THE MULTICULTURAL CAFÉ: THE PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF VOLUNTEERING IN A SERVICE LEARNING PLATFORM FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND OR ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
by

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the perspective of immigrants, who are also adult learners of English as an Additional Language (EAL), or English as a Second Language (ESL). This study recognizes that the goal of learning English for immigrants is to be able to converse, connect, and contribute as a valued community member. The hegemonic practice of sequestering newcomers and immigrants into language training classes can further their linguistic and social isolation and marginalization by restricting their access to authentically engage with English speakers in their community. This study investigates how adult immigrant English Language Learners (ELLs) invested in a service learning experience of volunteering for a small non-profit food service business at a local community college can facilitate a connection to the community whereby increasing perceived language skills and confidence. For this study, 10 adult immigrants who speak ESL or EAL participated. The data was collected from a questionnaire, an individual interview, and a focus group. The results revealed three themes pertaining to the social, personal, and transformational realms of learning. The social realm aligned with a sociocultural perspective in which social and cultural capital, bridging and bonding capital, communities of practice, and communities of contribution are highlighted. The personal realm reveals the significance of the affective-emotional aspects of language learning alongside agency and positive identity construction. Finally, this study reveals a connection between service learning and transformational learning. The overall conclusion of this study determines that service learning can be a meaningful endeavour for adult immigrants because it has the potential to transform marginalized voices into valued voices as they connect and contribute community.
Preface

This thesis is an original intellectual product of the author, Tracy Riley. The research reported in Chapters 3 to 5 was conducted through the protocols of The University of British Columbia’s Okanagan Campus Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) under the project title: The Multicultural Café: The Perceived Impacts of Volunteering in a Service Learning Platform from the Perspectives of Adult Learners of English as an Additional Language, Certificate Number: H12-02760. In addition to the protocols of Okanagan College’s Research Ethics Board under the project title: A Multicultural Café – A case study of an alternative service learning model for adult immigrant English language learners in Canada, Certificate Number: 12-022.

As per UBC’s BREB guidelines, the data collection was conducted by Tracy Riley under the guidance of the Principal Investigator and the thesis committee. The committee for this project included:

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- Dr. Vicki Green  
  Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, UBC’s Okanagan Campus

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  Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, UBC’s Okanagan Campus
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREB</td>
<td>Behavioral Research Ethics Board</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Citizenship and Immigration Canada</td>
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<td>CLB</td>
<td>Canadian Language Benchmarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Communities of Practice</td>
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<td>EAL</td>
<td>English as an Additional Language</td>
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<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>ESLSAP</td>
<td>English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
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<td>SLS</td>
<td>Second Language Socialization</td>
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<tr>
<td>TESOL</td>
<td>Teaching English as a Second or Other Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>UBC</td>
<td>University of British Columbia</td>
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<td>ZPD</td>
<td>Zone of Proximal Development</td>
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<td>Glossary of Key Terms</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency:</td>
<td>The socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act.</td>
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<td>Community of Contribution:</td>
<td>A community where there is a bilateral distribution of power and knowledge representing a novice to novice relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of Practice:</td>
<td>A community that has a unilateral distribution of power and knowledge representing a novice to expert relationship.</td>
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<td>Identity:</td>
<td>An ongoing dynamic, scaffolded, critical, and complex discursive art of social construction, evaluation, assimilation, negotiation, and positioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Proficiency:</td>
<td>Being able to use linguistic skills and sociocultural competencies confidently as a skilled, valued, and knowledgeable community member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenology:</td>
<td>The intentional and reflective study of lived experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poststructuralism:</td>
<td>A theory that highlights the interconnection of meaning, context, and power in a variety of discursive practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning:</td>
<td>The active engagement of learners invested in a meaningful community activity outside of the traditional classroom, where the learners are able to connect and authentically interact with others in their community, and where their act of service to the community is reciprocally valued.</td>
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Dedication

“Unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be”

Freire (1994)

“Through others we become ourselves”

Vygotsky (1978)

For my source of joy, Kaelah;

For my source of love, Bethany;

For my husband who makes both possible, Tobiah.
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview of Chapter 1

As an immigrant, who speaks English as a Second or Additional Language (ESL or EAL), the pathway to full participation in Canadian society as a valued member of the local speech community is an arduous journey that can span several decades (Currie & Cray, 2004; Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Fleming, 2007, 2010). Newcomers to Canada with non-English speaking backgrounds are often sequestered into government sponsored English classes and expected to acquire the language skills needed to fully integrate into Canadian society within one to three years (Boyd & Cao, 2009; Fleming, 2007, 2010). However, according to a Statistics Canada (2008) study, immigrants with a university degree, who have been in Canada for over a decade, are still struggling to find a place of equal value in the workforce. The Statistics Canada study’s authors blame their underemployment on a possible lack of recognition for their credentials (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008); yet, they do not address the newcomers’ initial experiences in government sponsored English classes as a cause or a cure for a lack of settlement, employment, and integration of immigrants who are ESL or EAL.

Traditionally, government sponsored English classes have been based on a cognitive, linear, transmissive andragogy, wherein the immigrant is expected to passively regurgitate grammar (Currie & Cray, 2004; Fleming, 2010; Friere, 1970, 1994) rather than actively engage in critically transactive and possibly transformative discourse (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010; Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002; Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010) with speakers in their community. These government sponsored English classes are focused mainly on language and citizenship training in which the immigrant is positioned as a “client, customer, patient and student, but not as a worker, family member, participant in the community or advocate” (Fleming, 2010, p. 597). Thus, this positioning not only negates the social, transactive, and transformative realms of learning, but it also negates the affective realm (Atkinson, 2014; Imai, 2012), respect for learner agency (Mezirow & Associates, 2000, van Lier, 2008), and does not promote positive identity construction (Morgan, 2007; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The parameters of a government English language policy that sequesters newcomers from the target speech community and rushes the language acquisition timeline has been questioned as unrealistic (Boyd & Cao, 2009; Fleming, 2007, 2010), for it fails to factor in the prerequisite need for immigrants to be invested in learning (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2010), the necessity for accumulating social and cultural capital (Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977, 1991), and fails to facilitate an increase in learner linguistic self-confidence (Hummel, 2013; Parks, 2000).

The result of not meeting these prerequisites for social, personal, and transformative learning is that immigrants are marginalized (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004; Russell, 2007) through social and linguistic isolation (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012; Yates et. al, 2010). This social and linguistic
isolation can place immigrants into a powerless (Roberts & Cooke, 2009; Nawyn et al, 2012), and alienating position (Hubenthal 2004; Russell, 2007), which can also be a catalytic agent for negative conditions such as acculturation stress (Torres & Rollock, 2004), depression (Levecque, Lodewyckx, & Vranken, 2007), low self-esteem (Hovey & Magana, 2002), lack of confidence (Mahn & Steiner, 2002), anxiety (Horwitz, 2001; Hovey & Magana, 2002), and language shock. All of this can result in immigrants feeling apprehensive and stressed in their new linguistic situation (Miller & Endo, 2004).

Consequently, in order to stave off the negative effects of marginalization and promote the full participation of immigrants in all facets of Canadian society, immigrant English language classes need to expand their notion and andragogical practices of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Norton & Toohey, 2011; Taylor, 2007; van Lier, 2004, 2008). Such an expanded andragogical notion includes service learning (Felten & Clayton, 2011) as a means to engaging English language learners (ELLs) in authentic interaction with the target language speakers in their community in order to foster an environment that promotes social integration, personal growth, and transformative possibilities through reciprocally valued discourse (Dudley, 2007; Felten & Clayton, 2011).

There is a definitive need to seek alternative methods for immigrants to learn English in order to function as equally valued members of their community both personally and professionally, and service learning may be a creative andragogical method to meet this need (Felten & Clayton, 2011; Grabois, 2008; van Lier, 2008). There are a few studies that have emerged in the 21st century that cite the benefits of service learning as it relates to SLA and high school students (Russell, 2007), as well as with college-university level learners (Elwell & Bean, 2001; Grabios, 2008; Hummel, 2013); however, there are few studies that focus solely on service learning and immigrants’ linguistic and social development (Dudley, 2007).

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap in the literature through a qualitative study that gathered data through a paper-based questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group from ten adult immigrants who were a part of a service learning activity. These immigrants were all ESL or EAL learners enrolled in a tuition-free, non-credit government sponsored English language program. They were also all volunteers in a seven month long service learning venture in a small non-profit community college campus café called the Multicultural Café. This study explored the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the perspectives of adult immigrants who speak ESL or EAL.

1.2 Summary of Relevant Literature

The literature review reveals that there are several significant areas to consider related to the value of service learning for adult immigrants who are ESL or EAL. The areas of note include the social, affective, and transformational dimensions that encompass learning alongside the matters of agency and identity.
Firstly, grounding this study is a poststructuralist lens that emphasizes a shift from “pedagogies of inclusion to pedagogies of transformation” (Morgan, 2007, p. 1043). Poststructuralism was chosen because it supports a view of language acquisition where the premise is “language as doing” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2). Researchers working within a poststructuralist framework support the presupposition that language is socially constructed and influenced by positioning, which affects the right to be heard and to speak (Bakhtin, 1986, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977; Norton & Toohey, 2011). The poststructuralist point of view contrasts with an idea of language as simply being a benign structure and system. Hence, using a poststructuralist lens lays a foundation from which this study can explore the perceived impacts in relation to a service learning project with adult immigrants, who are also ELLs.

The methodological positioning for this study is based on SLA theories from a qualitative lens influenced by a phenomenological tradition. Applying phenomenology to the data, particularly the individual interviews and focus groups, heightens a reflective mindfulness of the meanings ascribed by the participants (Husserl, 1931, 1964). This study employs phenomenology, for it values the participants’ subjective (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2013) and personal experiences (Giorgi, 2012; Groenwald, 2004) while attaining a deeper and richer understanding of their motivations and actions (Lester, 1999). Thus, the phenomenological construct is used in this study to document, validate, and honour the participants’ reflections on their own experiences.

Resting on a phenomenological foundation, this study uses the evolution of SLA theories starting from the behaviourist traditions (Wardhaugh, 1970), the developmental theories (Krashen, 1982), the cognitive movement (Dekeyser, 1998; Long, 1996), and then on to the Vygotskian inspired sociocultural perspective (Grabios, 2008; van Lier, 2004), the constructs of and social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; Putman, 2001), and Second Language Socialization (SLS) (Duff, 2007) in order to build an understanding of how languages are learned and how these theories can be subsequently applied to the data.

In this study, SLA and SLS emphasize the importance of becoming proficient in local discursive practice. English language proficiency in this study is defined as the confidence and ability to use English with respect to fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Sayer, 2008; Gottlieb, 2008). The literature revealed that many immigrants are not lacking the required language skills to be proficient rather they are lacking the confidence (Hummel, 2013) to use their skills, which can be addressed through SLS (Duff, 2007) because it affords immigrants the opportunity to garner the privilege to speak and to be heard (Norton & Toohey, 2011). The literature warned that when immigrants do not connect to, engage with, nor access local sympathetic interlocutors the result may be that a newcomer does not socially integrate into their local community, which can propel them into underemployment (Galarneau & Morissette, 2008), isolation (Hubenthal 2004; Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012; Yates et. al, 2010), and into an othered existence (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004). This path can be detrimental, for it can lead to
acculturation stress and depression (Torres & Rollock, 2004). Therefore, the current study supports van Lier’s (2004) warning to “move away from safe, tried-and-tested language classrooms into more critical, challenging democratic directions” (p. 82), and service learning is one such critical, challenging, and democratic direction that is explored in this study.

Service learning may be an answer to the challenge facing “adult education practitioners [which] is to create an environment of trust that invites multiple dimensions of learning, acknowledges diversity, and respects learners’ culture while assisting them new ways of seeing the world” (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010, p. 10). Service learning provides a platform for immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds to connect and contribute to their communities. This is supported by Lave and Wenger’s (1991) research in *legitimate peripheral participation*, which states the learning occurs when members outside of the main community are given access to participate. Complementing this construct is Grabois’ (2008) *legitimate peripheral contribution*, in which learning occurs amongst members of the same community.

Both Lave and Wenger (1991) and Grabois (2008) support Cervatiuc’s (2009) Canadian research that concluded proficient language learners actively seek access to social networks with the intention of practicing English and improving communicative skills in authentic situations with native English speakers. Thus, service learning facilitates deep engagement (Crick, 2012) for adult immigrant ESL or EAL learners to authentically use their English language skills through participating (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and contributing (Grabois, 2008) as reciprocally valued members in their local discursive communities (Felten & Clayton, 2011; van Lier, 2004, 2008).

The literature also verifies that the affective-emotional realm needs to be considered alongside the social realm in terms of language learning (Arnold, 2011; Imai, 2012). Service learning and experiential opportunities can accentuate the emotional realm which in turn promotes learning (Felton & Clayton, 2011). From a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, Grabois (2008), asserted that language learning through the zone of proximal development (ZPD) “affect must be seen as central to cognition and not merely as peripheral influence” (p. 385). Also, Imai (2012) argued that mainstream SLA research has negated the understanding of the complexity of the affective realm. The subjective nature of the affective and emotional individual personality traits and characteristics makes it challenging to interpret, research, and predict how they will affect language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). However, this study further illuminates how a vast range of emotions are important in facilitating SLA and SLS.

Identity is another area of the literature that is critical to include, for it is rooted in people’s lived experiences (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Crick (2012) contended that identity is a discursive activity that follows Vygotsky’s construct of scaffolding. Identity as a scaffolded discursive activity is an important andragogical point when teaching immigrants and newcomers to Canada. Literature also states that it is equally as important to understand that their identities are “multifaceted and complex process”
(Fleming, 2007, p. 196), “multiple and contradictory”, and a “site of struggle” (Norton, 2000, p. 127). In corroboration is Shugurensky (2006) who argued that identity and feeling included as a community member are imperative in citizenship education. Furthermore, Ayers (2004) stated that when people are surrounded by a new culture and language they construct new identities, and rely on a reciprocally valued relationship with the host community in order to be successful. Magro and Ghorayshi’s (2010) argue that newcomers’ identity should not be solely regarded as an economic asset rather newcomers should be valued by the host community as critically informed citizens. This opens the discussion to challenge the question of identity construction as it relates to power, which is taken up in the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1991), and (Norton, 2000, 2010), and is referred to in this study. Hence, learner identity in this study can be understood as a continuing dynamic, scaffolded, critical, and multifaceted discursive practice involving social construction, evaluation, assimilation, resistance, negotiation, and positioning.

Agency has also surfaced in the literature as notion not to be overlooked during SLA and SLS for immigration can leave immigrants in a position of marginalization and being othered, which in turn can lead to a sense of powerlessness (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) asserted that being othered negates agency. Roberts and Cook (2009) offered an antidote to otherization, which is to facilitate agency through the development of the learner’s “authentic voice in a new language” (p. 639). Several studies (Crick, 2012; Roberts & Cook, 2009; Mezirow & Associates, 2000; Miller, 2010; van Lier, 2008) found that traditional teaching methods and program deliveries do not address the issue of agency, and each study recommends exploring alternative ways of engaging learners in order to address agency, empowerment, and transformation. Therefore, in order to build adult immigrant learners’ agentive capacities, the literature reviewed states that agency must be viewed as a socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act, and educators must be given the latitude necessary to develop engaging and critically aware activities where learners are valued by giving them the opportunity to freely choose their participation level.

The final realm reviewed in the literature relates to transformative learning experiences. According to Jack Mezirow (1991, 2000), the difficult, frustrating, and isolating experiences lived by immigrants as linguistic and/or cultural minority (Hubenthal 2004; Roberts & Cooke, 2009; Nawyn et al, 2012), can be classified as a disorienting dilemma. Taylor and Cranton (2012) described disorienting dilemmas as “situations that take us by surprise and cause us to question assumptions” (p. 142). For Mezirow (1991) the disorienting dilemma is the first stage in the transformative perspective theory, where learners become critically aware. Transformative perspective theory is also historically rooted in emancipatory learning (Habermas, 1971), and conscientization (Freire, 1970). Thus, transformative learning rejects a transmissive banking model (Freire, 1970) of adult education and promotes critical reflection on personal experiences through challenging engagement and discourse.
Correspondingly O’Sullivan (2002) stated that the transformative perspective can be classified as an asset model of learning, as opposed a deficit model which upholds a reconceived idea that adult learners lack what they need to be successful learners. For example, Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) pointed out a common deficit view of Canadian newcomers which is underscoring their lack of Canadian work experience and lack of English language competency. Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) asserted that the transformative asset model is an important starting point because it values the learners’ prior education, work experiences, and cultural background. Service learning is an experiential education practice based on an asset model of learning, for it draws from the learners strengths, and situates the learner in space that can enable transformative critical reflective thinking (Dyson, 2010; Grabois, 2008). Felten and Clayton (2011) emphasized that because service learning supports the conditions for reciprocal and authentic relationships it in turn enables learners to access the transformative learning dimension. Thus, transformative learning is fostered when transformational education practices, such as service learning, facilitate a critically reflective and supportive personal and social environment.

In summary, the literature review highlights the importance of the social, emotional-affective, and transformational dimensions of service learning, in addition to agency and positive identity formation, as it relates adult immigrant EAL and ESL learners engaged in an experiential learning activity such as service learning. Furthermore, the literature review confirms the need for more research regarding the social, emotional-affective, and transformational dimensions of service learning for adult immigrants, and the need to creatively extend and expand upon the traditional ideas of SLA to include such andragogical practices as service learning. The literature review upholds the premise that service learning is a meaningful undertaking since it has the potential to transform marginalized voices into contributing and valued voices.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the impacts of service learning from the perspective of adult immigrant learners. Service learning is positioned by some scholars as being of “greater usefulness…as compared to more conventional language learning experiences” (Grabois, 2008, p. 390). Historically, experiential learning has been upheld by seminal educators such as Dewey (1938), Freire (1970), and Vygotsky (1980, 1988) as an optimal way to learn. Through the voices of the participants, who took part in a service learning venture, is it hoped that their lived experiences will inform SLA andragogical practices, programming, professional development, policy, and further research in the experiential area of learning in order to facilitate adult immigrant ESL or EAL learners to be able to contribute within their communities as fully valued and fully engaged citizens.
1.4 Research Question

The primary research question this study explores is what are the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform, such as the Multicultural Café, from the perspectives of adult immigrant ESL or EAL learners?

1.5 Significance of Study

This study highlights the need to consider alternative methods to concurrently foster linguistic skills alongside the skills needed to achieve social integration for newcomers and immigrants who speak ESL or EAL. Research reveals that many immigrants are not solely lacking language skills rather they are lacking Second Language Socialization (SLS) (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Duff, 2007). Specifically, Pennycook (2010) states that language is more than a memorization of static grammar rather it is composed of “communicative acts, bundled together as a form of social practice” (p. 125). In order to facilitate communicative acts in a social practice ESL and EAL educators need to step out of the classroom and into the community. Supporting this movement is Boyd and Cao’s (2009) argument that sequestering immigrants into language training classrooms will not foster their success in being able speak English in multiple sites or be fluent in English. Thus, this study demonstrates that one viable alternative to studying English principles in a classroom is service learning, which moves the learners into their community to practice authentic English usage with their neighbours.

This study on the perceptions of service learning through the eyes of adult immigrant ESL or EAL learners is significant, for it challenges the conventional practice of having immigrants confined to the classroom. It challenges adult immigrant English language educators to revisit and rethink how social and cultural capital is accumulated and leveraged (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; Putman, 1995, 2001), as well as how issues of investment (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2010), othering (Lister 2004; Jensen 2011), agency (Gao, 2010; Roberts & Cook, 2009), and positive identity construction (Norton & Toohey, 2011) are addressed in SLA. It challenges programmes to creatively establish authentic learning environments that honour communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and communities of contributions (Grabois, 2008). Finally, it challenges policy makers to redefine its measurement of English language skills and discourse, create a clearer pathway to supporting authentic community engagement opportunities, and expand timelines to encapsulate adult immigrant learners days and decades into their linguistic and social integration journey (Boyd & Cao, 2009; Fleming, 2007). Overall, this study addresses Magro and Ghorayshi’s (2010) “challenge for adult education practitioners [which] is to create an environment of trust that invites multiple dimensions of learning, acknowledges diversity, and respects learners’ culture while assisting them new ways of seeing the world” (p. 10). Therefore, this study is significant, for it creates another academic platform from which the voices of some of the most marginalized and isolated citizens can find their path toward a fuller and more valued participation in their local community.
1.6 Overview of Research Methods

This study employed qualitative methodology to explore the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the perspective of adult immigrants who speak ESL or EAL. This study is rooted in the phenomenological tradition (Husserl, 1931, 1964) when it seeks to describe the lived experiences of the participants. In addition, the study is influenced by poststructuralism (Bakhtin, 1986, 2010; Norton & Toohey, 2011), and a sociocultural research perspective (Scott, 2003; Taylor, 2007; Vygotsky, 1980, 1998). Thus, elements of the phenomenological tradition set the stage for the participants’ voices to be heard, poststructuralism frames their voices in a milieu of power, and a sociocultural perspective reminds all involved that voices need other voices in order to authentically and meaningfully communicate.

The participants of this qualitative inquiry were all immigrants to Canada. Some participants are fairly new to Canada, and some have been in Canada for decades. Each participant is an adult ESL or EAL learner enrolled in a government sponsored immigrant English program at a rural community college. In addition to their English class, each participant volunteered for at least seven months in service learning venture called the Multicultural Café, which was a small non-profit food service business that served the local college community, as well as some members living in the college’s surrounding community.

For this research, a survey design was used to gather data at one point in time to explore the participants’ beliefs, attitudes, and opinions (Creswell, 2012) in regards to their perceptions of volunteering in a service learning experience. The three survey tools used to collect data were a paper based questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group. Of the 10 participants who completed the initial paper based questionnaire, four consented to be a part of the individual interviews and focus group. The transcription of the data gathered recounted the participants’ words verbatim and written verbatim in the study, so as to circumvent appropriating their voices.

The data gathered for this study was analyzed by iteratively searching and coding for descriptors to reveal emergent patterns (Creswell, 2012; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). The unit of analysis for this study was the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the individual perspective of adult learners of ESL or EAL. Grounded in the supporting data arose three emergent themes: the social, personal, and transformative realms of learning.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitations

This study investigated the perceptions of service learner from ten participants in one location; therefore, the results cannot be generalized. However, the results can be used to encourage discourse around the efficacy of service learning and adult immigrants ELLs. Also this study did not investigate the immigrants who resisted being a part of a service learning experience. It cannot be assumed that their resistance is a result of their lack of motivation, for the work of Bonny Norton (1995, 2000, 2010),
establishes that learners who resist learning English may very well be motivated, but not invested in the learning platform. This study investigated service learning from the perspective of invested learners, and not unvested learners.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Service learning is a key term used in this study at it refers to an andragogy “which directs students’ classroom learning to address the needs of relevant communities, where [there is] reciprocity between the institution and the community partner” (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 192). Hence, service learning involves institutional reciprocity; however, this study also subscribes to Felten and Clayton’s (2011) statement that service learning also involves “reciprocal, authentic relationships” (p. 82). Even though immigrants frequently live in close geographic proximity to non-immigrants and native English speakers in many instances they have minimal opportunities to connect and interact and Grabois (2008) highlighted that service learning provides a platform from which diverse community members can meaningfully and authentically connect and interact. Thus, this study’s definition for service learning is the active engagement of learners invested in a meaningful community activity outside of the traditional classroom, where the learners are able to connect and authentically interact with others in their community, and where their act of service to the community is reciprocally valued.

Another key term in this study is language proficiency. Traditionally, English language proficiency means the confidence and ability to use English with respect to fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Gottlieb, 2008; Sayer, 2008). For ESL and EAL adult learners in Canada, the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB, 2012) document has described the conventionally understood skills of English language proficiency being listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the CLB document has been criticized for not being sufficient enough framework to assist adult ELLs to speak English in a variety of settings, nor help them be fluent in English (Boyd & Cao, 2009). The definition of language proficient needs to include language as a local practice (Pennycook, 2010), in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and in a community of contribution (Grabios, 2008). A holistic and authentic definition of language proficiency also needs to merge linguistic proficiency with intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009), or sociocultural proficiency, in order to validate second language learners aim to join and engage in their local community as a confident (Hummel, 2013), skilled, valued, and knowledgeable member. Therefore, in this study language proficiency is defined as being able to use linguistic skills and sociocultural competencies confidently as a skilled, valued, and knowledgeable community member.

Agency in this study combined Ahearn’s (2001) provisional definition of agency being the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (p. 112) and Miller’s (2010) definition of agency as the “discursively mobilized capacity to act” (p. 465). Hence, the definition of agency is the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act.
Identity is another key construct used in this study. Learner identity is defined in this study as an ongoing dynamic (Ayers, 2004), scaffolded (Crick, 2012), critical (He, 2010; Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010), and complex (Fleming, 2007; Norton, 2000) discursive art of social construction (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014), evaluation, assimilation (Shugurensky, 2006), negotiation (van Lier, 2004), and positioning (Cervatuic, 2009, Norton 2000).

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis begins with Chapter 1, which frames the context and main components of the study. Chapter 2 reviews key literature as it relates to SLA and service learning. Chapter 3 outlines the methods and methodology employed during the study. Chapter 4 details the findings and results of the paper based questionnaires, individual interviews, and focus group. Finally, Chapter 5 weaves together the results of the study with the relevant literature in order to build recommendations and further areas of research.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview of Chapter 2

Many English as an Additional Language (EAL) adult educators struggle with the problem of how to help their learners use their English skills and knowledge to connect to the community, both personally and professionally (Boyd & Cao, 2009; Derwing & Waught, 2012; Huang, Tindall & Nisbet, 2011; Russell, 2007). As a result of not connecting to their community, adult immigrant EAL learners feel alienated (Hubenthal 2004; Russell, 2007), socially and linguistically isolated, (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012; Yates et.al, 2010), othered (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004), and powerless (Roberts & Cooke, 2009; Nawyn et al, 2012). Research has confirmed the need to bring the outside world into the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom (Hillyard, Reppen & Vasquez, 2007; Roberts & Bayham, 2006), and have English language learners interact with native speakers (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Dudley, 2007; Pennycook, 2010). One little explored area of English language learner research is how volunteering and service learning (Dudley, 2007; Elwell & Bean, 2001; Grassi & Liston, 2004; Yan & Lauer, 2008) can promote social integration of adult immigrant English language learners through reciprocal discursive engagement with others in their community (Felten & Clayton, 2011). This study sought to explore this gap in the literature.

2.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the perceived impacts of volunteering in the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café from the perspective of immigrants, who are also adult learners of ESL or EAL. The Multicultural Café was a small food service learning not-for-profit business at Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus, where adult immigrant English language learners volunteered in all aspects of the Café’s creation and operations for 7 months from the Fall 2012 until the Spring 2013. The goal of the Multicultural Café was to provide an authentic learning platform from which the immigrants who volunteered could interact, connect, and contribute to their community through the medium of English.

2.3 Philosophical Position: Poststructuralism

For this study, a poststructuralist lens is applied for the main reason that poststructuralist theory shifts the focus “from pedagogies of inclusion to pedagogies of transformation” (Morgan, 2007, p. 1043). Traditionally, language acquisition and applied linguistic theories have had the myopic goal of acquiring the language structure and system rather than viewing “language as doing” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2). Corson (1997) asserted that the path to self-discovery and social transformation can be lost when language acquisition is pegged in such narrow hole. Poststructuralism holds the idea that people are endowed with agency and are empowered to act on their own (Chapman & Routledge, 2009). Also, poststructuralism seeks to explore the different ways of being and knowing the world in regard to identity negotiation (Morgan, 2007; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Moreover, poststructuralism recognizes and
explores the significant role power plays in language, and seeks to determine the importance of how context influences identity, agency and positioning amongst interlocutors (Gao, 2010; Hall, 1997; Norton & Toohey, 2011). In addition, poststructural theory supported the study’s presupposition that language is socially constructed while influenced by positioning, which affects the right to be heard and to speak (Bakhtin, 1986, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

2.4 Methodological Position

Adult immigrant English language learners are “complex and multifaceted” (Fleming, 2007 p. 196), paradoxically both stable and dynamic (Herring & Lave, 2001), subjective (Weedon, 1997), and contradictory (Norton, 2000). Accordingly, there are many different approaches to studying second language acquisition (SLA) that draw upon many disciplines particularly: sociology, developmental and cognitive psychology, and linguistics (Freeman, 2008; Myles, 2010). This section will explore the methodological positioning of this study through Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories from a qualitative lens influenced by a phenomenological tradition.

In modern times, understanding how languages are learned began in the mid-twentieth century with the behaviourist influence, particularly with the contrastive analysis hypothesis. The contrastive analysis hypothesis assumed learner’s errors resulted from transferring first language knowledge to the second language, but by the 1970’s “contrastive analysis… no longer does it seem to be as important as it once was” (Wardhaugh, 1970), for other explanations, such as developmental theories of language acquisition, better described learner errors (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Next, inspired by Noam Chomsky’s (1972) Universal Grammar hypothesis and in reaction to the behaviourist perspective, second language acquisition research took an innatist turn with the study of grammar in mostly advanced second language speakers (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). During this era Stephan Krashen’s Monitor Model (1982) came into focus for second language educators and researchers. Krashen’s (1982) model has five hypotheses consisting of: acquisition/learning, monitor, natural order, comprehensible input, and affective filter. Even though this five hypotheses model has been challenged, Krashen’s theory transitioned ideas about learning languages “from structure-based approached…to approaches that emphasized using language with a focus on meaning” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 107). In Krashen’s (1982) words, “the best methods might also be the most pleasant, and that, strange as it seems, language acquisition occurs when language is used for what it was designed for, communication” (p. 1).

In the 1990’s researchers began to explore the connections between the brain and learning, and this fueled the cognitive exploration in second language acquisition. From this cognitive perspective, Dekeyser (1998) put forth the information-processing model, which stated that the second language learner must pay attention, or be cognizant, to the concepts that they are trying to learning. Also, a language acquisition idea developed by Dekeyser (1998; 2007) suggested that learning a new skill starts
with a *declarative knowledge* (information, or rules in explicit form), then through practice this information can solidify into *procedural knowledge or skill*. Once established this procedural knowledge or skill, according to Dekeyser (2007), develops into a behavioral routine that consists of very specific rules or knowledge that can be applied quickly with a low error rate. However, Dekeyser (2007) noted that there is a problem of how to transfer declarative knowledge into procedural skill or knowledge “from one context to another, in particular from the classroom to the native-speaking environment…and is often referred to as the interface issue” (p. 9).

Another relevant research path from the cognitive perspective is the interactionist approach featuring the interaction hypothesis, whereby communicative interaction is viewed as crucial to language acquisition. Michael Long (1983, 1996) posited that in order to learn a language there needs to be a modified interaction. Long argued that learners need “opportunities to interact with other speakers, working together to reach mutual comprehension through negotiating for meaning” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 114). The interactionalist approach stresses the importance of negotiating for meaning in conversations in second language acquisition. This dovetails into the sociocultural perspective by “provide[ing] insight into the ways in which learners can gain access to new knowledge about the language when they have support from interlocutors” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 120). There are many paths to understanding second language acquisition, and for this study the sociocultural path will be traveled.

### 2.5 The Social Realm

#### 2.5.1 Sociocultural Theory of Language Learning

Sociocultural theory of language learning supports the concept that culture, language, and social interaction are interrelated (Duff, 2006; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1980). Sociocultural theory assumes that “all learning is first social then individual. Learning is viewed as a process that is socially mediated… [and] that during communication, learners jointly construct knowledge which is internalized by the individual” (Lightbown & Spade, 2013, p. 223). Sociocultural theory began when cognitive, behavioral, and linguistic theories of learning alone were not sufficient to fully hypothesize the complexity of language learning; thus, grounded in the seminal work of Leo Vygotsky (1980), which factored in social and cultural aspects of learning, sociocultural theory became a valuable theoretical tool for language educators and researchers alike (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2006).

However, Vygotsky himself seldom used the term ‘sociocultural’ instead he emphasized the psychological aspects of this theory when he used the terms, ‘cultural psychology’, or ‘cultural-historical psychology’ (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009, p. 459). Sociocultural theory of language learning has become quite expansive moving beyond its Vygotskian psychological scope (Lantolf, 2006; Duff, 2007), hence now includes “a broad set of theoretical frameworks that focus on social and cultural factors in L2 learning and use,” (Lantolf, 2006, pp. 67-68) such as social constructivism and poststructuralism (Ernest,
2010; Hall, 1997; Norton, 2000). This definition expansion allows sociocultural theory to “explore the intersection of social, cultural, historical, mental, physical, and political aspects of people’s sense-making, interaction and learning,” (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2006, p. 2), as well as address issues of identity, agency, and power (Hall, 1997; Lantolf, & Thorne, 2006; Norton, 2000). Therefore, the Vygotsky inspired sociocultural perspective used in this study views “learning [as] a social process in which culturally and historically situated participants engage in culturally-valued activities, using cultural tools [such as language]” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 419).

Two significant concepts related to this study were inspired by Vygotsky’s legacy, namely the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding. The ZPD, according to Lantolf and Beckett (2009), is “the difference between what someone can do alone and what he or she can do with mediation” (p. 450). Scaffolding is the “language that an interlocutor uses to support the communicative success of another speaker” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 223).

The first sociocultural construct to be considered is the ZPD, which began with the intent to understand children’s learning, and it has since been productively applied in interlanguage pragmatics, as well as teaching and learning English as a Second, Other, and Foreign Language. Several ZPD studies (Donato, 1994; Guerro & Villamit, 2000; Swain, 2000; Thorne, 2003) have demonstrated that English as a Second, Other, Additional, or Foreign Language learners can improve their language performance through collaboration and negotiation with others, who have either stronger or weaker skills.

The notion of working within proximity of people who are both stronger and weaker than the learner is an important aspect in the evolution of ZPD. The ZPD research focus, at first, was on the novice-expert relationship, which described traditional student-teacher interactions (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Now the novice-novice interactions are recognized as also playing a role in language development, which describes peer to peer, or student to student interactions (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

The construct of scaffolding also plays a significant role in sociocultural theory, as it relates to English language learning. Lightbown and Spada (2013), state that when a learner is in the ZPD, the learner can “perform at a higher level because of the support (scaffolding) offered by the interlocutor” (p. 118). Support is a simplified way to view scaffolding. van Lier (2004) offers a more detailed perspective by stating that in language learning activity and perception are “one whole, a necessary unit” (p. 92). van Lier (2004) continues:

An activity-based curriculum language would “surround” the learner in all its richness and complexity – it would not need to be simplified or sequenced along grammatical, functional, or any other lines. Instead of being presented with input (structured in one way or another), learners will pick up linguistic information they need for their activities and projects, so long as access is provided. The provision of access can be done in many different ways: by assisting learners in how and where to look, by providing opportunities for interaction and collaboration with peers,
by structuring tasks so that they have clear procedures and goals, while at the same time allowing for learners to employ creativity in a context of growing autonomy (p. 92).

