COMME Y'ALL VOULEZ: TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN DIGITALLY MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

by

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(Under the Direction of Linda Harklau)

ABSTRACT

Translanguaging is a theoretical framework of multilingual language practices that originated in the pedagogical sphere and later was adapted into a practical theory of language. In contrast with past translanguaging research which has primarily focused on homogeneous groups of multilingual language users, all of whom typically have a circumstantial or cultural basis to their multilingualism, this study aimed to characterize the translanguaging practices of multilingual speakers of diverse linguistic backgrounds, identities, and communicative motivations. This study also sought to describe translanguaging practices within the contexts of Digitally Mediated Communication and Digital Translanguaging Space. Through the analysis of five individuals' language practices over a digital messaging platform, findings shed light on different means of identity creation through digital translanguaging, the various types of linguistic and semiotic resources employed over Digital Translanguaging Space to create meaning, and the digital translanguaging practices of academically centered multilinguals.

INDEX WORDS: Translanguaging, Multilingualism, Bilingualism, Identity, Semiotics, Digitally Mediated Communication

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Within the linguistic subfields of bi- and multilingualism, pedagogical, and applied linguistic research, a critical question concerns the nature and character of multilingual language practices. Translanguaging is a theoretical framework of multilingual language practices that originated in the pedagogical sphere and later was adapted into a practical theory of language. The translanguaging framework provides an approach to multilingual language practices that emphasizes the individual backgrounds and identities of the translanguaging actors and also provides an alternative to dated, modular views of bi- and multilingualism that remain apparent in modern models of code-switching and code-mixing. From a translanguaging standpoint, multilingual language practices are considered to be realizations of multilingual language users' engaging their entire linguistic repertoires to create meaning in a contextually appropriate way without regard for or restriction by traditionally assigned boundaries between languages (Wei 2018). Through the adoption of a translanguaging approach, multilingual language practices can be examined and described in terms of the practices themselves, the myriad of resources available to individual language users and their selective employment of those resources, the historic, cultural, social, and individual backgrounds that a language user brings into a communicative context, and the specific characteristics of the communicative context that the language user finds themselves in.

In an increasingly multilingual and digitally mediated world, means of language use are no longer limited to face-to-face interaction or audio communication using telephones. Digitally

Mediated Communication (DMC) is an extension of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) as posited by Herring (1996), which refers simply to communication that takes place between humans via the instrumentality of computers. DMC has become a topic of greater and greater interest for linguists that wish to characterize the unique communicative practices possible across a wide range of types of digital communication. Because of the distinctive communicative practices and resources available through DMC, the communicative context that it affords has the potential to facilitate highly creative and innovative language practices that are not typical or feasible in face-to-face communication. Furthermore, DMC allows an unmatched environment for multilingual language users to exercise their full linguistic repertoires in conjunction with different types of uniquely digital, often semiotic resources. This study is situated at the intersection of translanguaging and Digitally Mediated Communication in order to describe and characterize the digital language practices of a small group of multilingual graduate students at a Southeastern American university.

The study outlined in this paper takes a translanguaging approach to the characterization of a group of five individuals' multilingual digital language practices over a shared group messaging platform. Its two parts consist of an interview portion and an analysis of a digital group message dataset which included messaging data between the five participants over a two-month time period. Interview data was used to contextualize the individual attitudes, motivations, and practices of the participants as contributing factors to the digital translanguaging practices present in the group message dataset. Guided by Grounded Theory methodology (Charmaz 1996, Thornberg & Charmaz 2012), the dataset was coded using the qualitative data analysis platform NVivo and analyzed in terms of several key areas of digital translanguaging practice, such as the use of image-based semiotic resources, methods of identity creation, negotiation of meaning, and

creative and innovative use of language. This thesis aims to answer the following research question: What are the digital translanguaging practices of one group of French-English bilingual students at a large southeastern university?

The following chapters consist first of a review of the origins and applications of translanguaging as a theoretical framework as well as the current state of translanguaging research in digital and non-digital contexts. The third chapter consists of an account of the methodology employed in the study, including a description of the participants, dataset, and methods of data collection. The fourth chapter includes a detailed account and analysis of the study findings in the areas of the participant interviews and dataset. The fifth and final chapter includes a summary of the essential findings of the study, any identified limitations of the study, directions for further research, and any pedagogical implications of the findings. Through the analysis of five individuals' language practices over a digital messaging platform, this study sheds light on different means of identity creation through digital translanguaging, the various types of linguistic and semiotic resources employed over Digital Translanguaging Space to create meaning, and the digital translanguaging practices of academically centered multilinguals.

CHAPTER 2

TRANSLANGUAGING IN REVIEW: ORIGINS AND APPLICATIONS

This chapter reviews the establishment of translanguaging as a theory as well as its original and more recent applications in research. This review first characterizes the history of translanguaging in terms of its pedagogical roots and later development into a practical theory of language. Translanguaging is then described in relation to the notion of discrete languages, especially regarding the prominent, competing code-switching and code-mixing models of multilingual language use. This review then touches on the communicative environments that facilitate translanguaging as well as the use of translanguaging practices in identity creation, especially in the context of DMC. The subsequent section includes a brief overview of the theory of metrolingualism as a possible extension or companion to translanguaging in terms of speaker identity. This chapter concludes with a summary of several weaknesses and blind spots of current translanguaging research which the study outlined in this paper seeks to account for and to begin to remedy.

2.1 Translanguaging History and Development

2.1.1 Pedagogical Roots

From its inception, the translanguaging framework has been traditionally applied to language education and pedagogical research. The original usage of the term 'translanguaging' was to describe the systematic and purposeful use of two languages for teaching and learning within the same lesson in Welsh primary schools in the 1980's in order to refortify the Welsh language after its suppression by the United Kingdom's administration (Lewis et al. 2012b). Since

the term's origin, translanguaging as a pedagogical practice has been fleshed out by a significant body of research and application in bi- and multilingual education. In a classroom setting, an educator can implement a translanguaging approach through facilitating activities where students are encouraged to utilize any and all of the linguistic resources available to them, irrespective of what language those resources 'belong' to. With its roots in the revitalization of the Welsh language, translanguaging in pedagogy is often manifested as the structured, planned use of linguistic resources with children, such as the use of the Spanish language in the classroom in the United States, that were formerly discouraged in favor of a monolingual approach to education that reflected the socially, systemically, or politically dominant language of the region where the education was taking place (García 2009; De Los Ríos & Seltzer 2017). A study of the translanguaging practices of Latinx 'emergent bilingual' students in two American classrooms conducted by de Los Ríos and Seltzer (2017) explored the methodology used by two teachers to create space in which multilingual students were encouraged to utilize their entire linguistic repertoires while at school. De Los Ríos and Seltzer reference the idea of 'border thinking' as a way to characterize the lived experience of people such as the subject emergent bilingual students that are living on colonized lands and who are subject to the continuous sociocultural legacy of colonialism, or those who did not cross borders but "had borders cross them" (De Los Ríos & Seltzer 2017: 57-58). To this end, implementing translanguaging in pedagogy is often interpreted by researchers as a means of seeking out social or linguistic justice for students whose speech communities have been historically suppressed in favor of a dominant language, usually in the context of indigenous or aboriginal peoples, previously colonized peoples, or other socially or politically marginalized groups (García 2013; García & Leiva 2014; García & Wei 2014; García et al. 2017; Cenoz & Gorter 2017). However, the practice of implementing translanguaging in the

classroom in the name of social justice is not universally accepted; some researchers like Block (2018) question the urgency of recognizing the full linguistic capability of students over other issues in education such as racial or class disparities. Charalambous et al. (2016) discuss another instance where the implementation of translanguaging practices with speakers of Turkish the context of Greek-Cypriot education results in Turkish-speaking students' discomfort in not wanting to identify themselves as 'being Turkish' due to charged sociopolitical relations between Cyprus and Turkey. This example demonstrates that the implementation of translanguaging practices in the classroom can hinder the comfort and performance of multilingual students in certain sociopolitical contexts.

Outside of any intentions for social justice, many translanguaging and pedagogical scholars argue for the implementation of pedagogical practice that embraces the fluidity of the linguistic repertoire, claiming that those educational practices are beneficial to students' psychosocial wellbeing as well as their learning success (e.g., Hornberger & Link 2012; García 2013; García & Leiva 2014; García et al. 2017; Seltzer 2020; for a criticism of translanguaging and its application in pedagogy, see Lyster 2019). Vogel and García (2017) have gone so far as to provide a detailed outline of the purposes of translanguaging programs in education and how instructors should best implement and reinforce translanguaging practices. Both research initiatives and programs that encourage the implementation of translanguaging practices in classroom settings like the CUNY-New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals are growing in number (Lewis et al. 2012b; Seltzer 2020). Following Cenoz (2017), I draw a necessary distinction between what Cenoz refers to as 'pedagogical translanguaging' and 'spontaneous translanguaging' in order to define the scope of this paper. Pedagogical translanguaging refers to an educator's planned use of the translanguaging framework inside the classroom and can include the use of different languages for

educational input and student output or other planned strategies based on students' use of resources from the whole linguistic repertoire. Spontaneous translanguaging, on the other hand, includes a much broader range of possible communicative contexts not limited to education settings and refers to fluid discursive practices that are, by definition, spontaneous or unplanned. The remainder of this review and the study to be discussed in this paper deals almost exclusively with topics that fall under the label of spontaneous translanguaging, although it is both appropriate and necessary to address the roots of translanguaging as a theory and its most widely accepted application so far. The translanguaging framework as applied in pedagogy has seen widespread research, applications, and implementations over the past decade, and this paper utilizes a translanguaging approach in order to describe multilingual language practices outside of any structured educational setting.

2.1.2 Dynamic Bilingualism and Other Extensions of Multilingualism

The framework that would become translanguaging was first extended outside of the pedagogical sphere by the work of García (2009, 2013) on dynamic bilingualism. Dynamic bilingualism was introduced by García in direct opposition to the linear model of bilingualism that once stood as the accepted norm within the field of bi- and multilingualism and that of educational research. Instead of assuming a linear model of bilingualism where a speaker would add on additional linguistic competencies to a monolingual starting point, dynamic bilingualism rejects this linear understanding of multilingualism and instead argues for a model where speakers are able to engage in a "simultaneous multiplicity of multilingual discourses" in a way that reflects culturally multilingual contexts like some in African or Asian communities in which "children engage in multiple discursive practices that incorporate the many language practices that they have available" (García 2009: 53-54). In other words, dynamic bilingualism refutes the cultural,

institutional monolingualism characteristic of the West and asks for multilingual competence to be analyzed through an equally multilingual lens. Dynamic bilingualism and later translanguaging stand opposed to older, and modular models of multilingualism like that of 'additive bilingualism' as characterized by Lambert (1974) in the context of language education. Models like additive bilingualism, where languages are seen as separate, discrete proficiencies to be stacked on top of one another, have been foundational to a long-standing tradition of modular views of multilingualism in research, such as those of code-switching and code-mixing, which will be addressed later on in this review. A foundational aspect of this extended view of multilingualism, and later translanguaging, is its multilingual, heteroglossic approach to bi- and multilingualism. With this approach comes a rejection of the monolingual, monoglossic approach to bi- and multilingualism that treated bilingualism as nothing more than an addition of one monolingual competency on top of another (García 2013; Blackledge & Creese 2014). Canagarajah and Wurr (2011) characterize a heteroglossic or multilingual approach to language practices by examining language use in culturally multilingual contexts. The authors go on to demonstrate how multilinguals themselves treat all of the resources in their repertoire as a continuum and do not 'shift' between linguistic competencies while communicating. Multilingual language practices do not reflect the goal of mastering individual languages as is often the case in language education in the West where educators or speakers are attempting to 'add' a new, whole, and pure language to the repertoire (Martínez et al. 2015). Instead, multilinguals negotiate all of the resources available to them in order to reach their communicative goals, participating in dynamic discursive activities that involve resources belonging to an array of 'separate' languages. While Canagarajah and Wurr (2011) do not mention the term 'translanguaging' at all in the cited paper, these notions of an integrated multilingual competence, rejection of 'separate' languages, and the negotiation of

meaning through the use of all available resources have become central tenets to the translanguaging framework.

2.1.3 Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language

Although translanguaging was not originally intended for use as a theory of language but rather to describe a specific pedagogical practice, its use has grown its successful application in pedagogy and led to its development into a practical theory of language (Wei 2018). Translanguaging is a theoretical framework and practical theory of language which rejects structuralist language ideology and notions of multiple underlying language systems in favor of the existence of a unitary semiotic repertoire that speakers draw from in order to communicate (García & Wei 2014; Vogel & García 2017; Wei 2018). The hallmark of translanguaging as a theoretical framework lies in the assertion of the unitary semiotic repertoire. The notion of the repertoire as defined by Blackledge and Creese (2017) is the "biographically emerging complexes of indexically ordered, and therefore functionally organized, resources" which "include linguistic, semiotic, and sociocultural resources used in communication (2017: 35)." The structuralist view of language is said to consider named languages to be static, separate, standardized competencies which a speaker would acquire and store separately and access through multiple discrete systems (see §2.2.2 for clarification on named languages). Translanguaging on the other hand considers language use as a situationally conditioned string of resources that speakers draw on from "one semiotic system integrating various lexical, morphological, and grammatical linguistic features" in addition to social practices and features that speakers portray, such as gestures, or resources used as an extension of themselves, such as means of digital communication like computers or mobile phones (Vogel & García 2017: 5).

