okay you are going to wait a little bit longer before cooking, I don't want you to hurt yourself." Despite the mishap, Daniel, like Nicolae, now knows how to cook something, such as eggs, toast, soup, and noodles, and will soon be cooking supper for the family one night a week. Although Daniel has learned to cook some things, he is not as keen on doing dishes since his last attempt when he pulled a handful of cutlery out of the dish drainer and a fork slipped out and poked his toe. He has since announced that he will never do dishes again, to which Chantal replied, "one thing at a time," implying that there is still time for him to learn to do dishes despite mistakes made.

Despite being present to guide her children in learning a skill, Chantal holds back when it comes to jumping in to protect them from adversity. Chantal allows her children to face the consequences of failing to fulfill responsibilities such as homework. She explains:

I see a lot of parents you know protecting their child, and when I say this I mean

quotation marks "protecting" their child is that they will make excuses for a

reason why a child didn't do something rather than having that child take

responsibility for their own actions, right? Learning from the mistake. Whereas if,

like I know for my own experience that I make sure my kids learn from their own

mistakes, I try not to make excuses for them.

Ultimately Chantal wants her children to learn to take responsibility for their actions, and she

hopes to achieve this by allowing them to make mistakes and deal with the repercussions, rather

than her intervening to remedy the situation.

Vasile: "One Size Doesn't Fit All"

Vasile acknowledges that his children have different temperaments and asserts that "one

size does not fit all" when it comes to the needs of his children. Vasile believes that giving a

child increasing responsibilities is not predetermined by age: "Somebody can be very mature at

11, somebody can be unreliable at 18." With this in mind, Vasile's parenting decisions for his

boys are, to an extent, "individualized" and based on their "different characters." For example,

Vasile points out that Daniel will "befriend anyone at any time" whereas Nicolae has a "harder

time making friends" and requires Vasile's encouragement to talk to people. In another example,

Vasile points out that Nicolae is more sensitive than Daniel. He explains: "The same amount of

lecturing will hurt the older one," whereas "the youngest will kind of deflect it." Vasile goes on:

"I think that again for the same amount of criticism Nicolae takes it harder, or at least for

longer." Vasile's parenting, then, differs between the two boys based on temperament.

In the larger context of the school landscape, Vasile believes that "one size does not fit

all" in terms of how children are disciplined and how children are expected to relate to each

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other amid conflict. Vasile finds it strange that in Canada, when there is wrongdoing among children, everyone gets a talking-to. Further, he is surprised that when there is a confrontation among children, adults intervene before the confrontation has even had a chance to play out. Vasile explains:

Every confrontation is cut short and my experience is that everybody involved

gets in trouble, which I find a little bit strange, . . . So, it's kind of everyone is

given the same amount of talk and punishment.

Vasile notes that this is different from his experience in Romania, where only "the one who starts [a fight] gets in trouble [and] the victim is the victim." Vasile, then, was confused one time when Nicolae's teacher called to inform him about a peer confrontation that Nicolae was witness to at recess. Vasile was left to wonder why he was even called by the teacher, since Nicolae was neither a victim nor a perpetrator of the incident.

Further surprised by the nature of schools in Canada, Vasile is also baffled by the fact that most children are taught that "everybody has to be friends with everybody" whereas in Romania, Vasile has witnessed that children are allowed to be friends with some children and not others. Vasile believes that the latter is more beneficial to children:

You naturally aggregate towards your friends and you learn how to cope with

somebody that doesn't like you . . . rejection and reality. Because when we grow

up, we have our circle of friends. Good friends, and people we don't like.

Reflecting on this idea of rejection and reality, Vasile reminisces about supervising at recess at a school in Canada:

I was also subbing at elementary school . . . it shocked me, this grade 3 boy came

to me, and said "They don't want to play with me." I said "Yes, what can I do?"

[The boy then responded]: "You have to make them play with me." I said "No, I can't do that." It was obviously told to them that everybody has to play with everybody, and everybody has to be nice to everybody, everybody is bringing everybody Valentine's cards.

In contrast to this "everybody has to play with everybody" mentality, Vasile believes that children should choose who they want to play with, without worry of offending anyone.

Vasile: The Child as One Who is Provided for at Home by the Parents

Vasile believes that parents, not the government or civic authorities, should have full responsibility in providing for their children. "Coming from Romania I'm kind of used to doing things on my own. Not to expect things from the city hall to happen." Vasile explains: "So, I expect the city to clean the roads, to take the garbage, and of course to have a school nearby." Vasile is clear, however, of his responsibilities, stressing, "the family is my job." Vasile does not expect monetary assistance or parenting help or skills from, for example, social services or community programs in raising his children. If Vasile wants his children to join a particular extracurricular activity not available in his neighbourhood, he will provide that activity with the help of other parents or will take his children elsewhere.

Vasile perceives his children to need physical guidance and protection, especially in the early years. He also believes that what he as the parent provides for his children changes over their lifespan. For example, in the first two years of each of his son's lives, Vasile focused on how his children were going to "evolve health wise" since both boys were born a few months premature. Vasile's concern for his boys' health progressed from protecting them from the flu, to monitoring how their speech was developing, to checking to see if they could do age-appropriate tasks such as throw a ball. Vasile found that once his children started attending school there was

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a "decreasing of guiding the child"—although there was worry on his part "about the child's adaptation to a classroom environment and learning capabilities."

Now with his children requiring less physical guidance and protection, Vasile focuses on providing them with intellectual guidance and emotional care. For instance, Vasile always makes sure to ask the boys what they learned at school each day. If the boys need help with a particular concept, he will help them in order to "put them on the right learning path." Further, intent on fostering a consistent emotional connection with his sons, Vasile engages with them in their favourite activities, such as Beyblades with Daniel and machinery and repairing things with Nicolae. Vasile also makes sure to watch out for the boys' socio-emotional well-being by keeping track of how their friendships are going. For instance, when a neighbourhood boy was obstinately being too physically rough with Daniel, Vasile told the boy's mother that the two boys were not a good match and could no longer play together. The mother was offended, but this did not concern Vasile because Daniel's well-being was more important than the mother's reaction. Above all, Vasile believes that the greatest emotional care that he can provide his boys is an emotionally "stable environment" where his and Chantal's "marriage is stable," they have a "worry-free house" filled with "happiness," and their living situation is established.

As his children get older and move towards teenagerhood, Vasile believes that the dynamic of communication between him as a parent and his children changes, and that it is his role to adjust to this and respond as necessary. For example, Vasile has noticed that 12-year-old Nicolae has been "directing the conversation" by asking Vasile questions regarding You Tube videos. Vasile explains: "So, actual interaction with the oldest is more from him to us. With the youngest it's still from us to him." With Nicolae's increasing confidence to take initiative and direct things, however, he has become quite bossy with Daniel. Vasile explains the parenting

responsibility that comes with this: "We have to actually keep the oldest in check not to boss the younger around, which he tends to." Vasile believes that when the boys enter high school it will be his role to continue to guide them, as they will be faced with "more temptations, more choice." Vasile will continue to guide them by providing both "encouragement" and "discipline." And, as the boys grow out of teenagerhood, Vasile will "help them choose a career and become fully adult," at which point Vasile will "still keep an eye on them . . . just to make sure that they are safe and making good choices."

Vasile: The Child as One Who is Expected to Accomplish Certain Things

Vasile believes that if his children are provided with physical, emotional, intellectual, and social support from him and Chantal, that the children then have the capacity and responsibility to "develop," "acquire," and "accomplish" certain provisions for themselves. These provisions include connection with the immediate family, which is of top priority for Vasile, friendships with peers, and intellectual curiosity. First, Vasile elucidates his expectations of the boys as family members: "If we provide a stable family, they should acknowledge it and create bonds." This includes respectful bonds between children and parents and bonds between the boys as siblings. Second, in addition to family bonds, Vasile also expects his children to develop friendships with peers. Third, Vasile believes that children have a responsibility to be intellectually curious in order to become lifelong learners, which requires the acquisition of self-control.

While Vasile expects his children to develop various capacities, such as family connections, friendships, and a commitment to lifelong learning, he does not expect them to do it on their own, but instead believes that it his role to teach them to "make right decisions." For example, while Vasile believes his boys should develop their own friendships, he offers guidance

by reflecting with them on current friendships, thus allowing them to develop their own "self-awareness." Despite his guidance, Vasile also believes that his children should develop independence, something that he sees "growing in time" as they get older.

In addition to fulfilling the above capacities, Vasile believes his boys should be thankful and "realize what's done for them" by him and Chantal rather than take it for granted. Vasile does not want his boys to act like many children he sees in Canada who, according to Vasile, have "little awareness of what hardship really means in other countries." Vasile explains: "I don't think children here [in Canada] realize what really hardship is in other parts of the world, you know. Don't have drinking water, you can have a bomb exploding over your head." By having his children fulfill responsibilities for themselves, Vasile feels that they will be less likely to take their life circumstances for granted and will respect what he and Chantal have given them.

Topic 4: Sources of Parenting Influence

Chantal and Vasile relied on parenting books to inform their parenting when they were first expecting Nicolae and during the subsequent early years. Now, however, Vasile's parenting choices are influenced by his own childhood experience of having strict parents and his continual effort to be less strict than them. Chantal, on the other hand, currently relies on her childhood experience of helping raise her sister's children to inform her parenting choices, as well as occasional advice from family and friends—with the exception of her mother-in-law.

Chantal and Vasile: Prenatal Classes and Books

When Chantal and Vasile were expecting their first child, they prepared by attending prenatal classes and reading books. During the joint interview, Chantal and Vasile look back on this time of preparation. Vasile, with nods of agreement from Chantal, reminisces about the

prenatal classes: "When [Chantal] was pregnant with the first one, she took me to prenatal class . . . which I found useless." Because Nicolae was born a month early, the birth plan that Chantal and Vasile made during a prenatal class was no longer relevant. The physicians, then, became the only decision makers during the birth. In addition to the prenatal classes, Chantal and Vasile also read parenting books. Chantal read *What to Expect When Expecting* (Murkoff et al., 2008) and *What to Expect in the First Year* (Eisenberg et al., 2003). Vasile pursued the same books at his leisure, but used them only as a reference to look up select information. Chantal and Vasile also used what Chantal refers to as "Doctor Google" to look up medical needs in the boys' early years.

Vasile: Not "Too Strict" vs. "I Wish I Was More Strict"

Vasile's parenting choices are often placed in opposition to his own childhood experience with parents whom he found to be "too strict," particularly his father, who "was the one putting the guidelines and the rules down." Vasile defines his relationship with his parents as a "love-hate" one, recalling the army-like expectations of his father: "If you haven't done this thing you cannot do this thing. You have to do this by this time. There were no negotiations." Vasile always complied with his father's demands but believes that this continuous demand/compliance sequence caused him to lack independence as a child. Intent on not making the "same mistake" as his parents, Vasile has chosen to take on a less strict parenting style in order to foster his sons' independence.

This less strict parenting plays out in the manner in which Vasile enforces things such as his sons' chores and piano practice. For example, for Vasile, the purpose of putting the boys in piano lessons is for them to "develop some musical sense" and be able to choose later in life if they want to more seriously pursue music or not. Vasile expands: "In an ideal world, that's how I

think it should work, the child should be exposed to everything and see where he naturally goes."

Vasile continues: "Or at least the parent makes an educated decision based on what he sees."

With the goal of exposure to music in mind, and the hope that the boys will express their desire

to pursue their preferred extracurricular activities, Vasile does not strictly enforce piano practice.

Vasile explains, "I'm not forcing them to practice over the week too much, just a little." Vasile

also tries not to be too strict in enforcing particular chores and gives his children alternate

options. This flexibility is in contrast to Vasile's experience as a child. Vasile explains: "When I

was growing up, if I had to go and do something it was that and nothing else." Vasile explains

his reasons for giving his children options:

> I don't think the choring itself is important, but for them to be given
>
> responsibilities to see that there are things they have to carry out and accomplish
>
> and finish. So, if it's sweeping the floor or washing the dishes, it doesn't matter, I
>
> want them to carry through on a task and keep the commitment.
>
> With Vasile's conscious choice to be less strict with his children than his parents were

with him, he vacillates between the sense that he is making the right choice and bewilderment

that perhaps he is not. Vasile describes this predicament:

> It's not too clear for me how much independence I can allow them and how many
>
> rules I have to impose. . . . It's more like make it up as I go. Sometimes I ask
>
> myself, "Do I let them get away with too many things?"

This predicament is further apparent when Vasile talks about overseeing the boys' academics at

home:

I'd like to make them love learning without forcing it upon them. As it is right

now, I think they are playing too much and learning too little. But, if I was to

clamp it down, they might hate learning even more.

Vasile is caught between wishing for his boys to spend more time on academics but not wanting to force things. In contrast to this, when Vasile talked previously about giving children options in the chores that they do, and then reflected on how regularly the boys actually do chores, he concluded: "I wish I was more strict." So while Vasile is intent on not being too strict like his parents, he sometimes struggles with wishing that he would be stricter with his children.

Chantal: Advice from Friends and Family and Reflecting on Past Experience

Chantal occasionally calls on her own family, as well as friends and colleagues, for parenting advice. In addition, she is sometimes given unsolicited advice by her own family or friends, but these impositions do not concern her. She explains: "I don't even take note of it if it's not worth listening to. Yeah, I just would zone out." There is one person's unsolicited parenting advice, however, that Chantal has struggled to deal with—the advice of her mother-in-law, Getta. When caring for her grandchildren as infants, Getta often insisted on different parenting methods than Chantal or Vasile, and this frustrated Chantal. For example, when Nicolae was an infant, Getta would not let visitors touch him, in fear that they would pass on germs, when it was Chantal's preference to allow others to touch Nicolae. In another instance, Chantal recalls when Getta would wrap Nicolae as a baby tightly onto a stiff pillow. Chantal would use her arms to signal "stop" while firmly saying "Don't!" and Getta would respond by saying "No, no, no" and continue to keep Nicolae tightly wrapped. Chantal was upset by her mother-in-law's refusal to take her direction and frustrated with their lack of ability to communicate with each other in a common language. She found the language barrier, however,

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to actually be advantageous. Because Chantal speaks English and Getta Romanian, they could not get into detailed and extensive arguments—only brief ones.

While admitting that being a mother of young children is "very difficult," Chantal seems to have transitioned into the role with ease and without much need for parenting advice. This is perhaps due to her extensive experience being a primary caregiver of her niece and nephew for a few years starting when she was 11 years old. Not only did that experience give her practice with the physical demands of parenting, but also more recently gave her retrospective pause about how she was going to relate to her own children. Consequently, Chantal tries to "be more of a friend to her kids" than her sister was to her own children. Despite this friendliness, Chantal asserts, "[My boys] trust me, and they know I am going to make them do things that they don't want to do. . . . I still enforce, but it is very kind and gentle." Chantal takes time daily to relate to her children in warm and positive ways.

Topic 5: Language

The primary language spoken in the Dupuis household is Chantal and Vasile's common language of English. Chantal uses a little bit of Cree and French, and Vasile speaks Romanian when his mother visits—and very occasionally when Nicolae requests particular translations. Chantal wishes that Vasile would teach the boys more Romanian, and tries her best to teach the boys some Cree. Both Chantal and Vasile are pleased that the boys are learning French at school.

Vasile: Language Priorities for the Boys

Nicolae and Daniel predominately speak English, which is one of the official languages of Canada. Although Vasile is pleased that the boys speak English, he succinctly sums up the irony of English being the family's primary language: "The thing is, my maternal language is Romanian. Chantal's parents are French and Native. We speak English at home by accident.

Normally none of us should speak English if you think about it." While other languages explored in the Dupuis family are seen to be a conscious choice, English is viewed by Vasile as an accident—yet at the same time an almost inevitable happening and something that would take considerable effort by Chantal and Vasile to *not* be spoken in the home.

Although Romanian is Vasile's mother tongue, he is not keen on his boys learning it. Nicolae, however, is intent on learning Romanian through the Babble app and YouTube, as well as through his best friend Andrei, who is fluent. Vasile does not initiate teaching Nicolae Romanian, but when Nicolae occasionally asks Vasile to teach him Romanian words, Vasile will. Vasile prefers the boys to learn French instead of Romanian—which he does not see as useful to the boys—because it is a more universal language and is a part of Chantal's cultural heritage:

> My oldest is keen to learn Romanian, but I'm not endorsing it. Learning a language is time consuming, so I'd rather have him allotting that time to learn French, which is more useful language. Well, first of all we have French background in the family. So actually, [Chantal's] dad grew up speaking French, so, we want to reconnect to this.