Thus, according to van Lier (2004), it is scaffolding that is the conduit for learning in activity-based language development. As such, van Lier (2004) presents two conditions in which scaffolding flourishes. The first condition is that scaffolding transpires during new, “unpredictable moments in activities, when learners try out something new and venture into uncharted waters” (p. 93). The second condition is that the goal of scaffolding must be recognized, which is to, “handover (by the teacher or peer) and takeover (by the learner) of control” (p. 93). van Lier (2004) asserts that “without these two conditions, the word scaffolding becomes just another word for any and all kinds of pedagogical assistance” (p. 93). Therefore, for the purposes of exploring the perceived impacts of adult immigrant EAL learners volunteering in a service learning activity, van Lier’s (2004) two conditions of scaffolding can be applied.

2.5.2 Social and Cultural Capital

The lived experiences of the participants demonstrates the concept of the funds of knowledge, which is based on idea that through life experiences competency and knowledge capital is accumulated (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Two forms of capital are the constructs of social and cultural capital, which support sociocultural theory, for language acquisition is surrounded by a complex landscape of social and cultural issues that are difficult to separate (Cummins & Davison, 2007). Although the expression social capital is relatively new, the concept of social capital, through social networks can be traced to eighteenth and nineteenth century scholars and thinkers such as Tocqueville, J.S. Mill, Toennies, Durkheim, Weber, Locke, Marx, Rousseau and Simmel; and, all can be identified as addressing the idea that people individually and collectively exchange, withhold and accumulate power through community networks (Adam & Roncevic 2003; Bankston & Zhou 2002; Putnam 1995). It was Lyda Judson Hanifan who was the first to use the term social capital in 1916 (Kikichi & Coleman, 2012; Putnam, 2001). Hanifan used social capital to emphasize that community cooperation is vital to running a successful school (Kikichi & Coleman, 2012).

After Hanifan, the social capital conversation reignited again in the 1960’s and 1970’s in France with the philosopher turned sociologist and anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1991). Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital, which he termed cultural capital, did not originate from the work of Hanifan rather it came from his own understanding of cultural capital among French and Algerian societies. Bourdieu’s time in Algeria greatly influenced his thoughts on cultural capital and power (Grenfell, 2008), and profoundly reflect the contentious power issues, or lack thereof, immigrants face when learning English and integrating into a community (Norton, 2000). Bourdieu critiqued the current anthropological and sociological view of language, for they “make language an object of understanding rather than an (instrument of action (or power)” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 645). Here Bourdieu connects
“language with power” (Nawyn et. al, 2012, p. 258). Also, in Bourdieu’s (1977) critical paper, “The economics of linguistic exchanges”, he critiques Noam Chomsky’s notion of linguistic competence by stating that it, “is an abstraction that does not include the competence that enables the adequate use of competence (when to speak, keep silent, speak in this or that style, etc.)” (p. 646). Here Bourdieu is setting the scene that other factors, particularly social factors, play a vital role in language and that this fact has been over looked by the narrow scope of cognitive linguists, like Chomsky. Bourdieu’s critique supports the poststructuralist idea that English language educators and researchers need to look beyond the individual cognitive factors of language learning and investigate the sociocultural factors that influences language learning and teaching (Norton, 2000). Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) view also support van Lier’s (2004) idea to focus on surrounding the learner with unstructured linguistic and cultural knowledge, so that the learner can learn how to use it on their own terms.

The political scientist, Robert Putman, has also written about social capital. The value of Putman’s (2001) work for English language educators and researchers is his distinction between two forms of social capital namely bridging or inclusive social capital and bonding or exclusive social capital. Bonding capital is akin to “sociological superglue” (p. 23), for it is good for specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity; however, it creates a narrow identity. Conversely, Putnam (2001) describes bridging capital as “sociological WD-40” (p. 23), for it offers linkages to external relationships, or assets, outside the direct community and these outside associations can give one better access to knowledge and opportunities, therefore, it can broaden identities.

In summary, the English poet John Donne (1572-1631) prophetically wrote in Meditation XVII that “no man [nor woman] is an island entire of itself” and this mirrors Hanifan’s (1920) assertion that the core concept in social capital is “the individual is helpless socially, if left to himself [sic] (p. 79). Corroborating this sentiment is Bourdieu’s (1983) idea that cultural capital is the “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to... relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 249). Finally Putman (2001) states that “a society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital” (p. 18). These notable scholars confirm that people need one another to exchange both tangible and intangible social and cultural goods in order to gain power, agency, position and a broad and positive identity. Therefore, social and cultural capital are accepted as woven together with the threads of power in a complex, ever changing tapestry of language acquisition. Adult immigrant English language learners need to learn (and earn) social and cultural pragmatics (or capital), alongside English language skills, in order to build mutual interdependence, earn respect, increase in confidence and trust, and secure a positive social position in their community (Woodworth, 2008). Vygotsky defined language as a cultural artifact that is an internalized condition of a mediated social form (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009). Consequently, the value in accumulating social and cultural capital, through language, for adult immigrant English language learners is that the capital can be used to leverage themselves into a
position of successful transition to social and professional community life, if they so choose (Cervatuic, 2009; Norton, 2000; Pennycook, 2010).

### 2.5.3 Second Language Socialization

As previously discussed, SLA has many lenses through which learning an additional language can be viewed. In exploring other ways to understand SLA, Canadian researchers Currie and Cray (2004) asked the question “Is ESL literacy language practice or social practice?” (p. 111). The relatively new field of SLS attempts to answer Currie and Cray’s (2004) inquiry.

SLS is defined by Canadian language studies scholar, Patricia Duff (2007) as:

> The processes by which novices or newcomers in a community or culture gain communicative competence, membership, and legitimacy in the group. It is a process that is mediated by language and whose goal is the mastery of linguistic conventions, pragmatics, the adoption of appropriate identities, stances (e.g., epistemic or empathetic) or ideologies, and other behaviors associated with the target group and its normative practices (p. 310).

Language socialization, according to the SLS perspective, is concerned with explicit or implicit linguistic and social interaction that is relevant to the local community (Watson-Gegeo, 2003, 2004). Pennycook (2010) confirms the SLS notion that learning languages involves socialization when he postulates, “local practice is not…about internal rules of language that accounts for utterances, but about the social activities we engage in that produces language” (p. 36). Finally, Jensen (2011) connects the negative impact of the lack of second language socialization in the term othering, which he defines as:

> Discursive processes by which powerful groups, who may or may not make up a numerical majority, define subordinate groups into existence in a reductionist way which ascribes problematic and/or inferior characteristics to these subordinate groups. Such discursive processes affirm the legitimacy and superiority of the powerful and condition identity formation among the subordinate (p. 65).

In analyzing the newcomers and interlocutors’ activities and the communities where they practice language and negotiate for meaning reveals how SLS research has been influenced by Lave & Wenger’s (1991, 1998) idea of *communities of practice* (CoP). According to Etienne Wenger (2000), communities of practice have three distinct features. First, it is a *joint enterprise* that is created and continually renegotiated by its members. Competency in a joint enterprise is defined as “understand[ing] the enterprise well enough to be able to contribute to it” (p. 229). Second, CoP involves *mutual engagement* through interacting and developing relationships and norms the members join together into a social entity. Competency in mutual engagement means being a trusted partner in these socially engaged community interactions. The final feature is the *shared repertoire* of communal resources such as, routines, artifacts, vocabulary, styles, and stories that members have developed over time. Competency in the shared repertoire means being able to access and use the repertoire appropriately. According to Pennycook
(2010) the focus should not solely be on the community piece, but also the practice, for “communities of practice are not therefore just groups of people who happen to be doing that same thing, but rather people whose communities are constituted by the language practices they engage in… it is communicative acts, bundled together as a form of social practice” (pp. 124-125).

CoP “highlights the importance of community membership and participation not only IN learning but AS learning” (Duff, 2007, p. 313). SLS research in CoP investigates the “processes that facilitate or obstruct learners’ increasing legitimacy, participation, and identities with in their new learning communities, (Duff, 2007, p. 313). However, the application of CoP in SLS research needs to employ a more critical analysis in order to identify how power positions affect the local language practice (Watson-Gegeo & Nielson, 2003). SLS, like in sociocultural theory and SLA, views language as both a skill and a knowledge. Thus, as a knowledge language comes with a political history and socially present consequences, for as David Scott (1999) states that in the social sciences it should be epistemologically assumed that “positions are to be read as contingent, histories as local, subjects as constructed, and knowledge as enmeshed in power” (p. 4). SLS needs to expand its usage of CoP to include the “deeper political potential of language practice” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 127). Furthermore, SLS research has yet to fully focus its attention on adult learning, or adult immigrant second language socialization.

In summary, SLS offers a deeper connection towards understanding second language acquisition through socialization, such as demonstrated in its incorporation of Lave & Wenger’s (1991, 1998) construct of communities of practice. Therefore, cognizant of the need to acknowledge how power affects language, the Second Language Socialization framework can connect the social and cultural contexts to language learning in order to understand how this interplay of the social, cultural and linguistic realms “help create/transform those contexts and human understanding” (Duff, 2007, p. 313).

2.5.4 English Language Proficiency

In discussing second language acquisition and socialization, the notion of becoming proficient in local discursive practices becomes a goal. Hence, reviewing what English language proficiency means is important. Conventionally, English language proficiency refers to the confidence and ability to use English with respect to fluency, accuracy and complexity (Gottlieb, 2008; Sayer, 2008). This definition of English language proficiency is the foundation of the CLB.

In 2012 and 2013, when this study took place, British Columbia used the CLB to describe, measure and recognize the English language proficiency of adult immigrants who live and work in Canada. The CLB uses 12 Benchmarks to describe and assess the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Benchmark 1 describes those with a beginning level in English and Benchmark 12 describes highly proficient and fluent speakers of English. At the time of the study, the provincial government in British Columbia funded tuition-free English language classes for immigrants up until Benchmark 6, when the government declared immigrants should be capable of functioning in an English
mediated society. However, there is disagreement with this low threshold of language proficiency for example Boyd and Cao (2009) contend that Benchmark levels 1-5 only enable participants to follow simple task and instructions. Boyd and Cao (2009) argue that with such training it is unlikely that adult ELLs would be speaking English in various locations, nor be fluent in English. The CLB (2012) does mention the importance of sociocultural competence; however still places greater emphasis on language proficiency by describing in detail reading, writing, listening, and speaking competencies; thus, failing to specifically address the social and cultural proficiency needed to participate in an English mediated community. This highlights a notable gap in the literature with respect to a holistic and comprehensive definition of language proficiency that reflects on an adult immigrant English language learner’s need to learn and earn social and cultural capital, to be competent in their communities of practice, as well as be proficient in the basic linguistic skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Since proficiency needs to extend beyond linguistic competence, reflecting on Lave & Wenger’s (1991, 1998) communities of practice and exploring Deardorff’s (2009) model of intercultural competence can extend the proficiency definition to include sociocultural proficiency. Competency in communities of practice, according to Wenger (2000), is to create, negotiate, and understand a joint enterprise in order to contribute to it. Second, competency in mutual engagement is built by being a trusted partner in socially engaged community interactions. Third, competency is built by being able to access and use the shared repertoire of communal resources such as, routines, artifacts, vocabulary, styles, and stories. Competency in intercultural development, according to Deardorff’s model (2009, p. 33) means that the second language learner develops cultural self-awareness, cultural knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness.

Also this form of sequestered patriarchal government sponsored ESL program (Boyd & Cao, 2009) can be deemed from a Freirian perspective (1970) as a form of banking education, which hold the negative potential to dehumanize and censor learners, for “banking education is about arrogance and lifeless transmission of facts…when teachers treat students as if they suffer deficits. [It is] a noncritical education is about students losing their voice and teachers or others denying them an opportunity to dialogue about their ideas, their values, their hopes, and their lives” (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010, p. 98).

van Lier, (2004) from an ecological perspective, considered “the fuel for learning … is not ‘input’ or ‘exercises,’ but ‘engagement’ ” (p. 98), and thus cited many problems with typical language classrooms and its materials. van Lier (2004) argued that most textbooks are “trite, filled with inconsequential events around a ubiquitous suburban family with two kids and a dog, or groups of adolescents engaged in soporific exchanges and adventures” (p. 82). Consequently, van Lier (2004) suggested that learning materials should “challenge students to think, with complex collaborative projects that push the boundaries of experience along with the language boundaries” (p.83). As for the traditional
language classroom van Lier (2004) proposed that communication and interaction be a fundamental focus. In support is Swain’s (2000) research that concluded that numerous language classes are based on the one way transmission of information rather than on communicative and transactive activities and principles. Hence, van Lier (2004) suggested that the language classroom not be based on “trivial information” (p. 98) rather it should be supported by “contingent and dialogical forms of collaborative dialogue… in which learners can develop a sense of true self-other dialogue, and hence an identity and voice in the L2” (p. 98).

Crick’s (2012) investigation of deep engagement mirrored van Lier’s (2004) concern that the traditional transmissive style of instruction leads to a ‘passive engagement’ that “does not equip the learner to cope when things go wrong, or are no longer straightforward, or when knowledge needs to be applied in complex situations or integrated into personal narrative” (p. 676). In Grabois’ (2008) study of service learning with Spanish as a Second Language learners revealed that learners often compared language learning in a classroom to service learning. This comparison “highlight[s] the greater usefulness of service learning as compared to more conventional language learning experiences” (p. 390).

If the transactive, communicative language classroom is beneficial to language learners, then why is the hegemonic traditional classroom still prolific? Derwing and Waugh (2012) provided an answer by stating “the complexity of pragmatics, the culturally determined social aspects of language, are often covered superficially in language classrooms because of competing demands and time constrains” (p. 19). Derwing and Waugh (2012) highlighted the value of engaging in sociocultural pragmatics in English language classrooms in their research, yet underscore the difficulty in structuring classroom time and resources around teaching sociocultural pragmatics.

Even though many immigrants acknowledge their aspirations to meet, interact, and connect with native English speakers in their local community, many fail to do so (Dudley 2007). This failure is not always due to a lack of mastery over quantitatively measured four linguistic skills, for the traditional classroom seems to be competent in this space. van Lier (2004) countered that “some of the most important indicators of educational quality cannot be measured quantitatively” (p. 98). This lack of failure to successfully interact and negotiate in English within their local community may be the traditional classroom’s inability to provide a space from which the pragmatic learning of the social and cultural norms that encompass the authentic language use can be taught (Cohen, 2005; Derwing & Waugh, 2012). Also, English language learners may have minimal access to the target-language community, and thus are restricted to using the second language within the context of their classrooms (Hummel, 2013). Failure to engage with native speakers and others in their locality may also be attributed to the lack of investment immigrants have in the classroom practices and thus choose not to engage in the local community of speech (Norton, 2000, 2010).
In summary, research has demonstrated that many immigrants are lacking not the language skills, but the second language socialization (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Dudley, 2007; 2012; Duff, 2007) which affords immigrants the privilege to speak and to be heard (Baktin, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; Norton & Toohey, 2011), to repeatedly access the local language practice (Pennycook, 2010) to increase their social and cultural capital in their joint enterprises through mutual engagement, and to increase their stock in shared resources in their communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Many English language classrooms are not able to fully create deeply engaging, transactive or transformative spaces due to time constraints, lack of knowledge, and hegemonic practices; thus, keeping immigrants from developing their sociocultural knowledge, skills and connecting to interlocutors in authentic local communities of practice.

Not connecting to, engaging with, nor repeatedly accessing local sympathetic interlocutors may result in a newcomer not socially integrating into their local community, which can catapult them into an isolated (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012; Yates et. al, 2010), alienated (Hubenthal 2004; Russell, 2007; Taylor, 2007; Nawyn et.al, 2012), and othered (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004) existence. This in turn can lead to acculturation stress and depression (Torres & Rollock, 2004). van Lier (2004) asserts that there are “a number of arguments to be made for a move away from safe, tried-and-tested language classrooms into more critical, challenging democratic directions” (p. 82). One such critical, challenging, and democratic direction to be explored in this study is service learning.

2.5.5 Service Learning

Adult immigrant English language learners and their new country of residence benefit from their social integration into the local and national landscape (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Yan & Lauer, 2008). Nonetheless, many immigrants are socially and linguistically isolated (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et al, 2012; Yates et.al, 2010) and othered (Jensen, 2011) segregated by policy, practice, and choice from the target native speakers in their speech community. Adamuti-Trache and Sweet (2010) emphasized that the “lack of cultural awareness of the complex issues that affect immigrant learners during the transition into the host society may diminish learners’ chances of achieving their educational goals” (p. 12). Thus, Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) asserted that it is “a challenge for adult education practitioners to create an environment of trust that invites multiple dimensions of learning, acknowledges diversity, and respects learners’ culture while assisting them new ways of seeing the world” (p. 10). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) research in ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ stated that it is crucial for the newcomer to not be sequestered from the community activities. Lave and Wenger (1991) addressed the need for immigrants to be ‘situated’ as full participants in their community creating and negotiating meaning, for “the purpose is not to learn from talk as a substitute for legitimate peripheral participation; it is to learn to talk as a key to legitimate peripheral participation” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 108-9). Cervatiuc’s (2009) research on identity and good language learning with adult immigrants in Canada concluded that “good language learners went out of their way to gain access into the social networks of native speakers in order to
practice English in authentic situations and to improve their communicative competence” (p. 259). Thus in order to develop and increase English language proficiency and sociocultural communicative competency adult immigrant English language learners need to participate and contribute in authentic local discursive environments.

One approach that can foster linguistic, communicative, and sociocultural development is service learning. Service learning activities took up van Lier’s (2004) challenge to move away from the “safe, tried-and tested language classrooms into more critical, challenging democratic directions” (p. 82) by having immigrants “gain access into the social networks of native speakers in order to practice English in authentic situations” (Cervatiuc, 2009, p. 259). Also Stewart (2007) highlighted the connection between the sociocultural perspective and service learning:

Through repeated participation in activities with more capable peers within a sociocultural environment, language learners acquire the linguistic, cultural and other knowledge needed to function within a given society. This dovetails nicely with service-learning, which places students in the community interacting with native speakers of the target language (p. 86).

Therefore, this section will review the literature on service learning as a means to increase linguistic, cultural and other knowledge needed for adult immigrants whose English is an Additional Language.

Service learning refers to a “pedagogy which directs students’ classroom learning to address the needs of relevant communities, where [there is] reciprocity between the institution and the community partner” (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 192). Along with institutional reciprocity, Felten and Clayton (2011) stated that “reciprocal, authentic relationships” (p. 82) also need to underpin service learning. Thus in service learning, “both service to the community and learning on the part of the students are equally valued” (Hummel, 2013, p. 67). The stakes are high for immigrants to be in such reciprocal, authentic relationships, for Norton and Toohey (2011) argued that highly motivated language learners are not successful because they do not have access to participate in social relationships where they are deemed reciprocally valued partners in communication. Service learning can provide a platform from which adult immigrant English languages can have access to participate in local discourse as valued interlocutor.

Experiential learning opportunities, such as service learning, can create a space conducive to socialization and language acquisition for it “emphasizes learning from firsthand, personal experiences rather than from lectures, books, and other secondhand sources” (Ravitch, 2007, p. 91). By creating reciprocal, experiential, and communicative enquiry spaces, such as service learning, learners can reap the benefits from being deeply engaged. In Crick’s (2012) study of deep engagement, he contended the being deeply engaged is fundamental to experiential knowing, which is viewed as a direct encounter of participatory, social enquiry. Crick (2012) stated that in contrast to passive engagement, “deep
engagement in learning requires personal investment and commitment—learning has to be meaningful and purposeful in the life of the learner and this is not procured simply by external demands” (p. 676), which “involves [the benefit of] personal transformation” (p. 679). Service learning may be catalyst for personal transformation resulting from being deeply engaged in meaningful and purposeful endeavours.

Combining knowledge and experience is not a new concept in education (Dewey, 1938), yet experiential learning has seen only minor applications in ESL or EAL programs largely due to classroom time constraints, problems with assessment, and lack of understanding and training on how to meet course outcomes experientially (Knutson, 2003). Felton and Clayton (2011), asserted that the “interdependence of learning processes and outcomes with community processes and outcomes not only renders service-learning powerful as a vehicle for learning and social change, but also makes it challenging to implement effectively (p. 77). Nevertheless, experiential learning has been linked to learner’s positive self-perception and increased linguistic-confidence with the target language (Hummel, 2013; Parks, 2000). This affords students a platform to access multiple new skills unrelated to the actual classroom based language-learning (Knutson, 2003), as well as brings together the realms of academia, civic learning, and personal growth to produce such “widely valued outcomes as intercultural competence and teamwork” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 77).

Experiential inquiries such as service learning opportunities are needed for adult immigrant English language learners. Dudley (2007) found that many ESL speakers showed an interest in volunteering (service learning), but few arranged to engage in such activities. Baer’s (2008) Canadian study of civic participation concluded that immigrants who are non-official language users are less likely to be involved in voluntary activities, especially those immigrants who are from Asia. Knutson (2003) recommended that more aspects of experiential learning in ESL curriculum needs to be studied including, “the empowerment that arises from just simply hearing one's own voice expressing ideas in a social context in another language” (p.62). Hummel’s (2013) findings on the perceived benefits of service learning for French native speakers joining in a local English-language minority community for one semester, or 3.5 months, included “greater linguistic self-confidence, and the perception of having improved their L2 skills” (p. 85). Hummel (2013) also pointed out that the participants of the service learning study also reaped personal benefits, such as personal satisfaction and development, and thus, they were unanimous in recommending service learning for others.

Grabois (2008) critiqued Lave and Wenger’s (1991) concept of communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation in that it conceptualizes a one-way street view of novice learners moving unidirectional towards a central community of practice. Thus Grabois (2008) concluded that such educational practices as service learning represents metaphorically a two-way street, or a legitimate peripheral contribution (p. 393) in which learning is a “mutual movement between complementary communities. Instead of expertise being uniquely situated with the center of one group, it is distributed
differently among diverse groups, thereby radically changing the conceptions of knowledge and power” (pp. 384-385). Grabois (2008) highlighted the importance of learners contributing to a mutually dynamic, and emerging community that develops within service learning opportunities rather than seeking participation in an existing community. Grabois (2008) moved the conversation of benefits of service learning from communities of practice to communities of contribution. Therefore, from Grabois’ (2008) work with university students learning a foreign language, he summarized the benefits of service learning:

I can think of no activity that provides students with a more meaningful context for learning than contributing to the well-being of others. In the process students become contributing members of emergent communities where learning is based on symmetrically distributed expertise, they develop awareness of and empathy for cultures and life experiences that are different from their own and they attain enhance motivation as language learners, students, and citizens. Service-learning may be the most powerful language pedagogy (p. 403).

In a meta-analysis of 40 peer-reviewed published studies on transformation learning, among the findings was the “definitive need to explore other settings particularly where the teaching contexts are more informal, less controlled by the instructor, and more susceptible to external influences (e.g. natural environment, public)” (Taylor, 2007, p. 186). Service learning ventures can be one of these less informal and externally influenced settings. According to Grabois (2008), “Service learning brings together members of diverse linguistic and cultural communities who, despite the fact that they often inhabit the same geographical spaces, may have minimal opportunity to interact in significant and meaningful ways with members of other groups” (p. 393).

To conclude the review on service learning, Pennycook (2010) through his phrase “geography of linguistic happenings” (p. 136), articulated how through space and locality “understandings emerge” (p. 136). The experiential and geographical aspects of service learning positions formerly sequestered language learners in a locality from which linguistic and sociocultural happenings can happen and this space and place for learners and researchers alike to explore.

2.6 The Personal Realm

2.6.1 Affective and Emotional Considerations in Language Learning

For adult immigrant English language learners acquiring proficient linguistic skills, sociocultural competence, and earning social and cultural capital are important, and these skills and competencies represent what is going on outside (Stevick, 1980) of the learner and between (Stevick, 1980) the learner and others, and in other relevant ecologies (Arnold, 2011; van Lier, 2004). However, what is going on inside (Stevick, 1980) the learner, or the affective-emotional realm, is often overlooked in second language research, where the cognitive realm is prioritized over the affective realm. (Atkinson, 2014; Dewaele, 2005; Imai, 2012; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010). Stevick’s (1980) notion that “success [in language learning] depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what
goes on inside and between the people in the classroom” (p. 4), continues to lie in the background of SLA.

Herein service learning and experiential opportunities can accentuate what is occurring “between the participants… or possibly between learners and the target language and culture” (Arnold, 2011, p. 11). Service learning also holds the potential to emphasize what is going on ‘inside’ of learners because this platform accentuates “firsthand, personal experiences” (Ravitch, 2007, p. 91). Even though emotions are personal, a purely “individualistic view of affect and language learning dismisses the interpersonal and communicative dimension of one’s emotionality” (Imai, 2012, p. 3). Service learning can foster what is ‘between’ participants interpersonally and communicatively because a language learner’s emotional “inner experience, it is very likely, if not exclusively, a social experience shared and communicates between people” (Imai, 2012, p. 3).

A strength of a community engaged language learning model, such as service learning, is that the “target language is acquired through meaningful experiences and deep, personal relationships in a rich socio-cultural context” (Jorge, 2011, p. 35, emphasis added). Service learning leverages the emotional realm because “service learning evokes integrated cognitive and affective responses” (Felton & Clayton, 2011, p. 81). Service learning researchers are beginning to explore the “positive role emotions can play in learning, emphasizing how the emotional dimension of experience can contribute to developmental outcomes, including enhance motivations, empathy, and persistence” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81).

From a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, Grabois (2008), asserted that language learning through the ZPD “affect must be seen as central to cognition and not merely as peripheral influence” (p. 385). Thus, language learning is steeped in personal and relational lived experiences and experiential learning opportunities, such as service learning, can ignite the connection between the affective domain and language development.

Affect can be defined as emotions, feelings, moods, or attitudes. Under the affective umbrella are a myriad of individual personality traits. According to Arnold, (2011) individual or personality characteristics that may influence second language acquisition including: self-concept/self-esteem, anxiety, inhibition, attitudes, motivation, and learner styles. Lightbown and Spada (2013) offered several individual differences that can be factored into language learning including: intelligence, language learning aptitude, learning styles (and multiple intelligences), personality traits (such as inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety, willingness to communicate, confidence, self-esteem, empathy, talkativeness and responsiveness), attitudes, motivation, identity, ethnic group affiliation, learner belief, and learner age. Imai (2012) noted that most of the affective realm of language learning research has focused on negative emotions such as anxiety, while the “palette of emotions that one may experience over the course of language learning and use, such as enjoyment, enthusiasm, relief, anger, happiness, hope, gratitude, envy, contempt, pride, love, nostalgia, etc. have been sidelined, if not neglected” (Imai, 2012, p. 3). Imai
(2012) argued that mainstream SLA research has confined the understanding of the complexity of the affective realm to a “very small corner” (p. 4). This small corner could be due to the subjective nature of the affective and emotional individual personality traits and characteristics, which can be difficult to interpret, research and predict how these traits and characteristics will influence language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2011). Aneta Pavlenko (2012), who studies affective processing in bilingual language learners admitted that “theory-wise, emotion research still lacks consensus on the relationship between affect and cognition” (p. 409).

Examining historically the relationship between affect and language learning reveals some useful tools of analyses. Reflecting back to antiquity demonstrates that emotions and second language learning have been tied for centuries. For example, in the fourth century, “St. Augustine wrote of his unpleasant experience learning Greek as a second language by force and with severe punishment, commenting that ‘Clearly free-ranging curiosity leads to more successful learning than do pressure and fear’ (Confessions, Book 1, Chapter 14)” (Arnold, 2011, p. 12). The feelings of fear and pressure centuries ago surrounded second language learning. Today many second language learners still feel this fear and anxiety (Horowitz, 2001; Mahn & Steiner, 2002).

In the early twentieth century in Russia, Leo Vygotsky (1980) was lecturing on his ideas pertaining to language and thought. During this time Vygotsky (Veer & Valsiner, 1994) introduced an idea called, perezhivanie which was translated as emotional experience, or lived experience that “include[d] values, attitudes, beliefs, schemes, and affect” (Crick, 2012, p. 680), which echoes some aspects found within a phenomenological tradition. Although this translation has been debated and the term was initially geared towards child language development (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Veer & Valsiner, 1994), it still demonstrated a concern for the affective realm in language mediated experiences. According to Veer and Valsiner (1994), they wrote that Vygotsky said, “In an emotional experience [perezhivanie] we are always dealing with an indivisible unity of personal characteristics and situational characteristic, which are represented in the emotional experience” to which they added “different events also elicit different emotional experiences” (pp. 342 - 343). Vygotsky acknowledged an association between experience (thinking) and subjective, emotional lived experience (feeling) of the language learner. This is represented in the following excerpt by Vygotsky (1988):

We come now to the last step in our analysis of the inner planes of verbal thought. Thought is not the superior authority in this process. Thought is not begotten by thought; it is engendered by motivation, i.e., by our desires and needs, our emotions. Behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency, which holds the answer to the last “why” in the analysis of thinking. A true and full understanding of another’s thought is possible only when we understand its affective-volitional basis (p. 252).
Vygotsky, a century ago, called for the affective-volitional tendencies to be accounted for in order to achieve the complete understanding of another’s thought. Prior to Vygotsky’s early death, he was working on two manuscripts, in which one was titled, *The Teaching about Emotions: Historical-Psychological Studies* (Mahn & Steiner, 2002). In reaction to Vygotsky’s inability to complete his *perezhivanie*, Goldstein (1999) in the twenty-first century stated that “because Vygotsky himself did not elaborate upon the role of affect and volition in the ZPD, it is up to us to do this work ourselves” (p. 669). Goldstein’s (1999) call was taken up in the research conducted by Mahn and John-Steiner (2002), who worked with adult ESL learners. Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) revisited Vygotsky’s ZPD, which was informed by the role affective factors play in language learning. In their expanded approach of ZPD to include affective variables deepens the ZPD to embrace “interrelated and interdependent elements [such as] the participants, artifacts, and environment/context, and the participants experience of their interaction within it” (p. 6). Mahn and John-Steiner (2002), posited that in the ZPD these elements complement one another and they argue that if there is a rupture in this complementary existence, such as when the “cognitive demands are too far beyond the learner’s ability of because of negative affective factors as fear or anxiety [then] the zone in which effective teaching/learning occurs is diminished” (p. 6). Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) also revisited Vygotsky’s construct of scaffolding to include “emotional scaffolding [which] includes the gift of confidence, the sharing of risks in the presentation of new ideas, constructive criticism, and the creation of a safety zone” (p. 12). Thus, even though second language researchers today still “prioritize cognition over affect” (Imai, 2013, p. 2), there are pockets of research that are combining the affective and cognitive realms through the revisiting of seminal ideas in order to better build adult English language learners’ “confidence and at the same time help promote and sustain life-long learning” (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 3).

From Vygotsky, a generation later in North America, Krashen (1982) explored the connection between language acquisition and the affective realm with his Affective Filter Hypothesis. According to Krashen (1982), the Affective Filter Hypothesis is a figurative barrier and is erected when the learner is experiencing low motivation, self-doubt, or anxiety, thus impeding language learning. Conversely, when a learner’s filter is low because their motivation is high, self-doubt is replaced by confidence and anxiety is lowered, then language learning is optimized. However, Krashen’s (1982) ideas that highly motivated learners are more likely to acquire language has been refuted by Norton (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010), who argues that highly motivated learners can in fact disengage from language learning due to lack of investment rather than low motivation. Also Grabois (2008) critiqued Krashen (1982) by positing that the Affective Filter “limits input into independent cognitive processes…prioritizing it as an unconscious processes that is distinct from learning” (p. 391). Nonetheless, Krashen’s (1982) theory was the first North American attempt to connect how emotions might influence language learning.
Next during the cognitive era, “neuroscience and cognitive neuroscience have finally endorsed emotion” (Damasio, 1999, p. 40). Thus, Schumann (1998) postulated that the affective appraisal of stimuli is fundamental to cognition. Schumann (1998) described a vital role that affect plays in language learning in that “emotional reactions influence the attention and effort devoted to learning, and . . . patterns of appraisal may underlie what has been considered motivation in SLA” (p. 8). Schumann (1998), from a cognitive stance, underscored the significant impact the affective-emotional realm plays in language development.

What motivates adult learners of English also became of interest in the latter half of the twentieth century. In opposition to personality traits (e.g. introvert, extrovert) influencing learner motivation, Norton (2000, 2010) created the construct of investment to capture how highly motivated learners choose to disengage in language learning opportunities. However, by what means learners affectively invest or not in learning a second language has received little attention. From a humanistic perspective William Glasser (1998) posited that all behavior is geared towards fulfilling five basic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. Revisiting Glasser (1998) to understand how adult immigrants, who speak English as an Additional Language, affectively engage in service learnings to fulfill their needs may prove fruitful. Also, Glasser (2006) offered another theory of how behavioural habits can either build or break down relationships. For example, negative relational behaviours that erode relationships include criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and rewarding to control. Conversely, positive relational, or connecting habits that develop and maintain relationship include caring, listening, supporting, contributing, encouraging, trusting, and befriending. Glasser’s (1998, 2006) can offer a construct from which tangible affective and emotional behaviours can be identified in invested (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010), adult immigrant language learners.

Next, Grabois’ (2008) research on the intersection of service learning and language learning revealed how service learning contributed to personal (affective) growth, particularly the development of empathy. Grabois (2008) suggested that service learning is a catalyst for personal development because of the relationships that develop between the people they work with. From learner interviews Grabois (2008) found the “these relationships are not simply contributing factors to learning, but rather are central to it” (p. 398).

In the beginning of the twenty-first century, despite the small pockets of research interest regarding the influence the affective-emotional realm has on language acquisition it is surprising, according to Garrett and Young (2009), that the “emotional states of language learners have received relatively little attention in the SLA literature” (p. 221). Garrett and Young (2009) also stated that the reason there needs to be more attention paid to affect in language learning is “because of the emotional grounding of higher order cognitive and metacognitive processes such as attention, memory, planning, and hypothesis construction” (p. 224). Therefore, Garret and Young (2009) suggested affective and
emotional states and traits can support and foster language development. A few years later, Imai (2014) noted that both negative and positive emotions can promote language development.