A common criticism of translanguaging and its extension into the theoretical sphere states that the term 'translanguaging' is a nebulous, confusing, neologism, and its growing usage in a widely varied body of work on diverse renders it a catch-all term for any interesting trends in multilingual or multimodal practice (Wei 2018). Jaspers (2018) raises a similar concern about the wide reach of topics that are linked to the term 'translanguaging' in research as well as skepticism of a term so far reaching that researchers like Otheguy, García, and Wallis (2015) would feel the need to 'clarify' it. However, Wei (2011, 2018), who joins García as one of the most influential proponents of translanguaging and an advocate of its applications as a practical theory of language, insists on translanguaging's appropriateness as a practical theory of language and its abilities as a practical theory to treat several fundamental theoretical questions in linguistics, particularly those of Language of Thought and Modularity of the Mind. The Language of Thought hypothesis proposes that thinking occurs in a mental language that resembles spoken language in that it is composed of words that are combined into sentences (Rescorla 2019). Modularity of Mind refers to a proposed cognitive model that assumes that the mind is made up of innate, distinct mental structures that are responsible for domain-specific function (Robbins 2017). In other words, the theoretical issue that Modularity of Mind is concerned with is the separateness of cognitive modules and their ability to affect other areas of function. Regarding the first of these issues, Wei (2018) presents examples from a corpus entitled 'New Chinglish,' describing what appears to be ordinary English utterances that have been reappropriated with new meanings intended for Chinese users of English. Such utterances include words and expressions that broadly adhere to the morphological rules of English but include specifically Chinese meanings particular to the cultural and social experiences of Chinese people. One example of these would be "*Freedamn* 中国特色自由

= *freedom* + *damn*, mocking the idea of 'freedom with Chinese characteristics'" (Wei 2018: 12). In reference to these examples, Wei asserts the following:

> These examples look English, but a monolingual English speaker may find it difficult to understand precisely their meanings and connotations. Existing terms such as code-mixing and code-switching that assume the existence of different languages as structural and cognitive entities and focus on structural configurations of the form seem unable to fully capture the creative and critical dimensions of these expressions. A fuller description and interpretation must involve an understanding of the sociopolitical context in which these expressions occur, the history of Chinglish, the subjectivities of the people who created and use these expressions, as well as the ideologies, including linguistic ideologies, that these expressions challenge. (2018: 13)

In terms of the issue of Language of Thought, Wei (2018) asserts that the essential question often posed in reference to bilinguals, 'What language is the speaker thinking in?', would simply not make sense when applied to the use of language like 'New Chinglish.'

2.2 Translanguaging and the Concept of Discrete Languages

2.2.1 Translanguaging versus Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

Of the traditional models of bi- and multilingualism, perhaps the most prolific are code-switching and code-mixing approaches to multilingual language practices. Sankoff and Poplack (1981) provide a foundational account of code-switching as a process and a model of what they refer to as the 'code-switching grammar.' In this model of multilingualism, code-switching is recognized as being the practice of multilingual speakers of alternating between structures and words included in the grammars of all available languages. The 'code-switching grammar' does not assume a 'base language,' or a matrix language into which resources from another language are inserted into, but rather includes in the grammar each of the monolingual grammars available to the speaker depending on the number of language competencies they possess (Sankoff & Poplack 1981). Code-mixing follows as a later addition to this framework to describe instances

where multilingual speakers mix resources, typically words, that are considered to belong to separate languages and to distinguish from code-switching as an alternation between structures that are considered to belong to separate languages (Muysken et al. 2000). Lewis, Jones, and Baker (2012a) situate the pedagogical roots of translanguaging in relation to previous adoption of 'code-switching' activities in the classroom environment; in this review, the authors emphasize the ideological difference between classroom translanguaging and code-switching, noting that translanguaging is associated with linguistic fluidity, where code-switching is concerned with language separation. Ariza (2019) recounts some of the weaknesses of code-switching and argues for the adoption of a translanguaging approach as a means to go beyond code-switching in our understanding of multilingual language practices. This view is echoed throughout much of the work on translanguaging cited in this paper and notably in Wei's (2011, 2018) foundational translanguaging literature. When assessed through the lens of translanguaging, multilingual speakers would not be considered to be constantly switching between named languages such as Chinese or English. Instead, a speaker would use language as a function of their personal idiolect or unitary repertoire, which would contain for multilingual speakers resources and features that are considered to belong to a range of named or politically-defined languages and for monolingual speakers resources and features that belong to a range of registers and social varieties considered to belong to one named language.

2.2.2 'Named' Languages and the Unitary Repertoire

The deconstruction of 'named languages,' or socially and politically defined sets of grammatical and lexical features, follows as another central tenet to translanguaging (Otheguy et al. 2015). In work leading up to the extension and development of translanguaging outside of the pedagogical realm, scholars like Canagarajah and Wurr (2011) and Pennycook (2010) began to

address the difference between the existence of named languages as politically defined, standardized entities that were linked to the creation of the nation state and the actual practices of language users. What translanguaging scholars define as ‘named’ languages correspond to arbitrarily defined sets of structures which are identified by linguists or other norm-defining individuals and labeled in accordance with cultural-political concepts that are associated with supposed speakers of that language or the region they reside in. Some scholars have questioned whether some of the principles of translanguaging, especially the ‘deconstruction’ of named languages, go too far in their rejection of more traditional, modular views of bilingualism. MacSwan (2017) delivers a criticism of translanguaging scholars’ questioning of the existence of discrete languages and advises a distinction between the use of nationally defined names for languages and the use of structural consistency used in the study of multilingualism. The hybrid model proposed by MacSwan (2017) distinguishes the mental grammar from the unitary linguistic repertoire central to translanguaging in favor of an ‘integrated multilingual model’ that posits the multilingual competence as containing both shared resources and internally discrete systems. This dual correspondence bilingualism model that assumes discrete but overlapping language systems is in turn criticized by Otheguy et al. (2019) due to its lack of theoretical clarity. Otheguy et al. (2019) then reassert the value of the unitary competence model of translanguaging with evidence of the activation of both languages in the bilingual mind when the speaker is apparently only speaking one language (see Kroll & Bialystok 2013). Neurological evidence like that attested by Kroll and Bialystok (2013) is beyond the scope of this paper, but it presents another avenue of study that deserves to be evaluated in terms of its support or lack thereof for a translanguaging approach to multilingual language practice. Wei is careful to acknowledge that multilinguals are aware of the existence of culturally or politically defined named languages and have acquired some

of the structures associated with them but utilize those resources stored in their unitary repertoire outside or beyond the bounds of ‘named’ languages to meet their communicative goals. Translanguaging is thus crucially defined “using one’s idiolect, that is one’s linguistic repertoire, without regard for socially and politically defined language names and labels” (Wei 2018: 19). With regards to earlier criticisms about the inexact goal or reach of translanguaging, its applications according to Wei have a specific, practical objective in assessing the language practices of multilingual speakers in a way that privileges the fluidity and particularity of the individual idiolect or repertoire. The primary objective of a practical theory, according to Wei, is “not to offer predictions or solutions but interpretations that can be used to observe, interpret, and understand other practices and phenomena,” and, in the case of translanguaging, the “everyday language practices of multilingual language users” and the creative and critical dimensions of multilingual language practice that cannot be captured by terms such as code-switching or code-mixing (Wei 2018: 11).

As a means of beginning to remedy the theoretical question of The Modularity of the Mind, Wei (2018) breaks down past interpretations of this question that posit that language and other human cognitive processes are functionally or anatomically distinct from one another. Through the discussion of the inherent connection between auditory and visual processes, as well as other cognitive processes like color categorization and number processing, and language, Wei (2018) represents language as a multisensory and multimodal semiotic system that is interconnected with other cognitive processes. This characterization of language as multisensory and multimodal is essential to the idea of the unitary semiotic repertoire of translanguaging theory; not only is the translanguaging repertoire a unitary source of linguistic resources, but it also includes gestural, visual, and other resources not typically categorized as a part of the internal grammar. Lin (2019)

and Wu and Lin (2019) discuss an extension of translanguaging that encapsulates the meaning-making potential of whole-body and other varied semiotic resources, referred to by the authors as 'trans-semiotizing.' Trans-semiotizing does not move to replace translanguaging as a practical theory of multilingual language use, but it is used to broaden the scope of study of multilingual language practices and to reinforce the entanglement of language with a myriad of other gestural, visual, and bodily means of meaning-making, primarily in the context of language integrated education and student success (Wu & Lin 2019). With the added consideration of the entire semiotic repertoire for the analysis of translanguaging practices, possible applications of the practical theory of translanguaging are allowed to go beyond traditional pedagogical studies and to assess holistic, everyday interactions between multilingual language users in a wide variety of contexts, including multilingual identity creation and digital communication.

2.3 Translanguaging in Context and Identity

2.3.1 Translanguaging Space and Digitally Mediated Communication

In applications of the practical theory of translanguaging to the actual language practices of multilinguals, not only is the entire semiotic repertoire employed, but the individual language user brings dimensions of their own personal history, attitude, environment, cognitive and physical capacity, and beliefs and ideologies into each interaction (Wei 2011). Relevant to studies on actual translanguaging practices of multilingual individuals is the idea of Translanguaging Space. Translanguaging Space is defined by Wei (2011) as a social space for the multilingual language user created for and by translanguaging through bringing together each of the personal resources previously noted. One recent development in translanguaging research has been the application of the practical theory to analyses of multilingual digital communication. Digital communication between multilinguals has also been recently studied using a code-switching view (Themistocleous

2015), but the translanguaging framework is, in my view, a more inclusive and successful means of describing multilingual language practices in digital media. The study of language and digital communication encompasses a broad and wide-reaching body of work, with roots in what has been widely referred to as Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) (Georgakopoulou & Spilioti 2015). CMC is defined by Herring (1996) simply as communication that takes place between humans via the instrumentality of computers. Since the first definition of CMC in the 1990's, the potential media and uses of digital communication have grown significantly alongside advances in digital and communicative technology, with the invention of social media and communication platforms, more easily portable mobile phones, and the ability to transmit communicative resources in both auditory and visual forms without relying solely on written language messages or telephone calls. With respect to the many additional media for language practice in addition to computers available at the time of this writing, especially mobile phones, DMC will be used as a slight adjustment to CMC in order to refer to communication that takes place between humans via the instrumentality of digital devices (also used in Newman et al. 2012, Hession 2016, Hatzidaki & Saridakis 2020, and more).

In the case of DMC, the concept of the unitary semiotic repertoire and the Translanguaging Space become especially salient; not only are speakers relying on grammatical, syntactic, phonetic, or physical cues in their communication, but on an expanded repertoire that includes stylistic choices of orthography, digital medium, images, videos, audio recordings, and more. The areas of DMC that are most relevant to linguistic and especially translanguaging studies crucially relate to the ways that language users utilize any and all of the semiotic resources available to them in order to create meaning while participating in DMC. Androutsopoulos (2015) utilizes translanguaging, metrolingualism, and polylingualism as foundations upon which to describe the digital

multilingual practices of secondary students of Greek backgrounds in a German city. In the same paper, the author also coins the term 'networked multilingualism,' a moniker for multilingual practices that are shaped through the interrelated practices of "being networked, i.e., digitally connected to other individuals and groups, and being in the network, i.e., embedded in the global digital mediascape of the web" (Androutsopoulos 2015: 188). This idea of 'networked multilingualism' is almost exactly in line with the multilingual practices of DMC that are analyzed with a translanguaging approach. Many studies on the language practices of multilinguals in DMC have targeted how multilingual speakers, often first-generation immigrants, use DMC as a way of bridging transnational space and conserving a transnational identity while also fostering a new identity in the new space (Wei 2011; Lam 2013). Transnational space is defined as "active, sustained and dynamic medium and interaction across national borders by non-state actors" which "takes into account the linguistic, social, cultural, ideological and political issues" (Han 2020: 175). A case study by Kim (2018) on a Korean migrant youth living in the United States, conducted using a 'connective ethnography' model and a translanguaging approach, attests to the use of media platforms as simultaneous negotiation of transnational identity and identity linked to an adopted country and culture. Through examination of three different Translanguaging Spaces, American school, transnational family, and transnational multilingual friend group, accessed through the use of different media platforms, the subject is argued to have "expanded her translanguaging scope" over the three spaces. The author uses this as proof of the transnational youth's flexibility in contextualizing each situation in terms of her identity forming and translanguaging potential (Kim 2018: 50). Lam (2009) finds similar results in a study of a Chinese teenager and resident of the United States for two years and her multilingual practices across three areas of DMC very similar to those targeted by Kim (2018). Lam (2009) does not adopt a