Although Chantal's father grew up speaking French, he did not speak to Chantal in French when she was a child. Vasile does not blame Chantal's father for not teaching her French as a child, but rather blames the attitudes of western Canadian society in general, which "did not consider French as important" as English. Vasile heavily prioritizes French over Romanian for the boys but is not completely against them learning to speak Romanian at some point. He explains: "Just prioritizing. If they grow up and they master French and they want to learn some Romanian I'm fine with it." Vasile says that his mother, who speaks Romanian and next to no

English, supports this decision to prioritize French over Romanian, saying that she too believes French is a "more important and a more useful language," "is broader," and "still has relevance to the family."

Another reason that Vasile wants the boys to learn French is because he believes that every Canadian should show an "allegiance" to their country by learning the two official languages—English and French. In Vasile's English-dominant city in western Canada, however, many speak English but not French. Vasile feels that this is exclusionary of Quebecers from eastern Canada and of other fellow French Canadians. Vasile reflects: "We have Ukrainian speaking here, it's a generation that made a conscious decision to come to Canada and Canada is their home and apparently, they're happy here, yet French is unimportant." Vasile goes on: "It's important to at least try and learn the second official language. At least try and learn." Vasile believes that this unwillingness by some people to learn French "doesn't help the national unity" in Canada. Further, Vasile believes that if a Canadian has yet to learn French, then as an act of allegiance, French should take precedence over any other additional languages learned. With this in mind, Vasile is surprised that additional language learning, such as Japanese, for example, is publicly funded in high schools without the prerequisite of being enrolled in French.

Vasile is pleased that his boys are in French immersion but is surprised and disappointed that a joint French/Cree immersion program is not offered. He finds the common Canadian practice of limiting a child's language instruction at school to only one additional language to be perplexing. Vasile explains:

> There is a lack of stability in the education system because we could have
>
> enrolled them in the Cree immersion, but then they would not be exposed to the
>
> French, so we had to choose. Ideally . . . if you want to take French and Cree it

should be offered. . . . I don't think it's a very extravagant request to have this

kind of thing offered together.

Not only does Vasile think that more than one language should be offered to children in school, he also believes that Cree—or other Indigenous languages—should be a priority as well as French, because Cree is a language Indigenous to Canada.

Chantal: The Cree Language

Chantal grew up in an English-speaking household, where her mother's use of the Cree language was limited to times when she "would get mad" at Chantal and her siblings. Commands used included kâya sâmina (which means "don't touch that"), cêskwa (which means "just wait"), kawsimok (which means "go to bed"), and kakitôw-kohkôs kôtinik êkâ pônyawitamani (which means "you have to be quiet because the pig spirit is going to come and take you away if you are not quiet"). A kohkôs, the pig spirit, is a monster that eats children.

In addition to these commands, Denise had learned what little Cree she knows at an early age from her cousins and other children on amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân (Beaver Lake Reserve). Denise's father knew how to speak Cree but did not speak it to Denise or her siblings and actually forbade them to speak it. This was due to his experience at residential school, where students who spoke Cree were punished.

Chantal fondly recalls a time when she taught Vasile a Cree word and he pronounced it so perfectly on his first attempt that they took it as an opportunity to play a joke on Denise. Chantal explains:

The Romanian language and Cree language, they have similar sounds. Yeah, like

in Romania the "c" is a "ch" sound. In Cree, the "c" with any vowel is also "ch"

sound. So, he [Vasile] has these sounds in his language. It's funny because I

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taught him how to say "cêskwa," which means "just wait." He said it so

perfectly. . . . So, then I said you know what, I said I'm going to teach you this

word and when my mom comes over, I want you to say this to her. I made him

say "cêskwa kâya sâmina!", which means "Just wait, don't touch that!" And so,

she walked in the door and she was coming in . . . and he said that to her, like

really kind of straight and she stopped . . . and she was looking at him like "What

did I do, like why?" Like because it's "just wait, don't touch that!" He said it so

perfectly, the look on her face, she is like "You are talking to me in Cree? What?"

So, he couldn't hold a straight face and he just starts giggling. My mom is like

"Ah, you!" She hits him and walks by. It was so, so perfect.

Denise was especially surprised by Vasile's apparent Cree-speaking ability because, since

Chantal and Vasile had just started dating, she was not yet aware of the sounds held in common

with the Cree and Romanian languages.

Chantal: Language Priorities for the Boys

At home, Chantal introduces her boys to Cree words here and there, especially when she

takes them on medicine walks. As Chantal learns more Cree, she hopes to share it with her boys,

so that the language "doesn't die." To work towards this goal, Chantal is currently learning some

Cree alongside her students from the resident Cree teacher. She will often ask the Cree teacher

how to say certain words, and if the Cree teacher is not around, Chantal and her students will

look up words in search of the correct pronunciation.

Chantal does not speak Romanian but can "pick up some words here and there." She

wishes for Vasile to teach their boys more Romanian, and during the joint interviews says to

Vasile: "I would want you to speak more Romanian to the boys and teach them Romanian. I

know you try to do a little bit, a little bit more of that would be nice." Vasile acknowledges her request with a relaxed nod, and the conversation naturally diverts elsewhere. While Chantal and Vasile have different views on the boys learning Romanian, French language learning is a priority for both Chantal and Vasile, and they are both pleased that the boys are learning French at school.

Topic 6: Identification and Identity

Chantal and Vasile identify their children in various ways, as well as have hopes for their children's own identity. Their identification of their children's cultural heritage includes the choice to (1) gather with Romanian family and friends, learn about Romanian and European culture, and attend Plains Cree cultural ceremonies and gatherings and (2) influence their children's exposure to their cultures while allowing their children to choose their identity (3) have Chantal's French-Canadian last name of Dupuis as well as having each family member gifted with their own Plains Cree Indian spirit name. In regard to the boys' identity, Chantal and Vasile are both clear that the boys can pursue whatever cultural identity, or identities, they wish.

Cultural Traditions and Gathering With Friends

Nicolae and Daniel have opportunities to experience their Romanian culture through their cultural connections with Romanian friends and relatives, as well as through Chantal's efforts to teach the boys about their Romanian culture. The Dupuis family spends a lot of time with Romanian friends, particularly Elana and Matei, who have two children—Andrei and Roxana—the same age as Nicolae and Daniel. The children refer to as each other as "cousins." The Dupuis regularly go to Elana and Matei's house for traditional Romanian meals as well as attend the local Romanian Orthodox church for special occasions. Getta, Vasile's mother, has also been instrumental in passing down the Romanian culture to the Dupuis family each time she has come

to Canada to help care for the boys. She visited for two months when Nicolae was born, two weeks when Daniel was born, a year when the boys were 4 and 6, and two months when they were 7 and 9. When she was visiting, Getta taught Chantal how to cook Romanian dishes for the family. Chantal has kept this skill alive by using a Romanian cookbook and accessing a store in the city that sells foods imported from Romania. Further, she sometimes plays Romanian music through satellite on her phone in the evenings.

Vasile exposes the boys to the general European culture rather than focusing on Romanian culture. Vasile explains this decision: "I don't think of Romanian culture, but more as the European culture. So, if I expose them to classical music, I feel they're exposed to my part of culture." To achieve this, Vasile shows the boys how to look up classical European music on YouTube and encourages them to continue with their piano lessons. Vasile also encourages the boys to read European history. He plans on reading classical European literature with them, such as Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, because he has found that books in Canadian schools are "digested" and "shortened" to simpler forms, such as *Jean Val Jean*.

Chantal, unable to rely much on Denise to provide her with cultural connections and immersion, takes it upon herself to learn about her Plains Cree culture and pass it on to her boys. Chantal reflects on this process with her sons: "Just having those opportunities to take them out and go to ceremony . . . sometimes I'm experiencing something for the very first time and they're with me." Chantal's workplace, pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik (Thundering Spirit School), has been a main source not only for Chantal's learning but also for the learning of Vasile, the boys, and Denise, as they all attend ceremonial gatherings such as feasts at the school. Vasile believes that going to feasts and other events is an important way of teaching the Plains Cree culture to the boys. In addition to gatherings at pihêsiw âhcahk kiskinohamâtowikamik,

Chantal and Vasile also occasionally take the boys to gatherings on amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân (Beaver Lake Reserve). Another valuable immersion opportunity has been the Indigenous medicine camp, which has given Chantal the skills to take the boys on regular medicine walks in their own province.

Parent's Influence, Child's Choice

With Nicolae and Daniel having French, Plains Cree, and Romanian heritage, Chantal believes that it is the boys' choice what cultural identity they want to align with. To make sense of this, Chantal points out that she identifies as Plains Cree while her sister identifies as Métis: "My sister, she thinks of herself as Métis, that's her identity, even though we're exactly the same." In comparing her identity to that of her sisters, Chantal highlights the fact that she and her sister have each chosen their own distinct identity, despite having the same parents and upbringing. Although Chantal is clear that she herself is Plains Cree, she does not automatically assume that her boys will identify as the same:

> Like I don't want them to think that they're a cookie cutter shape of who I am,
> because they're not. They have Romanian in them, so how they identify and what
> they accept from our cultures make up who they are. What do they believe in?

Chantal believes that the boys will choose which of Chantal's and Vasile's cultures will become a part of their identity.

Although Chantal believes that her children will each form their own cultural identity, she believes that it is her role as a parent to provide them with "information" about their cultures. She does this through bringing the boys to cultural activities as well as through fostering their relationships with friends who have the same cultural background. Chantal explains: "It should be their choice, they're their own people, right? I will show them what I have or the information

I know and then what you accept, what you believe in yourself—that becomes part of you."
Chantal also describes how she wants her boys to go beyond the information that she gives them
and seek out their own answers:

> I hope they can seek out what they need to know, to find places, like so part of
> like my own learning is showing them that I'm going to go and look for what
> information I need. So, if you want to learn about something then you go and you
> look for it, right? It's not just going to automatically come to you, you have to be
> a part of it, you have to experience it. So, if you want to learn Romanian then we
> need you to be going for visits to the Romanian people who are speaking
> regularly. If you want to learn nêhiyawêwin and do Cree cultural activities, then
> we have to find those places for us to do those activities. You want to learn more
> French stuff, well I'll have to go and find those things.

Here, Chantal transitions into using "we" as she imagines herself and her children seeking
information together. So, while Chantal wants her children to take initiative in what information
they want to learn, it seems that she will be present to support the process.

Vasile has more preconceived notions of identifying his children's culture than Chantal
does. Setting a narrow Romanian identity aside, Vasile expects his children to first focus on their
French (and more broadly European) as well as Plains Cree culture. During the joint interview,
Vasile explains:

> I hope they will learn French so they are able reconnect with the European French
> identity culture, to experience it directly. So they will make a choice, but they
> have to be able to form a choice. So, if I want them to reconnect to the French

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identity, which I don't want it to be lost, they have to learn French. And they'll

probably decide if they're more French or Native. I don't know.

Chantal rebuts this comment from Vasile—while Vasile intently listens without comment—

pointing out that the boys should also have Romanian as an option for their cultural identity and

it should not be denied to them in the same ways that the French and Cree cultures were denied

to Chantal as a child. In response to Vasile's comment that the boys will "probably decide if

they're more French or Native," Chantal says:

> Or even Romanian, it depends on them. But having those options open to them,
>
> right? Giving them the tools or like you know, the stepping stones, so that they
>
> can find themselves. Because like growing up—my own thinking on a lot of that
>
> identity stuff—we weren't raised in French culture and my dad was French. We
>
> weren't raised in Indigenous culture because of all the things that happened to my
>
> mom and her family from like residential schools and reserve living and the
>
> Indian Act and whatever it may be, like that all was taken away. We were not
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> given any of it, right? And then having the opportunity to learn it, right, and so
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> having to be when we go to Romania showing the kids, this is what this is, these
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> are the foods, this is the dance, this is the language, this is the history, right, that
>
> that's all available, right? Like that gives them that opportunity where like you
>
> know I was, growing up I didn't have that opportunity. Where do I come from,
>
> should I feel good about being who I am?

Chantal is intent on the boys being exposed to all of their cultures, including the Romanian

culture.

Both Chantal and Vasile work for each other's culture to be passed on to their sons. Chantal, who is firm in her belief that the boys' Romanian culture is as important as French, cooks Romanian dishes and plays Romanian music. Vasile is intent on focusing on the boys' French and Indigenous culture through their schooling and attendance at ceremony. In contrast to this focus, he provides them with limited exposure to their specifically Romanian culture, despite Chantal's desire for him to do so.

Naming

Chantal and Vasile chose their boys' first names at birth based on their connection to family and to both western and eastern European culture. The boys' middle names—Nicolae's being Adrian and Daniel's being Paul—were chosen based on personal preference and because they are common names in both Canada and Romania. The first name of their eldest son, Nicolae—who is often called Nick for ease of pronunciation for his Canadian friends and relatives—has both paternal and maternal roots. Chantal's grandfathers were both named Nicholas, Chantal's father is named Nick, and Vasile's father's middle name was Nicolae.

The first name of Daniel for Chantal and Vasile's younger son was chosen to honour Chantal's deceased Aunt Christine, who passed when Chantal was pregnant with Daniel. Following a traditional Indigenous protocol to protect the baby she was carrying, Chantal did not attend Aunt Christine's funeral. Chantal originally wanted the name Christopher for her baby because it is close to Christine, but according to Chantal's mother, Aunt Christine strongly disliked her own name. Consequently, Chantal and Vasile chose Daniel instead, since Christine's godfather's name was Dan, a name which Christine apparently loved. Daniel was also chosen because it is a common Romanian name. Chantal and Vasile are flexible in both the use and meaning of Daniel's name. They allow an aunt on Chantal's father's side to call Daniel "Dan"

because it is easier for her to remember and she prefers it, and they never correct Chantal's Uncle Dan on Chantal's mother's side for proudly claiming that Daniel is his namesake.

When Chantal and Vasile got married, Chantal kept her French surname and Vasile kept his Romanian one. When Nicolae and Daniel were born, however, the boys were given Chantal's surname of Dupuis. Vasile explains this choice:

> I wanted the kids to have the French name. Because it's easier in Canada to have a French name than a Romanian name. . . . If you have a Romanian name you are perceived right away as an immigrant or a newcomer. If you have a French name you are flagged more under the radar.

Further, Vasile does not want his boys to be faced with questions surrounding their Romanian heritage:

> Questions like, "Oh, is this Hungarian name? Is this a Russian name?" And most of the time they're wrong, so you have to start to explain where it comes from and I don't want to make them do that. They might not like it.

Rather than singling out his sons, Vasile wants others to simply assume that they are Canadian.

When Nicolae was in grade 2, Vasile decided to on take Chantal's last name of Dupuis "for the practicality of it," after being tired of the school continually assuming that Chantal and Vasile were a divorced couple. Vasile is content with his unconventional decision to take on his wife's name: "In Romania it's customary to, I would say 99 percent, the woman takes the husband's name, but I don't really care." What Vasile cares about most is that Chantal and Vasile will be perceived as a married couple, and that his boys will automatically be assumed to be Canadian due to their surname.

Vasile's desire for the boys to be seen as Canadian is noteworthy, since Canada is home to many immigrants. Being an immigrant is markedly Canadian, with everyone, except for Indigenous people, being immigrants to Canada. Some Canadians, though, consider recent immigrants to Canada to be "actual" immigrants and immigrants to Canada from generations past *not* to be immigrants. Perhaps this dominant and hegemonic hierarchy informs Vasile's decision for the boys to take on the French name of Dupuis—a name which has been in Canada for generations.

Chantal's reasons as to why Vasile took on her surname differ from Vasile's. During the joint interview, Chantal expresses her satisfaction that Vasile took on her surname:

> We kinda took a page from the book of First Nations people. In the past it was all
>
> matriarchal, and so for him to take my name is taking that power back and giving
>
> it back to the way it is, like the woman was the head of the house, not the man.

In hearing this reason of Chantal's, Vasile quickly and respectfully responds, "Okay. This is your perception," as he does not hold the same view. Chantal replies reassuringly, "This is my perception," to which Vasile calmly asserts, "I did it for the kids." It is of note that Chantal talks about taking the "power back"—where the woman is repositioned as the head of the house— when it seems that there is an equal power balance between Chantal and Vasile in their marriage. The name change in itself, then, perhaps only symbolizes an honourary or imagined matriarchy.