The call to further investigate the affective-emotional realm (Arnold, 2011; Garrett & Young, 2009; Imai, 2012; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010), especially in the under-researched area of adult immigrant English language learners is important, for many immigrants have to cope with the negative affective and emotional consequences that result from being uprooted linguistically and culturally (Nawyn et al., 2012). Consequently, some immigrants enter the language acquisition and socialization process under acculturation stress (Torres & Rollock, 2004), which can manifest affectively as depression (Levecque, Lodewyckx, & Vranken, 2007), low self-esteem (Hovey & Magana, 2002), a lack of confidence (Mahn & Steiner, 2002), and anxiety (Horwitz, 2001), particularly anxiety around language shock, which is the by-product of the culture shock where immigrants feel worried, nervous and stressed in their new linguistic environment (Miller & Endo, 2004). Therefore, it may prove profitable to heed Dewale’s (2005) recommendations that:

Research on instructed SLA would benefit from an increased methodological and epistemological diversity and . . . a focus on affect and emotion among researchers might inspire authors of teaching materials and foreign language teachers to pay increased attention to the communication of emotion and the development of sociocultural competence in a L2 (p. 367).

Heeding Dewala’s (2005) call for ‘diverse methodology’ to capture some affective and emotional data regarding language acquisition and socialization are Yasuhiro Imai (2013), who is a researcher based in Japan and practices from an English as a Foreign Language lens, and Dwight Atkinson (2014), who is based in the United States, and postulates from a sociocognitive view of second language acquisition.

Imai’s (2013) journal article, “Revisiting Affect in Second Language Acquisition: An Alternative Insight from Emotions in the Social World, offers a construct, based on the work of scholars, such as Vygotsky, from which affect can be analyzed. Imai’s (2013) postulations are that learning is not just a cognitive transaction, but completed with emotions; emotions are social; and all emotions can be resources or information for one’s thinking and behavior.

The aim of this research study was to explore the perceived impacts of a service learning platform with adult immigrant English as an Additional Language learners. Connecting this study’s aim with Hummel’s (2013) research on the perceived benefits of a service learning for French native speakers, who are university students and also English and as a Second Language learners, revealed a linkage between service learning and the affective-emotional realm. Hummel’s (2013) research demonstrated that there was an increase in linguistic self-confidence, personal gratification, and positive feelings such as mutual happiness, acceptance of racial differences, and a sense of joy knowing a difference has been made. The platform of service learning serves as an intersect between the social realm and the personal realm.
wherein service learning acts as a catalyst facilitating a place and space for the participants to reap the benefits of both realms in their ‘lived experiences’.

Emotion and cognition are linked. This linkage is eloquently phrased by Goodman (1978) when he wrote that “feeling without understanding is blind and understanding without feeling is empty” (p. 8). Therefore, in setting the historical background for understanding how affect influences language acquisition and socialization it is clear that this connect has been considered for centuries, and needs to draw the full attention of the current mainstream second language research. However, Vygotsky (1988), Krashen (1980), Schumann (1998), Mahn and John-Steiner (2002), Dewale (2005), Garrett and Young (2009), Imai (2013), Hummel (2013), and Atkinson (2014) have all blazed a trail from which the affective realm can be studied alongside cognition in SLA.

2.6.2 Identity and Agency in the Personal Realm

Within the personal realm there are two key areas to review in order to fully comprehend the research data. These areas include identity and agency.

2.6.2.1 Identity

Honouring the qualitative research approach taken in this study, identity can be understood in terms of “having some phenomenological, subject experience [likened to the] Vygotskian concept of perezhivanie (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014, p. 32). Thus identity is “embedded in concrete, historical cultural factors…through participation in human activities and practices - socialization and education - people develop and create lived experiences within themselves” (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014, p. 35).

Accepting that identity is a lived experience, it is important to acknowledge the medium through which this experience is lived. Crick (2012) acknowledged that “identities are discursive counterparts of one’s lived experience – they are stories which are told and re-told and which are open and susceptible to change” (p. 682). Thus, Crick (2012) continues, “If identity formation is a discursive activity, then it follows that language is required as a medium for that discourse” (pp. 685-686). Also, “the process of moving from one particular identity towards a designated one is a discursive activity” (Crick, 2012, p. 32), which is achieved according to Crick (2012) by the Vygotskian idea of scaffolding. Crick (2012) argued that:

Identity as a discursive activity becomes an important bridge between the lived experience a person brings to the learning encounter and the movement forwards towards the construction of a new identity. Since all learning is always about some new knowledge of some sort – it follows that the process of knowledge construction can also scaffold identity formation (p. 682).

Also, according to Fleming’s (2007) work, which drew from both Canadian and Australian research, identity construction is a “multifaceted and complex process” (p. 196) and that identity needs to be considered alongside opportunities for language learning beyond the basic level that engages the entire individual. Norton (2000) also described identity as “multiple and contradictory” and a “site of struggle”
Furthermore, Norton (Peirce, 1995) described the interaction with native speakers as a process where English language learners are “constantly organizing and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (p. 11). Shugurensky (2006) argued for the importance of citizenship education and claims that while “status is about being a full member of a community, identity is about feeling like a member of a community...[for it] is rooted in factors such as a common history, language, religion, values, tradition, and culture, which seldom coincides with the artificial territory of a nation state” (p. 68). Therefore, according to Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) “newcomers are not conceived of as economic producers and consumers but as informed and critically aware individuals” (p. 9). Hence, language tethers the complex and subjective identities of English language learners to their lived experiences and feelings of belongingness and critical awareness.

Another critical layer to the question of identity construction is the premise that power relations cannot be separated from issues of identity (Bourdieu, 1991; Norton, 2000). Cervatuic (2009) succinctly paraphrased West (1992) in her research with Canadian immigrants who speak English as an Additional Language that the “greater access to materials and symbolic resources determines the greater access to power, which positively affects identity” (p 266). Identity, as it relates to this research will combine Norton’s (2000) definition that identity is “how a person understands his/her relationship to the world, and how that relationship is co-constructed overtime” (p. 5) with the understanding that identity construction is a dynamic, paradoxical, subjective, imagined, and continually restructured. Thus, identity must be observed and respected in a holistic context that includes reference to a contested landscape of power (He, 2010).

From the author’s work with adult immigrant English language learners, she has witnessed them struggle with the question of, “Who am I NOW...now that I’ve immigrated?”, and this question of identity is difficult to answer especially if they have significant language and cultural differences. Ayers (2004) also encountered this question of identity and wrote that “Inside every student...lurks an implicit question, often unformed and unconscious, rarely spoken. It’s a simple question on the surface, but a question that bubbles with hidden and surprising meanings, always yeasty, unpredictable, potentially volcanic: Who in the world am I?” (p. 117). van Lier (2004) reiterated the author’s and Ayers’ (2004) sentiment:

When people find themselves in a new culture with a new language, they need to develop new identities to reconnect their deep sense of self to the new surroundings. To do this successfully requires reciprocity between the person and the host community (p. 96).

van Lier’s (2004) thoughts aligned with the sociocultural approach wherein identity is socially constructed and Second Language Socialization research regarding communities of practice, for it recognized the “processes that facilitate or obstruct learners’ increasing legitimacy, participation, and identities with in their new learning communities, (Duff, 2007, p. 313). This perspective also aligned
with affective and emotional learning wherein emotions are social (Imai, 2013). Finally, this aligned with service learning wherein reciprocally and repeatedly accessing of the local target-language community helps develop, confirm and reconnect identities (Felten & Clayton, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pennycook, 2010). Hence, learner identity can be understood as an ongoing dynamic, scaffolded, critical, and complex discursive art of social construction, evaluation, assimilation, negotiation, and positioning.

2.6.2.2 Agency

During the course of immigration feeling marginalized and othered can lead to a sense of powerlessness (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) argued that “otherization does not allow for the agency of other people to be a factor in their identity construction. It does not permit the negotiation of identity between people, but imposes crude, often reductive identities on others” (p. 159). According to Roberts and Cook (2009), “developing an authentic voice in a new language can help revive a sense of agency” (p. 639). To define agency this study combined Ahearn’s (2001) provisional definition of agency being the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (p. 112) and Miller’s (2010) definition of agency as the “discursively mobilized capacity to act” (p. 465). Hence, the definition of agency is the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act.

Roberts and Cook’s (2009) British study, which aimed at reviving adult immigrant learners’ agency in an ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) classroom, concluded that in order to build agency, thinking outside of the tradition classroom box needs to occur. Miller (2010) also encouraged researchers and teachers to “begin to imagine ways that we can work to coconstitute both agency and empowerment among minority learners of dominant languages” (p. 485). Finally, teaching from a transformative perspective needs to be considered for this perspective can help learners “gain a crucial sense of agency” (Mezirow & Associates, 2000, p. 20). In a transformative learning space adult immigrant English language learners can increase their agency through experiencing deep engagement. According to Crick (2012) deep engagement “connects the learner’s sense of identity and agency with their personal learning power, and these are utilised by the learner in a meaningful process of knowledge construction which leads to active engagement in the world” (p. 684). van Lier (2008) positioned agency in language learning as a central construct in sociocultural approaches to language learning and has linked the development of agency to hyphenated curriculum approaches such as “project-based, task-based, content-based and theme-based learning” (p. 183). Service learning can be classified under such a hyphenated curriculum approach that van Lier (2008) deems significant in the development of learner agency. Service learning is also critical education and a solution to the suppressive banking education (Freire, 1970), for its purpose is “to encourage human agency” (Giroux, 2010, p. 717).

Therefore in order to build agency as a socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act, then educators must create engaging and critically aware activities where learners are valued and given the latitude to freely choose their participation level.
2.7 The Final Realm: Transformative Learning

For adult immigrant English language learners it can be difficult, frustrating, and isolating living and learning as a linguistic and cultural minority (Hubenthal 2004; Nawyn et al, 2012), and this, according to Jack Mezirow, (1991, 2000) could be considered a disorienting dilemma. Taylor and Cranton (2012) described disorienting dilemmas as “situations that take us by surprise and cause us to question assumptions” (p. 142). Mezirow’s (1991) disorienting dilemma is the first step in transformative perspective theory, which is rooted in lived experiences and defined as:

The process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings (p. 14).

Transformative perspective theory is grounded in the seminal work of Habermas’s (1971) emancipatory learning, which is related to freedom from oppression, and Freire’s (1970) conscientization. Freire (1970) rejected a transmissive banking model of adult education in which preselected information is deposited in the mind of the adult learner. Whereas conscientization occurs in adult learners when they are critically reflecting on personal experiences through challenging engagement and discourse with others, and this space holds the potential for transformation.

This transformative space is detailed by Taylor and Cranton’s (2012) summary of Mezirow’s (2000) ten-staged arc of transformative learning which begins with a disorienting dilemma that “causes one to question assumptions, seek others also going through this experience, contemplate new roles, develop new skills and knowledge to match these, and then integrate these into a reordered life” (p. 142). The power of teaching and learning in this transformative space is that it holistically “draws upon the emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions of learning. Learning is not compartmentalized, and educational programs are rooted in the aspirations and needs of adult learners” (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010, p. 6). Also, according to (O’Sullivan 2002), the transformative perspective is built on an asset model of learning, as opposed to labeling adult learners as deficit. Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) point out a deficit view of Canadian newcomers and refugees stresses their lack of Canadian work experience and lack of English language competency. Whereas Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) assert that the transformative asset model views the learners’ prior education, work experiences, and cultural background “as strengths or assets…[thus], based on this assumption, education involves building on newcomers’ knowledge. Education would help them draw on their strengths and to build the skills they need to function successfully in society” (p. 9).

Service learning is one such experiential education practice that draws from the learners strengths, and situates the learner in space that can enable transformative critical reflective thinking
(Felten & Clayton, 2011; Grabois, 2008). As for service learning practitioners themselves, they “tend to come down on the side of transformational learning” (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 192). This space and place of transformation Dyson (2010) calls the ‘landscape of transformation’ (p. 14). The landscape of transformation critically and reflectively brings both the personal and social realms together, for “it is within this landscape that we start to live differently because we have seen another way of looking at ourselves, others, and the world in which we live” (Dyson, 2010, p. 14). Service learning brings people together for local practice (Pennycook, 2010) within this landscape of transformation (Dyson, 2010) and it holds potential for transforming marginalized learners because of what Vandenberg (1991) referred to as “the capacity to engage with others as co-beings and not as objects” (p. 1281). Felten and Clayton (2011) summarized the aim of service learning when they state that, “reciprocal, authentic relationships—such as those that underlie service-learning at its best—provide conditions well suited to transformative learning” (p. 82).

From Magro and Ghorayshi’s (2010) work with Canadian adult newcomers and refugees, who speak English as an Additional Language, they “emphasize the importance of a transformative approach to education for personal and social empowerment” (p. 6). For personal empowerment, transformative education places significance on the:

Role of affect in transformative educational practice, therefore, we focus on the aspects of social interdependence-human connection, and caring support – that foster the development of competence. Of particular concern to us are the ways in which competence is built through dignified, collaborative, caring support (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 3).

For social empowerment, transformative education within a Second Language Socialization framework can connect the social and cultural contexts to language learning in order to understand the interplay of the social, cultural and linguistic realms “help create/transform those contexts and human understanding” (Duff, 2007, p. 313).

According to Freire’s (1970) pedagogy of hope, the power associated with words cannot only encourage, empower, and transform a person, but this power can change the world. Freire (1970) believed that “human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world” (p. 88). Thus in summary, transformative learning is fostered when transformational education practices, such as service learning, create and facilitate a critically reflective, yet supportive personal and social environment that is built on learner strengths and is nurtured through collaborative and caring relationships.

2.8 Literature Review Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to explore the personal, social, transformational dimensions of service learning as it related to adult immigrant English as an Additional Language learners. The literature review confirms the need for more research in the personal realm of the affective
and emotional dimensions of learning English through participating in experiential and service learning opportunities. The literature review also confirms that service learning is worthwhile endeavour because it has the transformative potential to turn marginalized voices into contributing and valued voices in their local community.
Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Overview of Chapter 3

This chapter highlights the methods used in this qualitative study exploring the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the perspective of adult immigrants who are learners EAL. This chapter provides information on how the study has been influenced by the phenomenological tradition as well as the study’s postructuralist and sociocultural research perspective. The chapter further describes how the research was designed and how the data was analyzed, lists the research questions, details the population and sampling method, outlines instrumentation, illustrates the setting for this study, and addresses the study’s trustworthiness, reliability, validity, biases and limitations.

3.2 Research Perspective

This study employed qualitative research methods informed by a tradition of phenomenology to describe lived experiences (Groenewald, 2004; Husserl, 1964). Creswell’s (1998) description of phenomenology influenced the qualitative approaches taken during the data analysis. For Creswell, it is important to be aware of one’s preconceptions when analyzing the data. This kind of research tradition also involves developing research questions that connect to participants’ lived experiences, gathering data that honours participant insights, separating data into meaningful units, categorizing those units into themes, gaining a general understanding of participants’ experiences, and ending with a clearer understanding of what it was like for participants to experience the phenomenon under focus.

This qualitative inquiry was carried out from the perspective of ten Multicultural Café participants who were immigrants to Canada and adult EAL learners enrolled in the ESLSAP at the Salmon Arm campus of Okanagan College. The Multicultural Café was a unique nexus that occurred when the need for a food service provider and the need for an authentic English learning opportunity serendipitously collided. To capture the participants’ voice in this nexus, qualitative research methods informed by phenomenology were chosen as they allow space to describe the subjective and personal narrative of a social and psychological phenomenon to be validated (Giorgi, 2012; Groenewald, 2004; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Phenomenology is a research perspective that is able to gain “insights into people’s motivations and actions” (Lester, 1999, p. 1) and can also “look for some common understandings that have emerged to give meaning to the participants’ interactions” (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012, p. 13). According to Mayoh and Onwuegbuzie (2013), phenomenology recognizes that “experience is subjective, [yet] there are features to any lived experience that are common to all persons who have the experience” (p. 4). One of the goals of the phenomenological tradition is to understand the “essential, invariant structure (or essence) of the experience” (Creswell, 1998, p. 55). By adopting qualitative methods informed by the phenomenological tradition, a better understanding of how the participants experienced the Multicultural Café could be obtained. The experience of being part of the
Multicultural Café is understood from the perspective of the participants while investigating the meaning of that experience for the participants (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2012).

This research was also guided by poststructural and sociocultural theories of language learning. Poststructural theory, as proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1986, 2010), states that language is not an independent entity rather it exists solely for its social usage. Norton and Toohey (2011) articulated Bakhtin’s view of the social struggle to use language when they wrote, “Bakhtin saw language learning as a process of struggling to use language in order to participate in specific speech communities. Further, Bakhtin pointed out how social positions outside of language might affect and individual’s speaking rights” (p. 416). This study explored the struggle immigrants had in using English to mediate and negotiate meaning in a specific speech community. This study also investigated how positioning immigrants in a site where they have legitimized and equal speaking rights (Bourdieu, 1977) impacted their lives. Poststructuralist thought in language learning highlights the significance of “how contexts shape positioning among particular interlocutors” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 418). As a phenomenological approach can allow space for subjectivity, poststructural theories also creates a theoretical space for a fluid, dynamic, and subjective view of identity, “not as an essence, but a positioning” (Hall, 1997, p. 226).

Aligning poststructuralism with sociocultural theories of language learning highlights the interconnectivity of the personal and social arenas in language learning (Scott, 2003; Taylor, 2007). Sociocultural theories of language learning are based on the seminal work of L.S. Vygotsky (1980) where culture, language and social interaction recursively intertwine and influence one another. This interplay of culture, language, and social interaction defines identity, for “through others, we become ourselves” (Vygotsky, 1998, p.170). Poststructuralists add to Vygotsky’s view that this socially forged identity process is complex and the identity forged is not fixed rather fluid and can “change across time and space and are constructed on the basis of the socially given, and the individually struggler for” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 420). Therefore, using poststructuralist and sociocultural theories of language learning lay a solid foundation from which the complex social and personal landscape of creating, negotiating and struggling for meaning can be honored.

Thus, this study used qualitative research methodology informed by a phenomenological tradition because it respected participants’ experiences and its perceived impacts while discovering commonality in the collective experiences. In support of the qualitative inquiry, postructuralist and sociocultural perspectives of language learning were concurrently employed in order to understand how power, social, and cultural contextual aspects influenced language learning.

### 3.3 Research Design

A survey design was used to collect data at one point in time to investigate the participants’ beliefs, attitudes, and opinions (Creswell, 2012) regarding their perceptions of volunteering in a service
learning experience. Once the study was approved by the ethics review board from both Okanagan College and University of British Columbia, and the Multicultural Café ceased its food service operations, the survey research began. The population sample consisted of the adult immigrant EAL volunteers who worked in the Multicultural Café.

The survey consisted of a paper based questionnaire consisting of ten questions accompanied by a consent form. Potential participants had four weeks to decide if they wanted to take part in the study. Participants could participate by completing both the consent form and the questionnaire. After which, participants who indicated on the questionnaire that they were available for further stages of the study were contacted in person, or by telephone, to be a part of the individual interviews. During the individual interviews they were invited to be a part of a focus group. The data from questionnaires were transcribed by the author of the study into an MS Word document. The data from the interviews and focus group were recorded on an Apple iphone, then transcribed verbatim by the author of the study on to an MS Word document. Once the recorded interviews and focus group were transcribed, the recordings were erased. Data gathered using these instruments was recounted using the precise words of the participants; therefore, the participants’ use of non-standard English was not changed when quoting their words so as to avoid appropriating their voices.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered for this study were analyzed by iteratively searching, sorting, and coding for descriptors to reveal emergent patterns (Creswell, 2012; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). The unit of analysis for this study was the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the individual perspective of adult learners of English as an Additional Language.

As soon as the data were gathered from the paper based questionnaire, the recorded interviews, and focus group, they were then transcribed to a table in an MS Word document. All of the data were locked on a password protected laptop computer, or locked in a filing cabinet in the researcher’s office. Once the data were collected, they were read through and initial insights and issues were highlighted and accompanying notes were written in a journal. The second reading of the data produced descriptors, or units of analysis, that summarized the participants’ responses. These descriptors were typed in a column beside the participants’ transcribed responses. Once the descriptors were completed, then they were aggregated into categories using the color highlighter tool in MS word. These highlighted units of analysis became the basis for the emergent themes in the data and were recorded on a third column in the data analysis table. After the data were coded for emergent themes, the table was printed, cut, and sorted into tangible highlighted groups in order to gain a larger visual of the emergent themes and their supporting data. Based on the supporting data and the emergent themes, a concept map was developed to illustrate the themes and their complex interconnectivity.
3.5 Research Questions

The overarching research question explored in this study was from the perspective of adult learners of English as an Additional Language. It is as follows: what are the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform, such as the Multicultural Café? There were seven sub-questions asked in order to uncover and explore the emerging themes in the data. These sub-questions were as follows:

1. How does service learning affect adult immigrants English language learners?
2. How are the adult immigrant English language learners invested in the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café?
3. Is there a difference between learning in a traditional classroom and in a supported, yet authentic learning environment, like the Multicultural Café?
4. What are the impacts of working and learning with other volunteers?
5. What are the impacts of interacting with the customers of the Café?
6. Are there possibilities for transformative learning in a service learning platform such as in the Multicultural Café?
7. Does affective and emotional learning matter in service learning platforms?

The three survey tools used to investigate answers to these questions were a paper based questionnaire, an interview and a focus group.

3.6 Population and Sample

The participants were recruited from the volunteers who worked in the Multicultural Café at Okanagan College’s, Salmon Arm Campus during the Fall 2012 and Winter 2013 semesters. The participants were selected using non-random convenience sampling (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). All volunteers who could be contacted were invited to participate in the study.

There were 12 consistent volunteers during the seven months (September to March) in which the Multicultural Café was operational. Furthermore, these 12 volunteers were also a part of the development of the Multicultural Café during the spring and summer of 2012, once approval had been received from Okanagan College to open the Café as a service learning site.

After receiving the research ethics board approvals, all of the 12 Multicultural Café volunteers were sent a letter of invitation to take part in a study exploring their experiences and perceptions regarding volunteering and English language learning. The invitation letter contained a cover letter, information about informed consent, a consent form, and a short pen and paper questionnaire. All of these documents were written at a grade six reading level to take into account the participants are adult learners of ESL or EAL. Potential participants had four weeks to decide if they wanted to take part in the study. Once the participants gave their consent to be a part of the study and completed the questionnaire,
they were invited to an interview. Invitations to participate in a focus group were given in person to all the participants who sat an interview.

In total, there were 12 Multicultural Café volunteers invited to join the study. Of the 12 volunteers, ten consented to participate in the study and completed the questionnaire, which represented an 83% response rate. Two participants chose not to be a part of the study because they were in the midst of moving out of the community in order to pursue work and schooling opportunities. The ten participants who consented to be a part of the study were then given research pseudonyms. Of the ten study participants, four participants consented to an interview and these same four participants also consented to join a focus group. All of the participants were immigrants to Canada and English was their Second or Additional Language.

3.7 Instrumentation

The data collection instruments were comprised of a short questionnaire (see Appendix A), a semi-structured interview (see Appendix B), and a focus group (see Appendix C). The short questionnaire consisted of ten questions: five closed-ended questions and five open-ended questions (Saris, 2014). The first three questions gathered demographic information, and the remaining questions gathered data on the participants’ experiences and perceptions of the impact the Multicultural Café had on their English language learning.

Four participants who completed the questionnaire took part in a semi-structured interview to further explore their experiences and perceptions of the impacts the Multicultural Café had on their language learning. All of the open-ended interview questions took into account that participants were adult learners of EAL; therefore, all of the questions were checked using the readability tools in MS Word to ensure that they were no more difficult than a grade six reading level. In addition, the participants were given opportunities to negotiate meaning during the interview process to ensure that their true perceptions were being conveyed (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Finally, a semi-structured focus group was held. There were ten open-ended questions for the focus group participants to explore together their shared experiences and perceptions (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). There were also opportunities for participants to negotiate meaning during the focus group discourse to ensure that their true perceptions were being conveyed (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Both the interviews and the focus group were recorded and later transcribed to an MS Word document for data analysis.

3.8 Research Setting

This study recruited adult immigrant English language learners who volunteered in all aspects of a small non-profit food service learning business, called the Multicultural Café, at Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus. Salmon Arm is a small rural city with a population of approximately 18,000 in the southern interior of British Columbia, Canada (Salmon Arm Economic Development Society, 2014).
Okanagan College has four campuses in four cities within the Okanagan region of British Columbia. The Salmon Arm campus is the smallest of the four campuses, and in the year of the study, 2013, Okanagan College had approximately 1800 learners enrolled throughout the year (Okanagan College Institutional Research, 2014). Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus offers first and second university courses, adult upgrading, adult special education, business courses, trades, continuing studies, and, until 2014, the English as Second Language Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP).

All of the participants in this study were enrolled in the ESLSAP at Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus. The ESLSAP was a provincially funded tutor-based language program that was administered by community colleges, community service, or non-profit groups in British Columbia for rural immigrants. The ESLSAP offered free English practice groups, language focused settlement support, and one-to-one tutoring with a trained community volunteer. The ESLSAP was piloted in 2006 and by 2012 was funded in over 45 communities outside of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, and serviced more than 1000 adult immigrant learners who would have not been able to access other language and settlement support services (Welcome BC, 2012). The ESLSAP received international recognition in 2011 by winning the Grundtvig Award, out-of- Europe category, for Excellence in Adult Education from the European Association for the Education of Adults (WelcomeBC, 2012).

The ESLSAP program began as a pilot study in 2006 at Okanagan College, Salmon Arm campus, and approximately 20 – 40 immigrants, either permanent residents or naturalized Canadian citizens, were enrolled each year between 2006 and 2013. In April 2014, a year after this study was conducted, Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm ESLSAP ceased when the Canadian federal government assumed responsibly for language and settlement services for immigrants throughout Canada (Government of Canada, 2014), and a new format of English language studies and settlement support was implemented.

In 2012, the Multicultural Café was an idea advocated by Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm ESLSAP instructor and volunteer tutor coordinator, who is also the author of this study. The main tenent of the ESLSAP was that immigrants receive English language and settlement support from volunteer tutors. The author of this study turned this principle around with the intention that the immigrants enrolled in the ESLSAP would become the volunteers rather than receiving volunteer support. The Multicultural Café was the platform that allowed the adult immigrant EAL learners to take on a community volunteer role.

The year prior to the Multicultural Café’s inception, Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus had one year, 2011/2012, without food services, which negatively impacted the overall sense of a collegial community. The Salmon Arm campus was unsuccessful at recruiting someone, or some business, to take over the food services at the campus due to its limited operational year, and small customer base. When Okanagan College’s Ancillary Services, who managed Salmon Arm campus’s food services, was approached by the ESLAP instructor and tutor coordinator to try an alternate campus café
delivery model, namely an experiential, working classroom for adult immigrant EAL learners, they were supportive, for it met the campus’s need to provide both a food service and a sense of community.

In February 2012, once Okanagan College Ancillary Services approved of using the Salmon Arm campus café as a service learning site, the ESLSAP instructor and tutor coordinator, and author of this study began planning and working with the College, and the ESLSAP learners, to create a vision and a plan of action to make the service learning café operational. The ESLSAP instructor’s role changed from a teacher of English to a project facilitator and liaised amongst the volunteers, the College, the suppliers, the tradespeople, Interior Health, and city hall for appropriate business and health permissions.

The volunteers were given the latitude to create, design, and implement their collectively negotiated vision of the service learning platform. The ESLSAP instructor did not assign roles rather each volunteer found their own role according to their expertise, knowledge, and time available to volunteer. For example, some volunteers worked on signage, some worked on menu items, some cleaned and organized, while others met with suppliers, and some read the instructions to learn how to operate new equipment like the meat cutter and cappuccino machine.

The ESLSAP instructor approached the Salmon Arm Campus Life committee at Okanagan College and requested that they sponsor the purchase of a high quality second-hand cappuccino machine, for the volunteers believed that quality speciality coffee would be important in their success. The Salmon Arm Campus Life committee agreed to purchase of the cappuccino machine with the caveat that the speciality coffees be reasonability priced for the student body. The volunteers then went into the community to research the prices for coffees.

The mutual goal of the preparation period (February – August 2012) was to be ready to open on Tuesday September 4th, 2012, and not just open to the general public, but also cater for 200 students and staff for the campus’s orientation day. Thus in preparation the nine volunteers, as well as the ESLSAP instructor, earned their Food Safe Level 1 certification, which was funded by the ESLSAP program and completed alongside other community members, who were also enrolled in this continuing studies course.

Also over the summer the volunteers, along with the ESLSAP instructor, met numerous times to practice, learn, and teach one another their recipes and special cooking techniques, and to set up the kitchen and Café’s storefront. New black aprons were made for each volunteer with the Café’s name and tagline embroidered in white on the front pocket. A large 12 x 12 foot white board, which had a border with all of the flags of the volunteers, was hung to the right of the Café and was used as a menu board. A large 3 x 11 foot sign with the name, “Multicultural Café”, its tagline, “Transforming lives and communities one cup at a time,” and the logo, which was a white cup filled with steaming coffee and on the cup were the flags of all the volunteers’ countries of origin (see Figure 3.1). This sign was hung above the Café’s storefront. The tagline was a play on Okanagan College’s motto, “Transforming lives and communities” (see Figure 3.2).
Figure 3.1 Multicultural Café logo and Tagline
Over the summer months, several specialists came to the Café to help the volunteers and the ESLSAP instructor learn about café operations (see Figure 3.3). These visits were arranged by the ESLSAP instructor in order to help facilitate the commercial success of the café. These specialist workshops and meetings included building a relationship with a local Salmon Arm resident, who was also an employee for a large commercial food distributor, meeting a culinary instructor from Okanagan College’s Culinary Arts program in Kelowna, who helped with both menu selection and the cash register operations, meeting a bank representative who showed how to use the debit/credit card machine, a local plumber and water technician who showed how to use the water softener and filter system. Also, the owner of a new organic fair trade coffee company with a connection to Salmon Arm personally came to the Café to give several specialty coffee making workshops, for the owner supported the idea of a service learning café.
Not only did the ESLSAP instructor and the volunteers have onsite training and workshops, they also went out into the community to learn about the food service industry and report their findings back to the group volunteers. For example, one volunteer went to the local high school to see their cafeteria operations and interviewed the foods and culinary teacher. One volunteer went to a local baker to learn about bread and its ingredients because this volunteer came from a rice-based food culture rather than a bread-based food culture. Several went to local food places to learn and report back on pricing and menu information.

Also during this preparation period, Okanagan College committed funding to upgrade the existing campus café site, which included paint, countertops, cupboards, a glass cooler, a new oven, shelving, a microwave, a meat cutter, a water filtering and softening system, and basic food preparation tools. The ESLSAP instructor and the Café volunteers were consulted on each phase of the Café’s renovations. The College also committed to helping the Café with the financials, which included setting up interact and credit card services, invoicing for suppliers and event catering, banking deposits and accounting.

The Multicultural Café was not a course for credit and did not apply towards any academic credentials, and this was made clear to the volunteers at the onset of the joining the Multicultural Café. This was purely an experiential learning platform, and not an academically evaluated and testable course. The participants were not externally forced to participate in the Multicultural Café for credit, in fact some ESLSAP learners chose not to participate. This study does not explore the non-participatory ESLSAP learners, who used their agency and chose not to be a part of this service learning platform.

Geographically, the Café was situated in the smaller of the two buildings that comprised Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus. The Café was located between the campus bookstore, the
student union lounge, and First Nation’s gathering place. Okanagan College and the Café were located next to the community recreation center, the arena, curling rink, and some single family attached and detached residences; therefore, some community members were café patrons. The Café did have competition, especially in more temperate weather, from three major fast food franchises that were all within a 10-15 minute walking distance. This competition made the volunteers aware of menu selection and pricing and several recognizant missions were undertaken by volunteers throughout the time the Café was operational to make sure that the Cafe’s pricing and menu options remained competitive.

The Multicultural Café opened its door to business on September 4th, 2012, and closed March 15th, 2013. The Café was opened Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm. It was closed during all statutory holidays, as well as during the two week winter break. Sometimes the Café would be open past its hours of operation in order to cater a special event, like its grand opening when dignitaries from the community and College came to cut the ribbon, or the student union Christmas dinner that catered to 200 students and their families. At all the large campus events, such as the aforementioned occasions, the volunteers where invited to join the festivities rather than just serve the food.

To schedule the volunteers, a large lamented calendar was hung on the back wall. Volunteers chose the hours and days they wanted to work, and if they wanted to plan and be the chief cook of a Multicultural Lunch Special. The Café needed a minimum of two people at any given time. There were peaks in busy times with customers, and one usually occurred during the midmorning break around 10:00 am, and the other was the lunch rush, which would start at 11:45 am until about 12:45 pm. During those rush times it was helpful to have three to four volunteers, and on some days there were more and some days there were less. One volunteer would start around 8:00 am to get the coffees, cookies and muffins ready. Another volunteer would come in around 8:30 for opening and the start the morning preparation of sandwiches and salads, and start any catering that needed being organized. Each day there was a Multicultural Special, which was a culinary dish from a volunteer’s cultural background. If the volunteers decided they wanted to cook culturally inspired cuisine, then they would plan the menu and shopping list and either order, or purchase the ingredients (for which they would be immediately reimbursed). These Multicultural Specials were popular and usually sold out. Generally one to two times each week there would be a catered event at the college, which could either be a small meeting or a larger all campus event. The Café’s day ended at 1:30 pm and clean up would run until approximately 2:00 pm. At 1:30 pm an Okanagan College employee from the campus bookstore came to the Café to cash out and deposit the funds. These hours were set so that the campus’s food service needs were being met, and the volunteers were not overwhelmed with too much work. This Multicultural Café schedule was developed over the course of the first month by the volunteers and the ESLSAP instructor as they learned more about the needs of the customers and the capabilities of the volunteers.
The ESLSAP instructor was on campus each day, but not always in the Café for she was also teaching and coordinating the tutoring program. Therefore, for approximately 70% of the time the volunteers were running the Café on their own, cooking, planning, ordering, organizing, delegating, marketing, and problem solving. The ESLSAP instructor facilitated the Café’s operations and acted as consultant when issues or problems arose. Neither the ESLSAP instructor nor the College imposed any top down dictums on the volunteers regarding the daily Café operations.

