Understanding Chinese Language and Literacy Maintenance in Mixed-heritage Families: A Two-case Study of Family Language Policy in Alberta

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Understanding Chinese Language and Literacy Maintenance in Mixed-heritage Families: A Two-case Study of Family Language Policy in Alberta

by

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Abstract

Informed by family language policy (FLP) framework, I investigate in this study what FLPs look like in two mixed-heritage Chinese-English bilingual families in Alberta, Canada, and the family-internal and external factors influencing the enactment and implementation of their FLPs. Data for this study were collected by multiple methods: parental questionnaires; in-depth interviews, recordings of home talk and literacy activities; related documents and artifact collection; and email communications with the parents.

Results indicate that there are three major features of daily home language interaction: the diversity of language use patterns among family members; the dynamic mother-child language use patterns; and Chinese grandparents as a driving force for children’s Mandarin use and learning. In the process of parental language management, Chinese immigrant mothers engage children in varying Chinese literacy learning activities. Although the interactive Mandarin communication has been limited by the inevitable reality that Chinese immigrant mothers have to accommodate monolingual English-speaking fathers’ needs, mothers and children have been keen on investing time and effort in Mandarin-mediated activities. These findings also indicate that micro-level pro-Chinese language ideologies have been interacting and influenced by the educational reality and social tensions in Canada. However, the Chinese immigrant parents still value Chinese language transmission as a mission that needs to carry out through proactive and constant efforts for mixed-heritage children to strengthen the relations with the Chinese side of the family, as well as gain access to the valuable linguistic capital and the rich cultural heritage.

This study therefore fills a void in the field of FLP on examining how Chinese immigrant parents support mixed-heritage children in the Chinese language and literacy development under
the family-internal and external tensions in Alberta. Implications of this study are that, first, both parents’ mother tongues are equally important for mixed heritage individuals to maintain and develop. Secondly, positive beliefs and attitudes towards heritage language are insufficient, heritage language maintenance still needs *de facto* language practices and parent-child collaborative efforts can be undertaken. Finally, rather than simply a private issue in family domains, the effective implementation of FLPs requires collaborative efforts by parents, mainstream schools, community, and government.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background: Official Bilingualism and Multiculturalism in Canada

“Canada’s history of settlement and colonization has resulted in a multicultural society made up of three founding peoples – Indigenous, French, and British – and of many other racial and ethnic groups” (Dewing, 2009, p. 1). Historically, institutional bilingualism has been gradually implemented and reinforced to ensure the coexistence and complementation of English- and French-speaking immigrant communities (i.e., Canadians with either French or British ancestry) (“Bilingualism,” 2019). In efforts to enhance the more equal status of French language and culture, the right for children across Canada to be educated in each of the two official languages (French and English) has been explicitly stated in Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. Official bilingualism in Canada is further protected by the Official Languages Act, which came into force in 1969 and was substantially amended in 1988 (Mougeon, 2019). On the other hand, as the most welcoming country for immigrants, Canada has been built over time by immigrants and their descendants from all over the world; thus, the interrelationship between immigration and federal language policy and planning are inseparable in the history of Canada (Conrick & Donovan, 2010; Government of Canada, 2018). Although federal language policies are not focused specifically on other linguistic minorities, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1985) was passed as a significant part of federal integration policies to preserve the Canadian multicultural heritage and identity. It aims to:

(a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage;
(i) preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada.

Based on these, the federal government promotes the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1985) in Canada to preserve the diverse cultural and linguistic heritage of all immigrants rather than assimilate their heritage language (HL) and culture into Canadian traditions (Conrick & Donovan, 2010). In the Canadian context, the term heritage language (or non-official mother tongue) usually refers to all languages other than the two official languages (English and French) and indigenous languages (Cummins, 2014).

Although the official policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism has recognized English and French as official languages and the support of other ethnic groups as identity and multicultural preservation, little concrete action has been taken to foster multilingual resources of those linguistic minorities (Berry, 2020; Cummins, 2014). Demographic linguistic data from Statistics Canada (2017) demonstrated that the language transfer rate towards English among non-official mother tongue groups was as relatively high as 47%. In Alberta, as the pioneer and leader of Canadian provinces in actively promoting the HL bilingual programs in the public school system, the rate of complete non-official-mother-tongue retention was still only at 58.5% (Statistics Canada, 2012). As the transmission of HLs have been challenged by the social majority and highly valued languages, a large proportion of children from HL speaking families have tended to shift towards societal majority language, mostly English in the Canadian context (Cummins, 2001; Duff & Li, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2017). Based on this phenomenon, scholars have contended that the sole reliance on HL bilingual programs and other HL schools is insufficient in supporting children’s HL maintenance. Thus, family and community still take on greater responsibility for supporting heritage language and cultural preservation (Cummins,
Fishman (2001) pointed out that HL maintenance can hardly be achieved by promoting or instructing in public without family efforts.

With the growing emphasis on the role of the family in heritage language maintenance and shift, scholars, in the last decade, have gradually extended their investigations of language policy, from public institutional contexts, such as the national, provincial or school domains (e.g., Conrick & Donovan, 2010; Haque & Patrick, 2015; S. Lee, 2007; Tedick, Christian, & Fortune, 2011), to the more private home domains (King et al., 2008; Wei, 2012). As a result, Family Language Policy (FLP) has become an increasingly significant field of research as it shapes the processes of intergenerational HL transmission at home and has a decisive influence on the HL maintenance or loss in younger generations (Fishman, 2008).

**Problem Statement**

Family language policy is defined as explicit (Shohamy, 2006) and overt (Schiffman, 1996), but also implicit and covert, planning and efforts in relation to language use within the dynamic family units (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King & Logan-Terry, 2008). This significant field offers researchers a new window to investigate heritage language maintenance and shift in bi- and multilingual families and why children have varying bilingual development outcomes with bi- and multilingual parenting (Canagarajah, 2008; King & Fogle, 2013; Spolsky, 2012). Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2014a, 2018) suggested that FLP can be examined through its three interrelated components: language ideologies (beliefs or attitudes towards language and bilingualism); language practices (the authentic and differential language use and the language environment); and language management (the specific attempt to intervene or adjust language practices). Conflicts between the explicit language ideologies promoting the HL and the implicit
anti-HL ideologies in the public and home domains have shaped family language policy decisions and practices, which causes HL shift and loss (e.g. King et al., 2008; Ó hIfearnáin, 2013). Recent FLP studies have tended to focus on how parental language beliefs’ and attitudes (which are impacted by, or conflict with, broader societal language ideologies), shape and influence the dynamic processes of family language practices and management (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018; King, 2013; King & Fogle, 2013). In this study, I investigate how parents’ and children’s language ideology as well as the family-external forces shape and reform the process of FLP enactment and negotiation in mixed heritage families in Alberta. In this study, the mixed heritage family specifically refers to the interracial family with one Chinese immigrant parent (born and raised in Mainland China) and one native English-speaking Caucasian parent.

Chinese languages (mainly including Mandarin and Cantonese) are the most widespread non-official mother-tongues in Canada with more than 1.3 million, in particular, with more than 110,000 peoples in Alberta (2016 Census of Canada, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2018). Surprisingly, there are only a few studies have been conducted to explore what FLPs and language practices look like within Chinese immigrant families in Canada (e.g. Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Li & Sun, 2017). Even fewer studies have paid attention to mixed heritage families, i.e., even hardly any studies paid particular attention to mixed heritage families with only one Chinese immigrant parent and another native English-speaking parent. The examination of FLP regarding heritage language transmission is even more intractable to be conducted in mixed-heritage families than in “full heritage” families and it is imperative that more research on this is conducted. The reason for this is that the external tension between the different social statuses of the different languages spoken in the family usually aggravate the internal conflicts of
different perspectives regarding raising their mixed heritage children and transmitting their
diverse heritage language and traditions in home domains (Okun, 1998; Xie & Goyette, 1997).
For example, an earlier census study in 2001 showed that whilst 59% of children in Chinese
immigrant families used Chinese as their home language, this dropped to just 8% in mixed
heritage families with one Chinese immigrant parent (Harrison, 2000). On the other hand, the
construction of mixed heritage children’s bilingual and bicultural identities are integrally
connected to their HL maintenance (M. Y. Park, 2019; Shin, 2010).

When exploring how Chinese immigrant parents and their mixed heritage children
perceive their FLPs, language practices, and parental language management efforts in families, I
draw specific attention to how parental and children’s language ideologies, as well as socio-
cultural-political-linguistic forces frame and reframe the FLPs within individual family settings
and beyond (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2013a; Fogle, 2013). Investigating how and why varying
FLPs are enacted, implemented, and negotiated by family-internal and external factors helps us
to understand how parents and children co-construct to maintain the non-official mother tongue
in mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families.

**Research Purpose and Questions**

This study focuses on two mixed heritage families with a Chinese immigrant parent and a
monolingual English-speaking parent in Alberta. It documents how the family language policies
look like in the two participating families and the family-internal and external factors influencing
the enactment and implementation of those FLPs. Specifically, the following questions are
addressed:

(1) What are language practices and language management in mixed heritage Chinese-
    English bilingual families?
(2) To what extent do family language ideologies shape the family language policy decisions and implementation?
(3) What are other family-external factors influencing the processes of family language policy decisions and negotiation?

**Rationale and Significance**

First, the setting for the research is selected in mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families. As researchers have argued that school-based bilingual education is inadequate for children to preserve HLs, the family and HL-speaking parents play an irreplaceable role in supporting children’s heritage language maintenance (Cummins, 2001; Duff, 2008b; Fishman, 1991, 2001, 2008; Agnes Weiyun He, 2008). This study fills our knowledge gaps regarding mixed-heritage children’s HL learning and development in home settings and bridges the private familial domain of language policy and the wider influence of informal and formal language policies at institutional and official levels.

Secondly, this study examines FLP planning and practices in those families. While previous research on FLP has tended to focus on the transnational families which maintain European languages or shift to the societal majority language (e.g., English), scholars call for more research conducting within other types of transnational families, such as the bilingual families with non-European-language-speaking parents (Canagarajah, 2008; King & Fogle, 2013). This study therefore fills a void in how mixed heritage children maintain and develop the non-official mother tongue the immigrant parents speak.

Finally, this study not only explores parental decisive influence on the implementation and modification of FLPs but also embraces children’s active contribution to the dynamic and interactive process. In the past decade, researchers have revealed that children should be viewed
as “active and creative social agents”, rather than simply “as something to be molded and guided” by caretakers in bilingual families’ language practices and socialization (Lanza, 2007, p. 47). However, even if recent FLP studies have been gradually emphasized child agency and co-construction in the processes of parental language planning and management efforts (e.g., Fogle & King, 2017; Goodwin, 2006; Luykx, 2005), less attention has been paid to investigate how children perceive their heritage maintenance and multilingual development from their own words. To fill this gap, I selected the families with school-aged children to gain the description from both parents and children about their understanding of their FLP and family language practices as well as their beliefs of Chinese language maintenance. The investigation of both parents’ and children’s perspectives allows me to have a more profound insight into how Chinese immigrant parents make HL maintenance efforts through their FLPs and how their mixed heritage children participate and interact in this process under the influence of the family-internal and family-external factors.

**Organization of the Thesis**

Following this chapter of introduction, Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on previous studies of the familial role in HL maintenance and language shift and how family language policy enacts and negotiates in bilingual families, as well as the interdisciplinary framework of FLP. Chapter Three discusses the research methodology adopted for the present study – a qualitative two-case study design, followed by a discussion of discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) which provides an analytical tool to interpret the *de facto* family language practices and interview data in both home domains and the broader sociocultural, political, historical, and ideological contexts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b; King, 2013; Wodak & Savski, 2018). This chapter also introduces the relationship between the
researcher and participating families as well as a variety of qualitative data collection methods employed for the study. In Chapter , based on the data sources which include the parents’ interviews, the self-recordings, and the artifacts, I document the narrative profiles (Seidman, 2006) of participant parents and children regarding their sociocultural and language experiences and language ecology (Hornberger & Hult, 2008) for each family, i.e., children’s daily exposure to different languages and their language choices for responses inside and outside home. The purpose is to contextualize FLPs within these families for further in-depth analysis. The results and discussion of these findings are found in Chapters 5 and 6 which cover the enactment and implementation of FLPs, including diverse and dynamic family language practice patterns and family language management regarding Chinese literacy learning, as well as the internal ideological factors and external socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces in FLPs. In Chapter Seven, I summarize this research and discuss the gaps this study fills and its theoretical and methodological contributions to the fields of sociolinguistics, language policy, and language acquisition.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A review of literature on the role of family in heritage language maintenance and shift as well as family language policies in bilingual families provides in this chapter which goes on to discuss the theoretical framework of family language policy (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2014a, 2018; King et al., 2008; Spolsky, 2004).

The Review of Literature

Research on the Role of Family in HL Maintenance and Language Shift

In countries with a number of immigrants, such as the United States and Canada, research on heritage language maintenance and shift has indicated that since the transmission of HLs, have been challenged by the societal majority and its highly valued languages, a large number of children from HL speaking families has tended to shift to majority-language dominant, especially after attending school (Cummins, 2001; Duff & Li, 2009). Based on this phenomenon, scholars have contended that public schools and HL schools are insufficient to support children’s HL maintenance; thus, family and community still take on greater responsibility for supporting heritage language and culture preservation (Cummins, 2001; Duff, 2008b; Fishman, 1991; Agnes Weiyun He, 2008). Fishman (2001) even pointed out that HL maintenance can hardly be achieved by promoting or instructing in public without family efforts.

A variety of studies have indicated that parental attitudes towards HL have a considerable impact on children’s language attitudes and HL maintenance (Lao, 2004; Mu & Dooley, 2015; S. M. Park & Sarkar, 2007; D. Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009). The studies have shown that immigrant parents expressed their positive attitudes towards children’s HL maintenance and bilingual development because of multiple reasons. For example, Lao (2004) investigated Chinese immigrant parents whose children enrolled in Chinese bilingual pre-schools in the US
and revealed that their positive attitudes towards Chinese maintenance are mainly based on the consideration of future career success. Additionally, a research on Chinese immigrant parents’ beliefs and attitudes towards HL has concluded that apart from the practical value of Mandarin for children’s academic or professional development, parents’ positive attitudes are attributed to their desire to not only maintain children’s heritage ethnic identity (D. Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009) but also strengthen family connection (S. M. Park & Sarkar, 2007).

However, HL-speaking parents’ positive attitudes not always transfer to actual or continuous efforts to promote children’s HL development due to the inequitable societal status and values of HLs (G. Li, 2006; Mu & Dooley, 2015; Nagpal & Nicoladis, 2010; D. Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009). Nagpal and Nicoladis (2010) comparatively surveyed two groups of minority-language (ML)-speaking parents, namely French and South Asian languages, in Alberta, in terms of parental attitudes towards MLs and efforts to transmit MLs. In this study, despite the fact that all parents showed positive attitudes towards language maintenance, French-speaking parents had initiated more ML-mediated practices at home than those South-Asian-language-speaking parents since the Canadian government recognizes both English and French as having official language status at the federal level. French-parents’ more sustained efforts eventually achieve better results of intergenerational ML transmission. Similarly, Li’s (2006) ethnographic research on three Chinese families with first or second graders reported that even if children were attending weekend Chinese school, the insufficient HL use at home caused children’s unexpected outcomes and negative attitudes towards HL maintenance. She argued that parents chose to overlook HL and shift to English at home because their attitudes towards pragmatic values of societal majority language exceeded the affective values of HL.
In particular, prior research on mixed heritage families indicated that both parents’ mother tongues are equally important for mixed heritage individuals to maintain and develop to construct a positive bilingual and bicultural identity (Shin, 2010); otherwise, monolingual mixed heritage children experienced isolation in both HL community and mainstream society due to HL loss and passive construction of bilingual and cultural identity (J. S. Lee & Suarez, 2009; Pao et al., 1997). Furthermore, it is even more complicated to maintain HL in mixed families as different mother tongues parents spoken by usually have different social status, which may aggravate the tension between the HL and the societal dominant language in the family setting (M. Y. Park, 2019; Shin, 2010). Thus, to achieve the effective transition of HL in mixed families, both parents need to make attempts to enhance HL use in home settings (Shin, 2010). In Noro’s (2009) study of Japanese Canadian mixed heritage families, she specified the similar argument that father’s use of Japanese is essential for children’s Japanese maintenance and even if one parent is not able to speak Japanese, his/her positive attitude towards the HL will support children’s HL maintenance to some extent.

As the findings were shown in the above research on “full heritage” families and mixed heritage families, parental positive attitudes towards HL and family language planning may not always transfer to the exact actions for HL maintenance in the collective and interactional processes of family language socialization. With the continuous attention to the HL maintenance and shift of children in bilingual families, recent scholars have taken more consideration into “language practices and ideologies across time and space as well as the sociopolitical context that shapes family-internal processes” of actual language practices and development (Fogle & King, 2017, p. 9). Therefore, researchers in the past decade have begun to examine how FLP in different bi-/multilingual families shape and negotiate in the wider ideological and interactional
processes of language practices and result in different outcomes of children’s HL maintenance and bilingual development.

*Research on Family Language Policy in Migrant and Transnational Families*

As a newly developing field, family language policy (FLP) explores the explicit and overt as well as implicit and covert planning for language choice and literacy practices within the home among family members (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2018; King et al., 2008; King & Fogle, 2017; Spolsky, 2012). Research on FLP bridges the gaps between the two research fields in terms of child language acquisition and language policy, which not only provide an approach to access the process of language interaction among children and other family members and the outcome of children language development, but also gain a more comprehensive insight into how family language ideologies and family-external forces influence the processes of FLP decision-making, implementation, and negotiation (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2013a, 2016; King, 2016; King et al., 2008). Much early research on FLP had focused on how parents in Western middle-class bilingual families mainly in Europe and North American made efforts to raise balanced bilingual children with more than one European language by investigating parental language input, discourse strategies, language experiences, and beliefs of bilingualism (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). However, recent FLP scholars have expanded their focuses on a wider range of migrant and transnational families (including family members with life experience spanning two or more nations) and how those families manage different languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King, 2013; King & Fogle, 2013; Lanza, 2007).

*Family Language Policy Research on Language Ideologies*

Language policies are infused with various language ideologies which are “shared framework(s) of social beliefs that organize and coordinate the social interpretations and
practices of groups and their members” (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8). These ideologies are not just about languages and bilingualism but also embody external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces (Spolsky, 2004). Research on family language policy (FLP) has drawn specific attention to examining how language ideologies frame family language practices and management efforts as language ideologies are viewed as the driving force which informs FLP decisions and management efforts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). Parental language ideologies have been investigated as the decisive force in the FLP decision-making and implementation, with the three major aspects: the management of different languages for different purposes; attitudes towards specific language use patterns; and attitudes about bi- or multilingualism language learning (Houwer, 1990; King et al., 2008). For parental attitudes towards the language use patterns, Seloni and Sarfati (2013) indicated that even under the national monolingual policy, code-switching and code-meshing practices still commonly in Turkish-Jewish families in Turkey, which not only served for effective communication but also asserted their Turkish-Jewish identities. For parental beliefs of HL learning, Curdt-Christiansen (2009) pointed out that the decisions of enrolling their children in HL schools in Québec were based on Chinese immigrant parents’ expectations and positive attitudes towards Chinese language maintenance. Furthermore, parents may have diverse “impact beliefs” which refers to what level parents believe themselves as capable of and responsible for supporting their children being bilingual (De Houwer, 1999, p. 83; King et al., 2008). Curdt-Christiansen and Wang (2018) reported that Chinese parents have strong “impact beliefs” in raising Chinese-English bilingual children, so they believed that they were responsible for and capable of making actual English management efforts by providing sufficient English learning resources and educational expenditure for children’s English learning. Pérez Báez (2013), in contrast, found that Zapotec-
speaking parents in Mexico have lower expectations and “impact beliefs” in a successful HL transmission, which led to unsupportive FLPs and, eventually, resulted in a language shift. Besides, current FLP scholars have pointed out that the FLP practices cannot be simply perceived as parent-children “top-down” language interaction; thus, increasing attention has been paid to more complicated family-internal factors – more social agency and interlocutors other than parents involving in family language, such as grandparents, siblings, cousins, and the broader social networking (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2013a; Fogle et al., 2013; King, 2016; Parada, 2013; Spolsky, 2012).

Furthermore, rather than simply considering parental ideological factors in private familial domains, current FLP scholars have paid increasing attention to the broader political, economic, educational, and social-historical forces, such as the societal status of different languages in the state and community levels, the language policies of related public institutional contexts (e.g., school, community playground, church). For instance, official language policy has been examined as an essential source for FLP decision-making in individual families. For instance, Seloni and Sarfati (2013) revealed that Turkish-Jewish older family members in Turkey were forced to choose to stop transmitting Judeo-Spanish to the younger generation informed by the official monolingual “Turkish-only” policy. Likewise, Curdt-Christiansen’s (2014b) research examined how Singapore’s national language and education policy formed FLPs in Chinese-English bilingual families. She contended that the inconsistent national language ideology, which emphasizes the economic and cultural values of Chinese while shortening the instructional time of Chinese courses in public schools, eventually caused the unequal positions of two languages in FLPs. In this regard, there can be more conflicts between language ideologies at both macro and micro levels (King et al., 2008; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004). King et al. (2008) argued
that “the family sphere can become a crucible for such ideological conflicts” (p. 991), which may not allow language ideologies and beliefs, which inform FLPs, to translate into actual language management and practices (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004). For example, King (2000) interviewed Ecuadorian parents and found there is a conflict between explicit “pro-Indigenous” language ideologies and implicit “anti-Indigenous” language ideologies, which shaped family language policy decisions and practices and caused the HL shift and loss (King et al., 2008). Thus, to better understand the factors influencing the FLP planning and decisions, one should not only investigate the parental language ideologies but also take the external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces into consideration.

Family Language Policy Research on Language Practices and Language Management

Many recent FLP studies have mainly focused on the investigation of family language practices and language management. In particular, to resist or concede to various external forces, parents take different measures to ensure successful heritage language transmission and bilingual development. For instance, some parents chose to enact deliberate language strategies including One Parent One Language (OPOL), minority language at home, delayed introduction to second language and mixed languages (Baker, 2011; De Houwer, 2009); others decided to enroll their children to HL schools (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Schwartz, 2008) or enhance HL literacy learning through daily language interaction routines (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b, 2013c).

Parental discourse strategies are the patterns of language interactions that can be seen as evidence for the results of family language policy decisions (De Houwer, 2009; King et al., 2008). These strategies are categorized into five types, namely, minimal grasp; expressed guess; adult repetition; move-on; and code-switching (Lanza, 2007). They reflect parental intervention for family language interaction based on their conscious/unconscious and explicit/implicit FLP
decisions. To examine and analyze natural language practices among family members will not only allow the researchers to understand the processes of children’s bilingual language development or language shift and loss, but also provides an insight into how the broader social, cultural, and ideological context influences family language practices to follow or go against parental language planning decisions (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; King, 2016). Curdt-Christiansen (2013b) used discourse analysis to investigate actual family language interactions during homework sessions in Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore. She contended that while parents reported well-organized and explicit FLPs for HL maintenance, parents showed their unreflective and laissez-faire attitudes towards the consistency of FLP planning. In another research study on the family daily talks in Chinese immigrant families in the UK, Hua (2008) contended that children and parents used code-switching to express their different perspectives regarding social and cultural issues in family language practices, showing that conflicts in values and identities also impacted the negotiation of bilingual interaction among children and adult family members. Palviainen and Boyd (2013) examined the One Parent One Language policy and practices in Finnish-Swedish bilingual families in Finland. They found parents with different first languages applied explicit FLP for Swedish transmission by choosing Swedish-medium schooling and implicit OPOL policy for everyday parental language practices. However, their de facto language use always rejected those FLPs, e.g., children used Finnish to respond Swedish-speaking parents and Swedish-speaking parents used Finnish to talk to Finnish-speaking spouses unconsciously. Further, parental language strategies and family language practices informed by the dynamic and flexible FLPs had adjusted and negotiated over time, depending on the language proficiencies of family members and broader societal language environment.
Based on the above research, it is found that family language practices and language management efforts are modified and negotiated over time between children and adult family members. Therefore, researchers argued that initial family language policy planning is necessary but not sufficient to ensure children’s bilingual development; instead, the processes of FLP practices should be investigated in the dynamic family contexts with specific emphasis on the children’s agentive role.

**Family Language Policy Research on Child Agency**

Although prior research on family bilingualism has only emphasized parental leading contribution to family language socialization and children language development (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002), more recent studies have drawn more attention to family language socialization as a collaborative achievement (Goodwin, 2006) and children’s active role in constructing and negotiating family language practices (Luykx, 2003, 2005b). To respond to the call for emphasizing the active role of children in family language interaction, more FLP research gradually shifted to investigate how child agency, which refers to the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112), impacts the processes of implementing and negotiating FLPs. With the growing emphasis on children’s agency in bi- and multilingual families, the studies of FLP and language shift have gradually involved children’s family-external language experiences to explain their active contribution to the processes of FLP decisions and practices.

Fogle et al. (2013), for example, examined how child agency and their language practices shaped parental language practices within two types of transnational families, namely, Russian adoptive families and Spanish-English bilingual families, in the United States. They observed out that children often resisted using the languages which parents expected them to use, which
implicitly or explicitly negotiated and reframed parental language choices. Likewise, Gafaranga (2010) examined family language practices Kinyarwanda-French bilingual families in Belgium and found that children constantly used ‘medium request’ to ask for medium-switch from Kinyarwanda to French to respond to parental Kinyarwanda use. In the processes of FLP negotiation in everyday language practices, parents always accommodated children’s requests for switching into French, resulting in children’s language shift from Kinyarwanda-French bilingual to French monolingual. Thus, while parents have explicit/implicit language preference and intervention for children, children often show their potential to FLP. The conflicting language practices and choices in the home setting will lead to the adjustment of family language planning and practices.

Furthermore, recent discursive studies on children’s peer collaboration have demonstrated the multiple ways in which children’s interactions serve as a “double opportunity space” (Blum-Kulka, 2004, p. 308) to support bilingual children’s language learning and bilingual practices (Sun, 2016). As a particular part of peer interactions in home domains, recent FLP researchers started to specifically analyze how sibling interactions contribute to the negotiation of family language practices and language environment. Kheirkhah and Cekaite (2018) examined language interactions between siblings in Iranian families residing in Sweden. They found that younger children often asked older children to provide instructions for language-related questions, mainly in societal dominant languages. While they found older siblings’ HL language use may sometimes lead the younger child to use HL to align with others’ language choices in the conversation involving their parents, siblings’ language interaction is mainly in Swedish and led to language shift and HL loss. Additionally, in her studies of the variation in language practices and development between siblings in Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant
families, Parada (2013) indicated that older siblings’ significant contribution to family language practices and ideologies by introducing English, as the instructional language in school, to family domains. She also pointed out that siblings’ various language experiences and development led to their different language choices with different children as parents often used more English to accommodate younger children’s lower HL proficiencies. King’s (2013) study of a bilingual Ecuadorian family in the US used ethnographically informed discourse analysis to examine how three siblings held their varying language ideologies and language proficiencies shaped their diverse linguistic identities and family roles in family language interactions. King contended that children in the same familial context may have different contributions to family language ecology and practices due to their diverse family-external language experiences. Admitting the active role of each child in the family allows researchers to draw a broader picture of the ideological and interactional processes of multiple family language practices beyond parent-child interactions.

To sum up, the review of previous research provides much insight into the familial role in HL maintenance and the FLP in migrant and transnational families. To answer the call for a wider range of different types of transnational families with non-European languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King & Fogle, 2013), the current study is conducted in mixed-heritage Chinese-English bilingual families to explore language practices and management efforts regarding Chinese language maintenance, as well as how different family-internal and external factors influence the process of FLP enactment and implementation.

**Theoretical Framework of Family Language Policy**

Family language policy research is informed primarily by theories of language policy and language socialisation within the discipline of sociolinguistics (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). While
King et al. (2008) define family language policy as “explicit (Shohamy, 2006) and overt (Schiffman, 1996) planning in relation to language use within the home among family members” (p. 907), more researchers suggest that those implicit, covert, and unconscious decisions and practices should also be integrated into the examination of FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013; Schwartz, 2010). Based on Spolsky’s (2004, 2009) theoretical framework of language policy, recent FLP work, rather than solely examining how parental language ideologies and beliefs shape FLP in the “top-down” parent-children language interaction, focuses on how FLP is shaped and negotiated by the wider family-external political, economic, educational, and social-historical forces as well as family-internal factors regarding different family members in the dynamic processes of family language interaction (Canagarajah, 2008; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King et al., 2008; Lane, 2010). In the current study, FLP in mixed heritage bilingual families is examined by Curdt-Christiansen’s FLP model (2009, 2014a), which was developed from Spolsky’s (2004, 2009) original theory of language policy. Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018) suggested that FLP is examined through its three interrelated components: language ideologies (beliefs or attitudes towards language and bilingualism); language practices (the authentic and differential language use and the language environment); and language management (the specific attempt to intervene or adjust language practices).