Chantal, Vasile, Nicolae, and Daniel all have what Chantal refers to as "Indian spirit names." They do not use these Plains Cree names daily but are nonetheless honoured to hold them, as they signify belonging to their Indigenous cultural community. Chantal received her Plains Cree Y dialect Indian spirit name of kâ itahpit kêkêk iskwêw, which means "Looking Hawk Woman," years ago during a sweat lodge on kihêw tipahaskân (Eagles Reserve, where

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Chantal used to teach) from a traditional Saulteaux Medicine Man. Later that day Chantal called her mother, eager to tell her her new name. Chantal recalls the humour that ensued: "I said, 'Mom I got my Indian name' and she's like 'What is it?' I said, 'It's Looking Hawk Woman.' She says 'What? Looking Hot Woman!' And then we both started laughing." In exchange for her Indian name, Chantal gave the Medicine Man tobacco, cloth, and a gift. According to tradition, the receiver of the gift cuts the cloth into strips and hangs these tobacco ties in the forest as prayers for spirits to answer.

Nicolae, Daniel, and Vasile were gifted with their Plains Cree Y dialect Indian spirit names from a Medicine Woman of Swampy/Woodland Cree descent after participating in a sweat lodge at the Indigenous medicine camp. Nicolae's is kâ-nîmihitocik maskwa iyiniw, which means "Northern Lights Bear Man"; Daniel's is wapinêw isâyâwin mahikan, which means "Albino Wolf Man"; and Vasile's is misikitiw yâwê nâpêw, which means "You Can Hear the Thunder Coming Man." Vasile and the boys alike were pleased to be gifted with their Indian spirit names.

In Chapter 8, in the form of an interpretive account, I discuss the eight topics and subsequent themes of the participants' narratives. I then offer reflections on my interviews, my data analysis and interpretation, and my Indigenous research. I conclude with the limitations of my research, the implications of my research, suggestions for future research, and considerations moving forward.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION AND CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Discussion of Topics and Themes

In this discussion section, I discuss the eight topics and subsequent themes of the participants' narratives via an interpretive account. Common to all participants are the topics of interactions in the community, safety, understandings of children, parenting sources, language, and identification and identity. Predominantly pertaining to Celine and Michael is the topic of interculturalists, and unique to Celine and Michael is the topic of time. Subsequently, I reflect on my interviews, my data analysis and interpretation, and my Indigenous research. I conclude with the limitations of my research, the implications of my research, suggestions for future research, and considerations moving forward.

Topic 1: Interactions in the Community

Upon moving to Canada, both Amber and Michael were shocked that parents and their children tended to keep to themselves, and further, that parents had sole ownership over the discipline of their children. Amber explains that the "aloneness" she experienced in Canada was in stark contrast to the "togetherness" that she grew up with in Holland, where even a trip to the library would result in visiting with other families. Michael found the isolation that he experienced as a parent in Canada very different from the communal raising of children that he grew up with in Uganda. Michael was also surprised by the lack of agency that parents in Canada have over other people's children in public places such as playgrounds. This is because in Michael's recollection of his experience growing up in Uganda, any adult present was welcome to warmly interact with and discipline (most often via a verbal reprimand) any child as they saw fit. Amber too was taken aback by the fact that parents in Canada closely monitor the actions of

grandparents or babysitters, never fully entrusting their children into their care or allowing them full authority over childcare decisions such as discipline.

Vasile finds that parenting in his city in Canada affords him more friendly community interactions with others than in his native city in Romania, where he finds people keep to themselves. For example, Vasile explains that in his city in Romania it can be perceived as "weird" if one says hello to a stranger passing on the street. Vasile had grown up in a very large city, however, and one might wonder if social interactions might be more abundant in a nearby smaller setting, since places with very small populations are perceived to be friendlier than very populous places (Levine, 1997). Greeting a stranger provides little return, whereas greeting a person one regularly sees might provide a return of help or kindness in the future (Levine, 1997). In addition to the more frequent friendly interactions in their city in Canada, Vasile and Chantal have also found that adults are able to more easily interact with other people's children in public, such as correcting behaviour at a playground.

Both Chantal and Vasile grew up with the practice of taking the initiative to greet adults. Today, they work to foster this practice in their boys, despite regularly witnessing what they see as the Canadian norm of children being disrespectful to adults. In addition to witnessing this disrespect towards adults by children, Vasile has witnessed parents extend disrespect towards teachers on behalf of their children, by blaming teachers for their child's faults or challenges.

All of the participants in my study prefer raising children in a communal environment where interactions and/or relationships beyond the nuclear family unit are valued. This preference exists regardless of whether or not a communal environment was a part of the participant's own upbringing. For example, in Uganda, Celine grew to highly value the warm and friendly interactions that adults regularly initiated with children in the community, even

though they were different from her Canadian cultural norms. And Jason, in Holland, appreciated the "community feel" of adults and children interacting in public. Vasile, in Canada, appreciates participating in the communal Plains Cree gatherings, such as feasts, despite it not being a part of his upbringing. While foreign-born participants such as Vasile have acculturated to Canadian culture, the Canadian-born participants such as Celine and Jason have also acculturated to their spouses' cultures, particularly when it comes to the communal rearing of children.

Topic 2: Safety

All of the participants in my study experience more of an emphasis on children's safety in Canada as compared to the foreign-born participants' country of origin. This concern for children's safety ranges from being alone in public without parents to physical safety on the playground. For the most part, the Canadian-born-participants have defaulted somewhat to their foreign-born spouse's views on the safety of their children—views that they feel are more relaxed than their own.

Both Celine and Michael value a communal responsibility of children's safety in public spaces—a practice that they have found to be far more common in Uganda than in Canada. According to Celine, children in Uganda and adults alike watch out for the physical safety of all children so as to prevent injury, whereas in Canada, this is tasked to each parent individually. For the Ugandan children described by Celine and Michael, their independence requires an interdependence. The younger children have some independence from the supervision of adults because the older children watch out for them. This arrangement, however, hinges on the interdependent nature of the wider community, where any adult in the community is expected to intervene at any time should the children need guidance or correction. The dual nature of this arrangement points to the limitations of categorizing children, families, or even whole cultures as

either independent or interdependent rather than acknowledging that the two can coexist to varying degrees. Kağitçibaşi (2007) explores such a complexity of a self that is both independent and interdependent (i.e., related) in detail with her conceptualization of the "autonomous-related self" (p. 184), where children can be simultaneously autonomous and deeply connected to their families and communities. Here, relatedness is a requirement for the emergence of autonomy (Kağitçibaşi, 2007).

Amber and Jason are hands off with Charles at the playground as much as possible, allowing him to take risks and engage in what Amber calls "tricky" play. Despite the occasional guidance that Amber provides for Charles, such as where to place his foot when climbing, Canadian parents have commented with concern for Charles's safety. Jason refers to these parents as "helicopter parents" and does not see himself as one of them.

For some of the participants in my study, a child's or teenager's safety while independently navigating being out in public without parental accompaniment was a point of discussion. Both Chantal and Vasile are comfortable with their children being latchkey kids, where they go to and from school alone while their parents are at work. Vasile is comfortable with this arrangement because it is what he did as a child, and Chantal has grown to be comfortable with it, especially since the boys are together. For her part, Amber reflects on her trips as a teenager out of the city with her friends and compares this to Jason's more protected teenage years where his parents would pick him up. The foreign-born participants conclude that children, and even teenagers, in Canada are afforded very little opportunity to be independent of their parents in public settings.

Topic 3: Understandings of Children

When discussing their understandings of the child, all three couples in my research also articulate the role of the parent—demonstrating that their understanding of the child, and their broader parental ethnotheories of parenting, are intertwined.

Providing insight into her understandings of children, Celine organizes her child's needs into three categories: (1) needs fulfilled by the parent, (2) needs innate to each child, and (3) needs provided by the parent to the child and vice versa. First, Celine provides emotional and physical care to her children, placing her in a hierarchical position for the purpose of caregiving. Celine sees encouragement (an emotional need) to be as important as nourishment and physical safety (physical needs). Second, beyond their dependence on her, Celine views her children as unique individuals with innate needs, for example, to express themselves and have the freedom to play and explore—needs that exist regardless of her parental influence. Celine sees her children as unique individuals, even at a young age. This is evident when she refers to her 10-month-old baby, Juliette, as "more easygoing" than her sister. With this comment, it is apparent that Celine believes that babies have unique personality traits. Third, Celine sees her relationship with her children as not simply a hierarchical one, where the parent provides for the child, but also as an interdependent, in that Celine provides affection and warmth to her children and they provide it to her as well. In this realm, the relationship is mutually beneficial and unranked.

Michael's relaxed orientation to time influences his understandings of children and the manner in which he conceptualizes his children's growth. He refers to his children's "levels of growth" rather than by age-bound levels of development. Michael has a growth mindset when it comes to his children, in that he believes as time passes, they will learn new skills and abilities. For this growth to occur, both he and "time" are the teachers. For instance, he recalls reading

picturebooks often to Yvonne, but alludes to that idea that the passing of time, in addition to his own teaching, has allowed Yvonne the skills to be able to now look at picture books herself. When talking of his girls, Michael talks of enjoying "watching them grow," perhaps indicating that some growth can occur despite him.

Michael's parenting reflects the Ugandan belief that his daughters are a reflection of himself as a parent, and even a wider reflection of his family. Therefore, any behaviour exhibited by his children, whether desirable or undesirable, is deemed by his Ugandan community to be a direct result of Michael's parenting. This belief gives Michael the responsibility of raising his children to have Ugandan values, the two most important being humility and respect for elders. For Michael, his children's level of humility and respect for elders is a reflection of not only his parenting, but of the intergenerational parenting that occurred prior. Any misbehaviour from his children, then, is a reflection of the entire family, from his children right through to the grandparents and beyond. Consequently, despite being far away from his Ugandan family and community, Michael parents under the constant pressure of both "interdependent shame" (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 13) and pride. Knowing that he will one day be presenting his children to his Ugandan family, he lives under an awareness of their expectations of his "ingroup performance" (Ting-Toomey, 2010, p. 13).

Informed by their understanding of children as autonomous, Amber and Jason work to develop a secure attachment with Charles in order to enable him to develop autonomy. Although at this point in their lives they lack a broader familial community for Charles to regularly interact in, Amber and Jason are wholly dedicated to spending time with him and nurturing him. Amber is intent on providing Charles with unconditional love, safety, and security, and she wishes for him to "be who he wants to be" unrestricted by her ideas. Jason desires for Charles to become a

"free" and critical thinker. Jason sees himself and Amber as a key support system for Charles. Jason expects Charles to experience life by making mistakes and forming friendships, all the while being provided key things by him and Amber, such as an education, belonging, and security. While Jason expects Charles to enact his innocence, he expects that this innocence will not last forever, and he does not plan on sheltering Charles from sad realities of life.

Beyond being cared for by Amber and Jason, Charles receives nurture and learning opportunities at daycare. Amber has acculturated to a part of Canadian culture in a sense, where she now advocates for the common practice of daycare and the routine and structure it provides. This is in contrast to her experience in Holland, where children are often cared for in a home-based setting by parents, grandparents, or friends. Jason is very pleased with the new experiences that Charles is exposed to at daycare, as well as the curriculum and structure that he finds are not as easily offered at home. While Jason and Amber both value the routine-based nature of daycare for Charles, Amber is less routine based in her care for Charles than Jason is, despite Amber's upbringing in a culture that is known for its adherence to routines (van Schaik et al., 2020). Looking ahead to Charles attending kindergarten one day, Amber is disappointed that Canadian schools do not offer two years of kindergarten like in Holland, because she believes that kindergarten is a good way for children to get out of their homes and be a part of the community as well as prepare for the expectations and routines of school.

Chantal's understanding of children centers around her Plains Cree culture. She sees children as connected to the land and as belonging both to a cultural community and an interdependent family—all of which require parental guidance. In fostering her children's connection to the land, Chantal regularly takes her boys outdoors to identify and harvest traditional medicines. She also works to reconnect herself and her boys to their culture by

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learning skills to live off of the land, such as trapping. Belonging to an interdependent family is another focus of Chantal's. She provides a family home where there is a lot of love and nurture. She encourages her boys to be kind to each other and depend on one another and develop wider relationships with relatives.

Chantal and Vasile, like all the participants, articulate their role as parents in tandem with articulating their understandings of the child. Chantal is intent on providing her children with guidance so that they may learn new skills. This process is not seamless, as Chantal believes that her children need to have the opportunity to make mistakes as they go. Although she is present to provide guidance in their lives, she is careful to not protect her children by offering excuses for their mistakes. She insists that the boys take responsibility for their actions, such as not completing homework, rather than her intervening to fix situations for them.

Vasile believes that it is his role to provide his children with physical guidance and protection (such as learning to walk in the early years). He also believes that it is his role to provide them with intellectual guidance (such as helping them with school) and emotional care (such as doing their favourite activities with them, keeping an eye on their friendships, and providing a stable home). As the boys enter teenagerhood, Vasile anticipates that he will continue to provide them with "encouragement," "discipline," and guidance. Further, Vasile believes that it is his responsibility to parent to the unique character of each child, because "one size does not fit all." As described by Harkness et al. (2013), Vasile engages in "a process of mutual adaptation with the individual child" (p. 150) by parenting based on each child's unique characteristics. In addition, Vasile believes that his children can choose their own friends and that encouraging them to be friends with everyone does not allow the opportunity to deal with the reality of rejection.

While Vasile is clear in his role as a parent, he is also clear in the roles that he expects his children to fulfill. Vasile expects his boys to foster a connection with their immediate family, maintain friendships with peers, be intellectually curious, and be thankful for all that Vasile and Chantal provide for them. While Vasile expects that his boys will fulfill these responsibilities, he also provides guidance as he sees fit.

Topic 4: Sources of Parenting Influence

The couples in my research parent under various influences. These include (1) the broad umbrella of their cultural script (LeVine et al., 1994) and parental ethnotheories (Super & Harkness, 2002) and, more specifically, (2) acculturation, (3) friendships and community networks, (4) the advice of family, (5) observations of other parents, (6) their past experience/upbringing, and (7) parenting literature and expert knowledge. Each is discussed separately below.

One fundamental source of parenting influence for the participants in my study is their cultural script / parental ethnotheories, and those of their spouses and extended family. The Canadian-born participants are parenting in a culture that supports some of their cultural script—although Chantal often parents in ways common to her Plains Cree cultural community and not necessarily to wider Canadian norms. All three Canadian-born participants face expectations to parent in particular ways from their extended families, in-laws, and the larger Canadian society. And further, despite living in their country of origin, the Canadian-born participants experience substantial transnational influences regarding parenting from their foreign-born spouses. This results in the Canadian-born participants parenting in ways that they might not otherwise.

The foreign-born participants are parenting in Canada, where their cultural script is not the norm. There are few around them who carry the same innate cultural script, and

subsequently, few to normalize their culturally constructed parenting. Due to a pull from their taken-for-granted ideas about childrearing from their country of origin, their parenting is influenced by environments in which they are not even physically present. For instance, Michael's exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) of his family in Uganda carries the ubiquitous possibility of them visiting from overseas and seeing the results of his parenting. This puts pressure on him to act and parent in Ugandan ways, such as teaching his children to show respect to elders. For Michael, living in a different place than his family does not offer him autonomy from cultural and family expectations. For Amber and Vasile, while they do parent in ways congruent with their culture, living away from their country of origin also offers them some welcome departure from the parenting norms of their country or family of origin.

For both the foreign-born and Canadian-born participants, acculturation to Canadian culture and ways of parenting puts pressure on the developmental niche of their families, causing them to undergo change. This change is due to the influence of different cultural constructions of their spouses and the wider ecosystem, allowing for new and desired ways of parenting. For instance, Amber happily lets go of the dominance of routine. Vasile names his children with a Canadian last name, chooses the official languages of Canada for their daily use, and participates in Plains Cree cultural traditions. For the Canadian-born participants in my study, visiting their spouse's country of origin has allowed them to adopt new or stronger beliefs regarding childhood and parenting, thus altering or maintaining the development niche of their children. For example, living in Uganda allowed Celine to observe the Ugandan value of adults taking the time to relate to children and strengthened this value of hers. Her experience living in her husband's Ugandan culture fortified her belief that adults should take the time to relate to children. In this instance, Celine acculturates to her husband's Ugandan culture, even after returning to Canada. Jason

comes to at least appreciate the community interactions common to Dutch parenting, and Chantal is unified with Vasile in her resolve that children should extend respect to adults—an occurrence in both her Plains Cree and his Romanian culture. In this way, John Berry's (2007) belief that acculturation is a two-way rather than a one-way phenomenon is evident.