This unique service learning environment was recognized locally and provincially. In November 2012, the Multicultural Café was nominated for the provincial NESIKA Award for Multicultural Excellence. The ESLSAP instructor, accompanied by three Multicultural Café volunteers, attended the event in Burnaby, British Columbia. The NESIKA Awards project sponsored travel and accommodations for the ESLSAP instructor, whereas Okanagan College sponsored the three volunteers to attend the awards ceremony. Also in May 2013, this unique service learning endeavour earned Tracy Riley, the ESLSAP instructor, and author of the study two nominations for an Okanagan College Employee Excellence Award for Innovation, one by herself and one shared with the College’s Ancillary Services partner, who supported the Café with its financial and mortar and bricks needs. Tracy Riley, the ESLSAP instructor, and author of the study won Okanagan College’s Employee Excellence Award for Innovation in partnership with the Okanagan College’s Ancillary Service Manager for their collaboration on the Multicultural Café.

The Multicultural Café’s historical journey and setting offered unique research site to study the impacts of service learning on adult immigrant learners who speak English as an Additional Language.

3.10 Research Trustworthiness, Reliability, and Validity

During the data analysis process the researcher was cognizant that predetermined themes were not being imposed on the data to honor a qualitative approach informed by a phenomenological tradition, in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of the participants through the data rather that imposing interpretations of preconceived ideas on the data (Giorgi, 2012; Groenewald, 2004).

The researcher was the creator and facilitator of the service learning Multicultural Café site, the English teacher for all of the participants, and also could be considered a friend to these participants. According to Tillman-Healy (2003), friendship can be considered a significant method of acquiring reliable and trustworthy data from participants. Yet to ensure that the participants’ voices were clearly heard the researcher practiced, during the interviews and focus group, what Wolcott (1994) described as talking a little and listening a lot.

The author of the study was a reflexive researcher and was mindful that the research process was “never neutral, objective and distant” (Gao, 2010, p. 5), and recognized that she was a social agent in the participants’ service learning experience. Therefore, to address the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the data gathered, all of the data collection methods were examined and approved by two
research ethic boards. Then the data were triangulated by administering three different data collection methods, namely a questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group. Finally, the researcher also practiced peer debriefing (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012) with colleagues and the thesis supervisor in order to test and reflect on the data and challenge any underlying assumptions or bias.

3.11 Limitations and Bias

In this study, it is recognized that a disadvantage of a non-random, convenience sample may be that it is “difficult to describe the population from which the sample was drawn and to whom results can be generalized” (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012, p. 141). However, in the qualitative tradition, Gay, Mills and Airasian (2012) pointed out that generalizing the findings to a larger population is not a typical characteristic of qualitative research. Rather, the goal of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of what occurred and why it may have happened for a particular set of participants. Research that can be generalized to a larger population is not the only kind of valid inquiry.

This study employed the self-reporting questionnaire tool, which may be subject to bias, or distortion in the data because the participants are English language learners, even though all of the written documents were evaluated at a grade six reading level or below using the Flesch-Kincaid readability tool on MS Word. Also questionnaires may be vulnerable to common method variance bias, which is described by Gorrell et al. (2011) “when respondents answer to a questionnaire do not purely reflect their (intrinsic) thoughts about the phenomenon being asked about, but are influenced by the way in which the questions are asked - by (extrinsic) features relating to the design or administration of the questionnaire” (p. 508). Therefore, the triangulation of the questionnaire data to include interviews and a focus group may offset the common method variance bias.

As a poststructuralist researcher attuned to how power affects language, another limitation is that the researcher has a relationship with all of the participants. This relationship may enhance reliability. Conversely, this relationship may be perceived as an imbalance of power held by the teacher/researcher and thusly constraining, or influencing the responses of the participants. Also, this study only surveyed the participants who were invested in the service learning research and did not address those adult immigrants English language learners who resisted being a part of the service learning project and, or the study.

Finally, this qualitative study was filtered through the lens of poststructuralism and consequently the researcher takes ownership of the claim that the conclusions of this research “will enviably be ‘situated and partial’” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 426), for a reflexive researcher understands that their view is one of many forged in the complex landscape of understanding human behaviour.

3.12 Summary

The goal of this study was to understand how the Multicultural Café experience affected the participants’ language acquisition, so that recommendations based on the learners’ experiences and
perspectives can be made for future experiential learning opportunities. This chapter outlined the methods used to achieve this goal through the qualitative research survey methods influenced by a phenomenological approach. Furthermore, this chapter provided information on the study’s poststructuralist and sociocultural research perspective, the research design and analysis, listed the guiding research questions, introduced the population, sampling method and instrumentation, described in-depth the setting for this study, and addressed the study’s trustworthiness, reliability, validity, biases, and limitations.
Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Overview of Chapter 4

This chapter presents the results of the research into the participants’ experiences, who were all adult learners of EAL, in the Multicultural Café as they related to the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform. This chapter reports the results of this survey research by reviewing the study’s methodology, describing the participants, outlining the themes found in the study, and by summarizing the results through the overarching research question.

4.2 Summary of Research Methods

This qualitative study was informed by phenomenology to describe the lived experiences of the participants as a subjective and personal narrative of a social and psychological phenomenon (Giorgi, 2012; Groenwald, 2004; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2013) that manifested as a result of their involvement in the Multicultural Café service learning platform. The purpose of undertaking qualitative research influenced by the a phenomenological research tradition was to understand the participants’ investment (Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2011) and motivation (Glasser, 1986; Lester, 1999) for taking part in a service learning experience, so that their lived experienced, although subjective, could illuminate understandings common to the human experience (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

This study was conducted from the perspective of ten Multicultural Café participants, who were immigrants to Canada and adult EAL learners enrolled in the ESLSAP at the Salmon Arm campus of Okanagan College. The research instruments employed for this inquiry project consisted of a paper based questionnaire, a face to face interview, and a focus group. Data gathered using these instruments was reported using the exact words of the participants. Incidences of non-standard English usage are not changed so as to avoid appropriating the voices of the participants. Using three instruments for the study triangulated the data in order to enhance trustworthiness, reliability and validity.

4.3 Participants

The participants were all immigrants to Canada, as well as English language learners enrolled in the English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP) at Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm campus. The participants were recruited from the volunteers who worked in the Multicultural Café at Okanagan College’s Salmon Arm Campus during the Fall 2012 and Winter 2013 semesters. The participant selection was a non-random sample of convenience (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012), for all volunteers who were available were invited to join in the study.

From the demographic data collected from the paper based questionnaire, all of the participants were immigrants to Canada and English was their Second or Additional Language. The participants immigrated to Canada from six different countries. Four participants emigrated from Japan, two participants emigrated from Switzerland, one participant emigrated from the Philippines, one participant
emigrated from Hong Kong, one emigrated from Germany, and one participant emigrated from Uzbekistan. Hence, seven participants originated from an Asian background, and three participants originated from a European background. Also in total, there were six different languages representing the participants’ first language. The range of time the participants lived in Canada spanned from 1 year to 30 years. The average time lived in Canada for all of the participants was between 9-10 years. For gender representation, of the ten participants’ one was male and remaining nine participants were female. For age representation, two participants were between the ages of 19-29, three participants were between the ages of 40-49, and five participants were 50 years or older. Therefore, half of the participants were below the age 50 and half were above the age of 50.

4.4 Results

The overarching research question explored in this study was: from the perspective of adult learners of English as an Additional Language, what are the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform, such as the Multicultural Café? The instrumentation used to investigate answers to this question and triangulate the data were a paper-based questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group.

The paper-based questionnaire consisted of ten questions. The first three closed-ended questions gathered demographic information. The fourth and fifth closed-ended questions asked the participants to rate their English abilities according to noticed self-improvement in reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills before and after volunteering to work in the Multicultural Café. Five participants, Kaori and Nobuo, who have been in Canada eight years, Karin, who has been in Canada for five years, Ada, who has been in Canada for 15 years, and Fumiko, who has been in Canada for 30 years all stated their English skills had not changed. However, five participants had reported that they did notice an improvement in their English skills. Two of these five participants, Tala and Ming, stated that they improved reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and they have been in Canada for five and 19 years respectively. Two more participants, Miram and Mia, stated that they improved in listening and speaking skills, and both have been in Canada for one year. The last of the five participants to record an improvement was Jan, who has been in Canada for five years, and she saw improvement in her speaking skills.

The sixth question on the paper-based questionnaire asked the participants whether or not volunteering in the Multicultural Café had helped them learn English and to explain their response. Eight participants responded, “Yes,” that the Café helped them learn English. Reasons for their positive responses included, “I had so many chances to talk to customers in English,” “I developed my English skills through the help of my co-workers and customers of the café. It helped me to develop my confidence by talking and mingling with them,” “reffering to speaking because your co workers are also English speaking learners it is easier to overcome your fear to speak up,” and “Take orders, make
conversation with customers, listen to their real English and beautiful pronunciation helped me a lot to learn English. Even though the staffs were ESL people, it was also a good opportunity to use English.” One participant stated both, “Yes” and “No,” regarding whether or not the Café had helped her and she wrote, “Yes and No. I am no an extrovert, therefore, the conversation between our customers and myself usually consisted with a few words like, “Hello,” and “Thank you.” The final participant wrote that the Café did not help her learn English and she wrote, “No. I don’t know did it help me or not. I’ve learnt to be confident about my English, but I didn’t add any new vocabulary.”

The last four questions on the paper-based questionnaire, and the remainder of the questions for the interviews and the focus group, consisted of open-ended questions framed to enable the participants to explore and articulate their thoughts regarding participating in the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café. By coding, categorizing, and analyzing the units of meaning to these open-ended questions, three themes emerged from the data. From counting the units of meaning, the largest count related to the theme of the Social Realm of language learning. Also two other themes arose from the data that could not solely be categorized the social realms of language learning. These two themes were labeled Personal Realm and Transformative Understandings (see Figure 4.1). Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter will elucidate the findings within these three themes.

Figure 4.1 Emergent Themes from the Multicultural Café Participants’ Experiences

4.5 Major Theme: The Social Realm

The theme of the social realm was the most prominent leitmotif referenced by the participants in the data. The social realm references comprised of nine subthemes including the customers, the volunteers or coworkers, the social challenges, the socially good opportunities, the cash register, access to
social networks, learning in a traditional class versus the Café, social and linguistic isolation, and language skills. This section will detail the findings of these social realm subthemes.

4.5.1 The Customers

There were many aspects to the interactions with the customers that appealed to the participants, specifically the Café positioned participants to enhance authentic discourse with a variety of persons within their speech community. Customers took on the role as teachers and sympathetic interlocutors. There was evidence of a reciprocally beneficial relationship described between the customers and the participants. Interactions with customers also held some challenges, which were taken seriously. This section describes the lived experiences of the participants as it related to their connections with their customers.

Each participant reported that volunteering in the Café positioned them in the new setting which led to new and more opportunities for authentic discourse. Ming wrote in her questionnaire, “I can talk to people,” and Kaori said during her interview, “I enjoyed to talk to customers because I have never experienced talking to Canadians in English – very good experience for me.” Miram stated in the focus group that the conversations with customers and other volunteers were valued for the conversation’s breadth and depth, and lack of boundaries, for according to Miram in the Café volunteers talked to “different person, about different subjects… in the Café you talk about everything.” The other three members of the focus group agreed with Miram’s perspective.

It was not just having the actual conversations that many of the participants valued, but it was who they were conversing with. For example Nobuo wrote, “I had a chance to meet a variety of new people at the café,” and Tala said that at the Café you can talk to “different persons.” The new and different customers Nobuo enjoyed conversing with were from different age groups as evidenced in his comment, “I was really enjoying talking to the different generations, ‘cause my business the same age kind of thing, but I never talk to students and teens. That was interesting!” For Fumiko the ‘who’ was labeled as “strangers” and she wrote, “As a person who felt more comfortable being her own company, it was a good experience interacting with strangers. I am glad I did it.” For some participants the ‘who’ was labeled as friends. Miram said that she “can make friends [and] practice English”. Tala stated that she, “get a lot of friends”, and Mia wrote, “The friendship I made at the café will last for good.” These new and different persons or customers included members of the wider community, the college staff, and students some of whom both patronized the Café and helped support and promote the service learning concept of the Café. Kaori encapsulated this when she said:

I met many Canadians, local people…Many people helped us like the Gathering Place [Okanagan College’s Aboriginal reception room], the First Nation people, they help us a lot, but experience we return in a good way that is a good experience in our new Canadian life.
The references went beyond the ability to talk with customers to the notion that the customers were teachers from which the participants learned from. The customers taught Tala about different outlooks, “I learn different people, different attitude.” Kaori improved her ability to explain, “I improved my English better than before. For example, customers ask us ‘Please explain about menu’, and so I tried to explain them ingredients, like how to make this”. Nobuo learned about idioms from the customers, “There are many ways to say the same thing, so it’s really interesting. I talk to the customer and what say I can’t recall what it is something like in a flash, or in a second, those are interesting because some of them I never heard of it.” Miram talked about learning contextual social politeness when interacting with customers, “I have learned to say, ‘Yes, please, thank you’. Before if someone said thank you I wouldn’t say anything. Now I still sometimes forget, but at least I know that I have to say, ‘You’re welcome’.” Miram also said, “I think I have learned to understand young people’s speaking quickly.” Mia added to the idea that the customers are teachers when she wrote, “Take orders, make conversation with customers, listen to their real English and beautiful pronunciation helped me a lot learn English.” Finally Kaori summarized the idea that the customers were teachers when she told the focus group, “In the Café customers teach us...They taught us many things like Canadian culture, Canadian food, daily news, lots of new things.”

The customers not only taught the Café volunteers about social norms, but most did so with kindness, patience and understanding. Nobuo told the focus group that “the good part is that they know we are ESL because the sign says ‘Multicultural Café’, and how they’re kind almost 99% of the customers are kind, patient.” The other three focus group members verbally agreed with Nobuo’s statement once he completed his thought. Fumiko, who did not join the focus group, wrote on her questionnaire, “In general our customers were friendly, and many of them understanding and patient with us,” and this corroborates the focus group’s conclusion that the customers were sympathetic interlocutors.

The connection the participants had with the Café customers could be seen in their reciprocally beneficial relationships. Kaori said, “I enjoyed cooking my favorites for customers,”, and Ming wrote, “I was very happy when I heard ‘it tastes good!’” Karin and Ada both enjoyed, “Sharing time with nice people.” Nobuo connected his happiness to the happiness of his customers when he said:

The Café was a nice place to gather for people in the college. I liked to see that they are drinking a cup of coffee or tea while sitting the tables with friends. They are smiling when I serve them a coffee or tea. It made me happy that I gave them happiness. Thank you for giving me the great opportunity to serve at the Café.

Finally, Kaori poignantly summarized the reciprocal beneficial relationship between the participant, their customers, and others associated with the Café when she said:
I volunteered at the Café. I go outside I got energy from other people and so if I a little bit depressed, but I go out and speak another person, my friend, or coworker, and so just speaking in English they make me happy, not depressed.

### 4.5.1.1 Challenges working with Customers

Working with customers was not always easy, for there were several challenges mentioned by the participants. Nobuo worried about finding menu items that would strike a chord with their customers’ palate. Tala was concerned about “not understand other peoples’ English.” Jan was nervous answering the phone. Karin was challenged “to speak-explain with the customer,” and Fumiko worried about the customer’s reaction when she told them that what they wanted was sold out. Miram noted a challenge about the speed of speech and the speed needed to comprehend, “There are some moments when people asked very quick. I had to ask, ‘What do you mean?’” The other members of the focus group agreed that being quick was a challenge as Miram continued to voice her thoughts amidst their nods of confirmation, “You have to be quick in English and quick to understand, especially when there is lots of people waiting in line.”

The participants took their role volunteering and representing the Café and themselves earnestly and rose to the challenges the Café and its customers put forth. Nobuo captured this when he stated, “But at the Café there is a customer there. It is serious business…If there is a complaint with the customer we have to do something. We can think about it as much as possible. We want him to come back every day.”

From reading the lived Multicultural Café experience of the participants, there was evidence that their relationship with the customers of the Café was significant, as it related to their positioning which enhanced authentic discourse and promoted learning from a variety of sympathetic interlocutors within their speech community.

### 4.5.2 The Volunteers/Coworkers

Over the Multicultural Café counter, the customers seemed to have played an important role for the participants; however, behind the Multicultural Café counter was as Nobuo termed it, “Café World”, and to which Kaori compared it to a “family working together.” The ‘Café World, or ‘Café Family’ was a space and a place where the fellow coworkers connected and negotiated meaningful relationships through the medium of English. Hence, the data connected to volunteers and coworkers was another powerful theme arising in the data. This section will describe the perceived impacts of working alongside other volunteers.
Volunteering together with a person who is experiencing a similar life trajectory seems to have made a positive impact on the participants. This was expressed by Mia:

If all the co-workers were Canadian people it would be hard to work at the café because they all know perfect English and I would think that I have to catch up with them, feel more nervous. Even though workers are ESL people, customers are Canadian people. That was good for me.

Miram supported Mia’s statement when she said:

Also I think that because it is a Multicultural Café, all of us are immigrants and it help us understand each other, and to accept, and be patient because we know we are going through the same problems and we understand each other.

Tala noted some of the positive impacts for her were, “I developed my English skills through the help of my co-workers and customers of the Café. It helped me to develop my confidence by talking and mingling with them.” As Tala wrote about how coworkers help her developed her confidence, she delved deeper into this experience by sharing “the Café helped me to regain my trust in people after my bad experience from my previous job.”

Co-worker relationships that extend beyond the Café was Miram’s perceived impact when she said “because of working in the Café I visited many houses. I was invited to many places because of my connection to Café with co-workers and staff.”

Jan shared how working alongside other volunteers affected her when she wrote, “Referring to speaking because your co-workers are also English speaking learners. It is easier to overcome your fear to speak up.” Jan continued to write about the benefits of working in the Café which included “sharing] with other immigrants his/her own experiences about learning English and living in Canada.” Karin and Ada both noted that “sharing” was an important aspect working with other volunteers.

This idea of sharing and learning from others’ experiences and ideas, as termed in the previous section ‘customers as teachers’, was also reflected the idea that the ‘volunteers were teachers’ by sharing and teaching other co-workers their knowledge and skills. Kaori spoke to this concept of coworkers as teachers:

I learned about share and teamwork. Share because I learned how to make coffee or how to make latte from instructor, and I shared with other people, new volunteer person how to make or how to do something.

Miram said that “she learned to work with people from different cultures.” Tala noted that by volunteering you “get a lot of friends, get to know about different cultures, and learn something new from them.”

In conjunction with working with people from different cultures was learning to understand different accents, and Nobuo said that “one thing I noticed is accents, but after a while inside the Café we talk, chat, so it’s more easy for me to understand.”
Miram learned about self-acceptance and career clarification as she compared herself to other Café volunteers:

I also understood that I can’t do physical job...It made my purpose stronger that I have to apply in university...I am not that person because one day, two hours was exhausting for me. So I just could look at Fumiko, and she was never tired, and I said, ‘Oh, my God’, and Kaori, so I guess maybe I am different and that is OK.

4.5.2.1 Negotiating Differences

Within the realm of learning from the fellow Multicultural Café volunteers is the challenge of how to learn to negotiate differences. Nobou said that is was a challenge because, “same words, but different meaning received.” Ming reiterated this problem that it was a challenge “to understanding other peoples English.” Mia wrote that the “volunteer staffs were from all over the world, each one has their own style and opinions, so it was often hard to understand each other.” Jan gave an example that it was a challenge “to explain the proper use of the tools to the co-workers and to discuss ideas about how to do a sandwich, or how to manage problems.” Fumiko further illustrated some of the challenges encountered while working with other volunteers:

This is something that I observed: Sometimes words or demeanor is taken the wrong way because neither one of them were willing to talk to the other person to correct the misunderstanding. It left uncomfortable feeling for the rest of the working days. I suppose getting through to a person who does not speak you mother tongue can be difficult sometimes.

Thus, as Nobuo articulated, it is hard to “maintain good relationships with co-workers,” and Kaori concurred that it was a challenge “to make good relationship with the co-worker.”

Despite these challenges to negotiate meaning, personal meaning can be successfully negotiated as evidenced in Miram’s experience:

I learned that I have to be respectful because I had a little conflict with [a co-worker] and I was really angry at her, but I was going to tell it to you [author of the study], but then I told [another co-worker]. Because I shared it with her then I looked differently at her [the co-worker with the conflict], and I thought maybe she is lonely, so I tried to understand her. So I thought I have to learn to understand people...I have learned that if you are nice to other people the answer is a nice answer because I build up my relationship with [the co-worker in conflict] after the accident.

Nobuo also found a positive outcome, a sense of trust, as a result of negotiating co-worker conflict, “I had some difficulties to deal with of course, but mainly I believe in the people who became the volunteers. They wants to help...They think a different way to make it work.”

Working with the volunteers brought out other emotions as well. Miram mentioned a playfulness, “I like the times when we just have fun and laugh in the back”. Tala noted a feeling of support, “There is a time in the Café I talked my problems to [the author of the study, who was seen as a
fellow co-worker] and I cried,” to which Miram added, “and I cried too.” This emotional support was felt by Kaori too, “If I a little bit depressed, but I go out and speak to another person, my friend, or co-worker, and so just speaking English they make me happy, not depressed.”

To conclude this section, the participants perceived that working with other volunteers, who mirrored themselves as immigrants and speakers of English as an Additional Language, as a valued experience where they learned from and supported one another. Even though negotiating meaning presented a challenge at times, overall the references to trust, respect, teamwork, support, friendship, and lessons learned superseded these challenges in negotiations.

4.5.3 The Social Challenges

Challenges were mentioned by the participants in both the social and the personal realms. However, the social challenges recurred more often in the data compared to the personal challenges, which were referenced less often. The social challenges did focus on communicating effectively with customers; however, negotiating meaning with co-workers, and instrumental learning such as learning how to use the cash register or predict food demands and inventories were also cited as challenges.

Social challenges encountered by the participants as they related to the customers included understanding customers’ English, speaking with customers, and making explanations for the customers. This was symbolized by Jan’s fear of “answering the phone,” for which all of her language skills were authentically and unpredictably tested. The social challenge of negotiating meaning with co-workers, as outlined in the previous section, mostly centered on trying “to maintain good relationships,” as expressed by Nobuo. Mia summarized the social challenge of negotiating differences amongst the co-workers: “Volunteer staffs were from all over the world, each one has their own style and opinions so it was often hard to understand each other.”

Practical learning for working in a Café, which included cooking, using the kitchen tools and appliances, and managing inventory and claims, were also challenges for the participants. Miram wrote, “Using the cash register was new for me. I made lots of mistakes.” Kaori added that “I am challenged how to make coffee, latte, sandwiches, and the cash register,” and Nobuo struggled “to find popular menu for customers,” and found “selling prices were difficult to setup.” These practical learning challenges, although seemingly individual, were categorized under social challenges because the learning process took place within a social context and the learning processes for each of the participants were constructed directly or indirectly with other learners. This was represented by Jan when she stated that it was a challenge “to understand and read the instructions of the tools we use furthermore to explain the proper use of the tools to the co-workers.”

Although the participants were socially challenged to communicate with customers and co-workers and they had to learn and share their instrumental knowledge with others, they all displayed
commitment to the process of service by learning by volunteering for the entire seven months that the Multicultural Café was operational.

4.5.4 Social Opportunities

The Multicultural Café was reported by the participants as being a good opportunity both socially and personally, with the social opportunities emerging more strongly in the data than the personal opportunities. A good opportunity was also characterized by the words “good chance,” “good experience,” “wonderful or great opportunity,” and a “good place.”

Opportunities to extend social borders and social learning, and using English skills were the units of meaning all the participants agreed was important. This is represented in Mia’s quote that, “it was also a good place to use English…to know new people, to get higher English.” Specifically, for Nobuo it was a good social opportunity to “meet people from different age groups.” For Miram, as described in the previous section, it was a good opportunity to explore both career options and social skills with others. For Jan to was a good place to “share with other immigrants his/her experience about learning English and living in Canada.”

The Café volunteers had the ability to choose what they wanted to cook and serve, and for Kaori she “had a good opportunity to make my country’s food,” and share her culture with others. Speaking to the ability to choose a menu, Miram brings up the notion of a social ownership opportunity when she wrote that “it is a good place to work in a café because it’s a friendly environment and workers can improvise and make their own meals, unlike Mcdonalds where workers can’t do it.”

For Tala and Mia the good social opportunities also meant social support. For Tala this was an opportunity to heal from a past negative workplace situation, “I work again because, you know, I don’t want to work in other because of what happened to me and I always cried before, remember, but now after [the Café] I have confidence again.” For Mia this was a socially valued opportunity as suggested in her response, “Multicultural Café was really a big part of my life in Salmon Arm. Thank you for giving me such a wonderful opportunity, and also thank you very much for all of your support.” Miram summarizes why the Café was seen by all participants as a good social opportunity:

It was a good place to know new people and became friends…Also I think it is a good place for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially people working the cashier because they are forced to be friendly and to be talkative after because I worked there too and that is ok to be talkative…I don’t need to be afraid anymore of people, of Canadians. So I think that is good for new immigrants that is a good chance.

The lived experiences of these participants have revealed that social opportunities were important and that the Multicultural Café as a service learning platform was perceived as a good opportunity to socially connect and to socially explore.
4.5.5 The Cash Register

The second hand cash register was a large ominous machine layered with buttons that sat with great presence on the Multicultural Café counter. The volunteers had several workshops with a technician to learn how to use this machine. This machine also was the tool used to mediate and initiate most social transactions with customers. Not only was the cash register a technical challenge to master it was also a social challenge to master and interactions with the cash register were a recurring theme in the data.

In the beginning, Kaori wrote that it was a challenge for her “to use the cashier register accurately and quickly.” Tala responded that the “cash register I am always scared”. Miram said that she had “made lots of mistakes…When I worked as a cashier, there were some moments when people asked very quickly. I had to ask, “What do you mean?” Nobuo, Kaori, and Tala all agreed with Miram when she said in the focus group that “you have to be quick in English and quick to understand, especially when there is lots of people waiting in line.”

However, despite the initial anxiety of working both the technical and social aspects of the cash machine, many participants felt they eventually mastered both aspects of the machine. Nobuo said that “I got skill of operating the espresso machine and cash registers.” Kaori, when recounted what she could do now after volunteering in the Café was “the cash register and counting money quickly.” Finally Miram summarizes her thoughts on the cash register:

My math is very bad, so I learned and am still actually learning to think numbers in English…but working with the cash machine was good…Now I know that I don’t need to be very smart to work with that machine with a grade six level math I can do it. I think it is a good place for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially for people working the cashier because they are force to be friendly and to be talkative.

The cash register positioned the participants in a space to “be forced,” as Miram describes it, to interact with customers in English “accurately and quickly,” using Kaori’s words, and this social and technical challenge played a role in the lived experiences of the participants.

4.5.6 Access to Social Networks

In the Multicultural Café the volunteers were given access to certain social networks that would have been difficult to access if they were sitting in a traditional English as a Second Language (ESL) class. Tala described it as “In the classroom because the same students, but in the cafe different kind of people every day.”

One social network accessed was the connection to the college’s student body and its staff. The Café was in middle of a dynamic speech community by being positioned steps way for the front office and beside the campus bookstore, the student union lounge, and the First Nation’s Gathering Place. This gave the volunteers a new type of membership in the college community. As a result Kaori said, “I meet many staff at the college. Even I go to school they say ‘hi’ they know us. They know me and my face
and they say ‘hi’.” Tala wrote, “Aside from learning English, I got to engage myself to different activities at school. I also got lots of friends afterwards.” Access to this collegial social network even positioned one participant to “make romance” with a member of the student body.

Another social network that was having access to other immigrants who volunteered to work in the Café. Mia wrote that the benefits to working in the Café was getting to know the other volunteers, “the friendship I made at the café will last for good!!” Miram accessed social networks outside of the Café as a result of other Café volunteers, “because of working in the Café I visited many houses. I was invited to many places because of my connection to the Café with co-workers and staff.”

An additional social network accessed was the wider community and its members who came to the Café, even though they were not registered students. For example, Kaori mentioned how one local resident that she called “the rich lady” came to the Café on the weekly basis, and who also went around the community posting the Café’s menu to advocate for the volunteers and what they were accomplishing within the service learning Café.

The volunteers also accessed the larger Okanagan College social network when the Café, through their ESLSAP instructor, was recognized with an Innovation Award. They also connected with a professional social network through local and traveling suppliers when ordering and receiving food supplies. This social network didn’t always run smoothly. Nobuo said, “I have to deal the sales person, and unfortunately we cannot choose we want…Sometimes, I had frustration to the buying something from the company then dealing with the other people”; however, Nobuo added, “I enjoyed every day, even in the frustration.”

Another surprising social network accessed was on a provincial level. The Multicultural Café was nominated for a provincial NESIKA Award for Excellence Cultural Diversity in November 2012 (see Figure 4.2). Their ESLSAP instructor and three volunteers were given a travel stipend to attend the NESIKA Awards ceremony in Burnaby, British Columbia. The B.C. Minister of Multicultural Affairs at that time was the honorable John Yap and he gave a speech at the NESIKA Awards ceremony. In March 2013, the honorable John Yap (see Figure 4.3) came to Salmon Arm and stopped by the Multicultural Café to have a coffee, greet the volunteers, and have a newspaper photo opportunity with himself, the Café volunteers, the incumbent local MLA, and the Regional Dean of the Salmon Arm campus. Nobuo reminisced about these two events:

There was one group of people who came to see us like the minister John Yap, yes, before we went to the NESIKA Awards and at that time I was thinking that Canada and maybe B.C. thinks that those ESL activities because immigrants need help to join society. Then at the time that government, he is a minister right, he addressed something to the public and then I saw he at the Café, and so even those guys think about those small community that was kind of a good feeling to me - they care.
The Multicultural Café was a service learning platform for adult immigrant learners of English as an Additional Language. Not only did the Café give the volunteers opportunities to use English, it also gave them access to social networks to further their practice, use and learn English within a variety of social contexts.
Figure 4.2 Tracy Riley and the participants attending the NESIKA Awards ceremony in Burnaby, B.C., as nominees for Excellence in Cultural Diversity.

Figure 4.3 The participants at the Multicultural Café hosting the Honourable John Yap, Provincial Minister of Multicultural Affairs
4.5.7 Traditional Classroom vs. The Café

Another subtheme revealed in the data described the differences between traditional language learning in a classroom and learning English through an authentic service experience, such as found in the Multicultural Café. Kaori stated that the traditional classroom is a “very good study in English grammar”; however, she adds that the Café learning goes beyond grammar because “daily customers is teacher they taught us many things like Canadian culture, Canadian food, daily news, lots of new things.” Also, Nobuo noticed that in the traditional class he studied a more formal English, as opposed to in the Café where a more colloquial English was learned:

Always learned the polite way, proper way to speak, but as the same thing in Japan, Korean, or Chinese daily conversation skip so many words. We know we use a full sentence six words, but we only use three words. Also there is so many ways to say the same things. So it’s interesting. I talk to customers…something like ‘in a flash’, or, ‘in a second’ those are interesting because some of them I never heard of it.

This difference between who is the teacher and what subjects are being taught in the classroom versus in the Café was mirrored in Miram’s response, “In the classroom teacher speak more academic stuff”, and in the Café, “here is a more different language…different subjects…we talk about everything.” The idea of difference also was expressed in Tala’s answer, “In the classroom because the same students, but in the Café different kind of people every day. I learn English in a working in a Café because you can communicate to different kind of people.”

Nobuo brought up an interesting idea about difference between the investment learners may have in the classroom contrasted with the investment they may have in the Café when he said, “I shouldn’t say this, but at the class sometimes I don’t need to listen too carefully, but this [Café] I have to have all ears.”

Also discussed was the notion that the traditional class is more formal and not an appropriate place to display emotions, where as in the Café they were able to express a fuller range of emotions. This was evidence in a conversation between Tala and Miram:

Miram: In the class we have to do assignments, homeworks, and even more. In the Cafe you can make jokes and you don’t have a strict teacher.
Tala: There is a time in the Café I talk my problems to [the author of the study and their instructor] and I cried.
Miram: and I cried!
Tala: You too and I remember!
Miram: In the class you can’t do that you have to be tough.

It seems some of the participants believed that a traditional classroom follows a formal structure that emphasizes grammar, and may be disengaging for learners, like Nobuo. In contrast, learning in an
authentic speech community such as found in the Multicultural Café can be less structured, more open to emotionality, and may be an even more engaging place for some learners to invest their learning time and energy.

4.5.8 Social and Linguistic Isolation

A social aspect some of the participants acknowledged was the how the Multicultural Café helped them from being socially and linguistically isolated in their homes, for seven of the ten participants lived in a household where the main language spoken is not English. Tala stated:

I study English for how many years, but for me until now I am not a good time if you start for a whole week in my own house we are talking my own language. There is a time I forget. There is a time, ‘What is that in English?’ I forget it. It is so much better of you talking to the others person, communicate to others.

Tala also noted that others have noticed her language improved since working in the Café:

The others said my coworkers before… ‘I don’t know’, but know they said, ‘Oh your English now is better than before when you are new in Canada, I don’t understand you, but now I can understand you’, ‘Oh thank you’.

Nobuo confirmed Tala’s view that the Café gives them a place where they can daily engage in English discourse when he said that “After I quit then I kind of retired, still semi-retired, I don’t talk that much more everyday with someone in English…When I work in the Café I talk English every day.” And finally Kaori shared why the Café helped her with social and linguistic isolation:

I think speaking in English is very important for ESL student because I speak my own language in my own house inside, but I volunteer at the Café – I go outside. I got energy from other people, and so if I a little bit depresses, but I go out and speak another person…just speaking in English, they made me happy, not depressed.

The Multicultural Café helped get some participants out of their homes and into an English speaking space where participants could engage in daily conversations, which in turn helped improved their English skills and for one participant this gave relief from minor depression.

4.5.9 Language Skills

In learning English as a Second or Additional Language, the academic skills that are of primary focus are reading, writing, listening, vocabulary, and speaking and usually studied in that order. The data in this study was examined using these five language skills in order to find evidence of learning, or not learning, these skills. References to language skills were a recurrent theme in the data. The most common references to specific language skills involved speaking, followed by vocabulary, listening, writing, and reading with decreasing frequency. This section will report on these findings.

The skills of reading and writing were brought up by one participant, Jan. She wrote that for reading skills, “to understand and read the instruction of the tools” was a challenge; however she coupled
reading skills with speaking skills when she added that it was a challenge to then “explain the proper use of the tools to the coworkers.” Jan also referred to writing skills, “In the Café we needed to write only at the board sign the progress was limited.” From the lack of data collected and the response that the progress of writing skills was limited and that the reading skills were tied to speaking, it appeared that these skills had a minor impact on the participants.