translanguaging approach in this study as it was published before translanguaging was extended beyond pedagogy, but the results do reinforce the dynamic construction of multilingual identity through the creative language practices possible in DMC. Han (2020) investigates the language practices of Chinese visiting scholars at a university in California on the messaging application WeChat, noted in this article to be the most popular social media app in China. This paper differs from other translanguaging studies, such as Lam (2009) and Kim (2018), in that the subjects were adults as opposed to adolescents and therefore would not be going through their primary schooling in the English-speaking country they are visiting. Han (2020) characterizes the ways that the Chinese scholars employ translanguaging into several different functions: 'intertextualizating' the local voice (many times within the cultural voice of their home country), constructing identities as language learners and global citizens, and enacting the role of ethnic messengers and cultural brokers, or what some researchers call 'gatekeeping' (Han 2020). Through the WeChat analysis, Han describes the visiting scholars' translanguaging as more of a 'performative' practice as opposed to identity creation, which could suggest a function of age and lived experiences on the effects of translanguaging practices. On top of negotiating between a transnational identity and the culture of an adopted country, these scholars appear to creatively use their individual repertoires to depict themselves as global citizens to others in their home language communities in order to earn cultural capital. Ng and Lee (2019) explore the translanguaging practices and means of identity creation of Malaysian university graduates through DMC and identify several key factors that influence the translanguaging practices and identity constructions of the subjects. These factors include the formal setting that limits translanguaging practices, attitudes and emotions of language users that are practicing translanguaging, familiarity with audience as encouragement for translanguaging, and purpose and importance of the message (Ng & Lee 2019). The latter three

factors are said to promote translanguaging, whereas the first was shown to inhibit translanguaging practices. The factors that influence identity construction through DMC and translanguaging include organizational norms two settings: norms in building identities in a business setting, and norms in adopting stances, expressing emotions, and building identities in an informal setting (Ng & Lee 2019). These two factors of identity creation represent the importance of the social context on translanguaging practices, and primarily the inhibition of more formal settings and expectations on the creative and informal nature of translanguaging and by extension the creation and establishment of multilingual identity. Such studies of DMC which both do and do not take a translanguaging approach have chiefly applied to either single subjects or homogeneous groups of speakers from quite similar linguistic backgrounds.

An exception to the lack of investigation into translanguaging and identity creation without the need for survival or integration is described by Schreiber (2015) in an examination of the translanguaging practices of a Serbian university student on Facebook. The subject is shown to make stylistic choices of English or Serbian language material depending on the communicative context in order to cultivate his online presence. He does so despite having only cultural and educational exposure to English instead of the geographical, colonial, or heritage attachments seen in previously described studies. The subject in this study, an aspiring hip-hop artist who aims to garner a following through Facebook, selectively uses resources typical of English-language hip-hop (i.e., *hoes* to refer to women he speaks to over the Facebook messaging platform) as a means of 'gatekeeping' hip-hop culture but presents himself as distinctly Serbian at the same time through carefully mixed use of English and Serbian language resources in his music. While Schreiber (2015) adopts a translanguaging approach to characterize the DMC practices of the Serbian youth, the practice described in this paper that the subject uses to cultivate an identity linked to a culture

to which he forged his own attachment could also be described in terms of a similar framework referred to as metrolingualism.

2.3.2 Metrolingualism

Typically accredited to Pennycook and Otsuji (2010), metrolingualism is a theoretical framework that arose at around the same time as translanguaging that has distinct ramifications for identity creation through communication based on the selection of resources from unitary semiotic repertoire. The metrolingualism approach to multilingual discourse, however, does go a step farther than much of the literature on translanguaging. Metrolingualism explicitly does not require a speaker to have what would be traditionally thought of as a multilingual identity, such as identifying as a child of immigrant parents who possesses an idiolect with resources attributed to a particular heritage language as well as to the 'dominant' language of the lived region. Pennycook and Otsuji (2010) feature 'plurality' and 'complexity' as central tenets to metrolingualism. They argue that, by relying on theoretical frameworks like multiculturalism and multilingualism, scholars and speakers alike assume a plurality of identities as opposed to building on the complexity of identity. The concept of metrolingualism is made to reach across and challenge the discrete geographical, linguistic, and sociopolitical boundaries that are deeply ingrained in traditional concepts of language and linguistic research. Pennycook and Otsuji (2010) also bring up the terms 'fixity' and 'fluidity' which were coined by Connell and Gibson in 2003; these terms allow the authors to describe the flux between speakers' notions of fixed language, ethnicity, and identity which often challenge notions of fixed political, linguistic, and cultural borders. To this end, metrolingualism can be described as "creative linguistic conditions across space and borders of culture, history and politics, as a way to move beyond current terms such as multilingualism and multiculturalism" (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010: 244). In other words, metrolingualism

challenges the fixed sociopolitical lines of where one language ends and another begins. In reference to the critical view of translanguaging by MacSwan (2017), proponents of metrolingualism push even harder for the deconstruction of 'named' languages and the plurality of multilingualism than with translanguaging approaches. This paper does not move to compare and contrast the approaches of translanguaging and metrolingualism, but rather to demonstrate how metrolingualism may be seen as an extension to translanguaging theory. The mechanisms of identity creation and motivation for translanguaging practice that do not depend on geography, culture, or survival outlined in metrolingualism literature begin to fill in the gaps where the practical theory of translanguaging is deficient. The metrolingualism approach also has notable overlap with the question of motivation in the field of second language acquisition, a long-studied variable in the success of language learners. In early second language acquisition literature, Gardner and Smythe (1975), and later Gardner (2007), describe integrative motivation as "being interested in learning the language in order to interact with valued members of the other community and/or to learn more about that community" (Gardner 2007: 15). Otsuji and Pennycook (2011) describe a workplace in which employees engage in metrolingual practices despite their ethnic, national, and linguistic backgrounds in order to separate themselves from their prescribed backgrounds and to engage with an idealized language community. One subject is a Turkish-Australian man who is a described as a native English speaker who understands little Turkish and began learning Japanese at 15. The subject asserts that he never considered himself "a typical Aussie" and claims to feel more at ease within Japanese society and cultural norms (Otsuji & Pennycook 2011: 417). To his boss, who is described as a native Japanese speaker, he consistently and correctly uses informal speech to establish his cultural and linguistic knowledge and to earn the cultural capital that comes with this sociolinguistic competency. Through his adoption of

Japanese, this subject has effectively appropriated language that is not associated with his ethnic and cultural background into his communicative repertoire in order to claim a new identity. While what has been described by Otsuji and Pennycook (2011) as metrolingual practice (and what is seen in my view as translanguaging practice) may not be driven by community integration, it does seem to be linked to a desire to incorporate oneself into a certain culture surrounding a specific linguistic code or to have the benefits or cultural capital that a speaker perceives to be attached to a certain language or speech community. It is again essential to note that a metrolingualism approach is not assumed in this paper and the purpose of its review is not to propose metrolingualism as an alternative to translanguaging. Rather, this brief summary describes approaches to identity creation and translanguaging practices that have not been traditionally assumed in translanguaging research.

2.4 Weaknesses and Potential in Translanguaging Research

In current bi- and multilingualism research, taking a translanguaging approach to analyzing multilingual language practices outside of the educational context is becoming more and more common. However, several important areas of multilingual language use have been left untreated by translanguaging research so far. As described in §2.3.1, research both with and without a translanguaging approach to multilingual language practices in DMC has principally applied to either single subjects or homogeneous groups of speakers from quite similar linguistic backgrounds. There has been a considerable lack of translanguaging and DMC research that analyzes the language practices of mixed groups of immigrants or visiting students and speakers considered to be ‘native’ to the dominant language of the region. Such research has the potential to reveal more complex aspects of multilingual language practices, especially for heterogeneous groups of speakers that will bring highly variable personal histories, attitudes, and linguistic

identities into the communicative context. Another area lacking in translanguaging research is the study of speakers with motives for multilingual language use other than cultural or for survival. Such studies may investigate the translanguaging practices of multilinguals who have chosen to learn a language for a reason other than survival in speech community they are living, working, or studying in. Multilingual language users whose multilingualism is founded later in life and as the result of conscious choice rather than either cultural context or survival within a community have been largely disregarded in translanguaging research and in discussion of multilingual identity. However, multilinguals who have been referred to in past literature as 'elective' or 'elite' bilinguals (see §3.2.1 for a discussion on elective and circumstantial bilingualism in the context of this study) provide a unique and understudied perspective on the pursuit of multilingualism and the construction of multilingual identity that is presumably quite different from the lived experiences of 'circumstantial' multilingual language users. The study outlined in the following chapters utilizes a translanguaging approach to describe the practices of this type of multilingual language user as individuals and as members of a heterogeneous group of speakers in order to widen the scope of translanguaging research to consider the diversity of multilingual language practices, motivations, and lived experiences.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Goals

This thesis aims to answer the following research question:

What are the digital translanguaging practices of one group of French-English bilingual students at a large southeastern university?

This study examines five individuals' language practices over a digital messaging platform. Special attention is paid to means of identity creation through digital translanguaging as well as to the different types of linguistic and image-based semiotic resources employed over digital communication or Digital Translanguaging Space to create meaning. Findings shed light on the digital translanguaging practices of academically centered multilinguals.

3.2 Participants & Setting

3.2.1 Participants

Participants include five graduate students between the ages of 20 and 35 who attend a large southeastern university in the United States. Each of these students were pursuing a graduate degree in the university's Romance Languages Department, specifically in the French language program, at the time of this study. Three subjects were working towards a Master of Arts degree in French Linguistics and the remaining two were working towards a PhD in French Literature. These five students were enrolled in one or more shared courses within the French language program. Students had begun their programs at the university between August of 2019 and August of 2020. One student at the M.A. level and one student at the PhD level identified as natives of

France, having spent their entire lives living in the country until at least the age of 18. Both of these students had received all education before the university level where the language of instruction was French, with the exception of one participant having taken two high school courses that were taught in English as part of an elective program. Both of these students also identified as having spoken only French at home with their families while growing up. The other three participants identified as natives of the United States and who had received the majority or all of their previous schooling in English. All of the American participants reported having spoken only English at home with their families while growing up. All of the American participants grew up, or lived a majority of their pre-university lives, in the state of Georgia. When asked to describe the nature of their relationships with one another during an interview, most of the participants defined the beginning of their relationships with the other participants as beginning to text one another for the purposes of asking each other school- or class-related questions and getting to know the other participants. Since beginning to communicate with each other digitally in September 2020, the participants have organized several social gatherings together. Participants' pseudonyms, linguistic backgrounds (NS for native speaker, NNS for non-native speaker) and self-reported language proficiencies on a scale of one to five (see §3.3 for details of the scale), graduate degree program, and percentage of dataset coverage are included in Table 1. Short biographies containing all pertinent self-reported information on the study participants can be found in Appendix B.

Table 1: Participant background information.

Participant	English Proficiency	French Proficiency	Degree Program	Percentage of Dataset Coverage
Manon	5 - NNS	5 - NS	M.A.	11%
Amandine	4.5-5 - NNS	5 - NS	PhD	16%
Courtney	5 - NS	4 - NNS	M.A.	12%
Steven	5 - NS	5 - NNS	PhD	16%
Ryan	5 - NS	4.5 - NNS	M.A.	12%

Pseudonyms were assigned by selecting one of each participants' home country's most popular names from a certain year of birth. For this study, all pseudonyms were selected using the year 1995. Names traditionally associated with women were assigned to participants with given names traditionally associated with women, and names traditionally associated with men were assigned to participants with given names traditionally associated with men. For instance, one of the French participants was assigned the pseudonym *Manon*, one of the most popular names given to female children in France in the year 1995.

Following Valdés and Figueroa (1994)'s distinction between elective and circumstantial bilingualism, each of the five participants in this study can be classified as 'elective' bilinguals. The distinction between elective and circumstantial bilingualism draws attention to the differing individual life circumstances that have resulted in the speaker being multilingual as well as the individual identities of the speakers in relation to their multilingualism. While this distinction is somewhat incompatible with the non-modular, unitary model of the linguistic repertoire assumed by translanguaging scholars, the origins of each speaker's multilingualism are essential to understanding their translanguaging practices. Thus, the elective and circumstantial multilingual labels are used to characterize the specific motivations of these individuals and speakers like them. Participants in this study are also referred to as academically centered multilinguals, referring to the fact that each of the participants began learning their non-native language in an academic context. The primary difference between elective and circumstantial bilinguals per Valdés and Figueroa (1994) is in the active choice to learn a language in addition to a speaker's already possessed linguistic repertoire as opposed to the acquisition of an additional language or of multiple languages at once as a result of circumstantial needs such as survival or success within a multilingual or dominant linguistic community. Another marked difference between elective and

circumstantial bilinguals is in the linguistic input they receive. For elective bilinguals, communicative events are often sought artificially, such as in an academic setting or language classroom, and for circumstantial bilinguals, communicative events result from the individual communicative needs of the speaker and are often related to survival. An example of a circumstantial bilingual would be a child heritage Spanish speaker who is required to develop English proficiency in order to succeed in the United States education system where English is the language of instruction. The five target speakers in this study have all at various times in their lives made the active choice to pursue the task of learning a language, most often in the context of required foreign language coursework in elementary or middle school. While such requirements constitute institutional pressure to reach some benchmark of proficiency in a language other than the primary language of instruction or of the given speech community, each of the participants displayed motivation and active choice in continuing their pursuit of proficiency in their 'learned' language outside of any institutional requirements. This active choice distinguishes these participants from other multilinguals in that the speakers do not use their varied language resources out of necessity; their language practices can instead be analyzed as a means of actively adopting new aspects of identity, gaining cultural capital, claiming the benefits associated with the target language by the speaker, and more, outside of the need for survival.