In particular, language ideologies are the driving forces in FLP (King 2000), as they are “based on the perceived values, power and utility of various languages” (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 354). These language ideologies are not just about language but also embody external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces (Spolsky, 2004). Informed by the contextualized experience in dynamic sociolinguistic ecologies (the interaction between societal majority language and heritage languages in public and private domains), the
language ideologies of speakers and their speech communities are constructed by and shape their linguistic practices and choices regarding HL maintenance (Kroskrity & Field, 2009). Kroskrity (2018) further develops the concept of language ideology to language ideological assemblage (LIA). LIA is perceived as complexes of distinctive and divergent language ideologies that co-exist and are strengthened by historical and cultural events within the certain linguistic communities and external. The diverse and contingent language ideological complexes form language practices and the practices of HL maintenance (Kroskrity, 2018; Roy, 2020). In this regard, as the driving forces in FLP (King, 2000), those multiple and dynamic language ideologies shape and influence family language planning and practices within bilingual families. As an important component of LIA influencing FLPS in bilingual families, family members’ beliefs and attitudes towards language and bilingualism, which is informed by those macro language ideologies and individual sociocultural background and experiences, directly shape and influence the actual language practices within bi- or multilingual families (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013c).

**Language practices** are defined as “regular and predictable language behaviors which constitute the *de facto* language use in different contexts and for various purposes” (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a, p. 38). To explore the processes of FLP decision-making and practices, FLP researchers examine how parents translate their FLPS into the actual family language practices and whether children follow or resist those FLPs in the processes of intergenerational language interaction in specific family contexts, in particular, by examining parental discourse strategies (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b; Gafaranga, 2010; Hua, 2008) and home language models, such as one parent one language (OPOL) and HL-only policy at home (Leung & Uchikoshi, 2012; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013). However, in this study, the authentic language practices in the bi- or
multilingual families will be understood with a perspective on translinguaging by considering the entire linguistic repertoires beyond the monolingual ideologies and the artificial language boundaries (Kroskrity, 2018; W. Li, 2018).

**Language management** is defined as FLP makers, usually parents, make efforts to offer language and literacy resources to raise children bilingual (Spolsky, 2004). Such intervention efforts include summer stays in other countries, enrolling children in HL schools, HL monolingual visitors; as well as different kinds of formal and informal language and literacy activities (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a; Spolsky, 2004). However, the boundary between family language practices and language management is somewhat vague, as parental language management efforts and strategies may be utilized in the daily family talk in the processes of implementing FLPs (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a; Ren & Hu, 2013). Furthermore, the habitual literacy practices of multilingual children at home is also facilitated by parental language management, including home literacy environments and parental involvement in (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013c; Ren & Hu, 2013). In addition, current scholars contend that FLP implementation should be perceived as the co-construction processes, including both parental language management efforts and children’s support or resistance (Fogle & King, 2017; Goodwin, 2006; Luykx, 2005a). Further, FLP decision-making and implementation in bi- and multilingual families are perceived as a dynamic process with the constant co-construction by both parent and child agency (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b; Fogle et al., 2013; Gafaranga, 2010; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013).

On the other hand, language socialization theory, which is concerned with how children (and other language learners) acquire sociocultural knowledge through language use and how they are socialized to use language by participating in social interactions (Duranti et al., 2011),
has been also integrated in FLP framework. Curdt-Christiansen (2018) suggests that, rather than an isolated process from the wider sociocultural environment, family language planning and practices are constantly interacting with the external factors which takes place through the mediational means of language(s) in the language socialization process. Considering a variety of conflicting and unstable “linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables and factors” within and outside the family (Spolsky, 2004, p. 41), recent FLP research has paid increasing attention to how family-internal and external factors co-construct FLP through the processes of language socialization and development (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2013a, 2016; King, 2013; Spolsky, 2012).

Therefore, the combination of two theories of language policy and language socialization can broaden theoretical understanding of the dynamic and interactive interrelationship between family-internal language planning and practices as well as the broader sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Figure 1 presents Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018)’s interdisciplinary framework of FLP, which is adapted from Spolsky (2004)’s language policy framework and is informed by language socialization theory (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984), illustrating how FLP is framing and reframing by family-internal factors and the external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical contexts through language socialization.
Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on the familial role in heritage language maintenance and shift as well as family language policy research in migrant and transnational families in terms of language ideologies, language practices, parental language management, as well as child agency. Based on my research question, I discussed the conceptual framework of FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018), built upon Spolsky’s (2004) language policy theory and informed by language socialization theory (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). With this interdisciplinary FLP framework, I examine de facto language practices and language management efforts in two mixed heritage families in Alberta and how parents’ and children’s language ideologies and family-external forces intersect and collaboratively frame and reframe the process of FLP planning and implementation in specific families (Fogle & King, 2017). The

Figure 1 Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018)’s Interdisciplinary Framework of FLP.
following chapter explains how my research was designed to answer my research questions and what methods were chosen to obtain and analyze the related data.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH APPROACH

Overview of a Qualitative Two-case Study Design

This research aims to examine the three core components of family language policy (FLP), namely language practices, language management efforts, and language ideologies, as well as other broader factors in the process of FLP enactment and implementation. A qualitative research approach was chosen as the methodology for this study because of the nature of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016) and guided by the socio-constructivist ontology viewing the reality as “relative, multiple, socially constructed, and ungoverned by natural laws” (Given, 2008, p. 117). From the socio-constructivist view, I perceive FLP planning and implantation as a multiple and dynamic process embodied in the social practices rather than a given and stable product (J. S. Lee & Anderson, 2009). Thus, the co-construction and negotiation of FLPs need to be investigated with the consideration of the impact of interactional and ideological factors within and outside the family. Methodologically, a qualitative approach was useful “for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2018, p. 4). More specifically, it is usually used in the field so that we can understand the contexts from where participants are live or study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In investigating how and why FLP and family language practices construct and negotiate in bilingual families, we need to involve both parents’ and children’s perspectives to understand the local language ideologies, language ecologies, and practices, as well as FLP decision-making and implementation in the individual families.

Determined by the nature of the research problem, a case study approach (Stake, 2005) is used in this research which allows the researcher to gain a profound insight into the “hows” and “whys” of specific relationships, practices, and discourses within a bounded system (case). For
this study, as the case study approach emphasizes more on the process rather than outcome (Merriam, 1998), each bilingual family as a ‘bounded’ case provides the researcher with a chance to explore the dynamic and negotiating process of language ideologies, language policies and language practices in different bilingual families. Additionally, drawing on a two-case study approach, it provides a chance to explore the similarities and differences within each family settings and across the family settings (Baxter et al., 2008); on the other hand, the researcher should carry out a more detailed and in-depth analysis of a small number of bounded cases (Creswell, 2007; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Thus, to answer the call for FLP research on a broader range of different types of families and languages, including families within HLs and cross-national families (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King & Fogle, 2013), I decided to select two mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families as two cases of the study. According to Duff (2008a), for two-case studies, researchers should select the cases with very similar or quite different features based on different research objectives. As the two families are living in the same city in Alberta and both have a Chinese immigrant mother and a native English-speaking father, there are obvious similarities as the two families are influenced by the same socio-historical, political, cultural, and linguistic forces (King & Fogle, 2013; Spolsky, 2012) in Western Canadian society and have similar English and Chinese linguistic and cultural resources in home settings and attending in the same Chinese weekend school. However, they reported various FLP decisions, language practices, and language management across time as well as children’s diverse heritage language proficiencies. Thus, to examine parents’ and children’s perspectives of their experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about language and bilingualism, as well as the processes of co-constructing FLP planning and practices in each family, I conduct a two-case study to explore how parents’ and children’s language ideologies and family-external forces
collaboratively contribute to the processes of family language policy planning and practices in particular bilingual family contexts (Fogle & King, 2017).

**Discourse Analysis**

I choose to conduct a discourse analysis of FLPs in mixed heritage bilingual families as it flows from a social constructionist orientation and provides an approach to explore how people think about and interpret their social and cultural practices and how different ideologies are reproduced by exploring explicit and implicit meanings in the use of their language in the written or oral text (Roy, 2020).

Discourse was perceived as a form of social practice and emphasizes the “dialectical” relationship between discursive practices and the multiple contexts, including the situational, institutional, and broader societal contexts (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). In other words, it explores how discursive practices are formed and, at the same time, reframe the sociocultural and political contexts (Fairclough, 2013; Fairclough et al., 2011). Additionally, as discourse analysis emphasizes the socially consequential nature of discourse, it reflects the processes of power enactment and the spreading and reproduction of ideologies through talk and text; it also results in changes in the way power is exercised in the social structure (Fairclough, 2013). Discursive practices can also “produce and reproduce unequal power relations” between, e.g., ethnic majorities and minorities, “through the ways in which they represent things and position people” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258).

However, Blommaert (2005) critically pointed out that other than emphasis on the “real-time and synchronic” sociocultural and political contexts, the discourse should take historical contexts into account rather than solely focusing on “here-and-now of communication” as “people speak from a particular point in history, and they always speak on history” (pp. 126, 130,
134). Additionally, he emphasized that the dialogical nature of context and contextualization and disapprovingly pointed that those “seemingly self-evident” power relations and “social structures and patterns of action” will unilaterally predefine the context of discourses and simplified the diversity and complexity of the discursive practices, resulting in mis-contextualization of interpretation or inequality. Rather than involving too much prior contextualization, the meanings of the oral and written text should be co-constructed by speakers or writers and the researcher in particular contexts in the processes of recontextualization, as discourses might be interpreted in one context but might be transformed in another way in new contexts, especially within globalized and transnational contexts of language use (Blommaert, 2005, 2010; Wodak, 2000). Thus, discourse, in this study, is viewed as comprising “all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 3). The analysis of participants’ discourses will be conducted with a critical lens by fully considering its broader societal, cultural, historical contexts as well as its specific, individual, and transnational contextualization to enhance the understanding of their experience, practices, ideologies and “recognizes the manifestation might be reproduced, transformed, or contested” (Roy, 2020, p. 14) in the processes of discursive practices.

Discourse analysis provides an analytical tool to describe the dynamic and co-constructing processes of FLP and how diverse ideological and interactional factors promote or inhibit the implementation of FLP in bilingual familial contexts (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b, 2014b; Gafaranga, 2010; King, 2013). It allows the researchers to use discursive analysis of actual language use in the process of language practices and management strategies in family domains, as well as in-depth interviews with family members (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Fogle et al., 2013; King, 2013). This will allow the researchers to analyze the interview data and
family language interaction, as certain forms of discursive practices, in the broader sociocultural, political, historical, and ideological contexts in which language policies are decided, implemented, and endorsed and, at the same time, focus on how the conflicts macro and micro language ideologies and individual social agents, in particular, different family members in FLPs, co-construct and negotiate in the interactive and dynamic process of language policy enactment and language interaction (Wodak & Savski, 2018).

**The Researcher and Families**

The mixed-heritage families are recruited from the oldest Chinese heritage language school in this city in Alberta. My own position is a Mandarin teacher in the Chinese heritage language (HL) school where the participating children are attending weekend classes. The relationships between the participants and me are student-teacher and student-parent, which give the access which is “sought and given, connections made, contacts of reciprocity and responsibility developed, trust is built, intimacy negotiated, data collected, and knowledge constructed (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 135).” However, while I build the connection with participants as the teacher for the children and by sharing the same ethno-linguistic background as immigrant mothers, I have neither been a mixed heritage individual learning Chinese language nor an immigrant mother living in a mixed marriage family. Thus, by positioning myself as an insider/outsider and trying to create distance with the participants in the study, it allows me not to take everything for granted but to attempt to gain a deeper understanding of their life stories and perspectives on FLPs regarding HL maintenance. I also paid specific attention to balance my own biases and preconceptions and participants’ perspectives when exploring my research problem (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In this regard, I took reflective notes in conducting interviews to “chronicle my own thinking, feeling,
experiences and perceptions throughout the research process” (Creswell, 2003, p. 202). These notes assisted me and challenged my assumptions and bias as an insider/outsider in the process of data analysis and discourse interpretation.

For the recruitment of the families, according to Duff (2008), researchers should select cases with very similar or quite different features based on different research objectives for a two-case study design. Thus, I decided to recruit two families with the intention of integrating diverse perspectives on bilingual FLP and children's HL maintenance and bilingual development and have more elements, including diverse language proficiencies and learning experiences of children, as well as varying parental language ideologies and inventions (Duff, 2008a). On the other hand, I purposely selected the two families which had to meet the following criteria:

1) The family has one parent born and raised in mainland China and immigrated to Canada and another native English-speaking parent.

2) At the time of the interviews, the Chinese immigrant parent has been living in Canada for no longer than 25 years and for at least five years.

3) At the time of the interviews, at least one child in the family is attending school in Alberta.

Therefore, each family is selected by applying the same criteria with little variation among the families. One advantage of this homogenous sampling lies in the possibility of obtaining sufficient elements for analyzing similarities and differences among the two sample families, comparing the cases among each other (Duff, 2008a).

In this two-case study, I recruited Family A through purposeful sampling. I met the mother Perle (all participants are given pseudonyms) online in my first eighth-grade Mandarin class in September 2020. Before the class started, she was in front of the screen with her second
child, Darryl, who is a student in my eighth-grade Mandarin class. After the first class, she talked to me about the previous Chinese learning experiences of her two mixed-heritage children and their passion for Chinese learning. Once I asked Perle if she was interested and available to participate in the research study, she immediately expressed her support right after asking for her children’s willingness. The first child was at the age of 12 and the second child was at the age of ten at the time of my data collection. Family B was also recruited through criterion-based purposive sampling. Her daughter, Sprout, is a student in my first-grade Mandarin class, who was easily recognized as an Asian-Caucasian biracial child from her adorable facial features. After receiving the recruitment email, Jenney immediately expressed her willingness to participate and gave an overall introduction of her family’s linguistic and cultural background as well as her daughter’s Mandarin learning journey. Jenny informed me that they just consciously transmitted Mandarin Chinese after her children started school, but she has invested continuing efforts in supporting her child’s Chinese development in the last two years. The child was at the age of 9 at the time of my data collection. A brief summary of the two participating families is presented in Table 1. Additional narrative details on each participating family are provided in Chapter Four, the two families profiles and language ecology.
### Table 1 General Information of the Two Participating Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Family members (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Age (in 2020)</th>
<th>Years in Canada (by 2020)</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Education/Occupation</th>
<th>Language(s)/Dialects¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family A</td>
<td>Perle (Mother)</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Guangdong, China</td>
<td>Master, France Freelance</td>
<td>Mandarin; Teochew; Cantonese; English; French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father (not interviewed)</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Ontario, Canada</td>
<td>Bachelor, Canada IT</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effie (daughter)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 7 French immersion</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darryl (daughter)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 6 French immersion</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family B</td>
<td>Jenny (Mother)</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Shanghai, China</td>
<td>MA, Canada Accountant</td>
<td>Mandarin; Shanghainese; English; Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father (not interviewed)</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>England, UK</td>
<td>BA, UK Property Management</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sprout (daughter)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 4 English private</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Dialect is defined as a variety of language shared by a group of people that has some grammatical patterns and words that differ from the “standard” language, non-standard pronunciations, as well as less power than the “standard” language.
Data Collection Methods

Case studies use multiple methods and sources of data which allow an investigator to address a broader range of research questions (Merriam, 1998). Data for this study were collected by multiple methods: parental questionnaires; in-depth interviews with Chinese immigrant parents and children, recordings of home talk and literacy activities, and related documents and artifact collection; and email communications with the parents.

My data collection started on November 19, 2020 and finished on March 2, 2021. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the whole procedure was conducted via Zoom. In the beginning, I first carried out the electronic questionnaire with the two Chinese immigrant mothers. Based on the results of the questionnaire, from December 28, 2020 to January 23, 2021, I conducted eight semi-structured interviews with mothers and children in the two participating families online. From November 19, 2020 to March 2, 2021, I kept collecting the recordings, documents, and artifacts in terms of family talk and literacy practices, reported by the participating mothers.

I did not have a chance to survey or interview the native English-speaking fathers because the mothers in both families believe that they take primary responsibility to their children’s Chinese language maintenance, as well as their spouses are relatively busy with their work and have less time to participate in my data collection procedure. However, I valued the language-majority-speaking fathers’ supportive attitudes and/or active participation as an essential factor in children’s successful heritage language transmission (Noro, 2009). Thus, I intentionally asked the mothers about how the father’s attitudes or management efforts in in-depth interviews with both mothers and children.

Questionnaire
The electronic questionnaires were completed by the Chinese immigrant mothers in each mixed heritage family. The questionnaire was adapted from the survey used in earlier studies (Lao, 2004; Shin, 2004; Yamamoto, 2001) and modified based on my research questions (Appendix A). The questionnaire in both English and Chinese helped obtain the general information about parents’ and children’s social and linguistic profiles, home language use patterns, Chinese language and literacy management efforts, and parental beliefs of languages and bilingualism.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, I adjusted the specific questions in the following interviews to identify specific focuses on participants’ individual life stories, their experiences of family language practices and management, other language and cultural experiences outside families, as well as their beliefs about HL maintenance and bilingualism.

*In-depth Interviews*

In this study of FLPS, in-depth interviews were conducted with mothers and children to gather information about the participants’ views on their daily language practices, parental language management and children’s participation in Mandarin learning, as well as their beliefs of Chinese maintenance and bi/multilingualism. Based on Seidman’s (2006) in-depth interviewing approach, I carried out three-part interviews with participating mothers and children (see separate description of parent interviews and children interview below). All the interview questions were designed in English. However, when conducting the interviews, participants were encouraged to use English, Mandarin, or a mixture of the two languages to share their perspectives and experience.

The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in the original languages afterward. I also took field notes on some salient points during the tasks for later transcription and reflexivity
to clarify the bias I brought to the study and challenge my assumptions in data analysis. I only translated those interview excerpts used in the analysis and findings into English. In reporting findings from interviews, I include the original Mandarin followed by English translations. The translation of selected excerpts was first reviewed and validated by member checking with participating mothers and children, and then verified by a reliable Chinese-English bilingual colleague for accuracy and clarification.

**Mother Interviews**

According to Seidman (2006), the parental interview was designed as three parts (see Appendix B for parental interview protocol). The first part of the interview focused on parents’ life history and establishes the social and historical contexts of the participants’ experiences. In particular, the Chinese immigrant mothers were asked to talk about their stories and experience of moving to and living in Canada, their family background, their beliefs and attitudes towards children’s HL transmission and bilingual development. Participants were asked how they made their family language planning decisions and modified them with regard to children’s Mandarin maintenance to encourage participants to “reconstruct and narrate a range of constitutive events in their past……[to] experience that place their participation……in the context of their lives” (Seidman, 2006, p. 17). In addition, since I did not have a chance to conduct interview with native English-speaking fathers in participating families, I purposely asked the mothers about how the father’s attitudes or management efforts towards children’s Chinese language maintenance.

The second part enabled participants to reconstruct the details of their experience. Participants were asked to describe a typical school day and a non-school day regarding children’s language use and Mandarin-meditated activities. The emphasis is placed on their
explicit or implicit language policies about daily language use in different familial contexts. Additionally, interview questions included their description of whether they maintain the Mandarin-speaking environment and provide Chinese literacy resources, and children’s response to their management efforts. Additionally, I also focused on the factors causing the changes in the dynamic and negotiating processes of FLP implementation and language practices over time.

The third part was designed for the participants to reflect on the meaning of their experience. This part of the interview focuses on eliciting information of FLPs, parental ideologies related to the broader sociocultural and socioeconomic contexts, and identification. Participants were asked to talk about: (1) their attitudes and beliefs about Mandarin, other Chinese dialects, English, and other languages their children are learning; (2) the role of Chinese language(s) in their families and life, (3) their expectation for children’s Mandarin learning and multilingual development, and (4) their perceptions of children’s identity as a mixed heritage individual.

In the interviews with Chinese immigrant mothers, I did not follow a protocol too strictly, but let it go with the participants’ flow of telling stories and experiences about the enactment and implementation of FLP and their beliefs of HL transmission and bilingualism. I only intervened by asking occasional probing questions and follow-up questions concerned with my research questions. I conducted two interviews with each participating mother. Each interview lasted about one hour to 1.5 hours. In addition to the formal interviews, I had continuous informal conversations with participating mothers by email or Wechat (a major and widely used social networking application in China) throughout the study. The contents of the conversations included interview scheduling, following-up questions about the formal interviews and
observation, sending self-recordings and artifacts with background explanation, and member checking of interview and recording transcripts.

**Children’s Interviews**

The interview questions for children were also designed based on the same consideration as the above parental interview but were adjusted accordingly based on their mothers’ responses in the parental interviews (see Appendix C for children’s interview protocol). The first one-on-one interview with each child lasted about an hour. The children participants included the first child (12 years old) and the second child (ten years old) in Family A, as well as the nine-year-old single child in Family B. I was able to learn about children’s schooling experiences, their social-cultural and language experiences outside home, their detailed experiences in home language practices and interaction with parental language management, as well as their beliefs about Chinese language maintenance and being bi/multilingual mixed heritage individuals. For the second interview with children, I conducted the second one-on-one interview with the only child for about 20 minutes to ask a few follow-up questions based on her first and the second interview with her mother; for the family with two children, considering that more information can be disclosed by family members when interviewed together after individual interviews carried out (Reczek, 2014), I conducted a dyadic interview with two daughters for an hour to obtain the more detailed stories and experiences of their engagement in daily language practices and Chinese literacy activities at home. In addition, to supplement their mothers’ responses and obtain a more accurate understanding, I also purposely asked the children about their native English-speaking fathers’ perspectives and involvement regarding children’s Chinese language maintenance.

*Recordings, Documents, and Artifact Collection*
Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, instead of doing participant observation, I asked the mother of each family to self-record some home conversation and Chinese literacy activities. For example, I collected the recordings of children’s singing of their original Chinese song, their bedtime Chinese story-reading and follow-up talks with the mother in Family A, as well as Chinese-mediated daily conversation and everyday Chinese literacy learning promoted by the mother and the child in Family B. These recordings were transcribed by the researcher and verified by a Chinese-English bilingual speaker. In addition to audio-recordings, I also collected mothers’ self-designed Chinese literacy teaching materials from the mother in Family B, children’s Chinese homework in Family A, and children’s self-reported daily schedules in both families. I analyzed the various data to demonstrate the de facto language practices, mothers’ language management and children’s responses in the process of enacting and implementing family language policies in the two families provided in Chapter Five.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

First, I briefly explain the languages used in the process of data analysis and presenting findings. The audiotaped interviews and recordings of family talks and Chinese literacy activities were transcribed in the language(s) that they were originally taken. Field notes for interviews were taken primarily in English, except for the dialogues carried out in Mandarin. When writing the report, I used the original language (with translation when needed) to present the data.

Before conducting the in-depth analysis of family language policy (FLP) in two families to answer my research questions, I first applied Seidman’s (2006) approach of crafting narrative participant profiles and Hornberger and Hult’s (2008) approach of describing family linguistic ecology to establish the contextualized circumstance in each family. In this regard, I read through the interview transcripts of each participant, highlighted and grouped the passages that the
participants talked about their family background and previous experiences of learning and using Chinese and other languages inside and outside the home. Based on the marked transcripts, I presented the sociocultural and sociolinguistic profiles and language ecology of each family by using their own words. These narrative profiles later developed into descriptions of participating families’ sociocultural background, general language experiences, and language ecology provided in Chapter Four.

To conduct the further in-depth analysis of family language policies, I applied manual coding in my analysis by re-reading and familiarizing myself with interviews and recordings of home language and literacy practices, and constructed several categories for the analysis of the three major components in family language policy – the de facto language practices and management, as well as language ideologies – with different themes, such as the dynamic mother-child language use patterns, home Chinese literacy learning activities, Mandarin as the bond of language between children and the half Chinese-speaking family. In additional, to further identify potential family-external factors in FLP decisions and implementation, by using discourse analysis of interview data, I illustrate how parents’ and children’s language beliefs impact the FLPs under the external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces. In order to enhance the validity and reliability of the interpretation of language policies in the mixed heritage families, the transcribed interview data with both mothers and children was first reviewed and validated by all the participants and a Chinese-English bilingual colleague, and then triangulated with multiple data sources, including the field notes, surveys, and recordings (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Based on this in-depth analysis, I demonstrated the findings from my research: the enactment and implementation of FLPs (i.e., family language practices and management) in Chapter Five and the internal and
external factors influencing FLPs (i.e., language ideologies and other sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces) in Chapter Six.

**Ethical Considerations**

My research was guided by the principles of the national Tri-Council Policy statement (2018). After obtaining the ethical approval from the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University and the permission from the principal of the Chinese weekend school, I sent the recruitment email in English and Chinese to the parents of students in Chinese school to inform them of the research purpose, the potential data collection procedures, and the privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, and security of the data. Both parents and children were also given opportunities to ask questions before deciding whether they would participate in the research. Two families volunteered to participate in the study. Parents signed the consent forms for themselves and also for the children and their children signed the assent forms. Both parental consent form and child assent form – both in English and Chinese – were approved by the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE TWO FAMILIES’ PROFILES AND LANGUAGE ECOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the enactment and implementation of family language policies (FLPs), i.e., language practices and management in the two mixed heritage families, as well as language ideology and external sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical factors influencing FLPs. Before going into the findings, I present this chapter to craft a narrative and detailed profile (Seidman, 2006) and describe the language ecology (Hornberger & Hult, 2008) for each participating family, which aims to situate the further in-depth analysis in contextualized circumstances.

In this chapter, I first provide the general linguistic and social profiles of parents and their children in the two participating families (see Tables 2 and table 3). Then, I construct the narrative profiles (Seidman, 2006) of the participants from each family, which comprises the Chinese immigrant parent’s personal background, educational experiences, life stories, as well as children’s language learning, schooling, and life experience inside and outside the home. According to Seidman (2006), the narrative profiles of participants allow the interviewer to “present the participant in context, to clarify his or her intentions, and to convey a sense of process and time” (p.119). In the current study, it enhances the understanding of how and why family language policy is planned and negotiated in specific family contexts. Then, I describe children’s linguistic ecology (Hornberger & Hult, 2008) which illustrates children’s daily exposure to different languages and their language choices for responses. In language policy research, linguistic ecology refers to the interaction of languages, in particular, the illumination of the “relationships between societal multilingualism and individual language choices” (Hornberger & Hult, 2008, p. 280). In this study, to summarize the children’s linguistic ecology provides the researcher an overall understanding of children’s language input and output inside
and outside the family in daily life. The information was collected through the questionnaire, mothers’ and children’s interviews, their self-reported recordings of language and literacy practices, as well as other related artifacts and documents.

Family A

Table 2 Family A’s General Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Age (in 2020)</th>
<th>Years in Canada (by 2020)</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Education/Occupation</th>
<th>Language(s)/Dialects</th>
<th>Abilities in Mandarin</th>
<th>Abilities in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perle (Mother)</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Guangdong, China</td>
<td>Master, France Freelance</td>
<td>Mandarin; Teochew; Cantonese; English; French</td>
<td>Native</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father (not interviewed)</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Ontario, Canada</td>
<td>Bachelor, Canada IT</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effie (daughter)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 7 French immersion</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; French</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darryl (daughter)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 6 French immersion</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; French</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Native</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Narrative Profiles

Perle (Mother)

I met Perle (all participants are given pseudonyms) online in my first eighth-grade Mandarin class in September 2020. Before the class started, she was in front of the screen with her second child, Darryl, who is one of the students in my eighth-grade Mandarin class. She smiled and encouraged me that although I was a new teacher, there was no need to worry about teaching as students in this class have started learning Mandarin since kindergarten. She also added my Wechat account for better communication. I found her to be very extroverted and talkative. She shared about her two daughters’ previous Chinese learning experience and their
passion for Chinese learning in our first conversation by instant messages. Apart from this, Perle only contacted me for submitting Darryl’s homework and received feedback from me. When my research was approved by the University ethics board, I contacted Perle immediately to ask if she and her children would like to be part of my study. After asking for her children’s willingness, Perle agreed to participate and expressed her support. Since Perle got used to talking to me in Chinese, the interviews were conducted mainly in Chinese with a few phrases or sentences in English.