Listening skills received more acknowledgement by the participants. Mia wrote that one reason the Café helped her improve English skills was that she could “listen to their [customers’] real English and beautiful pronunciation.” Miram also agreed that taking part in the Café improved her English skills, “I think it made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening…I think I have learned to understand young people’s speaking quick.” Miram also noted that learning to listen and understand quickly was a challenge, “especially when there was lots of people waiting in line.” The other three participants who attended the focus group verbally agreed with Miram.

Even though there were only a few references to listening, it is tied closely to speaking and understanding, as seen with Miram’s aforementioned response. Thus Nobuo sums up listening’s silent significance when he said that in the Café, “I have to have all ears.”

On the other hand, vocabulary received mixed reviews from the participants. Miram stated that she “learned some names of some foods” because she did not “know everything, all the food ingredients.” Kaori said that she too learned “special vocabulary.” And Nobuo who was “kind of worrying about my vocabulary” said that he “got more vocabularies and how to emphasize things differently,” for he found that he learned “more vocabulary of daily life,” and this was “very practical.” Though, Ming wrote, “I’ve learnt to be confident about my English, but I didn’t add any new vocabulary.” Thus, the participants’ perception of their vocabulary acquisition was limited to mostly practical and specialized words; however, according to Ming, vocabulary may have not increased, but the confidence to use the vocabulary that she possessed did increase.

Finally, speaking was the largest referenced unit of meaning for language skills. Speaking was also cited as talking, discussing, explaining, telling, asking, answering, applying, practicing, communicating, and by the term conversation. There were several different contexts in which speaking was described. One context was in reference to reducing the fear and anxiety of speaking in English. Jan represented this idea when she wrote that by speaking to the coworkers, who are also “English speaking learners it is easier to overcome your fear to speak up”. Miram also mention this concern, for she said that the Café, “made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening, and not to be afraid of speaking in English because before even I know something I was afraid to speak.” Also Fumiko, who identified herself as being an introvert, wrote that the Café help her engage in the most basic of discourse being “Hello” and “Thank you,” and this was a sign of overcoming her anxiety around talking to, as she termed, “strangers.”
Another context, as reported previously, speaking to the customers and other volunteers was seen as a vital way to improve English skills. This was represented in a quote by Tala, “I developed my English skills through the help of my co-workers and costumers of the café. It helped me to develop my confidence by talking a mingling with them.” This quote also demonstrates the linkage between speaking and confidence, which in turn is tied to overcoming a fear of speaking, as demonstrated in the beginning of this section. Kaori highlights these connections when she stated that before working in the Café, “I used very shy when I speak English. I only smile, but now a little bit confidence and comfortable.”

Speaking English for some participants also meant practicing and applying the English skills that they possessed rather than learning new skills. When Jan was asked if she would recommend working in a service learning place like the Multicultural Café, she replied, “Yes”, because, “by applying your own English skills in a work setting without too much pressure and succeeding” it helps improve English language skills. Jan continued to say that at the Café a person, “is forced to explain himself through another language, which can be very hard and lowers your self esteem, [but] by challenging himself in a learning environment people can apply their skills and knowledge and get more secure in their language skills.” The relationship between being forced to speak and self-esteem or confidence was also observed in Miram’s statement when she said:

I think it is a good place [the Café] for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially for the people who are working the cashier, because they are forced to be friendly and to be talkative after because I worked there I too and that is OK to be talkative.

These quotes from the participants are identifying a linkage between being ‘self-challenged’, or ‘self-forced’ to speak in a learning environment and the increased confidence perceived when applying their English skills and knowledge. The use of the hyphenated words ‘self-challenged’, or ‘self-forced’ recognizes the agency of the participants, who chose to volunteer to work the service learning environment of the Multicultural Café. Taking agency into account, participation in the Multicultural Café can be summarized by Jan’s thoughts that one of the benefits to service learning is that you can, “challenge yourselves in a supportive way.”

The mind was another context in which speaking was addressed. In a speech act, thinking typically precedes speaking. Kaori addressed this metacognitive process when she said, “I am always thinking in English and speaking and thinking and speaking and tried to better than before and everyday a little bit improve.” As well Miram reported that she is “still learning to think numbers in English and how to talk about numbers in English because when I count myself I count in my own language.” These two examples demonstrated that being in the context of an English mediated service learning environment enabled some participants to articulate their metacognitive ability to think in English before speaking in English.
Also in the context of agency, even though the participants were exposed to new language skills and structure as agentive learners, some chose not to use these new language skills and structures. For example, Nobuo said that he may have learned more vocabulary, “but I still stick with my old ways. Much easier for me…I might learn more and I might use more”; however, Nobuo is choosing if and when he uses his new language knowledge.

From the data the language skills of reading and writing had a minimal impact on the participants. Listening was directly cited as a skill that improved and implicitly laid the foundation for its reciprocal partner, speaking. Speaking skills dominated the perceptions of the participants. Speaking skills were connected firstly to other interlocutors, and through applying the speaking skills they already possessed, in turn influenced feelings of self-confidence, the ability to challenge oneself, strengthening of metacognitive skills, and practicing agency as to whether, or not one uses the newly acquired language skills. Thus an increase in language skills was perceived by the participants in a social context of being in, or thinking about being in discourse with others.

4.5.10 Social Realm Conclusion

This section reported on how the participants, who volunteered in the Multicultural Café, perceived the social realm. The social realm included the subthemes of connecting to the customers and to the other volunteers, rising to the social challenges, partaking in the socially good opportunities, mastering the cash register technically to improve the frontline positioned social discourse, accessing a wider range of social networks, exploring the differences between learning in the traditional class versus the Café, coping with social and linguistic isolation, and improving language skills, specifically speaking skills. Overall, this was a large theme that highlighted the importance social connections held for the participants’ lived Multicultural Café experience.

4.6 The Personal Realm

The next theme to arise from the data was the personal realm. This theme directly related to an intrapersonal aspect of the participants’ perception of being a part of the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café. Although the personal theme did not emerge as strongly in the data as that of the social realm, it still carried the voices of the participants’ perceived emotional impacts, while honoring their social connection to other voices within their wider speech community. Each affective reference in the personal realm mentioned by the participants was connected to another emotion, or to personal challenge to overcome, or a personal opportunity to explore. The range of emotions experienced by the participants that emerged from the data was expansive (see Figure 4.4). Therefore, this section describes the affective and the emotional lived experiences of the participants within the context of their social interconnectivity.
4.6.1 Fear and Confidence

The affective themes arising in the data were initially categorized into positive and negative emotions, yet within the negative emotional experiences positive emotional outcomes were also reported. Two negative emotions that had positive emotional outcomes were fear and nervousness as it related to engaging in social discourse with native English speakers, or “Canadians” as they were referred to by the participants. This nervous feeling was exemplified in Mia’s quote:

If all the co-workers were Canadian people, it would be hard to work at the café because they all know perfect English and I would think that I have to catch up with them, feel more nervous.

Even though workers are ESL people, customers are Canadian people. That is good for me.

The feeling of fear for Tala, centered on engaging in social discourse with customers. This social engagement mostly occurred at the site of the cashier register, and thus, she stated the “Cash register I am always scared.” Both Tala and Mia’s personal anxiety and fear focused on linguistic performance with native English speakers in an authentic social arena.
Juxtaposed to the fear of speaking appeared to be the positive affective outcome of having confidence in speaking and this was heard in Miram’s quote: “I think that [the Café] made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening, and not to be afraid of speaking in English because before, even I know something, I was afraid to speak.”

The feeling of confidence was a popular emotion amongst the participants. Tala wrote the Café helped her “develop confidence by talking and mingling with [customers and co-workers].” Some participants detailed precisely what they have become confident in, for example Miram said that she had “learned to be confident about her English.” As did Ming, who learned to be confident, “to speak English properly,” and Mia, who became more confident in “mak[ing] conversations.” Fumiko grew in confidence toward, “interacting with strangers.” Jan became “more secure in [her] language skills.” Nobuo said that he “became good at preparing for functions any size.” Kaori became more confident with the “cash register and counting money quickly,” and in “using English a lot with new people and in new places.” Tala said that “I have confidence again…to work again…after what happened to me.’ Thus for these participants their personal fear was transformed into confidence through feeling successful and competent socially.

4.6.2 Loneliness, Isolation, and Depression

Another interrelated grouping of negative emotions expressed by some of the participants were loneliness, isolation, and depression. Miram wrote, “I was lonely and having culture shock. Working with people from different cultures helped me to be accepted and make friends among volunteers.” Kaori said that she was depressed as a result of being isolated socially and linguistically, yet by leaving her house and engaging in social discourse with sympathetic interlocutors she “got energy from another people and so if I a little bit depressed but I go out and speak another person my friend, or co-worker and so just speaking in English, they made me happy and not depressed.” Thus, for some participants the negative emotions of loneliness, isolation, and depression where alleviated by being socially and linguistically connected to and accepted by others.

Negotiating differences also brought up some negative emotions. Miram was struggling to negotiate differences between herself and another volunteer, so she consulted a fellow co-worker for advice. As a result, Miram’s perspective on the volunteer with whom she was in conflict had changed: “Then I looked differently at her and I thought maybe she is lonely, so I tried to understand her.” Having experienced loneliness herself, due to culture shock, Miram was able to empathize with another co-worker with the guidance of a fellow co-worker. Both Kaori and Miram provided examples of how reconciling negative emotions in both the personal and social realm can provide opportunities for positive affective outcomes.
4.6.3 Feeling of Pressure (or the lack thereof)

Many of the participants did mention feeling pressured working at the Multicultural Café; however, they also mentioned how the Café was not a site of pressure. The members of the focus group discussed the practical pressures of running a Café, such as serving the customers quality food in a timely manner, and “being quick in English and quick to understand, especially when there is a lot of people waiting in line” as noted by Miram. However, this feeling of pressure brought out the sympathetic side of their interlocutors as represented in this quote by Nobou, “The pressure eh? But the good part is that they all know we are ESL because the sign says, ‘Multicultural Café’, and how so they’re kind almost 99% of the customers are kind, patient,” which was positively affirmed by the other three members of the focus group.

Conversely, Miram talked about the positive effects of succeeding and making less mistakes from the lack of time pressure, “by applying your own English skill in a work setting without too much pressure and succeeding and making not too many mistakes because of less time pressure.”

Finally Mia wrote that she felt less pressure linguistically as a result of the setup of the Café with the volunteers being adult immigrant EAL learners and the customers being mostly native English speakers. If the Café setup was reversed and “all the co-workers were Canadian people, it would be hard to the café because they all know perfect English and I think that I would have to catch up with them, feel more nervous.”

Volunteering in a restaurant business has inherent pressure to perform. From the participants’ perspective this pressure was mitigated by having sympathetic interlocutors, on both sides of the Café counter.

4.6.4 Feeling Comfortable and Uncomfortable

For one participant, Fumiko, she felt the lived experience of the Multicultural Café, “as a person who felt who felt more comfortable being her own company.” Even though working in a social environment was pushing Fumiko from her more introverted comfort zone she still deemed, “it was a good experience interacting with strangers every day.”

Fumiko also felt the tension and discomfort of being in a working environment where two co-workers from different cultural backgrounds struggled to negotiate their differences. As a result of this social conflict it personally, “left an uncomfortable feeling for the rest of the working days.” Fumiko was able to articulate both the positive and negative aspects of comfort and discomfort as it affected her own personal experience.

4.6.5 Feeling Forced

Feeling forced was another affective trait that was mentioned by some of the participants. Feeling forced on the surface appears to be a negative emotion, and may even have a lack of agency
connotation, nevertheless from reading the data it is clear that these participants *forced themselves*. These participants forced themselves to risk being in a linguistically and socially challenging position by choosing to volunteer in an authentic working environment. The data revealed that the consequence of feeling forced if originated from the participant, produced a positive outcome. Jan provided an example of this *self-forced* transforming into a positive outcome:

> Everybody brings his own working skills and experiences and is forced to explain himself now through another language which can be very hard and lower you self esteem. By challenging himself in a learning environment people can apply their skills and knowledge and get more secure in their language skills.

For Jan being self-forced linguistically and socially meant that there was an opportunity to feel secure in one’s language skills. In the next quote, Miram also felt that there was a positive outcome by forcing oneself to be in a linguistically and socially challenging position:

> I think it is a good place for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially people who are working the cashier because they are forced to be friendly and to be talkative after because I worked there I too and that is OK to be talkative…I don’t need to be afraid anymore of people of Canadians. So I think that is good for new immigrants that is a good chance.

For Miram, being self-forced meant having a chance to grow in social confidence with interlocutors and take on the identity as a talkative person.

Being *self-forced*, or challenging oneself to take social and linguistic risks, appears for some participants’ a rewarding personal investment.

4.6.6 Sense of Freedom

Juxtaposed to the feeling of being forced, for many participants they felt a sense of freedom volunteering at the Multicultural Café. This feeling of freedom encompassed a freedom of choice, a freedom of ownership, and a freedom of expression.

4.6.6.1 Freedom of Choice

The organization of the Multicultural Café, being a new model of service learning interfacing with an actual not-for-profit business had the participants free to model the Café into a combination of their collective visions. All ideas from the colour of the Café’s wall to the food being serviced were heard, accepted and many acted upon by either the ESLSAP instructor, other volunteers, or the College representatives. To this end, Kaori enjoyed the freedom to decide the “menu for the customers”. Ming also reported that the freedom to create a menu was important, “It is good to work in a café because it’s a friendly environment and workers can improvise and make their own meal, unlike McDonald’s where workers can’t do it.”

Both Jan and Miram appreciated the freedom of “only working for a few hours” each week, so that each could pursue other schooling at the college. Also Miram appreciated the freedom to volunteer
according to her own physical limitations: “I worked at the beginning, I worked three hours, but then three hours was too much for me, then I decided to work two hours.”

The freedom to choose language use was demonstrated in Nobuo’s statement that even though he learned new vocabulary at the Café, he will “still stick with my old ways. Much easier for me.”

Hence, the freedom of choice was important for Nobuo to choose his language use, for Jan and Miram to choose their amount of participation, and for Ming and Kaori to choose the menus to be served.

4.6.6.2 Freedom and a Sense of Ownership

The freedom to make the Café a representation of the volunteers’ vision made an impact on Kaori’s lived experience, for it fostered a sense of ownership. Her sense of ownership was revealed in this interview statement:

You told us it your Café and you can decide yourself and so because nobody owner each person like an owner and I want to do more. I have lots of ideas, but its teamwork. Teamwork also like a we have a budget we had to create thing and it’s very fun. The customer happy and sometimes and that a good way because we had feedback why customers upset and why customer didn’t buy. This menu expensive, or the taste is not good. We think about this a lot. Because we are foreigners and we never can do work our own business like our English level. It’s amazing like our own business.

Kaori’s account of her sense of ownership connected with the freedom to decide the Café’s development, but this development is seen within the social boundaries of “teamwork,” and the customer’s “feedback”. Also intermingled with Kaori’s sense of ownership were the emotions of pride, happiness and fun. Kaori’s lived experience volunteering at the Multicultural Café demonstrated the interplay between the personal and the social through the affective realm.

4.6.6.3 Freedom of Expression

One of Miram’s lived experiences from the Multicultural Café was the finding her freedom of expression. This can be seen in her answer to the interview question, “What did you learn about yourself when you were in the Café?” She responded:

When I came to Canada I thought that I am not so social person because of my English, but in the Café I really felt good about myself and started joking, playing around, and I make friends with Mia. Also, I learned that when I get angry because I got angry one time and really frustrated, and so before I tried to keep my anger inside me, but that time I showed it outside. I didn’t keep it inside and it was good. I think I was good, so I thought, ‘Oh Canada is making me more free to express my feelings if they are bad or good!’ I felt good about myself for the first time and now I am learning not to be afraid to express my feelings.

Miram’s found her freedom of expression a social milieu of friendship and conflict. Also Miram’s experience was layered with emotions, which included feelings of inadequacy, confidence,
support, a sense of fun and light heartedness, alongside feelings of anger and frustration. Finding the freedom to expression one’s emotions, for Miram, occurred in a complex landscape of the personal and social.

The participants of the Multicultural Café have shown some complex examples of how the freedom to choose, the freedom to find a sense of ownership, and the freedom to express feelings was forged in a space where the social and personal meet.

4.6.7 Complex Affective and Social Involvements

There were several experiences in the data that related to a complex connection between the affective and personal realm and social realm. Some of the participants were able to articulate a complex emotional narrative, influenced by the social milieu, which resulted in several emotional outcomes such as anger, frustration, happiness, satisfaction, pride, and a freedom from fear. The following stories detail some of the participants’ complex affective and social involvements.

4.6.7.1 Complex Emotional and Social Narratives

As observed in the connection between fear and confidence, some emotional experiences were as a result of complex affective and social involvements. This was observed in Miram’s complex emotional narrative, which had woven together several emotions such as anger, frustration and a freedom from fear and freedom of expression:

I got angry one time and really frustrated [with a co-worker], and so before I used to keep my anger inside me, but that time I showed it outside. I didn’t keep it inside and it was good. I think I was good, so I thought, ‘Oh, Canada is making me more free to express my feelings if they are good or bad.’ I felt good about myself for the first time and now I am learning not to be afraid to express my feelings, before I could only say when I am happy, but when I was angry I couldn’t say I was angry…I [also] learned that not everyone is the same. I learned that I have to be respectful because I had a little conflict with [a co-worker].

At the Café, Miram was able to explore the complexity of expressing negative emotions in a new social context and as a result found this exploration satisfying and educational.

4.6.7.2 Complex Feelings: Challenged, Yet Happy, Satisfied, and Proud

Many participants felt the complex challenge of learning the day to day operations of the Café such as cooking and catering, using the kitchen tools and equipment, and managing the claims and inventory, while being challenged to meet the expectations of the customers. Mia exemplifies this when she wrote that she was challenged to “know Canadian Style.” Also Kaori comment that she was challenged to “find popular menu for customers.” Nobuo was personally challenged “to figure out preparation time.” And for Fumiko, she was challenged by trying to figure out the coffee needs of the customers with their ebb and flow patronage, “We were never sure if it was going to be busy or not.”
Through feeling successful in practical Café operational learning and social learning, some participants then felt a sense of satisfaction, a feeling of happiness, and a sense of pride. Kaori wrote that one reward for her working in the Café was feeling satisfied to be “able to make a good coffee and espresso and serve them to the customers.” Kaori went on to say that because she had personally challenged herself to learn the both the operational Café skills and its accompanying social skills that she was able to create an environment where both she and her customers were happy and satisfied:

The café was a nice place to gather for people in the college. I liked to see that they are drinking a cup of coffee or tea while sitting the tables with friends. They are smiling when I serve them a coffee or a tea. It make me happy that I gave them a little happiness.

In preparing the Multicultural Café special, Kaori took on the challenge to create and source a menu, and then be the lead cook for the culinary dishes inspired from her own cultural background. When her menu turned out to be successful she said that “I was so impressed that Canadian people like [the food from her culture].” She continued that she was “glad to know another country’s people love our country’s food. I am very proud of my country.” Kaori was challenged to share her culture through food and she was rewarded by having the interlocutor’s value her efforts, and this in turn encouraged pride in her nationality to flourish. Even though Kaori was challenged to learn the “Canadian Style” this was not at the cost of diminishing her own culture; hence, pride was the personal outcome for her.

Ming also wrote about taking on the challenge of creating a menu from her cultural background, sourcing the ingredients for the menu, and then becoming the lead cook. When her menu was a customer success she said that “I was very happy when I heard, ‘It tastes good!’”

From these participants lived experiences after they personally challenged, or invested in themselves, and built on their cultural strengths, which were in turn valued by the perceived target community, then in return they netted the profits of happiness, satisfaction, and pride. From the perspective of these participants’ complex affective and social involvements in a service learning Cafe, they have shown their ability to foster learning and emotional growth.

### 4.6.8 Fun

Volunteering at the Café was more than wading through challenges and coping with negative emotions, for according to all ten of the participants, working in the Café was fun and brought a lot of happiness and enjoyment. For example, Nobuo was often irritated with one particular food sales representative, yet he still said, “It was very fun to actually I enjoyed every day, even in the frustration.” He also said that he “was really enjoying talking to different age groups.”

Kaori stated that engaging with the customers and the other volunteers “in English, they made me happy, not depressed,” and that she “enjoyed to talk to the customers”. As for Ming, she felt happiness when she heard the customers say, “It tastes good.” In addition, Mia said that it was a “wonderful opportunity.”
Miram said that when she came to Canada she had the identity of a, “not so social person because of my English, but in the Café I really felt good about myself and started joking, playing around, and I make friends with Mia.” Miram found a more sociable identity through having fun at the Café. During the focus group she said, “I like the times when we just have fun and lots of laughs in the back at funny things. It was good that we all don’t get fired [to which the entire focus group joined her laughter].” Miram also compared the Café to a traditional language classroom through the filter of fun, “In the class we have to do assignments, homeworks, and even more serious. In the Café, you can make jokes and you don’t have a strict teacher.”

Kaori also found the Café creating process enjoyable: “It’s interesting, very interesting and fun because making something and selling something and earn money and I never believe that kind of situation like a business. Thinking and making menu and creating something and selling kinds like chocolate, or banana, or fruit. We had to create thing and it’s very fun.”

Nobuo sums up why the Café was a fun service learning environment, “I enjoyed very much the café, and learned new things, such as the operation of food service in a small scale, cooking my favorites for customers and working together with people come from different national origins.”

From these participants’ experiences of having fun, feeling happy, and enjoying, as Nobuo termed it “Café World”, they guide us to wonder about the importance of engaging in the lighter side of service learning.

4.6.9 Recognition and Acknowledgment

Some of the participants mentioned that it felt good to be noticed for their personal and collective accomplishments at the Café. Tala talked about a time when her native English speaking brother-in-law praised her for her new sandwich making skills, “I did a new skill…making sandwiches…and my brother-in-law said, ‘You’re the one who do this sandwich? Wow, nice’.” Tala also mentioned a time when her co-workers at her new job after the Cafe, who were both native and non-native English speakers, noticed her improved speaking skills, “They said, ‘Oh your English now is better that before when you are new in Canada, I don’t understand you, but now I can understand you’, ‘Oh thank you’.”

Kaori told of her experience being recognized by College staff members, “I meet many staff at the College. Even I go to school they say, ‘Hi’. They know us. They know me and my face and they say, ‘Hi’.” Also Nobuo recounts his good feeling when the Café was recognized provincially for the NESIKA Award for Multicultural Excellence and when the honorable John Yap, the provincial Minister of Multicultural Affairs came to visit the volunteers at the Multicultural Café.

The positive affective feelings that surrounded being noticed and acknowledged was a notable aspect for Tala, Kaori, and Nobuo’s lived Multicultural Café experiences.
4.6.10 Grateful and Thankful

Another affective aspect that was common amongst the participants was the gratitude and thankfulness they felt and expressed toward being a part of the Multicultural Café service learning experience. For example, Kaori wrote, “Thank you for giving me the great opportunity to serve at the café.” Tala wrote, “I had a great time at the Café…Thank you for our ESL teacher…who always help us and make these things happen.” Mia summarizes the sentiment of gratitude when she wrote, “Multicultural Café was a really big part of my life in Salmon Arm. Thank you for giving me such a wonderful opportunity and also thank you very much for all of your support. You’re a great teacher and a wonderful manager at the café :).”

4.6.11 Personal Realm Conclusion

In the data, all of the participants referred to their affective emotional learning experiences, which were fostered by the social environment at the Multicultural Café. A diverse range of emotional states were articulated by the participants. This section described the participants’ affective and emotional experiences as they related to fear and confidence, loneliness, isolation and depression, feeling pressured and not pressured, feeling comfortable and uncomfortable, embracing freedom of choice, ownership and expression, describing complex affective and social involvements, validating experiences that were fun, feeling good about being acknowledged, and expressing gratitude. The participants revealed that the personal realm grounded in affect was a significant part of volunteering in the Café.

4.7 Transformative Understandings

A small segment of the data held personal experiences and insights garnered by the participants in the social context of volunteering at Multicultural Café that transcended language acquisition into a realm of transformative understandings. These stories will conclude the study’s results chapter.

Earlier in the study Jan provided an example of her forcing herself to take a risk linguistically and socially in order to find an opportunity to transform a “fear of speaking” into “feel[ing] secure in one’s language skills.”

Social encounters experienced by some of the participants transformed into friendship that “will last for good” as Mia wrote. Tala agreed when she stated, “we still keep each other updated about our lives.” Mia, thus, found this experience to be a meaningful endeavor and said that the “Multicultural Café was a really big part of my life.”

Miram had many transforming experiences at the Café. One was when her humor returned to her identity, “I joked a lot using English, which I was shy to do in the beginning of my arrival to Canada.” She also talked about a time in the café, with the help of a co-worker, that she was able to “looked differently at [a co-worker]” with whom she was in conflict. Looking differently at this co-worker helped Miram transform her understanding of the possible motives to explain a co-worker’s behaviour, such as
“maybe she is lonely”. Thus, Miram “learned that not everyone is the same. I learned that I have to be respectful.” Moreover Miram discovered that “Canada is making me more free to express my feelings.”

Fumiko had a transforming experience as a self-declared introvert, when she stated that the Café allowed her to transcend this identity and have a “good experience interacting with strangers every day.” And upon reflection, Fumiko said that she was “glad she did it.”

Nobuo had a unique ongoing transformative experience through comparing his social encounters with his own personal life experiences. Nobou articulated eight different comparisons that he explored during his time volunteering at the Café. These comparisons included comparing his former business life with “Café World”, comparing his immigrant journey to others, where he concluded that there were two types of immigrants, “serious and not serious”. He compared Asian language acquisition to English language acquisition, the traditional classroom and the Cafe, and cross-cultural money cultures. He compared his service learning group to others across Canada, compared cooking for a family versus an institution, and compared the tension between pressure and the patience the customers displayed towards the volunteers. Finally, he compared conversing with different age groups. Nobou’s most commonly used expression was, “It’s interesting.” Nobou transcended the daily operations of the Café and explored cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and cross-generational issues.

Kaori recounted that the Café helped her transcend mild depression related to social and linguistic isolation, “I speak my own language in my house, but I volunteered at the Café. I go out and speak another people, and so it I a little depressed, but I go out and speak another person my friends or co-workers, and so just speaking English, they made me happy, not depressed.”

Miram also said that being a part of the Multicultural Café helped her transcend isolation and culture shock, “I made some friend. I was lonely and having a culture shock. With people from different cultures helped me to be accepted and make friends among volunteers.”

Finally, Tala recounted her transformative experience of finding trust in others again, after it had been broken through a previous traumatic work experience. As a result of this transformative understanding she was successful in finding a new job after her time volunteering at the Café:

I work again because you know that time I said to you, [referring to the researcher], that I don’t want to work in other because of what happened to me and I always cried before, remember, but now after that I have confidence again…For me yeah because I told you before that what happened to me before in my work, my job, I said I don’t want to work because I don’t want to trust somebody. But then, now because of maybe I exposed again to the people now I work again. I changed my mind because I want to I want to only inside my house and I do only cleaning job because I said I don’t like to trust anybody. Yeah, and I cried. I always want to go back to [my country]. I always talk to my husband I want to go back. But now, I change my mind.
From the data, the Multicultural Café appeared to provide a place and space from which these participants could transcend the daily operations.

4.8 Results Conclusion

This qualitative study described the lived experiences of the participants involved in volunteering in the Multicultural Café service learning platform. The overarching research question explored in this study was: from the perspective of adult learners of English as an Additional Language what are the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform, such as the Multicultural Café? The data findings were from three sources: a questionnaire, interviews, and a focus group. The data revealed three themes. The major theme in the data was the social realm, which consisted of the subthemes of the customers, the co-working volunteers, the social challenges, the social opportunities, the cash register, access to social networks, learning in a traditional language classroom versus a service learning platform, social and linguistic isolation, and language skills. Complementary to the major theme of the Social Realm, was the first minor theme, the personal realm, which captured the lived affective and emotional experiences of the participants. The Personal Realm consisted of the following subthemes: fear and confidence, loneliness, isolation and depression, feeling pressure and the lack thereof, feeling comfortable and uncomfortable, feeling forced, freedom of choice, ownership and expression, complex affective and social involvements, fun, recognition, and gratitude. The final minor theme, Transformative Understandings, was the culmination and colliding of the social and personal experiences that transcended the participant’s experience into a realm of insight, reflection, and a transformation.
Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Overview of the Study

This study aims to uncover the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform from the perspectives of the adult immigrant participants, who are all permanent Canadian residents and speakers EAL. The ten participants all volunteered for seven months at a non-profit food service business, called the Multicultural Café, in a rural community college campus. This study explores the experiences of the participants through a paper-based questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group. This chapter summarizes the results of the study, discusses the findings and implications in relation to the relevant literature, and suggests recommendations for future research (Creswell, 2012).

5.2 Research Summary of the Results

From the lived experiences of the participants, who volunteer in the Multicultural Café service learning platform, one major theme and two minor themes surface from the data. The major theme in the data pertains to the Social Realm of participants’ lived experiences. The first minor theme is the Personal Realm, which accounts for the lived affective and emotional experiences of the participants. The final theme revealed in this study is Transformative Understandings.

5.3 Research Findings and Implications

5.3.1 The Social Realm Overview

The social realm is the largest theme in the data, in which the customers, the co-workers, the social challenges and opportunities, the positioning of participants to the customers through the cash register, access to social networks, the benefits of service learning over learning in a traditional language, social and linguistic isolation, and improvement in speaking and listening skills, all significantly impact the participants lived experiences. This section will look at the aforementioned themes through the lens of the relevant literature.

5.3.1.1 The Customers

In the social realm of the data, the customers play the most significant role in the participants’ service learning experience as Kaori’s response represents: “I enjoyed to talk to customers because I have never experienced talking to Canadians in English – very good experience for me.” This social interaction between the participants and their customers support the sociocultural theory of language learning that assumes “all learning is first social then individual. Learning is viewed as a process that is socially mediated… [and] that during communication, learners jointly construct knowledge which is internalized by the individual” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 223).

The customers are perceived by the participants as sympathetic interlocutors, as evidenced by Nobuo who encapsulates the focus group’s opinion that “almost 99% of the customers are kind, patient.” The customers are also perceived as teachers, and this is summarized by Kaori when she says, “In the Café customers teach us…They taught us many things like Canadian culture, Canadian food, daily news,
lots of new things.” The participants, by volunteering to be a part of a service learning platform such as the Multicultural Café, did what Cervatiuc (2009) concludes when she studied Canadian immigrants, who are proficient users of English as a Second Language. Cervatiuc (2009) concludes that “Good language learners [go] out of their way to gain access into the social networks of native speakers, in order to practice English in authentic situations and to improve their communicative competence” (p. 259).

The participants in this service learning platform go out of their way to gain access to the customers, who are mainly native speakers of English, and as a result these customers enter the participants’ ZPD (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009; van Lier, 2004; Vygotsky, 1980). In the ZPD they are supportively scaffolded through a novice to expert relationship, (Vygotsky, 1980) where they achieve communicative success (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Also scaffolding language learning with customers in this service learning context meets van Lier (2004) two conditions for effective scaffolding for activity-based language development. Firstly, scaffolding between the customers and the participants emerges during new and “unpredictable moments in activities, when learners try out something new and venture into uncharted waters” (p. 93). Secondly, successful scaffolding occurs because at the Multicultural Café control is handed over by the teacher and taken over by the participant (van Lier, 2004). The Multicultural Café service learning platform allows for participants to engage in novel and unpredictable language activities that are not mediated by a teacher rather are initiated and controlled by the learner; thus, this service learning platform meets van Lier (2004) conditions for successful scaffolding for activity-based language development.

Furthermore, by having customers positioned as sympathetic interlocutors, they afford the participants the opportunity to increase their personal stock in social and cultural capital. Drawing again upon Kaori’s summary on the notion the customers are teachers “In the Café customers teach us...They taught us many things like Canadian culture, Canadian food, daily news, lots of new things”, this quote reveals that customers are not solely teachers, for they are also brokers in social and cultural capital. This phenomenon was recorded almost a century ago when Hanifan (1920) stated that if a person “comes into contact with his neighbour, and with others neighbours, there will be an accumulation of social capital” (p. 79).

The social capital that is accumulated by the Multicultural Café volunteers’ sympathetic relationship with the customers can be classified as Putman’s (2001) bridging capital, which metaphorically is akin to “sociological WD-40” (p.23). Bridging capital offers immigrants in a service learning activity linkages to external relationships, or assets, outside of their classroom, and these outside associations can facilitate better access to knowledge and opportunities.

The participants value the social and cultural capital brokered by the customers, for these types of capital are power laden resources (Bourdieu, 1977). Because these forms of capital are valued, the participants invest (Norton, 2000) their time and energy into the service learning platform of the
Multicultural Café. For some participants this equates to a yearlong investment, where the only tangible return on their investment is measured qualitatively by Vygotsky’s (Veer & Valsiner, 1994) *perezhivanie* or lived experiences, for the Multicultural Café does not offer institutionally recognized academic credit for service learning. The value and personal meaning the participants place on their interactions and experiences with the customers is evident when Fumiko states that “as a person who felt more comfortable being her own company, it was a good experience interacting with strangers. I am glad I did it.” This valued relationship can be attributed to the accumulation of social and cultural capital, richer lived experiences, and enhanced access to knowledge and opportunities.

Regarding enhanced access to knowledge, the knowledge the participants want access to is not additional English skills rather it is to use their existing English skills to acquire competency and confidence in those skills using appropriate intercultural understanding. For instance, the customers teach Tala about different worldviews, “I learn different people, different attitude.” Tala provides an example of building social and cultural capital through intercultural competency development. According to Deardorff’s (2009, p. 33) model of intercultural development, competency equates to developing a knowledge of cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness through the skills of listening, observing, evaluating, analyzing, and relating alongside having an attitude of respect, openness, and a sense of curiosity and discovery. Each of the participants demonstrates competency in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitude outlined in Deardorff’s (2009) model, as it relates to their relationship with their customers. On the surface it seems intuitive that adult immigrants who are English language learners will learn English from their interactions with native English speaking customers; however, only occasionally do the participants specifically mention that the customers directly help them increase their language proficiency. In contrast, the participants repeatedly mention that the customers assist them to _use_ the English language skills they already possess in order to increase their intercultural competency, as Mia’s quote “it was also a good place to _use_ English [emphasis added],” and Kaori’s quote “In the Café customers teach us…They taught us many things like Canadian culture, Canadian food, daily news, lots of new things” exemplify.