Other times, the developmental niche undergoes change due to the realities of the ecosystem, which override cultural constructions as well as a person's desired roles. For example, Michael, largely due to economic considerations, takes on domestic and childcare roles even though he would rather not. With Celine being the breadwinner, Michael lovingly cares for their children because of their ecologically based need to make their finances work. Michael's adaptive response in taking up his stay-at-home parent role is also catalyzed by the fact that in Canada, as compared to Uganda, it is more acceptable for men to care for children. Here it is clear that ecological realties, such as those in the "economic utility model" (Levine, 1994, p. 17), can drive parenting behaviours rather than parenting behaviours being solely cultural constructions.

Living in different locales than their extended families, the couples in my study are left to form their own friendships and community networks if they so wish. These networks allow some perceived freedom to raise their children in their own ways rather than solely based on expectations of their family. While the Meyer/Smith family generally stick to socializing in their own nuclear triad, the Omaras and the Dupuis family form expanded social networks. In doing so, they rely on "embedded friendships and families of choice" (Edwards & Caballero, 2008, p. 42) rather than their "families of fate" (p. 42).

Both the Dupuis and Meyer/Smith families seek parenting advice from family, relying more heavily on advice from mother to daughter. Unsolicited advice from mother-in-law to

daughter-in-law is also given. This advice is buffered by geographical separation, allowing Amber to politely wrap up FaceTime calls with her mother-in-law on rare occasions and allowing Chantal to only have to deal with her mother-in law's insistence on how to care for the boys when her mother-in-law is visiting. Chantal, although frustrated by her mother-in-law's insistence, is pleased that the language barrier between them limits the extent to which they can verbally disagree.

The Omaras' sources of parenting influence differ from those of the Dupuis and Meyer/Smith families in that the Omaras rely on observation of other parents to inform their practice. They forge their own path of parenting rather than seeking advice from their family. (Michael remarks that his father is too far away to give advice and points out that it is within the context of a relationship with an adult of strong character that he would seek face-to-face parenting advice if needed.) To inform their parenting decisions, Celine and Michael critically observe other parents whom they happen to encounter in both Canada and Uganda. Although Michael is generally quite insouciant in terms of anticipating or planning his parenting, he is reflective as he observes the practices of others in real time. Celine and Michael avoid using the undesirable parenting practices that they witness and instead choose to emulate the desirable ones. These decisions, of course, of what is desirable and undesirable are likely fuelled by their culturally constructed and taken-for-granted parental ethnotheories. Nonetheless, they make conscious decisions, and in doing so, open themselves to new possibilities of parenting not solely dictated by their cultural upbringing. This awareness is encouraged by their transnational travel back and forth from one culture to another, their large amounts of time spent away from family, and their confidence in making their own decisions.

Vasile, Jason, Chantal, and Amber all cite their own upbringing or that of those around them during their childhood as an influence on their parenting. First, Vasile reflects on his childhood to inform what he *does not* want to do as a parent, such as being rigidly strict. He struggles with this, however, sometimes wondering if he should be stricter. The reason for this ambivalence could very well be the political history of his country, Romania, where he witnessed a very swift change from an authoritarian communist government to a society more democratic in nature (Harkness, Blom, et al., 2007). As Harkness, Blom, et al. (2007) describe, such a rapid change can result in a "dialectical struggle to find a balance between the traditional values of obedience and group cohesion, and the recognition that individual assertiveness is necessary for success in a capitalist society" (p. 130). In light of this, Vasile struggles to determine how much obedience and autonomy he should expect form his boys. Second, Jason vows to expose Charles to the harsh realities of life rather than protecting his innocence like his parents did for him. Third, in citing her own upbringing, Chantal reflects on how her sister was at times emotionally withdrawn from her children and draws on this experience to motivate her friendship with her boys. Fourth, when Amber cared for Charles as an infant, she was inclined to care for him as she would infants who she helped babysit in Holland when she was younger. Such care included stomach sleeping—a practice Amber decided not to allow due to Jason's insistence.

In their children's early years, both the Dupuis and the Meyer/Smith families relied on parenting literature to inform their parenting. The Dupuis attended prenatal classes, read books, and searched Google—all of which are influenced by a developmental and Western philosophy of parenting. Similarly, the Meyer/Smith family utilized books and internet sources in addition to consulting their pediatrician. However, they relied most on Amber's relational child psychology knowledge—which was at times in conflict with their pediatrician's advice.

Amber's education plays a central role in her parenting decisions. Her child development philosophies from her graduate studies are sometimes stronger than her cultural scripts from Holland. Jason, a product of the academy himself with an engineering degree and a respect for university-graduate-based expert knowledge (a commonly Canadian and, more broadly, Westernized trait that includes Holland as well), sees his wife as an "expert" in child development. He is quite content to allow Amber to lead in most parenting decisions. Jason's adherence to expert knowledge is not surprising, as it is a common trend for North American parents (N. S. Berry, 2013). Despite Jason's respect for expert knowledge, it is important to note that his personality, as well as Amber's, are also likely at play. Jason is content and easygoing, and Amber is confident and well spoken as she freely shares her convictions about parenting with Jason. Amber holds a strong belief in the parenting knowledge that she holds, and this gives her the conviction to transcend her own parents' advice. Despite her convictions, though, Amber accepts Jason's influence when he expresses his own strong opinions regarding parenting, and in response she will compromise or adopt his method of parenting. In this way, they have a mutually rewarding and supportive coparenting relationship where both are pleased with the way that they are raising their son.

Topic 5: Language

Language use of each family in my study is guided by their ecologically based family language policy. Fogle (2012a) acknowledges that family language policy and the accompanying language ideologies of parents—such as hopes for their children to speak or not to speak an additional language—encompass the "wider social and cultural belief systems" (p. 84) in a family. These belief systems include "broader parent ideologies" (Fogle, 2012a, p. 84) such as culturally constructed parental ethnotheories. Conversely, parental ethnotheories of the

participants are often contextualized through language ideologies and impact beliefs in the entirety of the developmental niche.

In the context of language learning, language ideologies (Fogle, 2012a) and developmental agendas (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007) both entail parents' hopes and beliefs regarding successful language acquisition for their children. For most parents in my study, intervening factors (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007) in the home and wider ecology take hold of their language ideologies / developmental agendas. An open system, the developmental niche is subject to wider ecology intervening factors such as social, cultural, and political realities and histories. These intervening factors coincide with a lack of consistency in the three subsystems of the developmental niche—the physical and social settings of daily life, the customs and practices of care, and the psychology of caretakers (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 147). Intervening factors involved in this lack "mediate the relationship between ideas and behavior" (Harkness et al., 2010, p. 76) and can cause language ideologies to go unrealized.

The intervening factors regarding language ideologies for the participants in my study include (1) a one parent one language strategy, (2) the affective dimension, (3) differing parental beliefs, (4) parental cognitions of language use, (5) child agency, (6) a lack of language community, (7) an autochthonous minority language, and (8) preexisting language shift. Each is discussed separately below.

The couples in my study use the one parent one language strategy for the minority language transmission to their children. This is because they do not share a minority language in common and therefore cannot teach the minority language of the foreign-born spouse together. Although it can be effective, the one parent one language strategy is hard to implement, is considered unrealistic, and is prone to being unsuccessful (De Houwer, 2007; De Houwer &

Bornstein, 2016; Nakamura, 2019 Soler & Roberts, 2019), as seen with Amber and the Dutch language and Michael and the Langi language. This is because the responsibility of teaching and maintaining the minority language in the home lies exclusively with the spouse who speaks it. Given this difficulty, the language spoken in the home in transnational marriages with a nuclear family structure—such as the families in my study—often ends up being a majority language such as English Alba et al., 2002,; Yates & Terraschke, 2013).

Concerning the affective dimension of language instruction, Amber prioritizes Charles's affective dimension over active bilingualism, as seen in her childrearing priorities. This priority of Amber's is in line with De Houwer's (1999) finding that "parental beliefs and attitudes regarding children's language development are part of parents' more general beliefs and value systems regarding children's overall development" (p. 81). For example, when Amber speaks English instead of Dutch to Charles in response to his upset about Jason being out of town, her broader childrearing priority of emotional well-being, over active bilingualism, is apparent. Responding to the intervening factor of Jason being away, she strives to provide a more "stable cultural environment" (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 149) for Charles where the three subsystems of the developmental niche are operating in harmony under the English language. Amber's nurturing of Charles's affective dimension over his linguistic learning suggests not so much a lack of belief regarding his ability to learn Dutch, but rather a belief that forcing him to learn Dutch will have a negative impact on his emotional development. Or, stated otherwise, it suggests an impact belief that she cannot effectively teacher her son to be fluent in Dutch if she wants to adhere to her commitment to his emotional well-being.

Amber's psycholinguistic concern for Charles's emotional well-being in the language process is not unique to her, her Dutch childrearing norms of emotional closeness (Harkness et

al., 2000; van Schaik et al., 2020), or even her child psychology background. Fogle (2012a) points out that family language policy decisions are often made in light of children's "emotional capacities" (p. 84) and that a "recurring tension in bilingual parenting appears to be a conflict between desires of parents to raise bilingual children with their perhaps stronger desires to accommodate their children and form emotional attachments" (p. 86). Amber is doing what many parents do—putting the affective well-being of her child, and her relationship with him, ahead of her bilinguistic goals (Fogle 2012a, 2012b; Pan, 1995).

In regard to differing parental beliefs, family language policies are not always unified between coparents, since beliefs regarding language in the home can be shared or contested (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; Piller & Gerber, 2018). For example, Chantal would like Vasile to teach the boys Romanian, but Romanian language instruction is not a part of Vasile's family language policy, so he does not initiate teaching his boys Romanian. For the Omara family. Celine holds a family language policy where she wants the girls to learn Langi but the only Langi speaker in their circle is her husband, who exercises his own agency and weak impact beliefs. Despite the fact that Michael carries somewhat of an ideology that he wants his children to learn Langi, asserting that it is "the right thing to do" (and as such teaches them some Langi basics such as counting), he lacks the impact belief and perhaps the know-how to do so. Michael alludes to this when he says "the language thing is a bit confusing sometimes." Further, he admits that Celine, like his family back home, has more of a desire for the girls to learn Langi than he does, and he talks of getting his sister to come to Canada to help him teach the girls Langi. Celine, on the other hand, has a high impact belief in teaching her girls French, and being an educator, is confident in her skills to effectivity do so. She reads to her girls in French, speaks to them French some of the time, and has chosen to send the girls to a French daycare despite the

high cost. But because Celine speaks mostly English to the girls, even her high impact belief has not materialized into actively (for their age) French-speaking children.

In regard to parental cognitions of language use, what Amber says she does for Dutch language immersion in the home for Charles and what she actually does do not always align. As pointed out by Curdt-Christiansen (2016), what parents claim to do regarding multilingual language instruction and what they actually do, do not always match up. Amber says that she speaks to Charles in Dutch when Jason is away and switches to English when he returns but claims the opposite another time. In reality, Amber speaks mostly English to Charles. Amber's contradictory narratives are not a matter of deceit on her part but instead reveal the uncertain nature of family language learning in the home based on the psychology of the caretaker. Like many parents (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; De Hower & Bornstein, 2016), Amber displays the all too common "disconnect between declared language ideology and strategy" (Soler & Roberts, 2019, p. 252) and has a subjective conception of her own language use in her home.

Concerning child agency, not only are children recipients of the family language policy from their parents, but they are also agents of the language practices in the home (Gafaranga, 2010; King & Fogle, 2013, 2017; Said & Zhu, 2019; Sonia Wilson, 2020). As Fogle and King (2013) point out, "child agency and language use patterns influence parental language behavior" (p. 1). Such agency, where a child's capacity to act is "socioculturally mediated" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 11), is apparent in all three families in my study. First, Chantal and Vasile's oldest child, Nicolae, asserts his own agency in the Dupuis family language policy by occasionally getting Vasile to teach him Romanian words. This interaction is in line with King and Fogle's (2017) finding that "language socialization processes are collaborative and co-constructed as children seek out opportunities for language learning and form self and family identities" (p. 322). And in

regard to French language learning, Nicolae and Daniel also act as agents by willingly participating in their immersion schooling. Second, Celine and Michael's daughters, Yvonne and Juliette, show great eagerness to be read to in French at bedtime, which motivates Celine to do so each night. This French language learning is further supplemented at daycare, which the girls willingly attend. Third, Amber and Jason's son, Charles, asserts his own agency when Amber speaks to him in Dutch and he responds in English. Through this code switching, Charles prompts his mother to code switch as well. This behaviour is common for parents and can occur without their "conscious awareness" (King and Fogle, 2017, p. 320) despite their language ideology of speaking to their child in one language (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016).

Although the children of the parents in my study are certainly agents in family language policy, the extent to which they are agents is influenced by the understandings of the child that their parents hold. For instance, childcentric parenting practices and a tendency towards egalitarian family interactions make way for child agency in language learning (Said & Zhu, 2019). Here the three elements of the developmental niche—the physical and social settings, the customs and practices of care, and the psychology of the caretaker (e.g., parental ethnotheories) (Harkness et al., 2013)—mutually adapt to the child as an individual (Harkness et al., 2013), allowing for more child agency in language learning. For example, Amber sees Charles as an autonomous and decision-making individual, thus allowing him to be an active agent in the language process and choose English over Dutch. This is in contrast to a parent who might allow little influence from their child and sees them as one who should be strictly compliant to parental direction.

In regard to a lack of a language community, the families in my study are all isolated from a robust minority language community of the foreign-born spouse. Furthermore, Chantal's

children do not have regular interactions with a Plains Cree language speaking community. And none of the families have regular interactions with grandparents or aunts and uncles who speak the minority language. These "constraints" (King et al., 2008, p. 909) of the "wider family and community context" (p. 909) greatly affect the total quantity of input of the minority language (De Houwer, 1999; Smith-Christmas, 2016). These sociolinguistic factors, intertwined with the parents' lack of language use with their children and the dominance of the majority language of English in Canadian society, result in low minority language learning outcomes for their children. Further, Celine, who describes her children as "familiar" but not at all fluent with the French language knows that although her children lack a robust language community at present, she can eventually rely on French immersion schooling to more actively teach her girls French. Therefore, she does not feel under pressure to access a French-speaking community for her girls at present.

Plains Cree speakers in Canada belong to what Smith-Christmas (2016) refers to as an "autochthonous minority language community" (p. 19). Here, the minority status of the Plains Cree language is due to the intrusion of the Canadian government and churches on the Plains Cree community. In Chantal's family, the involuntary loss of their Plains Cree language can be attributed to the residential and day school systems, which operated with the goal of having Indigenous peoples cease to exist as "distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a, p. 3). To aid in this "cultural genocide" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a. p. 3), Indigenous children such as Chantal's mother were taught only in majority languages such as English. If they spoke their Indigenous language, which was deemed by the church and state to be uncivilized, they were punished for speaking it (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of

Canada, 2015a). For some of the small population of Plains Cree people who retained their language, their language conjures traumatic memories of residential school. Consequently, many do not pass down their language to their children.

In recent years, there have been opportunities for Plains Cree language instruction in some Canadian schools, but the majority offer only English and/or French. Although Chantal and Vasile could have chosen to place their children in the Cree immersion school in their city, they instead chose French. Vasile finds it unfortunate, however, that a dual stream school that offers Cree and French is not offered. Regardless, they are pleased with the boys' French immersion schooling. In addition to the French heritage connection of Chantal's father, Vasile likes that the French language has a high global "market value" (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016, p. 696) and provides opportunities for global postsecondary study.

As a final topic under language, preexisting language shift was experienced by all of the foreign-born participants in my study. This began prior to the birth of their first child when they regularly spoke English with their Canadian-born spouse. Here it is evident that their being an immigrant in a transnational marriage has had ramifications for their mother-tongue maintenance and the possibility of passing their mother tongue to their children (Alba et al., 2002). Where English is the dominant language spoken in society, not only are immigrants prone to using English by the second generation and being monolingual in English by the third (Alba et al., 2002; Piller & Gerber, 2018; Smith-Christmas, 2016), in intercultural marriages, the language spoken by the couple is often English (Alba et al., 2002). For the foreign-born participants, passing on their minority language to their children requires them to work against a language shift that catalyzed prior to them becoming parents. To return to regularly speaking in their

minority language upon the birth of their child, then, would require them to use a language that they had already been neglecting.