Perle was born in early 1970s in a Cantonese-speaking city in South China. She is a native speaker of Teochew, Cantonese, and Mandarin with a Cantonese accent. In her growing-up years, she spoke Teochew with her parents as their home language and used Cantonese and Mandarin in public. She also speaks English at a proficient level and French at a functional level. She completed her bachelor’s degree majoring in English in Mainland China and started using English as her primary working language. She completed her master’s degree in France and work there for several years. Due to her living experience in France, Perle acquired a functional level of French proficiency. After that, she went back to Guangzhou to establish her business and then met her husband, a Canadian, in Hongkong. For business reasons, she and her husband had traveled a lot in Europe and were attracted by those cultures and architectures and thought about living there. In 2000, as her Canadian husband can speak neither other European languages nor Chinese, Perle finally decided to immigrate to Canada and settle down in Alberta. As a self-confessed workaholic, Perle continued traveling back to Hongkong for business even when she was pregnant with her first daughter in 2008. However, she decided to close her business and start being a stay-home-mom to better accompany her children and support their language and personality development.
Reflecting on her growing experience, Perle believes her well-educated and very open-minded parents had supported encouraged and supported her to learn and try anything of her own choices. This made her become very an open-mined parent who introduced multiple language learning opportunities to the children and respect their wishes rather than forcing them to follow parental choices or decisions. As she described in the interview:

I just told them, “You have to choose what you really like to do, otherwise, it’s torture – you look at the job you hate so much. I think this is very important for kids. I feel very lucky as my parents were treating me like this. I know many people like my friends. They force the kids to do what the parents want, not the kid wants…… [Kids] never enjoy it and would give up. All the efforts were in vain, and a lot of money would be wasted. So, I help them [Effie and Darryl] weigh up benefits and time costs and tell them about my expectation, right? …… The rule of our family is that I introduce [different learning opportunities] for them to choose from. I never said you have to learn Mandarin…… We never. We’re very open-minded. I just told them about the potential benefits of learning Chinese. They chose to enroll in the Chinese weekend school by themselves. They also chose their French school. I was expecting them to go to German [bilingual] school as I can't speak German. But they still chose French school.
Adopting this open-minded parenting style, Perle believes that she has never forced her children to learn Chinese but allows them to decide whether they want to attend the Chinese weekend school. Similarly, even if she wanted to enroll her children to the German bilingual school, she decided to respect her children’s own schooling choices to attend a French immersion school as she did not impose her will on her children. When asked about how she perceived children’s learning of Chinese and other languages, Perle said “我教她们其实没有说特别因为你是中国人你一定得学中文，不是一种 identity 的问题，而是……你学语言越多你越 open minded，因为你对不同的文化的理解比较多一点 (I didn’t specifically tell them you must learn Chinese as you are Chinese, which is not just an identity issue. Instead, ……the more languages you learn, the more open-minded you are as you have a better understanding of different cultures). In Perle’s opinion, Mandarin Chinese is equally important as English and French. Based on this consideration, she had proactively spoken to her children in Mandarin since the children were born. Since her first child was six months old, she started reading various Chinese books with her children. Perle also consciously taught English and French to her children from a very young age, such as reading English with phonics and basic French by singing French songs. In addition, she started taking her children to different libraries since the first child was eight months and the second child was about a month. Perle found that this well-planned multilingual education in early childhood effectively sparked her children’s passionate interest in language learning and facilitated them to choose the Chinese weekend school and the French immersion school by themselves.

Effie and Darryl (Two Daughters)

In 2008, the first daughter, Effie, was born in Alberta, and the second daughter, Darryl, was born one year and a half late in 2010. Perle reported that as she started her trilingual and
literacy teaching when the children were very young, Effie and Darryl have been able to read all the children’s books in English by themselves at the age of three and read Chinese books with Pinyin\(^2\) and French books at the age of four. Two children started attending the Chinese weekend school at age three and French immersion school at about age five. The interviews were conducted when Effie was attending seventh grade at her French school and ninth grade at the Chinese school. For Darryl, when participating in the interviews, she was in her sixth grade at French school and learning in an eighth-grade class at Chinese school. At the beginning of the interviews with the two girls, I used Mandarin to ask some simple questions, and they responded to me mainly in Mandarin. However, they preferred to switch to English after answering the first several questions.

**Effie.** When talking about her Chinese learning experiences, Effie highlighted the educational benefits of reading Chinese stories and watching Xiangsheng (the Chinese tractional comic dialogue). She also mentioned that she enjoyed participating in Chinese speech and writing contests as she is a very competitive person and it would improve her pronunciation and writing skills in Chinese. While Effie believes that her Chinese proficiency is not bad, compared to other peers in Chinese class, she always looks to improve herself. When asked about her Chinese learning goal, Effie said “I wanna get a good level so I can at least understand to somebody who comes like from China. I can understand them. I communicate with them like wait by the highway.” Moreover, she specifically indicated her expectation for her Chinese literacy development:

I want to be able to read something like a long essay without the Pinyin and also write a good essay for Chinese, a longer one. So, I can like write and read…… Like if somebody

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\(^2\) Pinyin (is the official system to transcribe Chinese characters into Latin script in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Singapore. It is often used to teach Standard Chinese and spell Chinese names in foreign publications and may be used as an input method to enter Chinese characters into computers.
were to write me an email, like a long email in Chinese, I should be able to understand it, like read it and reply as long email in Chinese.

Effie therefore valued the instrumental values of Mandarin as one of the greatest benefits from learning Chinese. For the reasons of choosing French immersion, Effie argued that she thinks French is a beautiful language and wanted to go to France and communicate with French people when she was younger. She also feels, for now, she enjoys learning French the most among different languages as she can learn more new contents at school, and it has more connections to English.

**Darryl.** Darryl informed that the primary reason for her to make constant efforts in improving her Chinese proficiency level is that she wants to strengthen the connection with all Chinese-speaking relatives on her mother’s side. She attaches importance to both the communicative and affective values of Mandarin Chinese as she wants to be able to find a job in China so that she can continue to live with her parents even if they go back to China someday.

When asked about why she chose French immersion instead of Chinese bilingual school, Darryl claimed that she was already attending Chinese weekend school and wanted to continue her English learning while also learning another language. For her, learning in both the weekend Chinese school and French immersion provide access to diverse cultures. She also expressed the passion for learning both Chinese and French as she enjoys challenging herself by exploring significantly different languages. As she described in the interview:

I like Chinese and French equally because they're second languages for me. So, I still haven’t been exercised my mind far enough in them yet. So, I am more occupied with them than English…… lots of the languages are similar to other languages. Like French is similar to Spanish and Chinese is similar to Cantonese. But when I'm exploring with completely different kinds of languages [like Chinese], it's more interesting and exciting than [only] learning English and French because there's more of a connection.
As Darryl found Chinese is completely different from French and English, she perceives this multilingual learning as a challenging but enjoyable process. Darryl also expressed her willingness of introducing her half-Chinese background and the Chinese culture to her classmates and teachers at French school. When asked whether they have shared Chinese culture with their friends in French school during the two-sister joint interview, Darryl excitedly showed me the booklet (see figure 2) which she made for her presentation about Chinese New Year in French school:

**Darryl:** I have the booklet! Like 2016, we made the booklet about Chinese New Year and I wrote all about it. I put on some pictures and stuffs like this and I talked all about it and I was presenting in front of the class. (showing the booklet to the author)

**Effie:** Oh, your writing was quite messy back then.

**Darryl:** Hey! (taps on Effie’s shoulder) And here's an adorable picture on me. (showing a picture of herself in traditional Chinese costume when she was a baby)

**The author:** Oh, so cute. Was that your teacher invited you to share your culture?

**Darryl:** Like, if we were just asking, “Can we have a five-minute presentation from the class?” She would say definitely. So that was a chance to teach everybody about our culture outside of being a Canadian and how it was like to be half Chinese. (saying excitedly and proudly with a smile)

Darryl tends to take those opportunities to share her half-Chinese background and her knowledge about the Chinese language and culture in her French school class as she is dissatisfied with being affiliated with a single Canadian cultural/ethnic group. As she expressed, “I have an aspect on both cultures from my mom and my dad. So, if both of them were Chinese or both of them were Canadian, then I probably wouldn't learn Chinese in the first place, or I
probably wouldn't learn French in the first place……” She believes Chinese and Canadian cultural background is equally important, which motivates her to continuously learn Chinese language and culture outside her French school.

**Figure 2** Extracts of Effie’s Chinese New Year Presentation draft in Her French School.

In their French school, the two girls enjoy teaching simple Chinese words to their friends and playful using Chinese as their secret language. As they described in the interview:

**Effie:** It [Mandarin] is a good communication skill, especially it comes very useful when you're in French school. Nobody else speaks Chinese in your class. So, you can call boys like fat and stuff in Chinese, and then they'll never know. It’s like 胖 [fat] means very beautiful. It was like 我很胖 [I am so fat]. (chuckling)
Darryl: Yeah. Sometimes we say like 他很胖!他很胖! [He’s so fat! He’s so fat!] (chuckling). He wants to know what we're talking about. It's like, what are you saying? And we're like, oh, you're very handsome. He's like, thank you. It's my best feature. (Effie and Darryl are chuckling.)

Effie: And then you tell your friends what you're talking about, and they laugh like a lot.

Darryl: And we also tell them like, 面包[bread], it's a word you say for couch. And they're like, Oh really? And they're like, let's go sit on the 面包[bread]. [@]

For the two daughters in Family A, Chinese learning is perceived as an interesting and creative process rather than a burden. They informed that they are self-motivated and passionate about continuing their Chinese language and culture learning as it will help them better communicate with their mother’s side of the family, explore a different culture, and will open another path for future academic and career development.

Linguistic Ecology of Family A

In Family A, the parents interact with Effie and Darryl in English on a daily basis. Although Perle had spoken to the children in Mandarin very often in their early childhood, she has less time to interact with the girls in Mandarin after they started formal schooling. Children’s increasing after-school activities are all in English, such as the music class, programing, and coding. The major time for mother-children talk was during dinner time but they have to talk in English as they don’t want to exclude the monolingual father. For the last ten years, each Saturday, Perle encourages her daughters to make a video call with their Chinese-speaking grandparents and cousins living in Australia to practice Mandarin and maintain the family relationship. The grandparents speak Mandarin, and the girls interact with them mainly in Mandarin. Their cousins are also Mandarin-English bilingual, so they usually use two languages mixed to talk to each other. Sometimes when video calls stop the girls and Perle still expands
their conversation in Mandarin for a while. Additionally, each day, Perle also encourages them to watch French video for an hour while doing exercise and watch 20-minute Chinese cartoons before going to sleep. She also reads many Chinese books with the girls and takes them to visit other Mandarin-speaking relatives during vacations. Effie and Darryl go to the same French immersion, in which both French and English are used as the mediums of instruction. They go to the Chinese weekend school on Sunday morning. Figures 3 and 4 were the daily schedules created by Effie and Darryl.

Figure 3 Effie’s Daily Schedule.  
Figure 4 Darryl’s Daily Schedule.
Family B

Table 3 Family B’s General Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Age (in 2020)</th>
<th>Years in Canada (by 2020)</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Education/Occupation</th>
<th>Language(s)/Dialects</th>
<th>Abilities in Mandarin</th>
<th>Abilities in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jenny (Mother)</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Shanghai, China</td>
<td>MA, Canada Accountant</td>
<td>Mandarin; Shanghainese; English; Japanese</td>
<td>Native</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father (not interviewed)</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>England, UK</td>
<td>BA, UK Property Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprout (daughter)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Since birth</td>
<td>Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>Grade 4 English private</td>
<td>English; Mandarin; Spanish</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Native</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Narrative Profiles

Jenny (Mother)

I recruited Jenny through criterion-based purposive sampling. Her daughter, Sprout, is a student in my first-grade Mandarin class, who was easily recognized as an Asian-Caucasian biracial child from her adorable facial features. After receiving the recruitment email, Jenny immediately expressed her willingness to participate and gave an overall introduction of her family’s linguistic and cultural background as well as her daughter’s Mandarin learning journey. Jenny informed me that they just consciously transmitted Mandarin Chinese after her children started school, but she has invested continuing efforts in supporting her child’s Chinese development in the last two years. Jenny also sent me the recording of their daily Mandarin conversation and literacy learning sessions at home and the photocopies of their home teaching and practicing materials. Jenny chose to use English in the two parental interviews as her...
daughter was listening to the interviews and she wanted her daughter to understand what we were talking about.

Jenny was born and raised in Shanghai, China. She spoke Shanghainese with her family, as well as used Shanghainese and Mandarin in public in her growing-up years. She started self-learning English through the radio program when she was in first grade. In 1990s, as the Chinese government opened Shanghai to overseas investment, Jenny was able to work at an American company with a fully English-speaking environment for about one year and a half. After she married her first husband, a native French-speaking Canadian, she immigrated to Canada for a family reunion in 1998. As her bachelor’s degree completed in China could not be recognized back that time, she completed her part-time bachelor’s degree in Canada. Her first marriage lasted for 10 years. In 2007, she met her current husband, who was originally from England and moved to Canada in 1998. They gave birth to their child, Sprout, in 2011. Since her daughter was about age two, Jenny had completed a two-year master’s program in a Canadian institution.

Reflecting on the education decision she made for her child based on her previous schooling experience, Jenny believes that the development of a whole person is much more important than academic achievement or Chinese literacy development. As she described in the interview:

I had a lot of plans done, but mostly it was when I was pregnant with her [Sprout]. Everything changed when she was born……during the first 10 months, I was with her alone, I kind of changed all my ideas about a very “tiger mother” method of teaching or raising a kid, those very strict lines. I was thinking she has to be able to read and write [in Chinese]. And then she has to be able to do it and she has to go to immersion [Chinese bilingual school]. She has to do these. But they all came away...... I know that Chinese immersion are fairly like a little bit too focused academically and then that's very different than her school. The reason I picked her school now is because her school is
very balanced. They really focus on development of a person in a whole sense than just focusing on academic study. I didn't want a school that all their mission and their soul-driven focus is academic...... For my own experience growing up in schools in China...... they're all academic driven. So, there's a lot of natural part of a person is suppressed. Like there's just no question about it. So, there are things that I love to do when I was a kid. They all gone just because you chose a life. That's solely based on the academic learning and ranking. And then you'd go that route. It's very limiting. So, I didn't want anything like that for Sprout. And that was very clear I felt the way that a mother connects to a child, and I have to support her instead of forcing a way of life into her. So, I kind of just dissolved everything that I was planning in my head before she was born.

Jenny elaborated that she modified her initial “tiger mother” planning, in terms of academic achievement and Chinese literacy development, after she gave birth to her daughter because she realized that she was dissatisfied with her previous academically oriented schooling experience in China. Instead, she believes the whole person development and stress-free learning environment matter the most in her child’s education, which made her choose to delay teaching Chinese literacy to her daughter in early years and gave up enrolling her child in the Chinese bilingual program. To provide her child a free and flexible learning environment, Jenny chose to enroll her daughter in a very small-scale private school with English as the language of instruction. However, in recent years, Jenny attached increasing importance to Chinese transmission as her daughter grows older and the Chinese-speaking grandmother started living with them more frequently. While she started consciously speaking Mandarin and teaching Chinese literacy to her daughter since 2019, Jenny always ensures that her child is willing to learn Chinese rather than being forced by her. As illustrated in her interview:

I felt the only way that work with her is to introduce the opportunity and then she will tell me if she wants to go further or not. So, it has always been this way with so many things
that she has stabbed in. But now she's older, she's in grade four. And you know, when you're grade four, when you approach 10, you are more concrete in what you interested in. So, at this age you say you're interested in something, it's more like you would stay with it a little bit longer, or at least would give a little more effort before you want to quit. Right? And then you're not often, it's like too many candies when you’re younger, everything shows in front of you is that's a lot and it's colorful, it's sweet. You want them. But when you get older, you know how to choose them because all of those falls away. So, she's quite mature in that way. So, I'm just guiding through. Or I'm led by her, basically giving support. I am not forcing her. Learning Chinese has to come from her own willingness. So far, she is doing well and keen towards the learning.

Therefore, despite Sprout’s Chinese learning started relatively late than many peers, Jenny believes that with their joint efforts in learning and practicing Chinese, Sprout will gradually develop a higher level of Chinese proficiency in the near future.

**Sprout (Daughter)**

Sprout was born in Alberta in 2011. As her mother reported, Sprout was very well-spoken and articulate in English from a very young age, which has been greatly influenced by her father who is a bookworm with very high English literacy and promoted by her various school projects which encourage her to voice her opinions in front of people. However, as she just started learning Chinese diligently two years ago, her current level of Chinese proficiency is very limited. The interviews were conducted when Sprout was in fourth grade at her English school and first grade at the Chinese weekend school. I tried to ask the first simple question in Mandarin with Sprout; however, she was not able to understand the question. So, I switched into English for the interviews with her.

Although she has been struggling a little bit to learn about pronouncing the different tones in Mandarin and writing the Chinese characters, Sprout is passionate about and diligent in improving Chinese literacy proficiency on her own initiative. As her mother reported, when
Sprout comes home from school, the first thing she does every day is to ask the mother to sit down and practice Chinese with her. Because of her growing willingness to learn Chinese, Sprout and her mother have invested increasing time and efforts in practicing basic Mandarin conversation and learning Chinese literacy every day since September 2020.

Apart from Chinese, Sprout has been learning Spanish at school in the last three years. She had learned some French in the kindergarten but changed to learn Spanish since some of her relatives on her father side are Spanish natives. When asked the goals of learning the two different languages, Sprout said, “I want to understand Chinese and read Chinese and same goes with Spanish.”

*Linguistic Ecology of Family B*

In Family B, the monolingual father interacts with Sprout in English in their everyday life. The mother Jenny interacts with Sprout in mainly English but has tended to use more Mandarin since 2019. Although Sprout gets used to responding to her mother in English, she is willing to speak more Mandarin when the mother encourages her to shift to Mandarin. Sprout’s maternal grandmother has been living with the family on and off in the last 10 years. The grandmother and the mother speak Shanghainese to each other. However, the grandmother speaks Mandarin to Sprout. Sprout responses in very simple Mandarin words with hand signals. As her grandmother was not staying with the family during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sprout always greets her grandmother in Mandarin in almost every phone call. Sprout goes to a private school with English-medium instruction and learns Spanish as her second language at school. After school, she learns and practices Mandarin with her mother every day. As Jenny reported in her email on February 1, 2021, they have increased daily home learning from 15 minutes to an
hour in the half a year. In addition, Sprout goes to the Chinese weekend school on Sunday morning each week.

In her daily schedule, Sprout recorded the specific activities happened each day during the week from January 16 to 22, 2021, as figure 5 shows:

![Figure 5 Sprout’s Daily Schedule.](image)

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I introduced the two mixed heritage families by creating the narrative family profiles and describing linguistic ecology of these mixed heritage children. Instead of simply providing the basic timelines of significant events that happened in each family’s life, constructing extensive and narrative profiles and describing linguistic ecology of each participating family allows me to conduct further analysis to answer my research questions about language practices, management strategies, language ideologies with the specific familial contexts and broader sociopolitical, economic, linguistic, and cultural contexts in the following chapters (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; King, 2013; Seidman, 2006).
CHAPTER FIVE: ENACTMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FLPS

The findings in this chapter answer my first research question: What are language practices and management strategies in mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families? I documented how family language polices (FLPs) are enacted and negotiated in the two families from two perspectives: (1) how children use Mandarin in their daily language interaction; (2) how (Chinese immigrant) parents implement specific language management strategies to promote children’s Chinese literacy learning at home.

Family Language Practices: Language Use Patterns among Family Members

Language practices refer to regular and predictable language behaviors which constitute the de facto language use in specific contexts and for different purposes (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a). De facto language use differs from language beliefs in that it is “what people actually do” rather than “what people think should be done” (Spolsky, 2004, p. 4). Schwartz (2010) argues that language practice is the reflection of “sociocultural changes in intergenerational interaction” (p. 178) within families. According to Curdt-Christiansen (2014a), “the borderline between language practice and language management is somewhat blurred as parents may control or intervene in their children’s discourse behavior in their everyday talk” (p. 38).

Therefore, in this chapter, the analysis of language practices includes daily language interactions, as well as parental deliberate efforts and observable measures (e.g. to correct/modify language code) in daily conversation. In order to present the diverse and dynamic language use in mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families, the current study considered the diversity of interlocutors involve in daily interactions in mixed heritage families and the dynamics of language use patterns over the time, as shown in Table 4.
Table 4 Daily Language Practices in the Participating Families: In Which Language(s) Do/Did Family Members Speak to Each Other?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Family A</th>
<th>Family B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before children attended school</td>
<td>10 months to age 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After children attended school</td>
<td>Age 2 to age 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>After age 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife/husband</td>
<td>Always in English</td>
<td>Always in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother/children</td>
<td>In English more often than Mandarin</td>
<td>In English more often than Mandarin (in less Mandarin than preschool time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father/children</td>
<td>Always in English</td>
<td>Always in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between sisters</td>
<td>Almost always in English</td>
<td>Almost always in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal grandparents/</td>
<td>Always in Dialects and Mandarin</td>
<td>Always in Dialects and Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal grandparents/</td>
<td>Always in Mandarin</td>
<td>Always in Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For family A, the maternal grandparents haven’t lived in the same household with the family but interact with the children quite often, for example, making weekly video call via skype and visiting and staying with the grandparents during the summer vacation. For family B, the maternal grandmother has lived with the family on and off since the child was born.
The Diversity of Language Use Patterns among Family Members

Table 4 presents the language repertoire of the two participating families, which shows the complexity of daily language use in the mixed-heritage Chinese-English families among different generations. While both the mothers in the two families still use Chinese dialects with the maternal grandparents, namely Teochew used by Perle and Shanghainese used by Jenny, there are no mothers and maternal grandparents who speak their dialects to the younger generation. The maternal grandparents in both families always shift to Mandarin when interacting with their grandchildren. As all the maternal grandparents have limited English proficiency, they become who the children use the most Mandarin to interact with. The mothers tend to speak more English than Mandarin to the children most of the time on a daily basis, but their Mandarin use has been changing over time, influenced by various factors. The monolingual English-speaking fathers always use English to interact with the mothers and their children. Even if Mandarin is rarely used by the English-speaking fathers, the fathers have shown full acceptance and support of Mandarin use and transmission in the family space. As reported by Perle (the mother in family A):

[Their father] 他尽量就是说让她们跟爸爸妈妈在一起的时间多一点。
差不多我们所有的假期都花在旅游上看他们，看这些亲戚，因为我家亲戚就是全世界各地，他们都会讲中文，他爸觉得就说有一个锻炼的机会。他还跟我，说让我给小孩子讲多一点中文（chuckling）……
他自己有时候也会和孩子们用很简

[Their father] tries his best to encourage them to spend more time with my parents. We spent almost every vacation traveling to visit them and other relatives, as the relatives on my side are now living [in different countries] around the world. They all speak Mandarin and their father felt it provides a chance to practice [their Mandarin]. He also wants me to speak more Mandarin to the children (chuckling)…… He also uses very basic Mandarin with the children occasionally, like
Apart from the strong support from the English-speaking father, Jenny (the mother in Family B) also believes that the acknowledgment from her husband’s side of family also makes her feel supportive in terms of Chinese transmission to the mixed-heritage child. She commented,

Her [paternal] grandparents, “爷爷”, “奶奶”, [the kinship terms of paternal grandmother and grandfather in Mandarin] …… that's how she calls them. She doesn't call grandma or name. She just called them “爷爷”, “奶奶” [paternal grandmother and grandfather] and I know which is quite sweet…… From very, very young whenever the first time that we asked her to address them, that was how she called them…… So that's really supportive for me, feeling very supportive and warm.

The positive attitudes towards Mandarin have encouraged children to be exposed to Mandarin in everyday interaction to some extent. However, considering the effectivity of mother-child communication and the adaptation to the monolingual fathers, the mothers still speak relatively more English than Mandarin to the children in daily interaction. The children’s language preference for daily home language interaction tends to be English rather than Mandarin. For the younger generation, the two siblings in Family A playfully use Mandarin with each other occasionally, but English has been most common spoken language used in the everyday communication between themselves.

The Dynamic Language Use Patterns between Mother and Child

As Grenoble and Whaley (2005) point out, “the dynamics of intergenerational transmission are perhaps more important to understand than any other relevant factor in assessing the need for language revitalization” (p. 6). In the two participating families, the Chinese immigrant mothers both play the role of primary language policy decision marker. As
shown in Table 4, the language use patterns between the mother and the child(ren) in each family are not stable, but a more dynamic, muddled, and negotiable process.

In family A, Perle informed that she has been a stay-at-home mother since the children was born and tended to spoke Chinese often to her children in their early childhood. However, after the children started formal schooling at age five, children have been exposed to French and English during the day. The daily interaction between Perle and her children have gradually shifted to English-dominancy. As Effie and Darryl also informed in their one-on-one interviews respectively:

**Effie:** Before attending school, she [mother] spoke some Chinese with us as kids. She was helping us a little bit understand Chinese. But like when I was younger, I didn't really communicate that much, but now that I communicate more, it's just a bit easier to use English. For now, I just think it's just easier for me to communicate as it’s my first language.

**The author:** So, do you think there is any rule about like what language you should use to home in your family?

**Effie:** Not really. Like if I start speaking Chinese with my mother. She'll be quite surprised, but it would be fine. But I can't really speak Chinese with my father because he can't understand it.

**The Author:** As your mom has told me, she spoke Chinese more often when you were kids before attending school. What do you think of it?

**Darryl:** Because before she was just reading me little nursery rhymes in Chinese and poems and with all the Pinyin…… So, we use Chinese as kind of a bonding point, but we never really talk to each other much, like in Chinese. We never really had a conversation just in direct Chinese. It’s also because when my father was there, he was just looking at us, like he didn't know what we're talking about and I want to connect more with my father and my mom.
It is evident from the above statements that the children had certain Chinese language and literacy exposure when they were very young. But since they were non-verbal children during that time, they received more passive inputs in Chinese from their mother rather than directly interacting with the mother in Mandarin. According to Spolsky (2009), children’s language acquisition depends heavily on the exposure to the language through daily language practices, so, they not only need language input from what they hear but also require sufficient opportunities to produce language output through everyday interaction to achieve the language socialization. However, as they grow older, while the children still believe Chinese as a language of bonding with their mother by engaging in some Mandarin-mediated activities with the mother, such as storytelling or the reading of books, they have less and less chances to be exposed to Mandarin and use it with the mother on a daily basis. It is because the mother never requires the children to use Mandarin to speak to her and they all want the English speaking only father to be involved in their conversation. However, as the girls engaged in more extracurricular activities in recent years, the main verbal interaction between the mother and the girls is conducted during the family mealtime, which is also the only time in the family with an “explicit” language policy on English-speaking only:

可能在一起的时间少了。因为你要谈话的时候，你一定有得在一起的时间。他们上学以后，kindergarten 开始，一年级开始以后，早上到下午这段时间都没了。他们一回来家里，就赶紧做不同的事……四点半我们就得吃完饭，因为她们的音乐课五点就开始了。这段时间就全

Maybe there is less time for use to spend together as you need time to talk to each other. After they started to go to school, from kindergarten or grade one, we didn’t have the time – from morning to afternoon – to stay together So, when they come back home, they have to go for different activities…… we have to finish the meal at 4:30 p.m. as their music [class] starts at 5 p.m. This period of
time is occupied by all those activities……
There is no time to talk. When they were very young, before attending school, I felt that they acquired Mandarin very fast as they had time to practice, and I spoke with them every day. But there is no time now……So, for children from Chinese families, if both parents speak Mandarin, they may provide a better Mandarin-speaking environment. At least you can speak and listen to Mandarin for half an hour during mealtime. We don’t have that time or opportunity to interact in Mandarin. We almost only talk to each other during mealtime, but their dad is also with us. So, I also asked them not to speak [Mandarin] while eating as their dad doesn’t understand. They always make fun of him [in Mandarin] …… So, their dad doesn’t want them to speak Mandarin during dinner time. So, we don’t have much time to speak Mandarin.

Pervious research on family language policy in immigrant families has indicated that once children start attending school and are exposed to the external sociolinguistic influence, they would bring the societal majority language to the home domain and start the negotiation of the legitimacy of HL and majority language with their parents in home interaction (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b; Gafaranga, 2010; King & Fogle, 2013; Luykx, 2005b). However, it seems that there are more complex conflicts in mixed heritage families than other “full heritage” immigrant families. As Perle pointed out in the above excerpt, although the children had
comparatively extensive Mandarin exposure in their early childhood, it becomes more difficult to provide an HL-rich environment after they entered school. The biggest challenge is that the time for daily mother-children communication has been shortened to nearly only half an hour per day (i.e., the family mealtime), during which they have to use English to involve the father in family talk. The mother and children tend to speak English most of the time at home as they prefer to accommodate the English-speaking father rather than excluding him from the daily family talk. Thus, although the father encourages the mother to use more Mandarin with the children in daily life (except for the family mealtime), it becomes increasingly difficult for her to find more time to use sustained Mandarin with the children at home. Previous studies have shown that children growing up in bilingual families do not necessarily receive the same amount of input in their two languages (De Houwer, 2009; Paradis & Grüter, 2014); however, young children need regular and frequent input in both languages, even if which is not balanced and sustained all the time, to support their bilingual proficiency development (De Houwer & Bornstein, 2016). In family A, while the mother had made certain efforts to provide the Chinese language input in children’s early years, lack of continuity in the heritage language use may not be beneficial to children’s bilingual development (De Houwer, 2009, 2015). This was proved by Perle, when she informed that lack of Chinese speaking environment at home has impeded the development of their Chinese communication skills: “我们家没有环境……她[们]全部都能听得懂，但是她[们]要回答你的话，只能用很简单的语言” ([Chinese-speaking] environment is lacking at our home……they can understand everything they hear, but they can only use very simple Mandarin to reply to you).