3.2.2 Setting

Participants' language practices were analyzed in a group message on the messaging platform WhatsApp. WhatsApp is a computer and mobile application that boasts over 2 billion users across 180 different countries, making it the most popular instant messaging application worldwide (Andjelic 2021). Using this application, users can communicate one-on-one with other users or in groups of multiple users who are reached by their individual phone numbers. Users can

send text messages and voice messages, documents, images, videos, make voice and video calls, and utilize other means of communication like location sharing, polls, or events. One key characteristic of WhatsApp is that it can be utilized between users residing with different countries and with different countries' telephone numbers without accruing additional costs sometimes associated with messaging or calling telephone numbers with a different country code. WhatsApp and similar messaging applications have been studied in the context of their translanguaging potential (Han 2020), but most digital translanguaging research so far has focused on the language practices of individuals in either classroom-mediated spaces for DMC or larger, more public spaces for DMC such as social media platforms like Facebook (e.g., Androutsopoulos 2015; Schreiber 2015; Ng & Lee 2019). The WhatsApp group dataset in this study was initiated by the participants in early September 2020 and includes messages sent up until late November 2020, encompassing approximately two months' worth of communication with messages being sent between the participants almost every day within this time window. The dataset included over 35,000 words including dates and times of message sending and participant pseudonyms. Each of the five participants had equal access to the group message for the entirety of the time window available, and there was no time in which one or more of the participants left or was not a 'member' of the group message. Each participant accounted for between 11-17% coverage of the dataset. The remaining percentage of the dataset that is not marked for any speaker is the text showing the time and date of sending for each message along with the participant pseudonym at the beginning of each message.

3.3 Data Collection

The data used in this study was retrieved from two sources, one being individual interviews with each of the participants and the other being the group messaging platform WhatsApp.

Interviews were conducted in a one-on-one format with each of the participants over the video conferencing platform Zoom. Interviews lasted on average twenty minutes and the questions asked in the interview came from a predetermined set of questions compiled by the researcher, shown in Appendix A. One of the questions involved the participants' self-reporting of their language proficiencies on a scale of one to five. One was defined as beginner, two was described as the ability to produce minimal grammatical sentences, three was described as being able hold a conversation, four was described as proficient, comfortable, or confident conversing with native speakers, and five was described as the level of a native speaker. Each interview was recorded using the platform's recording feature and was later transcribed according to a set of conventions provided by the supervising researcher. Messaging data were extracted from WhatsApp using the platform's 'Export Chat' function, which is available for use in any string of messages. This function converts the stream of messages into a .txt file, containing all of the written information sent since the creation of the group message (all messages, emoticons, file names, and the dates and times of sending as well as the name of the person who sent the message). This function also extracts all video and audio files, as well as a selective amount of image files, to be downloaded separately from the written information. During the initial assessment of the data, all video and audio files and the available image files were matched to their respective places in the text by their file names in order to evaluate their use in context. One shortcoming of the data collection process was the selective inclusion of certain images in the exported dataset, where the omitted images were marked in the text as <*Médias omis*> 'media omitted'; after exploring the functionality of WhatsApp and the dataset, there was no apparent means of recovering these images or matching the respective images to their placements throughout the text.

3.4 Data Analysis

3.4.1 Methodological Framework

The data analysis portion of this study was guided by Grounded Theory methodology, which has been implemented since the 1960s in a wide variety of social sciences as an inductive, systematic approach to qualitative research (Charmaz 1996, Thornberg & Charmaz 2012). Grounded Theory outlines a means of qualitative inductive coding that emphasizes the researcher's studying the data, creating codes for the data as the data is studied, coding the data according to this set of codes and identifying the contextual patterns of these groupings of codes, and using inductive reasoning to bridge patterns seen in the data in order to support emergent theories (Charmaz 1996). This process of qualitative inductive coding was carried out for the purpose of situating the individual participants and their use of varying types of linguistic and semiotic resources within different translanguaging episodes, communicative and interpersonal contexts, and the Translanguaging Space created by the group message as a whole.

3.4.2 Analysis

The dataset in the form of a .txt file was uploaded into the NVivo qualitative data analysis computer software for analysis. Before beginning work with the dataset, the file was combed through using NVivo's search function and through the researcher's careful and repeated reading in order to replace each participant's name with their assigned pseudonym and to redact any other names or identifiable information such as addresses or phone numbers. As described in §3.3, all media files available were matched with their respective file names in the text. Using the 'annotations' function in NVivo, each video, audio, or other visual resource available were tagged with descriptions of their content. Guided by Grounding Theory methodology, several codes in the form of NVivo's 'cases' and 'nodes' were created in order to characterize the data. A case was

created for each participant, and each of their individual utterances was marked with their case in order to situate different language practices within the context of the individual speaker or speakers involved in communicating. Upon further review of the data, four nodes were created, and data were coded for 1) the use of any semiotic resources; 2) the use of innovative or novel forms; 3) instances of speakers providing language-focused feedback or support for another speaker; and 4) general episodes of translanguaging practices to be analyzed more in depth at a later point. The semiotic resources coded in the dataset included omitted media, images, videos, and emoticons. When emoticons were included as one sole emoticon or repeated in a string, their meanings were evaluated individually; when multiple different emoticons were strung together, their meanings were evaluated as combined. While it was not possible to decipher what the omitted media consisted of, the use of semiotic resources in context to negotiate and create meaning is still consequential to this analysis. Using the 'Annotations' function of NVivo, language practices that were deemed interesting by the researcher were tagged for later analysis if they did not fall under any of the established codes. All codes used to mark the dataset were developed throughout the process of open coding, in accordance with Grounded Theory. During and following the coding process, translanguaging episodes and the group message as a Translanguaging Space were evaluated within the context and patterns of the different types of resources and individual speakers that were coded in the discourse.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter begins with a report on information collected during participant interviews. This information is used to characterize the participants as individual translanguaging actors and to provide insight into participants' attitudes and motivations towards their language practices as well as into their linguistic identities and digital communication practices. I then report on the findings from the WhatsApp dataset and the attested translanguaging practices of the participants. This discussion then touches on several key aspects of the participants' translanguaging practices, including the idea of Digital Translanguaging Space, identity creation, use of semiotic resources, translanguaging as a means of language development, and linguistic innovation. Throughout this discussion and in any further reference to the study participants, all participants are referred to using the third person plural, gender-neutral pronominal *they*. Participant sex and gender were not controlled for in this study and participants were not asked to report on their gender identities. The gender-neutral pronoun *they* is utilized in order to respect and to not make assumptions on the gender identities of the participants, to preserve the privacy of the participants, and to avoid any conclusions being drawn about the translanguaging practices of these individuals in connection to speaker sex or gender.

4.1 Individuals as Translanguaging Actors: Participant Interviews

While the goal of inquiry in some sub-disciplines within linguistics is to establish patterns that can be generalized across wide populations, the translanguaging perspective prioritizes "the importance of feeling, experience, history, memory, subjectivity, and culture," all of which are

highly variable among individuals depending on their lived experiences (Wei 2018: 17). With this foundational emphasis on the individual in translanguaging research, it is essential to characterize at least a snapshot of the lived linguistic and social experiences as well as the attitudes of the translanguaging actors in order to understand why and how they may engage in certain translanguaging practices. Each of the participants, and all individuals who engage in translanguaging, for that matter, should be viewed as individual actors in translanguaging interactions. Each translanguaging actor brings not only their linguistic and semiotic repertoires into the communicative context but also their sociocultural backgrounds, personal attitudes, and experiences. Biographical information on each of the participants in this study, including their self-reported home countries and language proficiencies, is shown in Appendix B. This section of the chapter and its subsections focuses primarily on the participants' attitudes, awareness, motivations, and personal identities regarding their translanguaging practices and the ways in which their own personal experiences and feelings underscore those practices. This section also touches on participants' descriptions of their language practices specifically in the context of DMC. It should be noted as well that the participants in this study hold the common view of languages as additive competencies, a view that is characteristic of Western, monolingual cultures. To this end, participants' language capacities may be discussed in a manner that does not align with the translanguaging perspective of non-modular multilingualism in order to remain faithful to the participants' own views of their language practices.

4.1.1 Participants' Translanguaging Attitudes, Awareness, and Motivations

A key question in characterizing different episodes of translanguaging the speakers' level of awareness about their own language practices and their attitudes towards those practices. This group of participants varies considerably in their identifications of specific contexts in which they

employ certain linguistic resources over others. Courtney represented one end of the continuum, exhibiting little awareness or consideration of patterns in their own language practices. When describing the group message, Courtney reported that the participants in the group, themself included, use linguistic resources typically associated with French or English with "no rhyme or reason." Courtney contended that their own language practices were driven by responding to "whatever's thrown at [them]" in terms of which language was being spoken. In the context of the group message, Steven and Manon noted a similar tendency to match the language practices of whoever began the conversation. This practice of communicative accommodation is a long-observed phenomenon with theoretical explanation dating back to the 1970s and is commonly known as Communication Accommodation Theory or Speech Accommodation Theory (Giles & Ogay 2007). This attitude towards language use does not necessarily constitute a lack of reflection, but instead may be an example of the adaptive, fluid nature of multilingual language use and the naturalness of how speakers engage in such practices. The four other speakers' responses showed more awareness of their own language practices and how those practices are influenced by certain contexts. For example, Steven, who reported having spent the least amount of time learning French or English at 6.5 years and to have begun this process as an undergraduate student, described how their use of French resources is deeply entwined with academia. Steven reported a sense of increased comfort employing French resources in an academic setting that could outweigh their comfort when using English resources in similar environments. Amandine shared the knowledge of a tendency to use more French resources in academic contexts due to being "academically raised in French," referring to their having had the majority of their schooling in the primary language of instruction French. Ryan also noted a newer connection between increased use of French resources and academia after beginning a M.A. program where the primary language of instruction is French,

but Ryan noted a main distinction in the linguistic backgrounds of the other speakers they engage with as it pertains to their language practices. When asked about the contexts in which they employ 'more French' or 'more English,' they drew a clear distinction between their speaking with the other participants in this study and with the other French speakers that they have come into contact with; Ryan noted that they only notice themselves 'switching between languages,' in their words, with the other participants in this study as a function of the group message in focus. Ryan is distinguished from Courtney and Steven as an American participant that has spent two years living and working as an adult in a French-speaking country, whereas the other participants have taken 'study abroad' or other short trips to French-speaking countries for a total of much less time and not as a member of the working population. Ryan described the profound importance of the use of French resources to significant relationships in their life that were forged during their time in France and the following tendency to employ 'only' French while speaking with certain people, stating that "[their] relationships with some people that are very close to [them] now have been founded in French." The concept of an important relationship or an event being 'founded in' or entwined with a certain set of linguistic resources highlights the essential personal element in an individual's language practices. Amandine expressed a similar sentiment to Ryan about relationships being rooted in certain linguistic environments or resources. In describing their relationship with their romantic partner, Amandine explained that, while the partner has some knowledge of French, "it's a little weird to speak French with [their partner]" because the two "met in English." In the memories and sentiments of these speakers, they each describe clear associations between important relationships, stages in life, and events and the linguistic resources associated with them; there is a known and inextricable link between the personal histories of these participants and their language practices.

Each of the speakers Steven, Ryan, Manon, and Amandine also recognized their tendencies of employing the most accurate linguistic resources available to express certain thoughts, regardless of what language those resources 'belong' to. Manon held the view that members of the group message in focus will typically match the language that was used to begin a conversation or, specifically on the topic of coursework, that corresponds to the language of instruction of a certain course. However, they also noted that they and the other participants will answer questions with whatever linguistic resources will provide a more 'detailed' answer. Amandine provided an in-depth explanation of the use of different linguistic resources depending on context or need:

> I like to include some French, or even some other of-- um, some Spanish or German, when some concepts are just simply not available in one language's-- one language but available in another. In that case, if I'm with someone that understands all these languages, I can use some of these concepts, or even if I'm not with someone that speaks these language [sic], I tend to try to explain them cause it-- they're just some things that you cannot express exactly the same in English, or in French, and I just really like expressing exactly what I mean. And so for me, different languages are different tools to do that basically.