To conclude this section on language, the participants in my study who speak an additional language(s) do not provide enough additional instruction for their children to become fluent in a minority language. While Amber, Celine, Chantal, and Michael do not actualize their family language ideologies, Vasile and Jason largely do. First, Vasile largely meets his objective to *not* initiate teaching his boys Romanian and to speak to the boys in English instead, since part of his developmental agenda for them is to be fluent in the largely universal languages of French and English. Notably, Chantal and Vasile's ideology of their boys speaking French is achieved despite Chantal and Vasile, by way of French immersion schooling. Second, Jason is effortlessly able to carry out a considerable part of his and Amber's family language policy, since he is content with Charles only being able to speak the majority language of English for now. Jason cannot necessarily "rest easy," however, as there is always the consideration of him learning to speak Dutch.

Topic 6: Identification and Identity

While each parent in my study identifies their child(ren) in their own way, they all ultimately wish for their children to express autonomy in their cultural and racial identity. For the participants in my study, the following factors influence the children's identity choices: (1) their own identities and their identification of their children and their hopes for their children's identities, (2) the names that they give their children, and (3) contextual factors such as class. Each is discussed separately below.

Michael identifies as Lango, while respecting his Canadian citizenship. He resides in his new home of Canada with both tentativeness and contentment. Celine identifies as French

Canadian and, more broadly, Canadian, but also transcends cultural boundaries by seeing herself as more Lango than Canadian in some ways. Being well travelled and having experienced life with locals from many different countries, Celine takes pride in her cosmopolitanism.

Celine's and Michael's own identities play into in some ways the identities that they see possible for their daughters. They hold some similar as well as dissimilar views in their identification of their children, with the dissimilar identity typifications coexisting without major conflict. For example, both the French and Lango cultures of the girls are presented by Celine and Michael as a mix collective (Edwards, 2017), yet within this collective, Celine seems to surpass a strictly Ugandan identification of her girls by also encompassing a pan-African identification, whereas Michael, on the other hand, desires a Ugandan-focused approach. In addition to the mix collective, Celine alludes to a national collective identification (Edwards, 2017) of the girls, acknowledging that being Canadian comes with an awareness of the colonial history of injustice towards Indigenous people. This is a history in which Celine believes all Canadian citizens are implicated as they hold a responsibility to stand up to the injustice towards Canada's Indigenous people. The whole of who Celine identities the girls as, then, is made of many parts, an important part being camaraderie with Indigenous Canadians.

Vasile, in taking a pan-European approach for himself, does not identify as solely Romanian but rather as a European citizen belonging to the European Union. And, sometimes his lack of nostalgia for his home country of Romania prompts him to propel forward in his identity and also identify as Canadian (Hua & Wei, 2016). For his sons, Vasile mostly pursues a French and Plains Cree identification, preferring them to integrate into Canadian culture without being singled out as sons of an immigrant. He is intent on them learning French, which would allow them cosmopolitan flexibility in future travel opportunities—perhaps even travel to Europe. In

this leaning towards a "single collective" typification (Edwards, 2017), Vasile stresses one particular aspect of his children's backgrounds (Chantal's French and Plains Cree heritage) as significant while downplaying another (Vasile's Romanian heritage). While Vasile desires autonomy for his boys in choosing their own identity, he influences this process by the cultural backgrounds he presents to them.

Chantal's identity as a Plains Cree person and a status Indian (while also acknowledging her French heritage) is profoundly impacted by her familial intergenerational experience of colonization in Canada. Implicated in her Indian status is the knowledge that her mother, Denise, lost her own status through enfranchisement and later regained it through the passage of Bill C-31 (An Act to Amend the Indian Act, SC 1985). Chantal's Indian status—a racial typification created by the state that is wrought with a history of racialization, oppression, division, and sexism towards women, as well as a striking combination of forced assimilation and marginalization (Gehl, 2000; Joseph, 2019; McIvor et al. 2018; Monture, 2002; Palmater, 2011)—is not only a reminder of the injustices Denise and others faced via the Indian Act of 1876 (Indian Act, 39 Victoria 1876) but also a welcome, albeit limited, source of rights and belonging that Denise, and subsequently Chantal, were once denied. In this belonging, Chantal's understanding of her status transcends a normative identity (Nawrot-Adamczyk, 2012) born out of the power and control of the colonizer, to become a means of asserting and commemorating her Indigenous heritage in a society where opportunities for belonging to her Plains Cree community are fragmented. Chantal's choice to identify as a status Indian rather than Métis like her sister has likely already influenced Nicolae and Daniel's emerging identity by way of the Indian status that they too hold.

While Chantal imagines an Indigenous identification of her sons, she also imagines a Romanian one. In reflecting on a Romanian identification of her sons, it is fascinating that Chantal chooses to say that the boys "have Romanian in them" rather than "the boys are Romanian." This shows that while Chantal wants her boys to choose their identity, she naturally, and perhaps only subconsciously, already has her own notions about them identifying as only partly Romanian. On another occasion, however, when asked a question regarding how the boys refer to themselves in terms of cultural heritage, Chantal responds, "You'd have to ask them. . . . The oldest one knows he is Indigenous, he is French, and he is Romanian . . . so, whatever they feel most comfortable in, what they identify as." So, while Chantal understands that the boys' identity is an ongoing and flexing process, how she herself perceives their identity formation is also ongoing and flexing, as evidenced in her stating that the boys "have Romanian in them" one time, and, another time when referring to Nicolae, saying that "he is Romanian." Ultimately, Chantal pursues an open individual choice identity for her sons (Edwards, 2017).

Amber and Jason's cultural identities consist of Jason identifying as Canadian and Amber identifying as Dutch while being contently settled in her home of Canada. The Meyer/Smith family tend towards a mix collective (Edwards, 2017) identification of Charles, as they want their son to experience his two cultures. Despite this, they envision an open individual choice (Edwards, 2017) for his identity as he grows. This open individual choice is in line with their strong desire for Charles to express his individuality throughout his life course without parental pressure. Although all of the parents in my study—including Amber and Jason—want their children to eventually choose their own identity as they grow older, the overriding reality is that the parents are actively socializing their children in the meantime.

The parents in my study selected names for their children as a marker of cultural identification and/or a representation of personal taste—such as a name from popular culture unrelated to the parent's cultural heritage. Michael and Celine chose their children's names, Juliette Akello and Yvonne Apio, based on a "collective affinity" (Edwards & Caballero, 2008, p. 55) to both Lango matriarchal and gendered traditions and to Celine's French-Canadian roots. The order used for the girls' names is dependent on the traditions of the country they are in. When in Canada, their French-Canadian names are used first (Yvonne Apio and Juliette Akello), and when in Uganda, their Ugandan names are used first (Apio Yvonne and Akello Juliette). In this way the Omaras simultaneously adhere to and go beyond the bounds of Lango and Canadian naming traditions. In naming their children, both Michael and Celine found room for their individual preferences. Celine is content with having a feminist flair to the girl's names, in that each girl has their own maternal, rather than paternal, surname, and Michael is content that they are following Lango naming traditions in doing so. Chosen in a collective manner, the Omaras' girl's names acknowledge the blended nature of their family. And, despite her feminist values, Celine takes on her husband's surname in keeping with Ugandan (and Canadian, largely) tradition.

Chantal and Vasile collectively chose their boys' names for a number of reasons. Vasile took on Chantal's Canadian name of Dupuis for himself and the boys due to social and political reasons. He wanted the boys to have the surname of a Canadian rather than an "immigrant" so that they could blend inconspicuously into Canadian life. Despite this, however, the boys' Romanian first names acknowledge Vasile's heritage, especially Nicolae's, which is markedly Romanian. The boys' Indian spirit names, on the other hand, pay heed to Chantal's Plains Cree heritage, and for Chantal—but not Vasile—represent matrilineal potency. Rarely used, they are

alternatives to their everyday names, hold great cultural and spiritual significance, and afford the boys strength and belonging.

In naming their children, the Dupuis and the Omaras achieve "a collective belonging" (Edwards & Caballero, 2008, p. 56) by acknowledging each spouse's culture in the process. This involves an amicable negotiation between each couple signifying their belonging as equals in their marriage. This negotiation can be seen as a mode of "turn taking," where if one has a turn to choose a name, then it is assumed that next it is the other person's turn. In accommodating the cultural naming traditions and family ties of each spouse, the naming boundaries on the basis of culture and kinship affiliation are both adhered to and transcended (Edwards & Caballero, 2008).

Amber and Jason chose the common Canadian name "Charles Oliver" for their son based on a fondness for the names and an affiliation to Jason's family. The English name of Charles was chosen because Jason can easily pronounce it, unlike many Dutch names. In choosing the name Charles, which is Jason's grandfather's name as well as Jason's middle name, Amber and Jason followed a patrilineal naming tradition, acknowledging Jason's English roots.

The cultural identity that the parents in my study present to their child, or how the child identifies, is mediated by wider societal influences—such as class—that may encourage or discourage these identities (Csizmadia & White, 2019). All of the parents in my study are middle class, and middle-class families in North America tend to emphasize independence in their childrearing. Independence in turn lends itself to choosing one's own identity over adhering to the identity of a group (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Edwards et al., 2010). For example, middle-class families such as the ones in my study have more global opportunities, such as foreign travel, and more local options of residence, such as where they want to raise their children (Csizmadia & White, 2019; Edwards et al., 2010). They can choose a neighbourhood and school that has a

diverse population, perhaps giving their bicultural children greater chances of finding belonging or identity options based on their cultural or racial background (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Doucet et al., 2019; Edwards et al., 2010).

Topic 7: Interculturalists

Celine and Michael are very aware and respectful of each other's cultural traditions. In engaging in some of the cultural practices of their spouse, despite not necessarily wanting to, they act as what Celine terms "interculturalists." According to Kim (2001), "becoming intercultural is a gradual process of freeing one's mind from an exclusive parochial viewpoint so as to attain a greater perspective on the more inclusive whole" (p. 193). With the whole of their marriage and family in mind, Celine and Michael are willing to let go of, or modify, some of their own cultural traditions or personal values for the benefit of each other and their children. This is often done by performing roles from one another's culture. Roles, as defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979), are "a set of activities and relations expected of a person occupying a particular position in society" (p. 85). Celine and Michael negotiate and navigate the strong paternalistic gender roles that Michael grew up with alongside Celine's expectation of shared responsibility of household and childcare tasks.

Acting as an interculturalist, Celine engages in roles that she would not typically engage in otherwise in order to accommodate Michael's culturally influenced ways. For example, very aware of Michael's concern for his public image as a Ugandan man, she temporarily takes sole ownership of traditional Ugandan female gender roles such as cooking and childcare when in the presence of Ugandan people. She does this so that Michael is not seen doing what he describes as "female" roles. When Celine does require Michael's help, she is resourceful and creative in her response to his concern for his public image. For example, she gets him to barbecue with his

male friends, which, although according to Celine is not typically done by Ugandan men, is socially acceptable in Michael's Ugandan context. Celine's self-described ability to creatively "work around cultural norms" allows her and Michael to share the workload of hosting company and allows Michael to maintain his traditional gender roles in the presence of his Ugandan friends. Celine's accommodations of Michael are in line with Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2001) notion of confirming the self-worth of others by "being sensitive to people's self-images in particular situations and according due respect to their desired identities" (p. 184). In acknowledging the Ugandan group belonging that is important to Michael (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), Celine strives to affirm his self-image and strengthen their marital relationship while achieving an equitable division of labour. While doing this Celine effectively "integrates, rather than separates" (Kim, 2015, p. 7) the cultural differences between her and Michael.

Celine is willing, once in a while, to kneel for her father-in-law as a way of expressing respect for his cultural ways and his desired identity (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). She is not shy to admit, however, that although she fully intends to express respect, the act itself is performative. Therefore, Celine is genuine in her intent to express her respect but perhaps disingenuous in her performance. This embracing of mixed intent allows Celine to honour her husband's culture while still maintaining her own values. It is in the intersection of her feminism and interculturalism that Celine finds herself doing things that a feminist might not do otherwise. Celine reconciles her accommodation of Ugandan gender roles by keeping at the forefront the choice that she has in the matter—she is performing gender roles out of her own will rather than such roles being imposed on her. In doing so, she fosters her husband's emotional well-being by upholding his cultural traditions.

Michael's reasons for taking on the roles of cooking and childcare are both pragmatic and out of love for his wife and children. Celine needs to work both to bring in money and to maintain her career, and the girls need to be cared for and nourished. Michael does cooking and housework knowing that hiring a "house girl," as he calls it, would be too expensive. In addition to the pragmatics of the household needing to function, Michael loves his wife dearly and does not want to see her overexerted. When the girls were infants, he would get up in the middle of the night to soothe them so that Celine could get some rest after breastfeeding. Also, when Yvonne was a baby, he carried her on his back to keep her content. Taking on what he sees as the female role of baby carrying is conflicting for Michael, and he reconciles this enduring tension by emphasizing the sheer necessity of the task. In the face of this necessity, and out of his love for his family, Michael overlooks his preconceived notions of what is a man's work and what is a woman's work, and simply does what needs to be done, noting that he has no choice in the matter because his love for his family supersedes his choice. His love and concern for the well-being of his children and wife seem to take precedence over his traditional beliefs of what roles belong to a mother and what roles belong to a father. In caring for his family, he purposefully fosters his wife's physical well-being, not wanting her to become overexerted. This is in contrast to Celine's actions mentioned previously, where she emphasizes the choice she has in intercultural matters (such as protecting Michael's public image by enacting gender roles) and prioritizes Michael's emotional well-being.

When Celine and Michael are unable to reconcile their different points of view between their parental ethnotheories in a particular situation, their solution is to choose a unified course of action despite their disparate views. This course of action is achieved by one spouse deciding to accept and welcome the other's cultural tradition even though it does not align with their own

core belief system. To address the tension of partaking in a tradition with which the conceding spouse disagrees, this spouse rationalizes the situation in the context of their wider belief system. For example, as a feminist Celine does not necessarily agree with patrilineal naming traditions but agreed to having the girls named in Michael's Ugandan tradition in order to extend honour to Michael and his family. While Michael views the girls' last names as marker of Ugandan tradition, Celine then chooses, for herself, to reframe it as an act of feminism in that the girls have their own surname derived from matrilineal lines. In Celine reassigning her own values of feminism to a patrilineal tradition of Michael's, a win-win (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001) situation emerges where both spouses ascribe their own values to the situation rather than having their spouse's views and values imposed on them. This offers the conceding parent a sense of efficacy, and perhaps even contentment, as they make space for their and their spouse's different rationales to peaceably coincide.

Chantal and Vasile also act as interculturalists when one spouse reassigns values to their spouse's cultural tradition. For example, Vasile took on Chantal's last name of Dupuis, in part, his children not be readily identified as sons of immigrants. While Chantal sees the name change as a feminist move in line with Plains Cree matrilineal traditions, Vasile sees it instead as a marker of the boys' belonging to Canada. Each spouse remains content with their own justification and holds it at the forefront when explicating the name change. In this way, the couples in my research are not so much searching for common ground in their reasoning regarding parenting and family decisions as doing the same thing but with very different justifications. By respectfully holding different justifications for the same phenomenon, both spouses in the marriage are content.

Topic 8: Time and the Pace of Life

Both Celine and Michael articulate their relationship with time by comparing their pace of life to each other's. Living life together in their intercultural union has made apparent each other's, and their own, pace of life. What makes Celine's pace fast is that Michael's—like others in her experience of the Ugandan context—is slow in comparison, and what makes Michael's pace slow is that Celine's—like others in his experience of the Canadian context—is fast in comparison. Michael has picked up his pace since he began living in Canada, trying diligently to keep up to Celine. However, his relaxed sense of time and lack of worry for the future, coupled with Celine's quick pace and tendency to plan ahead, remain a point of tension. For instance, Michael, living day-by-day and parenting in the moment, sees no immediate need to teach the girls Langi, despite Celine's strong desire for it to happen without delay.