As the participants continue to invest (Norton, 2000) themselves in service learning at the Multicultural Café, and accumulate social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, Hanifan, 1920, Putman, 2001) through accessing knowledge, opportunities and developing intercultural competency (Deardorff, 2009) in the ZPD (van Lier, 2004; Vygotsky, 1980) with their authentic discursive interactions with the customers, they are repositioned to secure the right to speak and the power to be listened to (Bourdieu, 1977, Norton, 2010; Norton & Toohey, 2011). As a result, the customer-participant connection becomes a powerful and significant relationship. This relationship is tethered by proximity and practicality, but it is also tethered together affectively. The Multicultural Café highlights what is occurring “between the participants… or possibly _between_ learners and the target language and culture” (Arnold, 2011, p. 11) at
an affective level (Arnold, 2011). The affective connection the participants have with the Café customers is demonstrated when Nobuo speaks to the mutually needs satisfying relationship:

The Café was a nice place to gather for people in the college. I liked to see that they are drinking a cup of coffee or tea while sitting the tables with friends. They are smiling when I serve them a coffee or tea. It made me happy that I gave them happiness.

Nobuo’s affective connection to the customers affirms Felton and Clayton’s (2011) view that service learning leverages the emotional realm because it “evokes integrated cognitive and affective responses” (p. 81). It also upholds Imai’s (2012) assertion that the “inner experience, it is very likely, if not exclusively, a social experience shared and communicated between people” (p. 3). The relationship between the participants (Arnold, 2011) and the Café customers is an interplay of the interpersonal, communicative, and emotional realms. This interplay between the participants and the customers is the phenomenon service learning researchers are beginning to explore (Felten & Clayton, 2011). From a Vygotskian, sociocultural perspective, Grabois (2008), asserts that language learning through the ZPD “affect must be seen as central to cognition and not merely as peripheral influence” (p. 385).

The discursive relationship between the participants and the customers occurs in a particular space and place. The relationship with the customers signifies entry into a community of practice by legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) research state that it is critical for the newcomer to not be sequestered from the community activities, which contain vital sympathetic interlocutors such as the customers. Concurring is van Lier’s (2004) argument that in “an activity-based curriculum language would “surround” the learner in all its richness and complexity…by providing opportunities for interaction and collaboration with peers [or customers]” (p. 92). Surrounding or situating the participants with authentic customer interaction is aimed to “not to learn from talk as a substitute for legitimate peripheral participation; it is to learn to talk as a key to legitimate peripheral participation” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 108-9).

Being surrounded by the rich and complex customer interactions in a community of practice does not assume that the linguistic exchanges are smooth and effortless. Rather it means that these participants are becoming well versed in negotiating meaning with customers to solve communicative challenges. For example Tala is challenged by “not understand other peoples English,” Jan is nervous answering the phone, also Karin is challenged “to speak-explain with the customer,” and Miram notes a challenge regarding the speed of speech and the speed needed to comprehend, “There are some moments when people asked very quick. I had to ask, ‘What do you mean?’” Because the participants are invested (Norton, 2000), in their role volunteering and representing the Café and themselves, they rise to the challenge of negotiating meaning with the customers, as Nobuo’s attests, “But at the Café there is a customer there. It is serious business…If there is a complaint with the customer we have to do something. We can think about it as much as possible. We want him to come back every day.” Michael
Long (1985, 1996) posited that in order to learn a language there needs to be a modified interaction. Long (1985) argued that “learners must be put in a position of being able to negotiate the new input, thereby ensuring that the language in which it is heard is modified to exactly the level of comprehensibility they can manage.” (Long & Porter, 1985, p. 214). Lightbown and Spada (2013), Long (1986) and Norton (2002) all proposed that language learners need to be invested to able to interact together to negotiate meaning that is mutually comprehensible, and Nobuo’s aforementioned statement affirms this stance. Thus, when the participants are challenged to understand the customers, or conversely be understood by the customers, they negotiate for meaning, which is viewed by Long (1985, 1996) and Lightbown and Spada (2013) as an authentic and optimal method to acquire language; and according to Canagarajah, (1999b), this allows the participants to use English to empower their own agendas.

In summary, the customers through the medium of English assist the Multicultural Café service learning volunteers to use and leverage their existing linguistic proficiency cognitively and affectively. This leveraging also enables the Multicultural Café volunteers to become legitimate peripheral participants, and thus facilitates the accumulation of social and cultural capital and the building of intercultural competency. This is achieved by the participant through negotiating meaning, differences, and terms of understanding with the customers within their local discursive community of practice.

5.3.1.2 The Volunteers/Coworkers

In the social realm, the co-workers, who are fellow Multicultural Café volunteers, also play a major role in the participants’ perceived impacts of being a part of a service learning venture. The co-workers are all adult immigrants that speak English as an Additional Language. Even though most of the co-workers immigrated from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds there is a common bond (Putman, 2001), mostly surrounding the feeling of being the ‘other’ outside of the mainstream cultures (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004). Volunteering alongside someone who is experiencing similar life challenges made a positive impact on the participants. Mia expresses this sentiment:

If all the co-workers were Canadian people it would be hard to work at the café because they all know perfect English and I would think that I have to catch up with them, feel more nervous. Even though workers are ESL people, customers are Canadian people. That was good for me.

Miram concurs with Mia when she says:

I think that because it is a Multicultural Café, all of us are immigrants and it help us understand each other, and to accept, and be patient because we know we are going through the same problems and we understand each other.

Here the data unfolds two different communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) depending on whether the participants are engaging with a customer or a co-worker. The community of practice that surrounds the customer rests on a novice-expert relationship that can be conceptualized as a one-way street (Grabois, 2008), where the novice is in a legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger,
yet the expertise and power is still “situated with the center of one group” (Grabois, 2008, p. 384-385). Thus, in the customer centered community of practice the novice participants are orientated to move unidirectional towards a central community of practice (Grabois, 2008).

In contrast, the co-worker centered community of practice, as experienced amongst the Multicultural Café co-workers, is represented by a two-way street metaphor (Grabois, 2008), for the learning orientation is more reciprocal and multidirectional. Nobuo calls this co-worker community of practice “Café World” and Kaori refers to it as “Café Family.” The metaphors of a two-way street (Grabios, 2008), world, and family, as it relates to the co-worker community of practice, signifies the value placed on interconnectedness and multidimensionality in this co-worker community of practice. In the co-worker community of practice the participants move away from being in legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991), toward one of “legitimate peripheral contribution” (Grabois, 2008, p. 393). In legitimate peripheral contribution learning is a “mutual movement between complementary communities [and] expertise…is distributed differently among diverse groups, thereby radically changing the conceptions of knowledge and power” (pp. 384-385). Grabois (2008) highlights the importance of learners contributing to a mutually dynamic, and emerging community that develops within service learning opportunities rather than seeking participation in an existing community. As does Etienne Wenger (2000), who states in the construct of communities of practice there are three distinct features, and the first of which it is a joint enterprise that is created and continually renegotiated by its members. Competency in a joint enterprise is defined as “understand[ing] the enterprise well enough to be able to contribute to it” (p. 229). The importance of contribution for the participants is evidenced in Kaori’s comment, “You told us it your Café and you can decide yourself and so because nobody owner each person like an owner and I want to do more. I have lots of ideas, but its teamwork.” Kaori is merging her expertise into the co-worker Café community in order to contribute to the team effort as they construct a new community, Nobuo terms, “Café World”. Thus, Grabois (2008) helps define the phenomena of two communities of practices in this study. The first is the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) that involves the participant seeking participation with customers, who are at the center of this community. The second is a community of contribution (Grabois, 2008), which is a space and place where the participants mutually develop and contribute, according to their expertise, alongside fellow service learning volunteers.

When the participants enter the customer centered community of practice they accumulate a form of social capital Putman (2001) calls bridging or inclusive social capital. However, when the participants enter the co-worker centered community of contribution they acquire a form of social capital that Putman (2001) calls bonding or exclusive social capital. According to Putman, (2001) bonding capital is a figurative “sociological superglue” (p. 23), for it is useful for specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity. Therefore, behind the Multicultural Café counter the social capital being accumulated
represents the co-workers’ empathetic interlocutor relationship with one another rather than the customers’ sympathetic interlocutor relationship. This service learning platform provides participants with the best of two interlocutor relationships one with customers, or sympathetic interlocutors, that bridges and broadens identities (Putman, 2001), and one with co-workers, or empathetic interlocutors, that supportively narrows, and affirms identities (Putman, 2001). This co-worker community of contribution that accumulates bonding capital with empathetic interlocutors is represented in both Tala and Miram’s statements. Tala writes “the Café [co-workers] helped me to regain my trust in people after my bad experience from my previous job.” And Miram states that “because of working in the Café I visited many houses. I was invited to many places because of my connection to Café with co-workers and staff.”

Within the co-worker community of contribution, the ZPD and scaffolding play important roles in the participant’s perceived language development. The participants’ association with their customers manifest as the traditional novice-expert relationship. Whereas, the participants’ connection with their co-workers manifests as a novice-novice relationship. This novice-novice relationship had not originally been recognized as a valuable language learning resource; however, recently the novice-novice connection has been appreciated for its language acquisition potential (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; van Lier, 2004). This is also recognized in this study, and Tala cites some of the benefits of the novice-novice relationship, “I developed my English skills through the help of my co-workers… It helped me to develop my confidence by talking and mingling with them.” Jan writes how working alongside other volunteers affects her English language development: “Referring to speaking because your co-workers are also English speaking learners. It is easier to overcome your fear to speak up…share with other immigrants his/her own experiences about learning English and living in Canada.” The voices of the participants’ lived Multicultural Café experiences support the importance of using, learning, and practicing language with peers, who are empathetic interlocutors, while they actively engage in a community of practice.

Volunteering with people who are experiencing a similar life path makes a positive impact on the participants in their co-worker community of contribution, as Grabois, (2008) asserts, “Expertise…is distributed differently among diverse groups, thereby radically changing the conceptions of knowledge and power” (pp. 384-385). Consistent with Grabois’ (2008) theory, participants are considered experts in some field and novices in other fields. This is highlighted in the initial organization of the Multicultural Café when the volunteers were given the freedom to implement their collectively negotiated vision of the service learning platform. Rather than assigning random roles in the Café, each volunteer autonomously found their own role according to their expertise, knowledge, and time available to volunteer. Thus, lays the foundation for learner investment (Norton, 2000) and learner empowerment (Grabois, 2008).

However, embedded in this community of contribution is need to negotiate differences (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004) regarding opinions, styles, and ideas. This is a challenge noted by many participants. Mia summarizes the challenge of negotiating differences: “Volunteer staffs were from all
over the world, each one has their own style and opinions, so it was often hard to understand each other.” Nobuo articulates that it is hard to “maintain good relationships with co-workers,” and Kaori agrees that it is a challenge “to make good relationship with the co-worker.” Nevertheless, these participants are invested (Norton, 2000) in the service learning process and with the distribution of expertise altering the conceptions of power and knowledge (Grabois, 2008) they exercise agency to persist and negotiate their differences. The result of the participants applying their agency to persist in negotiating differences is that they secure affective and personal benefits (Felten & Clayton, 2011). Miram’s experience is an example of persisting through the negotiation of differences with a co-worker, which in turn contributes to her own affective well-being:

I learned that I have to be respectful because I had a little conflict with [a co-worker] and I was really angry at her, but I was going to tell it to you [author of the study], but then I told [another co-worker]. Because I shared it with her then I looked differently at her [the co-worker with the conflict], and I thought maybe she is lonely, so I tried to understand her. So I thought I have to learn to understand people…I have learned that if you are nice to other people the answer is a nice answer because I build up my relationship with [the co-worker in conflict] after the accident.

Although the participants experience some challenges in negotiating differences with co-workers in their community of contribution, vital language skills (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009) and social and cultural capital are still acquired (Bourdieu, 1991), alongside agency and affective growth (van Lier, 2004, 2008).

5.3.1.3 Negotiating: A Poststructuralist Perspective

From a poststructuralist view that connects language to power (Gao, 2010; Hall, 1997; Norton & Toohey, 2011), the reciprocally beneficial relationships the participants experience with other volunteers and customers rests on their ability to learn and to use English to negotiate meaning, differences and terms of understanding. These relationships with empathetic and sympathetic interlocutors in their communities of practice and contribution are essential because “English can be learned and then used to empower the local communities, or to further [the participants] own cultural, social, and educational interests (Canagarajah, 1999b, pp. 41–42).

Also learning to use English effectively does not mean that it appropriates the role of the language learner’s mother tongue. Rather, as Canagarajah (1999b) points out, English should be used as a tool of empowerment. Service learning experiences have the power to create an ecology of empowerment (Grabois, 2008; van Lier, 2004). Kaori demonstrates using the ecology of empowerment provided for her by the service learning platform when she takes on the challenge of negotiating with the other co-workers using her own terms of understanding to represent her culture by means of the cultural tool of cuisine. As Kaori reflects on her successful Café specials, Kaori says that “I was so impressed that Canadian people like [the food from her culture]… I glad to know another country’s people love our country’s food. I am
very proud of my country.” Even though Kaori is challenged to learn English and use it to negotiate meaning, differences and terms of understanding, it is not at the cost of diminishing her own cultural identity. Kaori is leveraging the power of her cultural capital earned through the service learning platform, to further her own cultural, social and educational interests.

In summary, Canadian poststructuralist English language studies scholar Norton (1997), based on the work of Bourdieu (1997) and Cummins (1996), writes that “collaborative relations of power…can empower rather that marginalize” (p. 412). The Multicultural Café provides the participants a platform from which collaborative relations of power can be negotiated and developed with both empathetic and sympathetic interlocutors in the communities of practice and contribution that in turn enables the participants to move toward a position of empowerment.

5.3.1.4 Summary of the Customers and the Co-Workers

In the social realm the connections the participants have with the Multicultural Café customers and their fellow co-workers are significant (see Figure 5.1). Many immigrants feel marginalized (Cervatiuc, 2009; Morgan, 2007), othered (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004), and socially isolated, (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012), which can lead to a sense of powerlessness (Nawyn et al, 2012; Roberts & Cooke, 2009), but “developing an authentic voice in a new language can help revive a sense of agency” (Roberts & Cook, 2009, p. 639). The participants’ voice and sense of agency are renewed, revived, and received as a result of being in reciprocally beneficial relationships with sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in their communities of practice and contribution.

The phenomena of the significance of the social realm can be accounted for by the relatively new field of Second Language Socialization (SLS) (Duff, 2007), which studies “novices or newcomers in a community or culture [who] gain communicative competence, membership, and legitimacy in the group [through] a process that is mediated by language and whose goal is the mastery of linguistic conventions, pragmatics, the adoption of appropriate identities, stances (e.g., epistemic or empathetic) or ideologies, and other behaviors associated with the target group and its normative practices” (p. 310). In SLS, Lave and Wenger’s (1991) community of practice is viewed as “highlight[ing] the importance of community membership and participation not only IN learning but AS learning” (Duff, 2007, p. 313). Extending this SLS idea to apply to the Multicultural Café means that the customer centered community of practice and the co-worker centered community of contribution are beneficial for participants IN learning communicative competence, and the relationships, both empathic and sympathetic, within these communities are a crucial AS they learn communicative competence. Fumiko poignantly summarizes how community membership and participation is important IN and AS learning in the communities of practice and contribution:

This is something that I observed: Sometimes words or demeanor is taken the wrong way because neither one of them were willing to talk to the other person to correct the misunderstanding. It left
uncomfortable feeling for the rest of the working days. I suppose getting through to a person who
does not speak you mother tongue can be difficult sometimes.

In summary, Jorge (2011) points out that the strength of a community engaged language learning
model, such as service learning, is that the “target language is acquired through meaningful experiences
and deep, personal relationships in a rich socio-cultural context” (Jorge, 2011, p. 35). Thus the
meaningful connections experienced by the participants occur in the rich sociocultural context of the
Multicultural Café service learning platform, which is supported by the sympathetic customers in the
community of practice and the empathic co-workers in the community of contribution.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 5.1 Comparing the Effects between the Customers and the Co-workers in the Participants’
Multicultural Café Service Learning Experiences.

5.3.1.5 Traditional Classroom vs. The Café

In Canada, it has been an academic tradition to sequester newcomers who are English language
learners into government sponsored classrooms where they are instructed from traditionally narrow
andragogical practices (Currie & Cray, 2004; Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Fleming, 2007, 2010). For at
least two decades, scholars have warned educators and policy makers not to isolate newcomers from their
communities (Fleming, 2007, 2010; Lave & Wenger, 1991) and have English language learners connect
and interact within their local speech community (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Dudley, 2007; Pennycook,
2010). From the participants’ experiences in the Multicultural Café service learning platform confirms
that connecting adult immigrant EAL learners to members of their local speech community is beneficial,
particularly in the realm of deep affective engagement from which learners invest and accumulate social
and cultural capital (see Figure. 5.2).
When the participants compare service learning to traditional learning in a classroom, they all agree that the traditional classroom is a place to learn the rudimentary mechanics of English. From a Freirian perspective, traditional rote learning, grammar based language learning pedagogy is classified as banking education, which can be dehumanizing because:

banking education is about arrogance and lifeless transmission of facts from some patriarchal source [i.e., a government sponsored ESL program]. It is arrogant when teachers treat students as if they suffer deficits…[it is] a noncritical education is about students losing their voice and teachers or others denying them an opportunity to dialogue about their ideas, their values, their hopes, and their lives (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010, p. 98).

However, they all confirm that the real, local speech community is where their English can be used and enhanced through social interaction, and where English can be leveraged to accumulate social and cultural capital, find their voice “to dialogue about their ideas, their values, their hopes, and their lives” (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010, p. 98). For example Miram says, “In the classroom teacher speak more academic stuff” and Kaori concurs that the traditional classroom is a “very good study in English grammar”. However, Miram adds that at the Café ‘, “is a more different language…different subjects.” Tala supports this when she says “In the classroom because the same students, but in the Café different kind of people every day. I learn English in a working in a Café because you can communicate
to different kind of people”. The participants’ experiences corroborate Hummel’s (2013) assertion that English language learners in a traditional classroom have restricted access to the target-language community. The participants also confirm Swain’s (2000) research that concludes that the traditional English Language classroom is structured for transmission rather than transaction and communication. Also the participants, as Dudley (2007) notes, aspire to meet, interact and connect with native English speakers, which is very unlikely to happen in a traditional classroom. Thus, the participants experiences concur with van Lier’s (2004) suggestion that learning should “challenge students to think, with complex collaborative projects that push the boundaries of experience along with the language boundaries” (p. 83).

When the participants reflect on their experiences pushing the language boundaries through their Multicultural Café experiences as compared to their classroom experiences another theme within the data rises, which is participant investment in learning. Nobuo articulates the difference between the investment (Norton 2010) learners have in the classroom contrasted with the investment they have in the Café when he said, “I shouldn’t say this, but at the class sometimes I don’t need to listen too carefully, but this [Café] I have to have all ears.” Nobuo, with a preface of guilt, admits that even though he is a motivated learner of English (as evidenced by his immigration to a small rural community as a visible and linguistic minority) he is still at times not engaged, and not motivated to learn in the traditional classroom. Nobuo’s experience speaks to Norton (2010) construct of investment, which is based on Bourdieu’s (1977) theory of cultural capital and her original work with Canadian immigrants. Norton’s (2010) construct of investment opposes the traditional thoughts on learner motivation as a psychological trait, for she suggests that “if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital” (p. 3). Nobuo’s comment affirms that a motivated learner may not be invested in a traditional classroom, for there are few opportunities to acquire cultural capital. On the other hand, the service learning platform can be a better invest for learners because there is perceived opportunity to accumulate cultural capital.

Another theme that surfaces in the data regarding the benefits of service learning over the traditional English language class is the realm of affective responses. In second language classrooms and research the cognitive realm is prioritized over the affective realm. (Arnold, 2011; Atkinson, 2014; Imai, 2012). Almost three decades ago, Stevick (1980) argued that “success [in language learning] depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people” (p. 4). The participants confirm Stevick’s (1980) lament that traditional ESL classes are cognitive based, and less focused on what transpires between people. Whereas in the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café, participants can express a fuller range of emotions, and explore what occurs between themselves and others while learning a second language. This focus group conversation between Tala and Miram represents this idea:
Miram: In the class we have to do assignments, homeworks, and even more. In the Cafe you can make jokes and you don’t have a strict teacher.

Tala: There is a time in the Café I talk my problems to [the author of the study and their instructor] and I cried

Miram; and I cried!

Tala: You too and I remember!

Miram: In the class you can’t do that you have to be tough.

Confirming Tala and Miram’s affective experiences, is Arnold’s (2011) assertion that service learning and experiential opportunities can accentuate what is occurring “between the participants… or possibly between learners and the target language and culture” (p.11). The conversation with Miram and Tala also highlights van Lier’s (2004) argument that “some of the most important indicators of educational quality cannot be measured quantitatively” (p. 98). Hence classroom learning, according to van Lier, (2004) from an ecological perspective, needs to consider “the fuel for learning … is not ‘input’ or ‘exercises’, but engagement… contingent and dialogical forms of collaborative dialogue… in which learners can develop a sense of true self-other dialogue, and hence an identity and voice in the L2” (p. 98). The service learning platform, and not the classroom, supports Miram and Tala’s engagement and exploration of the affective realm of learning through true self-other dialogue.

Finally, in agreement with van Lier’s (2004) ecological stance on dialogical engagement and Norton’s view of investment (2010) is Crick’s (2012) concept of deep engagement. Crick (2012) asserts that traditional transmissive classroom methods of learning lead to a passive engagement that “does not equip the learner to cope when things go wrong, or are no longer straightforward, or when knowledge needs to be applied in complex situations or integrated into personal narrative” (p. 676). From the participants’ experiences service learning holds the potential for facilitating a learning ecology that inspires invested participants to be deeply and affectively engaged. Thereby affirming Grabois’ (2008) study of service learning that concludes service learning is of “greater usefulness…as compared to more conventional language learning experiences” (p. 390).

5.3.1.6 Social Opportunities and Access to Social Networks

The participants’ experiences shed light on a reason service learning can be of greater usefulness over traditional language learning practices (Grabois, 2008), which is that service learning affords them greater social opportunities, positioning, and access to social networks. This notion of social access and opportunities can be traced back to Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) seminal thoughts regarding the operation of language as unequally valued cultural capital, which in turn impacts life chances and opportunities.

For the participants, a good opportunity is characterized by the words “good chance,” “good experience,” “wonderful or great opportunity,” and a “good place.” These opportunities, experiences, and chances extend social borders and social learning by using English, and this is represented in Mia’s quote.
that, “it was also a good place to use English…to know new people, to get higher English.” And for Nobuo it was a good social opportunity to “meet people from different age groups.” The participants’ experiences supports van Lier’s (2004) argument that when an activity-based project surrounds the learner in a rich and complex language landscape, they will pick up the needed linguistic information; the key being as long as access is provided. According to van Lier (2004) the provision of access can be accomplished in various ways including providing opportunities for interaction and collaboration with peers, and by permitting learners to “employ creativity in a context of growing autonomy” (p. 92). The Multicultural Café, according to the participants, surrounds them in what van Lier (2004) calls language “in all its richness and complexity” (p. 92). The social network that surrounds this service learning venture and is accessed by the participants is the college’s student body, its staff and some community members that reside within the college district. This provision of access gives the volunteers a new type of membership, peripheral legitimate participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and peripheral legitimate contribution (Grabois, 2008) in the college speech community. Kaori exemplifies this when she says, “I meet many staff at the college. Even I go to school they say ‘hi’ they know us. They know me and my face and they say ‘hi’.” This recognition by others is the building block of cultural capital, for Bourdieu (1983) states that cultural capital is the “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to... relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 249).

The participants at the Café are also given the access to “employ creativity in a context of growing autonomy” (van Lier, 2004, p. 92). This is seen in the participants’ ability take ownership over what they want to cook and serve, and for Kaori she “had a good opportunity to make my country’s food,” and share her culture with others. Miram brings up the notion of a social ownership opportunity when she writes that “it is a good place to work in a café because it’s a friendly environment and workers can improvise and make their own meals, unlike Mcdonalds where workers can’t do it.” The participants’ experience supports van Lier (2004) idea that provision of access, alongside creative ownership, is essential for language learners for autonomously grow.

The provision of access is also the third element of Lave and Wenger’s (1991) communities of practice (Wenger, 2000). This element features the shared repertoire of communal resources such as, routines, artifacts, vocabulary, styles, and stories that members have developed over time, and competency in the shared repertoire means being able to access and use the repertoire appropriately (Wenger, 2000). The Multicultural Café participants are attempting to access and use the shared repertoire in both the communities of practice and contribution.

For the participants the cash register is a significant artifact in their shared repertoire (Wenger, 2000) that they need to access and use in order connect with the sympathetic interlocutors, being the customers, in their community of practice. The cash register is a technical challenge; moreover, it is a social challenge for the participants. For example, Tala’s response is that the “cash register I am always
scared”. Miram summarizes the focus groups thoughts on the cash register, “I think it is a good place for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially for people working the cashier because they are force to be friendly and to be talkative.” The provision of access for language learners in the Multicultural Café means being physically situated in a position where they are “forced”, using Miram’s words, to speak, listen, and be heard by the sympathetic interlocutors in their community of practice. Poststructuralist theory supports the study’s presupposition that language is socially constructed, and influenced by positioning, which affects the right to be heard and to speak (Bakhtin, 1986, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977; Norton & Toohey, 2011). In the Café, the positioning of power manifests itself physically as a cash register. The positioning of power is seen in the use of words such as scared and forced by the participants. The shared artifact of the cash register enables the participants to garner the right to be heard and right to speak.

The sociocultural perspective offers “insight into the ways in which learners can gain access to new knowledge about the language when they have support from interlocutors” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 120). And the poststructuralist perspective reveals how the power differentials influence attempts to gain access to social opportunities (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). Watson-Gegeo and Nielson (2003) cite that communities of practice and second language socialization research needs to apply a more critical enquiry in order to identify how power positions affect the local language practice. In a service learning context, in order to gain access to social opportunities in a service learning activity, “both service to the community and learning on the part of the students [must be] equally valued” (Hummel, 2103, p. 67). It is a challenge for most immigrants to find reciprocally valued and authentic relationships, and Norton and Toohey (2011) argue that highly motivated language learners are not successful because they do not have access to participate in social relationships where they are deemed reciprocally valued partners in communication. The Multicultural Café fulfills this poststructuralist criteria of being equally valued by the participants and the community because the Café is providing essential food services to a community college campus that did not previously have café food services. Therefore, the community of practice is grateful to have this need fulfilled and the community of contribution is grateful to fill the need.

The provision of access and being an equally valued interlocutors are important for not only language development, but also for positive identity formation. Cervatuic (2009) succinctly paraphrases West (1992) in her research with Canadian immigrants, who are also English language learners, that the “greater access to materials and symbolic resources determines the greater access to power, which positively affects identity” (p. 266). Tala demonstrates this when she writes, “Aside from learning English, I got to engage myself to different activities at school. I also got lots of friends afterwards”. Miram shares her thoughts on accessing social networks “because of working in the Café I visited many houses. I was invited to many places because of my connection to the Café with co-workers and staff.”
When the Multicultural Café participants access a social network on a provincial level through their nomination for a provincial NESIKA Award for Multicultural Excellence, and when the B.C. Minister of Multicultural Affairs honorable John Yap visits Multicultural Café, Nobuo reminisces about how this access to power and symbolic resources affects him:

There was one group of people who came to see us like the minister John Yap, yes, before we went to the NESIKA Awards and at that time I was thinking that Canada and maybe B.C. thinks that those ESL activities because immigrants need help to join society. Then at the time that government, he is a minister right, he addressed something to the public and then I saw he at the Café, and so even those guys think about those small community that was kind of a good feeling to me - they care.

Hummel (2013) states that English language learners have minimal access to the target-language community when they are restricted to using the second language within the context of their classrooms. Thus finding learning platforms, other than the classroom, to facilitate social opportunities and access to social networks is critical. Cervatiuc’s (2009) research concludes that “good language learners went out of their way to gain access into the social networks of native speakers in order to practice English in authentic situations and to improve their communicative competence” (p. 259). Thus, language programs and activities, such as service learning, should assist adult immigrant language learners to gain access to social networks with native speakers of English. Miram’s thoughts conclude why the Café is a good social opportunity:

It was a good place to know new people and became friends…Also I think it is a good place for people who are not confident because they are forced, especially people working the cashier because they are forced to be friendly and to be talkative after because I worked there I too and that is ok to be talkative…I don’t need to be afraid anymore of people, of Canadians. So I think that is good for new immigrants that is a good chance.

The lived experiences of these Multicultural Café participants’ reveals that social opportunities and access to these opportunities where they are deemed valuable interlocutors are crucial to engaging in the full spectrum of linguistic and sociocultural language learning.

5.3.1.7 Social and Linguistic Isolation

Centuries ago, John Donne claimed that “no man [nor woman] is an island entire of itself”, and more recently sociocultural theory claims “learning [as] a social process in which culturally and historically situated participants engage in culturally-valued activities, using cultural tools [such as language]” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 419). Thus, for language development, learners need others, yet many immigrants are socially and linguistically isolated, (Jensen, 2011; Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010; Nawyn et. al, 2012;). Putman (2001) states that “a society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital” (p. 18). Many of the Multicultural Café participants experience
isolation for a variety of reasons, and consequently possess minimal social capital. Thus, English language learners need to be brought out of their isolation and given access to spaces where social and cultural capital can be accumulated alongside language acquisition. Stewart (2007) claims that service learning can be an answer to linguistic isolation:

Through repeated participation in activities with more capable peers within a sociocultural environment, language learners acquire the linguistic, cultural and other knowledge needed to function within a given society. This dovetails nicely with service-learning, which places students in the community interacting with native speakers of the target language (p. 86).

Nobuo corroborates Stewart’s (2007) claim that service learning can mitigate linguistic isolation. Nobuo has recently retired and now spends most of his days at home, except for volunteering at the Multicultural Café, “I kind of retired… I don’t talk that much more everyday with someone in English…When I work in the Café I talk English every day.” Tala also confirms Stewart’s (2007) claim when she speaks about living in a house where English is not spoken:

I study English for how many years, but for me until now I am not a good time if you start for a whole week in my own house we are talking my own language. There is a time I forget. There is a time, ‘What is that in English?’ I forget it. It is so much better of you talking to the others person, communicate to others.

Stewart (2007) does posit that when linguistically isolated learners connect with more capable peers, such as native speakers in a novice to expert relationship, then they are able to acquire the linguistic, cultural and other knowledge needed to function within their community of practice; and both Tala and Nobuo confirm this claim.

However, Stewart (2007) fails to acknowledge the benefit of novice to novice interaction within the community of contribution as also beneficial to lifting learners out of social isolation. From the participants perspective both social and linguistic isolation need to be addressed. Service learning with co-workers in a novice to novice relationship in their community of contribution assists the participants in overcoming social isolation. Kaori shared why the Café helped her with social and linguistic isolation:

I think speaking in English is very important for ESL student because I speak my own language in my own house inside, but I volunteer at the Café – I go outside. I got energy from other people, and so if I a little bit depresses, but I go out and speak another person, my friend, or coworker just speaking in English, they made me happy, not depressed.

Being with others, even if they are not from the same cultural or linguistic background, yet sharing the commonality of immigration can help ease the struggles of social isolation. Miram wrote, “I was lonely and having culture shock. Working with people from different cultures helped me to be accepted and make friends among volunteers.”
The trials of immigrating can leave immigrants feeling marginalized, othered, and isolated, which in turn can lead to a sense of powerlessness; however, “developing an authentic voice in a new language can help revive a sense of agency” (Roberts & Cook, 2009, p. 639). Agency meaning a combination of Ahearn (2001) and Miller’s (2010) definition to be the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act. Service learning, such as the Multicultural Café, that incorporates novice to novice empathetic relationships in a community of contribution, and novice to expert sympathetic relationships in a community of practice can enable adult immigrant English language learners to overcome their social and linguistic isolation through a revived sense of agency, being the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act.

5.3.1.8 Othering

The accumulation of social capital inherently relies on the connection to others as stated in Hanifan’s (1920) thoughts on building social capital, “the individual is helpless socially, if left to himself [sic]” (p. 79). Yet, it is difficult to build social or cultural capital when immigrants’ culture and language are not considered socially or culturally valuable within their community (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991), and this leads to a negative space of othering (Jensen, 2011). Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) point out the harm, for “otherization does not allow for the agency of other people to be a factor in their identity construction. It does not permit the negotiation of identity between people, but imposes crude, often reductive identities on others” (p. 159).

The participants in this study tread in the negative space of othering, but not from the obvious external forces which other the immigrant. Rather the othering comes from their own internalized perceptions based on their experiences as immigrants. The demarcation lines between us and them, or the more and less powerful, (Lister, 2004) for the participants are contained in the words “Canadian(s)”, and “Foreigner(s)”. Even though all of the participants are permanent residents of Canada, or naturalized Canadian citizens, they still referred to them, the nonimmigrant native speakers of English, as “Canadians.” While they referred to themselves as us, or “foreigners”, who are foreign born and speakers of English as a Second or an Additional Language. The lines of social and linguistic powers are clearly delineated in the participants’ minds. This is expressed by Mia’s relief that the Multicultural Café volunteers were not them, the nonimmigrant native speakers of English, “Canadians”:

If all the co-workers were Canadian people it would be hard to work at the café because they all know perfect English and I would think that I have to catchup with them, feel more nervous. Even though workers are ESL people, customers are Canadian people. That was good for me.

It is with sad irony that a few of the Multicultural Café co-workers that volunteered with Mai are actually “Canadians”, as naturalized Canadian citizens. As the participants label the other as Canadian, they give themselves the limiting label of foreigners. This is evident when Kaori says that “because we
are foreigners and we never can do work our own business like our English level.” Here Kaori is limiting her agency, just as Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) warned that this is a problem of otherization.

However, the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café with its connection to sympathetic interlocutors, who are comprised mostly of nonimmigrant native speakers of English, or “Canadians” in their community of practice breaks down the sense of otherization. For example after Miram’s experience volunteering in the Multicultural Café she says, “I don’t need to be afraid anymore of people, of Canadians.” Kaori also affirms that being involved with the Multicultural Café breaks down the negative repercussions of otherization when she says:

I enjoyed to talk to customers because I have never experienced talking to Canadians in English – very good experience for me…I met many Canadians, local people. Like one lady, she is a rich person and she visit out Café once a week and she helps. She made a menu and brought to another place to post. Many people helped us like the Gathering Place [Okanagan College’s Aboriginal reception room], the First Nation people, they help us a lot, but experience we return in a good way that is a good experience in our new Canadian life.