This level of awareness and intentionality in their language practices provides a significant example of the resources, or 'tools,' that multilinguals can draw from in order to create meaning and how multilinguals conceive of these resources. From a translanguaging perspective on multilingual language practices, all the resources held in the linguistic repertoire act as tools, ready to be selected for use depending on what the speaker perceives as being most appropriate for the specific communicative context. The above statement by Amandine, especially, and the observations by other participants in this study reinforce the instrumental view of the unitary linguistic repertoire posited in translanguaging research and refute more traditional views of multilingualism as modular, separate competencies. In addition, this statement and similar attitudes of the other participants include interesting ramifications for comparisons drawn between

different types of multilinguals and their respective language practices. As all of the participants in this study can be considered elective bilinguals, their use of linguistic resources as tools to negotiate meaning, irrespective of the language they 'belong' to, points to evidence that multilingual language users considered to elective or circumstantial in origin do not use or conceive of their linguistic repertoires all that differently.

4.1.2 Participants' Translanguaging Motivations

Motivation has a long history of study in bi- and multilingualism as well as SLA research (see §2.3.2 for a discussion on motivation). For the purposes of this analysis, translanguaging motivations refer to forces, both internal and external, that promote an individual's translanguaging practices. In §4.1.1, Amandine is described as making a connection between academic settings and their tendency to employ French resources in those settings due to their personal educational history. While this connection points first toward a relationship between one's lived experiences and the linguistic resources they associate with those experiences, Amandine also characterizes French as sounding more "posh" and "more … intellectual and high class," in line with common cultural stereotypes about the link between the French language and high social status or regard. Courtney reports a similar attitude towards their use of French resources: "when I speak French, I feel a lot more, like, … it feels more, like, refined and exciting, as opposed to … my little hillbilly English that I talk with my parents." It is rather striking that participants of both French and American backgrounds connect with this stereotype and recognize it as influencing their language practices. These feelings are in line both with common stereotypes on the unrefined nature of American English and a higher regard towards French. In addition, these feelings seem to indicate the oft cited perception in multilingual language use that one will gain cultural capital by speaking a certain language over another. Speakers that are considered to be

elective bilinguals in the sense of Valdés and Figueroa (1994) are sometimes characterized as 'elite' bilinguals and contrasted with 'folk' bilinguals in order to highlight this drive towards gaining cultural and social capital through language proficiency (Liddicoat 1991).

Like Valdés and Figueroa (1994)'s depiction of elective and circumstantial bilingualism, this distinction is not compatible with the translanguaging perspective's view of the non-modular, unitary repertoire. However, the distinction serves to characterize social perceptions of multilingualism that affect the actual language practices of speakers. 'Elite' bilinguals are described by Liddicoat (1991) as people who become bilingual through both their free choice to learn a language and in a formal, often academic environment, and 'elite bilingualism' is recounted as being highly valued and seen as cultural enrichment and a mark of learning and intelligence. 'Folk bilingualism,' on the other hand, refers to speakers that emerge as bilinguals due to practical contact with speakers of certain languages (Liddicoat 1991). Compounded with societal stereotypes of certain languages like those previously described for French and English, the desire to be perceived as intelligent, well educated, worldly, as a global citizen, and more qualities in the same vein act as driving forces in both the quest to learn a new language and to display oneself as a speaker of multiple languages. Pressure is added also from the primarily academic environments in which 'elite' or 'elective' multilinguals acquire new linguistic resources, as the academic world defines success as being graded on a scale from completely imperfect to completely perfect. Thus, multilingual speakers of these backgrounds may be especially driven to reach what they perceive as native proficiency in their 'learned' language. When asked if they have ever asked the participants of French background for language-related help, Courtney emphatically answered yes, citing their reasoning as wanting to sound as 'native' as possible and to "have all the little things" that they associate with native speech, such as native-like pronunciation and slang terms. Courtney

self-identified as possessing the lowest proficiency in their non-native language among each of the participants in the study, indicating the perception of weakness in their own language abilities. So-called 'native speaker norms,' usually referring to pronunciation or proficiency goals of language learners to match the perceived linguistic norms of native speakers of a target language, are a well-established motivational factor in second language acquisition and language education research (e.g., Timmis 2002; Szymańska-Tworek 2013). The goal to become the product of a combination of two or more native speaker competencies in one's pursuit of multilingualism reflects older models of additive bilingualism, and much of the translanguaging research cited in Chapter 2 has refuted such views. However, translanguaging practices have been recognized in pedagogical research as facilitating the language development of emergent multilinguals thus plausibly might facilitate the development of multilinguals considered elective or elite if the language user is motivated to increase their command of certain linguistic resources. This type of translanguaging motivation explicitly held by Courtney and, in the author's experience, held by many multilinguals who gained access to linguistic resources through learning an additional language in an academic setting will be further analyzed in accordance with the actual translanguaging practices of the study participants later in this chapter.

4.1.3 Participants' Linguistic Identities

Related to translanguaging motivations, individuals' linguistic identities and their role in translanguaging practices encompass a highly significant and circular space in that they are relevant both in how they influence translanguaging practices and how they are shaped, built, and developed through those practices.

Several of the speakers connected patterns in their own language practices with **personality and emotionality**. Manon provided an interesting insight into the sensation of a

change in personality depending on the linguistic resources used and communicative context. They expressed that, at their core, they remain the same person, but that they possess certain traits "in English" that they do not have "in French." Namely, they believe they are "more shy in French" than in English. Even though Steven stated that they are confident in explaining themselves using French or English, they notice themselves employing more English resources in "really emotional moment[s]." In such cases, Steven states that they "would rather speak in English, because [they] feel like … even if [they are] saying the same thing in French, it just feels more personal in--in English because that's [their] … mother tongue." This statement both provides insight into the constitution of the linguistic identity of the speaker and how certain linguistic resources can be deeply interwoven with emotions. In terms of their emotionality, Amandine emphasizes the importance of the sense of ownership over one's linguistic resources and the ramifications of this feeling of ownership for their identity. After expressing that they feel "more in sync" with their emotions when they speak English rather than French, they reasoned that this may be because "English is the language that [they have] chosen" despite it not being their "birth language." They also suggested that, regarding some contentious familial relationships, they might "find some type of … escape in English." Amandine also emphasized that they feel more "in sync" with themselves as well as feeling more "like" themselves while speaking English, indicating a deep significance of their adopted linguistic identity. In describing the importance of their continuing to live and work in an English-speaking environment, even if they were to return to France, Amandine also makes the connection between their "mental health" and speaking English; besides noting that they "feel better" while speaking English, they described their relationship with English as a "love story." That participants Amandine and Steven feel inversely about their emotionality with respect to their language proficiencies is rather striking. For Steven, they connected their emotionality to

their 'mother tongue,' whereas Amandine connected their emotionality to their 'chosen' language. This emphasis on choice, ownership, and self represents an interesting aspect of the identity of elective or academically founded multilingual language users. Those who choose to pursue multilingualism and do so in an academic environment may encounter more difficulty in claiming ownership over linguistic resources than those who consider it their mother tongue. Unable to reach perfect 'native-like' proficiency, there may be reluctance to feel ownership over a language in which they do not consider themselves to be fully realized speakers.

For the participants in this study, another consistent parallel drawn between the importance of their language use and their identities was the ability to **bridge transnational and transcultural space** through the use of certain linguistic resources. Ryan, who spent around two years living and working in a French-speaking country, stated that their French proficiency is an important part of their identity because of the time that they have spent studying and "mastering" the language and the relationships that they forged while living in a French-speaking country. In Ryan's view, French is important to their identity because "it represents half of [their] life." Participant Manon, who had lived in the United States for approximately four and a half years at the time of interviewing, alluded to a similar bridging of space in their linguistic identity, but also with some complications. In describing other peoples' perceptions of them, they noted that people in the United States "see [them] as French" and they are "proud … to be saying that [they are] French whenever somebody asks [them] about my accent and where [they are] from." When they have had the chance to return to France, they noticed that "people there don't know what [their] life looks like here, so it's like -- on both sides, there are parts of [them] that people don't know." Reiterating the importance of ownership observed by Amandine, Manon remarked that "both countries and both languages feel like they are [theirs] and it's [their] home and stuff, but at the

same time they don't." As described in Kim (2018), 'transnational' refers to "individuals whose daily experiences and identity construction are significantly affected by the relationships and institutions both in their country of living and country of origin" (2018: 41). Possessing a transnational identity is a complex and constant process of negotiating different aspects of oneself with perceived connections and disconnections between different aspects of the country of living and country of origin. In past studies on the translanguaging practices of transnational individuals such as Kim (2018) and with the idea of the Translanguaging Space described by Wei (2011), translanguaging practices have been shown to be a means of bridging transnational space and constructing identity by utilizing resources and going beyond the bounds of 'named' languages and political borders. Ryan's and Manon's connections of certain linguistic resources and geographical regions to their identities represents the potential for their translanguaging practices to be driven by their senses of self and transnational people and to be used as a mode of reconciling some of the complexity that comes with possessing a transnational identity.

4.1.4 Participants' Digital Language Practices

Participants' attitudes towards digital literacy practices provide another window onto their language use over digital communication media that is the focus of this study. When asked about their digital language practices, Steven noted that, in addition to using a less formal register while text messaging, they feel more comfortable making language-related mistakes while texting. They also recognized less of a tendency to correct themselves or check their grammar while texting as opposed to speaking. Amandine expressed a similar level of freedom in their digital language practices, stating that they feel "more free when [they] write texts to in the middle of a sentence switch to English or switch to French" and that they feel more comfortable incorporating what they perceive to be mixed language into digital communication as opposed to speech. Amandine

stated that they do sometimes perceive themselves as 'switching' between languages in speech, but that it feels "less natural and more weird" and think that others would also perceive those spoken language practices as 'weird.' Amandine then remarked that what they consider to be the main distinction between their oral and digitally written speech is the feeling that they are "way more free to do whatever and to put whatever comes first" in terms of language resources, whether they perceive those to 'belong' to English or French. These attitudes towards digital communication suggest that DMC constitutes a Translanguaging Space where speakers potentially feel more comfortable using all of the resources at their disposal and thus exhibit more creative translanguaging potential than they do while using spoken language. As translanguaging is a highly creative practice that relies on going beyond traditionally assumed borders between languages and resources employed in communication, the feeling of increased linguistic freedom connected with DMC should positively facilitate translanguaging practices and the language development and identity creation that results from those practices.

4.2 Digital Translanguaging Practices: WhatsApp Data

Communication between interlocutors is a collaborative process and translanguaging is no exception to this fact. Beyond the personal attitudes, motivations, and backgrounds that individuals bring into a translanguaging interaction, their language practices must be observed as part of a greater, shared communicative context. For the participants in this study, each individual has regularly engaged in larger, collaborative translanguaging exchanges through the digital medium of the WhatsApp group message. To begin this section, an extension to translanguaging theory is offered that accounts for the specific language practices which occur while engaging in translanguaging through the use of DMC. This section of the chapter and its subsections then focus on participants' actual digital translanguaging practices as they pertain to identity creation, the use

of semiotic resources, language development, and innovation in language use. The findings outlined throughout this second portion of the chapter serve to characterize the multilingual language practices of this academically centered group of multilinguals and to provide insight into unrestricted, casual translanguaging practices in DMC.

4.2.1 Digital Translanguaging Space

The idea of 'Translanguaging Space,' a social space created by the bringing together of the identities, personal histories, beliefs, attitudes, and cognitive and physical abilities of multilinguals, was developed by Wei (2011) as a manner of describing space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging. I propose an extension of the idea of Translanguaging Space in order to describe the unique communicative characteristics of the 'Digital Translanguaging Space.' The Digital Translanguaging Space encompasses all of the essential aspects of the Translanguaging Space but accounts for the unique innovative and creative potential for language practices carried out using digital communicative media. In comparison to the communicative resources drawn upon in face-to-face communication, the Digital Translanguaging Space offers both overlapping and different affordances to multilingual language users; these affordances include semiotics and multimodal communication, creative choices in orthography or characters, and more. In the following discussion I highlight the distinct nature of digital translanguaging practices using illustrative data from my findings.

4.2.2 Identity Creation in Digital Translanguaging

One of the most well-established purposes and outcomes of translanguaging practices is the construction of a language user's multilingual identity. As multilingual language users forge a Translanguaging Space, the users' particular language practices serve to experiment with and index different aspects of their identity. As previously described in §4.1.3, one potential objective

in translanguaging practices is the building and preserving of transnational identity. The following exchange between the participants Ryan and Amandine represents an interesting negotiation of Ryan's transnational identity.