Levine's (1997) conceptualization of time sheds light on Celine's and Michael's different orientations of time. Levine (1997) acknowledges the diversity in how people from culture to culture, and even from person to person, construe time. While unspoken rules regarding the pace or "tempo" (p. 3) of life are inherent to a group and place, these rules can be confusing to an outsider. Levine (1997) likens the difficultly of learning the daily tempo of life in a culture vastly different than one's own to learning a foreign language. In considering time as largely a cultural construct, however, it is also important to acknowledge that the tempo or pace of one's life can be influenced by individual factors, such as personality. For instance, Levine (1997) points out that "Type A" personalities often have the urgency to "achieve as much as possible in the shortest amount of time" (p. 19), and as a consequence, they live a fast-paced life.

Celine's and Michael's upbringings in countries with different value orientations—Celine in a country often characterized by individualism and Michael in a country often characterized

by collectivism—have resulted in different conceptualizations of time between them. This is of no surprise in light of Levine's (1997) study of 31 different countries, where the use of time varied significantly between individual and collective cultures. According to Levine (1997), "people are prone to move faster in places with vital economies, a high degree of industrialization, larger populations, cooler climates, and a cultural orientation towards individualism" (p .9). In collective cultures, on the other hand, people are prone to move slower. "Temporal expectations" (Levine, 1997, p. 189)—that is, one's expectations regarding time, such as how quickly or slowly something should occur—can vary among cultures.

Canada can be said to have an orientation towards individualism, where a focus on achievement and "clock time" (Levine, 1997, p. 52) drives a "time-is-money mindset" (p. 18) governed by speed and an adherence to rigid schedules. This mindset is in contrast to Michael's collective Ugandan upbringing, where the nurturing of social relationships and "event time" (p. 82) allows events and social interactions to unfold spontaneously from start to finish. (This spontaneity is also evidenced in his view of children mentioned previously, where he allows his daughters' development to unfold spontaneously rather than in a developmental-milestone-bound manner.) In Canada, Michael's relaxed and prosocial tendencies do not keep pace with the environment around him. Michael faces a temporal culture shock when his spontaneity does not meet his wife's desire for him to plan ahead or to frequently teach the girls Langi, or when he feels uncertain at the playground because parents are not investing the time in relating to him.

Clock-time-oriented people such as Celine and event-time-oriented people such as Michael often clash due to a misinterpretation of intent (Levine, 1997). Although they experience tension and frustration regarding time, Celine and Michael fare well in that they don't "confuse cultural normalcy with ethnocentric superiority" (Levine, 1997, p. 98). Instead, they

respectfully make space for each other's orientations of time to coexist in their relationship without conceit. Further, Celine and Michael focus on what they do hold in common in regard to time—the fact that they both wish for more leisure time to spend with their daughters in activities such as going to the playground together. This shared priority serves as a buffer to the stress created by their different orientations of time.

Reflections on Participant Recruitment

When recruiting participants, the criterion that one participant of each couple be foreign born and raised (having immigrated to Canada as an adult) proved to be a challenge. For example, multiple couples responded to my call for participants, but the foreign-born spouses had spent much of their youth residing in Canada. Even though the respondents felt that the foreign-born spouse was more heavily influenced by the portion of their upbringing that took place overseas, I was intent on abiding by my criterion because I felt it offered the best chance for a contrast of upbringings between spouses.

For over two years I tried find a suitable Canadian-born Indigenous participant. I contacted 22 Indigenous people in several provinces to ask if they knew of any possible participants. All were eager to try to help me find a participant—except one who did not trust the university institution's history of research with Indigenous people. Several people had possible couples for my research in mind, but they subsequently learned that these couples had recently separated or divorced and were not in an amicable relationship.

Six potential participants who were referred to me agreed that I could contact them. Two possible participants—Jenny and Kara—did not respond to my messages. I imagine that this was their way of declining participation without having to say "no" to the person who had referred them to me. Melinda, another potential participant, passed her phone number to me via a past

university classmate of mine. Unfortunately, when I called her the next day, her cell phone had been disconnected. Another potential participant, Bree, agreed that I could contact her, but when I called her, I could tell from her tentative speech that she was not interested in participating in my study. Consequently, I did not pursue further contact. Michelle, another potential participant, expressed to me that she was very interested in participating. During our third phone call, however, there were some issues with her landlord who was knocking at the door, and Michelle abruptly ended our phone conversation. She ceased contact with me after that, despite me leaving a few phone messages. Michelle had five children and her husband worked out of town, so I imagine she may have been too busy to participate in my study. Another person, Shelley, who was recently divorced, was very interested in participating in my study. In response, I widened my research criteria to separated or divorced couples who felt they could amicably engage in a joint interview. Unfortunately, however, Shelley's ex-husband was not interested in participating.

With time passing, I could not continue to hold out hope for an Indigenous participant. As a result, I took on my second and potentially final couple, Amber and Jason. I now had two couples as originally planned, and although neither included an Indigenous spouse, I knew I could take on a third couple if an Indigenous participant emerged. In the end, through a referral, I did find Chantal and Vasile. Looking back, despite the extra work of a third case study, I am pleased with the diverse and rich experiences that the three couples offered, and I am especially grateful for Chantal's Indigenous perspective.

Reflections on Interviews

During the individual interviews, the participants not only brought up what was salient to them as individuals, but they also often brought up, of their own accord, their interpretations of

their spouse's views on topics. This occurrence was especially common for Celine and Michael. During the interviews, each would often first share their perception of their spouse's views on the topic before expressing their own views. Perhaps they were preoccupied with, and/or grappling with, their spouse's view and trying to come to terms with it before expressing their own views. Or, perhaps it was easier for them to first analyze and articulate their spouse's view that was somewhat removed from them, rather than their own taken-for-granted views. By verbally wandering through their perceptions of their spouse's views that were different from their own, they were able to begin to make sense of their own views on the topic. The participants in my study also came to more deeply understand and express their views on childhood and parenting by having experienced their spouse's country of origin. By juxtaposing their experiences of parenting in their country of origin with their experiences in their partner's country of origin, they were able see some of their ways of parenting more clearly. The space to do this, without the presence or interruption of their spouse, was essential for them to be able to reflect on and answer questions.

During the joint interviews, when interviewing the couples together after having interviewed them separately, I was diligent in not divulging any information from the individual interviews during the joint interviews, even if it related to the topic at hand in the joint interview. Although the ethics form that each participant signed stated that confidentially could not be guaranteed between spouses/partners, my aim was to provide as much confidentially between spouses as possible. Consequently, the joint interviews required calculated speech on my part, because I could not use what was said in the individual interviews as a springboard for conversation. However, I wanted the sensitive topics from the individual interviews—where one participant said something about their spouse that could potentially cause upset—to be brought

out into the open during the joint interviews before being considered as material for my dissertation so as not to breach my desire for confidentiality. The joint interviews were, then, a means to address possible confidentiality concerns between spouses (Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2014).

An example of an individual interview topic that I needed to get out in the open during the joint interview was Celine's disappointment that Michael had not been teaching the girls more Langi. I did not want to bring this up during the joint interview because I risked causing discord between Celine and Michael in the event that Michael took offence to her views and to the fact that she had disclosed them to me. But I also risked discord in the event that Michael might only learn, via reading my dissertation, that Celine had disclosed her disappointment to me regarding Michael's lack of Langi language teaching in the home. As I had hoped, the carefully crafted open-ended joint interview questions—accompanied by the comfort that we all felt with each other during the joint interview—prompted Celine to bring up her disappointment. These open-ended questions allowed Celine to revisit and expand on topics that were salient to her. Notably, what was salient in the individual interviews remained salient in the joint interview. Now, with the knowledge that Michael was aware of Celine's disappointment and unconcerned that she had shared it with me, I could include Celine's views in my writing without concern.

When the joint interviews exposed tensions within the coupled relationships (Taylor & de Vocht, 2011), it was my responsibility to know when to probe further, allow for silence, or change the direction of conversation. I was alert to the possibility that one partner might unintentionally (or intentionally) bring up a topic that the other partner wished to remain confidential (Taylor & de Vocht, 2011). At one point during Celine and Michael's joint interview, a particular topic that harboured potential for hurt feelings emerged naturally in the conversation. Celine and Michael's voices became tense and quiet and their words noticeably

hesitant. Reading their mutual discomfort, I was able to playfully shout "strawberry!"—the predesignated "stop word"—after which we all joined in a little chuckle and a sigh of relief and then moved on to a new interview question. Celine and Michael's willingness to show their discomfort allowed me to conclude during the other parts of the interview that they were likely comfortable. I was pleased to see that not only Celine and Michael but all of the couples in my study expressed some disagreement with one another during the joint interviews, because it indicated to me that they were at ease enough in the interview setting to express their true feelings.

Reflections on Data Analysis and Interpretation

Crafting the Narrative Portraits

When first setting out to craft the narrative portraits of each participant, I was striving for parallels between two spouses in a couple. For example, once I discovered Michael's mention of his support systems, I searched for evidence of support systems in Celine's interview transcripts as well. I soon realized, though, that by having a preconceived idea in my search, I was infringing on what was important to each participant individually. Instead, I needed to analyze each transcript in spite of the other, and in spite of each spouse's preoccupations. I had to remind myself that the pre-interview activities (which were a gold mine for gathering information for the narrative portraits) were first presented to the participants as a choice for a reason: Michael chose pre-interview activities that were significant to him and Celine chose pre-interview activities that were significant to her. Following this focus on what was significant to each participant, then, the narrative portraits were written with different content and were not thematically matched. The narrative portraits of each participant became what they should be: stand-alone entities, crafted to represent the uniqueness of each individual.

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Generating Topics

To identify most topics in my research, I had to meticulously mine the participants' interview transcripts, find common topics, and then look across the topics to determine their significance. This involved writing draft after draft of possible topics and eventually narrowing them down. For one of Michael's topics, however, it was as if the interview process did the work, with the topic just blatantly there upon reviewing his transcripts. Michael's belief that community members have roles in raising children, represented in the topic of "Interactions in the Community," tumbled out in response to me introducing the group of questions entitled "Group Four: Questions about the way the participants experience parenting their own child in Canada." I introduced the group of questions by saying, "So, this next set of questions are about the context of where you live now and how that affects things for your children and for you as a parent. So, where you're living now, for example, [City], Canada, and how that affects things for your children and how it affects how you are as a parent." Michael immediately provided a rich response. It was as though groups 1 to 3 of the questions prepared him and brought him to a space where he could access enough memories and feelings for that thoughtful response.

Reflections on Indigenous Research

It was important to me that a relational Indigenous ontology and epistemology (Shawn Wilson, 2008) were apparent in my research with Chantal. Working to achieve this, however, was not straightforward. Ideally, Indigenous research is community based and directed and informed by community members where the research is taking place (Drawson et al., 2017; Gaudry, 2018). Employing such a community-based participatory research methodology in my research with Chantal was not viable, however, because connecting with her community would have revealed her as a participant in my study. Furthermore, there was a partial disconnect

between Chantal and her Plains Cree home community of amiskosâkahikan tipahaskân (Beaver Lake Reserve) due to her mother Denise's own detachment from the reserve. These factors made the possibility of engaged and meaningful community-based participatory research incongruous.

Given these circumstances, I relied on my past relationships with Indigenous and Plains Cree communities, as well as the counsel of Chantal herself, to inform and direct my research with her. As a way of moving forward with my research relationship with Chantal, I first reflected back on my life journey as a person of Quw'utsun and European descent, as a learner of oral tradition from my grandfather, as an alumna of the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), and as a person who has at times been generously welcomed into Plains Cree circles. Such circles include the community that helped me engage in my master's study (Akerman, 2010; Tine, 2020) with Plains Cree Elders and teachers, and collegial relationships with Plains Cree people whom I have worked with and been mentored by. In addition to relying on my past experiences, I also sought counsel from Chantal as to what Indigenous research protocols I should follow, and I often asked her if my methods of gathering data and the questions that I was asking were culturally appropriate. In this way, I proceeded in the research with a tentativeness while carefully observing her verbal and nonverbal reactions to my inquiries.

Once Chantal had agreed to do the research with me, I was faced with the task of figuring out what tobacco-offering protocols, if any, she wanted me to follow. In my research with Elders in the past, I was always expected to offer the Elders tobacco. But in my experience researching with Indigenous people who are not Elders, some preferred me to offered tobacco whereas others did not. Because I was keeping Chantal's participation confidential, I could not ask members of

her community what her tobacco protocol preferences were. Consequently, I asked Chantal herself ahead of the interviews.

Contacting Chantal via phone, I asked, "Do you feel it would be appropriate for me to offer you tobacco when we meet? It would be a way of honouring any ancestral knowledge that you might choose to share with me throughout our research journey together, such as knowledge passed on to you from your mother or grandparents." Chantal replied that yes, she would appreciate being offered tobacco. Taking into account her willingness to answer my question, her desire to be offered tobacco, and her gentle and open tone of voice, I then sought further guidance by indirectly inquiring how much tobacco would be appropriate. I shared, "Some Elders that I have worked with in the past prefer a large unopened package of tobacco, whereas others prefer only a pinch, and, further, some prefer a tobacco offering with each meeting, whereas others prefer tobacco for only the first meeting." Chantal jumped in saying that just a small amount, at our first meeting, was sufficient. She then said that homegrown, unprocessed tobacco is best, while acknowledging that I would not have access to it. When I did present Chantal with tobacco at our first in-person meeting, she was very pleased to see that I had wrapped it in cloth. Chantal explained to me the significance of wrapping tobacco in cloth:

> We wrap the tobacco in cloth and then hang it in the forest or we throw it into the fire. It is an offering to the spirits, the wind, the creator. An exchange . . . when Elders are accepting these gifts, many use them to create prayer bundles or offerings. It is a form of currency, sort of.

Chantal's generosity in informing me of tobacco protocols and her preferences and my occasional, yet significant, life experiences offering others tobacco in the past allowed me to respectfully navigate Indigenous tobacco-offering protocol with her.

Just as there is no singular Indigenous lived reality or way of knowing, Kaiwipunikauikawēkiu (2018) states that "there is not one singular approach to Indigenous methodologies" (p. 209). I believe that my research method of interpretive inquiry with open-ended questions can be considered, in part, to align with Indigenous research methods as it invited the tradition of storytelling. Storytelling, according to Minthorn and Shotton (2018), allows participants to share their own stories in their own way. Chantal shared stories salient to her at will, wandering into her own topics and priorities.

Allowing Chantal to share her own stories in her own way (Minthorn & Shotton, 2018) and go off topic wasn't always easy for me, as I was concerned that we would not get through all of the 40 interview questions. Less concerned about time and more concerned about content and context, Chantal was very intent on using a storied response to my open-ended questions. One time when I interrupted her with a clarification question while she was embarking on a story, she confidentially instructed me, saying, "Just wait," and continued with the entirety of her story. Not only did Chantal assert her own preferences in how she answered the interview questions, but she asserted her preferences in her participation in the pre-interview activities as well. Chantal completed most but not all of her pre-interview activities on paper for the first interview as per my directions. But for the second interview, she only made a few sparse notes and drawings, and for the joint interview she did not complete any of the writing or drawings. Chantal's choice of not completing the pre-interview activities via pen to paper, however, was not of concern to me because I knew she deeply reflected on her chosen pre-interview activities before the interviews, giving her time to recall stories to share with me when we met. I respected Chantal's preference to complete the pre-interview activities orally rather than pictorially or in writing, because it allowed her to express herself as she wished.

Despite the sometimes winding storytelling path that Chantal brought me on in response to the pre-interview activities and interview questions, we ended up getting through all of the open-ended questions. This was important to me because the open-ended questions—asked in flexible ways—served to direct Chantal towards my research question, kept the interview "focused enough to cover relevant and comparable (across interviews) information" (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 43), and allowed Chantal to answer, or even just consider or reject, the questions in her own way. When I listened to Chantal's stories and responses and analyzed the transcripts, I found a rich account of interconnected stories. Further, stories that were repeated multiple times signaled to me which ideas and life experiences were most salient to Chantal. It was through a continual synthesis of the knowledge that Chantal shared with me that I was able to connect all the parts of her responses to understand the whole of her ongoing life journey as a parent. Her stories, which provided a rich context to her responses, were essential to this process of synthesis. As Brant Castellano (2000) explains,

> The holistic quality of knowledge implies that isolating pieces from experience
>
> and trying to make sense of them apart from the environment that gave rise to
>
> them flies in the face of reality and is bound to lead to frustration. (p. 30)

Detailed and storied responses from Chantal, then, allowed me enough information to understand the whole of her life experience, including, for example, the impact of colonization on her mother's life and the subsequent impact on Chantal.