Many immigrants are socially and linguistically isolated (Nawyn et al, 2012; Yates et.al, 2010) and othered (Jensen, 2011) segregated by policy, practice, and choice from their local communities of practice. Yet, the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café successfully takes on Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) challenge for adult education practitioners “to create an environment of trust that invites multiple dimensions of learning, acknowledges diversity, and respects learners’ culture while assisting them new ways of seeing the world” (p. 10). The diverse social connections made in an environment of trust assists the participants to engage in seeing the other, being the Canadian, in new and positive ways. Parks (2000) and Hummel (2013) both state that experiential learning is linked to learner’s positive self-perception and increased linguistic-confidence with the target language. The participants experiences at the Multicultural Café increases their positive self-perception, which fends off the negative impact of reduce agency brought about by othering themselves as “foreigners” and othering members of their community of practice as “Canadians”.

Breaking down otherization is very difficult, if not impossible to achieve in a traditional language learning classroom; thus, Knutson (2003) argues that experiential learning activities affords learners a platform to access multiple new skills unrelated to the actual classroom based language-learning. The participants’ experiences in this service learning platform demonstrate that one such new skill unrelated to the actual classroom based language-learning is confronting othering.

5.3.1.9 Language Skills

By tradition, language acquisition theories focus on acquiring the language structure and system rather than emphasising “language as doing” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2). At the Multicultural Café, language as doing is the primary goal; consequently, participants’ references to improved speaking skills
trumps listening, vocabulary, writing, and reading. The participants’ perceived impact on speaking supports Knutson’s (2003) assertion that experiential learning in ESL curriculum needs more academic attention because of “the empowerment that arises from just simply hearing one's own voice expressing ideas in a social context in another language” (p. 62).

For the Multicultural Café participants, they hear their voices expressing ideas in English in several contexts. One context is in reference to reducing the fear and anxiety when speaking in English. Jan embodies this idea when she writes that by speaking to co-workers, who are also “English speaking learners it is easier to overcome your fear to speak up”. Miram also mentions this fear, for she says that the Café, “made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening, and not to be afraid of speaking in English because before even I know something I was afraid to speak.” This phenomena has been explored by Stephan Krashen (1982) with his Affective Filter Hypothesis, which is a metaphorical barrier that when raised inhibits language learning, particularly when the language learner is experiencing low motivation, self-doubt, or anxiety. Conversely, when a learner’s affective filter is lowered, due to high motivation, and confidence, then language learning is enhanced. Krashen’s (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis may account for the participants’ perceived increase in speaking skills proficiency, for the participants are highly motivated (as evident in their commitment to volunteer for seven months).

However, Krashen’s (1982) notion that highly motivated learners are more likely to acquire language has been challenged with the question of why highly motivated learners disengage from learning language skills. This challenge is taken up by Norton (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010), who contends that highly motivated learners can disengage from language learning due to lack of investment rather than low motivation. Also Grabois (2008) critiques Krashen (1982) by arguing that the Affective Filter “limits input into independent cognitive processes…prioritizing it as an unconscious processes that is distinct from learning” (p. 391). Thus, Krashen’s (1982) theory may just apply to the independent cognitive processes of highly motivated and invested learners, which in this study refers to the participants who volunteered for 7 months, or more, in the Multicultural Café.

A more recent Canadian study conducted by Hummel (2013) states that service learning increases the participants’ levels of comfort and confidence when speaking English in their authentic speech communities. In Hummel’s (2013) study, she finds that among the perceived benefits of service learning for language learners includes “greater linguistic self-confidence, and the perception of having improved their L2 skills” (p. 85). As discussed, Krashen (1982) believes that having a lowered Affective Filter increases the potential to learning a second language. From the participants’ perspective, they corroborate with Hummel’s (2013) research, service learning increases learner linguistic self-confidence because it helps lower their Affective Filter, while keeping in mind that the participants are all invested in the service learning platform.
Regarding increasing language skills, particularly speaking skills, Knutson (2003) draws attention to how learners are empowered when they use their voice, or speaking skills, to express “ideas in a social context” (Knutson, 2003, p. 62). This is represented in Jan’s experience when she writes that one of the benefits of service learning is that you can, “challenge yourselves in a supportive way,” she underscores the social context, or how language learning is intertwined with socialization (Duff, 2007; Vygotsky 1980, 1988). The Multicultural Café environment surrounds the participants (Grabois, 2008) in their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1980,1988) with sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in the communities of practice and contribution, who supportively scaffold the participants to increased linguistic self-confidence, and the perception of having improved their language, specifically speaking, skills (Hummel, 2013).

For the invested Multicultural Café participants, when they hear their voices expressing ideas in a social context with sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in the communities of practice and contribution, this can reduce fear, lower the Affective Filter, and thus increase linguistic self-confidence. Yet, Knutson (2003) states that experiential learning for ESL curriculum there is “empowerment that arises from just simply hearing one's own voice expressing ideas in a social context in another language” (p. 62). The empowerment piece comes when they hear their voices resonate and be valued (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991) in the voices of their customers and coworkers. This is represented in a quote by Tala, “I developed my English skills through the help of my co-workers and costumers of the café. It helped me to develop my confidence by talking a mingling with them.” Kaori says that before working in the Café, “I used very shy when I speak English. I only smile, but now a little bit confidence and comfortable.” And Jan when is asked if she would recommend working in a service learning place like the Multicultural Café, she replies, “Yes”, because, “by applying your own English skills in a work setting without too much pressure and succeeding.” Jan continues to say that at the Café a person, “is forced to explain himself through another language, which can be very hard and lowers your self esteem, [but] by challenging himself in a learning environment people can apply their skills and knowledge and get more secure in their language skills.” The participants are identifying a connection between the confidence that stems from taking a risk to being self-challenged, or self-forced, which in turn enhances speaking skills. This corroborates Hummel’s (2013) research that with an increase in confidence there is a perceived increase in English skills and knowledge. The participants, however, are able to take a risk to forces themselves to speak because they feel that their voices are valued (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991) in their communities of practice and contribution.

The participants use of the hyphenated words “self-challenged”, or “self-forced” reveals their agency, which is defined as the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act (Ahearn, 2001; Miller, 2010). From the participants’ experiences as invested agentive learners they forced themselves to go “out of their way to gain access into the social networks of native speakers, in order to practice English in authentic situations and to improve their communicative competence”
(Cervatiuc, 2009, p. 259), and this according to Cervatiuc (2009), this makes them good language learners, who are “linguistically self-confident” (Hummel, 2013). The participants’ experiences illuminate the linkage between agency, voice, and language acquisition. According to Roberts and Cook (2009), “developing an authentic voice in a new language can help revive a sense of agency” (p. 639). This deep and invested engagement the participants place in the Multicultural Café service learning project “connects the learner’s sense of identity and agency with their personal learning power, and these are utilised by the learner in a meaningful process of knowledge construction which leads to active engagement in the world” (Crick, 2012, p. 684). Thus, through the participants’ deep engagement and investment in the Café, they are using their agency through linguistic self-confidence to claim the right to speak and the right to be heard (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Also within the framework of agency, participants have the ability to refuse to learn, or apply, new language skills and knowledge. Nobuo gives an example of a learner claiming their agency to not use new language skills. Nobuo says that he may have learned more vocabulary, “but I still stick with my old ways. Much easier for me…I might learn more and I might use more.” Nobuo is claiming his agentive right to choose if and when he will use his new language skills and knowledge.

Thus, van Lier (2008) positions agency in language learning as a central to sociocultural approaches to language acquisition and connects the development of agency to hyphenated curriculum approaches such as “project-based, task-based, content-based and theme-based learning” (p. 183). Therefore, when Miller (2010) asks researchers and teachers to “begin to imagine ways that we can work to coconstitute both agency and empowerment among minority learners of dominant languages” (p. 485), the participants of the Multicultural Café, van Lier (2008), and Hummel (2013) all concur that one imaginative way to coconstitute both agency and empowerment among minority learners of dominant languages would be through service learning.

The Multicultural Café participants’ report that their language speaking skills increased, due mostly to their sense of agency and linguistic self-confidence within the service learning social context. However, the realm of the mind is another context, in which speaking is also addressed by the participants. As the participants reflect on their service learning experiences, some also report on improvement in their metacognitive processes, as it relates to speaking. Kaori addresses this improvement in her metacognitive processes when she said, “I am always thinking in English and speaking and thinking and speaking and tried to better than before and everyday a little bit improve.” As well Miram reports that she is “still learning to think numbers in English and how to talk about numbers in English because when I count myself I count in my own language.” These two examples demonstrate that being in the social context of an English mediated service learning environment allows some participants to strengthen their metacognitive ability to think in English before speaking in English. There are no studies that specifically link service learning to increases in metacognitive capacities for
English language learners. This is validated by Huang (2010) who states that “very little research has addressed L2 learners' speaking skills from a sociocultural perspective” (p. 246). Yet, the interplay between mind and language is at the core of sociocultural theories particularly from a Vygotskian perspective (1980, 1988), which supports the critical role mediation plays in the attainment of higher mental processes such as verbal thought, and intellectually coherent speech. Thus, from a Vygotskian perspective, “through the mediating actions of tools or practices…higher mental functions may be generated while performing goal-directed, mediated activities [such as service learning] in sociocultural settings” (Huang, 2010, p. 246).

In the 1990’s when researchers began to explore cognitive connections in Second Language Acquisition, Dekeyser (1998) proposed the Information-Processing model, which states that the second language learner must pay attention, or be cognizant, to the concepts that they are trying to learning. The Information-Processing model could explain Kaori and Miram thinking about their speaking. Dekeyser (1998, 2007) also suggested that learning a new skill starts with a declarative knowledge (information, or rules in explicit form), then through practice this information can solidify into procedural knowledge or skill. However, Dekeyser (2007) admitted that there is a problem of how to transfer declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge “from one context to another, in particular from the classroom to the native-speaking environment…and is often referred to as the interface issue” (p. 9). Kaori and Miram are solving Dekeyser’s “interface issue” (2007, p. 9) in that service learning helps English language learners be cognizant, thus turning declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge.

As it relates to “mediating action of tools or practice” (Huang, 2010, p. 246), Pennycook (2010) sheds some light on the participants’ perceived increase in metacognitive capabilities. Pennycook (2010), in his book Language as Local Practice, argues that the focus should not solely be on the community piece, but the practice aspect needs to also be considered as valuable. Thus, Pennycook (2010) argues “communities of practice are not therefore just groups of people who happen to be doing that same thing, but rather people whose communities are constituted by the language practices they engage in… it is communicative acts, bundled together as a form of social practice” (pp. 124-125). Hence, for the Multicultural Café participants hearing their voices expressing ideas and repeatedly practicing expressing their ideas both in thought and language in a social context as a form of social practice with sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in turn reduces their fear and anxiety when speaking in English; thus, increasing their linguistic self-confidence, and metacognitive processes.

The majority of the participants’ references to improved language skills relate to speaking skills. Aside from the speaking skills the participants cite some improvement in the other areas of language development, namely, listening and vocabulary. Thus, a distant second to speaking skill references are references regarding listening skills. Listening skills are the so closely tied to speaking skills that this not a surprising revelation in the data. The connection between speaking and listening is noted by Miram “I
think it made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening…I think I have learned to understand young people’s speaking quick.” Yet, Nobuo poignantly summarizes listening’s silent significance when he says that in the Café, “I have to have all ears.” In traditional language classes the domains of speaking and listening are often neglected, for they are difficult to learn and practice authentically (van Lier, 2004); therefore, service learning platforms allow English language learners to engage and practice their speaking and listening skill in authentic discourse in their local speech communities (Grabois, 2008; Hummel, 2013).

Regarding and increase in vocabulary development, it receives mixed reviews from the participants. Miram, Tom, and Kaori say that they acquired specialized, or practical daily life vocabulary. Conversely Ming writes, “I’ve learnt to be confident about my English, but I didn’t add any new vocabulary. Ming’s quote emphasizes Hummel’s (2013) findings that for service learning participants it is not necessarily about acquiring new language skills rather it is about confidently using the English skills already possessed.

Finally the skills of writing, and reading that receive so much attention in the traditionally structured language classes (van Lier, 2004), receive minimal attention from the participants. The skills of reading and writing are mentioned by only one participant, Jan, and she writes that “to understand and read the instruction of the tools” was a challenge; however, she coupled reading skills with speaking skills when she adds that it is a challenge to then “explain the proper use of the tools to the coworkers.” Jan also refers to the limited progress in writing skills when she writes, “In the Café we needed to write only at the board sign the progress was limited.”

Thus, from the data collected the participants perceive that their reading and writing skills do not progress in this service learning activity, which is countered by the progress the participants believe they do achieve in their speaking and listening skills. This affirms the tradition that language acquisition pedagogy and practice mainly focuses on acquiring language through the structure and system of reading and writing, which leaves a skills gap in speaking and listening. Experiential learning activities, such as service learning, which places an emphasis on speaking and listening supports the notion of “language as doing” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2), and is also supported by the participants’ lived serving learning experiences.

In summary of the data pertaining to language skills, it is evident that speaking and listening skills meaningfully develop, according to the participants, in this service learning experience. Over three decades ago, Stephan Krashen (1982) said that “the best methods might also be the most pleasant, and that, strange as it seems, language acquisition occurs when language is used for what it was designed for, communication” (p. 1). From the participants experiences volunteering in a service learning platform they also agree that the most pleasant and engaging method to develop their language confidence, skills and knowledge is to use language as it was designed for – communication.
5.3.1.10 Social Realm Conclusion

The theme of the social realm emphasizes the importance of social connections hold for the participants’ lived Multicultural Café learning experiences. This section covers a large social territory that connects the participants to two different, but complementary groups of people. The first group is the customers from which they engage in reciprocally valued sympathetic discursive relationships in a community of practice, and where they received access to bridging social capital that broadens the participants’ identities. The second group of significant people are the co-workers from which they engaged in reciprocally valued empathetic relationship, and where they received access to bonding capital that connects the participants’ identities to others. Access to these opportunities eased social and linguistic isolation issues, wherein the participants’ linguistic confidence and agency are increased. The participants’ experiences affirm Stewart’s (2007) assertion that there is a connection between the sociocultural perspective and service learning, and Pennycook’s (2010) notion that through the “geography of linguistic happenings…understandings emerge” (p. 136). The Multicultural Café occurs in a geographic time and place where linguistics happenings intersect with social understandings, where social and cultural capital accumulates, agency is fostered, and isolating othering is held at bay. Therefore, the participants’ narrative supports Grabois’ (2008) view that “service-learning may be the most powerful language pedagogy” (p. 403).

5.3.2 The Personal Realm

Another reason that “service-learning may be the most powerful language pedagogy” (Grabios, 2008, p. 403) is that it ignites personal and affective responses. The participants of the study cite many instances related to their intrapersonal perceptions, connections and growth, as a result of volunteering in the service learning platform of the Multicultural Café. For example, Miram’s complex emotional narrative weaves together several personal and affective responses such as anger, frustration, freedom from fear, and freedom of expression, which extends her far beyond the realm of language learning:

I got angry one time and really frustrated [with a co-worker], and so before I used to keep my anger inside me, but that time I showed it outside. I didn’t keep it inside and it was good. I think I was good, so I thought, ‘Oh, Canada is making me more free to express my feelings if they are good or bad.’ I felt good about myself for the first time and now I am learning not to be afraid to express my feelings, before I could only say when I am happy, but when I was angry I couldn’t say I was angry…I [also] learned that not everyone is the same. I learned that I have to be respectful because I had a little conflict with [a co-worker].

Stevick (1980) argued over three decades ago that “success [in language learning] depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom” (p. 4). Miram’s deeply reflective comment attests to Stevick’s (1980) argument. And a century ago, Vygotsky (Veer & Valsiner, 1994) introduced an idea called, *perezhivanie*, which was
translated as emotional experience, or lived experience, that “includ[es] values, attitudes, beliefs, schemes, and affect” (Crick, 2012, p. 680). Vygotsky acknowledged an association between experience (thinking) and subjective, emotional lived experience (feeling) of the language learner, when he wrote that “behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency” (Vygotsky, 1988, p. 252), and this is evidenced in Miram’s aforementioned quote.

Despite the historical acknowledgment between language learning and emotions, the affective-emotional realm is often overlooked in second language research and practice (Arnold, 2011; Atkinson, 2014; Imai, 2012). However, in this study, the lived affective and emotional experiences, or perezhivanie of the participants demonstrate that what is going on inside the language learners, as it relates to their affective-volitional tendencies that occurs during authentic discourse is significant. Thus, this section describes the affective lived experiences of the participants within the context of their social interconnectivity.

5.3.2.1 Fear and Confidence

Imai (2012) points out that most of the research on affect in language learning has exclusively focused on negative emotions such as anxiety and fear. The Multicultural Café participants do cite many occurrences when they feel fearful and anxious, particularly when they feel pressure to engage in social discourse with the customers at the cash register. Tala exemplifies this when she says that at the “cash register I am always scared.” Tala’s feelings can be historically connected to St. Augustine, who upon reflecting on his second language learning experience wrote that he was plagued by pressure and fear (Arnold, 2011, p. 12). The anxious feelings of fear and pressure that surrounds second language learning still exists today for second language learners (Horowitz, 2001; Mahn & Steiner, 2002), and the Multicultural Café participants do not differ.

In the participants’ lived emotional experiences, juxtaposed to the fear of speaking is the positive affective outcome of having confidence in speaking. This is heard in Miram’s quote: “I think that [the Café] made me more confident and to be able to talk and in listening, and not to be afraid of speaking in English because before, even I know something, I was afraid to speak.” According to Krashen (1982), Miram’s experience could be attributed to the Affective Filter Hypothesis. When her Affective Filter is high due to anxiety it acts as barrier, and thus impedes language learning. Conversely, when Miram’s Affective Filter is lowered as a result of reduced anxiety, then she experiences linguistic self-confidence and language learning motivation is optimized. However, Krashen’s (1982) ideas that highly motivated learners are more likely to acquire language is contested by Norton (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010), who argues that highly motivated learners disengage from language learning due to lack of investment rather than low motivation. Based on Norton’s (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010) theory of language learning investment, Miram is invested in the Multicultural Café, and thus is motivated to “challenge
[herself] in a supportive way”, using Jan’s words, to work through her fear of speaking to arrive at a place of linguistic self-confidence (Hummel, 2013).

In summary, the participants demonstrate that by being invested (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010), they can face their linguistic fears (Horowitz, 2001; Mahn & Steiner, 2002) in a supportive environment, and lower their Affective Filter (Krashen, 1980), which enables them to increase their linguistic confidence (Hummel, 2013).

5.3.2.2 Loneliness, Isolation, and Depression

Another interrelated assemblage of negative emotions that are expressed by some of the participants are loneliness, isolation, and depression. For example, Miram writes that prior to volunteering in the Café she was, “lonely and having culture shock.” Kaori says that she was “depressed” as a result of being isolated socially and linguistically. In addition, Tala says that she only wanted to stay “inside my house…I cried. I always want to go back to [my country],” after a traumatic work experience in her community, which was not supported by sympathetic interlocutors. Despite these participants revealing that there is a linkage between the language learning and emotions, there is still minimal research currently being conducted towards better understanding the affective-emotional realm with adult immigrant English language learners. (Imai, 2012; Garrett & Young, 2009; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010). This research area is important for many immigrants, such as Miram, Kaori and Tala, who have to cope with the negative affective and emotional consequences that result from being uprooted linguistically and culturally (Nawyn et al, 2012; Roberts & Cooke, 2009; Yates et al, 2010.). Miram, Kaori and Tala enter the language acquisition and socialization process under acculturation stress (Torres & Rollock, 2004), which have manifested affectively for them as depression (Levecque, Lodewyckx, & Vranken, 2007; Torres & Rollock, 2004), lowered self-esteem (Hovey & Magana, 2002), a lack of confidence (Du, 2009), anxiety ( Hovey & Magana, 2002; Levecque et al., 2007), and language shock, which is a by-product of the culture shock where immigrants feel worried, nervous and stressed in their new linguistic environment (Miller & Endo, 2004).

However, from the participants’ narratives, they attest that being surrounded by sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in a service learning venture can reverse the negative effects of culture and language shock. For example, Miram writes, “I was lonely and having culture shock. Working with people from different cultures helped me to be accepted and make friends among volunteers.” Kaori says that she was depressed as a result of being isolated socially and linguistically, yet by leaving her house and engaging in social discourse with sympathetic interlocutors she “got energy from another people and so if I a little bit depressed but I go out and speak another person my friend, or co-worker and so just speaking in English, they made me happy and not depressed.” Finally Tala says “I don’t want to work in other because of what happened to me and I always cried before, remember, but now after that [volunteering in the Café] I have confidence again.”
The narratives of Miram, Kaori, and Tala support Felton and Clayton’s (2011) assertion that “service learning evokes integrated cognitive and affective responses” (p. 81). For some participants the negative emotions of loneliness, isolation, and depression that result from culture and language shock are alleviated by being socially and linguistically connected to and accepted by others. From a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, Grabois (2008) asserts that this social and linguistic connection and acceptance by others occurs in the ZPD where “affect must be seen as central to cognition and not merely as peripheral influence” (p. 385). Affect, according to Grabois (2008), is central to cognition in language learning, and the affective engagement with others may be a reason the participants are invested (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010) in service learning, for it has the power to create the conditions from which participants can convert loneliness, isolation, and depression into confidence, trust, and happiness.

### 5.3.2.3 Negotiating Differences

Even though it has been demonstrated by the participants’ lived service learning experiences that there are benefits to engaging in authentic social discourse with others, the benefits does not imply that they are achieved easily. When it comes to negotiating differences with others, particularly with other co-workers, negative emotions supervene. For example, when Miram is struggling to negotiate differences between herself and another volunteer, so she consults a fellow co-worker for advice. As a result, Miram’s perspective on the volunteer with whom she was in conflict had changed, “then I looked differently at her and I thought maybe she is lonely, so I tried to understand her.” Having experienced loneliness herself, due to culture shock, Miram is able to empathize with another co-worker with the assistance of a fellow co-worker. Miram provides an example of how reconciling negative emotions in both the personal and social realm can provide opportunities for positive affective outcomes, such as empathy.

Miram’s experience is supported by Grabois’ (2008) research on the intersection of service learning and language learning, which reveals that service learning contributes to personal (affective) growth, particularly the development of empathy. Grabois (2008) suggests that service learning facilitates personal development on account of the relationships that develop between the people they work with. Grabois’ (2008) research aligns with Stevick’s (1980) argument that success in language learning “depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom” (p. 4). Thus, the participants’ lived affective experiences uphold the call for service learning researchers to further explore the “positive role emotions can play in learning, emphasizing how the emotional dimension of experience can contribute to developmental outcomes, including enhance motivations, empathy, and persistence” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81).

### 5.3.2.4 Feeling Pressured and Forced

Many of the participants mention feeling pressured working at the Multicultural Cafe; paradoxically, they also mention how the Café is not a site of pressure. The members of the focus group
agree that there are practical pressures associated with running a Café, such as serving the customers quality food in a timely manner. Correspondingly, there is the added pressure of “being quick in English and quick to understand, especially when there is a lot of people waiting in line” as Miram explains. However, this feeling of pressure has brought out the sympathetic side of their customer interlocutors. Nobou captures this phenomena: “The pressure eh? But the good part is that they all know we are ESL because the sign says, ‘Multicultural Café’, and how so they’re kind almost 99% of the customers are kind, patient.” Grabois (2008), Stevick (1980), Felton and Clayton (2011) all agree that the affective relationship between the language learners and others is critical in language development. At the Multicultural Café, the affective relationship that develops between the participants and the customers is sympathetic in nature, thus eases the participants’ sense of pressure, which in turn supports their linguistic risk-taking. Miram talks about this sympathetic support for linguistic risk taking, “by applying your own English skill in a work setting without too much pressure and succeeding and making not too many mistakes because of less time pressure.” Linguistic risk taking is an inherent element in Cervatiuc’s (2009) research that concludes that “good language learners [go] out of their way to gain access into the social networks of native speakers” (p. 259).

This sympathetic support transforms into empathetic support when the participants talk about their co-workers. This is evident in Mia’s response that she feels less pressure linguistically and more able to take risks because the Café is setup to be operated by volunteers, who are all adult immigrant EAL learners. Mai states the if the Café setup is reversed and “all the co-workers were Canadian people, it would be hard to the café because they all know perfect English and I think that I would have to catch up with them, feel more nervous.”

The participants made several references to feeling pressured, and they also made several references to feeling forced. Feeling forced can be a negative emotion if it is externally exerted, yet in the data it is clear that these participants internally force themselves, or apply their agency, to take the social and linguistic risks to be a part of a service learning restaurant venture. Thus these participants are classified good language learners according to Cervatiuc’s (2009). The data reveals that the consequence of feeling forced, if it is agentive and originates from the participant, produces a positive outcome. Jan offers an example using her agency to force herself to be an active member of the Café, which in turn transforms into a positive outcome of increases language skills.

Everybody brings his own working skills and experiences and is forced to explain himself now through another language which can be very hard and lower you self esteem. By challenging himself in a learning environment people can apply their skills and knowledge and get more secure in their language skills.

Jan is a “good language learner” (Cervatiuc, 2009) because she made an effort and forced herself to engage socially and linguistically with others. Jan made the effort because, according to Crick (2012),
she is deeply engaged in the service learning project which connects her “sense of identity and agency with [her] personal learning power” (p. 684). Hummel (2013) found that service learning fosters linguistic self-confidence and this study further articulates this phenomena. Many of the participants feel pressured and forced to engage socially and linguistically with others. Nonetheless, for participants being in a service learning environment that fosters sympathetic and empathetic relationships that honor their agency to take risks enables them to reap the benefits of their investment, such as feeling more secure in their language skills.

5.3.2.5 Sense of Freedom

Juxtaposed to the feeling of being forced many participants feel a sense of freedom volunteering at the Multicultural Café. Roberts and Cook (2009) assert that this sense of freedom the participants find comes from their revived sense of agency, defined as the socioculturally mediated and discursively mobilized capacity to act (Ahearn, 2001; Miller 2010). From a Freirian perspective (Freire, 1970) this sense of freedom that service learning facilitates represents a democratizing of knowledge, for in traditional educational platforms “where memorized facts selected by others are considered to be evidence of intelligence, the capabilities that are necessary to engage fully in democratic processes are suppressed” (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010, p. 98). Thus, this sense of freedom the participant feel and act upon as they engage in service learning represents a critical pedagogy:

Unlike dominant modes of teaching, [critical pedagogy] insists that one of the fundamental tasks of educators is to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality… [Thus,] it is a project that gives critical education its most valued purpose and meaning, which in part is to encourage human agency (Giroux, 2010, p. 717).

The goal of critical education is to nurture freedom and grow human agency. From the participants’ experiences outside of traditional modes of learning and in a democratically organized service learning method of learning, they find a sense of freedom that links to augmented agency. This section reviews the participants’ feelings of freedom that incorporates a freedom of choice, a freedom of ownership, and a freedom of expression, which in turn leads to invested (Norton, 2000) action and increased agency (Giroux, 2010).

A freedom of choice defines the organizational model of the Multicultural Café, which combines service learning with a not-for-profit business. The participants have the latitude to mould the Café to represent their collective visions on how to meet the food service needs of the campus. To this end, Ming reports that the freedom to create a menu was important, “It is good to work in a café because it’s a friendly environment and workers can improvise and make their own meal, unlike McDonald’s where workers can’t do it.” There was also freedom to choose the hours and days the participants would volunteer. Also, Nobuo feels free to choose the language he wants to use, for even though he learned new
vocabulary at the Café, he chooses to “stick with my old ways. Much easier for me.” Thus, woven into the fabric of the Multicultural Café service learning platform is the poststructuralist tenent that people are endowed with agency and are empowered to act on their own (Chapman & Routledge, 2009).

The power and the freedom to act on their own is seen in Kaori’s sense of ownership, which is revealed in this interview statement:

“You told us it your Café and you can decide yourself and so because nobody owner each person like an owner and I want to do more. I have lots of ideas, but its teamwork. Teamwork also like a we have a budget we had to create thing and it’s very fun. The customer happy and sometimes and that a good way because we had feedback why customers upset and why customer didn’t buy. This menu expensive, or the taste is not good. We think about this a lot. Because we are foreigners and we never can do work our own business like our English level. It’s amazing like our own business.

Kaori’s account of her ownership weaves together the social aspect of teamwork and the affective aspects of pride, happiness and fun. Kaori’s lived experiences volunteering at the Multicultural Café demonstrates the interplay between the personal and the social through the affective realm. Although “theory-wise, emotion research still lacks consensus on the relationship between affect and cognition” (Pavlenko, 2012, p. 409), it is clear from Kaori’s account that there is a relationship between affect and cognition, and that this relationship rests on learner agency. There is tension between Kaori’s sense of ownership and her othering label of a foreigner. Holliday, Hyde, and Kullman (2004) state that “otherization does not allow for the agency” (p. 159), yet giving learners like Kaori and opportunity to explore othering through a sense of ownership can revive her sense of agency (Roberts & Cook, 2009).

Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010) assert that “A noncritical education is about students losing their voice and teachers or others denying them an opportunity to dialogue about their ideas, their values, their hopes, and their lives” (p. 98). Conversely, service learning takes up van Lier’s (2004) challenge to move away from the “safe, tried-and-tested language classrooms into more critical, challenging democratic directions” (p. 82). A result of this pedagogical movement away from a loss of voice and toward critical democracy is the freedom to expression one ideas, values, and hopes (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010). Miram’s lived experiences from the Multicultural Café exemplifies finding her voice through freedom of expression:

“When I came to Canada I thought that I am not so social person because of my English, but in the Café I really felt good about myself and started joking, playing around, and I make friends with Mia. Also, I learned that when I get angry because I got angry one time and really frustrated, and so before I tried to keep my anger inside me, but that time I showed it outside. I didn’t keep it inside and it was good. I think I was good, so I thought, ‘Oh Canada is making me more free to..."
express my feelings if they are bad or good!’ I felt good about myself for the first time and now I am learning not to be afraid to express my feelings.

Miram finds her voice through democratic freedom of expression in a social milieu of friendship and conflict facilitated by the critical pedagogy that underscores service learning. Also Miram’s experience is not just cognitive rather it is deeply embedded with emotions such as feelings of inadequacy, confidence, support, a sense of fun and light heartedness, alongside feelings of anger and frustration. Jorge (2011) argues that the strength of a community engaged language learning model, such as service learning, is that the “target language is acquired through meaningful experiences and deep, personal relationships in a rich socio-cultural context” (p. 35). Felton and Clayton (2011) concur that “service learning evokes integrated cognitive and affective responses” (Felton & Clayton, 2011, p. 81).

Service learning with its integrated cognitive and affective foundation creates a space for freedom, agency, and democracy to flourish as Miram demonstrates. This view is supported by Giroux (2010) who states that “Freire argued, education as a practice for freedom must expand the capacities necessary for human agency, and hence the possibilities for how academic labor should be configured to ensure such a project that is integral to democracy itself” (p. 717).

Therefore, the experiences of the participants of the Multicultural Café demonstrate the critical necessity for language learners to grow in a place, such as service learning, which honors both the cognitive and affective realms, thus, enabling them to explore, practice, forge and expand agency through the freedom of choice, the freedom of ownership, and the freedom of expression.

5.3.2.6 The Full Gamut of Emotions

The participants of the Multicultural Café express an emotional range that extends far beyond the expected fear and anxiety felt when conversing in another language. Imai (2012) critiques that most of the research conducted on the affective realm in language learning has focused on negative emotions such as anxiety, while the “palette of emotions that one may experience over the course of language learning and use, such as enjoyment, enthusiasm, relief, anger, happiness, hope, gratitude, envy, contempt, pride, love, nostalgia, etc. have been sidelined, if not neglected” (Imai, 2012, p. 3). The participants uphold Imai’s argument for they cite a variety affective states experienced during their time volunteering. The rich spectrum of affect includes: feeling comfortable and uncomfortable, feeling anger, frustration, happiness, satisfaction, and pride, feeling a sense of whimsy, fun and light-heartedness, feeling recognized and acknowledged, and finally feeling grateful.

Learning English in a traditional classroom sets learning up to be a transmissive cognitive banking affair (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010; Friere, 1970). However, the participants’ complex emotional and social narratives highlights that power, positioning, identity, agency, affective and cognitive experiences all factor into language learning, and that creative forms of pedagogy, such as
service learning, supports the affective complexity of language learning (Imai, 2012; van Lier, 2004). This is observed in Miram’s complex emotional narrative:

I got angry one time and really frustrated [with a co-worker], and so before I used to keep my anger inside me, but that time I showed it outside. I didn’t keep it inside and it was good. I think I was good, so I thought, ‘Oh, Canada is making me more free to express my feelings if they are good or bad.’ I felt good about myself for the first time and now I am learning not to be afraid to express my feelings, before I could only say when I am happy, but when I was angry I couldn’t say I was angry…I [also] learned that not everyone is the same. I learned that I have to be respectful because I had a little conflict with [a co-worker].

At the Café, Miram explores the complexity of expressing negative emotions in a new social context, and as a result found this exploration satisfying and educational. This narrative again supports Grabois’ (2008) argument that “highlight[s] the greater usefulness of service learning as compared to more conventional language learning experiences” (p. 390).

5.3.2.6.1 Fun

Volunteering at the Café means more to the participants than dealing with challenges and managing negative emotions, for according to all the participants, working in the Café is fun and gives numerous moments of happiness and enjoyment. This evident in Nobuo’s comment, who is often exasperated with one particular food sales representative, yet he still says, “It was very to fun to actually I enjoyed every day, even in the frustration.” The fact that the participants genuinely enjoyed themselves through the challenges, the unknowns, the risk-taking and the negative affective emotions illuminates a possible answer to the longstanding question of what motivates adults to engage in learning English. Personality traits, such as introvert and extrovert have been targeted (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), Affective Filter Hypothesis is offered by Krashen (1980), and Norton’s (2000) theory of investment explains how highly motivated learners choose to disengage in language learning opportunities, due to their lack of investment. However, how learners affectively invest or not in learning a second language has received little attention, and yet noticeably in the data the Multicultural Café participants are affectively invested in this service learning opportunity. For instance, Miram says that when she came to Canada she had the identity of a, “not so social person because of my English, but in the Café I really felt good about myself and started joking, playing around, and I make friends with Mia.” Miram adds during the focus group “I like the times when we just have fun and lots of laughs in the back at funny things. It was good that we all don’t get fired [to which the entire focus group joined her laughter].”