> Amandine: Je suis sûre que c'est le genre de phrase que [name] pourrait te sortir, c'est limite si j'entends pas sa voix dans ma tête parfois XD
>
> Ryan: 😂
>
> Steven: 😂😂😂
>
> Ryan: [Amandine] tes cheveux commenceront bientôt à devenir gris
>
> Amandine: (GIF)
>
> Ryan: et puis un matin tu te regarderas dans le miroir et op! Tu seras devenue Dr [name]
>
> Ryan: (Also I absolutely LOVE Tatiana Maslany ^^)
>
> Amandine: Saaaame! She's amazing 😍
>
> Amandine: Did you watch Orphan Black?
>
> Ryan: Yesssss. Amazing amazing
>
> Ryan: Also if you're interested you should listen to the French of Évelyne Brochu, l'actrice qui joue Delphine dans la série. She's canadienne and I find her accent really interesting
>
> Amandine: I didn't finish it (I think I saw the first 2 or 3 seasons) but I really liked it

In the fourth message in the string sent by Ryan, they address Amandine and say the equivalent of 'your hair will soon begin to turn grey,' which is a humorous way of saying that a person is undergoing a significant enough deal of stress that it would lead to their hair turning grey. In a subsequent message, Ryan follows up by saying 'and then one morning you will look at yourself in the mirror and *op!* You will have become Dr. [name].' The expression *op* /ʌp/, otherwise spelled as *hop*, is an interjection common in conversational French that communicates some sort of finished action or exclamation and is comparable to the English 'there you go' or 'bingo.' The cultural competence necessary to properly employ this expression is actively displayed by Ryan

and is likely a means of indexing the participant's adopted French identity. The GIF utilized in this exchange by Amandine depicts an animation of a woman imitating the facial expressions of different emoticons which appear in sequence during the animation. From the response by Ryan, the woman depicted in the GIF is presumed to be Tatiana Maslany, a Canadian actress who had breakout success with her role in the film *Orphan Black*. Ryan's demonstration of their cultural knowledge of this actress as well as providing suggestions to Amandine on the interesting French speech of another actress appears to be an additional manner of asserting themselves as possessing advanced French-language cultural knowledge. In asserting this knowledge, Ryan both exemplifies their transnational identity and situates themselves on equal cultural ground with a 'native' French speaker.

For participants Amandine and Courtney, their use of the colloquial pronoun *y'all*, a contraction of *you* and *all* characteristic to the speech style of the southeastern United States, was specifically used to negotiate the participants' southeastern United States identities. The direction of identity creation, however, was inverted between the two participants. For Amandine, the use of *y'all* was a means of integrating and constructing their adopted southeastern United States identity into their lived French roots and experiences, and for Courtney, the use of *y'all* was integrated into a string of French resources in order to index their southeastern United States identity against their adopted French identity. In the language practices of Amandine, their use of *y'all* was situated solely within their use of English linguistic resources. As Amandine has described a deep entanglement between their emotionality, self, and wellbeing and their use of English (see §4.1.3), the choice to utilize a word form that is highly significant and particular to the speech of the southeastern United States appears to be an extension of their linguistic identity to not only encompass the use of English but also the identifying linguistic factors of the specific

region that is their adopted home. Courtney, on the other hand, utilizes *y'all* both in strings of solely English linguistic resources as well as integrated into strings of French resources. The most interesting use of *y'all* by Courtney is depicted in the following two example messages. In the context of making plans in the weeks surrounding the Halloween holiday, Courtney sent to the group *Je sais que c'est tôt, mais est-ce que yall voulez aller chez moi pour "pumpkin carving" le weekend 2-5oct? J'ai un kit des petit* [sic] *coûteux! Et je peux cusiner!*, which equates to 'I know that it's early, but do *y'all* want to come to my house for "pumpkin carving" the weekend 2-5oct? I have a kit of little knives! And I can cook!.' In a later conversation also describing plans to meet as a group, Courtney sent to the group *Comme yall voulez! Juste ditez* [sic] *moi* 👍🏻, which equates to 'As *y'all* want! Just tell me' followed by an emoticon showing a hand giving a thumbs-up gesture. In both of these messages, the use of *y'all* is followed by a conjugated French verb. In the second example message, *y'all* is integrated into a phrase very common in conversational French, *comme vous voulez* 'as you want.' The situation of the form *y'all* which contains cultural and linguistic significance unique to the southeastern United States against French resources, and especially a phrase so common in French conversational speech, appears to be a manner of using the creative translanguaging potential available in the Digital Translanguaging Space in order to communicate and index their hybrid identity. In addition to communicating their membership to the specific region of the United States where the university and the participants are located, the speaker is also including reference to the region of the United States where they have grown up and have spent the majority of their lives. In describing the importance of their language practices to their identity, Courtney noted that "being bilingual … is a big deal for [them]," and creative utterances like those included above are a clear means of establishing their multilingual identity while also including reference to their linguistic and cultural background.

For elective multilingual language users like the participants in this study, establishing multilingual identity is presumably a critical process. Circumstantial multilingual language users may possess various relationships from early childhood with their multilingual identity that stem from different cultural practices within the home, engaging in creative use of the heritage language linguistic resources with family or other community members, or having navigated their educational endeavors as an emergent multilingual. However, elective multilingual language users that have acquired many of their 'learned' linguistic resources in an artificial environment like a classroom will likely not feel the same type of identification with or ownership over their multilingual identity. This gap in multilingual and multicultural experience and identity for elective multilinguals must be bridged in some manner in order for speakers to be able to explore, experiment with, and construct their own multilingual identity. The free, unregulated nature of the Digital Translanguaging Space and the examples of identity creation in the dataset represent promising evidence for the salience of the Digital Translanguaging Space for identity creation, especially for academically centered multilingual language users.

4.2.3 Use of Semiotic Resources in Digital Translanguaging

Three principal types of image-based semiotic resources were employed frequently in the group message data: images, emoticons, and GIFs. Emoticons, or 'emotion icons,' are pictorial representations typically of facial expressions, but also possibly of embodiments of humans performing certain actions, objects, animals, plants, symbols, and more. They are a widely acknowledged resource employed in DMC or 'text-based' communication (Aldunate & González-Ibáñez 2017). Emoticons can be communicated as either combinations of punctuation marks, such as parentheses, colons, and semicolons, or as small images that are available as typable characters in a stream of digital writing. Sets of emoticons are now commonly available as 'keyboards' that

can be downloaded onto mobile phones and both accessed and used in text in the same manner as an alphabetical keyboard. Emoticons enable greater emotional expressiveness in the absence of contextual, social, and other expressive information typically conveyed in spoken language interactions; they also have been shown to affect decisions, moods, and perspectives regarding a conversation (Aldunate & González-Ibáñez 2017). A GIF, whose three letters stand for Graphics Interchange Format, is a type of image file that allows for both animated and static images. Within the context of this study, GIF will refer specifically to instances of animated images, which sometimes include text affixed onto the image. Tolins and Samermit (2016) found that GIFs in DMC, GIFs are utilized by interlocutors as "affective responses displaying their stance toward prior talk or as co-text demonstrations of affect and action" in order to reproduce meaning that does not require demonstration in face-to-face communication (2016: 75). In order to convey and negotiate meaning that may otherwise be communicated by embodied actions, facial expressions, tone of voice, or other factors typically available in spoken communication, speakers creatively intersperse semiotic resources like GIFs and emoticons both to create communicative events that successfully convey as much meaning as would be conveyed in a spoken context and to create meaning that is unique to the digital communicative context. In addition, the use of such semiotic resources as integrated with linguistic resources in a way that is meaningful to one's audience reflects a measure of communicative competence specific to DMC. Examples of this specialized competence recur throughout the study data and seem to indicate an additional level of communicative freedom in Digital Translanguaging Space.

Within the group messaging data, over 1100 instances of use of the three principal types of image-based semiotic resources were identified. Certain individuals were more prone to the use of images, GIFS, and emoticons than others. The frequency of use of image-based semiotic

resources across the five participants was calculated by dividing the number of image-based semiotic resources (images, GIFS, and individual emoticons) used by the total number of tokens attested by each participant. This distribution, given in instances per 1000 tokens, is represented in Figure 1.

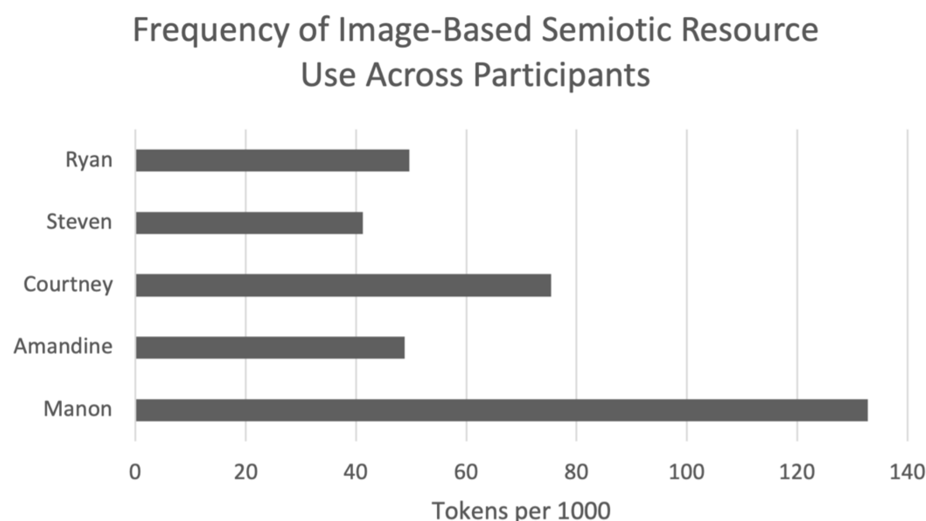

Figure 1: Frequency of image-based semiotic resource use across participants.

While the frequency of use differed among the participants, their language practices as individuals and as members of a group showed substantial evidence for the use of image-based semiotics as a manner of negotiating meaning in translanguaging interactions. One interesting trend surrounding the use of GIFs by the participants was in the language information contained in each respective GIF. No matter the linguistic resources being employed by the other individuals in the group message during any particular interaction, all GIFs sent by the participants either included no language information or solely English resources. It is unclear whether this was a conscious choice made by the participants or if this pattern was a result of only 'English-language' GIFs being available to the participants at the time of the interaction. Regarding the other linguistic resources

surrounding the use of GIFs, emoticons, or images, there was no apparent trend in the use of semiotics that favored French over English resources or vice versa.

Throughout the group message data, each type of image-based semiotic resource was shown to serve distinct communicative purposes. As previously noted, unfortunately many of the images in the group message data were omitted in the download process and could not be recovered. Nevertheless, 22 images were left available in the data set. Analysis showed that their primary purpose in communication was to exemplify situations or provide proof or direct reference of an event that occurred outside of the conversation at hand. Frequently, the images included in the dataset were screenshots, or a photo taken directly of the digital display on a computer or mobile phone, of emails between the participants and their professors, photos of materials related to the academic courses that the participants are a part of, or photos taken of computer screens during remote, digital course lectures conducted over a video conferencing platform. The images in the dataset also included photos of the group of participants, participants' pets and family members, and different objects that the participants were in contact with (i.e., a box with bags of candy ordered from France, or photos of the meals that they were eating). Images related to the academic courses shared by the participants were often used in order to assist the other group members when they posed questions about the courses they shared. In DMC, interlocutors are not able to make the physical gestures. In a text messaging application such as Whatsapp, they must also be fairly economical in the amount of text they include in messages due to character limits and acceptable norms of texting communication. The use of images as assisting with questions posed by other interlocutors situates the image in focus and serves to exemplify the meaning that the interlocutor is attempting to create without the use of physical gestures or face-to-face contact. The photos shared of family members, pets, and other objects available to the participants also

served the purpose of exemplifying what the participants aimed to communicate, but they also seemed to act as bonding social capital (Putnam 2000), building interpersonal relationships with the other participants. One of the particular qualities of this group message and the study participants is that the students first met each other at a time of online instruction for the university due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In addition to having a majority of courses taught remotely over a digital classroom platform, each of the participants in this study were also employed as graduate teaching assistants at the university, teaching lower-level courses in their department. As several of the participants were new to the university when the group message was initiated, it is not surprising that some of them characterized their relationship during their interviews with the other participants as being close because of their collective unusual university experience. As Steven puts it, "[they] feel like [the group has] opened up more because of … all the circumstances, so in their texting, … [they are] kind of more willing to say stuff that maybe people who've first met each other might not have off the bat." The participants' choices to send photos of family members, pets, and of personal objects appears to be a means of creating or supplementing the closeness in the group by recreating an event that happened outside of the group message that the sender desires to include the other participants in.

Compared with the limited number of images in the extant data, the use of emoticons and GIFs appeared to be a greater source of creative potential, context demonstration, and the construction of meaning. The use of emoticons and GIFS were particularly important for communicating emotionality in the text and exemplifying what would be embodied as expressions or actions in face-to-face communication. Emoticons showing facial expressions were frequently utilized throughout the text, and they were typically utilized following a string of linguistic resources to provide emotional context to a texted utterance. This use of emoticons to provide

emotional context is well accounted for in recent research (Aldunate & González-Ibáñez 2017), but the most interesting use of emoticons was to represent embodied expressions or actions. Two examples in the data were especially salient in this respect and represent the same manner of use consistent throughout the data. In immediate succession and during an active conversation, Steven sent to the group message a GIF with no text showing an infant falling face-forward with its eyes closed on a couch followed by a message reading *Moi pendant chaque classe* 'me during each class.' Both from context and from the content of the GIF and following message, this communicative combination can be presumed to signify boredom or exhaustion with the course that the participants were discussing. This construction of a personal referent or description in conjunction with a GIF represents a highly creative method of meaning construction that greatly relies on the information communicated by the semiotic resource. A similar construction was used by Ryan within the same conversation and only several minutes after the messages sent by Steven. The message sent by Ryan read *Like when he's trying his darndest to figure out the drawing tools on the whiteboard and he's angrily like Non c'est pas ça! I'm just like* 🏃 , where the French information in the phrase equates to 'no that's not it' and the emoticon employed shows a human dressed in athletic clothing in the process of running. Within the conversational context of participants' irritation with the professor's unfamiliarity with classroom technology, this message appears to describe the participant's desire to 'run away' from the situation in focus. The use of an emoticon following a personal referent as communicating indispensable meaning in the same manner previously described with a GIF represents an exceptionally creative means of meaning construction through the combination of linguistic and semiotic resources.

Following Lin (2019) and Wu and Lin (2019), these instances of meaning construction where linguistic and semiotic resources are equally responsible in an interlocutor's communication

are best viewed as instances of trans-semiotizing, a theoretical extension to the translanguaging framework that aims to emphasize language as being deeply entangled with other types of communicative resources, especially image- and symbol-based semiotics. These instances of multimodal communication also represent a method of meaning construction totally unique to DMC. Whereas embodied expressions and actions are readily available to interlocutors engaging in face-to-face communication, the adaptation of humans in order to communicate comparably and meaningfully over DMC has led to creative and innovative use of resources like emoticons, GIFs, and images that take different constructions and communicative processes than their embodied counterparts. The original intention of the creation of such resources was likely to create equivalent meaning in digital language as in spoken language, but practices in translanguaging and meaning creation that take advantage of such semiotic resources have been shown in this study to foster language practices that are unique to the digital space.

4.2.4 Digital Translanguaging for Language Development

For multilingual speakers like the participants in this study that acquired many of their 'second language' linguistic resources in an academic environment, Digital Translanguaging Space may be a vital resource to their language development and especially to their development of creative language use. From the interview data as described in §4.1.4, several of the participants noted an increase in comfort and freedom in employing their entire linguistic and semiotic repertoire over digital communication as opposed to in spoken language; these sentiments and prior evidence for translanguaging practices facilitating language development described in Chapter 2 pose a promising possibility for Digital Translanguaging Space as a communicative context that allows multilingual development and creativity to emerge where it otherwise would not in more heavily regulated contexts.

Participant Courtney both self-reported and was indicated by several of the other participants as having the weakest French proficiency among group participants. With this in mind, Courtney also exhibited ostensibly the most complex strings of French and English linguistic resources within the same text utterance. One of their messages reads *Pour demain: the parking in downtown est nulle donc yall pouvez garer au campus et je peut* [sic] *conduire a toi, yall can park in this lot by me for 5$, et aussi i can come get yall from home easily!*😄 , where the entire string in English would equate to 'For tomorrow: the parking in downtown sucks so y'all can park on campus and I can drive to you, y'all can park in this lot by me for 5$, and also I can come get y'all from home easily!' followed by an emoticon showing a smiling facial expression. There are several notable aspects to this message. As compared to the other messages in the dataset, this string of linguistic resources includes the most complex combination of French and English resources and constitutes an excellent example of the free and creative selection of resources characteristic to translanguaging episodes. In addition, the colloquial pronoun *y'all* is used as the subject to the conjugated form of the French verb *pouvoir* 'to be able to,' which has been previously characterized in this chapter as indexing the participant's 'adopted' French identity alongside their southeastern American identity. Utterances with similarly complex strings of French and English resources as well as the use of *y'all* integrated with French resources were attested by Courtney throughout the dataset. When such creative messages were sent by Courtney, there was only one instance in which another participant communicated that they did not quite understand what Courtney was trying to communicate, which leads to the broader finding that highly creative utterances like these are acceptable and meaningful in a casual Digital Translanguaging Space. For multilingual speakers like the participants in this study, the creative use of linguistic resources without regard to what language specific resources 'belong' to has been

described by Steven as not "permissible" in an academic environment. To this end, multilinguals likely do not encounter the potential to exercise and develop creative language practices if their use of particular linguistic resources is restricted to a regulated, academic environment. It is not possible to ascertain whether these practices contributed to development in the language use or faculty of the speaker in the context of this study, but the exhibited freedom of Courtney in the Digital Translanguaging Space and the attitudes of Steven and Amandine clearly demonstrate the potential of the practice of digital translanguaging as a way for multilinguals to explore, test out, and eventually develop their creative translanguaging practices.

4.2.5 Linguistic Innovation in Digital Translanguaging

In addition to the development of creative multilingual language practices, translanguaging practices also allow for the innovative use of language that transcends traditionally assumed parameters between 'named' languages and both cultural and national spaces. Innovative uses of language have already been described throughout this chapter, including the use of the pronoun *y'all* integrated with French linguistic resources and the meaningful and uniquely digital constructs of linguistic and semiotic resources. In addition, the cultural fusion created by the different backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences of the group message participants facilitated the creation of novel forms. One of the most salient novel forms attested in the dataset was the form *catifier*, which was first attested by Amandine and written within quotation marks likely to communicate that the form was novel or unusual in some way. After Manon requested clarification in the next message by sending simply *Catifier ?*🤔 , including an emoticon that showed an inquisitive facial expression, Ryan responded with a formal definition: *Catifier: rendre un environ plus agréable à un chat* '*catifier*: make an environment more suitable for a cat.' The French morpheme *-ifier* is comparable to the English morpheme *-ify*, which is defined by Dictionary.com

as a verbal suffix meaning 'to make,' 'to cause to be,' or 'to render.' The construction of the novel *catifier* appears to be the combination of the morphemes *cat* and *-ifier*, which are both traditionally associated with the separate languages English and French, respectively. Including the French *chat* 'cat' would have resulted in the phonetically and structurally similar form *chatifier*, and there thus appears to be no pronunciational or orthographical cost in including *chat* rather than *cat*. The choice to include morphological structure from what are often treated as two separate languages represents the participant's active choice to transcend barriers between 'named' languages in their experimental, inventive translanguaging practice. The result is a novel form that holds hybrid linguistic and cultural significance. In addition, the collaborative construction of meaning of this form was a striking instance of cooperative translanguaging practices and provides insight into the meaning making potential of groups of multilingual language users.

An additional innovative form included in the dataset was attested in a message sent by participant Courtney. In a conversational context where the participants were discussing their frustrations with a professor's lack of response to their emails, Courtney sent *Il m'a ghosté aussi* 😅 'He ghosted me too' followed by an emoticon of a smiling facial expression with a bead of sweat coming down the face, evidently used to communicate exasperation or frustration. The novel form, *ghosté*, appears to be past participle form of a verb *ghoster* that was constructed using the English morpheme *ghost* and the French verb ending *-er*; from this verbal structure, the novel form is suspected to be equitable to the English form 'to ghost.' *Ghosting*, which has been recognized by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is a relatively new form that originated among young American adults in the Millennial and Generation Z generations to describe the practice of immediately cutting off all contact with another person by no longer accepting their phone calls, messages, social media postings, or other forms of contact, and is typically associated with

romantic partners. It is unlikely that the use of this form as combined with morphological structure typically associated with French was first attested or originated in the group message in focus as social media has largely increased global access to novel linguistic forms. Even so, the roots of this form in digital language, the culture of the generation of which these speakers are members, and digital communication and the seamless acceptance of this form by the other group message participants resulted in an interesting fusion of linguistic, digital, and young adult culture. As shown throughout this chapter with other innovative constructs and forms, the Digital Translanguaging Space presents an exceptionally unrestrained environment for the creative and experimental use of linguistic and semiotic resources.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter begins with a summary of the study outlined in this paper as well as several essential takeaways from its findings, especially focusing on the potential of the Digital Translanguaging Space and the patterns of identity creation, creativity, innovation, and negotiation of meaning present in the participants' digital translanguaging practices. The following section describes some limitations encountered during the study that may have restricted the scope of its findings. The final two sections outline some further avenues for study to build on the findings described in Chapter 4 and the pedagogical implications of those findings.

5.1 Summary and Essential Findings

Findings from this study shed light on different means of identity creation through digital translanguaging, on the various types of linguistic and image-based semiotic resources employed over digital communication or Digital Translanguaging Space in order to create meaning, and on the digital translanguaging practices of academically centered multilinguals. This section focuses on three major areas of these findings which are essential in characterizing the digital translanguaging practices of the study participants. The first subsection touches on the proposed theoretical concept of the Digital Translanguaging Space and the unique communicative practices that can be attributed to this space. The latter subsections summarize two areas of meaningful takeaways from the participants' digital translanguaging practices and the importance of these individuals' practices as a heterogeneous group of academically centered multilingual language users.

5.1.1 Digital Translanguaging Space

In §4.2.1 and throughout the second section of Chapter 4, I proposed and discussed an extension of the idea of Translanguaging Space in order to describe the unique communicative characteristics of translanguaging practices in DMC. The Digital Translanguaging Space encompasses all of the essential aspects of the Translanguaging Space as proposed by Wei (2011), but accounts for the unique innovative and creative potential for language practices carried out using digital communicative media. In comparison to the communicative resources drawn upon in face-to-face communication, the Digital Translanguaging Space offers both overlapping and different affordances to multilingual language users. The affordances that were taken advantage of in the WhatsApp dataset include semiotics and multimodal communication, creative choices in orthography or characters, and increased freedom in the creative and innovative use of language without the fear of repercussions associated with making prescriptive errors in an academic or other formal setting. Perhaps the most salient of these qualities is the increased feeling of freedom in language practices within the Digital Translanguaging Space, which was remarked on by several of the participants (see §4.1.4). These attitudes towards digital communication suggest that DMC constitutes a Translanguaging Space where speakers potentially feel more comfortable using all of the resources at their disposal and thus exhibit more creative translanguaging potential than they do while using spoken language. Through discussion of the digital language practices of the participants, it is clear that DMC and the translanguaging practices that occur while using it are unambiguously different in type and quality from translanguaging practices in a face-to-face communicative context. There is thus a previously understudied area of multilingual language practices that can be clarified and built upon through the adoption of Digital Translanguaging Space as a theoretical concept.

5.1.2 Digital Translanguaging Practices: Identity and Emotionality

Through investigation of the five participants' digital language practices over a group text message, several areas of the findings stand out in the characterization of multilingual language practices. The first area of takeaways references the relationship between the language user and their language practices, specifically in the link between emotionality, ownership, and language use and means of identity creation. While not an aspect of the WhatsApp data, participants during their interviews consistently made connections between their emotionality, personal relationships, sense of ownership, and feelings of comfort and the use of certain linguistic resources. Each participant that spoke about one of these topics referenced an association between certain emotions, relationships, ownership, or belonging and a specific set of linguistic resources (i.e., English or French). Based on participants' responses, there is a known and inextricable link between the personal histories of these participants and their language practices. Another important pattern of language use that the participants exhibited was performing new aspects of their identities. In particular, two of the participants utilized the pronoun *y'all* in order to index their Southeastern American identity against either a native French or adopted French identity. The native French participant situated this word against other English resources, ostensibly to build up her newly found American, anglophone identity, whereas the American participant situated *y'all* against French verbal constructions, likely as a means of integrating her adopted French, francophone identity into her Southeastern American identity. The attested means of identity creation, which has been noted as a key aspect of translanguaging practice, was especially interesting when situated within the context of these participants as academically centered multilinguals. In past translanguaging and bi- and multilingualism research, multilingual identity has been traditionally seen as the cultural or circumstantial connection between a multilingual

language user and their linguistic repertoire, which has largely left out elective, academically centered multilinguals from the conversation. The means of identity creation shown throughout the WhatsApp dataset highlight the similarities and differences in the relationships that elective, academically centered multilinguals hold with their linguistic repertoires and identities and exemplify some of the creative practices that are used by these multilinguals to establish their identities.

5.1.3 Digital Translanguaging Practices: Meaning Creation and Innovation

The second key area of takeaways references the process of meaning creation through digital translanguaging, especially concerning the use of image-based semiotic resources to create meaning and creative and innovative language practices. The three different types of image-based semiotic resources examined in this study (i.e., images, GIFs, and emoticons) were used in highly creative constructions to create meaning. The most common type of construction used included a declarative sentence and an image-based semiotic resource that represented some embodied action or expression that would not have otherwise been communicated by the linguistic information alone. These instances of multimodal communication represent a method of meaning construction totally unique to DMC, and consequently, to Digital Translanguaging Space. One of the most striking findings concerning the use of image-based semiotic resources was in the linguistic information that they contained; no matter the linguistic resources being employed by the other individuals in the group message during any particular interaction, all GIFs sent by the participants either included no language information or solely English resources. Regarding the linguistic environments that these resources were employed in, there was no apparent trend in which linguistic resources favored the use of image-based semiotics over the other, no matter the type of image-based resource. In addition to the creative use of image-based semiotic resources, the

participants also exhibited innovative language practices which combined resources traditionally attributed to separate languages. The most interesting example of this practice was in the coining of the form *catifier*, the English morpheme *cat* + the French verbal morpheme *-fier* (roughly equivalent to the English verbal morpheme *-ify*) in a collaborative meaning-making event among the participants. While one participant needed clarification on the intended meaning, a participant other than the creator of the term stepped in and offered up a potential meaning which was in turn accepted by the creator and the other participants. In terms of the creative and collaborative potential that is seen when considering forms like *catifier*, the Digital Translanguaging Space appears to be especially suited for this type of innovative language use. With no requirements to meet a prescribed standard and the general acceptance of creative forms by the other participants, and the knowledge that the other participants will engage in order to better their own understanding, the multilingual language users are free—even encouraged—to take risks in their language practices and to exercise all of the resources available to them within their linguistic repertoires.

5.2 Study Limitations

While many interesting translanguaging practices were found in the data, this study also had several limitations. As described in §3.3, one shortcoming of the data collection process was the selective inclusion of certain images in the WhatsApp data exporting function, with no apparent means of recovering these images or matching the respective images to their placements throughout the text. For this reason, the use of images as semiotic resources for constructing meaning could not be investigated to the original degree intended and should be included as a goal in further study of digital translanguaging practices. Another limitation of this study was the lack of concrete measurement of language development that could have been shown as a result of

extended periods of digital translanguaging. This study did not control for any measure of language proficiency other than the self-reported assessments provided by the participants, so additional study would be needed in order to provide quantifiable evidence of any strengthening of participants' language faculties following an extended period of digital translanguaging. However, Courtney's highly creative text utterances combined with their self-reported motivations for language development and willingness to seek out language-related help from other participants provided evidence for the use of creative translanguaging practices as a manner of strengthening one's ease in using certain linguistic resources. Adding a quantifiable component would serve to reinforce these findings.

On a much broader scale, translanguaging research of this kind is somewhat limited in that small groups of individuals are observed. One may not generalize from the language practices of such a small group to the wider and highly diverse population of multilingual language users. This is not so much a weakness of the particular study outlined in this paper, but this point is intended to emphasize the need for future study in order to see whether the findings attested in this paper hold true for other multilingual language users. The unique factors of the individual are paramount in translanguaging research, and it is only with more study that patterns can be observed across speakers with shared factors in order to better understand the forces that influence an individual's translanguaging practices.

5.3 Directions for Future Research

As noted in the previous section, the findings described in this paper present compelling and interesting examples of actual translanguaging practices by a heterogeneous group of multilingual language users; however, like most results, they are in need of further instantiation in future study. Three areas stand out as essential directions for future research: 1) greater elaboration

of Digital Translanguaging Space as a theoretical concept; 2) concrete effects of extended periods of digital translanguaging on the language proficiencies, comfort of use, or creative potential of multilingual language users; and 3) further study of heterogeneous groups of multilinguals and especially academically centered, elective multilinguals.

5.3.1 Establishing the Digital Translanguaging Space

A newly posited concept from the findings of this study is the idea of the Digital Translanguaging Space (see §4.2.1). Future research is needed to determine whether the Digital Translanguaging Space and the unique communicative context it affords are different enough from face-to-face communicative contexts in order to establish a differentiated Translanguaging Space for DMC. In addition, further research and observation is needed in order to characterize the full communicative potential afforded by Digital Translanguaging Spaces. Within the findings of this study, the use of image-based semiotic resources to construct meaning and to create bonding social capital among multilingual peers, the overall different and variable set of resources utilized in DMC, and the noted increased comfort and exemplified tendency of the participants to exercise creativity and innovation in their digital language practices are all positive evidence for the salience of the Digital Translanguaging Space as a unique communicative context that affords different kinds of communicative potential to translanguaging actors than does face-to-face communication. Future study should build on and investigate these positive findings and explore the communicative potential of the Digital Translanguaging Space.

5.3.2 Digital Translanguaging for Language Development: Revisited

A consistent pattern in the results of this study was the increased freedom of innovative and creative language use by the participants. While this study did not control for any level of language proficiency besides the self-reported ratings by the participants, previous work on

pedagogical translanguaging, including in DMC, has shown positive results for language development in emergent multilinguals. From these results and the findings of this study, digital translanguaging practices should positively impact the language proficiencies of multilinguals. The potential for language development through digital translanguaging is an avenue for further research that is essential to explore, as it would afford greater understanding of the mechanisms for multilingual development and would have positive pedagogical implications for the use of digital translanguaging activities in academic environments (this potential will be further discussed in §5.4.1). Increased freedom and communicative potential in the Digital Translanguaging Space, increased comfort in making mistakes, and the acceptability of highly creative forms are promising evidence for the Digital Translanguaging Space as facilitating language development.

5.3.3 Diversity in Multilingual Origins and Experiences in Research

One of the foundational aspects of this study was its focus on both heterogeneous groups of multilinguals and 'nontraditional' multilingual language users (i.e., elective multilinguals that do not necessarily have a cultural connection to their 'learned' language) that have been neglected in past translanguaging research. As exemplified in the study data and in the large body of research on multilingual language users, multilinguals as a population are highly variable in their experiences, origins, identities, motivations, and all other aspects of their multilingualism. By focusing solely on culturally centered or 'circumstantial' bilinguals, an array of motivations for language use, means of identity creation, and language development potential will go unstudied. An essential avenue for further researched based on the findings of this study would be to continue to emphasize the importance of individuals' variable backgrounds to their translanguaging practices and to continue to explore multilinguals of diverse origins and backgrounds without relying on any idealized version of a multilingual language user.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

While this study did not focus on translanguaging practices in an academic environment, findings did have certain implications for translanguaging in the pedagogical sphere. The implementation of digital translanguaging in pedagogy would closely resemble some of the translanguaging practices described in the past research discussed in §2.1.1 and would include structured, planned classroom activities involving DMC where students are encouraged by instructors to utilize the entire breadth of their linguistic and semiotic repertoires. The two most pertinent implications from this study for digital translanguaging in pedagogy were the potential of digital translanguaging for multilingual identity creation in an academic setting and the potential use of digital translanguaging as a tool for language learners. I do not claim to be an expert in pedagogical practice and these implications are not meant as suggestions for any specific type of classroom activity implementation; rather, they serve to shed light on the possible benefits of digital translanguaging practices for emergent and especially academically centered multilingual language users in an academic environment.

One of the possible pitfalls for academically centered multilinguals like the participants in this study is in their development and ownership of multilingual identity. As discussed in §4.1.3, participants expressed a deep connection between their emotionality and their language use, often citing the feeling of ownership over either their mother tongue or their chosen, ‘adopted’ language. While the interviews conducted in this study did not explicitly touch on this question, those who choose to pursue multilingualism and do so in an academic environment may encounter more difficulty in claiming ownership over linguistic resources than those who consider it their mother tongue. Unable to reach perfect ‘native-like’ proficiency, there may be reluctance to feel ownership over a language in which speakers do not consider themselves to be fully realized, ‘fluent’

speakers. In an academic environment, especially in Western culture, the emphasis in a foreign language classroom is often on reaching a standardized level of achievement or perfection in a language that can somehow be quantified and translated into a grading system; however, academic measures of fluency, or even the goal of achieving 'native-like' proficiency, is quite arbitrary and does not reflect a speaker's actual communicative competence in a language. In addition, academically centered multilinguals in monolingual cultures often only have the ability to utilize their 'learned' language within the highly structured environment of the foreign language classroom, where creativity that does not adhere to a prescribed standard is discouraged. With greater freedom, creative potential, and lack of repercussions, digital translanguaging has the ability to aid in the process of multilingual identity creation by allowing academically centered multilinguals to explore their identity and to make mistakes without the pressure of being perfect or meeting a certain standard. The implementation of classroom activities that include a digital translanguaging component has the potential to create a safe space for emergent multilinguals to explore and negotiate their identities and to become creative language users in a way that may not otherwise have been available. To this end, digital translanguaging practices could be an effective and important tool for language learners as a means of developing and strengthening their command of all of the resources available to them for communication.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your name? [to be assigned a pseudonym for data collection/evaluation]
2. What is your home country, and where in that country did you grow up?
3. When did you first arrive at [university]? What do you study?
4. What languages do you speak?
5. What language(s) did you grow up speaking? What language(s) did you speak at home, and what language(s) did you speak at school?
6. (for first language English speakers) How many years (approximately) have you been learning French?
7. (for first language French speakers) How many years (approximately) have you been learning English?
8. In what language have you had the majority of your schooling?
9. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being a beginner and 5 being at the level of a native speaker, please rate your proficiency in English and your proficiency in French.

    1: beginner; 2: can produce minimal grammatical sentences; 3: can hold a conversation; 4: proficient/comfortable or confident conversing with native speakers; 5: level of a native speaker

10. (for first language English speakers) How much time have you spent in French speaking countries, if any?

11. (for first language French speakers) How much time have you spent in English speaking countries?
12. In what contexts do you use French? English? Do you notice any patterns in how you use your languages?
13. What about in your use of digital communication? This can be social media, texting, or anything else you consider to be digital communication.
14. How important is your language (mother tongue or languages you have learned) to your identity? Is it/are they important to your identity?
15. Please describe your relationship with the other participants involved in the study.
16. Do you notice any patterns in how you all speak with each other in terms of your language use?
17. Do you have any additional comments you would like to add about your relationships to the languages you speak?

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTIONS

Manon: Manon was born and spent the majority of their pre-university life in France, and they identified their home region to be the city of Marseille, France. They reported to have spoken exclusively French inside their home while growing up. They had the majority of their pre-university schooling in French with the exception of two high school courses that were taught in English as a part of an elective language program. Their self-reported proficiency in English was at level 5, and they estimated that they had been learning English for 15 years at the time of the interview. The other languages that they reported to have some level of familiarity with (at any point on the 1-5 scale) were German and Japanese. They first arrived in the United States for extended residence in August of 2017 in order to pursue a bachelor's degree, and they had been residing in the United States for about 5.5 years at the time of the interview. Before arriving in the United States in 2017, they had taken several short trips to other English-speaking countries for a maximum of three weeks at a time and for the purpose of tourism. They first arrived at the university where this study was conducted in August of 2020. They are pursuing a Master of Arts degree in French Linguistics.

Amandine: Amandine was born and spent the majority of their pre-university life in France, and they identified their home region to be the city of Lyon, France. They reported to have spoken exclusively French inside their home while growing up and to have received all or the majority of their pre-university schooling in French. Their self-reported proficiency in English was between 4.5 and 5, and they estimated that they had been learning English for 12 years at the time of the

interview. The other languages that they reported to have some level of familiarity with were Spanish, German, and Italian. They first arrived in the United States for extended residence in July of 2019 with the intention of finishing the final year of their master's degree at the university where this study was conducted. Before arriving in the United States in 2019, they had taken several "linguistic trips" in their words to English-speaking countries, including a two-month stay in Ireland as an au pair. At the time of the interview, they had been residing in the United States for 2 years. They are pursuing a PhD in French Literature.

Courtney: Courtney was born and spent the majority of their pre-university life in the United States. They identified their home region as John's Creek, Georgia. They reported to have spoken exclusively English at home while growing up and to have received all or the majority of their pre-university schooling in English. Their self-reported proficiency in French was at level 4, and they estimated that they had been learning French for 12 years at the time of the interview. The other language that they reported to have some level of familiarity with was American Sign Language. They estimated that they had spent a net total of four months in a French-speaking country at the time of the interview, and their purpose for visiting was either for tourism or for academically focused trips in high school and during their undergraduate studies. They arrived at the university where this study was conducted in August of 2020, and they are pursuing a Master of Arts degree in French Linguistics.

Steven: Steven was born and spent the majority of their pre-university life in the United States, and they identified their home region as the Woodstock and Canton area of Georgia. They reported to have spoken exclusively English at home while growing up and to have received all or the majority of their pre-university schooling in English. Their self-reported proficiency in French was at level 5. They estimated to have been learning French for 6.5 years at the time of the interview.

The other language that they reported to have some level of familiarity with was Spanish. They estimated that they had spent a total of six months in a French-speaking country at the time of the interview, and their purpose for visiting was mostly for academically-focused trips during their undergraduate and post-graduate studies. They arrived at the university where this study was conducted in August of 2019, and they are pursuing a PhD in French Literature.

Ryan: Ryan was born in Belgium and moved to the United States at four years of age; they resided for the remainder of their pre-university life in the United States. They identified the United States as their home country and reported their home region to be Augusta, Georgia. They reported to have spoken exclusively English at home while growing up and to have received all or the majority of their pre-university schooling in English. Their self-reported French proficiency was at level 4.5. They estimated to have been learning French for 12 years at the time of the interview, and the other language that they reported to have some level of familiarity with was Hebrew. They estimated to have spent a cumulative total of 2 years in a French-speaking country at the time of the interview, with the majority of that time spent working in an educational environment as a part of the Teaching Assistant Program in France (TAPIF) program. They arrived at the university where this study was conducted in August of 2020, and they are pursuing a Master of Arts degree in French Linguistics.