Allowing Chantal to assert her authority and her own specialized knowledge and skills in the research process alongside my specialized knowledge and skills required from me "the discarding of ego" (Brayboy et al., 2011, p. 437). In this way, I could act with humility and stay attentive to my relationship with Chantal. My willingness to rely on Chantal's intelligence,

reflectiveness, attentiveness to her journey as a Plains Cree person, and confidence to relate in a way that she felt most comfortable with (such as through stories) allowed my research to be respectfully Indigenous in nature at least some of the time. The Indigenous nature of my research within a Westernized approach, then, was born out of many factors, including a living dynamic of both my and Chantal's life experiences, the ways in which Chantal asserted her preferences in communicating and engaging in the research with me, the ways in which I aligned myself to be perceptive to her preferences and ways of knowledge sharing, and the ways in which I intently and persistently moved through the 40 carefully chosen and purposefully sequenced open-ended questions (and additional impromptu questions) while flexing to Chantal's way of answering them.

Sharing Chantal's mother's journey throughout Chantal's narrative was done with the intention of better understanding Chantal as a person and the whole of her life experience, including previous intergenerational impact. Because the colonization of Indigenous peoples by the Canadian government and churches has resulted in intergenerational repercussions such as trauma (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b), I could not fully express Chantal's life journey as an Indigenous person and parent without sharing the realities of her mother, Denise—realities that Chantal persistently and openly shared with me. My inclusion of Denise's history is done with Vygotsky's (1934/2012) sociocultural-historical view of child development in mind, where the ontogeny of an individual mediates a child's development. The realities of Denise's life included stories of hardship and resilience, as well as the beginnings of her recent journey towards cultural resurgence.

In sharing Chantal's story alongside her mother's, I employed Indigenous métissage (Donald, 2012) as a relational research praxis, treating Chantal's and her mother Denise's lives

and the lives of the colonizer "as relational and braided rather than isolated and independent" (p. 537). As Donald (2012) points out, as a curricular form, "métissage shows how personal and family stories can be braided in with larger narratives of nation and nationality, often with provocative effects" (p. 237). How Chantal experienced her life and her parenting, along with the limits placed on her to access the strengths of her culture, were a result of colonial imposition on Denise's life. The constraints (e.g., residential school) and affordances (e.g., Chantal's workplace) that allowed Chantal to be Plains Cree reveal the complexity of being an Indigenous person in colonial Canada. Chantal and Denise emerge from their ongoing life story as survivors and resisters of Canada's colonial imposition, while Vasile, a settler to Canada, emerges as a support and ally.

Chantal and Denise's "survival" (Donald, 2012, p. 545) story demonstrates Indigenous "presence, participation, resistance, and agency in the events of the past" (p. 545). In the words of Donald (2012), these stories "give life back" (p. 545) to Indigenous people today and offer hope for the future—a hope especially significant for Chantal's sons—a future in which all Canadians are implicated. In this imminent future, Donald writes, Canadians must "face each other across historic divides, deconstruct their shared past, and engage critically with the realization that their present and future are similarly tied together" (p. 535). Listening to braided stories such as Chantal's and her mother's allows a means to begin to traverse this divide. Further, prioritizing their stories as important social realities makes space for decolonization to emerge.

A key component of my Indigenous métissage research with Chantal was the centrality of relationships in her life stories—person and place interweaved. The experiences Chantal shared were all tied to important places on the land, such as her childhood park where she experienced

friendship, adventure, and the care of her father; her backyard where she experienced racism from her neighbours; her mother's reserve where she experienced acceptance from her kohkom and also a disconnect from her culture and people; and places from her adulthood where she began to experience the depth and strength of her Plains Cree culture, such as her university campus, her workplace, and a summer medicine camp. These places, all on Canadian treaty territory, embody Chantal's identity as a Plains Cree person and, more specifically, a Plains Cree mother looking to pass on her culture to her sons through land-based education such as medicine walks. Chantal strives to pass on her culture while working against the oppressive tides of colonization that seek to sever a familial connection to land and culture. Where Chantal carves out her identity is not a third space but rather a tangible place. This speaks to the reality that land, and the sense of place it provides, is essential to Indigenous well-being and identity (Donald, 2012; United Nations, 2008).

Not only did I employ Indigenous métissage as I shared Chantal's life stories alongside Denise's, I also kept a key component of the more broadly conceptualized community-based participatory Indigenous research at the forefront—that is, research that benefits the Indigenous community (Drawson et al., 2017; First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2014; Gaudry, 2018). I sought to achieve this by including in my writing the historical accounts that Chantal shared—such as Denise's experience with residential school, the reserve system, The Indian Act, and Bill C-31—to highlight the injustices of colonialism for Indigenous peoples. I also highlighted the importance of some of the current programs and services that are essential for Indigenous people to connect to the strengths of their culture. Two examples of such programs include ITEP, through which Chantal received her bachelor of education, and grade 12 community-based adult education (with a foundation of Indigenous cultural programming),

through which Denise received her high school diploma. By highlighting these programs, I was striving to work towards the communal good of Indigenous people, sharing history via Chantal's choice and voice, and highlighting the need for Indigenous cultural programming and opportunities as a result of this history. Such programs are beneficial because they foster the cultural strengths and resilience required to overcome firsthand or intergenerational trauma—not only as an individual pursuit, but as a collective, holistic, and community pursuit as well (Shahram, 2017).

Considering My Own Forestructures

My own forestructures both helped and hindered the extent to which I could illustrate the participants' experiences. As Patterson and Williams (2002) explain, "preunderstandings necessarily sensitize researchers to certain issues and obscure others" (p. 32). The allowances and limits to how I could cocreate understanding with my participants include my own life experiences and my awareness of the experiences of those around me in my life course. My shared experience with the participants of raising children in an intercultural marriage helped me to "foster dialogue" (Mahtani, 2012, p. 158) with them. Further, my similar experiences with some participants in particular allowed me to retell their story more clearly. For example, some of what Michael shared resonated with my understandings of my husband's experience of being raised in Senegal prior to him parenting in Canada, and some of what Celine shared about her conceptions of her marriage resonated with me as well. My husband is a devoted and loving father of our children with an intensity of caregiving that might be considered by some as contrary to the traditions of his culture. In my awareness of this, I was able to openly listen to Michael's stories of caring for his children, and I tried my best to share his story in the way he told it. Chantal's story too resonated with me and connected to my desire to learn more about

Indigenous life experiences. Going through ITEP had been transformational in Chantal's journey as an Indigenous person, as was SUNTEP for me. Chantal's and her mother's stories—although painful to hear and something that I could not directly relate to nor "truly empathize" with (Patterson & Williams (2002, p. 12)—allowed me to learn about part of Canada's colonial past and present and contributed to my emerging awareness of the injustices that Indigenous people face. My connection in some way to the stories of participants such as Michael, Celine, and Chantal illustrates my own forestructures at play in my research. Aspects that we held in common (whether via my similar experiences or similar interests) likely influenced me to attend to those participants deeply. In this admittance, I am left to wonder what went untold with those participants whose lives were less like mine or less related to my awareness.

Considering Limitations

My ability to speak only English was a limitation in my research because English is not a primary language for the foreign-born participants. When they were not speaking in their mother tongue, I imagine that the participants were, at times, limited in fully conveying their thoughts. Also, I wonder if my participants ever felt compelled to give "right answers" based on Western norms in order to appease me, a researcher from the university institution. I tried to mediate this possibility by letting participants know that all answers were welcome and that their cultural conceptions were a valued and important component of the study. A relaxed atmosphere where I welcomed their stories with genuine interest and sustained attention, as well as shared my own brief stories where appropriate, also mediated this concern.

My research is limited to three case studies. While the small sample size of my study might be perceived to be a limitation, my study was not intended to be a large-scale study nor generalized to other intercultural families. Instead, it was meant to look at the everyday parenting

experiences of the three families in detail and "explore what their lives are like" (Merriam, 1988, p. 6). The stories that the participants shared in my study are constructions of their experience shared at a particular time and place in their lives, drawn out through dialectal conversation. Take, for example, Vasile, whose selected memories of his time in Romania are from his own unique experience. To make sense of his parenting in a new country, Vasile reflects on his time in Romania, offering a contrast to living in Canada. This contrast works to inform and reform the "culturally constructed ideas about children's behavior and development, about the family, and about parenting" (Harkness et al., 2013, p. 148) which he holds. Sharing his construction is not meant to promote stereotypes but rather to illustrate typifications of his experiences. Further, like any other participant, some memories of his childhood may be selective—remembering and drawing on certain experiences perhaps to the exclusion of others. What he shares are his experiences, nonetheless. It is left to the reader to judge the transferability of the case studies, and this will depend in part on the reader's own life experiences, their relationships with others, and their interpretations of the case studies.

The fact that all of the participants have university degrees, if not graduate degrees, narrows the life experiences of the participants, while at the same time providing a homogenous demographic factor. The education level of the participants in my study is expressive of the fact that people who are more educationally and socioeconomically advantaged are more likely to enter into intercultural marriages than their less advantaged peers (Choi & Tienda, 2017; Gullickson, 2006). The reasons for this might include that they have more contact with other ethnic groups (Choi & Tienda, 2017) and adhere less to ascribed ethnic boundaries (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2010; Ting-Toomey, 2010). Whether or not postsecondary education makes one more open to diverse ways of knowing is something to be considered.

My research explores intercultural parenting of couples who are contentedly married and who navigate coparenting well as they negotiate and flex to each other's cultural ways of parenting. These marriages are exclusive of marriages where navigating intercultural differences end in separation or divorce, and in contrast to marriages where one spouse dictates all parenting decisions at the disinclined submission of the other spouse.

Other Considerations

I continue to consider the implications of gender expectations in regard to the participants' daily experiences. First, the participants and I were sometimes able to identify when gender constructions—although likely socially and culturally constructed—were a part of their parental and spousal roles. For instance, Michael takes on the majority of childcare, even though his Ugandan gendered belief that "mothers are supposed to do all the work" would dictate otherwise. He freely admits that he struggles with taking on this "female" role. Celine very occasionally kneels for her father-in-law as a "performative" act in order to foster intercultural family relations, even though she considers herself a feminist. And Vasile took on his wife's surname while admitting that it goes against Romanian gendered cultural traditions. Second, it is prudent to question how the parent participants' culturally and socially constructed gender expectations of their children influence the ways in which they raise them, as different racial socialization practices between parents of boys and girls have been cited in research (Stone & Dolbin-MacNab, 2017). Third, I wonder about my participants' expectations of who—father or mother, or both—should pass on culture to their children. In all three couples in my research, the mothers were very articulate in what they desire for their children in terms of cultural immersion. This is in line with research that shows that mothers tend to take primary responsibility for racial and cultural socialization (Edwards et al., 2010); Doucet et al., 2019; Edwards, 2017; Lorenzo-

Blanco et al., 2013; Stone & Dolbin-MacNab, 2017) even if the culture is not their own (Edwards et al., 2010).

Implications

My three case studies on intercultural couples' experience raising their bicultural children have implications for early childhood educators. In addition, my study has implications for parents in intercultural marriages, parents who are immigrants, counsellors in the intercultural parenting field, and early childhood policy makers. I offer some implications of my study below.

Parents in my study believe that parenting is a community pursuit that requires the participation of many adults. In response to this belief, early childhood educators can open up classroom and school activities to families and engage with parents as well as extended family members and community members. Debbie Pushor's (2012) concept of "parent engagement" (p. 469)—which involves nurturing relationships among the home, school, and community—can enrich life in the classroom. Curriculum can be informed not only by educators' agendas (Pushor, 2012) but by parents' developmental agendas (Super et al., 2007, p. 38S; see also Pushor, 2012). In valuing parents' extensive experience in educating their children in the home environment, educators work "alongside parents in respectful, caring, and committed ways" (Pushor, 2012, p. 475). Pushor (2013) points out that this "side by side" (p. 42) approach of authentic parental engagement works against the negative narrative of a school as colonial "protectorate" (p. 466) where well-meaning educators "take charge" (p. 466) of parents whom they believe have little to offer.

Parent engagement can occur in many ways—parents may help with decision making regarding their child's schooling, work with educators and students on learning activities, contribute to the warm emotional climate of the classroom with their very presence, or share

their own interests or expertise with the class. In reflecting on my research with parents of various cultures, expertise shared by parents should not be limited to an educator's perceived "cultural expertise" or to the sharing of cultural artifacts and traditions. For example, a parent like Vasile might not be interested in sharing his Romanian culture but be interested in sharing about engineering or literature. Michael, while he might be interested in sharing his Ugandan culture, might wish to share his digital illustration skills as well. When educators see parents who are immigrants as valued citizens with diverse knowledge and talents to share rather than only a "cultural other," not only will multicultural understanding in the classroom flourish, but intercultural understanding will also.

Educators must be creative in increasing opportunities for parent engagement. Here I offer some suggestions for parental engagement that relate to the parental ethnotheories expressed by the participants in my study. First, where feasible, educators can be flexible in welcoming parents who, due to a present-orientated conception of time, prefer not to commit ahead of time their presence in the classroom. Second, educators might consider the possibility of welcoming parents while they are caring for a younger sibling, since childcare options might be limited due to extended family members residing overseas. Third, educators can work with parents to ensure that schools are places where parents can gather and socialize in both formal ways (e.g., attending a school/family barbeque) and informal ways (e.g., using a designated lounge in the school for parents to congregate and visit) so that they are not parenting in isolation. This opportunity is especially important for parents who are immigrants to Canada and may not yet have established social networks. Fourth, attending public community and cultural activities where they are welcomed (e.g., an Indigenous feast such as the one held at Chantal's school) is an enlightening way for educators to learn about a child's wider ecological

environment. Fifth, educators can offer to visit each student in their home environment. Through home visits, educators can learn about the child's developmental niche—their physical and social settings of daily life, the parents' practices and customs of care, and the parents' ethnotheories—and consider how these can be brought into the context of the classroom. These visits also serve as an opportunity for educators to witness firsthand the strengths of the parent-child relationship. Learning from parents' strengths can occur frequently when educators offer a multitude of ways to engage with parents.

Educators can be aware that parents hold differing beliefs regarding children's safety when going to and from, and while at, school. Parents, in considering different perspectives of "what counts" as a child's safety, may make decisions on their child's safety needs based, not on age, but on the child's skills and on the availability of community members to watch out for them. Teaching children the concept of "stranger danger," as Vasile calls it, can be balanced with the idea of community helpers, and "risky play," as Amber calls it, can be a point of discussion among educators and parents.

My study shows that the value parents place on various sources of information regarding parenting and childhood differ. For instance, Amber and Jason value experts with postsecondary credentials, whereas Michael values advice from family and community members. Regarding planning early childhood education policies, it would be prudent to consult a variety of sources as well as invite a diverse group of parents and community members to contribute.

Early childhood educators can teach students, and relate to parents, in ways that connect with parents' understandings of children. For example, in response to Chantal's understandings of children, an educator might consider opportunities for Indigenous culturally informed land-based education, opportunities for classroom and school relationships that represent an

interconnected family (as well as opportunities to act independently), opportunities to welcome interdependence among parent, child, and community (and not view this interdependence as an interference with the child's independence), and a classroom environment where children are welcome to make mistakes. In response to some of Vasile's understandings of children, an educator might determine what responsibilities to allocate to an individual student based on their unique skills and abilities rather than on age or grade.

In response to Celine's understandings of children, an educator might teach with an awareness that a child-parent relationship can range from interdependent to hierarchical. Depending on the home experiences of each child, a gradual teaching of expected student-teacher relationships might be required, while also allowing space for diverse ways of relating. In response to Michael's understandings of children, first, an educator might extend parents' teachings on respect for elders and adults. Second, an educator might communicate a student's progress to a parent with sensitivity to the possibility that the parents might value growth in general over meeting developmental milestones. And last, in response to parents' values regarding childhood, educators can warmly invite parents to share about their "hopes and dreams" (Pushor, 2012, p. 465) for their child (such as developmental agendas), share how the child meets the school's curricular objectives in the context of the home (Pushor, 2012), and share about the child's skills and talents unique to the home environment. In response to Amber and Jason's value of autonomy, an educator might foster a student's autonomy while also offering guidance in collaborative pursuits. By attending to diverse understandings of childhood and the uniqueness of a child's home experiences, educators can help bridge the home and school environments.

Educators can be cognizant that, like the family language policies identified in my study, every family language policy is unique. If multilingualism is a part of the parents' family language policy, the child's multiple language capabilities and of the child and their agency in them can be fostered. Language resources such as connections with language speakers can be offered to families as they attend to the difficult, easy, and changing aspects of their family language policies. Because language learning is a sociolinguistic process, educators can acknowledge the home, school, and wider environments as a dynamic system where language learning can be both hampered and enhanced by intervening factors.

As illustrated in my study, cultural identity and identification in intercultural families is complex and is best understood by being in dialogue with the family. Educators can be aware of the following factors: a family's cultural traditions might have dual or multiple meanings based on the cultural identities of the parents and their cultural identification of their child; identification of a child between spouses might be the same or different; a child might identify differently than one or both of their parents' identification of them; a bicultural student might identify differently between home and school (Albuja et al., 2018; Csizmadia & White, 2019; Root, 2003); and siblings might identify differently than each other. In addition to not making assumptions about child identity and identification, educators can model vocabulary to students for talking about their cultural identity (Doucet et al., 2019). Further, school systems can consider how the cultural diversity of educators, as well as curricular materials, marks cultural belonging for bicultural students.

My study has implications for couples in intercultural marriages, counsellors, and anyone else who wishes to understand the complexities of parenting interculturally in Canada. My participants demonstrate that spouses can navigate differences respectfully so as to parent in

sometimes opposing yet overall collaborative ways. For example, while parents may take a unified course of action in a parenting decision, they may hold disparate views on the course of action. Or, when out in the public eye, parents may act in different ways as compared to being in their home, illustrating the hermeneutical idea that "people construct the self according to their current situation or role" (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Further, my study shows that one spouse may adopt some of their spouse's ways of parenting or relating to children with willingness and satisfaction or hesitancy and discontent. In acting as interculturalists to varying degrees, accepting difference, and asserting their opinions when they have strong convictions, each couple in my study collaboratively raises their child(ren) in a peaceful, vibrant home. Their multifaceted ideas about parenting and children result in rich cultural traditions and values. My study offers inspiration and a sense of being known to parents in intercultural marriages and serves as a useful resource for counsellors seeking to better understand the unique nature of intercultural marriage and parenting.

The parents in my study hold unrealized developmental agendas for their children due to intervening factors (Harkness, Super, et al., 2007). Such factors include a lack of cultural community, geographical distance from family supports, conflicting family language policies between spouses, different identity hopes for their children, colonization, and an acculturation to the dominant cultural scripts in the wider society. Counsellors working with intercultural couples can help identify these intervening factors and encourage them to work together to navigate them.

Educators can acknowledge that temporal expectations of a parent or a child may differ from the expectations of the classroom environment. Educators may need to help children from a present-oriented home with little routine or schedule adjust to the clock-based nature of school

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(Brooker, 2003) and its temporal expectations (Levine, 1997) of playing, eating, and listening. At the same time, educators can consider how they might adjust the classroom activities to be more in line with present-oriented conceptions of time. Further, educators can be aware that temporal expectations of children may differ within a parent couple, as they do with Celine and Michael.

My study has implications for those wishing to understand the experience of new Canadians who are parents. As parents immigrate to Canada, they bring from their home country their culturally constructed parental ethnotheories. At the same time, they may purposefully and willingly let go of some of their ways of parenting in favour of ones from their new country. Many parents who are immigrants actively construct culture in an active, emergent, and dynamic process. This construction is a living space, where there are choices to be made—some as a means of acculturating to the new environment and some as a way of letting go of undesirable practices via deculturation (Kim, 2015).

The case study of Chantal and Vasile offers a glimpse into how Indigenous people and immigrants—old and new—can live together in the broader Canadian context. Like Vasile, immigrants can serve to be allies of Indigenous peoples (and vice versa), and, where invited, participate in Indigenous cultural gatherings. All settlers and Indigenous people can collaborate in asserting the inherent rights of Indigenous people while working towards a national collective identity (alongside their own cultural identities) where all Canadians—settler or Indigenous—live together in comradery, a respect of difference, and a commitment to carrying out Canada's treaty promises (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015c). And, extending beyond the case of Chantal and Vasile, my three distinct case studies represent a microcosm of Canada—where various cultures live near and with one another. This microcosm offers insights into the realities and possibilities of interculturalism in Canada.

The overarching implication of my study is that educators and policy makers must consider how bicultural students' experiences at school might connect to the entirety of their multicontextual developmental niche (Super & Harkness, 2008). By considering how familial beliefs and goals for children can play out alongside, or in replacement of, dominant (i.e., Western) theories of child development, educators and policy makers will be able to better address the strengths and needs of bicultural students (Super & Harkness, 2008). Educators require the time and resources to learn firsthand about parents' diverse ethnotheories and determine, with families, how these ethnotheories might be best acknowledged in the ecology of the classroom. Ultimately, educators must acknowledge that there are "multiple pathways to achievement and wellbeing" (Feng et al., 2020, p. 167)—even in the same nuclear family—and be open, through parent engagement, to learning about these pathways in order to inform their practice. Teaching bicultural students challenges educators to become intercultural in their thinking and imagine new ways of relating with families "so as to attain a greater perspective on the more inclusive whole" (Kim, 2001, p. 193) of the lives of families.

Considerations Moving Forward

Research with other intercultural families of different compositions, classes, locations (i.e., urban vs. rural), countries, and languages will offer more diverse perspectives on parenting bicultural children. Also, observational research examining the coherence between what intercultural parents say they do and what they actually do when it comes to parenting their bicultural children will offer further insight into their daily experiences.

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Appendix A: Individual Interview Pre-Interview Activities

Group 1: About Your Life in General

Please **complete two or more** of the following visual representation activities and bring them to our interview. Please use pens, pencils and preferably coloured markers (or pencil crayons etc.) on blank paper. We will begin our interview by having you show me and tell me about the ones you completed.

1.	Draw a picture or a diagram of a **place that is important to you** and use key words to identify the parts or to indicate what happens in each part.
2.	Draw a **schedule for your day or week or year** and use colours to indicate how time is spent. Make a legend to explain the colours.
3.	Draw a diagram or images to show where your **support or support systems** come from.
4.	Think of **an important event that changed your life.** Make two drawings showing what things were like for you before and after the event happened. Feel free to use speech bubbles or thought bubbles.
5.	Think of an **important activity** that you do you. Make two drawings showing "**a good day" and a "not so good day" with this activity**. Feel free to use speech bubbles or thought bubbles.
6.	Think of a component of your life that has been important for a long time (examples might be: cooking, exercise, sports, money management, using digital technology, travel, a relationship with a particular person.) Use colours to make three drawings **symbolizing how your experience of that component has changed over time.**

Group 2
Individual Pre-Interview Activities: About Childhood and Parenting

Also please **complete two or more** of the following visual representation activities and bring them to our interview. Please use pens, pencils and preferably coloured markers (or pencil crayons etc.) on blank paper. We will begin our interview by having you show me and tell me about the ones you completed.

1.	Make a list of **20 important words** that come to mind for you when you think about the idea or concept of "the child" or "childhood" and then divide the words into two lists in any way that makes sense to you. Copy them out to clearly show the two groups of words. Please bring all three lists to the interview.
2.	Use colours to make three drawings **symbolizing how your experience of being a parent has changed over time.** Or Make two drawings showing a **good day as parent and a not so good day as a parent**. Feel free to use speech bubbles or thought bubbles.
3.	Think back to when you were a child yourself and draw a diagram or images to show where your **support or support systems** came from when you were a child.
4.	Draw a timeline listing turning points, **key events, or ideas that changed** the way you experience caring for or parenting your child.
5.	Thinking back to your own childhood, make a **diagram or map or picture of a special place** where you spent important time. Use key words to label the parts and to indicate what happened in each of these parts. (The place can be as small as a room or a yard or as big as a huge neighbourhood or part of a city.)
6.	a) Canadian-born spouse only Please complete these two sentences: For a child, living and **growing up in my home place** of _____ [city/town], Canada, when I was young was like… For a child, living and **growing up here in** _____, [city], Canada now is like… b) Foreign-born Spouse only Please complete these two sentences:

For a child, living and **growing up in my home place** of _____ [city/village], _____ [country], when I was young was like…

For a child, living and **growing up here in** _____, [city], Canada now is like…

Appendix B: Individual Interview Open-ended Questions

Researcher says: "I have brought some questions that might help you think of things you might enjoy telling me about. Some questions might work well that way and some might not. And that is okay. When a question does not work well, we can just move on to the next question and see if it helps you remember something to share. The first group of questions are just general getting to know you better questions."

Group 1: Getting to know you questions

1.	Are there any special people or even fictional characters you admire, or wish you could be like?
2.	What (or what else) would you like to be really good at doing?
3.	In the world of nature, things or people, what surprises you the most?
4.	If you could pick something that you wouldn't have to worry about anymore, what might you choose?
5.	Have you ever done anything that surprised other people?
6.	What are some of the things you wanted to do in your life but didn't? Follow-up Question: What are some of the things you did not want to do in your life but you did them anyway?
7.	Are there any favourite places you like to go to or spend time in? What do you enjoy about those places?
8.	What are some of the things you like about being your age? … What are some of the parts of being your age that are not as great?
9.	If you had free time one week a month, what are some of the things you would like to do with your extra time?
10.	If you could spend two weeks with someone who does a special kind of work, what kind of person would that be?
11.	In the year ahead, what are some of the things you'd like to accomplish or try for the first time?

Group 2: Questions about the participants' own childhood experiences in their home countries

Researcher says: "The next set of questions are about your own childhood when you were growing up. "

1.	When you were a child what were some of your favourite activities…the things you looked forward to all day or all week or all year?
2.	When you were a child what are some ways you liked to pass the time when you had free time?
3.	What were some of the special occasions or events you looked forward to each year? [Follow-up Question if needed]: What happened in those occasions that you liked?
4.	What were some of the things that were annoying to you or disappointing to you when you were a child?
5.	When you were a child what were some of the things you imagined doing or looked forward to doing as an older person?
6.	When you were a child who were some of the people that were special to you or that you enjoyed? [Follow-up question if needed]: What did you like, enjoy, or appreciate about them?
7.	What are some of your memories about how you learned things when you were a child?
8.	When you were a child what did people notice about you or say about you?
9.	What were some of the guiding words you heard most often from parents or other people who cared for you?...What did you think about those words?

Group 3: Questions about the way the participants experience parenting their own child

Researcher says: "The next set of questions are about what it is like generally to be a parent to your child."

1.	What are some of the favourite parts of your role in caring for your child?
2.	What has surprised you most about your child?
3.	What are some of the things that impress you or please you about your child?
4.	What is sometimes confusing about your child or about caring for your child?
5.	What kinds of things sometimes seem to be difficult or frustrating for your child?
6.	Before the birth of your child, what did you think parenting would be like?... [Follow-up question]: So how (or how else) has it been the same or different from what you expected?
7.	What are some of the things that you find most satisfying about being a parent?
8.	How have some of your ideas about parenting changed over time? . . . For example, have some things become less important and other things become more important?
9.	What are some of your favourite activities that you do with your child or favourite times of day with your child? [Follow-up question if needed]: Can you tell me about a particularly special time that you've had with your child?
10.	What advice would you give to someone who was expecting their first child?
11.	What do you hope some of your lasting contributions to your child will be?
12.	What do you think is your most important contribution to your child's life to date?

Group 4 A: Questions about the way the <u>Canadian-born</u> participants experience parenting their own child(ren) in Canada:

Researcher says: "This next set of questions are about the context of where you live now and how that affects things for your child and for you as a parent."

1.	What has surprised you most about your experience of being a parent in _____ [city], _____, Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada?
2.	What are some of the ways (or some of the other ways) it is difficult to be a parent in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city] Canada?
3.	What are some of the things you do or want to do to support your child's growth and well being?...Is it easier or more difficult to do these things in _____ [city], or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada, as compared to your spouse's home city/village of _____?
4.	Are there some things you like about raising your child where you live now instead of your spouse's home city/village of _____? [Follow-up question if needed]: "What are some of the things you like about your current neighbourhood as a place for your child?" And then: Are there any other ways that living in your current locale have been helpful to you in your role as parent?
5.	What are some of the things you do not like about raising your child in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada,? [Follow-up Questions]: And do you have any ideas about what could make this neighbourhood or community more family friendly? What changes in your neighbourhood or city would make it a better place for your child and for you as a parent?
6.	How (or how else) do you imagine your child's life would be different if she were living or growing up in your spouse's home city/village of _____ [country]?

7.	How has being in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada, been helpful to you in your role as parent?
8.	In an ideal world, what kind of a place or context would you like all children to have for their everyday lives growing up? [Follow-up question only if needed]: For example, what kinds of community environments, resources, opportunities, and learning experiences would you like all children to have?

Group 4 B: Questions about the way the <u>foreign-born</u> participants experience parenting their own child in Canada

Researcher says: "This next set of questions are about the context of where you live now and how that affects things for your child and for you as a parent."

1.	What has surprised you most about your experience of being a parent in _____ [city], _____, Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada?
2.	What are some of the ways (or some of the other ways) it is difficult to be a parent in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city] Canada?
3.	What are some of the things you do or want to do to support your child's growth and well being?...Is it easier or more difficult to do these things in _____ [city], or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada, as compared to your home city/village of _____?
4.	Are there some things you like about raising your child where you live now instead of your home city/village of _____? [Follow-up question if needed]: "What are some of the things you like about your current neighbourhood as a place for your child?" And then: Are there any other ways that living in your current locale have been helpful to you in your role as parent?
5.	What are some of the things you do not like about raising your child in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada, instead of your home city/village of _____, _____ [country]?

	[Follow-up Questions]:
	And do you have any ideas about what could make this neighbourhood or community more family friendly?
	What changes in your neighbourhood or city would make it a better place for your child and for you as a parent?
6.	How (or how else) do you imagine your child's life would be different if she were living or growing up in your home city/village of _____, _____ [country]?
7.	How has being in _____ [city], Canada, or, in your neighbourhood in _____ [city], Canada, been helpful to you in your role as parent?
8.	In an ideal world, what kind of a place or context would you like all children to have for their everyday lives growing up?
	[Follow-up question only if needed]:
	For example, what kinds of community environments, resources, opportunities, and learning experiences would you like all children to have?

Appendix C: Joint Interview Pre-interview Activity

Joint Interview Pre-interview Activity

1.	Make two drawings to show what it is like when your child is having a good day and a not so good day. Feel free to use speech bubbles and/or thought bubbles.

Appendix D: Joint Interview Open-ended Questions

Group One: The participants' experience parenting their child(ren)
1. As your child becomes older and more mature with each day, how would you say your experience of being a parent changes a lot or stays the same a lot?
2. When thinking about your experience of being a parent so far, what kinds of things were easier than you thought they would be?
3. When thinking about your experience of being a parent so far, what kinds of things were more difficult than you thought they would be?
4. If you could go back to the first year of your child's life and start all over again, is there anything you would do differently to either support your child more or to support yourself more or support each other more?
5. Is there anything you would have done differently to make it easier to "parent as a team?"
6. A child often requires a new learning curve for parents. What/who have been some of your best sources of ideas or information as you have learned to care for your child
   Follow-up Question: What/who are some of the sources that have not been so useful?

Group Two: The participants' experiences of, and imagined experiences of, their child(ren)
1. If you had more free time each day or each week to do things with, or for, your child, what would you want to do?
2. If your spouse had more free time, what do you wish your spouse could spend more time doing with, or for, your child?
3. Does your child remind you of someone else in your families?
4. Would you say that your child has any favourite people outside of your home?

Group Three: The participants' experience parenting their child(ren) in Canada and in [foreign-born spouse's country of origin]

Part A: [city], Canada
1. What is/was it like to have a babysitter for your child when you are/were in [city] Canada? . . . What works/worked well? What doesn't/didn't work so well?
2. What has been interesting or surprising to you about other parents or other children in, [city] Canada? . . . for example, how children interact with each other; how parents interact with their children and vice versa, how parents interact with children other than their own and so on . . .

Part B: Foreign-born spouse's [city], [country] of origin
1. What was it like to have a babysitter for your child when you were in [foreign-born spouse's country of origin]? . . . What worked well? What didn't work so well?

What was interesting or surprising to you about other parents or other children in [foreign-born spouse's country of origin]? . . . for example, how children interacted with each other; how parents interacted with their children and vice versa, how parents interacted with children other than their own, and so on…

Group Four: The participant's practices and hopes for their child(ren) in their two (or more) cultural heritages

1. What are some of your hopes for how your child will experience their cultural identity?
2. What are some of the supports that might help them to do so—that is, experience their cultural identity in the ways you mentioned?