In family B, the mother-child language use patterns changed even more markedly than in family A. As Jenny reported, she did not proactively create an HL-rich environment in the early
childhood of her daughter. She barely spoke Mandarin to her child up until the child was about 11 months old. When the child was 11 months to two years old, the temporary Mandarin-speaking environment was promoted by the Chinese-speaking grandmother who stayed with the family for about a year. Jenny tended to use more Mandarin with her daughter during that year. After the grandmother went back to China when the child was about age two and entered full-time daycare. Jenny chose not to use Mandarin with her daughter. The reason was illustrated by Jenny,

So, then the Chinese-speaking environment went away because I didn't speak to her diligently. I didn't have my mom beside me that needs me to speak that all the time. So, that kind of went away……because I didn't want to have an environment that I don't feel comfortable that her dad cannot be part of the conversation. I mean, a lot of families, they do like one of the parents will speak exclusively one home language to the kid and then the other parent would do so. And then when the parents communicate in a common language. I didn't like that. The reason was that I had experienced with my ex, so my first husband came from Québec. His home language is French……And I was always excluded. So, I did not like that feeling at all. I didn't want to have that happen in my household because I really didn't want to exclude my husband. So, when Sprout was 20 months, about two years of age, it was all English basically.

Because of the unhappy experiences of feeling uncomfortable when living with her first husband’s French-speaking family, Jenny expresses her concern that using Mandarin with the child may exclude her husband from the daily family conversation, which is even more serious than the mother in Family A. This made Jenny refused to try the One Parent One Language Policy (e.g., De Houwer, 2007, 2009; Döpke, 1992; Yamamoto, 2001) and paused using
Mandarin to interact with her child for about two years. However, after the Chinese-speaking grandmother immigrated to Canada in 2015 and her daughter started attending school, Jenny reflected her initial decision of English-only family language planning. As explained by her in our interview,

It [Chinese transmission] become a thought for me again, when my mom immigrated over…… So, Sprout would be four years of age. And it's very apparent that she's has forgotten most of the words that we used to speak. So, the communication between them, they can make themselves understand just very simple words and gesture, but I guess it wasn't enough for me. So, 2016, 2017, 2018……As the year progressed, and she goes to like a primary school start to learn a lot of other stuffs. It was, then I started to feel that it's important that she learned [Chinese].

In this excerpt, Jenny explained that the direct reason for her decision on changing her monolingual parenting to transmit Chinese is directly due to the fact that her daughter had forgotten most of the Mandarin learned in the toddler period and had difficulties communicating with the grandmother. Since 2019, Jenny started diligently teaching and using Mandarin to her child in everyday life. Although the grandmother has not stayed with the family in the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Jenny tends to initiate Mandarin basic conversation in everyday interaction with her child and require her child to respond in Mandarin. Jenny believes this facilitates her child to understand and practice basic Mandarin words and expressions in situational contexts:

……I was surprised to see when I start to go through all the words of the first six lessons, many of them are daily words you would use now that she understands. If she's asking me, where is that? I would just say, 在上面 [on the top], 在下面 [on the bottom], she will understand what I mean – why you say that…… So, I try to create that very situational kind of a conversation at home, by every single thing I ask, I would try to use like very simple Chinese, basically just a name, you ask a thing, what is this? What is that? You
answer me back…… she's willing to use it [Chinese]…… So that's good. Like right now, because at their age they ask permission to do things a lot. So, I just taught her how to ask for permission. So we'll like “我可以 blah, blah 吗?” or “我做 what 可以吗?” [Two ways of asking the question “May I do something?”] Something like that. So, she's practicing these with me on a daily basis right now.

The following dialogues provide snapshots of the daily Mandarin-mediated interaction when Jenny and her daughter were doing planning for the next day’s morning on November 19, 2020, Thursday evening:

**Excerpt 1 Do Nightly Planning in Family B (November 19, 2020, Thursday Evening)**

In Family B, as a routine before going to bed, the mother Jenny asked what the daughter Sprout wanted for breakfast in next morning. [M: the mother Jenny; S: the daughter Sprout; transcribing convention in Appendix D; **Bold font:** English in original text]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>明天早饭吃什么？饺子？</td>
<td>What do you want for breakfast tomorrow? Dumplings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Waffle.</td>
<td>Waffle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Waffles？</td>
<td>Waffles？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yeah, 要几片？三片？</td>
<td>Yeah, how many pieces [do you] want? Three pieces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>No, 两、两片。</td>
<td>No, two, two pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>两片，够啦？</td>
<td>Two pieces are enough?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>够啦。</td>
<td>[It’s] Enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>你确定吗？Are you sure？你确定吗？</td>
<td>Are you sure? Are you sure? (Repeats and translates the question to ensure the daughter can understand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>I'm sure.</td>
<td>I'm sure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this episode of mother-child talk, the mother initiated the daily conversation in Mandarin by asking if the child wanted to have dumplings as her breakfast. As explained in the interview, Jenny intentionally used basic Mandarin phrases and expressions over and over again in daily mother-child interaction, which would facilitate the child’s gradual pick up of basic Mandarin words. For example, Sprout was able to understand and answer the simple questions - “明天早饭吃什么?“ (What do you want for breakfast tomorrow?) in turn 1, “要几片?” (How many pieces [do you] want?) in turn 2, and “够啦?” (Is it enough?) in turn 7. Notably, in turn 9, when asking the question “你确定吗? (Are you sure?)”, the mother first switched it into English and repeated the original Mandarin to ensure that Sprout could understand the meaning of the unfamiliar Mandarin question. Sprout first replies to the question in English. With her mother’s demonstration and repetition of the answer, Sprout finally repeated it in Mandarin. The next excerpt shows how the mother dynamically used two languages to encourage the child to understand and use Mandarin in everyday interaction.
**Excerpt 2 Sending Sprout to School** (November 20, 2020, Friday morning)

On the morning, the mother Jenny (M) was sending daughter Sprout (S) to school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sprout, 今天几号？今天几号？</td>
<td>Sprout, what's the date today? What's the date today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Uh, what does that mean?</td>
<td>Uh, what does that mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>What's the date today? 今天几号？几月几号？</td>
<td>What day is today? What's the date today? What the month is and what the date is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>November 20th.</td>
<td>November 20th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yeah, can you say it in 中文？</td>
<td>Yeah, can you say it in Mandarin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>November 20th!</td>
<td>November 20th!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>How to say November?</td>
<td>How to say November?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>I don't know!</td>
<td>I don't know!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>What's the number? 十一: 月: [In Mandarin, the name of month is the number plus “month”]</td>
<td>What's the number? Eleven: month: [In Mandarin, the name of month is the number plus “month”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>十一: 月:</td>
<td>Eleven: month: [November]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes. 二十:号:。是不是二十？</td>
<td>Yes. The twentieth. Is it twenty?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>是。是。二十。</td>
<td>Yeah. Yeah. Twenty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>好了, [你]去[学校]吧。</td>
<td>Alright, [you can] go [to school].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>我爱你！Bye-bye!</td>
<td>I love you! Bye-bye!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>我爱你。下午见，玩的开心，再见。</td>
<td>I love you. See you this afternoon. Have fun. Goodbye.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>下午见。再见。</td>
<td>See you this afternoon! Goodbye.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Sprout already learned how to say and write numbers in the Chinese weekend school, Jenny intentionally introduced a related question “今天几号？”(what's the date today?) to Sprout. The daughter inquired about the meanings of the question in English. Jenny chose a
move on strategy (Lanza, 2004) indicating an acceptance of such code-mixing. As expected, she explained the question in English first and repeated it in Mandarin. However, Jenny was unsatisfied with her daughter’s reply in Mandarin as Jenny knew her daughter has learned about numbers in school and would be able to use Mandarin to answer. In turn 4, a code-switching move on strategy (“can you say it in 中文 [Mandarin]?”) was used again to encourage Sprout. Then, Jenny found her daughter forgot the Chinese expressions 十一月 (November) and 二十号 (20th). She taught Sprout about the rule of naming a month in Chinese is to combine the number with the Character 月 (month). As Jenny explained in the interview, she tends to use more basic Mandarin with her daughter in moment-to-moment interaction in everyday life. With parents’ active involvement, support, and stimulation in the daily language interaction, children’s language acquisition and socialization occur within each specific circumstance in home language interaction (Ochs, 2002). Besides, in the above excerpt, after the mother required her to learn and practice some Chinese expressions and sentences on the way to school, the daughter initiatedly chose to speak “我爱你” (I love you) in Chinese to her mother (turn 14), which confirmed Jenny’s comment in the interview:

I always say, well, you should say this in Chinese. Or you should apply Chinese. You have enough words. You can use them very simple stuff that we always go through review. And she would, basically. And she doesn't give me a fuss over – oh, we have to do it again, that kind of thing. She'll just try…… I enjoy spending time with her [Sprout], especially in my mother tongue…… Learning Chinese has been a great way for me to be involved with her.

De Houwer (2009) pointed out that children attach emotional importance to their caregivers’ language choice. Similarly, in this narrative, Jenny confirmed that as she tends to use
more Chinese in the daily mother-child conversation and enjoys interacting with the daughter, her daughter has shown positive attitudes to accommodate Jenny’s language choice.

*Chinese-speaking Grandparents as a Driving Force for Mandarin Use and Learning*

According to De Houwer (2007, 2009), the heritage language input pattern from adult family members to children largely determines children’s language output, which is one of the most significant factors contributing to the emergence of active bilinguals. In the two participating families, frequent interaction with the mixed heritage children and their monolingual Chinese-speaking grandparents provides natural opportunities for the mixed heritage children to receive the Chinese language input and produce the output. Although the grandparents in the two families have not or have not always lived with the children, they have maintained a close connection with each other. When asked with whom the children speak the most, all participants’ answers are the maternal grandparents. Regardless of their Mandarin proficiency, all children have to use as much Mandarin as they know to communicate with their maternal grandparents. The participation of maternal grandparents in the mixed heritage children’s lives greatly increases children’s exposure to Mandarin and the opportunities to produce output. As Perle illustrated,

*我觉得最好面对面的那种交谈……我发现就是说跟我爸爸和我妈妈在一起 [孩子们的中文] 就好很多，我们一般去澳洲会两个月时间在那里 [因为外公外婆和 Perle 的姐姐一起移民到了澳洲]。两个月的时间她俩的中文就讲了很多，口语明显有很大的进步，然后也 [讲的] 快一点，就那思维也快

*Face-to-face communication is the best way to improve. I found that [children’s Mandarin] would be much better when they’re staying with my parents. We usually go to Australia and stay there for two months [as the grandparents have immigrated to Australia with Perle’s sister]. In the two months, they can speak much more Mandarin, and their oral skills would*
Considering the limited Chinese input and output in Family A, the parents often take the children to visit and stay with Mandarin-speaking grandparents for about two months in summer vacations. During that period of time, Effie and Darryl have sustained opportunities to communicate with their Chinese-speaking grandparents, which would greatly enhance their Chinese oral proficiency. It is consistent with the conclusion by previous studies on the relationship between the language and family bonding that an intimate relationship between older family members and the children leads to a favourable outcome for heritage language maintenance (Ruby, 2012; Tannenbaum & Berkovich, 2005; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; J. Zhang, 2009). Even if the positive effects to their spoken Chinese may not last very long, the children expressed that the desire for better communication with their grandparents has been one of the greatest motivations for acquiring higher Chinese proficiency. According to He (2008), children’s motivations for learning and using the heritage language are enhanced not merely from pragmatic concerns, but also from affective values of the language. Heritage learners’ emotional connection to a language is usually analyzed in terms of language ideology, which will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

Likewise, the transnational movement of the Chinese-speaking grandmother back and forth between Canada and China has largely influenced the dynamic Chinese-speaking
environment as well as the mother’s decision on Chinese transmission to the child. As explained by Jenny,

So, when Sprout was about 10 or 11 months, all the way until she was about two, she had a kind of Chinese speaking environment at home……. Between my mom and I, we spoke Shanghainese. We spoke Mandarin only when me and my mom addressed to Sprout……. but I did remember there's a lot of videos of her at that time. It does show that she understands Mandarin because we talked to her in Mandarin……. It [Chinese transmission] become a thought for me again, when my mom immigrated over……. the communication between them, they can make themselves understand just very simple Chinese words and gesture, but I guess it wasn't enough for me……. We’re communicating in Chinese now, between her [Sprout] and I, now are more for occasional purpose. It might change later on when my mom comes around after the COVID. So that would be a little bit more dynamic speaking environment because it will involve a lot of other things……. She [Sprout] does understand if she can learn more before her grandma comes back, and then she'll be able to communicate better.

In Family B, the grandmother has lived with the family on and off in the last ten years. Jenny reported that the grandmother’s first arrival brought the unplanned and temporary Chinese-speaking environment to the child between 11 months to two years. The grandmother’s decision on immigration to Canada for the family made Jenny start teaching Mandarin to her daughter diligently. Even if the grandmother has not stayed with the family during the whole COVID-19 pandemic, the mother and the child tended to conduct more daily conversation in Mandarin to be better prepared for the grandmother’s return.

In addition to the face-to-face interaction, children also talk to the grandparents via video call frequently when they are not staying together. As Perle (the mother) and Darryl (the second daughter) in family A reported,
**The author:** In平时生活中，孩子们一般在什么情况下会说中文呢？

**Perle:** 她们跟外公外婆每周六都会Skype，这个习惯坚持了十年，主要是让她们和外公外婆联络感情和练中文。一般都谈论这个星期生活一些事情，比如天气怎么样，外公外婆的身体怎么样，学校发生的一些小事。和外公外婆都说中文，外公外婆是不会讲英文的。她俩有时会夹几个英文单词，如果她们不知道怎么用中文表达那个单词。

**The author:** On what occasions do the children usually use Mandarin in their daily life?

**Perle:** They make video call on Skype to their grandparents every Saturday. It has been a 10-year habit for them, which mainly aims to maintain the relationship and practice Mandarin. They usually talk about the things happen during the week, such as asking about the weather, the health status of the grandparents, and their daily stuffs at school. They always speak Mandarin with their grandparents. If they don’t know some specific expressions in Mandarin, they may mix a few English words occasionally.

**The author:** What would usually be the topics of the conversation between you and your mom in Mandarin?

**Darryl:** It's most of the time it starts about my grandparents, her parents, that's we usually speak the most Chinese in our house with my mom and then it expands to different topics…… Sometimes, we [the daughters, the mother, and the grandparents] all talk together [on Skype] and then we still keep on talking when the video call stops and that's how we start the conversation……

In the last ten years, Perle has intentionally encouraged her daughters to make video calls with the maternal grandparents every weekend proved by the participants in family A. Talking to the grandparents by video calls is the time children used Mandarin the most in their daily life. Even the occasional Mandarin communication between the mother and the children is mainly about the grandparents or the conversations conducted with the grandparents on the video calls.

In Family B, since the grandmother has not stayed with the family during the whole COVID-19 pandemic, whenever the mother speaks to the grandmother on phone calls, the
daughter always comes to greet her grandmother by using some very simple Mandarin sentences. As the mother informed, while Sprout now is a novice Mandarin learner, she has been very diligent and keen on engaging in daily Mandarin learning and practices with the mother. Being motivated by her Mandarin-speaking grandmother, the child believes that her current efforts will help her better communicate with her grandmother later in life. Jenny believes that with their joint efforts, her child has gradually picked up the basic Mandarin phrases and, hopefully, will be able to verbalize more in Mandarin by continuing to engage in their daily Mandarin-mediated practices.

**Family Language Management: Chinese-mediated Home Literacy Activities**

As language managers in the family, parents consciously or implicitly implement the specific language intervention strategies for offering “resistance against or submission to a minority language and cultural changes” (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018, p. 236). Specifically, in my study, none of the fathers in the two mixed-heritage families have Mandarin competence; thus, English, as the default home language, has been used as the medium for the majority of daily interaction among both parents and children. Considering the insufficient exposure to Chinese in everyday communication, apart from enrolling children in Chinese weekend school, the mothers have been consciously or implicitly providing extra Chinese literacy resources and instruction for children. However, the agentive roles of children in those learning processes have been underlined in recent research on family language policy (e.g., Fogle, King, & Org, 2013; Gafaranga, 2010; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2018), which “make informed choices, exert influence, resist (e.g., remain silent, quit courses) or comply” (Duff, 2012, p. 413). In this regard, rather than perceiving children as simply passive participants, this study acknowledges the active agentive role of children in the processes of Chinese learning and
practicing in home settings. In what follows, I present different parental language management efforts made by the two mothers in engaging children in various literacy activities and inspiring their creative literacy practices with the consideration of child agency.

*Home Chinese Literacy Learning*

As an after-school routine in Family B, Sprout and her mother always take about an hour to learn and practice Chinese reading and writing together. As the mother reported, their Chinese learning session always starts from practicing the materials on Sprout's Chinese school textbook as Sprout asks for reviewing previous lessons or previewing the new contents on her initiative as she wants to be well-prepared for every week's Chinese classes. To complement and extend the Chinese class materials, the mother usually teaches some extra Chinese phrases, expressions, or some related cultural traditions to Sprout. The following interaction excerpt illustrates the daily Chinese learning and practice session between the mother and child in Family B.

*Excerpt 3 Chinese textbook reading in Family B (March 3, 2021, Tuesday afternoon)*

After getting home from school, the daughter Sprout[S] asks her mother Jenny[M] to practice dialogic reading and nursery rhyme reading on the Chinese textbook (see figure 6).

[Bold font: Mandarin in original text; Italics: Pinyin for transcribing and annotating the pronunciation of Mandarin]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>来念一下这个。So, this is a conversation between what's this?</td>
<td>Let's read this one. So, this is a conversation between what's this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>云云。</td>
<td>Yunyun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>And?</td>
<td>And?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>老师。</td>
<td>Teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yeah! So, you will be 云云. I’ll be teacher. So, 云云 says –</td>
<td>Yeah! So, you will be Yunyun. I’ll be the Teacher. So, Yunyun says –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>老师好。</td>
<td>Hello, teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>老师说:&quot;你好，你是马晓云吗？&quot;So, what am I asking?你是马小云#吗！]</td>
<td>The teacher says, &quot;Hello, are you Ma Xiaoyun?&quot; So, what am I asking? Are you Ma Xiaoyun# ma[!]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8  S  It's your – horse?
     ( 马 has two meanings: horse and family name-Ma)
9  M  No, 马小云 is the name. So, if I say
     你是马晓云, What does it mean?
10 S  You're 马小云。
11 M  Yeah. But now I'm having a 嗯. It
     becomes a question.
     (嗯 [ma] is an interrogative particle)
12 S  Okay. Are you 马小云?
13 M  Very good. So 云云 are saying?
14 S  我是马小云。
15 M  Yeah, what does 云云 mean? So,
     they take the last given name, make
     it double, so it's something very
     popular, very common in Chinese.
     The mummy's name is 王娜
     (pseudonym). 娜 is my given name.
     So, guess what I was called growing
     up?
16 S  娜娜?
17 M  Yes, exactly. That's how Chinese
     people call their kids when they
     grow up. They like to double
     syllable the given name. Let's read
     the last one. That's 读儿歌. 儿歌 is
     a what is called a nursery rhyme
     kind of thing. So, go!
18 S  太阳当空 zhāo –
19 M  Zhào. ((corrects her intonation. It
     should be the fourth tone, but Sprout
     pronounced the first tone))
21 S  照((zhào)), 花儿对我笑。小鸟
     说, 早早早, 你为什么背着小书
     包? 我 duì –
22 M  duì
     ((corrects Sprout’s intonation of 对: the fourth tone not the first tone))
23 S  对((duì))小鸟说, 我要去学校。
24 M  Okay. let's translate. So 去学校 is?
     Facing ((duì)) the little birds and
     says, I am going to school.
     Okay. let's translate. Yeah, so go to
     school is?
Go to school.

Very good. So, start with this one.

太阳 # The sun?

Yeah. 阳空, 当 is right at the moment, 空 is another way to say 天, what's 天?

((天[tiān] has two meanings: Sky and day.))

Day.

Yeah and it's also?

Sky.

Yeah, so 当空, right at the sky. 照 means shining. So, when the sun is shining in the sky.

Flowers smile at me.

Yeah, so what's 花儿 ((huāer))?

What's 花((huā))?

Draw?

((花[huā] means flowers; 画[huà] means to draw.))

It’s 花 not 画. @ What's beautiful [!] in the field in the spring, a lot of them. (tries to remind her of the meaning of “花”)

((tries to remind her of the meaning of “huā”))

Flowers.

Yes. So 花儿, so there's a lot of words in Chinese they put 儿 at the end just to make the word rhymes or sounds better. So, 花儿对我, what's 对我? Remember when we say 我对着你, I'm facing you. So, it's a direction word. So, 花儿对我笑.

What does it mean?

((儿[er] is the non-syllabic diminutive suffix.))

Um 花 the flowers are facing at me-

And? 笑 is laughing [or] smiling.

And Smiling.

Say it properly is # [the flowers -][The flowers are facing me, are smiling at me. So, the little bird says 早早早, morning, morning, morning?

Say it properly is # [the flowers -][The flowers are facing me, are smiling at me. So, the little bird says morning, morning, morning, morning?

Yes!

Yes!
You why背着小书? You? #

Why are you carrying a little backpack? You? #

You why背着小书?

Why are you carrying a little backpack?

You why背着小书?

Why are you carrying a little backpack?

You why背着小书?

Why are you carrying a little backpack?

You why背着小书?

Why are you carrying a little backpack?
In this excerpt, Jenny was helping her daughter to read and understand the reading materials in the textbook to prepare for the coming Chinese school class. In this preparation process, the mother took on the role of a Chinese as a second language instructor in teaching Sprout. While she initiated this interaction by using a simple instruction in Mandarin – “来念一下这个” (Let’s read this one), she shifted to English when she needed to explain how they were going to practice the dialogic reading. This indicates that the child's limited Chinese proficiency only allows her to understand some basic and routine instruction. Thus, the mother has to use English for those instructions or explanations involving meaning-negotiation in Chinese learning sessions. Sprout followed with her instruction to read Yunyun's turn of the Chinese conversation. In the succeeding section of interchanges, the mother then read the question from the teacher – "你是马晓云吗?" (Are you Ma Xiaoyun?). After the mother found Sprout couldn't understand the question, the mother first transformed the question into a declarative sentence – 你是马晓云 (You’re Ma Xiaoyun), and then guided Sprout to translate by herself. In turn 10, the mother continued using English to introduce the interrogative particle “吗” to help Sprout learn about the basic sentence structure of the yes-no question in Chinese.

Likewise, rather than simply translating the Chinese nursery rhyme to English, the mother has tended to utilize varying strategies to help Sprout translate the Chinese sentences by herself. In turn 27, to teach the new Chinese character 空 (sky) to her daughter, she related it to the character 天(sky) with the same meaning of sky as Sprout has just learned 天 in class. For those characters which Sprout is more familiar with, in turn 35, the mother reminded Sprout of the meaning of 花 (flower) by describing the features of flowers in English; in turn 37, 45, 61, she took their daily conversations as examples to make Sprout remember the meaning of 对 (to face),
why), and 要(want). In turn 49 to 55, the mother also integrated the new aspect particle – 着 (for indicating action in progress) by connecting to 了 (the aspect particle indicating completed action) which they have practiced before. To clarify the difference between the two aspect particles, she used two simple sentences “Sprout 吃着饭” (Sprout is eating) and "Sprout 吃了饭" (Sprout has eaten) to clarify the difference between the two aspect particles. In addition to the explanation of meaning, Jenny also paid specific attention to correct Sprout's intonation while reading the Chinese textbook. For Mandarin Chinese, as a tonal language, the same syllable with different tones can have completely different meanings. Apparently, Sprout has difficulties distinguishing the difference between the first tone and the fourth tone (turn 19, 21), which caused the confusion between the meanings of 花 (huā) and 画 (huà). This is the reason why the mother believes that pronouncing the intonation accurately is very important in learning Mandarin. Moreover, to help her daughter understand why the student Ma Xiaoyun in the dialogic reading is also called Yunyun, she introduced the naming traditions in China that children’s nicknames are usually the repetition of the last character of their given names (turn 15-17). In turn 38, Jenny told the child that people prefer disyllabic words to monosyllabic words so they always put the non-syllabic diminutive suffix 儿 after a monosyllabic word like “花 (flowers)” to make the word sounds more naturally. As explained by Jenny, she found imposing more cultural background knowledge related to current Chinese learning has facilitated her daughter’s understanding and memorizing new words and phrases.
Apart from textbook reading, Jenny makes considerable efforts in providing some extra Chinese writing exercises for her daughter to teach her basic sentence structures. As Jenny explained, unlike other children from Chinese immigrant families who have a more sustained Chinese-speaking environment before enrolling in the Chinese school, her daughter has missed some natural learning opportunities as she did not consciously speak Chinese to her daughter before attending school. She also believes that the learning contents in first-grade Chinese class is insufficient for Sprout who is a fourth grader in the English school. Considering that her daughter is also learning English sentence structure at school, she believes introducing how Chinese sentences are constructed helps her daughter to make a connection to what she already knows in English. In the following email from Jenny, she explained how she taught new sentence structures in Chinese to her daughter.
In this session on sentence structure learning, the mother first introduced a commonly used question – 你在做什么 (What are doing). The mother then started explaining the different emphases between the two basic ways of answering the question by teaching the sentence structures – “Subject + 在 (in/at) + location + verb” and “Subject + verb + 在 (in/at) + location”. The mother provided several examples of the different structures of the two sentences by using very simple Chinese words and phrases. Instead of providing whole sentences, the mother chose to write down the Pinyin and some difficult characters but leave other characters as the blanks for Sprout to fill in. For example, the first two examples, the sentences 我在雨中走 (I + in + the rain + walk) and 我走在雨中 (I + walk + in + the rain) has similar meanings – I am walking in the rain. However, while the former sentence emphasizes that the location is in the rain, the latter one highlights the action of walking. This not only helps Sprout understand how to form the sentences but also encourages her to practice Chinese character writing.

Likewise, Jenny has taught more basic sentence to her daughter, such as: “Subject + 有 (have/has) + object” (see figure 8); “Subject + 在 (to be at/in) + object (location)” (see figure 9); Someplace + 有 (have/has) + object (There is/are something in someplace) (see figure 10);
“Subject + use + object+ to do”, “Subject + verb + 到 object (到: verb complement denoting completion or result of an action)” (see figure 11). While teaching those sentence structure, the mother consciously integrated common words and phrases in her examples of those sentences, e.g., when forming sentences for “Subject + 有(have/has) + object”, she introduced some common nouns with the corresponding measure words (see figure 8). This is because measure words in Mandarin Chinese are more complicated than in English due to a large amount of variation depending on what object is being discussed. Besides, Sprout also learned a few extra words and phrases from her mother based on the class contents in her Chinese school, for instance, possessive nouns and adjectives (see figure 12), noun words for time (see figure 13), and extra phrases related to the new characters in Sprout's Chinese class (see figure 14).

**Figure 8 Subject + 有(Have/Has) + Object.**
Notes: One of sentence examples in this figure: 我们有一只狗(We have a dog; 只 is a Chinese measure word used to describe certain animals such as dogs, birds, cats...)

**Figure 9 Subject + 在(to be at/in) + Object (Location).**
Notes: One of the above sentence examples: 小鸟在树的上面(The bird is on the top of the tree).
**Figure 10** Someplace + 有 (Have/Has) + Object (There is/are something in someplace)

Notes: One of the above sentence examples: 天上有白云 (There is clouds in the sky).

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**Figure 11** “Subject + Use + Object + to do” and “Subject + Verb + 到 + Object”

Notes: 到 is the verb complement denoting completion or result of an action. One of the above examples for each sentence structure in this figure: 我用手摸 (I use my hand to touch); 我摸到冰 (I’ve touched the ice).

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**Figure 12** Possessive Pronouns and Adjectives.

Note: An example of phrases in the above sheet: e.g., 今天的天气 (today’s weather).

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**Figure 13** Noun Words for Time and How to Ask for Date and Time.

Notes: A few examples of phrases and sentences in this figure: 昨天 (yesterday); 早上 (morning); 今天是星期几 (What day is today).
Figure 14 Extra Words and Phrases Related to New Characters in Chinese Classes.
Note: E.g., the words 电车 (tram/trolleybus), 水电 (utilities), 雨水 (rainwater), 下雨天 (rainy day) in this figure are based on the new characters 电 (electricity), 水 (water), 下 (down/drop), 雨 (rain); 天 (day).

In the processes of daily Chinese learning, the mother has helped Sprout gradually pick these basic phrases and expressions based on learning materials in her Chinese weekend classes. As Jenny informed by email (see figure 15), as Sprout is passionate about Chinese literacy learning, their home practicing session has been extended from 15 minutes per day to an hour per day in February 2021.

Figure 15 Jenny's Email about Increasing Time for Everyday Home Chinese Learning.
In family A, the mother proactively made plans for her children’s Chinese literacy learning and engaged children in various literacy activities from a very young age. When asked about the early Chinese literacy practices in the family, the mother Perle said,

When the two girls were about 6 months old, I started to tell stories with them, which were mainly in Mandarin. I bought a lot of books from China. When I was pregnant with Effie, I was still on business trips to China. So, I brought a few books back each time. Those children [books] are mostly about moral education and early learning, also including those famous Chinese classic texts for children, such as *Three Character Classic*. At about age 4, [they] can read those short moral stories in Mandarin with Pinyin by themselves……. All the books I read with them are about moral education. But I am not just simply read the book. Every time after telling them a story, I’ll contact it with the truth and reality of life. [I’ll] give them an example right after the story to inculcate [moral values] and enhance their understandings. So, all [Chinese] books I read [for them] are bought from China. I enjoy reading these kinds of books [with them] a lot.

In this narrative, Perle informed that she bought plenty of children picture books in Chinese from China (see figure 16) when she was pregnant with her first child. She started to tell
Chinese since the children were six months old and taught them to learn how to read the book with Pinyin (Chinese pronunciation system) by themselves. Notably, by reading the picture storybooks (See figure 17), Perle introduced the three most classic Chinese children's texts - *Three Character classical*, *Thousand Character classical*, and *Di Zi Gui* (Standards for being a Good Pupil and Child) – to her children. Based on the ancient teaching of the Chinese philosopher Confucius, these three books are the basis of elementary education in traditional China, which not only works as the textbook of early literacy training but also emphasises the basic Confucian morality for young children to be a good person, especially filial piety and respect for elders. Elaborated by Perle, she attaches great significance to the traditional Chinese moral values; thus, she tends to inculcate those positive values to her daughters by osmosis through reading the classic children’s texts and telling moral stories.

*Figure 16 Children’s Chinese Books in Family A.*

Notes: The Chinese books include classical moral stories, classic texts, ancient poems, popular science books, and the Chinese version of fairy tales in the world.
As a student, I should follow the teaching of Confucius. Show filial piety at home and respect people outside. Behave prudently and trustfully. Love all universally and draw close and learn from people of virtue and compassion. If I have energy left, I should study further and learn literature and art to improve my cultural and spiritual life.

As these classical Chinese texts are arranged in three- or four-character verses with rhythmic structure, Perle encouraged the children to start with reading aloud these simple and basic Chinese texts, and then extend to recite other ancient Chinese poetry (see figure 18). [We] also sang rhymes. When they were not quite about one-and-a-half-year-old, [the girls] has already recited 20 ancient Chinese poems. We were singing those poems as bedtime routine to develop their sense of Chinese language. Now, they forgot many of them. However, once they learn about a poem [recited before] at the Chinese school, they’ll remember it immediately.
Like most Chinese parents, Perle believes that reading the Chinese classic texts and reciting poetry is a good way of enhancing children’s sense of Chinese language and learning the heritage culture and history about ancient China.

Figure 18 An Example Poem in the Book 我爱背唐诗 I Like Reciting Tang Poetries.

Note: The translation and interpretation in English was added by the researcher.

Even if the time for Mandarin-mediated storytelling and book reading has been reduced considerably after the children started attending school, the mother has kept telling a Chinese story as children’s bedtime routine activity until 2019. As Perle expressed,

就中文我真的希望她们给我一点时间，以前我每个晚上都坚持读故事给他们听，从她们就是 6 个月开始,还没到 5 岁之前没上学之前真的读了有好多书，英文中文法文，其实到去年我每天晚上就还坚持读一个中文故事给他们听…有很多时间就留给她们听，但是慢慢这段故事的时间没了，我其实很难受的，因为读中文故事的时间

So, I really hope they could allow me a little bit more time to interact in Chinese. I used to keep reading stories to them every night since they were 6 months old. Before they started school at age 5, we actually read a lot of books in English, Chinese, and French. I still kept reading a Chinese story to them every single night, actually up until last year……They [used to] have lots of time to listen to my stories. But the
Perle revealed that she values Chinese storytelling highly as a cultural and emotional bond between her and her daughters as it not only provides a chance to interact with her children in her mother tongue but also allows them to conduct deep conversations about some truths of life behind the stories. Thus, she makes effort to read more stories with her children when they have spare time. The following interaction excerpt provides a sense of how Perle manages children’s multiple language use and practices in the family storytelling session.

Excerpt 4 Mandarin-mediated Storytelling in Family A (January 3, 2021, Sunday evening)

One night during winter break, the mother Perle is reading a Chinese moral story called 在音乐厅里拉琴 (Playing the Violin in Concert Halls) with the two daughters.

[P: Perle (mother); D1: Effie (first daughter); D2: Darryl (second daughter); Bold fond: Mandarin in original text; Italics: French in original text]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Ok,我们今天讲一个新的故事，在音乐厅里拉琴，音乐厅什么意思？</td>
<td>Ok, today, let's tell a new story. Playing the violin in concert halls. What’s the meaning of the concert hall?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>It's like a [concert hall.</td>
<td>It's like a [concert hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>D2</td>
<td>[concert hall.</td>
<td>[concert hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Ok,有一个年轻人对音乐如痴如醉……因为他一直梦想成为首席</td>
<td>Ok, there is a young man who is obsessed with music……Because he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>小提琴手，首席小提琴手指的 – like a concert master in the orchestra......即使在最艰苦的日子里，他也没有后悔自己的选择，从不放弃。You understand? He never gave up even in the most difficult time.</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Darkest days.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Darkest days.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yeah. ((chuckling)) ((continues telling the story in Mandarin)) …… by the dream of playing the violin in the concert hall, he never stopped improving his violin performance. couldn't stop his steps. Now he is a world-class musician. He was invited by the famous concert hall to perform. This is the power of dream, the power of dream. Do you understand? What’s the meaning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Basically, what I learned from it is that-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>You can say in Chinese. Can you use Chinese?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Yeah, I can. As long as you believe in yourself and work hard, you'll achieve your dream.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Very good and Darryl [D2] you can speak English or Chinese or French.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>D2</td>
<td>I'm gonna do English and French because Effie did Chinese. If you kept doing what you want to do, eventually you will achieve your dreams and # even though the road were dark and those were dangerous potholes and pinecones on the ground that you keep on tripping over the stupid things. But they will eventually make your way to the top of success if you keep on trying your best and keep on doing what you love.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12 | D1 | Also, I learned that no matter what heard obstacles come in life, you can
can always manage them if you believe in yourself. But if you don't believe in yourself, it's almost impossible. If you don't believe in yourself, then don't expect to succeed.

Don't expect to get off those giant potholes.

Okay. This story tells us the type of dream we pursue can determine what kinds of life we live. But, the road to achieving your dream is always not smooth sailing. You’ll experience varying difficulties. Then, it depends on whether you can persist with your dream, right? Yeah.

You must believe in yourself, the past does not equal the future, right? There is no failure, just you’re on the road to success. Anything that happens must have a reason and will strengthen me. It's not what happens to you, but how you react it that matters. The pass is a pass, how you can improve is more important, right? Also, be responsible for your own life. Yeah?

Yeah, don't let other people throw you.

Yeah. [If you] want things to change, first change yourself. [If you] want things to get better, first get better yourself. Right?

If you want things to improve first, improve yourself. If you want things to get better, first get better yourself.

Yeah, very good job.
In this episode, Perle was reading a story *Playing the violin in concert halls with her child*. To make sure the children can understand the title, she asked them “音乐厅什么意思？” (What’s the meaning of the concert hall?) The children both answered in English. Perle starts reading by mainly using Mandarin. Noticeable from the story reading are the explanations provided by the mother always switched into English: “首席小提琴手指的(A concert master means) like a concert master in the orchestra” and “即使在最艰苦的日子里，他也没有后悔自己的选择，从不放弃 (Even in the most difficult days, he didn't regret his decision and never gave up). You understand? He never gave up even in the most difficult time.” (turn 4). As she informed, “有时我习惯了讲英文，因为更容易，我那个时候也确实没反应过来” (sometimes I get used to speaking English as it’s easier and I just unconsciously [choose to use English]). The unconscious code-switching in meaning-negotiation indicates that the mother and children used limited Mandarin as their communication language. After reading the whole story, Perle asked the daughters about the meaning of the story by using both English and Mandarin (turn 6). D1 naturally replied in English, which also suggests that the default language in the family is primarily English. The mother made a request asking her “You can say in Chinese. 讲中文可以吗? (Can you use Mandarin?)”. D1, then complied with the request by using Mandarin. Her short response in Mandarin is grammatically correct and conveys the basic meaning (turn 9); however, compared to her further responses in English in turn 12, there is still a huge gap between the language fluency, grammar complexities, and vocabulary varieties of her Mandarin and English. This proved Perle’s description of children’s oral proficiency levels in the interview, “她[们]全部都能听得懂，但是她[们]要回答你的话，只能用很简单的语言” (They can understand everything they hear, but they can only use very simple Mandarin to reply
to you). When it was the second daughter’s turn, as the mother allowed her to choose languages as she wished (turn 10), she started expressing her opinion by using French and then switched into English (turn 11). It is evident from the acceptance and support for children’s trilingual practices during Chinese story reading time indicates that children are encouraged to leverage their entire linguistic repertoire in the family as what the mother and children informed in the interviews. However, to respond to children’s inadequate Mandarin use, Perle intentionally chose Mandarin to summarize what the children could learn from the story (turn 14) but still used some code-switching to ensure the children could understand her words (turn 17). In the succeeding conversation, without continuous request for their Mandarin use, both children naturally used English to interact with the mother. Children’s responses indicate that they can fully understand what their mother said in Mandarin; especially in turn 20, D2 accurately translated her mother’s words from Mandarin into English without being asked.

In family A, it seems that the reading of Chinese books, as one of the few Mandarin-mediated activities, provides children more exposure to Mandarin but may have limited contribution to producing children’s Mandarin output. Spolsky (2009) explained this kind of language choice as the inertia condition: “[O]nce we start speaking to someone in a certain language, it is easier and more natural to continue using the same language, and it may be uncomfortable to switch” (p. 15). In family A, the relationship between mother and children has been established mostly in English in everyday interaction, especially after the children started schooling; thus, even with the pro-Chinese language ideologies and the certain Chinese language management regarding the reading of books, it becomes difficult to insist on using Chinese by both the mother and the children in the whole process of interpreting the contents of the book and discussing the truth and reality of life behind those Chinese stories.
Children Creative and Initiative Chinese Literacy Activities

As reported by Perle (the mother in family A), the children have initiated creating their original Chinese songs at bedtime in January 2021. As reported by Perle,

……就前两天晚上她们两个跟我一起睡，我读了三个中文故事给她们听。后来她们说继续，我真的很累了没办法读了，她们就开始自己随意做一些中文歌，互相争对句子，然后在床上表演给我看，自己就唱，边跳。英文的话，她们两个写诗歌都特别好可以做曲，她们都会做自己创作的英文歌，original那种……我觉得不是他们没有创意，如果有一些时间的话，我觉得他们可能会做一些很多有关中文的，比如像唱中文歌，不是唱人家，而是自己写出来的中文歌。她们随口编出来，但是我觉得真得很好。她们说“我的妈妈是太阳的，我爸爸是小花朵，美丽的花朵”，就乱七八糟的编出来，因为你只要押韵就好了，她们都知道怎么押韵，她们英文法文押韵这些根本就没有问题，就是用中文可能难一点，因为可能她们的词汇量不够，中文没有英文那么多，她肯定要想，然后要找，但她们会找简单的词来代替。这是我第

The other night they [Darryl and Effie] slept with me, so I read three Chinese stories to them. They still asked me to continue. I was too tired to read more. So, they started to make some Chinese songs by themselves, and they were composing the lyrics together. They were singing and dancing on the bed to perform for me. Both of them know how to write excellent poems in English and compose a melody, so they made some original English songs…… I don’t think they are not creative. If they have some spare time, I think they may do a lot of Chinese-related activities, like singing Chinese songs, their original songs, not the songs from other people. They just improvise the lyrics but it’s really good. Their songs are like my mom is the sun, my dad is a little flower, beautiful flower”, just make things up freely. You just need to make it rhyme and they know how to rhyme. They won’t have any difficulties rhyming in English and French. Just it can be a little bit tougher in Chinese. It’s probably because they don’t have enough Chinese vocabulary like what they have in English. So, they have to seek
For both children and the mother, Chinese language and literacy learning have been a challenging but entertaining process rather than an unhappy burden. The mother’s Chinese storytelling may directly stimulate children’s decision for improvising songs in Chinese. But their initiative composition of Chinese songs is also connected to their previous experiences in terms of learning Chinese classic poems, nursery rhythms, and songs, as well as writing the original English and French songs and poems. Encouraged by their mother, Darryl and Effie created the other Chinese song named 春天 Spring (see Table 5) at bedtime on January 3, 2021. With the consideration of the basic rhyme schemes, the children used simple and catchy Chinese phrases in their lyrics to portray the vivid springtime scenes: After a long winter, with flower blooms comes a new spirit of optimism. It also presents dynamic imageries such as Lively children and free birds as well as busy adults versus hardworking bees, but also static imagery –
a calm, cloudless day. What is noticeable in the lyrics is that the children chose to describe roses, daffodils and crocuses, and tulips, which are rare to find in Chinese poetry and songs. In Chinese classical poems, peach, pear, and apricot blossoms usually symbolize the arrival of Spring. Even for modern Chinese poets and songwriters, they tend to integrate more Spring flowers, like early-blooming winter jasmine, cherry, and magnolia. Children’s unique choices of Spring flowers may indicate their life experiences in Canada and the reading experiences in English and French.

**Table 5 The Sisters’ Original Chinese Song 春天 Spring in Family A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original lyrics in Chinese</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>春天</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>花长大了，孩子们玩。</td>
<td>When flowers grow up, kids are playing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>玫瑰盛开，大人很忙。</td>
<td>When roses are in full bloom, adults are so busy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鸟儿飞，蜜蜂嗡嗡声。</td>
<td>Birds are flying while bees go buzzing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>没有云，而且没有风。</td>
<td>There is neither cloud nor wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>花长大了，孩子们玩。</td>
<td>When flowers grow up, kids are playing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>玫瑰盛开，大人很忙。</td>
<td>When roses are in full bloom, adults are so busy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>有水仙花，有番红花，</td>
<td>There are daffodils, crocuses, as well as tulips, so pretty!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>还有郁金香，好漂亮啊！</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>花长大了，孩子们玩。</td>
<td>When flowers grow up, kids are playing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>玫瑰盛开，大人很忙。</td>
<td>When roses are in full bloom, adults are so busy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the creation of original songs, the second daughter, Darryl, has been passionate about creative writing by using different languages since a very young age. Her imagination and nuanced views have also shown in her creative sentences for Chinese homework (see table 6).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The given Chinese words/English translation</th>
<th>Darryl’s sentences in Chinese/English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 不管 whatever</td>
<td>我都喜欢看，不管书是英文的还是法文的，我都喜欢看。Whatever the books are in English or French, I always enjoy reading them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 非 must</td>
<td>我必须坚持练习中文书法。I must keep improving my Chinese calligraphy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 不仅…而且… not only… but also</td>
<td>我不仅喜欢学中文，还喜欢中国的文化。I not only enjoy learning Chinese language, but also like Chinese culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 只有…才能… only if…can…</td>
<td>只有努力学习中文，才能感到有成就感。Only if I learn Chinese hard can I have a sense of achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 使用 use</td>
<td>我喜欢使用电脑作曲。I like using computer to compose music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 纷纷 one after another</td>
<td>秋风吹，树叶纷纷飘落。The Autumn wind blows, the falling leaves drift one after another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 时候 When</td>
<td>当我想坐雪橇的时候，突然下雪了。When I was think of going sledding, it suddenly started to snow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 怀抱 in arms</td>
<td>我依偎在妈妈温暖的怀抱里，不知不觉睡着了。I was nestled in my mom’s arms, drifted into sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 自我 oneself</td>
<td>儿童是天生的自我表现者。The children are naturally good at express themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 幸福 happiness</td>
<td>人的幸福不能依附于财富。Our happiness cannot lie in material wealth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 原来 It turned out……</td>
<td>原来大人也会把错误！It turned out that even the adults will also make mistakes!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above sentences are extracted from Darryl’s Chinese homework. Although the homework requirement is just to make reasonable sentences with the new Chinese words and phrases, Darryl always creates her own sentences in a very narrative and imaginative way. For example, the first three sentences (see Table 6) reflect her varying hobbies and interests.
regarding English and French book reading, Chinese language and culture learning, as well as
digital music compositions. In sentences four to six, she captured several tender moments of
nature and her everyday life, e.g., the fallen leaves of Autumn, the unexpected snowfall, the
warmth of her mother’s arms. The last four sentences provide an intriguing glimpse of her
creative and critical thinking in Chinese literacy practices, by writing down her unique
perspectives such as “儿童是天生的自我表现[达]者” (The children are naturally good at
expressing themselves), “人的幸福不能依附于财富” (Our happiness cannot lie in material
wealth), and “原来大人也会犯错误！”(It turns out that even the adults will also make
mistakes!)

As her mother reported, Darryl has been willing to put sustained efforts to complete the
Chinese homework and improve literacy skills without parental supervision:

She [Darryl] really likes attending Chinese
classes as she can learn Chinese
seriously……. The principal told me that he
had asked the students in Darryl’s class who
is willing to go to Chinese school by
themselves than being forced by the parents.
Besides Darryl, none of the other children
raised their hands…… I used to help the
teacher correct their homework sometimes, so
I knew that they were really unwilling [to do
it]. But for Darryl, I never need to push her to
do her homework. She just wants to work on
it really hard……If she didn’t have time to
review at the night before dictation [in class],
she would wake up early at 5:00 a.m. by
Unlike other students who think Chinese homework is a burden, Darryl enjoys doing it and always make an extra effort in writing tasks. As the mother mentioned in above excerpt, Darryl’s take-home essay about extracurricular activities is written as three times longer than the length of the requirement. In her essay, she first talked about her interests in multilingual creative writing – “我喜欢创意写作……无论是用英文，法语还是中文写作，我总是充满着期待，激情和喜悦” (First, I like creative writing…… Whether writing in English, French or Chinese, I am always full of expectations, passion, and joy). She elaborated the reasons why she is passionate about creative writing by composing Chinese sentences with vivid imagination.

Darryl wrote,

写作让我的想象力，创造力插上翅膀，自由飞翔……让思想顺着笔尖流淌到纸上，文字如精灵般跳舞，把自己的故事娓娓道来，就像电影播放在我的脑海里，其乐无穷……每个人都希望可以有个倾诉的对象，但我们有时未必可以找到那个人。写作可以代替那个人，我可以把我的喜怒哀乐宣泄在纸上。

**Translation:** Writing makes my imagination and creativity spread the wings and fly freely…… makes my thoughts flow out of the tip of my pen onto the page. My words are dancing like fairies to tell their own stories tirelessly and vividly. It also like writing a rolling movie in my head, which brings me boundless joy……. Everyone needs a listener, but sometimes we couldn’t find one. Writing can replace that person as I can give full vent to all my sorrows and joys on paper.

In addition to her anthropomorphic expressions, she also appropriately applied a few Chengyu (the four-character traditional Chinese idiomatic expression) such as 娓娓道来 (talk
tirelessly and vividly), 其乐无穷 (it brings boundless joy), 喜怒哀乐 (joys and sorrows), and 泪如泉涌 (a deluge of tears). Before talking about her second hobby, book reading, Darryl explained the interrelationship between her two hobbies by reading by citing a well-known verse of a classical Chinese poem “读书破万卷, 下笔如有神” (After you have read more than ten thousand volumes, you will find it easy to write as if God were there helping you), as well as her favorite author J.K. Rowling’s quote – “You can't be a good writer without being a devoted reader”. This also indicates that she not only did extensive reading in multiple languages but also can flexibly use those multilingual recourses in the actual literacy practices (see Appendix E for the manuscript of Darryl’s full essay).

Darryl is dissatisfied with just being able to communicate with her Chinese-speaking relatives. She is also making constant efforts improving her Chinese literacy skills and learn more about Chinese culture as it expands the space of reading and creative writing by developing higher Chinese literacy. As she expressed,

The author: So, why you feel it is also important to be able to read and write in Chinese rather than only speaking or listening?

Darryl: Because normally when I read, there's a bunch of books…… I have in my house. So, there's also the Chinese books and the French books. So, it's a more diverse reading space for me. And later when I read some more, I can write in many different languages…… English, Chinese, French, whatever. If I feel like writing in French, I write in French. When I feel like writing in Chinese. I feel like writing nothing. I write in English anyway.

For multilingual children, “creativity is more than producing something ‘original’. It is about life’s creative power: proliferating connections and the continuous formation of different assemblages” (Masny & Waterhouse, 2011, p. 302). Darryl’s creative literacy practices in Chinese are partly related to her previous reading and learning experiences among multiple
languages; however, it also has varying associations other than the conventional writing system and traditions (Masny & Cole, 2007). For instance, it is noticeable that her Chinese creative writing has been potentially influenced by her extensive experiences of learning, reading, and writing among Chinese, English, and French, her playful use of Chinese with her sister, her observation of the transient Autumn and long winter in Alberta, and her cross-cultural journeys within different countries.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I first demonstrate the three major features of daily language interaction in the two mixed heritage families: the diversity of language use patterns among family members; the dynamic language use patterns between mother and child; and maternal grandparents as a driving force for children’s Mandarin use and learning. Considering the lack of natural opportunities for children’s daily Chinese practices, Chinese immigrant mothers in two families have invested considerable heritage language management efforts by engaging their children in Chinese literacy learning activities, including Chinese storytelling and book reading, singing and reciting Chinese nursery rhymes and ancient poems, and extra Chinese literacy teaching based on weekend Chinese classes. Although the use of Chinese in mother-child conversation has been limited by the reality that they have to accommodate the monolingual English-speaking fathers’ needs, the mothers and children have been keen on investing more time and effort in those Mandarin-mediated activities for not only strengthening the bond between children and the mother’s side of the family but also enhancing children’s Chinese language proficiency.
CHAPTER SIX: LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND OTHER FACTORS IN FLPS

The previous chapter answered my first research question on how family language policies (FLPs) have been implemented (the actual language practices and language management efforts) in these two mixed-heritage families. This chapter turns to discuss how FLPs have been planned and developed in the two families with regard to their children’s Chinese language and literacy learning and multilingual development. The findings revolve around the parents’ and children’s perceptions of the role of Chinese and multilingualism in their life and the *de facto* practices of Chinese transmission in order to investigate (1) how ideological factors influence the planning and implementation of FLPs, as well as (2) other factors causing the negotiation to FLPs.

**Parental and Children’s Language Ideology as the Underlying Forces in FLPs**

With regard to the underlying forces of family language policy of the two mixed-heritage families, the data indicate how different language ideologies reflect in the processes of FLP decision making, implementation, and negotiation. In the following sections, I illustrate not only how the parents but also how their school-aged children perceive Chinese transmission and the different values attached to multilingual development.

*Mandarin as the Bond of Language between Children and Half Chinese-speaking Family*

The emotional and sentimental values for intergenerational heritage language transmission have been highlighted by Chinese immigrant parents and children in the two mixed heritage families, as Mandarin Chinese carries out a mediating function in maintaining the connection between mixed-heritage children and the mother’s side of the family, especially the Chinese-speaking grandparents. As illustrated by participants in family A,
**Perle (mother in family A)**

她们跟外公外婆每周六都会 Skype，这个习惯坚持了十年，主要是让她们和外公外婆联络感情和练中文……和外公外婆都说中文……我和我先生也尽量让她们去看外公外婆，每次去澳洲她俩都会呆上两个月的时间……两个月的时间她俩的中文就讲了很多，口语明显有很大的进步……我们所有的假期都花在旅游上看他们看这些亲戚，因为我家亲戚就是在全世界各地，他们都会讲中文，她爸觉得就说有一个锻炼的机会……后年可能又得去澳洲，因为都是老人家，所以你一定得去看老人家。

(They make Skype calls on to their grandparents every Saturday. They have been in this habit for 10 years, which aims to maintain the relationship and practice Mandarin…… They always speak Mandarin with their grandparents …… My husband and I also try to take them see grandparents more often, so they usually stay in Australia for two months…… In the two months, they can speak much more Mandarin, and their oral skills would apparently improve a lot…… We spent all vacations traveling to see them and other relatives as my relatives are now living in different countries around the world. They all speak Mandarin and their father felt it is a chance to practice [their Mandarin] …… We probably will go to Australia again the year after next year as their grandparents are living there, we have to see them.)

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<th><strong>Effie (1st child in family A)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Darryl (2nd child in family A)</strong></th>
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<td>I continue learning Chinese mostly because most of my mother's family, they cannot really speak any English. They're mostly Chinese. So, I wanted to be able to communicate with them better. I'd be out there, hang out with them because they don't really know English well, so it's easier…… my grandpa and grandma, the people who I practice my Chinese language the most with…… Whenever we travel to Australia where my mother's family lives. I always have to speak Chinese for my grandparents to understand. Most of time we have to speak at least a little bit Chinese.</td>
<td>All of my relatives on my mom's side, they can speak Chinese. So that's usually how I communicate with them. Cause some of them don't even know how to speak English or French…… What motivates me [to learn Chinese] the most is because I want to communicate more with the relatives on my mother's side…… if I stopped learning Chinese, then I'll lose lots of my connection with all the relatives on my mother's side. And we visit them so often that it's not being able to communicate with them in Chinese would be a much tougher.</td>
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Although Perle did not explicitly express her consideration of the emotional values of Chinese transmission in grandparent-grandchild connections, she informed that the primary purposes of encouraging children to make frequent video calls and visit the maternal grandparents are to practice Mandarin and strengthen the family relationships. The daughters in family A attach high importance to the affective values of Mandarin as they believe learning Mandarin helps maintain sentimental bonding to their mother’s side of the family. Their desires for better communicating with the maternal grandparents have been the strongest motivation for them to make ongoing efforts to improve Chinese proficiency.

In Family B, the emotional functions of Chinese maintenance directly led to the modification to the initial FLP planning. Jenny explained this when she introduced the background information about her home language planning to me by email,

At home we never had any Chinese speaking except when my mom came to live with us. I did not speak Chinese with her was because I did not feel fair to my husband when I was communicating with Sprout, as my husband would not understand and would feel being excluded. Teaching her Chinese was a decision I made couple of years ago. When she started school and my mom came to live with us fulltime, I want Sprout and my mom be able to communicate with each other…… I also speak with her more in Mandarin, simple phrases on a daily basis. Hopefully she will be able to carry one simple daily conversation as we move forward in couple years.

In Jenny’s email, she emphasized the sentimental functions of languages in intergenerational interaction. In this regard, her FLP has been planned and modified primarily based on her concerns about different family members’ language competence and preferences. As mentioned in Chapter Five, Jenny’s unpleasant experiences of being excluded from her ex-
spouse’s French-speaking family directly made her accommodate her monolingual English-speaking husband’s language preference rather than transmitting and speaking Chinese to her daughter in early childhood. After the monolingual Chinese-speaking grandmother immigrated to Canada and started living with the family, Jenny realized that her daughter’s low Chinese proficiency had limited everyday interaction with the grandmother. Jenny’s desire to strengthen the grandmother-grandchild connections has motivated her to start transmitting and speaking Mandarin Chinese to her daughter diligently in daily life. Jenny’s beliefs have markedly influenced her daughter’s understanding of the benefits from language learning:

It [Learning Mandarin] will help me be able to understand half of my family when they speak Chinese because half my family is Chinese……I think for the last three years, I’ve been learning a bit of Spanish. In kindergarten, I learned a bit of French, but then I took Spanish. I think it was because a little bit of my family speaks Spanish. So, my father’s sister took Spanish and married a Spanish. They and my cousins are living in Mexica.

Sprout’s explanations for her choices of learning Chinese and Spanish reflect the similar emotional value her mother attaches to languages – the primary reason for her to learn these two languages is to maintain the relations to her mother’s side of the family as well as a few Spanish-speaking relatives one her father’s side.

Moreover, even if Jenny is bilingual fluent in both Chinese and Mandarin, they both provide the following viewpoints that interacting in Mandarin Chinese creates an emotional connection between her and her children. As Jenny told about the greatest joy and reward for her in transmission:

I enjoy spending time with her [Sprout], especially in my mother tongue. And it gives me a lot of joy when she remembers things that I didn't expect she will because anytime I
would say something or asking something [in Chinese], and it were those moments, I will ask her something and she will just answer me as if it's not even worth to be a question. I was like, wow, you really know your thing. So those are the moments surprises me. Like when before Christmas. We were preparing for the dictation and she's a little bit stressed, but we were doing it the first time at home. I was very surprised that she remembers 90% of it. There's nothing I need to even a hint. So, these are the things I need to remember that there's so much potential of your child. You don't even know until you engage with them. So, learning Chinese has been a great way for me to be involved with her.

Jenny emphasized that everyday Chinese learning and interaction between her and her daughter offer an irreplaceable opportunity for her to be involved with her daughter. She particularly enjoys interacting with her daughter in her mother tongue, Chinese, even if she is fully fluent in English. Her child’s diligent and productive Chinese learning also brings her a sense of achievement in the process of Chinese transmission. Likewise, the mother Perle in family A highlight the emotional connections drawn by those Mandarin-mediate activities: 我真的希望她们给我一点时间……因为中文故事的时间真是一个 bonding 的 time (I really hope they could allow me a little bit more time to interact in Chinese as the Chinese storytelling is actually a bonding time). Her second daughter Darryl also acknowledged that the role of Chinese in the mother-children interaction is more like an emotional bonding that she would like to maintain rather than the medium of communication on daily basis:

We use Chinese as kind of a bonding point, but we never really talk to each other much, like in Chinese……. Maybe because my parents might go and live in there [China] again. So, if I'm going to live with my parents, if I learn Chinese, then I can have a job in China and still continue to live with my parents.
According to Curdt-Christiansen (2009), as “FLP, like all other language policies, advocates economic advancement”, linguistic instrumentalism becomes a significant factor in family language policy decisions and implementation (p.363). In particular, the communicative function and economic capital have been revealed in parents’ and children’s beliefs and attitudes towards Chinese transmission and multilingualism. As the mother and children in Family A indicate in the interviews,

**Perle** (mother in Family A)

另外一个学中文对你的生活很方便。就是说那个人不会讲英文，你会讲中文你就能沟通，对不对？还有生活方面比较方便的说，就是说你就出去旅游，就不会被骗得那么厉害[@]。然后将来对她们的 career 有没有帮助我不知道，就是说你学多一种语言不会浪费……她爸爸觉得[中文很重要]可能也是一个比较实际的考虑，说将来对她们事业的发展肯定有帮助，生活有帮助…… Darryl 和她姐姐打算的挺多的，很多小孩子都不会想这么多可能。她们是想学了这个以后对他将来有什么帮助，会想的很深的，她们跟我说他说想我去找工作老板要去讲中文了，他就会请我。

(Another benefit is that learning Chinese makes your life very convenient. It means that if the person can't speak English, you can speak Chinese, and you can communicate, right? For life, it is more convenient, if you travel to China, you won't be deceived that much. [@] Then, I don’t know if it will help their future careers, but if you learn another language, it won’t be wasted..... Her father thinks [Chinese is very important] might be also because of a more practical consideration as it must be beneficial to their future career development. It is also helpful for their life...... Darryl and her sister have lots of plans themselves, which many children may not think that much. They do consider the benefits of Chinese learning. They think it very deeply. They’ve told me that if the employers need someone speaking Chinese, they’ll hire them.)
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<td>Learning different languages, it's way easier because that way can communicate with more people. I think my advantage really is if there's anybody that doesn't know English but knows Chinese, I can communicate with them...... because China is a powerful country......it's good to learn Chinese if ever like encounter pretty much any job you might have to work with Chinese people. And it's the way easier if you know how to speak mandarins, so business reasons.</td>
<td>Because then when I go to different countries, then I can, uh, interact with the people more in another language and they'll understand me. So, if I go to China, I can speak Chinese well that they understand me, and we can communicate together...... And the educational benefits. When you speak Chinese, when you're older and you have to go to university, it opens up a new pathway for your university and jobs. So new options and paths that I can go down if I want.</td>
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Both parents and children emphasized the economic values are closely associated with Chinese maintenance and multilingual development as being well-spoken and literate in Mandarin would help the children to seize more career and educational opportunities related to the thriving market of China. This coincides with Curdt-Christiansen (2009)’s research on pro-Chinese ideologies reflected in their family language planning, which reveals that many Chinese immigrant parents perceived Chinese language as “a typical form of economic capital which can create financial opportunities and material wealth and bring economic advantages” in children’s future life (p. 363). Apart from the economic advantages, Mandarin learning also facilitates children’s daily life, such as traveling to China in the future. This view is further exemplified by the younger child. Darryl believes that being able to communicate in Chinese will help her to better understand the local people. Apparently, parental language ideologies and children’s beliefs regarding the pragmatic values of Chinese learning echoes with each other. As the mother illustrated, children’s deep understanding of the language learning benefits is related to her
thorough analysis of benefits from mastering Chinese for them: “我从来没说你一定得学中文……我给她们说你学了中文以后有什么好处，她们自己挑的中文学校” (I never said that you have to learn Mandarin…… I just told them what the benefits will be if they learn Chinese and they choose to the Chinese weekend school by themselves). Since they have been clearly recognized the benefits from making the decisions of starting their Chinese classes, Effie and Darryl are more self-motivated and passionate about Chinese learning than other peers who are forced to attend Chinese classes by parents.

In addition, because of the increasing importance of China on the international scene, and the increasingly important role the Chinese language plays in the international political arena (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009), both immigrant mothers and English-speaking Caucasian fathers has recognized the pragmatic and practical values of Chinese. For example, indicated by Perle (the mother in Family A), her Canadian Caucasian husband even attaches more importance as knowing Mandarin can provide their mixed heritage children with better career opportunities and instrumental benefits: “其实学中文他[爸爸]觉得真的很重要，比我觉得更重要，可能是一个比较实际的一个考虑，就是说将来对她们的事业的发展肯定有帮助, 对生活有帮助” (In fact, their father believes that Mandarin learning is really important - even more important than me. He probably has a more pragmatic concern as it must be helpful for children’s future career development as well as their everyday life). Therefore, unlike Mi Yung Park (2019)’s study on mixed heritage families in South Korea that neither the Korean family members nor the broader society provided support for those Southeast Asian immigrant mothers to transmit their heritage languages due to the low pragmatic values of Southeast Asian languages, in this study, Chinese immigrant mothers’ HL transmission have been fully accepted and supported by their English-speaking Caucasian spouses and their extended families and
promoted by other external family-external support, such as Chinese weekend school. As researchers pointed out that children’s successful heritage language maintenance largely relied on the support from community and family (e.g., Cummins, 2001; Duff, 2008b; Fishman, 1991; Agnes Weiyun He, 2008), the Chinese language development of mixed heritage children has been enhanced by the collaborative efforts made by both the parents and the heritage language school.

However, while Chinese dialects are still widely used in the communication between the two mothers and their Chinese-speaking families, none of the Chinese immigrant mothers chose to pass those dialects to their mixed-heritage children. When asked why they decided to teach their child Mandarin instead of passing the certain Chinese dialect, the mothers pointed out,

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**Jenny** (mother in Family B)

Because Mandarin is more universal. So, it's a useful language. Shanghainese is not. It has already very hard to master and it's kind of a dying dialect. So, for her [child], I guess, Shanghainese would die with me. When my mom gone, when I'm gone, that's the end of her hearing it, unless in the future, she chose to live in China or have some kind of experience that involves Shanghainese. And in China...... I understand that Mandarin is just like English here, it's all over people. You speak Mandarin in every single city. You go, people don't really speak that [dialects]. Other than like older generation. I went back to Shanghai last year. They even have to have Shanghainese in all the public spaces...... because the younger generation, they just know Mandarin and English, or they will hear their family speaking or speaking with their family if their family is from Shanghai. But there's so many immigrants from other province...... the government then decided to use this way to try to save the language. So, with Sprout, the only way hearing Shanghainese is if me or my mom's speaking. But it's kind of automatic, somehow when my mom talking to her, she would switch from Shanghainese, automatically into Mandarin. For some reason, she wouldn't speak to her in Shanghainese. So, we would just naturally speak to her in Mandarin.
Jenny (mother in Family B) emphasized the widespread use of Mandarin as a *de facto* lingua franca in China, corresponding to the role of the English language in Canada, while describing her home dialect (Shanghainese) as a dying dialect. While she and her mother still mainly communicate with each other in Shanghainese, they naturally shift to Mandarin when talking to her daughter. Similarly, Perle in Family A underlined the widespread usage of Mandarin in communication with Chinese people including most of the Cantonese speakers. She also argued that learning Mandarin is enough, even better than transmitting Cantonese, for her children to communicate with their Chinese-speaking relatives as some of their extended family members speak Mandarin instead of Cantonese. Additionally, she pointed out learning recourses in Mandarin are more adequate and accessible than those in Cantonese, such as the systematic

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**Perle** (mother in Family A)

Because Mandarin is still a national language, right? It has a wide range of uses. In addition, most people who speak Cantonese can also speak Mandarin, so it has widespread coverage. The other reason why I prefer it is that the Chinese school has a system to teach them. I have never read a book in Cantonese, but I think the Mandarin one is very good. Also, like when they watch some cartoons. There are more cartoons in Mandarin, so there are more choices. Then, for example, there are like my brother-in-law and my younger brother's wife, none of them speak Cantonese. But everyone like my parents speaks Mandarin, right? So, it is easier for them to communicate with each other.

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Jenny (mother in Family B) emphasized the widespread use of Mandarin as a *de facto* lingua franca in China, corresponding to the role of the English language in Canada, while describing her home dialect (Shanghainese) as a dying dialect. While she and her mother still mainly communicate with each other in Shanghainese, they naturally shift to Mandarin when talking to her daughter. Similarly, Perle in Family A underlined the widespread usage of Mandarin in communication with Chinese people including most of the Cantonese speakers. She also argued that learning Mandarin is enough, even better than transmitting Cantonese, for her children to communicate with their Chinese-speaking relatives as some of their extended family members speak Mandarin instead of Cantonese. Additionally, she pointed out learning recourses in Mandarin are more adequate and accessible than those in Cantonese, such as the systematic
course contents in Chinese school and various choices of cartoons. Like the other Chinese parents in Curdt-Christiansen's (2018) study, Jenny and Perle share a common belief regarding the instrumental values of language, which leads to an underestimation of Chinese dialects as less useful in actual communication, resulting in their decisions of passing Mandarin to the younger generation instead of their home dialects. Due to extra difficulties in Chinese dialect transmission and the limited communication possibilities provided by the dialects, the Chinese immigrant mothers therefore decided to transfer the cultural and emotional values of their dialects into Mandarin in terms of heritage language transmission.

Language as Meditational Means for Accessing the Richness of Culture

Passing Chinese Cultures and Traditions

As part of their language socialization, multilingual children acquire not only cultural values and ideologies, but also a rich cultural knowledge of human creations through languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Language as meditational means can enable children to gain access to culturally significant aspects of knowledge and information (Vygotsky, 2012). The mothers in the two participating families consider that Chinese language provides a tool for their children to understand the rich wealth of Chinese culture:

Perle (mother in Family A)

对我来说就是语言是一门工具去理解另外一个文化的工具，所以我就觉得这一方面很重要……我们中国的文化方面的过年过节。她们喜欢吃，比如说一些中国特色的年糕月饼都会给她们介绍，然后顺便介绍一下有关传统的传说。[Chinese festivals are] 文化还有历史沉淀下来的东西，所以她们很喜欢。有时太忙她们也会提醒我春节要穿旗袍……要Chinese hair style, 一定要看春节联欢晚会。还有中文学校每年过节的时候都有节目，她们每次都会参加很喜欢。不会像在加拿大圣诞节就是放假很boring, 对她们来说中国这些文化很有吸引力。 (In my opinion, language is a tool to understand another culture. I think this is more important…… For our Chinese cultures, like new year and other festivals, as
they’re foodies, I introduce special food like Chinese-style rice cakes, moon cakes. While eating, I would introduce the traditional legends to them. The Chinese festivals have been constructed by the rich Chinese culture and long history, so they like them a lot. Sometimes I’m so busy, but they would also remind me in the Chinese New Year that they want to wear Cheongsam [traditional Chinese dress], make the Chinese hairstyle, want to watch the Spring Festival Gala. There are also different festival performances at the Chinese school each year. They participate every time and enjoy them a lot. It’s not like you’re on Christmas holidays in Canada just for day-offs. It’s kind of boring. For them, Chinese cultures are always attractive.)

**Jenny (mother in Family B)**

For me, just because I know there's such a rich culture in China, so they're just endless, endless, endless things you can get into. You can learn if you are able to at least understand like basic Chinese……. I always talk to her about cultural things. I like to explain – what’s the meanings behind words. I would explain to her, there's a lot of words in pairs. That's how we speak in that way to mean something of it. Like 手足. So, I would explain to her that means brothers, siblings, and sisters in Chinese. So that's how we say it because I'd say you belong to one body, and then siblings, or like one family. So, stuff like that, when it comes, I would explain to her. How much she retains I don't know. Like she would probably remember maybe years later watch something and then she heard 手足, 情同手足, she’ll understand, Oh, that's why it means. Now I just impart the knowledge. [手足 literally means hands and feet. But it extended meaning s siblings; 情同手足 means brotherly/sisterly love.]

From Perle’s perspective, the greatest benefit from language learning is to gain access to cultural wealth. Specifically, she values the Chinese festivals as precious cultural and historical wealth. In this regard, she has transmitted the special food culture and traditional Chinese legends regarding different Chinese festivals. Likewise, although her daughter, Sprout, is still a novice Chinese learner who just started learning basic words and expressions, Jenny consciously introduces the extended meaning behind related phrases in the processes of teaching Chinese to her daughter. It is because Jenny believes that imparting the cultural and literary knowledge
behind the basic words provides the mediational means to her daughter for exploring Chinese culture wealth in the future.

The mother’s beliefs have been deeply influenced children’s understanding of the interrelationships between language and culture:

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<tr>
<td>Our family is half Chinese, so we want to be able to know where we came from and learning Mandarin kind of helps us understand the culture……I feel quite lucky to know it [Mandarin] because that way whenever there is an event, like a Chinese event, I can always participate……… if there's like Chinese New Year or something, as I know Chinese, I can participate a bit more other than people who don't know.</td>
<td>With the language, I also learned the culture and it opens up new experiences for me……Like I learned the Chinese culture of them is the people who come from different parts of China, it's similar but it's also different, and they have their own ways too, and they have their own experiences with the different kinds of Chinese culture …… if I don’t know Chinese, then I’d never know as much about the culture I did now……</td>
<td>I think it [learning Chinese] helps me understand more about Chinese culture because I think when I started to know about the Moon Festival [Mid-autumn festival] and the Chinese New Year, I didn't really understand it until I started learning more about Chinese…… In the Moon Festival, we……talk about the legend of the moon goddess and the moon cakes.</td>
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In Family A, the first daughter, Effie, thinks learning Mandarin Chinese satisfies her curiosity about the half Chinese cultural background, in particular, it allows her to participate in varying Chinese cultural activities. Darryl, the second daughter, expressed that she has benefited from learning Mandarin as she gains an opportunity to experience and discover the diversity of cultures in China. For Sprout (child in Family B), while her Chinese learning journey has just
started for two years, she also found that learning Mandarin helps her know more about the
cultural traditions and legends behind Chinese traditional festivals.

Besides, Perle’s view on the unique cultural and historical wealth of traditional Chinese festivals was echoed by her daughters in the sibling joint interview:

**The author:** So, from your experiences, what would be the differences between Chinese culture and Canadian culture?

**Effie:** It's quite different. [In Canada], they just have Halloween, Eastern, Canada Day, and Christmas, that's it. That's like 100 celebrations [in Chinese culture]. Like Chinese celebrations involve a lot of more. I suppose there's more of a history, for example, for all the Chinese celebrations, there's always like a story behind it and why have that celebration. There's always a big story. But like Canadians, they don't really have a big story that everybody follows. They might have some little ones, but they're always different. They're small. But for Chinese, there's like one big story for every celebration.

**Darryl:** Yeah. China, it’s like more of a cultural celebration. And then Canada, it's more for like the day off from work……[In Chinese festivals,] we usually learn about the Chinese cultures and my dad takes us to China town for lots of festivals – the Chinese New Year, the Lantern festival and the Mooncake Festival [Mid-autumn festival]………we go to Chinese parades to watch the Chinese dances and the Chinese songs and interact more with the other Chinese children. Most of them are Chinese Canadians, but some of them are immigrants from China. So, it's an experience for us to meet up with them and ask them more about what they know about the Chinese culture.

From Effie’s and Darryl’s perspectives, varying Chinese festival celebrations and events allow them to learn plenty of cultural or historical background stories, which can barely be experienced in Canadian festivals. Their whole family, including their Canadian-born father, have engaged in different Chinese festival events in China. In particular, Darryl pointed out that participating in these cultural activities provides them a chance to socialize with children from China and learn about Chinese cultures from their peers.
Furthermore, the view on cultural and literary values of Mandarin, in particular the literacy skills, was explicitly articulated by the two mothers:

Perle (mother in Family A)

Because I've read all the four Classical Chinese Novels, which is so fascinating. I read them many times... I know they must like Journey to the West. I found the Chinese cartoon shows about Journey to the West for the girls. They have watched many episodes and really enjoy watching them. They also always sing along with the opening and closing songs. I think, among the four novels, Journey to the West will be most accepted by kids, which is very interesting like Harry Potter, like fairy tales. Their children are willing to accept it as it doesn't have a specific historical context. You don't need to understand its historical background. I know they can't read the Chinese Journey to the West, and they definitely can't read the original book now. I feel a little bit pity as the children now just read Harry Potter. But they're quite interested in [Journey to the West] now, if they continue improving the Chinese literacy skills, they probably can read and understand those classic novels one day. The Chinese classic novels have so profound historical and cultural basis. For Canada, a very young country, it's hard to find such books here. They started with high technology and machine industries rather than a historical process of cultural wealth. Thus, children and people here have different personalities. They are very
straightforward without thinking a lot, which is related to the Canadian culture and history. I still expect that they can have chances to read and understand this – the very deep part of Chinese culture and history – as this is a completely different world. )

**Jenny (mother in Family B)**

Sprout’s quite arty. She likes drawing a lot…….. She did tell me that she finds it fun to learn it. So, I think it's a good sign. She does say it's difficult because the writing – there's a lot of writing involved. But I tell her that in all languages, Chinese is the only one that you draw each character, because every time you write, you're actually drawing it…….. If she enjoys arts, and then there's a lot of different arts in Chinese ways that you can learn. There're endless stories, classic stories that you can read about books and stuff. So that might be a stretch because I found it's always very hard for people to read it in a second language that they learn…….. basically you can get is possibly just speaking because reading is really hard. So, I can't really say I have any specific goal for her, but every year she spends at the [Chinese] school. I will support her at home. Then we'll bring her to whatever level she will be. I do think amongst most of kids, I think I do a lot with her every day on the side. Considering we don't have an environment that forced her to just subconsciously repeat everything she learns. I think we do quite a bit, and I'm quite happy at this moment……those classical storybooks I bought that she has not read it. I think I plan to utilize those books and cartoons. It's such a rich heritage teacher, Chinese culture. So, I would like her to be able to watch, appreciate it, understand it because she doesn't really know those classics.

Perle expressed that due to her personal love of reading Chinese classical novels, she decided to introduce classical Chinese literature to her children as she values this literary heritage as the carrier of Chinese history and culture. Among those Classical Chinese Novels, Perle specifically selected *The Journey to the West (Monkey King)* as a pointcut for her children as it is one of the most popular children's Chinese literary works about a fantasy and adventure story without the demand for extensive cultural and historical knowledge. Considering that children’s Chinese reading proficiency, instead of reading the original ancient Chinese novel, Perle has used the Chinese animated shows of *The Journey to the West* to arouse the children’s interest and
curiosity about the rich wealth of Chinese classical literature and to motivate children’s literacy learning. The process of becoming literate to be able to access classical Chinese literature will eventually help the children to better understand the differences between Chinese and Canadian cultural and literary values. The increasing understanding of Chinese language and culture will eventually facilitate smooth their actual oral or written Mandarin communication with local Chinese people in the future. Similarly, Jenny, the mother in Family B, highlighted the values of Chinese language, especially the literacy skills, as the mediational means for exploring Chinese culture wealth, including a variety of literature and arts. Although she understands how difficult it is for her daughter, as a second language learner, to read and understand those classical literary works, she has been willing to make continuing efforts to support her literacy acquisition that she will have the tool to access the Chinese literary and art world. Jenny also informed that she has pointed out the unique artistic quality of Chinese characters for her daughter – “I tell her that in all languages, Chinese is the only one that you draw each character because every time you write, you’re actually drawing it”. Chinese characters, as the only continuous and commonly used logographic writing systems, are distinctly different from other phonologic languages, such as English; thus, becoming literate in Chinese is always one of the challenging parts for heritage learners. However, as her daughter enjoys drawing, Jenny tries to make the challenging learning of Chinese characters more interesting by describing each Chinese character itself as a piece of art. By gradually helping her child acquire literacy in Chinese, Jenny looks forwards to sharing those classical stories books she bought but has not read with her child (see figure 19) as she does not want her Child to miss the opportunity to access those Chinese classic literary works for children.
Figure 19 Picture Books of Chinese Classical Fairy Tales in Family B.

Parental values and guidance about the cultural values of Chinese literacy skills have an invisible and subtle influence on children’s positive attitudes towards their Chinese literacy learning:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Effie (1st child in Family A)</th>
<th>Darryl (2nd child in Family A)</th>
<th>Sprout (child in Family B)</th>
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<td>My mother read lots of Chinese stories for us. Like almost every single day. Lots of very intelligent Chinese stuffs. I found it very helpful to learn. Then also like every time, there's this contest in [Chinese] school, like Chinese speech contests, or Chinese writing contests, she would always make us go there and help</td>
<td>[Reading] in Chinese each time, I don't know a word, I can't really connect it to any other words. So, I have to search it up in a dictionary to find out what it is. But I enjoy reading in Chinese...... [After finishing study in Chinese school,] we could also ask our mother and our mother can teach use more you</td>
<td>I find the reading [in Chinese] is interesting...... Maybe the writing, some of the writing is a bit hard......I don't really know, but I just feel like it's important to write and read in Chinese.</td>
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us do it…… So, I think reading or writing [in Chinese] could also help because like, we can read and write that way. …… I want to be able to read something like a long, for example, essay without the Pinyin and also write a good essay for Chinese. So, like a longer one, so I can write and read. know, enhance our vocabularies, and yeah, that probably how we're going to do more…… you have a feel of how things are going to go if I continue to learn Chinese …… It's a more diverse reading space for me. And when and later when, when I read some more, I can write in many different languages.

Although it is always challenging for mixed-heritage children to learn how to read and write in Chinese language, they are willing to improve their Chinese literacy skills. In Family A, as Effie and Darryl have been exposed to varying Chinese literary materials and encouraged to engage in varying Chinese literacy practices from their early childhood, they demonstrate an apparent willingness to devote efforts to improving their literacy skills to be able to read and write in Chinese language. While Sprout, the daughter in Family B, just started her Chinese learning, she already experienced increasing difficulties in Chinese literacy development; however, she acknowledges the importance of Chinese literacy acquisition and expresses her interest in Chinese reading.

It is interesting to notice that while the Chinese immigrant mothers have attached to the transmission of Chinese cultural heritage, they have been reflected and modified the specific strategies and contents of the transmission of Chinese cultural knowledge by considering English-speaking fathers’ suggestions and children’s receptivity. As Perle and Jenny illustrated respectively,
Perle (mother in Family A)

When they were very young, I used to strongly require their Chinese, and I told them about my experiences. But my husband told me that they[children] are in completely different eras. The growing-up environments and locations are totally different. For me, I actually have a strong sense of belonging to China, so I wanted them to be the same. My husband told me that it won’t work and might have a reverse effect later as they really cannot understand. I was telling them about Chinese history, but they couldn’t understand as it has been accumulated over thousands of years. It’s different here. In Canada, it’s always peaceful. They couldn't understand, so they asked why did they always fight? Why not negotiate? Their way of thinking is different. Later, I learned that I stepped back as I couldn't force it. That’s why I shifted to tell those Chinese moral stories. It’s very important for me to transmit all those Chinese [cultural values] like respecting the old and loving the young. So, we usually inculcate them in storytelling...... All the books I read with them are about moral education. But I am not just simply read the book. Every time after telling them a story, I’ll contact them with the truth and reality of life. [I’ll] give them an example right after the story to inculcate [moral values] and enhance their understandings. So, all [Chinese] books I read [for them] are bought from China. I enjoy reading these kinds of books [with them] a lot.)
**Jenny** (mother in Family B)

For the new Chinese festival, we do really set up really like a dinner like everybody does in China and I would take her to the cultural center……… We usually get moon cakes and stuff for the Chinese harvest festival [Mid-autumn festival]. Tell her a little bit about what it is. Hopefully, she will understand a little bit more. We watched a related cartoon called over the moon…. For the Dragon boat festival, if my mom is here with us, she would make 粽子 [Zongzi, the special festival food], I think it’s part of Chinese culture. But I didn’t tell her the stories like 屈原跳河自杀 [the patriotic poet Qu Yuan died by suicide by drowning himself in the river – the Dragon boat festival commemorates Qu Yuan’s death]. If you tell her, she may have some misunderstandings. Like children born here might think he [Qu Yuan] has depression. I don’t want to talk about those sad parts that early. I think when she grows older, if she’s willing to explore more, she probably can go deeper. For now, I just want her to enjoy those fun parts.

Perle and Jenny, as Chinese immigrant mothers living in mixed marriage families, coincidentally choose a moderate way to pass the traditional cultural values to their children. Perle pointed out the conflicts between her passionate desire for transmitting the traditional Chinese cultural values and the actual practices of Chinese culture maintenance as she found her Canadian-born mixed heritage children have difficulties understanding very sophisticated Chinese cultures. Being reminded by her Canadian husband, Perle realized that she should not indoctrinate every traditional Chinese value and belief she holds without the consideration of children’s distinctive linguistic and cultural background as this might have some adverse effects on the culture transmission to her children. Therefore, instead of explicitly inculcating Chinese cultural values, she modified her ways to vividly convey those easily acceptable moral values, such as respecting the old and loving the young, in the Chinese moral storytelling and follow-up mother-children conversations. Jenny explicated further such consideration in the above excerpt.
– in the process of transmitting traditions and cultures of varying Chinese traditional festivals, she is more likely to introduce those joyful and easily understandable background legends and food cultures to her child but chooses to not tell about those related tragic history stories prematurely.

Apart from introducing Chinese cultural knowledge to the children, Chinese immigrant mothers also express their strong desires for supporting children to actually experience Chinese cultural wealth first-hand. Perle made the following commented on the value of the Chinese cultural heritage tours of China for her children:

They [children] really want to see the Great Wall. I told them if they can achieve a very good level of Chinese proficiency, we can go for it as at that time they can understand what the tour guides are talking about in Chinese. But I definitely will take them to travel back. Both my husband and I think it’s necessary to take them to visit the Great Wall and other representative [Chinese historical] architectures they’ve read about in books. It will help them know more about the history and culture. Traveling to China for Great Wall is definitely our primary trip…… also the Temple of Heaven. They have strong impressions [about those architectures] and I really want them to see those by their own eyes. I’ve found a few documentaries about those architectures for them to learn more, but that’s still different. If they really set foot in that place by themselves, their feelings will be different... They don’t
她们在这里生活没真正感受中国这些历史文化，小的时候去中国不一样，你要大一点她们会真正感受，包括是有一定的就是语言啊，对文化有一定的理解。我不想剥夺她们感受的那个经历，就给她们下定论了，就是给她们报道事实这样。我不想因为父母的观念失去了她们自己思维判断的能力，所以我是确实希望带她们去中国，让她们自己感受，真的感受了理解了她就自己变成自己的东西，自己的经验。

really experience Chinese history and culture when they are living here. Even if they have been to China in early childhood, it is different. When they grow older, with a certain level of Mandarin Chinese and a certain understanding of the culture, they can experience it on their own. I don't want to deprive them of their own experiences, so I always report the facts rather than drawing a conclusion for them. I don’t want them to lose critical thinking skills and good judgment the critical thinking skills because of parental perceptions. That’s why I really want to take them to China and let them feel by themselves. When they actually feel the culture in person, it will become their own things, their own experience.

Influenced by the classic Chinese educational beliefs “纸上得来终觉浅，绝知此事要躬行” (The knowledge gained from the book is always superficial, want to understand it thoroughly must personally go to practice), Perle emphasized the importance of traveling back to China in terms of experiencing the culture, especially those renowned architectures, by children themselves since she is not satisfied with passing the cultural knowledge to children just from those their own words, books, or documentaries. Notably, Perle informed that she tends to use the children's curiosity about and attraction to the sightseeing in China, such as the Great Wall, to facilitate their acquisition of Mandarin Chinese. The wishes for visiting China were explicitly expressed by Darryl in the sibling joint interview: “I’d love to go there. We'll go for the great wall of China. We’ll go for traveling, sightseeing, and lots of cultures”. Perle’s point of view is echoed by Jenny, the mother in Family B:
Once when she [Sprout] was 18 months old…… we were back to China …… But other than that, we hadn't had a chance to go back, but I'm seriously thinking after the COVID is done, I probably will go with her for summer holidays or spring break……I think learning the language seems more important for her to know half of her heritage…… I think it's [teaching Chinese to the child makes it] a little bit better to understand. Well, every kid is different, but with her understanding something is important. So, if she has a little bit understanding of Chinese language, then she wouldn't feel so out to when she's in a fully Chinese-speaking environment. So, I want to minimize her shock. But I kind of visualize, I am her would enjoy traveling as she grows older, especially possibly when she's into teenage years, like 12, 13, 14, it's the time they will learn a lot, all the history, geography, all of that…… you start to travel you might find you like the culture, so you want to learn more. It's part of her heritage…… So, learning Chinese now lays the good foundation……

As her daughter is reaching teens, Jenny expressed a growing desire to transmit Mandarin Chinese. Her modification of language planning for her child is also attributed to her intention of bringing her mixed child back to China later to learn more about her Chinese heritage. She believes that learning Chinese helps her daughter better accommodate future trips to China. More importantly, she articulated that laying a solid language foundation by learning Chinese will provide her daughter to access the richness of Chinese cultural heritage.

**Constructing Bi-cultural and Bi-ethnic Identity**

Both mothers and children themselves in the two families tended to describe the cultural and ethnic of mixed heritage children in varying ways rather than simply identifying as a single cultural or ethnic group. For example, Sprout, the daughter in Family B identified herself: “I was born in Alberta, so mostly Albertan and a bit British and a bit of Chinese”. As explained by her mother,

I think she's very aware of what means race. We discussed this, like the skin colors what they mean, the yellow, the black and the white, and then her dad is a Caucasian, she's a
mixed Chinese......She [Sprout] is always very clear that she has half heritage from British and then half was from Chinese. And then, she knows her mom's Chinese from China. I would say she's curious about that [Chinese], that's partially, or maybe majorly why that she wants to learn that language, learn Chinese. Although now they're young. They possibly can't fully express why they are interested in and want to learn, but they’re showing full support, the willingness to put time and effort into learning something.

In line with the many language theorists who argue identities as constructed, defined, and framed by the language we use (Gee, 2012; Norton, 2000), the mother elaborated the close relationship between Sprout’s grand passion for Mandarin learning and her half Chinese cultural and ethnic background. Even if Sprout has not been able to articulate the identity-related factors, the diligent learning of Mandarin seems to be strongly motivated by her curiosity about half Chinese heritage.

Similarly, Children in Family A articulated their understandings of the cultural and ethnic identity and how it related to their multilingual learning:

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<th><strong>Effie (1st child in Family A)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Darryl (2nd child in Family A)</strong></th>
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<td>I identify myself probably Chinese Canadian…….. My French school, like my normal school, there’s not many students with Chinese background. But in Chinese school, I can hang out with other kids who are also like, are learning Chinese and they're also half comes from China too. So, it's interesting. I think learning Mandarin helps mostly with Chinese culture because it's getting to know because</td>
<td>I identify myself as both Chinese and Canadian because China Chinese, it's where my mom came from and Canadian’s where dad came from and I also learned French as French is the second language in Canada……. But everyone at my French immersion, they always think that I am just Canadian, which kind of bugs me a little because I'm from Canada. And that's why they think that I'm not Chinese Canadian because I don't really, like I tell them I can speak Chinese, but I don't really openly speak Chinese to them. So, they think I'm just falling</td>
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I'm half Chinese, so learning Chinese cultures are important for like generations and stuff like where my mom came from...... For Chinese, I could also be the only one to know about Chinese culture and stuff. And it makes me proud to be a Chinese and Canadian citizen......At Chinese school, I like interacting with people who know who are the same level with me and who don't just, and it's not the same as the French school, because at the French school, they come from, like most of them are Canadians and they don't come from much more diverse cultures and I don't get to learn more culture.

Children in Family A have more profound insights about their identities with equal and adequate consideration of both their mother’s Chinese background and father’s Canadian background. Effie pointed out that learning Chinese not only offers her a means for understanding her half Chinese origin but also allows her to interact with other mixed-heritage children like her. Darryl particularly expressed that she feels dissatisfied with being affiliated with a single Canadian culture group and enjoys interacting with other peers with a multicultural background like her. As mentioned above in Darryl’s social and linguistic profile, she tends to take more opportunities to display her half Chinese background to her classmates in the French school, as she expressed, “that was a chance to teach everybody about our culture outside of being a Canadian and how it was like to be half Chinese”. As Chinese Canadian mixed heritage child Darryl also illustrated that learning French strengthens her Canadian side of identity as it is one of the official languages in Canada. This is similar to the findings in Roy’s (2020) research where the author explains how newcomers or immigrants are learning French in order to strengthen their Canadian identity. Besides, Darryl feels fortunate that her mixed heritage background allows her to engage in diverse cultures with multiple languages.
When asked about how she considers the ways that her children identify themselves, Perle elaborated her views on the following comments:

We’ve also discussed it before. Effie always considers that she’s Chinese. She said that she’s Chinese first and she’s very proud. She told her dad she’s Chinese…… Their dad’s very nice…… My last name and their Chinese names are shown in their formal names – English names first and then Chinese names. He thinks this’s very important. It is an identity issue. For him, he wants them to know where their mother came from. It should be written down in words to express their identity. So, he believes they have to learn Chinese language. He even values Chinese learning more than I…… I didn’t specifically tell them you must learn Chinese as you are Chinese, which is not just an identity issue. I just told them that it is important for you to understand a culture, and then be open-minded. It may be related to all my own experiences. People say cultural shock, I don't have the cultural shock. I told them that the more languages you learn, the more open-minded you are as you have a better understanding of different cultures…… I hope they won’t be limited to which single identity…… Usually, I
know they might get confused, possibly because in Chinese school they don't look Chinese, and in French school they don't look Chinese, either. So they are very unique.

I often tell them, don't get confused. You are who you are. You don't need to fit in which group. I often tell them, if they respect you, it's your heart and your mind, it's not like you look, right? I tell them a lot, as I know sometimes, they may still feel confused....Actually, when Darryl was 6 months old, we went back to China, people said that she's not Chinese......We hang out together here [in Canada]. People thought I'm a nanny. I said no I am the servant. [@] So I don't want them to be afraid of their unique appearance...... I can understand that they think their dad’s Canadian so they’re Canadian, their mom’s Chinese, so they’re Chinese. Kids are very straightforward to think in that simple way. But I did tell them you don’t have to be limited to which country you come from. I told them – you are global citizens!
It is interesting to note that Perle considers her husband has been attached more importance to the value of identity marker to Chinese language transmission than herself. It is because her husband thinks learning Chinese is a significant way of helping the mixed heritage children to learn where their mother came from. Unlike her husband, Perle highlighted that the greatest value of learning multiple languages is to facilitate children to understand different cultures and broaden their horizons. While she understands children’s simple way of identifying themselves according to their parents’ cultural and ethnic background, she encourages her children to give up the typical beliefs about affiliation to specific ethnic or cultural groups by one’s appearance. Due to her concern about children’s potential confusion regarding their unique biracial appearance, she tends to help her children establish the concept of being a global citizen rather than identifying based on a specific nationality or ethnicity. Her children’s beliefs about multiculturalism are proved her mother’s views that multilingual learning helps children bridge culture bridges and develop a positive understanding of being mixed heritage individuals:

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<td>The advantage (of being mixed race) is probably you can participate in two cultures. You understand two cultures. I think it's nice to know about both my backgrounds because then I know where I come from…… I wouldn't really say there's any too many disadvantages like for me. There might be another people, but not for me……They don't really deal me any differently when they know I am Chinese. Yeah, they just think of me as a person……Learning different languages ……you can also have more</td>
<td>For the advantages [of being mixed heritage individual], I feel like I have an aspect on both cultures from my mom and my dad. So, if both of them were Chinese or both of them were Canadian, then I probably wouldn't learn Chinese in the first place, or I probably wouldn't learn French in the first place……They [parents] said I can be who I want, and my nationality doesn't identify who I am as a person……If you don't have the experience of the different kinds of cultures, then you'll always overlooking and think that it's just</td>
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cultures and overall to help you in the real world— you have different people from different cultures here…… another culture. But if you engage in them with the languages, you’ll find that they're all unique and different.

From Effie’s and Darryl’s perspectives, they perceive being a mixed heritage individual as an advantage for them as it provides them a chance to learn three languages, Chinese and the two official languages (English and French) in Canada and engage in multiple cultures. Additionally, their parents’ positive multilingual and multicultural education has supported the children to construct positive their cultural and ethnic identities. In particular, Darryl reported that she has been encouraged by their parents to be the person she wants to become regardless of her nationality; Effie believes that people think of her as a person other than viewing her differently according to her mixed Chinese background. Moreover, they also expressed that learning multiple languages promotes their awareness of respecting and embracing the diversity of culture, especially in this multicultural society of Canada.

Other Factors Influencing FLPs

While parent’s and child’s language ideologies may be the underlying forces in family language policy decision-making and choices of language intervention, these beliefs are not always translated into practices (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004). Spolsky (2004) contends that “the potential success of language management will depend on its congruity with the language situation, the consensual ideology or language beliefs” (p. 222). According to Curdt-Christiansen (2009), apart from these family-internal ideological factors, our understanding of FLPs should take the external forces into consideration because “such consensual ideology is largely influenced by the social place of a language within a society”, which may shape language practices in ways that are sometimes unexpected (p. 372). In this section, I discuss how family language policies combat and resist the macro-level institutional impositions.
While she acknowledges the important role of sustained Chinese language input from caretakers in children’s language development and use, Perle (mother in Family A) informed that children’s exposure to Mandarin still largely depends on the weekly digital conversation with their Chinese-speaking grandparents. As explained by Perle,

Every week when making Skype calls with my parents, they [daughters] will speak Mandarin. But it’s far from enough as I think the better way is to talk face-to-face to go deeper. Because the children tend to just say a few words, then run away. They don’t know what to say. If they are living together [with grandparents], they can do many things together and have many topics to talk about. But for them, they face the screen, so they can’t talk about many things. It actually has the disadvantages…… I think their literacy skills are relatively good mainly due to their memory. We read stories together when we have time, and they really make a lot of effects to do their Chinese homework. But their spoken Chinese is actually not as good as other Chinese children as even if those children do not speak Chinese, they still have many opportunities to hear it. The children will still consciously or unconsciously acquire the language. But we don’t speak Chinese at home, we always speak English, so their spoken Chinese is not very good…… He [father] also asked me to speak more Chinese
Perle acknowledged that she tends to mainly use English to talk to her children in everyday home language interaction. While both Perle and her husband have positive attitudes towards Mandarin use in their home for the purpose of increasing daily Chinese input, Perle gets used to using English with her children in the majority of daily communicative interaction. She also realized the important role of the Chinese-speaking grandparents in children’s Chinese use and development as they can only talk to each other in Mandarin Chinese. However, she also pointed out that it seems to be insufficient for her children to interact with the Chinese-speaking grandparents by video calls as children’s process of oral Chinese proficiency has still been hindered by the limited face-to-face Mandarin interaction with her in their everyday life. De Houwer (2007) argued that parental language input pattern is a decisive factor in children’s language output. Despite she has made significant efforts to engage her children in reading Chinese books, the time for Chinese storytelling has gradually occupied by other extracurricular activities in the last two years. Likewise, the younger daughter, Darryl, expressed her willingness of investing more effort and time in her Chinese learning: “When we have nothing to do and we have lots of spare time. We’d like to do some Chinese homework or like catch up on Chinese”. However, Darryl indirectly acknowledged that she places a higher priority on other learning.
activities than Chinese learning in her limited after-school time. The inconsistency between the pro-Chinese language ideologies hold by participants in Family A and their limited communicative interaction in Mandarin suggests that “FLP is not a decontextualised psycho-linguistic practice; rather, it is constantly interacting with and shaped by overt language policies at institutional levels and covert long-standing negative ideological associations with minority languages at family level” (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016, p. 704).

Rather than simply a private issue in family domains, FLPs are constantly interacting with and shaped by broader socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces – the official language policy and the educational system (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a). When talking about how Canada’s official policies on bilingualism and multiculturalism and educational system interact with the process of Chinese language transmission, the mothers in two participating families expressed,

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**Perle** (mother in Family A)

我觉得[the Canada’s language policy and school system]很有帮助的。I can't complain the education system，比如他有中文学校给你了，对不对？因为你看你中国人在这个城市真的不多，你比起起来其他地方，但是他还有一个 Chinese immersion[bilingual]纳入公立教育系统，你在其他国家真的找不到。我的朋友他是英国人，英国就只读英语，你没有其他语言的，但是这边教育系统就会有。另外一个还有很多不同的星期六星期天的中文课，而且他也承认你这里的学分，你将来也能纳入你申请大学的学分，所以这一方面我觉得加拿大做的相当不错 very open minded 做得很好。另外一个像可能比如像 cultural activities 真的很多，在 cultural center 有很多 Festival。这些都是 promote一些文化，还有一些历史传统，包括艺术。所以我确实没有什么 complain，我觉得这一方面比美国就很好很多。(I find [Canadian official policies and school systems] very helpful. I can't complain the education system, for example, they have Chinese weekend schools for you, right? As you see that there are not that many Chinese in this city compared
to other places, there are still the Chinese immersion [bilingual] schools included in the public education system. You really can't find it in other countries. My friend is British. They [People in the UK] only learn English in the UK. They don't have any other languages, but the Canadian education system involves [diverse languages]. Also, there are also many different Chinese classes on weekends, and children can also earn High School credits upon completion of those courses, which are recognized in the future university application. So, I think the Canadian [government] are doing quite well in this aspect. Very open-minded. Also, for example, there are quite a few cultural activities, and there are many festivals in [Chinese] cultural center. They’re promoting varying cultures, as well as some historical traditions including art. So, I really don't have any complaints. I think this aspect [Canadian multiculturalism] is much better than what they do in the US.)

Jenny (mother in Family B)

I'm sure it's good that they have these policies. I know French and English are the official languages, just that like Mandarin is the Chinese official language. So, in that way, I can understand. Other than that, probably just no objection to teaching your mother tongue and cultures, but no, I don't think the policy has anything to do with why I want her [child] to learn Chinese or why she feels like she wants to learn more…… School is very open. They don't teach Chinese, but they don't stop. You learn anything, you can learn anything you like. So, then she's happy just to go through school and tell them a new phrase every other day that she'll learn. And she has been asking to bring her Chinese, either the homework booklet or the textbook. She would sometimes put it in her bag, and she'll read them at a free time at school, just to review them sometime. So yeah, supportive, her school is very supportive.

For the two Chinese immigrant mothers, a somehow different view on the de facto influences of the official policies and school systems. While Jenny (mother in Family B) believes that the school system positively welcomes student’s individual choices of learning their heritage languages and expressed a positive attitude towards the official policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism, she does not believe that these policies have provided real impact on the choice and efforts of the Chinese transmission in her family. She pointed out that the polices of
bilingualism and multiculturalism mainly acknowledge English and French as the official languages and other immigrant languages as cultural affiliation rather than devoting substantial resources to the transmission of non-official mother tongues. This corresponds with critics’ argument that “endorsed diversity in principle without actually changing in any fundamental way how power and resources [are] distributed” (Fleras & Elliott, 2002, p. 56). In other words, these official policies in Canada have been criticized for concerning the cultural diversity as largely symbolic (Berry, 2020), which, in fact, “de-emphasiz[ed] the languages of other cultural groups” for the purpose of “creat[ing] a cultural and linguistic hierarchy in Canada” (Guo, 2013, p. 27). In contrast, Perle, the mother in A family, expressed that she has no complaint about the official multiculturalism which allows the Chinese community to maintain the historical traditions and cultural heritage. By comparing to other English-speaking countries, she showed her appreciation for the acceptance and support for HL education from the Canadian education system as it not only supports the development of weekend Chinese schools and recognizes the credits of the high school level Chinese classes but also provides the Chinese bilingual program in Alberta’s public education system.

However, even if Perle expressed full satisfaction about the official support efforts in HL transmission, her unintentional complaint with the very limited Chinese literacy recourses in Canada seems to reveal the not sufficiently effective implementation of official multiculturalism policy:

They have read all the Chinese books in the local libraries. They [libraries] have Chinese books, but very limited. They might think it is a kind of multicultural library, you can also see Korean, German, and French. Relatively
speaking, most are English books. Even books in French are quite few and even much fewer in Chinese. There is only like a bookshelf with about 100 books. Many of them are books for little children, so I helped them read all of them at around age three. Because I seldom go to China, it was difficult to buy Chinese books here...... because I only went back twice since they were born, I didn't buy enough. After reading all those books, we don’t have more to read. There are really insufficient [Chinese books] in here. There was a library in the Chinese Culture Center with Chinese books, which was great. But that Chinese library was also closed. We used to rent many books back home to read but it was closed, we don’t have it anymore. So, it’s a pity! Both my husband and I, we disagree with closing the Chinese Library. He said that there wasn’t any other Chinese library here. Also, the center is called cultural center, right? Language is very important part. If you close the library, no books could be found here.

Perle acknowledged that there are some books in multiple languages in local libraries which seems to be an echo of the government’s official policy on multiculturalism. However, in her opinion, the few Chinese books in local libraries are mainly for very young children, which is not adequate for her children’s growing needs for reading. As the only Chinese library affiliated with the Chinese cultural center was closed a few years ago, it has been increasingly difficult for
her to find age-appropriate literacy resources in Chinese for her children. Perle’s complaint against a lack of a library in the local Chinese Cultural Center confirms “the separation of culture and language” as a serious flaw of Canada’s federal multiculturalism policy, which is unfavorable for the perseveration of diverse cultures in those linguistic minority groups (Guo, 2013, p. 27). Moreover, when asked about how her long-term planning about children’s Chinese development is Perle pointed out the potential challenges which may exist for children to continue their Mandarin learning in high school due to the social tensions and educational reality:

I also discussed with them [children]. They want to continue learning Chinese. After they complete the twelfth grade at Chinese school, they’ll be like in Grade 10 in their formal school. But for whether to choose the Chinese IB program in high school, Chinese is still taught at the weekend school rather than the formal school, not in school. From a pragmatic perspective, I think it’s easier to pass the French IB exam as I heard that the Chinese IB is tough, which might involve the Classical Chinese reading. I think children can choose the French IB program as French is also the official language of Canada and they may get higher scores than choosing Chinese. So, they usually start the IB program in Grade 10. As French is also difficult, they have to study in the IB program……They set their own schedule, so the Chinese school ended in grade 10. Then, they will fully concentrate on
希望大学的时候，一般那些都有语言课吗，她们能继续再读。就说提高，因为她们拼音基础都学了，别浪费。提高就是说把听说读写好一点。但是这个真的很难你知道吗？语言的话你不用也就是没了，像我的法语，她们现在已经比我好很多，我没办法教他了。就是因为我根本就没用[French]，所以你真的会忘记的。

papering the university application. I hope after they enter university, they usually have language courses, so they can continue to study – to improve their Mandarin, in particular, the abilities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Because they already learned the basics knowledge like Pinyin, don't waste it. But you know, this is really difficult. If you don’t use the language, you will forget it, like my French. Children’s French is much better than mine now. I can’t teach them anymore as I didn’t use [French] at all, so I really forget it.

In this excerpt, Perle’s acknowledgment of the “unbalanced” emphasis on Chinese and French learning revealed a deeper layer of the sociopolitical reality in Canadian society. While bilingual programs with both English and heritage languages, including Chinese (Mandarin) as instructional languages are offered in Alberta to preserve the non-official mother tongues of immigrant youth or descendants of migrations (Cummins, 2014), there still a certain proportion of young heritage language learners who are enrolled in regular English schools or even French immersion program, like the participating children in this study. As pointed out by Perle, with the influence of official bilingualism, children’s academic achievement and further development in Canada inevitably depends more on the development of the two official languages rather than the heritage language proficiency level. As children grow older, even if Perle understands the importance of providing a sustained Mandarin learning environment, she has little choice but to give Chinese lower priority, leading to more provision of French literacy recourses.
Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed about the factors influencing FLP planning and development in the two mixed-heritage families. Considering that while the internal language ideologies, as the driving forces in FLP decision making and choices of language intervention, sometimes may be not always translated into practices (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004), the findings of factors were presented in two parts. This first part of chapter investigated the beliefs of Chinese and language learning that mothers and children held and the impact of those language ideologies on the enactment and modification of FLPs. The findings suggest that Mandarin Chinese was valued by the mothers and children as the bonding language linking the children to their mother side of the family, the effective communication tool attached considerable economic capital, and mediational means for accessing the richness of culture and constructing a positive identity of mixed-heritage children. The second part of the chapter examined those family-external factors influenced and negotiated with the pro-Chinese family language policies in the two families under Canada’s social contexts.
CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

In Chapter Five and the first section of Chapter Six, I presented findings that answered my research questions - that how the family language policies (FLPs) look like in the two participating families – in particular, language practices, language management, and language ideologies (the three core components of FLP adapted by Spolsky [2004]'s language policy conceptualization shown in the center of figure 20). These findings were examined at the micro-level of the family domain based on the information documented in Chapter Four, including the sociocultural profiles of participating parents and children and home language environment (shown in the inner circle of figure 20). Besides, I analyzed de facto language practices occurred in daily conversation and Chinese learning with the consideration of language socialization co-constructed by children and immigrant mothers. The second section of Chapter Six reveals broader socio-cultural-political-linguistic factors influencing the implementation of FLPs (shown in the outer square of figure 20).

Figure 20 Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018)'s Interdisciplinary Framework of FLP.
In this chapter, based on revisiting the interdisciplinary framework of family language policy, I further discuss 1) how parents and their mixed heritage children co-construct in the processes of enacting and implementing FLPs; 2) how family language ideologies reflected or resisted the broader socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces, and eventually reinforced or modified the de facto FLPs.

*The Co-construction of FLPs by Both Parental and Child Agency*

Prior research has only emphasized parental leading contribution to family language policymaking and implementation, more recent studies have drawn more attention to family language socialization as a collaborative achievement (Goodwin, 2006) and the child’ active role in constructing and negotiating family language practices (Luykx, 2003, 2005b). In this study, I perceived the enactment and implementation of FLPs in the two families as a co-construction process involving Chinese immigrant mothers, English-speaking fathers, and their mixed heritage children. Specifically, unlike some Chinese immigrant parents who forced their children to learn the heritage language (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018), the Chinese immigrant mothers informed that what they have been working on is to introduce the benefits of learning Chinese to their children, as well as provide Chinese resources and instruction according to children’s willingness. The mothers’ adequate consideration of children’s self-motivation, enjoyment, and willingness for Chinese learning stimulates children’s active Chinese learning in both families as well as children’s creative Chinese literacy practices in Family A. According to Fogle (2012), with the acknowledgment of the co-constructed nature of parent agency and children agency, the investigation of the processes of language learning and use need to emphasize “the importance of the learner’s intentions, will and autonomy” (p. 21).
In addition, although the parent-child interaction in Chinese has been limited by the reality that they have to accommodate the monolingual English-speaking father’s needs, the fathers have shown full acceptance and support of Mandarin use and transmission in the family space. It consists with Noro’s (2009) study of Japanese-Canadian mixed heritage families that even one parent is not able to speak Japanese, his/her positive attitude towards the HL have positive influence on children’s heritage language maintenance. Therefore, the mothers and children in both families have been encouraged to invest more time and effort in those Mandarin-mediated activities for enhancing Chinese proficiency and strengthening the relationship between children and the mother’s side of the family. In the two families, not only a variety of Chinese literacy resources have been provided by the Chinese immigrant mothers, but also their mixed-heritage children have been engaged in different Chinese literacy activities, which largely support children’s Chinese literacy development. This is consistent with the findings in previous studies that a rich home literacy environment in heritage language largely enhanced children’s literacy development (Schwartz et al., 2013; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). Additionally, as they develop their levels of multilingual proficiency, the mixed heritage children tend to actively engage in more Chinese-related literary and cultural activities, which motivates them to make continuous efforts in promoting their Chinese literacy skills and expand their multilingual reading and writing space.

The Conflicts between Family Pro-Chinese Language Ideologies and Social-political Reality

The findings of Chapter Six indicate that the micro-level of pro-Chinese language ideologies have been interacting and influenced by the educational reality and social tensions. In Canada, these tensions are illustrated by the official policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism recognizing English and French as official languages but the support of other cultures and ethnic
groups as identity and multicultural promotion (Berry, 2020; Guo, 2013). The Mandarin Chinese transmission has still been challenged by the tensions between official languages as having instrumental and political values and non-official mother tongues as having cultural and emotional functions (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). In particular, in these mixed-heritage families, the external tension of the societal majority language and Mandarin Chinese has been directly reflected in the family domains – the Chinese immigrant mothers have little choices but to accommodate the English-speaking spouse’s language preference instead of maintaining a sustained Mandarin-speaking environment at home. In spite of the acknowledgment of those difficulties inside and outside of the families, the Chinese immigrant mothers have been trying their best to support children’s Mandarin maintenance. Perle and Jenny stated their attempts to offer more opportunities for children to learn and practice Chinese to compensate for lack of home Mandarin-speaking environment in their mixed-heritage families:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perle (mother in Family A)</th>
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| 因为有的讲中文的家长还是希望小孩子讲英文好一点。他们觉得中文还不是那么重要，就毕竟他们[children]在这里生活。但是我就觉得如果有环境还是讲中文，因为你不用怕他们英文学不会的……我有些中国的朋友他们也不送小孩去学中文学校。他们小孩会讲，但是就不会写。他们说没必要，将来回去中国一年他也能学会得了，但是不一样的，因为你如果学有个底的话，像 Effie 和 Darryl 小的时候就学，还有很多中国的小孩都不会的，我觉得这个很可惜了。所以我还是尽可能的给她们提供环境，虽然真的很难，我们家里很少有这个环境，还是她爸不说中文。所以还是尽量多和老一辈的聊天，有机会看看多读故事。还是希望她们能把一直有机会多学一学中文，不要浪费。(I know some Chinese-speaking parents still hope that their kids can speak English better. They don’t think Chinese is that important, as they [children] are living here. But I think it’s better to speak Chinese if you have that environment. You don’t need to worry about their English…… For some of my Chinese friends who don’t send their children to Chinese schools, their children can speak, but they can't write. They think there’s no need to
enroll in Chinese school – if the child goes back to China for a year, they’ll master Chinese. But I think if you started learning at a very young age, like what Effie and Darryl did, it’s different – it helps you lay a foundation. There’re still many Chinese kids who can speak Mandarin, I think this is a pity. So, I still try my best to provide them kind of an environment, although it is really difficult. We rarely have this environment in our family as their dad can’t speak Chinese. But I always encourage them to talk to the older generations as much as possible and find more chances to read more Chinese stories with them. I still hope that they can take the opportunity to improve their Chinese. Don't waste it.)

**Jenny** (mother in Family B)

I do my best. English wouldn't be a problem. It's just the way it is. And Chinese so far goes very well……I can't really say I have any specific goal for her, but every year she spends at the [Chinese] school. I will support her at home. Then we'll bring her to whatever level she will be. I do think amongst most of kids, I think I do a lot [regarding Chinese learning] with her every day on the side. Considering we don't have an environment that forced her to just subconsciously repeat everything she learns. I think we do quite a bit, and I'm quite happy at this moment.

The above excerpts, on the one hand, demonstrated the choices of adopting to English as the default home language to adapt to the majority-language-speaking husband inevitably have resulted in a lack of natural Mandarin-speaking environment in these mixed-heritage families. On the other hand, this study shows that the different mother tongues mixed-marriage parents speak may also bring a positive impact on HL transmission. In particular, while the two participating mothers perceive English as attaching higher practical and instructional values in Canadian society, none of them thinks learning Chinese is “at odds with learning English” (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a, p. 52), or emphasizes English literacy education more than Chinese language transmission, which is often expressed by other Chinese immigrant parents in “full heritage” families (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2014a; G. Li, 2006). Since they display little or no consideration that unsatisfactory development of English proficiency will hinder children’s
academic or career success English proficiency development, the participating mothers are more willing to promote extra investment in Chinese literacy learning activities at home due to their beliefs in the benefits of passing Mandarin Chinese, in terms of maintaining the relations with Chinese side of the family as well as gaining access to the valuable linguistic capital and the rich cultural heritage.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I revisited the interdisciplinary theoretical framework of family language policy and furthered the discussion on how the FLPs in the two mixed heritage families are constructed by both parents and children as well as how family pro-Chinese language ideologies impacted by or resisted the broader socio-cultural-political-linguistic reality in the process of FLP implementation and negotiation. More specifically, to answer the call for FLP research on more social agency and interlocutors, I further reflect how the agentive role of different family members involve and impact the co-construction process of FLPs, including the language management efforts made by Chinese immigrant mothers, language attitudes displayed by English-speaking fathers, and the responses given by their mixed heritage children. In addition, to understand family language policies in the larger social, cultural, and ideological context, I analyzed the Canada’s official bilingualism and multiculturalism policy support or challenge the *de facto* FLPs in the two families as well as how the parental language ideologies reflects or resists the macro-level sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces in Canadian society.
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

The first research question asked is: What are language practices and management strategies in mixed heritage Chinese-English bilingual families? In Chapter Five, I documented how family language policy (FLP) is enacted and negotiated in the two families from two perspectives: (1) how children use Mandarin in their daily language interaction; (2) how (Chinese immigrant) parents implement specific language management strategies to promote children’s Chinese literacy learning at home. There are three major features of daily language interaction in two families: the diversity of language use patterns among family members; the dynamic language use patterns between mother and child; maternal grandparents as a driving force for children’s Mandarin use and learning. The findings are consistent with previous research on heritage language maintenance in mixed-heritage families: more difficulties have been found in pass the non-official mother tongue of one parent to the mixed heritage children since the imbalanced statuses of different mother tongues spoken by parents tends to aggravate the tension between the HL and the societal majority language in home settings (M. Y. Park, 2019; Shin, 2010). In this study, while the positive attitudes towards Mandarin transmission displayed by the monolingual English-speaking fathers support the Chinese-speaking mothers to continue transmitting HL to children to a certain extent, the mothers inevitably shift to accommodate the mixed marriage by adopting English as the default language of the family, resulting in inadequate Chinese-speaking exposure in home settings. However, I found that raising children in mixed families may also have a favorable impact on HL maintenance because the rich English-speaking environment fostered by the monolingual fathers can largely dispel Chinese immigrant parents’ misgivings at children’s English literacy development. This allows
the Chinese immigrant mothers to expand continuing language intervention efforts to compensate for the lack of natural and sustained Chinese exposure in daily home interaction.

In particular, I presented the parental language management efforts in engaged children in varying Chinese literacy learning activities, including Chinese storytelling and book reading, singing and reciting Chinese nursery rhymes and ancient poems, and extra Chinese literacy teaching based on weekend Chinese classes. Although the mother-child interactive communication in Chinese has been limited by the inevitable reality that the HL-speaking mothers have to accommodate the monolingual English-speaking father’s needs, the mother and children have been keen on investing more time and effort in those Mandarin-mediated activities for enhancing Chinese proficiency and strengthen the relationships between children and the mother’s side of the family. Furthermore, along with the development of their levels of multilingual proficiency, the mixed heritage children tend to actively engage in more Chinese-related literary and cultural activities, which motivates them to make continuing efforts in promoting their Chinese literacy skills and expand their multilingual reading and writing space. The initial and de facto FLPs in two families have been largely impacted by the family-internal language ideologies, as well as the external tensions of social and educational tensions, which were discussed in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six addressed the next two research questions: To what extent do parental language ideologies shape the processes of FLP decisions and practices? What are other factors influencing the processes of FLP decisions and practices? Considering that while the internal language ideologies, as the driving forces in FLP decision making and choices of language intervention, sometimes might be not always translated into practices (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004), the findings of factors in the FLP planning and development in the two families were
presented in two parts. This first part of the chapter investigated the beliefs of Chinese and language learning that mothers and children held and the impact of those language ideologies on the enactment and modification of FLPs. The findings suggest that Mandarin Chinese was valued by the mothers and children as the bonding language linking the children to their mother side’s family, the effective communication tool attached considerable economic capital, and mediational means for accessing the richness of culture and constructing a positive identity of mixed-heritage children. The second part of the chapter examined those external factors that negotiate with participants’ positive attitudes towards Chinese transmission and shape the FLP implementation. These findings indicate that internal-family language ideologies have been interacting and influenced by the educational reality and social tensions. In Canada, these tensions are illustrated by the official policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism recognizing English and French as official languages but the support of other cultures and ethnic groups as identity and multicultural promotion (Berry, 2020). The Chinese language transmission has still been challenged by the tensions between official languages as having instrumental and political values and non-official mother tongues as having cultural and emotional functions (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016) inside and outside of the mixed-heritage families. On the other hand, in spite of the acknowledgment of those difficulties inside and outside of the families, the Chinese immigrant mothers have been trying their best to support children’s Mandarin maintenance. The findings indicated that even if the mothers acknowledge English is perceived as attaching higher practical and instructional values in Canadian society, they value Chinese language transmission as a mission that needs to carry out through their proactive and constant efforts to create opportunities for their mixed-heritage children to strengthen the relations with their Chinese side
of the family, as well as gain access to the valuable linguistic capital and the rich cultural heritage.

**Methodological and Theoretical Contributions**

Methodologically, I conducted semi-structured interviews with children and collected their self-designed daily schedules which were direct access to children’s understandings of daily language use and Chinese literacy activities at home as well as their beliefs of Chinese language learning and multilingualism. Previous FLP research (over-)relied on parental reports of language practices, language management efforts, and language ideologies at home (Fogle & King, 2017). Even if increasing attention has been paid to child’s agentive role in supporting or reframing the implementation of language policy at home, recent scholars have mainly conducted home observation or recording to examine everyday language interaction between children and other family members (e.g., Fogle & King, 2017; Goodwin, 2006; Luykx, 2005) but neglected children’s voices of daily experiences of HL use and learning and their beliefs of language and multilingual development. In my study, children gained a chance to talk about how they actively engage in and interact with the implementation of FLPs and they perceive their Chinese learning and multilingual development. I also asked each child to provide a self-report daily schedule (in Chapter Four) between two interviews with them to help me better understand their everyday language environment and time invested in Chinese language learning. In particular, for Family A with two daughters, I positioned individual interviews first which allowed me to learn about how children established their independent narratives and identify specific topics of deeper conversation for the latter dyadic interviews (Reczek, 2014). I found that the two sisters became more comfortable in the dyadic interview to disclose their detailed experiences and various opinions in each other’s company. Therefore, the varying methods of
collecting children’s self-report data facilitate our understanding of the impact of child agency on the process of FLP implementation and negotiation.

Theoretically, I adopted Curdt-Christiansen’s (2009, 2018) interdisciplinary framework of family language policy (adopted from Spolsky’s (2004) theoretical framework of language policy) to address my research questions. Three components of this framework – language practice, language management, and language ideology – are demonstrated to be intertwined and interdependent, though analyzed in Chapter Five and Chapter Six. Although the two chapters presented my findings on different research questions focusing on different components of the FLP framework, throughout the research data presented in this study, there was obvious interrelationships among the three components in the process of the enaction and negotiation of FLPs regarding HL transmission in mixed-heritage families. I argue that HL practices are promoted by language management strategies, and impacted by articulated and/or embodied language ideologies; language management strategies, in particular, the home Chinese literacy learning activities, are implemented to compensate for a lack of daily HL practices based on parent’s and children’s pro-Chinese language ideologies; multiple language ideologies are reflected in affirming or contradicting language practices and are (re)constructed during the language management processes. Furthermore, as Canagarajah (2008) highlights that “the family is not a self-contained institution” (p.170), this study not only investigated family-internal ideologies as the underlying factors in FLP decision-making and negotiation but also explored the wider socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces which may impede the translation of those beliefs into practices (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). In this regard, by investigating both ideological factors and broader socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces, the study deeply explored how daily
language practices and management efforts have been shaped and reframed in the two families through a dynamic, critical, and holistic lens.

**Significance and Implications**

By investigating FLPs in the two mixed heritage families with one Chinese immigrant mother and one native English-speaking father in Alberta, I analyzed how the family language ideologies about Chinese and multilingualism and external socio-cultural-political-linguistic forces explicitly and implicitly impact home daily language practices and the choices of language management efforts. While recent FLP scholars have gradually paid increasing attention to transnational families with non-European-language-speaking parents in English-speaking countries (e.g., W. Li & Zhu, 2013; Liu, 2018; Oriyama, 2016), there is still few studies have specifically investigated how the Asian immigrant parent in mixed-marriage family enacts and implements family language policies to support HL maintenance. This study therefore fills a void in the field of FLP on examining how Chinese immigrant parents support their mixed-heritage children in the development of Chinese language and literacy skills under the family-internal and external tensions between the official mother tongue (English) and non-official mother tongue (Mandarin Chinese) in Alberta.

This study points to several implications for non-official mother tongue maintenance in mixed-heritage families. First, both parents’ mother tongues are equally important for mixed heritage individuals to maintain and develop (Shin, 2010). Unlike those monolingual mixed heritage individuals who experienced isolation in both HL community and mainstream society in some previous research (e.g., Lee & Suarez, 2009; Pao, Wong, & Teuben-Rowe, 1997), children in the current study demonstrated a strong willingness to share their Chinese knowledge and cultural experiences with students and teachers in English or French schools, as well as
socializing with peers with a similar cultural and ethnic background in the Chinese weekend school. Therefore, the development of both official and non-official mother tongues spoken by their parents provides access for mixed heritage children to their bi-cultural and bi-ethnic background, which eventually facilitates them to construct a positive bilingual and bicultural identity and better socialize with both the minority and mainstream groups.

Secondly, pro-HL beliefs and attitude are insufficient for HL maintenance, unless *de facto* HL practices and parent-child collaborative efforts in HL learning can be undertaken in mixed heritage families (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b). For example, in Family A, although the mother Perle had proactively provided extensive Chinese language exposure to their children in early childhood and has consciously encouraged them to make frequent video calls with extended Chinese-speaking families, the decreasing daily mother-children interaction in Mandarin has resulted in a lack of progress in children’s Mandarin oral proficiency. On the other hand, with her Canadian husband’s full support of Chinese language maintenance, Perle has never abandoned her attempts to involve her mixed heritage children in Chinese book reading, which not only facilitate children’s development of Chinese literacy skills but efficiently stimulate their interest in multilingual creative writing. Likewise, although Sprout (child in Family B) started systematic Chinese learning relatively late, her Chinese language proficiency has been increased progressively by actively engaged in basic Chinese conversation practicing and Chinese course-related literacy learning with her mother on a daily basis. Moreover, the mother made efforts in sparking her children’s interest in Chinese learning and promote active engagement in their home Chinese language and literacy activities, rather than perceiving them as simply passive participants. Children’s willingness and passion for Chinese proficiency development also support the mother’s HL maintenance efforts in these mixed heritage families.
Thus, in order to successfully implement the FLP for HL maintenance, both parents and children need to make sustained efforts to be involved in more HL interaction and literacy practices in home settings.

Finally, rather than simply a private issue in family domains, the effective implementation of FLPs requires collaborative efforts by parents, mainstream schools, community, and government. In this study, Chinese language education in home domains has still been challenging by the tensions between official languages as having instrumental and political values and non-official mother tongues as having cultural and emotional functions (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). For instance, even if the mother and children in Family A perceive Chinese and French as equally significant to learn for the cultural values of languages, their Mandarin maintenance practices have to be compromised due to the higher pragmatic functions of French in children’s future academic success in Canada. Therefore, policymakers at government, community, and institutional levels need not only to understand the power of languages in society but also take measures to enhance the status of HLs by promoting effective teaching (Lo Bianco, 2010) and richer learning recourses, as well as raising stakeholders’ critical awareness of the future and status of heritage languages (Canagarajah, 2011).

Limitations

This qualitative two-case study, based on a comparatively small sample of only two families, has inevitably some limitations. The sample families, for instance, were recruited from a small-scale Chinese weekend school, which cannot reveal the ideological differences that may be found between the various Chinese immigrant communities and the potential gaps that exist between the Chinese and other immigrant communities regarding FLP decisions and implication. The fact that the higher educational background of the participating immigrant mothers may not
be representative of the general immigrant population in Canada may strongly affect the ideological positions that underlie different FLPs. Additionally, although I drew specific attention to children’s perspectives on how they participate and interact in the process of FLPs implementation, the sample children are all highly motivated and passionate about Chinese language and literacy learning regardless of their levels of Chinese proficiency. While this may suggest that what kind of parental language planning and management may stimulate mixed heritage children’s interests in learning the non-official mother tongue, the investigation of other children with passive attitudes towards parental HL management is also needed to enrich the understanding of child agency in the formation of FLPs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was not able to conduct participant observation in the two families to observe their daily language interactions and home Chinese literacy activities. Instead, I collected some self-recordings of home conversations and literacy learning activities and related documents and artifacts, such as home literacy teaching materials and children’s Chinese homework from two families. Data would be much richer if I could gain access to more family language interactions and literacy activities in-person, which would help to record how FLPs are implemented and negotiated in their everyday life in more meticulous detail. Moreover, I was only able to learn about the English-speaking fathers’ beliefs and attitudes towards Chinese language maintenance from the participating mothers and children. The data would be more reliable if I have a chance to directly interview the fathers to gain their perspectives and expectations for their mixed heritage children’s HL development.

**Future Directions for Research**

While this study has focused on how FLPs influence the HL maintenance of mixed heritage children, future research on family language policies would also benefit from
investigating how interracial parents enact and implement to support children’s development of multiple languages besides parents’ mother tongues. The findings in this study provided a rough understanding of how Chinese immigrant parents differently respond to the official bilingualism outside Québec in terms of choosing an additional language for children to learn. In family A, even if the mother and children perceive Chinese and French as equally significant to learn due to the cultural values of the two languages, the *de facto* Mandarin maintenance practices sometimes have to make a certain concession to French learning for higher pragmatic functions carried out in children’s academic success in Canada. However, Spanish, not French, has been chosen as the second language that the child in Family B is learning at school because of the part of the Spanish-speaking relatives in the father’s side of the family. This reflects that their emphasis on affective values of Spanish excesses the pragmatic or political functions of French. In this regard, to better understand the multilingual development of those mixed heritage children, it would be useful for future research to not only investigate how parents enact and implement FLPs to support their mother tongue(s) transmission but also explore how multilingual learning promotes or impedes the development of the non-official mother tongue(s) in mixed marriage families.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire Responses

Dear parent,

In an attempt to better understand your family language practices and policies, you are invited to complete the parental questionnaire which includes four sections: 1) Family demographic information; 2) beliefs and attitudes towards bilingualism and bilingual development; 3) language use and choices; 4) language management.

Thank you in advance for this information. All the information you provide will keep confidential and under a pseudonym.

Name & date

Your Pseudonym Name

Date

Content

1) Background information about family members:

Notes: For native language(s) and other language(s) s/he can use, if more than one, please list all languages; if including other Chinese dialect(s), please list the specific dialect(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (You may give the age range like 30-35; 36-40; etc.)</th>
<th>Residing in Canada since</th>
<th>Country and City of birth</th>
<th>Native language(s)</th>
<th>Other language(s) s/he can use</th>
<th>In which grade</th>
<th>The instructional language in School</th>
<th>Highest education level</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older child</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Younger child</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How are family members' English abilities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Functional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Native/nearly native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
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<tr>
<td>Older child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Younger child</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How are family members' Mandarin abilities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Functional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Native/nearly native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
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<tr>
<td>Father</td>
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<tr>
<td>Older child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Younger child</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there are other Chinese-speaking family members or nanny who has taken/is taking care of your children, please list them and fill the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The person's relationship to your child (e.g., Grandmother)</th>
<th>English abilities</th>
<th>Mandarin abilities</th>
<th>Native language(s)</th>
<th>Other languages or Chinese dialects s/he can speak</th>
<th>When and how s/he have been/is living with your children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same as above</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2) Beliefs and attitudes towards bilingualism and bilingual development

NOTES: The language "Chinese" in the following questionnaire is referred to Chinese languages including Mandarin, Cantonese, or other Chinese dialects.

*From question 1-23 , please use a scale of strong disagree= Never to 5= Strongly agree to rate the agreement of questions.*

1. English (and French) should be the only language(s) spoken in the public in Canada, such as in the school.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

2. Chinese is becoming more important, and it will become the future global language.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

3. It is very important to speak fluent Chinese for my children.
   - 1. strongly agree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

4. It is very important to speak fluent English for my children.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

5. It is very important to read and write in Chinese for my children.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

6. It is very important to read and write in English for my children.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

7. Family (especially parents) has the responsibility to help children develop Chinese and become bilingual, even if my children are attending school.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

8. I think my children are able to learn to speak in both Chinese and English simultaneously.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

9. I think my children are able to learn to read and write in Chinese and English simultaneously.
   - 1. strongly disagree: 
   - 2. disagree: 
   - 3. Neither agree nor disagree: 
   - 4. agree: 
   - 5. strongly agree: 

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10. I think it is important for my children to use English-only or Chinese-only in their sentences when communicating with others.

11. I think my children can mix two or more languages together in their sentences when communicating with others.

12. I plan to let my children go back to China someday for study or work.

13. I feel the Canadian government policies on bilingualism and multiculturalism efficiently support my children’s Chinese maintenance and bilingual development.

14. I feel that the social pressures in Canada make my children speak more English.

15. It is NOT necessary for my children to master Chinese if they live and work in the Canada.

16. Learning Chinese is benefit for my children’s future study or work.

17. Learning Chinese is helpful for my children to strengthen the bond with the Chinese-side of the family.

18. Learning Chinese is helpful to construct children’s identity.

19. I think it is important for my children to maintain Chinese heritage and construct a positive Chinese-English bilingual and bi-cultural identity.

20. I think my spouse always support me to pass Chinese to my children.

21. I think my spouse think learning Chinese and English well are equally important for my children.

22. I think my spouse always support my children to maintain Chinese heritage and identity.

23. My spouse is interested in learning more Chinese or Chinese culture, or at least show positive attitude towards them.

How do you identify yourself?

- Chinese
- Canadian
- Chinese-Canadian
- both Chinese and Canadian
- half Chinese and half Canadian
- Your answer if none of above:

How do your older child identify yourself?

- Chinese
- Canadian
- Chinese-Canadian
- both Chinese and Canadian
- half Chinese and half Canadian
- Your answer if none of above:
How do you identify your younger child?

- Chinese
- Canadian
- Chinese-Canadian
- both Chinese and Canadian
- half Chinese and half Canadian
- [ ] Your answer if none of above:

### 3) language use and choices

For question 1-5, please use the following scale from 1 to 5 to rate the frequency of using each language:

1. English always
2. mostly English
3. English and Chinese balanced
4. Mostly Mandarin / other Chinese dialect(s)
5. Mandarin / other Chinese dialect(s) always

1. Which of these languages do you normally use in the following activities?

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV dramas or films</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browsing the internet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending messages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing journals or other personal written contents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Which of these languages does your older child normally use in the following activities?

- (1) Watching TV dramas or films
- (2) Reading books
- (3) Browsing the internet
- (4) Sending messages
- (5) Writing journals or other personal written contents
- (6) Asking you for something (e.g., a new toy/money, etc.)
If your older child use language other than English and Chinese to do above activities, please just write down the number of the activities (1 to 6) and list the language(s) used in the activities.

3. Which of these languages does your younger child normally use in the following activities?

<table>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV dramas or films</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading books</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browsing the internet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sending messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing journals or other personal written contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking you for something (e.g., a new toy/money, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If your younger child use language other than English and Chinese to do above activities, please just write down the number of the activities (1 to 6) and list the language(s) used in the activities.

4. Which of these languages do you usually use among friends and colleagues?

|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

5. In general, which of these languages do your children use among peers?

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<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Younger Child</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. With whom your older child speak Chinese more often? (You could choose multiple available options if available.)

- [ ] With you
- [ ] With grandparents (From your side)
- [ ] With siblings
- [ ] With cousins (From your side)
- [ ] With other Chinese speaking relatives
- [ ] With children from other Chinese families
- [ ] Mostly Chinese people
- [ ] Other people if not in the list:
7. With whom your younger child speak Chinese more often? (You could choose multiple available options if available.)

☐ With you
☐ With grandparents (From your side)
☐ With siblings
☐ With cousins (From your side)
☐ With other Chinese speaking relatives
☐ With children from other Chinese families
☐ Mostly Chinese people
☐ Other person/ people if not in the list:

4) Language management and choices

1. Please use a scale of 0 = Never to 5 = Always to rate the frequency of the following questions.

| How often do you buy any Chinese language-learning-related facilities/tools for your children? (books, software, CDs, DVDs, etc) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| How often do you encourage your children to participate in language Chinese-learning-related activities. (For example, Chinese cartoons/ movies, story-telling activities, Chinese traditional festival celebrations, etc) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| How often do you have family trip back to China (before COVID-19)? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| If your Chinese speaking relatives are not living in China or with you, how often do your children visit your Chinese-speaking relatives (before COVID-19)? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| How often do your Chinese speaking relatives visit your children (before COVID-19)? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

2. How long do your children usually stay back in China?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2 weeks</th>
<th>about a month</th>
<th>1-2 months</th>
<th>2-3 months</th>
<th>more than 3 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How long do your Chinese speaking relatives usually visit your children? OR if they are not living in China or with you, how often do your children usually visit them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2 weeks</th>
<th>about a month</th>
<th>1-2 months</th>
<th>2-3 months</th>
<th>more than 3 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Please use a scale of strong disagree= Never to 5 = Strongly agree to rate the agreement of the following questions.
1. I think those Chinese-learning-related facilities/tools facilitate the effectiveness of Chinese learning. 

2. I think those Chinese-learning-related activities facilitate the effectiveness of Chinese learning.

3. I plan the family trip to China/visit Chinese relatives with the consideration of improving children’s Chinese learning.

4. I think those trips have facilitated the effectiveness of Chinese learning.

5. I am working on provide more Chinese learning opportunities to my children. (For example, native Chinese relatives or friends to talk to, language courses, etc)

4. How long has your **older child** been attending Chinese weekend school?

5. How long has your **younger child** been attending Chinese weekend school?

6. How long do your children spend on Chinese learning besides attending the weekend Chinese school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>30 min to an hour a week</th>
<th>An hour to 1.5 hours a week</th>
<th>1.5 hours to two hours a week</th>
<th>More than 2 hours a week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Child</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. How long does your child usually spend on the courses with Chinese as the language of instruction in subjects other than Mandarin itself? (For example, online Math courses taught in Mandarin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than an hour</th>
<th>An hour to 1.5 hours</th>
<th>1.5 hours to two hours</th>
<th>More than 2 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger Child</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Older Child</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. If there are more Chinese-learning/speaking/practicing-related activities/opportunities for your children other than those I mentioned above, please briefly describe them.


Appendix B: Parental Interview Protocol

Part I. Focused Life History

Please share what you feel comfortable sharing your language and culture background.

- Language use/ schooling & language learning experience during your growing up years.
- The reasons for moving to Canada and your life experiences after moving to Canada.
- What do you think your language learning experience have impacted your planning or decisions for your children’s language learning?
- Any interesting cultural difference between you and your spouse reflecting in your daily life? How did you negotiate with each other?

Part II. Details of Experience

Please describe in as much details as possible.

- How did/do you create a Chinese learning environment for your children before & after attending school? What made you choose to use those languages with them? What factors made you change your language use patterns with your kids?
- Your children’s mutual support in multilingual language learning (give some examples).
- With maternal grandparents/cousins (making weekly video call & visiting them during holidays)
  What do you think of children language use/ their mixed usage of English and Chinese with them?
- Your learning strategies for teaching children Chinese at home.
- Specifically, to support their literacy development (reading & writing); to convey to your children the cultural heritage; travelling experiences in China.
- The most difficult challenges for teaching Chinese to your children; the greatest joys and rewards during these processes?
- How did different schooling decisions make?
- Why enroll in French immersion & Chinese language school? What children have benefited from them? Why didn’t choose Chinese bilingual school?

Part III. Reflections on Meaning (Language beliefs)

- How do you see the language future of your children?
- What would be the advantages, for your children to learn Chinese? (For family relation? Personal development? Identity construction? Learning? Chinese Culture…)
- To what extent do you feel that the Canadian government policies on multiculturalism efficiently support your children’s Chinese maintenance and bilingual development? Could you explain why?
- Do you think the education system, the school, the community can do something to promote Chinese? What do you think it should be their role?
- In what ways, if any, do you consider learning Chinese language and culture will help your children identify themselves as a mixed heritage individual.
- How does your spouse support you transmit Chinese language and cultural heritage to your children?
- Any conflicting parenting beliefs(attitudes) regarding children’s education and language learning between you and your spouse? How did you negotiate with each other?
Appendix C: Children Interview Protocol

Part I. Focused Life History

*Please share what you feel comfortable sharing your language and culture background.*

- Which name are you usually called by others? English or Chinese? Which name do you prefer to be called? Why?
- What is your mother tongue? (What was the first language you learned?)
- Tell me about your school experience in general. Ever use Chinese at school? What happened at school if you use Chinese? Reaction from teachers? Classmates? If never used Chinese, why not?
- Learning experience in the Chinese weekend school.
  Why you are enrolling in the Chinese weekend school? What make you continue attending Chinese classes? What have you learned from Chinese class? How do you like the learning experience in Chinese weekend school? What do you like most about it? Why did you dislike about this? Why?
- Do you talk about what you learn in Chinese classes with your mom? Why or why not? If yes, what languages do usually you use?
- What languages do you usually use when hanging out with your friends?
- Have you ever talked about your Chinese language or cultural learning experiences with your friends?
- Do you have Mandarin speaking friends or Mandarin/English bilingual friends? Which languages do you usually use when talking to them?

Part II. Details of Experience

- In your family with whom do you speak Chinese? What languages do your parents/sister use with you?
- Do you think these is a rule for using which languages with whom in your family?
- Describe the last time your mom spoke Mandarin with you at home. (What topic did her talk about? What language(s) did you use to respond? Why did you choose to use that language(s) for response?)
- Describe the last time you started a conversation in Chinese at home. (What topic did you talk about? Who did you talk to? What did you feel when you choose to use Chinese?)
- Tell me about how your mom used Chinese to talk to you before attending school? Any changes of your language use between you and your mother? (e.g. she speaks less Chinese with you/ you speak more English to her?) What made it changed?
- Describe the last time you talked to your Chinese-speaking grandparents. (What topic did you talk about? What languages did you and your grandparents use?) How do you feel when you use Chinese to talk to your grandparents? How often do you mix English and Chinese in your sentences when you talk to your grandparents? When talking to your cousins? (Give examples of actual conversation)
- In what contexts you would use two languages together in your conversations with them? How do you feel when you mixed two languages to talk to them?
- Have you ever used different languages together in conversations with other people? How did you feel when you mix two languages to talk to them?
• Do you read any books/ Cartoons/ dramas/ films in Chinese? If yes, any ones are you currently watching/reading? How do you like that book?
• Outside home, do you have opportunities for speaking Chinese or speaking about China? With whom?
• If yes, describe the last time you used Mandarin outside the classroom or home?
• Would you like to have more opportunities to share your Chinese background?
• Is there any support for your Chinese study from outside the family? How did you find the resource?
• Other things you would like to share about your Chinese language and culture learning?
• Language use when traveling back to China.? What was those trips to China like for you? What do you like or do not like about China? Would you like to go and live in China one day? Why?

Part III. Reflections on Meaning (Language beliefs)
• What is China for you? What does it represent? What does it mean for you to speak Chinese?
• What is Canada for you? What does it mean for you to speak English? What does it mean for you to speak French?
• Among the languages you know, which language you feel most comfortable to speak? What is the language you enjoy Speaking/learning the most? How easy or difficult is it to speak in Chinese? Why?
• Do you feel lucky by speaking Chinese or do you think you it is an advantage compared to your friends, who don’t know this language?
• How do you think China and the Chinese language and culture are viewed by your friends or by the people you meet? What do they say?
• How do you identify yourself? How do you understand your mixed Chinese and Canadian background? How do you understand your relationship to China or Chinese people?
• Do you think learning Chinese language help you understand Chinese culture or your Chinese heritage? If yes, could you some examples?
• How well do you think you can use the Chinese language? What level of Chinese ability do you expect to achieve in the future (speaking, listening, reading, writing)?
• If you live and work in the Canada, do you think it’s still necessary for you to learn Chinese?
Appendix D: Transcription Conventions

(Adapted from Macwhinney (2000) and Tannen, Kendall & Gordon (2007))

- abrupt cut off, stammering quality when hyphenating syllables of a word
[ words in brackets overlap with another speaker
# pause of two seconds or less
: an elongated sound
[!] word is stressed

@ laughter

((words)) double parentheses enclose transcriber’s comments
写作比赛；终于在我三年级的时候，老师让我参加全国的创意作文比赛，参加全国的创意作文比赛，我参加了四次，四次全部获奖。并且在其中的两次中，我获得了二等奖。写作让我收获了信心，让我更加自信。
第91章：我的作品让我感到快乐。

2020年12月9日

1. 我的作品让我感到快乐。
2. 这是我第一次写小说。
3. 我非常喜欢写小说。
4. 我的妈妈也非常喜欢我写的小说。
5. 她说：“你的小说写得很好，继续写下去吧！”
6. 我很开心。

第92章：我有一个梦想。

1. 我有一个梦想，那就是成为一名作家。
2. 我想写很多书，让每个人都喜欢。
3. 我相信，只要我坚持写下去，总有一天我会实现我的梦想。
4. 我会不断努力，直到我的梦想成真。

第93章：我想成为一个好作家。

1. 我想成为一个好作家，让每个人都喜欢我的书。
2. 我会不断努力，写出更好的书。
3. 我相信，只要我坚持写下去，总有一天我会实现我的梦想。
4. 我会不断努力，直到我的梦想成真。
八次读完我最喜欢的小说《哈利波特与死亡圣器》，我读了这么多次，以至于我能清楚地知道角色的对话和故事情节，情景发生在书上的那一节，那一页！如果有人要让我放弃这本书如此奇妙的书，我一定会极为烦乱，泪如泉涌。当我在阅读时，我完完全全地与书中人物的情感联系在一起。我摘录了作者的写作风格，感受他的一些风格。我衷心希望有一天，我能够写出和我所读到的一样好的故事。