Turing to William Glasser (1998), from a humanistic perspective, may shed light on the phenomena of affective investment in service learning opportunities. Glasser (1998), posits that all behavior is geared towards fulfilling five basic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. Thus, from Glasser’s (1998) perspective the participants are affectively invested in this service
learning venture because their needs, particularly belonging, power, freedom, and fun are being met. In the data there is evidence that each of these needs are being met. For example, being a member of the community of practice and contribution meets the participants’ need to belong. Being able to successfully master the daily café operations and social discourse meets their need for power. Being able to control their own volunteer scheduling and contributions meets their need for freedom. Finally, being in an environment with shared laughter and happy customers meets their need for fun. Therefore, according to Glasser (1998) the participants are highly invested in service learning because it is meeting their basic affective needs of belonging, power, freedom, and fun, and this may be the reason Mia says that the Multicultural Café is a “wonderful opportunity.”

5.3.2.7 Affective Connections in the Communities of Practice

Some of the participants cite that it feels “good” to be noticed for their personal and collective accomplishments at the Café. Bamber and Hankin (2011) refer to service learning as a “pedagogy which directs students’ classroom learning to address the needs of relevant communities, where [there is] reciprocity between the institution and the community partner” (p. 192). In consort with institutional reciprocity, Felten and Clayton (2011) declare that “reciprocal, authentic relationships” (p. 82) also need to underpin service learning; therefore, in service learning, “both service to the community and learning on the part of the students are equally valued” (Hummel, 2103, p. 67).

There are positive feelings attached to belonging in equally valued relationships. Many participants feel the affirmative affective repercussions that are a result of being in a reciprocally valued relationship that is positively recognized and publicly acknowledged. Kaori tells about how good it feels to be recognized by college staff members, “I meet many staff at the College. Even I go to school they say, ‘Hi’. They know us. They know me and my face and they say, ‘Hi’.” Kaori is supporting Finley’s (2014) research that finds “there is a relationship between an increased sense of belongingness, improvement in language and other skills, and an increase in confidence” (p. 127).

Also Nobuo recounts his “good feeling” when the Café was recognized provincially for the NESIKA Award for Multicultural Excellence and when the honorable John Yap, the provincial Minister of Multicultural Affairs came to visit the volunteers at the Multicultural Café. The positive affective feelings that surround belonging, being noticed, and being acknowledged are notable aspects in the lived Multicultural Café experiences of the participants. These positives affective aspects are critical in language learning for Norton and Toohey (2011), who contend that without feeling like a reciprocally valued partner, highly motivated language learners are not successful and disengage from learning.

In the data the participants only mention that they valued the acknowledgment and recognition from the sympathetic interlocutors, customers, in their community of practice, and not from the empathetic interlocutor, co-workers, in their community of contribution. This could be attributed to the
higher value that is placed on the social and cultural capital garnered by native speakers of English, as opposed to non-native speakers of English (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991).

Thus, being recognized, acknowledged, and equally valued for the participants by the sympathetic interlocutors in their community of practice subsidized a part of their positive emotional state while volunteering. In the larger linguistic landscape, this affective and equally valued connection to others, particularly to the sympathetic customer interlocutors, who are deemed more endowed with linguistic social and cultural capital is critical, for Giroux (2010) asserts that equality in discourse is fundamental to creating a “more socially just world” (p. 717).

5.3.2.8 Affective Connections in the Community of Contribution

As previously discussed the participants have an affective connection to sympathetic interlocutors, customers, in their community of practice through feeling equally valued. However, the participants have a different affective connection with the empathetic interlocutors, co-workers, in their community of contribution that are expressed in their references to trust, respect, teamwork, support, and friendship. For example, Nobuo feels a sense of trust, as a result of negotiating co-worker conflict, “I had some difficulties to deal with of course, but mainly I believe in the people who became the volunteers. They wants to help…They think a different way to make it work.”

Other emotions surrounding the sympathetic interlocutor relationships include playfulness, “I like the times when we just have fun and laugh in the back” says Miram. Tala recalls feelings of support, “There is a time in the Café I talked my problems to [the author of the study, who was seen as a fellow co-worker] and I cried,” to which Miram added, “and I cried too.” This emotional support is felt by Kaori too, “If I a little bit depressed, but I go out and speak to another person, my friend, or co-worker, and so just speaking English they make me happy, not depressed.” There is a great spectrum of emotions expressed with the participants’ relationship with each other, as opposed to a more limited range connecting them to their customers.

Each participant is an immigrant who is struggling with a disorientation dilemma (Mezirow, 1991) that “causes one to question assumptions, seek others also going through this experience, contemplate new roles, develop new skills and knowledge to match these, and then integrate these into a reordered life” (Taylor & Cranton, 2012, p. 142). Thus, seeking others who are also going through a similar life trajectory becomes an affective support. The affective support is termed emotional scaffolding by Mahn and John-Steiner (2002), who revisit Vygotsky’s construct of scaffolding. Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) state that “emotional scaffolding includes the gift of confidence, the sharing of risks in the presentation of new ideas, constructive criticism, and the creation of a safety zone” (p. 12). For the participants, who are struggling in a disorientating dilemma, they seek others experiencing the same phenomena. Then bonding capital (Putman, 2001) is accumulated through emotional scaffolding with other co-workers, or empathetic interlocutors, in an affective safety zone, and thus, enables them to
grow in self-confidence (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002), as well as linguistic-confidence (Hummel, 2013). The Multicultural Café service learning cite facilitates this process.

5.3.2.9 Grateful and Thankful

Finally not only do the participants feel good about being valued in their communities of practice, they also value Multicultural Café that facilitates learning experiences in their community of contribution such as linguistic and emotional scaffolding. The by-product of valuing service learning is evident in their feelings of gratitude and thankfulness. This aligns with Hummel’s (2013) Canadian research with language learners also involved in service learning, for they “also reported various ways in which they found their experiences personally enriching. Several of these testimonies emphasized how gratifying it was to feel they were making a positive contribution to society” (p. 84). A Multicultural Café example is from Mia, who summarizes the sentiment of gratitude when she writes, “Multicultural Café was a really big part of my life in Salmon Arm. Thank you for giving me such a wonderful opportunity and also thank you very much for all of your support.” The participants are connected, engaged, and repeatedly accessing local sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors, thus are becoming socially integrated into their local community, which is taking them away from a powerless position of isolation and being othered (Jensen, 2011; Lister, 2004), and for this they are thankful.

5.3.2.10 Personal Realm Conclusion

In summary, Imai (2012) argues that mainstream SLA research has confined the understanding of the complexity of the affective realm to a “very small corner” (p. 4); however, the lived experiences of the Multicultural Café participants demonstrate that the affective realm permeates every crevasse of language learning. Over a century ago, Vygotsky, called for the affective-volitional tendencies to be considered in order to understand another’s thought (Vygotsky, 1988), and his call is warranted by the participants of this study. Moreover, acknowledging the affective realm is imperative, for there is a connection between the “role of affect in transformative educational practice” (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 3).

5.3.3 Transformative Understandings

The last part of the data holds the participants’ personal experiences and insights that transcend both the linguistic and social experience into a realm of transformative understandings. Transformative understandings holistically “draws upon the emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions of learning” (Magro & Ghorayshi, 2010, p. 6). Each transforming experience big or small are meaningful to the participant, for they are rooted in lived experiences and represents emancipatory learning (Habermas, 1971), conscientization (Freire, 1970), and according to Mezirow (1991) it embodies “the process of becoming critically aware… [and] acting upon these new understandings (p. 14).

5.3.3.1 Disorientating Dilemma

According to Mezirow (2000) transformation begins with a disorienting dilemma that “causes one to question assumptions, seek others also going through this experience, contemplate new roles, develop
new skills and knowledge to match these, and then integrate these into a reordered life” (Taylor & Cranton, 2012, p. 142). Each participant in this study is an immigrant, who has entered second language learning while struggling with their own disorienting dilemmas. For immigrants this disorientating dilemma is also termed culture shock, language shock (Miller & Endo, 2004), or acculturation stress (Torres & Rollock, 2004). However, the disorienting dilemma is also a pathway to transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000).

Earlier in the study, Jan provides an example of her disorientating dilemma of reassessing her language skills and knowledge in order to match and integrate them into her new life in Canada. As a result, Jan forces herself to take a risk linguistically and socially and join the Multicultural Café, wherein she transforms her “fear of speaking” into feeling more “secure in one’s language skills.” Similarly, while in a disorientating dilemma, Mia seeks others who are also dealing with the same issues. As a result of Mia socially connecting to her empathetic interlocutors, co-workers, some connections transformed into a friendship that “will last for good” according to Mia. Thus, Mia finds this service learning experience to be a meaningful and transformative endeavor and states that the “Multicultural Café was a really big part of my life.”

Miram labels her disorientating dilemma as culture shock, and articulates several transforming experiences. One includes when humor returns to her identity, Miram wrote, “I was lonely and having culture shock... [but now ] I joked a lot using English, which I was shy to do in the beginning of my arrival to Canada.” Miram attributes this transformation to “working with people from different cultures helped me to be accepted and make friends among volunteers.” The Multicultural Café supports transformative experience, such a Miram’s, activities because it is “contingent and dialogical forms of collaborative dialogue… [where] learners can develop a sense of true self-other dialogue, and hence an identity and voice in the L2” (van Lier, 2004, p. 98). Miram’s transformative experience is supported by the transactive and transformative process of service learning and the collaborative dialogue within, which aids her in consolidating her voice and identity in English.

Miram also has two more transformative experiences that intersect with her identity as a lived experience (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Miram reflects on a time in the Café with the help of a co-worker that she was able to “looked differently at [a co-worker]” with whom she was in conflict. Looking differently at this co-worker helps Miram transform her understanding of the possible motives to explain a co-worker’s behaviour, such as “maybe she is lonely”. Miram connects this co-worker’s loneliness to her own disorientating dilemma of struggling with culture shock. Thus, Miram concludes that she “learned that not everyone is the same. I learned that I have to be respectful.” Miram’s identity expands and transforms to deepen her sense of empathy. This supports Crick (2012) who states that “identities are discursive counterparts of one’s lived experience – they are stories which are told and re-told and which are open and susceptible to change” (p. 682). Thus, change, or transformation, is enabled
through “the process of knowledge construction [which] can also scaffold identity formation (Crick, 2012, p. 682). Miram’s experience also supports Taylor’s (2007) assertion that “one of the most powerful tools for fostering transformative learning is providing students with learning experiences that are direct, personally engaging and stimulate reflection upon experience” (p. 182). A consequence of this transformative experience, according to Taylor’s (2007) research is “empathy” (p. 182). Finally, transforming identities as a discursive practice is seen in Miram’s final transformative understanding that she articulates when she discovers that “Canada is making me more free to express my feelings.”

Fumiko likewise has a transforming experience as a self-declared introvert. Fumiko comments that the Café allows her to transcend being an introvert and explore an identity of being an “extrovert” in English, to which she deems that it is a “good experience interacting with strangers every day”, and that she is “glad I did it.” From a poststructuralist view, language learners need to explore the different ways of being and knowing the world in regard to identity negotiation (Morgan, 2007; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The Multicultural Café facilitates this discursive identity exploration, from which both Fumiko and Miram are able to experience a transformative understanding that positively affects their right to be heard and their right to speak (Bakhtin, 1986, 2010; Bourdieu, 1977; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

5.3.3.2 Critical Awareness

The landscape of transformation critically and reflectively weaves the personal and social experiences together, for “it is within this landscape that we start to live differently because we have seen another way of looking at ourselves, others, and the world in which we live” (Dyson, 2010, p. 14). The Multicultural Café provides a landscape of transformation, as Nobuo’s experiences attests, for he critically and reflectively compares his new social experiences with his own personal life experiences. Nobuo compares and explores cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and cross-generational issues and his engages in critical awareness, which is the first step in Mezirow’s (1991) transformative perspective theory defined as:

The process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings (p. 14).

Nobuo articulates eight different comparisons, in which he becomes critically aware of his assumptions about the world and builds the foundation for future transformative changes, if he so chooses. Nobuo demonstrates that teaching and learning from a transformative perspective helps learners “gain a crucial sense of agency” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 20). Nobuo’s time at the Multicultural Café is spent transcending the daily operations of the Café to explore cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and cross-
generational issues. This exploration of his critical awareness helps him acquire a crucial sense of agency, from which transformative understandings can flourish.

### 5.3.3.3 Becoming a Co-being

Service learning brings people together for local practice (Pennycook, 2010) within a landscape of transformation (Dyson, 2010), which holds potential for transforming marginalized learners (Felten & Clayton, 2011). Kaori feels her marginalization viscerally as mild depression, for she is isolated linguistically and socially in her home: “I speak my own language in my house, but I volunteered at the Café. I go out and speak another people, and so if I a little depressed, but I go out and speak another person my friends or co-workers, and so just speaking English, they made me happy, not depressed.” In the landscape of transformation (Dyson, 2010) she is transformed from a marginalized other into a “co-being” (Vandenberg, 1991, p. 1281).

Kaori exemplifies the reason for Magro and Ghorayshi’s (2010) plea that adult newcomers and refugees to Canada, who speak English as an Additional Language, ought to be taught through a transformative approach because it increases their personal and social empowerment. For Kaori, the transformative landscape enables her to utilize and strengthen her personal power by becoming a co-being. This helps Kaori overcome mild depression due to isolation because she has built competency “through dignified, collaborative, caring support (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 3). And this is at the core of Freire’s (1970) pedagogy of hope that the power associated with words cannot only encourage, empower and transform a person, but they ultimately have the power to change the world.

### 5.3.3.4 Trust and Transformation

Within landscape of transformation (Dyson, 2010), it is a challenge according to Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) “for adult education practitioners… to create an environment of trust that invites multiple dimensions of learning, acknowledges diversity, and respects learners’ culture while assisting them new ways of seeing the world” (p. 10). Transformative understandings need to incubate in an environment of trust, and Tala’s story poignantly highlights the capacity for service learning to be a conduit for transformation:

I work again because you know that time I said to you, [referring to the researcher], that I don’t want to work in other because of what happened to me and I always cried before, remember, but now after that I have confidence again…For me yeah because I told you before that what happened to me before in my work, my job, I said I don’t want to work because I don’t want to trust somebody. But then, now because of maybe I exposed again to the people now I work again. I changed my mind because I want to I want to only inside my house and I do only cleaning job because I said I don’t like to trust anybody. Yeah, and I cried. I always want to go back to [my country]. I always talk to my husband I want to go back. But now, I change my mind.
Tala shares her transformative understanding of finding trust in others again after it had been broken through a previous traumatic work experience. As a result of this transformative understanding she was successful in finding a new job in the community after volunteering in the Café. This supports Taylor’s (2007) findings that one significant aspect of transformative learning rests on “trustful relationships…authentic relationships [were] the equalization of power between teaching partners allow[s] for learner autonomy and the development of trust” (p. 179).

At the Café, Tala earns the social capital of trust (Woodworth, 2008) because she is affectively supported by dignified, collaborative and caring human connections (Mahn & John-Steiner; 2002) that she finds within the transformative educational practice of service learning in the Multicultural Café. This notion is upheld by Etienne Wenger (2000), who posits that a feature of a communities of practice (and community of contribution, as discussed previously) is that it involves mutual engagement, and competency in mutual engagement means being a trusted partner in these socially engaged community interactions. For Tala, this not only means being a trusted partner, for her it also means she finds a partner(s) to trust.

Correspondingly, Glasser (2006) offers another dimension to Tala’s transformative understanding, which is how behavioural habits can either build or break down relationships. For example, negative relational behaviours that erode relationships include criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and rewarding to control. Conversely, positive relational, or connecting habits that develop and maintain relationships include caring, listening, supporting, contributing, encouraging, trusting, and befriending. Tala’s past work experience was rife with negative relational behaviors, which in turn made her distrust others and sequester herself from being engaged in her community. When Tala takes a risk to join the Multicultural Café, she begins to develop mutually engaging relationships in her community of practice and contribution because they are based on positive relational, or connecting habits that include caring, listening, supporting, contributing, encouraging, trusting, and befriending (Glasser, 2006). These habits can been seen as the metaphorical glue in the bonding capital (Putman, 2001) that accumulates with Tala’s connection to the empathetic interlocutors in her community of contribution.

As a result of Tala’s transformative understandings, not only does Tala develop an authentic voice in a new language, and a revived a sense of agency (Roberts & Cook, 2009, p. 639), moreover Tala finds trust and transformation. Freire (1970) believed that “human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world” (p. 88). Tala is nourished by true empathetic and sympathetic words from members of her communities of practice and contribution. As a consequence, she accumulates the social capital of trust through language, which in turn she uses to leverage herself into a better social position (Cervatuic, 2009; Norton, 2000) when she is hired for a new job shortly after her Multicultural Café service learning experience.
5.3.3.5 Transformative Understandings Summary

The tag line for the Multicultural Café is *Transforming Lives and Communities One Cup at a Time*, which foreshadows many of the transformative moments that occurred at the Multicultural Café. Kaori, Nobuo, Miram and Tala all take a risk to be vulnerable and exposed in order to access the social network (Cervatiuc, 2009). The result of their engagement with sympathetic and empathetic interlocutors in their communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and contributions (Grabois, 2008) is they accumulate bridging and bonding capital (Putman, 2001). Then somewhere in the landscape of transformation (Dyson, 2010) these participants found their voice (Freire, 1970), which revives their agency (Roberts & Cook, 2009), and their identity in a second language (van Lier, 2004).

The Multicultural Café for these participants serves as a site of transformative learning because, according to (O’Sullivan, 2002), it is built on an asset model of learning, as opposed to labeling adult learners as deficit. Magro and Ghorayshi (2010) state that a deficit view of Canadian newcomers and refugees stresses their lack of Canadian work experience and lack of English language competency, whereas the transformative asset model views the learners’ prior education, work experiences, and cultural background “as strengths or assets…[thus], based on this assumption, education involves building on newcomers’ knowledge. Education would help them draw on their strengths and to build the skills they need to function successfully in society” (p. 9). The Multicultural Café service learning site through its supportive personal and social environment that is built on learner strengths and is nurtured through collaborative and caring relationships lays the foundation for the possibility of experiencing transformative understandings.

5.4 Discussion Summary

This qualitative study describes the lived experiences of the participants who volunteered in the Multicultural Café service learning platform. The overarching research question, which guides this study, is from the perspective of adult learners of English as an Additional Language what are the perceived impacts of volunteering in a service learning platform, such as the Multicultural Café? In answering this question three themes arise: the social, personal and transformative realms, and from analyzing the data it is evident that they matter in language learning, and service learning facilitates their growth and development (see Figure 5.3). This study finds that the nexus of the social, personal, and transformative dimensions of service learning is critical in language learning for adult immigrants because ultimately it affords them the opportunity to move from a negative space of othering to a positive space of mattering. Hence this research supports Felton and Clayton (2011), assertion that service learning is a “powerful…vehicle for learning and social change” (p. 77).
5.5 Implications

In light of the research findings supported by pertinent literature, the final portion of this chapter will discuss the andragogical, programming, provision of service, professional development and policy and implications.

5.5.1 Andragogical Implications

Immigrants to Canada who speak English as a Second or Additional Language are often sequestered for a relatively short period of time in government sponsored classrooms and expected to learn all the linguistic skills, and the social and cultural knowledge needed to integrated into their community (Derwing & Waugh, 2012; Fleming, 2007). The participants state that these classrooms are proficient at teaching the grammatical foundations, but fail to meaningful transfer and connect these grammatical skills to the community outside the classroom, which is what Dekeyser (2007) cites as the interface issue. Derwing and Waugh (2012) concur as they state that “the complexity of pragmatics, the culturally determined social aspects of language, are often covered superficially in language classrooms because of competing demands and time constrains” (p. 19). Moreover, this transmissive andragogical approach to newcomer English language learning treads dangerously close to Friere’s (1970) notion of banking education:
Banking education is about arrogance and lifeless transmission of facts from some patriarchal source… A noncritical classroom names the world for others without their input and expects them to learn these names. A noncritical education is about students losing their voice and teachers or others denying them an opportunity to dialogue about their ideas, their values, their hopes, and their lives. (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010, p. 98).

Thus, adult immigrant English language education needs to move beyond the goal of merely uncritically transferring skills and knowledge, and move towards supporting immigrants to critically invest in acquiring and leveraging social and cultural capital. From the participants’ experience, this andragogical position needs to honor the significant role the personal affective realm plays in language acquisition, in order for them to harness the right to speak (Bourdieu, 1977; 1991), and transactively dialogue with others about their ideas, values, hopes and lives (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010) in their communities of practice and contribution.

Service learning is an educational practice that honors the aforementioned empowering discursive practice, as witnessed in the participants’ rich and generative Multicultural Café experiences. According to Ehrlich’s (1996) foundational service learning framework, “Service-learning is the various pedagogies [andragogies] that link community service and academic study so that each strengthens the other. The basic theory of service-learning is Dewey’s: the interaction of knowledge and skills with experience is key to learning” (p. xi). Service learning, from a poststructuralist lens, shifts the focus “from pedagogies [andragogies] of inclusion to pedagogies [andragogies] of transformation” (Morgan, 2007, p. 1043). In a meta-analysis on transformational learning Taylor (2007) cites the “definitive need to explore other settings particularly where the teaching contexts are more informal, less controlled by the instructor, and more susceptible to external influences (e.g. natural environment, public)” (Taylor, 2007, p. 186). Service learning fits this criteria for transformational learning. Hence, service learning needs to be seriously considered as method of best practices for marginalized adult immigrant learners of English. This is supported by Grabois’ (2008):

I can think of no activity that provides students with a more meaningful context for learning than contributing to the well-being of others. In the process students become contributing members of emergent communities where learning is based on symmetrically distributed expertise, they develop awareness of and empathy for cultures and life experiences that are different from their own and they attain enhance motivation as language learners, students, and citizens. Service-learning may be the most powerful language pedagogy [andragogy] (p. 403).

Even though service learning may be a best practice for transactive, and possibly a transformational language classroom is not an easy practice to organize, implement, and assess. However, according to the participants’ perceptions and relevant academic literature, service learning is worth the time invested to implement because in is a powerful and progressive andragogical tool that can
enable and empower marginalized adult immigrant learners to “unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be” (Freire, 1994, p. 9).

5.5.2 Programming, Policy, Provision of Services, and Professional Development

In 2013, the federal government of Canada, specifically the ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), took over the language training of adult immigrant newcomers from the British Columbian provincial government. Subsequently, from the author’s perspective and knowledge accumulated working with newcomers’ English programs such as ESLSAP in rural British Columbia for over a decade, combined with the findings of this study concludes that the CIC has lost critical second language acquisition and socialization opportunities through restricting access to the language training to exclusively permanent residents, and not naturalized Canadian citizens. This study demonstrates that immigrants, whether permanent residents or naturalized Canadian citizens, still feel othered and struggle with a sense of culture and language shock up to 30 years after immigrating to Canada.

This study reveals that immigrants need continued long-term support to engage fully and equally in their communities. Moreover, immigrants need better support to integrate and engage with their communities earlier on in their immigration and language development journey. Immigrants who are ELLs need to participate in community life and not be sequestered from community life. To the detriment of adult immigrant language learners, the CIC is narrowing newcomers’ language learning opportunities to transmissive language training, while subjugating the more transactive and transformative approaches to language acquisition and socialization, which also honours the personal affective aspects of learning. As Fleming warns (2007):

Canadian cultural identity cannot be viewed as a pristine set of immutable facts to be transmitted to the immigrants in our ESL classes. Nor should our history be represented as an unproblematic and inevitable progress towards our status as the world's "best place to live." Our practice as ESL educators in countries like Canada must reflect the fact that newcomers are dynamically reconstructing identity, both in terms of their own personal and nationstate identities. In very real ways, they are transforming what they encounter both in and out of classes into new visions of what it means to be a citizen of a particular country, or even, in fact, the world as a whole (p. 196).

Missing Fleming’s (2007) point that immigrant ESL classes need to provide the latitude to address immigrants’ dynamically reconstructing identities, the CIC recent ESL policies have narrowed learning to language training and transmission by bureaucratizing the procurement of federal funds to offer newcomer language classes, restricting the admission and program quality perimeters, expanding administrative duties and quantitative accountability with increased bureaucratic policies and procedures, and finally by leaving the majority of the language training for rural immigrants to a few kind-hearted community volunteers to aid the newcomer into full participation into the community.
Over a century ago, Vygotsky (Veer & Valsiner, 1994) drew attention to the value of qualitatively measured lived experiences. Today the participants support Vygotsky’s view that essential learning needed to become an equally valued community member is found outside the classroom and outside of quantitative measures. Corson (1997) warned that the path to self-discovery and social transformation can be lost when language acquisition is pegged in such narrow hole.

Consequently, at no stage in the CIC newcomers language training scheme does the empowerment of the adult immigrant language learner come into focus, wherein the newcomer is challenged to “think, with complex collaborative projects that push the boundaries of experience along with the language boundaries” (van Lier, 2004, p. 83). Pushing the boundaries with service learning opportunities enables and empowers immigrants to apply their agency to autonomously invest socially, personally, and transformatively (Norton, 2010), build linguistic confidence (Hummel, 2013), secure social and cultural capital (Putman, 2001, Bourdieu, 1977;1991) that in turn can be critically applied towards finding their voice and their right to speak (Bourdieu, 1977; 1991) in a symmetrically valued (Grabios, 2008), transactive dialogue with others about their ideas, values, hopes, and lives (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2010) in their communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and contribution (Grabois, 2008). This boundary pushing can only be accomplished by diminishing the training notion and bureaucratic emphasis of immigrant language programs, and by widening the language learning gates to include second language socialization and experiential practices, such as service learning, to a broader range of immigrants.

This inclusive programming expansion for immigrant language and socialization learning through service learning does not need to be a financial burden for their can be timely, creative, and collaborative partnerships that meets both the needs of the community and the personal, social, and linguistic needs of the adult immigrant learner, such as the Multicultural Café demonstrates. Therefore, the provision of services for adult immigrant language learning should include access to service learning opportunities that enables immigrants to use their English to critically engage in and foster transactive and transformative discursive relationships within their communities of contribution and practice. Moreover, to implement service learning with existing adult immigrant language program there needs to be a service learning knowledge repository, both online and through professional development workshops, from which progressive educators can access, contribute, and learn from one other regarding the creation of service learning experiences rooted in a pedagogy (andragogy) of hope (Freire, 1994).

### 5.5.3 Further Research

From this study, it is clear that there needs to be additional research in the field of service learning, its creation, and implementation regarding language acquisition and socialization for adult immigrant English language learners. This study affirms Grabois’ (2008) study of service learning that concludes service learning is of “greater usefulness…as compared to more conventional language
learning experiences” (p. 390). Service learning may be the hope that yields the federal tidalwave of benign English classes that sequesters immigrants from their communities and perpetuates uncritical, undemocratic, and transmissive language training. Hence, it is imperative that more studies be conducted on service learning as a pathway to hope for a future where all citizens can participate and contribute equally.

5.6 Conclusion

This research explores service learning as a conduit that moves adult immigrant English language learners outside of the traditional classroom, and into authentic communities of practice and contribution. The results of this research conclude that service learning is indeed a powerful and potentially transformative andragogical practice, for it is rooted in affective respect and agency, which in turn lays the foundation for an increase in linguistic self-confidence, an accumulation of social and cultural capital, and positive identity formation. Thus this research supports service learning as a creative and critical andragogical practice to aid adult immigrant English language learners to converse, connect, and contribute in their community.
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Appendices

Appendix A Consent Form and Questionnaire

Consent Form

What is the title of this study?

The Multicultural Café: The Perceived Impacts of Volunteering in a Service Learning Platform from the Perspectives of Adult Learners of English as an Additional Language

Who is doing the study?

Tracy Riley, MA Graduate Student
Faculty of Education, UBC’s Okanagan Campus
Phone: (250) 832-2126 ext. 8236
Email: triley@okanagan.ubc.ca

Who is Tracy Riley’s Graduate Supervisor?

Scott Douglas, PhD
Faculty of Education, UBC’s Okanagan Campus
Phone: (250) 807-9277
Email: scott.douglas@ubc.ca

Who is paying for this study?

No one is paying for this study. You will not receive money for being in the study.

Why should you take part in this study?

You will share your opinions. Your opinions are valuable. They will help to improve the Multicultural Café. Your opinions may help make better English classes.
What happens if you say “yes”?

You will complete a short questionnaire. The questionnaire should only take 20 minutes. You may be invited to an interview. The interview will only take 30 minutes. You may be invited to a focus group discussion. The focus group will only take 60 minutes. You will be asked your opinions about the café. In total, the study may take about 2 hours of your time.

The interview will be recorded. I will type out what I hear in the recording. The focus group will be recorded. I will type out what I hear in the recording.

What will you do with my answers?

I am a graduate student. I was also your teacher in the café. These are two separate jobs. For this study, I am a student in a Faculty of Education. My school is the University of British Columbia. My campus is the Okanagan Campus. My supervisor is Dr. Scott Douglas. This study is separate from the café. I am doing my Master of Arts. I need to write a thesis. A thesis is a kind of research report. This project is my research. I will use your answers to help me write my thesis. I may also use your answers to write a paper. I may try to publish this paper in a journal. I may also do a presentation.

How will you know the results of the study?

I will write a report in plain English. The report will be available after the study is finished. Some of you will want a copy. Please contact me for a copy. My contact information is on the first page of this form. A presentation may be made. The presentation may be in Salmon Arm. Advertisements will be put up around Okanagan College.

What are the risks of participating in the study?

You may feel your English is not very good. Don’t worry. Your English is not being marked. You may think you must take part. You do not have to take part. This study is not connected to your English classes. You can still take English classes if you do not take part in this study. Please see the Okanagan College website. The web address is www.okanagan.bc.ca. The website will tell you how to take more English classes. This study is not connected to your immigration status. This study is not connected to your ability to get a reference letter. You can get a reference letter if you participate or not. You can ask any of your English instructors for a reference letter. You can also ask the Regional Dean for a reference letter. Your Regional Dean is Mr. Jim Barnby. This is Mr. Barnby’s phone number: (250) 832-2126, ext 8239. Also, your ability to volunteer in the café in the future is not connected to your decision to participate or not in this study.

What are the benefits of participating in the study?
You are an important part of our school. Your opinions help us to be better English teachers. Your opinions help everyone make a better campus.

How will your identity be protected?

I will not tell anyone your name. I will not use your real name in my report. I will not use your real name in my thesis. I will not use your real name in my presentations. You may take part in a focus group. I will tell people that what we say in the focus group should not be shared. I will report the results of this study in general. I will not specifically identify you in my study.

I will keep the recordings in a locked filing cabinet. I will keep my papers in a locked filing cabinet. The locked filing cabinet will be in my office. My office is at the Salmon Arm Campus of Okanagan College. I will keep electronic data on my computer. My computer is password protected. I will back up my information. It will be stored on an external hard drive. The external hard drive will be password protected.

My graduate supervisor will have an electronic copy of my data. It will be on a password protected external hard drive. It will be locked in a filing cabinet in his office. His office is at UBC’s Okanagan campus.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

You may have questions. You can contact me. My phone number is (250) 832-2126 ext. 8236. My email address is triley@okanagan.bc.ca. You may contact my graduate supervisor. His email address is scott.douglas@ubc.ca. His phone number is (250) 807-9277.

Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

You may have complaints. These complaints may be about your rights. They may be about your treatment. You may contact a special phone number to complain. This phone number is for the UBC Office of Research Services. It is 1-877-822-8598. You may also contact the UBC Okanagan Research Services Office. The phone number is 250-807-8832.

How do I give informed consent?

Consent means that you are agreeing to be in the study and you know what the study is about. It is your choice to be in the study. You may refuse to be in the study. You may quit the study at any time. You may quit after the questionnaire. You may quit after the interview. You may quit
after the focus group. If you quit, I will not use your information. Nothing bad will happen to you if you quit. You may still take classes at Okanagan College. Your studies will not be hurt.

Your signature at the end of this form tells me that you have a copy of this consent form. Please keep the copy with the big words "Participant Copy" in the background. You received an envelope in this invitation. The envelope has a stamp on it. The envelope has the address on the front. Please put the copy you signed in the envelope. Please put your questionnaire in the envelope. Please put the envelope in the mail.

Your signature tells me that you say "yes" to being in this study.

Your email address tells me that you want to be invited to an interview. Your email address tells me that you want to be invited to a focus group. Your email address tells me that you want me to email you a copy of the final report. Your home address tells me that you want me to mail you a copy of the final report. Your phone number tells me that you want me to phone you. I can phone you to invite you to the interview. I can phone you to invite you to the focus group. You do not have to give me your email. You do not have to give me your home address. You do not have to give me your phone number.

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<td>Your signature</td>
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<td>Your home address (optional)</td>
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Version 3: April 26, 2013
Multicultural Café Research Questionnaire

1. What is your first language (the language you first learned)?

2. What is your age range? Please circle.
   
   19 – 29   30 – 39   40 – 49   50 +

3. How long have you lived in Canada?

4. What were your English skills before working in the Café? Please circle.

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<th>Advanced Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1</td>
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5. What were your English skills after working in the Café?

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<td>Writing</td>
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<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
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6. Did the café help you to learn English? Please circle.

   Yes   No

   Please explain your answer to Question 6:

   

   Version: April 9, 2013
7. What were some challenges about working in the Café?

8. What were some of the benefits about working in the Café?

9. Would you tell a friend who is learning English to work in the Café? Please circle.
   
   Yes  No
   
   Please explain your answer to Question 9:
   
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about your time at the Café?
Appendix B Interview Questions

April 7, 2013

Study Title:
The Multicultural Café: The Perceived Impacts of Volunteering in a Service Learning Platform from the Perspectives of Adult Learners of English as an Additional Language

Semi-Structured Interview Questions:
1. What did you learn about yourself when you were working in the café?
2. What did you learn about others when you were working in the café?
3. You may have learned some English in the café. Was learning in the café different than in your regular class? If yes, how?
4. Do you use English differently now after taking part in the café?
5. In the café, did you learn new things about Canada?
6. You may have learned some new skills and knowledge. Have you used any of these?
7. What can you do now after taking part in the café that you couldn’t do before?
8. Has taking part in the café improved your English skills?
9. Now, do you use English in new places? Do you use English with new people?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences in the café?
Appendix C Focus Group Questions

April 8, 2013

Study Title:

The Multicultural Café: The Perceived Impacts of Volunteering in a Service Learning Platform from the Perspectives of Adult Learners of English as an Additional Language

Focus Group Questions:

1. What were some of your memorable moments at the café?
2. What were some of the challenges working in the café?
3. Do you think your English improved while working in the café?
4. Is learning English in the café and learning in a classroom the same?
5. Has this experience changed you in any way?
6. Would you recommend volunteering in the café to a friend?
7. What did you learn about Canadian culture in the café?
8. How would you improve the café?
9. Would you volunteer in the café again?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences?