

**THE SPATIALITY OF OCCUPATION IN A MIGRATION CONTEXT: EXPLORING
FRENCH-SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS' OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN
FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY SITES IN METRO VANCOUVER**

by

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Abstract

International migration is receiving increasing attention in occupational science, especially the interactions between the environments, the occupations and the identities of voluntary and forced migrants. The perspective of viewing these as related, but largely independent of one another can conflict with those in the discipline who have been advocating a transactional approach for more than a decade. Moreover, little remains known about the production of space occurring through occupational engagement and the spatiality of occupation in a migration context.

This critical ethnography explores the occupations of French-speaking voluntary and forced migrants (immigrants) in Metro Vancouver, in a Francophone minority context. Taking a transactional approach to the study of occupation and drawing from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, this research examines the meaning and the production of Francophone spaces in French-speaking immigrants' daily lives. Attention was paid to diverse intersecting identity markers in immigrants' experiences and in the production of Francophone spaces. More specifically, partnerships were established with three Francophone community sites and I collected data through in-depth and go-along interviews with fifteen immigrants, and three key informant interviews.

Combining transactionalism and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space allowed me to analyse the production of formal Francophone community spaces through (1) their conception by their leadership, (2) immigrants' perceptions and understandings and (3) the lived experiences of occupational engagement in these spaces. I paid particular attention to the production of these spaces in regard to the diversity stemming from international migration. While occupational

engagement in French was fluid over spaces, formal Francophone spaces represented stable French-speaking landmarks in the Anglo-dominant context of Metro Vancouver. The production of stable spaces, durable over time required a conception by their leaderships and shared perception by the participants. However, occupation was the omnipresent element in both formal and informal spaces, and while it was dominated by the two other components, conceived and perceived space in formal Francophone spaces, it was ultimately shaping these spaces.

Lay Summary

Canadian federal policies currently prioritize Francophone immigration to support the vitality of Francophone minority communities outside Quebec. This research explores French-speaking immigrants' experiences of participation in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver. Partnerships were established with three sites: a provincial organization, a community association and a church. This critical ethnography included (1) personal in-depth interviews and (2) optional participatory interviews with fifteen French-speaking immigrants (five immigrants recruited in each site), as well as (3) key informant interviews with a representative of each partner site. The findings highlight (1) the meaning of using French in immigrants' occupations while in an Anglo-dominant environment, (2) the fluidity of occupational engagement in French over spaces and (3) the production of Francophone community spaces through their conception by their leadership, immigrants' perceptions and lived experiences. Francophone community spaces are important for French-speaking immigrants' integration but they need to be more inclusive to diversity.

Preface

This thesis draws from a larger project entitled “Cultural encounters: Examining the role of community spaces in the participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Vancouver”. My thesis supervisor, Dr. Suzanne Huot, is the principal investigator on this project and Dr. Luisa Veronis and Dr. Gillian Creese are co-investigators. When I started my Master’s degree, the project had already been designed. My thesis supervisor made the partnership with three Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver. I was involved in the ethics approval process. I completed all the data collection with the exception of three observations: one done by another research assistant, one by my thesis supervisor and one co-led by the research assistant and myself; as well as three interviews: one done by my thesis supervisor and two co-led by my thesis supervisor and myself. I was responsible for the verbatim transcription of the recorded interviews. I have been involved in conference presentations and publications. For the purpose of my thesis, only part of the data is included. The analysis of these data was led primarily by me (with the guidance of my committee members); but, in addition to my thesis, I have been involved in the analysis of the entire data set for the project.

Three publications have arisen from this project and my work in preparation for this thesis.

- A theoretical paper including a focused review exploring the use of theory in the occupational science literature examining immigrants’ experiences was published in the *Journal of Occupational Science* in March 2020 [Delaisse, A.-C., & Huot, S. (2020). Using theory to inform understandings of occupation in a migration context. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 0(0), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1734961>]. I completed this focused review for a graduate course and I am first author on this article. Dr. Suzanne Huot provided feedback

and edited the article. She is second author. This article informed the literature review of this thesis.

- An article recommending the use of Lefebvre’s theory of the production of space in occupational science was submitted in April 2020 and is currently under review. I wrote this paper for a graduate course. I am first author on this article. Drs. Suzanne Huot and Luisa Veronis provided feedback and edited the article. They are second and third author. Parts of this article are in the literature review and the theoretical framework section of this thesis.

- A book chapter presenting preliminary findings of the project from which this thesis draws, was submitted in December 2019. I drafted the chapter, which was reviewed and edited by Drs. Suzanne Huot, Luisa Veronis and Aude-Claire Fourot. Dr. Suzanne Huot is first author of that chapter, I am second, Dr. Luisa Veronis is third and Dr. Aude-Claire Fourot is last author. Although this chapter does not appear in this thesis, it shaped my initial understanding and analysis of the data.

The project from which this thesis draws, received approval from the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board under the title “The role of community spaces in the social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver”. The certificate number is H18-02680. The approval was received on November 21st 2018 and is valid until September 23rd 2020.

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List of Abbreviations

AGM - Annual General Meeting

B.C. – British Columbia

FMC – Francophone Minority Community

IRCC - Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada

UK – United Kingdom

US – United States of America

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Canada is an officially bilingual country whose demographic profile is strongly shaped by immigration. However, its bilingualism is not evenly distributed across the different provinces and territories. While Quebec accounts for the majority of the country's French-speaking population, there are Francophones in all Anglo-dominant provinces who constitute Francophone Minority Communities (FMCs) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006). Moreover, FMCs¹ not only encompass individuals, but also community organizations, schools and other institutions that contribute to these communities (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006). Although the absolute number of Francophones is increasing (albeit at a slow rate) in most regions, the proportion of the population listing French as their predominant language (whether we consider the mother tongue, home language or first official language spoken) is decreasing (Statistics Canada, 2009). For example, in the census, the proportion of people reporting French as their mother tongue has dropped from 22.3% in 2006, to 22% in 2011 and 21.4% in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017b, 2017a, 2018). It is important to note that the absolute numbers of both the English-mother-tongue and the French-mother-tongue population are increasing (Statistics Canada, 2018). However their respective share is decreasing because of the growing proportion of people speaking a non-official language as a consequence of large-scale immigration and growing language diversification (Statistics Canada, 2017a). In Anglo-dominant provinces, such as British Columbia (B.C.), FMCs are threatened by a drop of birth rate, their low geographic concentration leading to less use of the French language and more exogamous couples with low

¹ In this thesis I use the singular form 'community' when referring to individuals, organizations and institutions that constitute a FMC within a particular location (i.e., a city such as Surrey or a metropolitan area such as Metro Vancouver). The plural form is used when talking about multiple locations (e.g., the FMCs in B.C.)

rates of transmission of French to their children (Chavez & Bouchard-Coulombe, 2011). The decreasing share of the population having French as their mother tongue is particularly significant in a province like B.C. where the language is already very minoritized, as it challenges the status of French as an official language. In order to support the vitality of FMCs, Francophone immigration has been actively encouraged by the Canadian federal government since the early 2000s (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006). It has become a priority among official language policies (Government of Canada, 2018), which emphasize the attraction, welcoming, integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs (Farmer, 2008). As defined by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), French-speaking immigrants are forced or voluntary migrants for whom French is their first official language spoken (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006). In this research the word immigrant will be used to refer to both voluntary and forced migrants. Although these groups enter the country under different circumstances and one person's immigration status might change over time, they are all included as part of this study.

In B.C., Francophone immigration is of primary importance for FMCs, since among the people who have French as their first official language spoken (1.4% of the B.C. population), 28% were born outside of Canada (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2015b). This situation is unique in Canada. Of all the provinces outside Quebec, B.C. has the largest proportion of immigrants in its French-speaking population (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2015a). Moreover, Francophone immigration to B.C. seems to be a recent and quickly expanding phenomenon; the percentage of Francophones born abroad has doubled, from 14% to 29% between 2001 and 2006 (Traisnel, Violette, & Gallant, 2013).

Similarly, in Metro Vancouver, immigrants represent about 25% of the population declaring French as their unique first official language spoken; among them, 57% come from Europe, 23% come from Africa, 11% come from Asia, and 8% come from the rest of the American continent (Statistics Canada, 2014). French-speaking immigrants from a variety of countries may encounter challenges integrating into society, while negotiating their Francophone identity in an Anglophone majority context. Moreover, many of them may have to negotiate multiple minority identities (e.g., being an immigrant, belonging to a racial minority) (Madibbo, 2016).

Because of their minority context and because the Francophone communities are becoming more diverse, in part through immigration, Francophone community sites play an important role in providing Francophones with spaces to meet and socialize, access services, and negotiate their differences (Huot, 2013; Huot & Veronis, 2018). Indeed, community sites are important for the FMCs as they support the use of the French language by the community members, they strengthen cohesion and can enhance advocacy for the communities' interests (Forgues, 2010). Moreover, research led in Ontario has shown the importance of Francophone community sites for the integration of French-speaking immigrants into the Canadian society (Huot & Veronis, 2018). However, the context of the FMCs varies from one location to the other. For example, in B.C., the role of Francophone community sites may be different as the geographic dispersal of the Francophone communities in the province may challenge their visibility, accessibility and the sense of cohesion.

Focusing on French-speaking immigrants' daily experiences in relation to the FMC in Metro Vancouver, this qualitative study applies an occupational science lens and situates these experiences in context.

1.1 Study purpose

This critical ethnography examines French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver, B.C.'s largest urban center; with an emphasis on space and the spatial dimension of occupation. More specifically, I critically examine French-speaking immigrants' experiences of social participation in three community sites: a church, a community association, and a provincial organization. I examine diverse forms of occupational engagement in each site.

This research aims to bring a novel theoretical and empirical contribution to the occupation-based literature on migration. Theoretically, I focus on the spatial nature of occupation as well as the different aspects of space as produced through daily life activities within a migration context; in particular, I take a transactional approach to space, people and their occupations. Empirically, I examine the spatiality of occupation broadly by looking at a variety of occupational engagements, by a diverse population and in different spaces.

This research considers the three following questions:

1. What role do Francophone community sites play in French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver?

I examine the meaning of Francophone community spaces in French-speaking immigrants' daily lives. I explore their lived experiences, how they use these spaces for their occupations but also their perceptions of the Francophone community spaces, what the meanings of these spaces and the occupations taking place in these spaces are among their other daily occupations in Metro Vancouver.

2. How do French-speaking immigrants negotiate their intersectional identities when navigating Anglo-dominant and Franco-minority spaces?

In this research, identity is considered as fluid, dynamic, and implying the interweaving of multiple markers (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). Indeed, I intend to encompass the multiplicity of factors at play in immigrants' experiences, and especially how identity markers such as gender, class, culture, language, and race among others intersect in immigrants' daily lives in an environment of unequal power (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999a). That is, these identity markers have been used to create inequality by different power systems (e.g., sexism, racism, etc.); however, as intersectionality scholars have suggested, identity markers should not be considered singly or as an addition of separate elements, rather following Hill Collins and Bilge (2016), I explore how identity markers interweave as they put the individual at the intersection of several power systems.

This study captures the role of various intersecting identity markers in immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites. Immigrants are contributing to increasing diversity in the FMC, with respect to identity markers such as country of origin or race. I explore how they are welcomed in Francophone community sites, how they perceive themselves and how diversity is experienced in the sites.

3. What are the spatial dynamics shaping occupational engagement in Francophone minority community sites in Metro Vancouver?

In this research, I explore immigrants' experiences in Francophone community spaces but also how immigrants and spaces co-define each other through occupational transactions. Moreover, these transactions might be interrelated to other spatial dynamics. I aim to identify

power dynamics at play within and upon the Francophone minority community spaces and I examine the interaction between these power dynamics and immigrants' occupational engagement. Studying occupation in the specific context of migration and linguistic minority space allows me to provide new insight on the spatiality of occupation.

In this research a distinction is made between community sites and community spaces. Community sites are defined as institutions and associations that are organized and to a certain extent formalized. Community spaces are the many spaces through which the community sites operate and by which they exist. In this sense spaces encompass not only the physical aspects, but also social, mental or virtual aspects, among others. Given the inextricable link between the sites and the spaces they use and that are necessary to their existence, the word "community site" will sometimes be used to encompass both the institution and its community spaces.

1.2 Positionality and reflexive strategies

I am a White female from France. I was 22 when I started this project. I arrived in Canada to start my Masters in September 2018. I learned English before coming, but I have spent most of my life in France, and B.C. is the first predominantly Anglophone place in which I have lived. When entering and exploring the field, I was both an insider as a French-speaking foreigner and an outsider as a researcher. My race could also be a similar or differential identity marker in some spaces.

Indeed, as Canada is not my country of origin, I could relate to some of the participants' migration experiences. Moreover, I belong to the Francophone community in Vancouver, as I live there, French is my first language and I identify as Francophone. The Francophone community is both a work and a personal space for me. In fact, I started attending events in the

community because of this project but my participation went beyond my research as I connected personally to the community in Metro Vancouver, and this participation contributed to my integration. As I went into the community for data collection, I noticed that I was included in the targeted population of some of the activities and some of the events I observed were activities I could have done in my daily life. However, my presence in the community was for research purposes, which created a different positionality. Conversely, some data collection sessions were activities targeting populations with certain identity markers I did not have (e.g., attending events for parents while I do not have children). In these cases, I sometimes had to make my researcher positionality more explicit to justify my presence. It was important for me to reflect on my perception and understanding of these different activities given that I was more or less personally concerned by the topics of the activities observed and engaged in as part of my critical ethnography.

Ideologically, I came into the field with a critical perspective. I was interested in issues of power. Given that French is a colonial language, I had concerns about racial dynamics within the Francophonie and my own privilege as a White French person. Overall, given the diversity of the Francophonie and the diversity of the participants in this study, my positionality within this community implied that I had more closeness with some participants' experiences and more distance to those of some others. That is, my experience as a White European international student differed more or less greatly from those of other Francophone immigrants, coming from other places or being in Canada with a different status. For example, I noticed that the cultural closeness and my familiarity with European participants' experiences facilitated the rapport I developed. For some racialized participants coming from former Francophone colonies, the fact that I was French could also ease the rapport as many had connections to France (e.g., some had

lived there or had family there). However, although I did not experience animosity, I reflected on how our interaction was implicitly impacted by the historical and on-going power relationships between the participants' and my own countries of origin. Besides, identity markers such as gender, age or educational level also played an important role in building rapport with the participants; sometimes more important than race and country of origin.

Throughout the project, I regularly met with Dr. Huot, my thesis supervisor and principal investigator on the larger project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, to debrief about my fieldwork experiences and to discuss my ongoing reflexivity. She also took part in some of the data collection and she is familiar with the local Francophone community. Therefore, we were able to exchange and reflect on our perspectives. Dr. Veronis, thesis committee member and co-investigator on the larger project, also provided feedback regarding the data collection. Of the data included in this thesis, I completed all but one interview (which is why, in this thesis, I will use "I/me") and I led the analysis for the purpose of this thesis but Drs. Huot, Veronis and Mortenson (thesis committee member) helped me through peer debriefing. They informed my theoretical framework and they provided insight to ensure I broadened my perspective and did not narrow my analysis to a single interpretation.

1.3 Thesis organization

The next chapter contains a literature review addressing migration in the context of FMCs, migration as studied in occupational science and the concept of space in occupational science studies focusing on migration. Then, I argue that there is a need for reconceptualizing and further theorizing space in occupational science.

The third chapter of the thesis presents the theoretical framework guiding this research, including the transactional approach to occupation and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space (Lefebvre, 1974).

The fourth chapter presents the methodology. First, I explain the ontological and epistemological location of my research; I then describe the field where data collection was completed. I present the critical ethnographic methodology and methods that were used, I discuss ethical considerations and outline the quality criteria for this research.

The findings are presented in the fifth chapter. I describe the partner sites as I interacted with them and the findings organised in three themes; (1) Speaking French in participants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver, (2) Engaging in occupations in French fluidly across permeable and interrelated spaces, (3) Producing Francophone Spaces for the diverse population of the FMC.

The sixth chapter includes the discussion and conclusion. I discuss the findings in regard to the literature about FMCs and the occupation-based literature. I draw from transactionalism and Lefebvre's spatial theory to address (1) the 'in-between' role of the FMC, (2) the diversity and openness of the FMC, (3) the occupational and spatial fluidity of language. Then, I return to my reflection as a researcher, I discuss the study limitations, future research directions, and present a final conclusion to this research.

Chapter 2: Literature review and context

This chapter reviews the literature about (1) migration in the context of FMCs, (2) migration research in occupational science, and (3) the concept of space in occupational science literature focusing on migration. The last section is argumentative and discusses the need for reconceptualizing and further theorizing space in occupational science.

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 Migration in the context of FMCs

In this section, I review literature about migration in the context of FMCs. First, I describe how migration into FMCs is a relatively new phenomenon. It has become a government policy priority to support the vitality of the FMCs only in the past two decades (Fourot, 2016). Secondly, I describe the tensions between the need for migration into the FMCs to support their demography and the willingness of the communities to welcome new immigrants. There are also incongruencies in recruiting French-speaking immigrants for their French linguistic skills, while encouraging them to settle in Anglo-dominant provinces where English is necessary to function in daily life. Then, the importance of community sites for the receiving FMCs and for the immigrants is explained. More research is needed about immigrants' participation in community sites. Finally, the variation from one FMC to another and the need for more research in B.C. is highlighted. Metro Vancouver is the biggest urban center in B.C. and the French-speaking population of the province mainly lives in Metro Vancouver. Thus, the present thesis aims at filling a gap in the literature regarding the experience of participation of French-speaking adult immigrants in a major Francophone community in B.C.

The body of literature about migration to FMCs is relatively recent given that policies supporting this initiative only began in the early 2000s, but is quickly expanding (Fourot, 2016). Historically, FMCs have emphasized linguistic identification and shared ethnonational and historical origins (sometimes religion) to affirm a strong united identity, avoid assimilation into the Anglophone majority and legitimate their advocacy for political recognition (Traisnel et al., 2013). However, given the demographic decline of the Francophone population, immigration has been adopted as a government policy to support the survival of the FMCs (Chavez & Bouchard-Coulombe, 2011; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006). FMC organizations that had been built as “fortresses protecting the unilingual practice of French” [our translation] (Traisnel et al., 2013, p.11), have had to show more openness to immigration as they have taken various initiatives to encourage and welcome immigrants (Traisnel et al., 2013). Since the adoption of Francophone immigration policies, researchers have studied their implications (for example, producing reports for the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne or the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages) (Farmer & da Silva, 2012); and a new area of study has emerged focusing on how FMCs can be open to more diversity and redefine their identity for more inclusivity (Farmer & da Silva, 2012; Traisnel et al., 2013).

It seems that there are incongruencies between the apparent willingness of FMCs to receive Francophone immigrants and the way diversity stemming from international migration is included (or not) in the communities’ identity definition (Gallant, 2008). Authors have noticed disjunctions between political discourses advocating for the demographic need to welcome immigrants to support the vitality of FMCs and the actual willingness of the communities to include immigrants in practice (Veronis & Huot, 2017). Indeed, the literature describes how immigrants can face exclusion in FMCs (Esses, Huot, Ravanera, Thakur, & Vanderloo, 2016).

For example, Veronis and colleagues found that there was a lack of communication between newer immigrants and established members of the FMC in Ottawa and that could lead to a “parallel integration” (that is, immigrants building connections with other recent immigrants instead of members of the receiving community who were born in Canada or who have been settled for a longer time) (Veronis & Couton, 2017; Veronis & Huot, 2017). Madibbo examined the experience of Francophone African immigrants in FMCs and showed how they constitute a “minority within a minority” and face racism in the FMCs in Alberta and Ontario (Madibbo, 2006, 2016). Moreover, the rate of French-speaking immigrants accessing settlement services in French remains low. In fact, French-speaking immigrants lack information about these services, they have difficulties accessing them due to geographic distance, or they perceive Francophone settlement services as less efficient than services provided by mainstream organizations or the support offered in bigger groups, such as the Chinese or South-Asian communities in B.C. (Mulatris, Jacquet, & André, 2018). Yet, it is important for French services provided to French-speaking immigrants to be offered directly in the FMCs (rather than translated services offered by Anglophone organizations), as it allows direct contact between French-speaking immigrants and their receiving FMC (Esses et al., 2016).

Researchers have also examined French-speaking immigrants’ experiences of integration more broadly in the Canadian society. A recent mixed-method study highlighted that the most important difficulties that French-speaking immigrants face in their integration (specifically in the Canadian labour market) are related to the lack of recognition of their credentials and work experience in their countries of origin as well as the lack of “Canadian experience” (Mulatris et al., 2018). While these difficulties with foreign credential recognition are not unique to French-speaking immigrants in FMCs (Guo, 2009; Hawthorne, 2016); the second most important

difficulty participants mentioned was language barriers (Mulatris et al., 2018). These immigrants are recruited to come to Canada because they speak French; however, speaking English is necessary for them to integrate into society in an Anglo-dominant province given the small size and the diffusion of the FMCs (Mulatris et al., 2018). For example, a study looking at the professional integration of French-speaking immigrants in Manitoba found that speaking French was not a valued asset; on the contrary, employers preferred unilingual Anglophone people or bilingual people to unilingual Francophone candidates (Martin, 2010). Multiple authors have denounced the utilitarian approach to Francophone migration (i.e., the instrumentalization of immigrants for demographic purposes) as well as the “misunderstanding about the contract between the receiving country and the immigrants” [our translation] (Mulatris et al., 2018, p.23), that is, immigrants’ misinformation about Canadian bilingualism in practice and the need to speak English outside of Quebec (Esses et al., 2016; Farmer & da Silva, 2012; Huot, Cao, Kim, Shajari, & Zimonjic, 2018; Huot, Dodson, & Laliberte Rudman, 2014; Martin, 2010; Veronis & Huot, 2017).

In a scoping review on immigrants’ experiences in official language minorities, Esses et al. (2016) identified a lack of research about the processes of immigrants’ integration (e.g., access to labour market, social networks, sense of belonging and civic participation). They highlighted the need for qualitative research focusing on the challenges immigrants face in official language minorities. While the literature about French-speaking immigration in Canadian Anglo-dominant provinces has mostly addressed public policies and discourses, there is a need for research exploring immigrants’ daily experiences (Fourot, 2016; Veronis & Couton, 2017) and more specifically their participation in the FMCs (Veronis & Huot, 2018).

Community spaces have been shown to be important for the vitality of the FMCs. Forgues (2010) argued that (1) one can consider the vitality of a Francophone community by examining the ability and willingness of its members to use French in their daily occupations; and (2) Francophone community spaces support people's occupational engagement in French (Forgues, 2010). These spaces may also enhance cohesion among individuals, allowing them to create, maintain and advocate for the identity of the community (Forgues, 2010). Moreover, the variety of activities offered and the ability of the institutions and organizations to support their members to thrive in their daily lives within and beyond the community are also signs of community vitality (Breton, 2001; Forgues, 2010). Finally, community sites are important for the representation of the community and the advocacy of its interests (Forgues, 2010; Gilbert, Langlois, Landry, & Aunger, 2005; Landry, Gilbert, & Forgues, 2005).

With regard to immigration, studies conducted in Ontario have shown the importance of Francophone community sites for the integration of French-speaking immigrants (Huot, 2013). Indeed, these spaces support occupational participation and the performance of diverse intersectional identities (Huot & Veronis, 2018). Participating in Francophone community sites allows immigrants to acquire or maintain skills that are useful for their integration in the Canadian society. The sites can provide them with information and support the development of a social network and a sense of belonging (Veronis & Huot, 2018). Lacassagne (2010) described an example of how community sites can meet immigrants' needs while enhancing the development of an identity that is inclusive to the diversity of the community. Veronis and Huot (2018) noted that the literature has paid particular attention to community spaces related to education, such as schools; however, they highlighted that immigrants' participation in Francophone community spaces is still understudied (Veronis & Huot, 2017, 2018).

It is important to note that FMCs vary from one location to another in terms of size, proportion and concentration of the Francophone population, as well as supporting institutions and services; because these elements impact French-speaking immigrants' experiences of participation in the FMCs, there is a need to study the diversity of the FMCs in their contexts (Veronis & Huot, 2017). For example, a comparative study explained that, while FMCs in New-Brunswick and Ontario have strong historical roots, only 12.5% of Francophones in B.C. are born in the province, while 57% are born in other provinces and 29% are born outside of Canada (Traisnel et al., 2013). Francophone communities in the West are more cosmopolitan and less 'communitarianist', meaning French-speakers are less attached to their local Francophone community than those in Francophone communities in Ontario and the Acadian communities on the East coast (Thériault, 2008). For Traisnel et al. (2013), the FMCs in B.C. are "polyglot, multicultural and multiethnic" (Traisnel et al., 2013, p.20) like the province's overall population, and the communities define themselves and identify as such. In this context in B.C., the communities tend to be more inclusive because "whoever expresses him/herself in French and wishes, one way or another, to live partially or entirely in French" can be a member of the local community (Traisnel et al., 2013, p.20). The diversity and the recentness of the communities may hinder cohesiveness and members' sense of belonging. However, Francophone schools seem to play an important role in uniting the diverse population of "ayant-droit" (Traisnel et al., 2013). "Ayant-droit" are people eligible to educate their children in the minority official language of their province of residence. In B.C., ayant-droit are people eligible to register their children in Francophone schools, where all teachings occur in French because French is being taught as the first language (as opposed to French immersion schools where French is being taught as a second language). The important role of Francophone schools may explain why

research about French-speaking migration in B.C. has primarily focused on Francophone immigrant children in schools (Jacquet, 2009; Jacquet & Masinda, 2014; Jacquet, Moore, Sabatier, & Masinda, 2008; Laghzaoui, 2011; Levasseur, 2012; Masinda, Jacquet, & Moore, 2014; Mc Andrew et al., 2008). Like in other provinces, there is a need to look at the social participation of adult immigrants beyond the school system (Veronis & Huot, 2018). Finally, it is important to specify that Traisnel et al.'s study (2013) focused on discourses around the communities' identity and their openness to diversity resulting from immigration; the authors did not examine community practices, thus they could not examine whether there is a gap between what is said and what is done regarding these issues. More research is needed to understand whether and how discourses of inclusivity translate into concrete practices.

Besides research focusing on the school environment, comparative studies between B.C. and other provinces and territories have also been completed. Ndoti-Ngbale (2016) examined the legal role of municipalities in recruiting Francophone immigrants in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C. She highlighted the lack of collaboration between the municipal, provincial and federal governments and the lack of inclusion of municipalities' demands and suggestions into federal policies. Fourot (2018) focused on settlement services in Manitoba and B.C. She looked at the effects of the Federal Repatriation of Settlement Services in 2012 on the provision of such services at the local level, from the perspective of Francophone organizations (Fourot, 2018). Mulatris et al. (2018) explored how Francophone settlement services meet the needs of French-speaking immigrants in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C., from the perspective of the immigrants (Mulatris et al., 2018). They used qualitative and quantitative methods to identify the barriers and needs of French-speaking immigrants as well as their use of Francophone settlement services. They noticed disparities between the objectives of the settlement services and the

immigrants' expectations and highlighted a need for more in-depth qualitative studies to analyze these disparities.

2.1.2 Migration through the lens of occupational science

My thesis is situated within the discipline of occupational science, in which there has been growing interest in migration since the early 2000s. The discipline's unique focus on human occupation allows an innovative approach to migration studies. Occupational scientists often focus on the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between immigrants' identities, their new environments within the host countries, and their occupations (Bennett, Scornaiencki, Brzozowski, Denis, & Magalhães, 2012; Connor Schisler & Polatajko, 2002; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). The following literature review is not exhaustive but serves to highlight key findings in occupational science regarding the effect of migration on occupation and how occupation is central to the experience of migration, settlement and integration. The literature about French-speaking migration into FMCs in occupational science is also reviewed.

Research in occupational science has examined the effects of migration on people's occupations. Several studies have explored the occupational injustices experienced by immigrants, including the violation of their fundamental "right to equal opportunities to engage in varied and meaningful occupations in order to meet basic needs and maximize their potential" (Durocher, Gibson, and Rappolt 2014, p.420). George and Stanley (2018) explored the occupational injustices faced by immigrants experiencing human trafficking, as well as its negative impact on health. Burchett and Matheson (2010) focused on asylum seekers in the UK and showed how being prohibited from working is a "legislatively imposed occupational injustice" (Burchett & Matheson, 2010, p.85). Occupational scientists have also explored concepts related to occupational injustices such as occupational deprivation and occupational

imbalance. These concepts seem to be particularly recurrent in the occupational science literature exploring the experience of forced migrants in particular (Huot, Kelly, & Park, 2016).

Occupational deprivation can be defined as “a state of preclusion from engagement in occupations of necessity and/or meaning due to factors that stand outside the immediate control of the individual” (Whiteford 2000, p.201). Occupational imbalance is a situation in which an individual’s participation in one type of activity occurs at the expense of other types of occupations (Durocher et al., 2014). Notably, occupational scientists have denounced the occupational deprivation and imbalance asylum seekers experience in detention centres in countries like Australia or Denmark (Crawford, Turpin, Nayar, Steel, & Durand, 2016; Morville & Erlandsson, 2013). That is, these detention centers are restrictive structures for forced migrants waiting for their visa-status determination, where little occupational opportunities are available, which has negative impacts on asylum seekers’ health and well-being.

Occupational injustices, however, are also faced by voluntary migrants and forced migrants outside of detention centres. Rivas-Quarneti, Movilla-Fernández, and Magalhães (2018) conducted a participatory health research study in Spain and found that female Latin American immigrants had limited occupational opportunities in their receiving country. Their lack of resources pushed them to low skilled survival jobs where they experienced exploitation (Rivas-Quarneti et al., 2018). Bailliard (2013) conducted ethnographic research among Latino immigrants in the United States (US) and found that the atmosphere of fear created by the government policies and anti-immigrant sentiment led to occupational deprivation and imbalance (Bailliard, 2013). The immigrants would also change the way they performed occupations and the meaning of these occupations would be “underscored by the malaise of persecution and oppression” (Bailliard 2013, p.352). Indeed, the occupation-based literature has shown that, in

the migration process, immigrants often adapt and modify the way they engage in occupations or stop performing certain occupations and replace them with other ones (Huot et al., 2016). The occupational injustices and the changes in occupation immigrants experience can further affect their health and well-being (Bennett et al., 2012; Gupta, 2013; Huot et al., 2016; Rivas-Quarneti et al., 2018).

The literature review by Huot et al. (2016) linked the different sub-concepts of occupational injustice into a process constituted by “occupational deprivation, occupational imbalance, occupational adaptation, occupational change, efforts to maintain and re-establish identity and outlook for the future” (p.186). They focused specifically on the occupation-based literature studying forced migration and they described how occupational deprivation can lead to occupational imbalance (e.g., working many hours with low wages and being unable to engage in other meaningful occupations). Such a state of occupational imbalance can further create a need for occupational adaptation and change, which can impact immigrants’ identity as well as their outlook for the future (Huot et al., 2016). The literature about immigrants’ occupational engagement tends to focus on the negative effects of migration on occupation (Bennett et al., 2012).

Occupational scientists have also examined how occupation can contribute to the transitions experienced by immigrants in their receiving country. One way occupational science can contribute to migration studies is by acknowledging and exploring the central role of occupation in the settlement and integration processes (Nayar & Hocking, 2006; Nayar & Sterling, 2013). For example, Lintner and Elsen (2018) showed how participating in work was helpful for asylum seekers in Italy. Beyond the economic activity, working improved immigrants’ well-being. It allowed them to find meaning and purpose as well as to develop a

network in their receiving country (Lintner & Elsen, 2018). Exploring the experience of Indian immigrants in New Zealand, Nayar, Hocking, and Giddings (2012) developed the grounded theory of “navigating cultural spaces” that described the interweaving of home and host cultures occurring through immigrants’ occupations. They showed how immigrants used occupations to maintain cultural roots while integrating into their host society often trying to work “with the best of both worlds” and blending the two cultures (Nayar et al. 2012, p.72).

Moreover, while policies and research tend to focus on employment and immigrants’ productivity in their host country (Bennett et al., 2012; Huot, 2013), occupational scientists recognize that immigrants can face barriers to a variety of occupations (i.e., beyond economic productivity) and that the whole range of occupations is involved in the integration process (Huot, Laliberte Rudman, Dodson, & Magalhães, 2013; Nayar & Hocking, 2013). Indeed, occupations such as leisure activities can contribute to the well-being of immigrants going through occupational disruption (Suto, 2013). Stephenson et al. (2013) examined traditional weaving among Karen refugee women from Burma. This occupation appeared to be meaningful and empowering for the women. Engaging in this occupation allowed them to maintain ties with their cultural roots and their Karen network, which further helped them handle the stress in their receiving country (Stephenson et al., 2013). Raanaas, Aase, and Huot (2018) explored refugees’ participation in an amateur choir in Norway. They found that this occupation was important for the occupational balance of the participants. It also allowed them to meet Norwegian people, maintain and value their previous skills and acquire new ones (e.g., learning the Norwegian language) (Raanaas et al., 2018).

The experience of Francophone immigrants in FMCs has been studied in occupational science by Huot and her colleagues (Huot, 2013; Huot et al., 2018; Huot & Laliberte Rudman,

2010; Huot & Veronis, 2018). For example, Huot et al. (2014) explored how Francophone immigrants navigate different spaces and negotiate their intersectional identities depending on the context in which they perform occupations (Huot et al., 2014). Huot and Laliberte Rudman (2010) also examined the interaction between occupation, identity and place in the context of migration, applying Goffman's theories about the performative aspects of identity and Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). While the present study is located in the same discipline and builds on Huot's work; it differs from previous studies in both the context of the study and the theoretical lens that is applied. Indeed, these studies were completed in Ontario, where the context of the Francophonie is quite different as the situation of the FMCs varies from one province to the other (Fourot, 2018; Traisnel et al., 2013). Moreover, the present research particularly focuses on space and the spatial aspect of occupation in a migration context.

2.1.3 Space in the context of migration in occupational science

The study of immigrants' occupations can bring new insights on the spatiality of occupation. Indeed, because migration implies a change of space, the spatial aspect of occupation can be brought into light and emphasized by the migration context (Nayar & Hocking, 2013). According to Johansson et al. (2013, p.108-109): "The relevance of deepening the conceptual knowledge of migration within occupational science is to understand how people, in global contexts, relate and connect to different places around the world through daily occupations." Moreover, the theory of transactionalism has been proposed in the discipline in order to move beyond a dualistic perspective on people and their environment, but rather consider the inextricable link and continuity between both. That is, "one is not without the other" (Cutchin 2004, p.304) as they co-constitute each other (Cutchin & Dickie, 2012) and occupation can be

conceptualized as a “transactional experience” between people and their environments (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006). The transactional approach to occupation will be explained in more detail in chapter three. The exploration of the transactional relation between people and their environment, embodied through occupations in the context of migration, allows for the investigation of changes, potential tensions and adaptations happening in this transaction. It can enable understanding of aspects of the person-place transaction yet unexplored (Nayar & Hocking, 2013).

It appears that the conceptualization of space is variable among occupational scientists studying migration. This section reviews these different conceptualisations of space in occupational science studies focusing on migration. For example, Gupta and Sullivan (2013) investigated the experience of immigrant women in the US and conceptualized space “geographically or emotionally” (Gupta & Sullivan, 2013, p.26). They found that the spatiality of immigrants’ occupational engagement was altered in their host country and this impacted not only the performance of occupation but also the socio-emotional engagement and outcomes; for example, the participants reported a lack of social connectedness and support (Gupta & Sullivan, 2013). In the theory of “navigating cultural spaces” mentioned earlier, Nayar et al. (2012) also considered the geographical aspect of space but they emphasised the cultural connotation of different spaces. They highlighted the spatial aspect of the negotiation and interweaving of the home and host cultures in immigrants’ occupations depending on the context (Nayar et al., 2012). Also, two occupational scientists have used Turner’s concept of liminal space in different ways. Peralta-Catipon (2009) used spatial and temporal liminality in her research about Filipina immigrants’ weekly gathering at Statue Square in Hong Kong to describe the transformative potential of immigrants’ occupational engagement of this space (Peralta-Catipon, 2009).

Mondaca and Josephsson (2013) examined the concept of liminal space in the daily life of Chilean survivors of human rights violations living in Sweden. However, they addressed how some occupations enabled the production of a “possibility space” (Mondaca and Josephsson 2013, p.83), described as a mental space for immigrants to revisit and give meaning to their memories. This space allowed them to connect but also put distance with their previous experiences so that they could live with those memories without being plagued by them. These two last studies considered space as a dynamic concept, produced by people’s occupations.

There has been a call in occupational science to look at space “as dynamically created through the doing of occupations, rather than as a static geographical location” (Johansson et al. 2013, p.113). Moreover, there is a need for the discipline to consider different aspects of space (e.g., physical, social, mental) and their interconnectedness.

2.2 The need for reconceptualizing space in occupational science

Given the multiple conceptualisations of space in occupational science that seem to each focus on particular aspects of space, I argue that there is a need to reconceptualise space in occupational science in a more comprehensive and dynamic way. The discipline might also benefit from moving away from the space-place dichotomy.

There has been a general tendency in many disciplines to distinguish space and place, based on a Cartesian dualism between the body – the physical or “tangible” world that is supposed to be objective – and the mind – the “mental” world, based on experience that is supposed to be subjective (Merrifield, 1993). Space tends to be conceptualized as the “material” world that can be “neutrally” described in geometric terms (e.g., distance, size, volume) or geographical terms (e.g., coordinates, boundaries and territories) (Cresswell, 2014; Eyles, 1985;

Gieryn, 2000; Najafi, 2011; Short, 1998). Space is considered universal and absolute; in opposition to place that is unique (Entrikin, 1991). Place is described as being based on the material world (space), but linked to people's experiences in space and the particular meanings they ascribe to a location (Cresswell, 2014; Entrikin, 1991; Eyles, 1985; Gieryn, 2000; Najafi, 2011; Short, 1998).

This conceptualization of space and place has been useful in occupational science for enabling an understanding of occupation as a key factor in the "transformation" of space into place (Johansson et al., 2013; Rowles, 2008; Seamon, 2002; Zemke, 2004). For example, this dichotomy is present in the concept of place-making: "Place making is defined as the process in which humans transform physical spaces into socially relevant and meaningful places" (Johansson et al. 2013, p.114). Time and space have been conceptualized as external aspects as opposed to experiential and subjective aspects; and the physical and locational entity "space" becomes the meaningful entity "place" based on the occupation performed "there" (Zemke, 2004). This space-place dichotomy assumes neutrality and ascribes an absolute character to the concept of space. There are risks in theorising space as a blank slate onto which individuals or groups can ascribe meaning depending on their occupations and their experiences in that space.

There is a need in occupational science to both (1) consider different aspects of space (i.e., physical, social, mental) and their interconnectedness, and (2) adopt a dynamic conceptualization of space and move away from the metaphor of space as a 'container'. Firstly, there is a need for occupational science to adopt a comprehensive conceptualisation of space that moves beyond the theoretical segmentation of space. For example, occupational scientists should move away from the space-place dichotomy. From a constructivist and critical perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 2003), there is no "neutral" description of space, as knowledge is value-

mediated and rooted in culture. A geometrical or geographical understanding of a location (supposedly “space”) should not be considered more objective than an understanding based on human experience, occupation and personal meaning (supposedly “place”). Instead of supporting the idea of a neutral, pre-existing space, independent from social practices, it is suggested that “knowledge of space implies the critique of space” [our translation] (Lefebvre 1974, p.465). Moreover, the space-place dichotomy can lead to valuing one concept over the other. On one hand, considering some conceptualizations of space as neutral can lead to a lack of questioning and cause an overreliance on them that gives them power (Lefebvre, 1974). On the other hand, occupational scientists’ interest in the concept of place as defined through this dichotomy carries the risk of centering individual subjectivity (Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom, & Schmid, 2008) and overvaluing people’s understandings, meanings and experiences to define a certain place. Putting emphasis on individuals’ subjective experiences may impede a disciplinary understanding that can move away from the individualistic approach that has been criticized (Dickie et al., 2006). In this thesis, I use the term space as conceptualized by Lefebvre, that is, space as relational and dynamic. It includes material things, geographical location as well as social relations (i.e., humans’ relations with one another and with material things). Space does not exist in itself but is instead produced. Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of space will be explained in more detail in chapter three.

A transactional approach to occupation enables researchers to move away from the internal/external, subject/object, material/ideal dualism (Cutchin, 2004) and rather explore how space and place “melt into each other” (Merrifield 1993, p.520) and are both embodied in occupations. In fact, physical, social, institutional and cultural aspects of space should not be considered in isolation (O’Brien, Dyck, Caron, & Mortenson, 2002); rather occupational

scientists should bridge these different conceptualisations of space. Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space is one that aims at bridging mental, physical and social space, instead of theoretically distinguishing them (Lefebvre, 1974; Merrifield, 1993). Situated in occupational science's transactional approach on occupation (Cutchin & Dickie, 2013) and drawing from Lefebvre's concept of "production of space" (Lefebvre, 1974), the present study explores the spatial nature of occupation as well as the different aspects of space as interconnected and dynamically produced through daily life activities.

Secondly, space should not be considered as an absolute, static, pre-existing container for people and their occupations (Dickie et al., 2006; Johansson et al., 2013). Occupational scientists have been criticized for considering the environment as a distinct element impacting occupation (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). For example, models such as the Person-Environment-Occupation model or the Model of Human Occupation, used in occupational therapy and occupational science, take into account the environment in the performance of occupation but they tend to consider it as an external factor (Cutchin, 2004; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). Occupational scientists might benefit from recognizing space as inherent to occupation (i.e., not an exterior element to people and their occupation), to be congruent with the transactional perspective suggested in the discipline (Cutchin, 2004; Cutchin & Dickie, 2013; Dickie et al., 2006). Moreover, conceptualising occupation as the means for a neutral space to become a meaningful place is incongruent with the transactional approach to occupation; particularly because space, as defined by the space-place dichotomy, is an absolute and pre-existing container that is either empty or indifferent to its content. If space is a blank slate waiting to be filled by meaning developed through people's experiences and occupation, then it cannot be

thought as “a process that involves continual transactions between space and [people] that transforms both” (Johansson et al., 2013, p. 111).

In the last three decades, other social sciences such as human geography have pushed the conceptualization of space from an “absolute” positivist understanding of space, to a relative and relational understanding of space; a conceptualization of space as constructed and constantly produced (Hubbard, Bartley, Fuller, & Kitchin, 2002). Occupational science could benefit from concepts developed in disciplines such as sociology or geography, as they point to the constructed nature of physical and social spaces (O’Brien et al., 2002). Moreover, occupational science could also contribute to a dynamic conceptualisation of space by acknowledging and exploring how space is produced through occupation (Delaisse, Huot & Veronis, under review). This thesis draws from Lefebvre’s theory of the production of space to highlight both the spatial nature of occupation and the role of occupation in space production.

2.3 Summary

This literature review highlighted the need for more qualitative research exploring adult French-speaking immigrants’ experience of integration in Canadian FMCs. More specifically, French-speaking immigrants’ participation in Francophone community sites is understudied. Finally, there is a need for more research looking at the specific context of different FMCs. This thesis aims at contributing to the literature about adults French-speaking immigrants’ experiences in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver, B.C.

This thesis is situated within the discipline of occupational science. This disciplinary lens is relevant to studying immigrants’ experiences of integration as this process occurs primarily through occupation. While occupation-based research has explored French-speaking immigrants’

occupational engagement in Francophone community sites in Ontario, the present thesis differs in its focus on B.C.'s context, and by the theoretical focus on space and the spatiality of occupation.

This literature also explored how the concept of space has been explored by occupational scientists in the context of migration. Indeed, the migration context tends to emphasize the spatiality of occupation. There have been different conceptualizations of space among occupational scientists studying migration. Authors have drawn from transactionalism and other theories such as Turner's concept of liminal space.

Finally, in an argumentative section, I discussed the need for occupational scientists to move away from the space-place dichotomy and adopt a comprehensive conceptualization of space that is congruent with the transactional approach suggested in the discipline. That is, occupational science would benefit from a dynamic conceptualization of space that bridges different theorizations of space and emphasizes the central role of occupation in the production of space. To this end, the present thesis takes a transactional approach to occupation and draws from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

In this section, I introduce the transactional approach to occupation as well as Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. The former is a theoretical approach that has been suggested in occupational science, which I adhere to in this thesis. The latter is a theory that has been used in many disciplines but not yet in occupational science, to my knowledge. Lefebvre's theory of the production of space was key to the theoretical framing and analysis of the study data and my conclusions regarding the spatiality of occupation in a migration context.

3.1 Transactional approach to occupation

This research is informed by the transactional approach that has been developed and adopted by a number of scholars in occupational science for more than a decade. Indeed, in the early 2000s, Cutchin, Dickie and Humphry introduced the theory of transactionalim in occupational science (Cutchin & Dickie, 2013). They were critical of both individualism in occupational science and the dualistic approach the discipline was taking towards the environment that tended to be considered as a distinct element surrounding the person's doing.

In 2004, Cutchin used Dewey's work to develop the concept of place-integration in contrast to "adaptation-to-environment" that was commonly used in occupational therapy and occupational science. Dewey's philosophy focuses on experience, that is, "what people '...do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine'" (Dewey as cited in (Cutchin, 2004)). Cutchin particularly used Dewey's theory of continuity, which states that experiences are relational; they are not at the level of isolated entities (the person and the environment) but rather at the level of their interaction, where they interpenetrate each other. Cutchin also used Dewey's theory of contingency that is about the ever-changing and dynamic characteristic of the world,

which implies the non-static quality of experiences. Based on these two theories, Cutchin criticized the theory of adaptation-to environment, firstly because in this theory the environment is considered as a container, distinct from the person and the occupations; secondly because this theory leads to focus on the internalized and subjective perspective of individuals on their occupations; lastly because the theory of adaptation-to-environment tends to portray the interaction between the person and the environment in a mechanized way (Cutchin, 2004). Instead, Cutchin proposed the concept of place-integration that “assumes the continuity of person and place—that one is not without the other” (Cutchin, 2004, p. 309). He argued that occupations should be considered as experiences of “interconnectedness of a person and her or his context where each penetrates into and becomes a part of the other” (Cutchin, 2004, p.304), as human doing can never be decontextualized. In the concept of place-integration, actions can be understood as a response to the instability of a situation as they are not initiated solely by the independent motivation of the individual, but a result of the person-place transaction; although, the situation is ever-changing and never definitive. Furthermore, the changes implied by actions have effects on the entire person-place whole.

In 2006, Dickie, Cutchin and Humphry further used Dewey’s work to criticize and offer an alternative to the person-environment dualism and the focus on the individual in occupational science. They noticed how the environment had been considered as a distinct container of occupation in the discipline; moreover, they paid particular attention to individualism in occupational science. They attributed it to the discipline’s link to occupational therapy and the medical world that tends to focus on the treatment of singular persons; and occupational science’s roots in the North-American culture in which individual self-determination is a core moral value. Thus, at its beginning, the discipline had been exploring occupation as taking place

at the intersection of the individual and the context but occupation was still mostly determined by the person, and the individual was the common unit of focus. Dickie et al. (2006) criticized this individualistic approach, as occupation is rarely individual in nature. They considered that “occupation was a process located not at the level of the individual but rather at the level of the situation of which the individual is an integral part” (Dickie et al., 2006, p. 91). They highlighted the inextricable person-place link and they conceptualized occupation as a “transactional experience” between people and their environment (Dickie et al., 2006), drawing from Dewey and Bentley’s concept of transaction (Dewey & Bentley, 1946). As opposed to self-action that refers to an action initiated by an autonomous agent; and in contrast to inter-action where distinct entities come together on the initiative of one or the other or both, while remaining separate entities; trans-action is “based on a holism, a continuity of persons and world” (Dickie et al., 2006, p.88). In this view, occupation is “an important mode through which human beings, as organisms-in-environment-as-a-whole, function in their complex totality” (Dickie et al., 2006 p.91). Thus, transactionalism has offered the possibility for occupational science to move beyond a decontextualized and individualized perspective on occupation (Cutchin & Dickie, 2013), to explore people’s occupations as situated.

In this study, I look at immigrants’ engagement in occupation as a transactional experience with their environments. That is, occupations are considered as the embodiment of how immigrants and spaces co-constitute each other. Transactionalism allows me to examine the situated nature of people’s occupations and how immigrants negotiate their intersectional identities in different spaces. Immigrants’ experiences are considered in their contexts as exhaustively as possible.

The transactional approach to occupation is suitable to a critical approach as it recognizes the inherent contextual nature of occupation and how occupations are in and of a context; however it has been criticized for overlooking the power relations at the core of this context (Laliberte Rudman, 2013; Laliberte Rudman & Huot, 2013). That is, the transactional approach may be used to focus on harmonious transaction in a context that seems to be equal for all without questioning how transactions are actually in and of a context of unequal power and possibilities. Therefore, in this critical ethnography, Lefebvre's theory is useful for taking these power dynamics into account.

Lefebvre's theory about space is congruent with a transactional approach to occupation. Indeed, Lefebvre criticized theories that considered space as an absolute "neutral" container for human activity, indifferent to its content; as well as theorists studying space without taking into account their own existence in space. Moreover, he pointed to how these conceptualizations of space could simply be a mistake or, more likely, the results of ideologies meant to present space as unquestionable and as the taken-for-granted morphology of society (Lefebvre, 1974).

3.2 Lefebvre's triadic approach to space

This thesis draws from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space and the spatial triad he developed. In this section, I first briefly explain the context in which Lefebvre developed this theory. Then, his approach to space is presented as well as his spatial triad. The spatial theory is aligned with my particular interest in space and the spatial aspects of occupation; furthermore, I highlight how this theory is congruent with my study's occupational lens.

3.2.1 Lefebvre's theory of the production of space in context

Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was a French sociologist, philosopher, political scientist and geographer. Influenced by Marx and Hegel, he is known for his work on everyday life in modern capitalist society (*Critique de la vie quotidienne*, published in French in three volumes in 1947, 1961 and 1981, respectively; translated in English, in a combined edition in 1991) and space (*La production de l'espace*, published in French in 1974, and in English in 1991) (Shields, 1998). In this thesis, I draw on *La production de l'espace* (Lefebvre, 1974), which reflects Lefebvre's interest in issues of urban development at the time, following the urbanization phenomenon happening in Europe, as well as the reproduction of class inequalities and the impact of capitalist dynamics on space (Shields, 1998). Lefebvre developed his thinking and theories based on the issues he was seeing in the capitalist society he was living in. Since his book's publication and translation into English, Lefebvre's ideas have been very influential and used in a variety of disciplines, including geography, urban studies, and education studies (Michalovich, 2019; Middleton, 2013; Pierce & Martin, 2015). In this section, I present my reading of Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, in light of my disciplinary location in occupational science. For example, Lefebvre's terminology differs from that adopted by occupational scientists; Lefebvre uses terms such as "daily everyday life" and "lived experience" when occupational scientists have developed a more specific vocabulary according to their needs. However, by bridging these notions, I illuminate how Lefebvre's work and my research in occupational science inform one another.

3.2.2 Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space

For Lefebvre, space in itself does not exist; rather it is produced and "fundamentally bound up with social reality" (Goonewardena et al. 2008, p.28). In his conceptualisation, space is

both a thing (a product) and a process (a production), in which occupation plays an essential role (Lefebvre, 1974; Merrifield, 1993).

In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991) noted that space has been studied by different disciplines, each of which conceptualizes space very differently. Given the absence of terminology for the space-place dichotomy in the French language, Lefebvre does not discuss it in those terms. However, he mentions incoherencies between various theorisations of space, more specifically, between theorisations of mental space (i.e., abstract conceptualization of space such as in geometry), physical space (i.e., relating to nature and natural elements in space) and social space (i.e., space of everyday life and social interactions). He critiques the way theorists shift from one conceptualisation of space to another without attending to how these different types of space relate to one another (Lefebvre, 1991).

Lefebvre was concerned with the theoretical fragmentation of space. For him, the divisions in, and segmentation of the study of space was serving those in power (i.e., intellectual, economic and political elites) (Lefebvre, 1991). For example, if mental, physical and social spaces are thought as distinct and having little connection then mental space is not questioned by theorists of the social space as it would not be considered their domain. Lefebvre also noticed that mental space tends to be more valued and the dominant conceptualisation of space (e.g., in architecture and urban planning). According to him, this dominance is problematic because of its repercussions for how everyday life is lived in space. For example, one can imagine how architectural features of a space would shape its accessibility. More generally, space often reflects social hierarchy in the way it is “ordered”. That is, under the guise of rationality, mental space’s dominance can actually serve the elite to exclude and keep other groups at a distance. If the social and constructed nature of space is overlooked, the power and implications of the

mental space, presented as free of ideologies, might not be questioned (Lefebvre, 1991), with space being perceived as a container for everyday life, on which everyday life has little impact (Watkins, 2005).

An occupational reading of Lefebvre's work brings to light the need for a comprehensive conceptualisation of space in which everyday life occupations are neither overlooked (i.e., space as an empty container) nor considered as content without influence on space. For Lefebvre, the distinct and multiple notions of space do not provide an adequate and holistic understanding of it. Rather, he contends that mental, physical and social space "involves, underpins, presuppose" one another (Lefebvre 1991, p.14). Space should not be considered as an abstract notion because it is "embodied in material processes - namely, real human activities" (Merrifield 1993, p.520). As such, theorisation of space needs to capture lived experience (i.e., occupation in space) or it runs the risk of being no more than an ideological model (Lefebvre, 1991; Watkins, 2005).

Lefebvre's definition of space encompasses and synthesizes mental, physical and social space. It subsumes material things, geographical location and social relations that can be embodied through engagement in occupations. Space is neither passive nor empty (Lefebvre, 1974) because it "is produced, it is an object, a thing, whilst simultaneously a process, a means, a tool through which and in which, social relations, and therefore change, can occur" (Zieleniec 2008, p.13). The expression "the production of space" suggests this dialectical relation: space as product (space as produced) and space as producer (the production of space as "what space produces") (Adam, 2019; Lefebvre, 1974).

Lefebvre further associates his conceptualization of space with time, arguing that neither time nor space are purely material or intellectual concepts; rather, they are "integral aspects of social practice" (Goonewardena et al. 2008, p.29). He notes that each society produces its own,

particular space at any given time and that, “space is nothing but the inscription of time in the world” (Zieleniec 2008, p.2). A Lefebvrian approach to space is critical and tends to have an ontological positioning of ‘historical realism’ (Lincoln & Guba, 2003) insofar as space is considered to exist not universally but in its historical and societal context (Goonewardena et al., 2008). Instead of a container for a society and its occupations, “Space is social morphology: it is to lived experience what form itself is to the living organism, and just as intimately bound up with function and structure” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.94).

Finally, it is important to note that *The Production of Space* focuses on the ontology of space. Theorizing space, space planning and rationalizing, spatial practices and lived experiences of space could be considered as ways of knowing about space (epistemology). However, Lefebvre considers them ontologically because these activities *produce* space (Pierce & Martin, 2015). Thus, in a Lefebvrian perspective adopting a relational conceptualization of space, power dynamics not only influence space, they *are* space because they are part of the relations constituting space.

Similarly, occupations do not happen in a container that is indifferent to their presence and upon which they have little impact; occupations are actually producing space and are therefore ontologically part of space. Rather than conceptualizing occupation as the means of transforming a supposedly neutral space into a meaningful place, occupation can be theorized as a key factor in the production of space that is constantly ongoing. Space being both a process and a thing, occupations happen in space while simultaneously producing it. When entering a space, layers of space production have already occurred, thus shaping occupational possibilities in that space. The performance of occupation contributes to the ongoing (re)production of space and adds a layer of space production. Lefebvre’s spatial theory recognizes the importance of

everyday life and practices in the production of space and “moves [space] from the realm of the mental to become the foundation of our engagement with the world” (Watkins 2005, p.211).

For example, for the purpose of this study, layers of space production are understood as having occurred in the Francophone community prior to immigrants’ arrival. The spaces have been shaped for and by the performance of certain occupations with power dynamics at play in this process. The spaces are constantly evolving and being reorganized by the social relations happening within them, as well as between the FMC and the broader Canadian society. Similarly, when immigrants enter the Francophone community spaces, they are understood as contributing to the shaping and production of space through their occupational engagement in these spaces.

3.2.3 Lefebvre’s spatial triad

Lefebvre suggested “that space is fundamental to our lived experience of the world, and that every experience is comprised of three interrelated aspects of space” (Watkins 2005, p.209): (1) conceived space or representation of space, (2) perceived space or spatial practices, (3) lived space or space of representation (Lefebvre, 1991). In this section, I provide an occupational interpretation of this “spatial triad”.

3.2.3.1 Conceived space or the representation of space

The conceived space or representation of space refers to space as organised by dominant forces and social elites. This component is linked to social hierarchy, power dynamics and the “order” they impose (Lefebvre, 1991). It encompasses ideologies that constitute and organise space in a top-down regulatory manner (Michalovich, 2019). Lefebvre noticed that these ideologies are not projected in a neutral space, rather “they are in space, and of it” (Lefebvre,

1991, p.210), and they dictate where certain occupations should be performed (Lefebvre, 1991). The conceived space includes scientific and technocratic space (Lefebvre, 1991; Merrifield, 1993; Shields, 1998) in which elites such as architects or urban planners (Lefebvre, 1991) shape space and its use through occupation. This component of the production of space highlights the intentionality and the partiality of space; it is the embodiment of “what the space is meant for” occupationally from those exercising power over space.

The conceived space is the dominant space and it can be made visible through the signs and codes of those in power (Lefebvre, 1991). It emerges in discourses but also descriptions or theorisations of space (Goonewardena et al., 2008). Moreover, maps and plans that the elite produces and presents as objective are materialisations of this space (Goonewardena et al., 2008; Shields, 1998). Thus, the study of discourses and documents can inform us about the ideologies in action in the conceived space; what occupations, according to the elite, should be done in certain spaces and how.

3.2.3.2 Perceived space or spatial practices

The perceived space or spatial practices refer to the rapport between the members of a society and its space (Lefebvre, 1991); that is, when people make sense of space in a bottom-up manner (Michalovich, 2019). It encompasses people’s untold and internalized understanding of space that, in turn, shapes everyday life (Merrifield, 1993; Zieleniec, 2008). Spatial practices can be considered as knowledge about the different roles expected to be performed in different spaces, associating certain spaces to certain occupations (Lefebvre, 1991), as well as knowledge about how to navigate space in a way people consider satisfying (e.g., knowing shortcuts to take during traffic jams; Zieleniec 2008).

Spatial practices can be learned and become intuitive, enabling “individuals to participate effectively in a spatial event” (Watkins 2005, p.213). Indeed, spatial practices imply performance and competence, ensuring cohesion among those sharing similar space understandings because spatial practices are socially specific (Lefebvre, 1991; Merrifield, 1993; Zieleniec, 2008). For example, in the case of migration, one’s knowledge about how to perform occupation depending on the space or one’s space understanding (perceived space) that is relevant in the country of origin, may not be applicable in the receiving country. Thus, if spatial practices allow cohesion among people of the same society, they may also exclude those with different understandings.

3.2.3.3 Lived space or the space of representation

The lived space is the space of actual human interactions and practices (Goonewardena et al., 2008; Michalovich, 2019). It is “the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.17). The space of representation is the component in the production of space that relates to occupation in the most explicit way. Lefebvre had a special interest in everyday life and lived experience, and it is conceptualized as an important element of the production of space (Goonewardena et al., 2008; Watkins, 2005; Zieleniec, 2008).

Lived space is “the dominated - and hence passively experienced - space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.38), meaning that the lived space is dominated by the conceived space and shaped by the perceived space; but it is also the space in which power dynamics can be challenged (Watkins, 2005). Occupations are shaped by societal forces that are embedded in space (what has been planned in the conceived space) and by the boundaries we apply to ourselves, depending on the limitations we identify in space (the perceived space). These elements bring structure to our occupations; sometimes necessary, sometimes repressive. By trying to rationalize and order our occupations, hegemonic conceived

space can usurp the lived space (Merrifield, 1993). However, the actual performance of occupation transcends conceived and perceived space; it allows “the deviations, diversity and individuality that are a fundamental aspect of any social encounter” (Watkins, 2005, p.213). Moreover, by challenging conceived and perceived space, lived space has the power to impact them on a shorter or longer term.

3.2.3.4 Interaction between conceived, perceived and lived space

It is essential to consider the reciprocal interactions between each component of the spatial triad (i.e., conceived, perceived and lived space) in the production process. The spatial triad is understood as constantly dynamic rather than linear (Merrifield, 1993, 2006). Watkins’ (2005) application of the spatial triad to theatre helps explain the interaction but also the interdependence of the three components. Watkins (2005) compares the conceived space to the written text of the playwright or the stage manager’s book; it is the stage as imagined by the director. The perceived space can be considered as the social conventions in theatre, such as knowing one’s lines and being at the right place on stage at the right time. The lived space is the actual performance. While the framework provided by the text of the play, the staging and the theatre conventions (the conceived and perceived space) are both necessary and constraining for actors; they also need to be transcended during the performance in order for the show to be persuasive (Watkins, 2005).

The conceived space tends to be dominant and impacts both perceived and lived space but it also gets its power from these because the ideologies producing space and “organising” it have power only if people’s understanding of space aligns with them and if they are put into practice during engagement in occupation. With a focus on space in capitalist societies, Lefebvre aimed to show the tension between conceived space and the lived space; the more space is

organised by the conceived space, the more it tends to be assigned to specific functions and the less the lived space has room for creativity and “appropriation” of the space (Lefebvre, 1991).

Spatial practices are informed by what has been planned in the representation of space but they can also challenge conceived space. Also, the perceived space informs the actual performance of occupation in the lived space (i.e., people act in space depending on the knowledge and understanding they have of space). However, the performance of occupation can deviate from the original perceived space, allowing a new understanding of space and thus generating new spatial practices.

The space of representation has a relationship of interdependence with the power of the representation of space and the spatial practices. While the structure provided by the conceived and perceived space can be necessary, for example in occupations that are performed in groups; this implies submission to the domination of the conceived space and the unquestioning acceptance of spatial practices. However, despite the constraints imposed, occupations can nonetheless allow creativity and thus challenge the representation of space and the spatial practices. For example, the contestation of symbols in space intended by the conceived space, can challenge its power, directly by the lived space. But the lived space can also disrupt the conceived space through the perceived space. That is, if an occupation is performed in a new way (in the lived space) and creates a new norm of how that occupation has to be performed (in the perceived space); this, in turn, can challenge the conceived space by forcing it to work around a new understanding of space.

Using the workplace as an example, Lefebvre explained how an office is not just an empty space filled by the occupation of employment. The lived space of the workplace exists through the organization, division and governance of work that is specific to a society. The space

becomes a work space because of how people use this space (lived space), how it is understood (perceived practices) and organized (conceived space). The three elements are all interdependent, changes in one of them implies concomitant adjustment of the others.

Lefebvre's theory of the production of space is congruent with a focus on occupation; as his conceptualisation of the space of representation and its interactions with the other components of the production of space supports the claim that space is embodied in occupation. That is, not only are occupations an important component of the production of space (the lived space) but they are also the most observable ones. Discourses or maps can tell us about the power dynamics that are ontologically part of space; but, power dynamics, social relations, ideologies have to be embodied through occupations, or they lose their power and cease to exist. Given the interdependence of the conceived and perceived space with the lived space, occupations can be considered what make the production of space visible.

Yet that does not diminish the need to consider other components of the production of space. While research in occupational science often focuses on what happens in the lived space, Lefebvre urged those studying lived space not to overlook conceived and perceived space (Lefebvre, 1991), but rather to consider the triad as a whole. Considering the conceived and perceived space ensures researchers can move away from the conceptualisation of a 'container indifferent to its content'. Space is simultaneously the field of occupation and the basis of occupation because it "appears as a realm of objectivity, yet it exists in a social sense only for activity", that is for and by virtue of occupation (Lefebvre 1991, p.191). Therefore, in this research, I focus particularly on occupation but I also pay attention to each of the three different components of the production of space as well as how they interact and are interdependent.

3.2.3.5 The spatial triad to analyse immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites

In this research I explore conceived space, by examining what is expected to be done in Francophone community sites or which populations seem to be targeted. During key informant interviews, I analysed the vision in each partner site. More specifically, the opinion of community sites' representatives on how space is expected to be used, or their perception of policy makers' or funding agencies' expectations for the community sites, informed me about the dominant discourses in Francophone spaces.

I explore perceived space through immigrants' views on Francophone spaces. For example, during the interviews, I was able to examine the perception of these spaces by the immigrants, their understanding of what these spaces are for, as well as the role these spaces play in their broader occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver (i.e., how they navigate between these spaces and other spaces in the region). Beyond the meaning of the partner sites for the participants, I was also interested in how they perceive themselves and other immigrants in these sites, in regard to diversity (of country of origin, race etc.).

The lived space was explored through observational, participatory and dialogical data. I was able to observe what people do in Francophone spaces and how these spaces are used. This aspect is central to my research as I adopt an occupational lens.

3.3 Summary

In this section, I explained both the transactional approach to occupation and concepts from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space that I use in this thesis. That is, occupations are considered as the manifestation of the transactional relation between the French-speaking

immigrants and different spaces in Metro Vancouver, particularly Francophone spaces. I consider the continuity, contingency and co-construction of the immigrants and the spaces. The transactional approach to occupation is congruent with Lefebvre's dynamic and relational conceptualisation of space. In fact, in this critical research, Lefebvre's theory buttresses the transactional approach by ensuring that I take into account power dynamics as part of space in its transaction with immigrants. Because of the emphasis on everyday life and lived experience in Lefebvre's approach to space and in his spatial triad, this theory is relevant for an occupation-based research study with a focus on space. Moreover, the acknowledgement of the role of power relationships in the production of space, particularly in the component of representation of space allows a critical approach.

Chapter 4: Methodology

A critical ethnography was completed in order to explore French-speaking immigrants' daily experiences within but also beyond the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver. The ethnographic methodology situated within a critical theory paradigm was useful to situate immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites in the broader context of their occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver and in the socio-political context of the Francophone community (i.e., the power dynamics at play within the FMC and in its rapport with the Anglo-dominant society).

In fact, this thesis draws from a larger project funded by an Insight Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (with Dr. Suzanne Huot as principal investigator). This project, in Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, has itself been designed based on a previous research study in Ottawa, Ontario (with Dr. Suzanne Huot and Dr. Luisa Veronis as principal investigators). Both projects have similar research questions, relating to French-speaking immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites, that is, sites that are considered part of a Francophone Minority Community (FMC). In both the Ottawa and Metro Vancouver projects, the methodology was a critical ethnography in three Francophone community sites. There were also similarities in the data collection methods, which included observations in each of the three sites, interviews with French-speaking immigrants and refugees and key informant interviews. The project led in Metro Vancouver drew from the Ottawa project materials; the observation table template, the personal interview guide and the key informant interview guide were the same in both projects. However, the Vancouver project included go-along interviews that the Ottawa project did not.

In this section, the ontological and epistemological location of this thesis is explained. Then the field of the research is defined; and more specifically the three partner sites of this project are presented. I introduce my critical ethnographic methodology as well as the methods I use in this project. At the end of the section I discuss some ethical considerations as well as the quality criteria I aim at meeting to ensure the rigour of my research.

4.1 The critical theory paradigm

This work is situated within a critical theory paradigm. Ontologically, this research considers that realities are socially constructed and shaped by power. They are situated in specific social and historical contexts and are dependent on social, political, cultural and economic values (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 2003). The epistemology of this research is “transactional and subjectivist” (Guba and Lincoln 1994, p.111); that is, the knowledge emerging from this research is the product of interactions between the researcher and the community: it is “co-constructed” and value-mediated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 2003).

Moreover, beyond the ontological and epistemological stand that is presupposed in critical theory, it is also a school of thought encompassing theories concerned with injustices and inequalities between different groups of people according to identity markers such as race, class or gender. These theories attend to power dynamics and seek to explain how these can be embedded within the social structure in a way that makes them appear natural or inevitable (Carspecken, 1996; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). For example, the theory of production of space as described by Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1974) can be considered critical, in that, it acknowledges the role of power in the spatial triad, and how it impacts perception and daily use of space.

This thesis adheres to a Foucauldian conceptualisation of power, which is understood as relational and omnipresent. Power is exercised rather than possessed and not simply centralized in one person or institution, but shapes most social interactions and relationships. Indeed, power “operates as a social relation of inequality between forces” (Cooper 1994, p.437). It is productive (Crampton & Elden, 2007) in that it transforms social relations, practices and processes by structuring the field of possibilities. Power is ever present and, although power dynamics can change, power in itself cannot be overthrown (Cooper, 1994).

In line with this conceptualisation of power and the critical theory school of thought, I recognize that the knowledge shared by the participants, their discourses and experiences are consciously or unconsciously situated within social structures that may create inequalities and where taken-for-granted hegemonic principles perpetuate unfairness (Carspecken, 1996). Moreover, “Power operates not just on people but through them. Power relations are those that structure how everyday life will be lived” (Simon and Dippo 1986, p.197). Thus, the focus on occupation coupled with a critical theory lens is appropriate to uncover how power operates in immigrants’ daily experiences.

The ontological and epistemological paradigm, the critical ethnography methodology and the theoretical framework of this research align to answer my research questions as they leave space for subjectivity and critique of power dynamics in daily life occupations. As this research explores immigrants’ experiences, it is important to recognize the subjectivity of their experiences with appropriate methodological and analytical tools while contextualising them and not overemphasizing individual subjectivity. Moreover, examining immigrants’ experiences with a critical ethnography by focusing on their occupations is the most direct way to explore power dynamics in immigrants’ daily lives.

4.2 Critical ethnography

Ethnography has historical roots in anthropology and is the exploration of a culture performed by particular people, through their occupations located in space and time (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Hole, 2014). Culture is inherent to this study of international migration of people from a variety of countries and having diverse cultural backgrounds settling in a Canadian linguistic and cultural minority context. Culture is understood as fluid and dynamic instead of static (Huot, 2014); “culture is the learned and shared knowledge that people use to generate behaviour and interpret experience” (Spradley and McCurdy 2012, p.2). French-speaking immigrants are expected to integrate into both the Anglophone majority as well as the Francophone minority. As Francophone immigrants have to navigate between different cultures, ethnography is an appropriate methodology to study their experiences in context.

Ethnography is well suited for research focusing on occupations as this methodology examines what people do and what their motivations are to do so in a specific context (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b; Tedlock, 2000). Ethnography consists of both observing and taking part in people’s occupations (Tedlock, 2000). A starting assumption of ethnography is that people’s behaviours are locally specific (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b). The emphasis on contextualizing people’s experiences (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b; Tedlock, 2000) is in line with this study’s focus on the spatiality of occupation and the transactional approach. The ethnographic process is in itself transactional (Bailliard, Aldrich, & Dickie, 2013) as researchers enter the field and acknowledge their co-construction of the field. Moreover, the “field” is not considered as a static environment, separated and distinct from the researchers’ environment. Instead, the field is lively, dynamic and moving. It evolves in time and space and it is impacted by the researchers’ presence and participation (Amit, 2000; Katz, 1994). The researchers’ own

experiences within the community are important, as they observe both the participants' and their own 'coparticipation' in the community (Tedlock, 2000). Ethnography describes events occurring in their 'natural setting' (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b), however, researchers become part of this setting, and thus, "co-construct" the field (Huot, 2018).

The study also situates immigrants' experiences and constructed realities in their social context with the lens of critical theory. This ethnography is critical in that it aims at uncovering how the spaces and the study participants' experiences are shaped by power relationships (Carspecken, 1996; Cook, 2005; Jamal, 2005) both between the Francophone minority and the mainstream Anglophone community as well as between different groups within the Francophone community. Ethnographic data collection and analysis are informed by critical theory. I examine immigrants' daily lives in regard to dominant social forces and how power relationships materialize themselves in immigrants' occupations (Anderson, 1989; Cook, 2005). For example, I explore French-speaking immigrants' transactional link with the Francophone minority, embodied in occupation and whether there were tensions occurring in this transaction as immigrants negotiated their minority-language and other intersectional identity markers. Concretely, I try to understand the barriers encountered by French-speaking immigrants in their daily occupations, specifically in the FMC; and how these barriers are socially constructed. Thus, my methodology is more interpretive and critical than classic ethnography. Going beyond the "what?" question of traditional ethnography, I reflect on the "why?" and "what can be done?" and thus, take a critical ethnographic approach (Cook, 2005).

4.3 The field

This section contains a description of the three community sites involved in the research project; however, at times, the data collection occurred beyond these sites. As noted above, the

research field is not simply pre-existing and pre-defined; rather it is co-constructed throughout the research process by both the researcher and the participants. The field for this study was defined by the research team and myself according to the research objectives, as well as by the participants who chose when and where to meet or which occupation to perform during the go-along interviews.

This critical ethnography was conducted over approximately eleven months, in three Francophone community sites: a church; a provincial organization; and a community association. Each of the sites organizes its activities in a different municipality within Metro Vancouver (Figure 4.1).

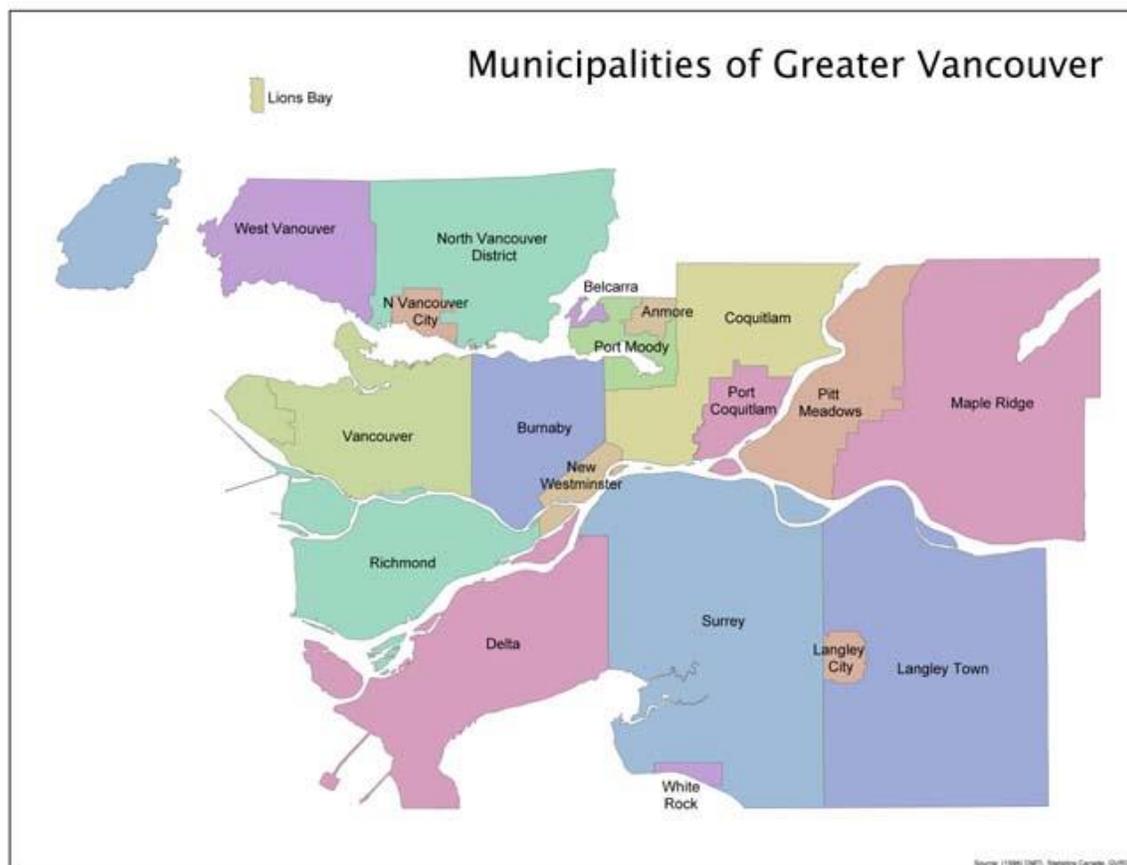


Figure 4.1: Map of the Greater Vancouver Regional District

(<http://www.sfu.ca/geog/geog452spring03/group1/methodology.html>)

The Christian church has existed for about 10 years and it organises prayers and events in different places. Most of the church's activities occur weekly, although monthly and occasional events are also organised. The most important activity of the week is the Sunday service happening in a church in an area that tends to be more affordable than the average in Metro Vancouver (MetroVancouver, 2019). This building welcomes other groups at other times. The church organises other prayer sessions, rehearsals for the choir and a bible study session on week day evenings. One of the prayer sessions takes place at the church on Friday evenings while other activities happen in the homes of church members, mostly at the pastor's home. Occasional events consist of celebrations, parties or longer prayers. There is also a group for fathers and a group for mothers who meet independently once a month. The church is bilingual with simultaneous translation of English and French occurring during services.

The provincial organization was founded in 1979. Its head offices are located in *la maison de la francophonie* (with offices of other major Francophone associations) in Vancouver. Its mandate is to bring together, represent and support Francophone parents in their parenting role as well as in their participation in their local Francophone community. The members are associations for parents of children enrolled in French first language schools (the equivalent of Parent Advisory Councils in English-language schools) or day-care centres across the entire province; but the provincial organization also provides direct services to parents in Metro Vancouver. Most of the activities they organise happen during the school year. They tend to be occasional; although some activities constitute series, occurring weekly or biweekly for a determined period of time. These activities consist of workshops about children's education or

family life and playtime for children and their parents. They are often offered in collaboration with other Francophone organizations. The provincial organization communications are mainly in French.

The community association was founded in 1987. It is attached to a particular municipality in Metro Vancouver and the mandate of the association is to promote the French language and Francophone culture to this city's population. Historically the community association is linked to the Francophone school and was funded by and for parents of the school's students but its mandate extends beyond families affiliated with the school. Today, the office of the organization is located inside the school building. They organise occasional events and activity series throughout the year, such as French classes or cooking classes. The occasional events tend to be celebrations and festive activities. The community association also participates in festivals, particularly those organised by the city where it operates. Their communications are mostly in French. The community association changed its name in January 2020.

These three organizations have different mandates and programming and are located in different municipalities in Metro Vancouver that have different demographic profiles. They have in common that they constitute "social sites", organizing geographically and temporally delimited social interactions and activities (Carspecken, 1996) aimed at French-speaking people (their attachment to the French language is a distinctive feature of the sites). In Metro Vancouver, the Francophone population is diverse, geographically diffused and in numerical minority. The three partner sites that are accessible to a French-speaking population, by offering their services in French, consider themselves Francophone, are committed to the promotion of the French language. Therefore, they can be comprised in the Canadian Government's definition

of FMCs, which encompass “driving forces behind civil society” including community associations (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006, p.2).

Also, because I consider the partner sites as “social sites”, I recognize that they are embedded in a broader social system and interact with it (Carspecken, 1996) and therefore, what happens in those sites informed me about the larger community. Indeed, the selection of the sites was done with the help of community gatekeepers to reflect the diversity of Francophone organizations and the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver. The research team and I were interested in exploring sites with and without government funding, having one site that is a place of worship and we wanted sites located in different parts of Metro Vancouver. Having diversity among the sites allowed me to look at different forms of participation in the community.

4.4 Methods

For this project, we partnered with the three sites described in the previous section. A representative from each site had an advisory role and helped with participant recruitment.

This thesis is part of a larger project, which included observations in each partner site, in-depth personal and participatory ‘go-along’ interviews with a sample of twenty French-speaking immigrants (fifteen being recruited from the partner sites and five recruited from the broader Francophone community in Metro Vancouver), as well as key informant interviews with representatives from the partnering community sites and other relevant Francophone sites. This thesis, however, only includes the interviews with the fifteen immigrants recruited through the partner sites and the three key informant interviews with representatives from the partner sites.

Although this thesis does not directly include data from the on-site observations, they constitute a part of the ethnographic approach to data collection (see appendix A for the observation table that was filled after each on-site observation). I conducted most of the on-site observations and I had a “participant-as-observer” role (Gold, 1958; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) or “peripheral membership” (Adler & Adler, 1987b). I interacted with participants numerous times for formal sessions such as interviews but also informally during the observations. Both the participants and I were aware of the “field relationship” (Gold, 1958); I acknowledged the purpose of my presence as a researcher. I participated in the activities but I did not take a functional role in the sites, I rather kept a “research and social” role (Adler and Adler 1987a, p.2); therefore I had a “peripheral membership” (Adler and Adler 1987b, p.2). The observations allowed me to build trust between the participants and myself and they influenced both the completion and analysis of the interviews as I was more receptive to some themes I had observed while on-site. Moreover, in the analysis I paid attention to consistency or inconsistency between the observational and participatory data.

4.4.1 Participant sample

As this research focuses on French-speaking immigrants’ participation in Francophone community sites, participants were recruited through the partner sites to ensure they were somehow involved in the local community. The three partner sites have diverse mandates, some of them have government funding, their activities are more or less formal and happen in different frequencies. Recruiting through these different sites allowed me to collect data among a population with diverse interests in the community and I explored various ways of engaging in the community.

Fifteen immigrants were recruited, with five immigrants being recruited in each community site through email advertising, paper pamphlets (Appendix B) or word of mouth within the sites. The choice of the sample size was done with regard to ensuring balance between sites, as well as remaining feasible given the different methods being adopted. Participants had the possibility to do two interviews, which allowed an in-depth exploration of their occupations in Metro Vancouver. Given the small size of the Francophone minority community, I aimed for more richness of data with fewer participants. I was also conscious of the time constraints for data collection, as it occurred over eleven months and I conducted all but one interview.

Immigrants were included if they met the following criteria: being born outside of Canada, speaking French and being 19 years of age or older. The exclusion criteria were: not being involved in any way in the Francophone community sites or not being able to give informed consent. Participants were also recruited in order to reflect the diversity of French-speaking immigrants in terms of gender, race, country of origin, date of arrival in Canada, and migration status. I recruited a purposive sample; however, participants were also recruited based on availability and willingness to participate. Thus, although I aimed for maximum variation in the recruitment, some groups were more represented than others. As indicated in Table 4.1, 80% of the participants were female. Participants came from six different countries but one third of them came from Democratic Republic of the Congo and one third came from France. Before starting the personal interview, immigrant participants were asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C), additional demographic data coming from this questionnaire, are available in appendix D.

Table 4.1: Gender and country of birth by site

| | Church | Provincial organization | Community association |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Gender | 3F/2M | 5F | 4F/1M |
| Country of birth | Democratic Republic of the Congo (5) | France (4) Switzerland (1) | Burundi (2) France (1) Haiti (1) Mauritius (1) |

In addition, one representative of each partner site was recruited. The site representatives who had an advisory role for the project were invited to either participate themselves or to transmit our request to other employees of the site.

4.4.2 Data collection

The immigrants were invited to do two interviews: an in-depth personal interview and an optional “go-along” interview; and representatives of the three partner sites completed one key informant interview each.

4.4.2.1 In-depth personal interviews

All fifteen participants took part in an in-depth interview consisting of open-ended questions that focused on their experiences of settlement and integration in Canada, as well as their occupational engagement in Francophone community sites (see Appendix E for personal interview guide). Semi-structured interviews are well suited to explore people’s experiences, their perspectives as well as how social structures impact their experiences (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019; Longhurst, 2010). Participants were initially asked about their settlement and integration when they first arrived in Canada. I asked them where and when they had the opportunity to speak French. My goal was to establish a list of Francophone spaces they

accessed. Indeed, the interview focused on their involvement in the partner site from which they were recruited, but also on other Francophone sites they were engaged in or any other way they connected with the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver. I examined French-speaking immigrants' motivations for participating in community sites, their experiences of participation, and the perceived outcomes they experienced – for example, in terms of integration in both the Francophone community and the broader Canadian society (Omoto & Snyder, 2002).

Participants were also asked about recommendations to foster French-speaking immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites. If appropriate, I sometimes asked participants about Anglophone or other community sites they accessed. This allowed me to compare their motivation, their experience of participation and the benefits of their participation in both Anglophone and Francophone community sites.

Through these interviews, I intended to explore how participants engaged in transactional interactions with different spaces, what they did in these spaces (Lefebvre's concept of "lived space), whether the spaces were related to particular occupations, how participants perceived these spaces (perceived space), how they related to them and how important languages spoken in these spaces were to them. Beyond the lived and perceived space, some of these interviews also gave me more insight on the conceived space.

The in-depth personal interviews took place at a time and in a location chosen by the participants (e.g., the participant's home, a coffee shop). The conversations lasted between 40 and 130 minutes (60 minutes on average). However, the overall interactions with the participants lasted longer. For example, one participant invited me to her home and wanted to complete the interview over a shared lunch. In total, I spent about three and a half hours with her. The interviews were conducted in French and they were audio-recorded. These in-depth interviews

were completed between January 21 and June 11, 2019. I did not take notes during the interviews as I felt it would have interrupted to flow of the conversation. However, I wrote a reflexive memo after each interview, in which I described the planning of the interview, the space where the interview took place, the rapport I experienced with the participant, things that surprised me and general reflections.

In order to ensure anonymity of the participants, recording and transcripts were labelled with the acronym of the site through which the participant had been recruited, followed by a number from 1 to 5 (according to the order in which participants were interviewed) and a letter to indicate whether it was the first interview (A) or the second (B).

4.4.2.2 Go-along interviews

The participants had the option of completing a “go-along” interview at a later date. A “go-along” interview is a hybrid form of ethnographic data collection method, between participant observation and interview (Kusenbach, 2003). In fact, I accompanied participants “on their ‘natural’ outings, and – through asking questions, listening and observing – actively explor[ed] their subjects’ stream of experiences and practices as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment” (Kusenbach, 2003, p.463). When it was appropriate, I also took part in the activity that the participants were engaging in. Go-along interviews are particularly well suited for the exploration of the spatial aspects of occupation as it allows the researcher to observe occupations in their contexts while hearing the participant’s experience and perspective at the same time (Kusenbach, 2003).

Participants were asked whether there was a daily activity they were comfortable participating in with me. The occupation could happen within or beyond the Francophone community, but preferably outside of the partner sites. Nine of the fifteen participants agreed to

complete this second interview. The observed occupations are described in tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. The timing of the go-along interviews depended on when the chosen occupation was usually performed. They occurred between one day and up to two months following the in-depth interview, which allowed me to review the in-depth interview before doing the go-along interview. I was not always able to transcribe and deeply analyse the in-depth interview ahead of the go-along, but I could articulate potential follow-up questions by listening to the audio-recording and reviewing my reflexive memo.

These go-along interviews allowed me to actively explore and capture immigrants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver, thus contextualising their experience within but also beyond the Francophone community. I had the opportunity to see the transactional relation between the immigrants and different spaces and therefore explore the situated nature of their occupations in a very concrete way. Moreover, this form of interaction with the participant facilitated a more spontaneous conversation in a natural and meaningful context for the person.

The go-along interview took place at the time and location where the participant usually performed the chosen occupation. When it was appropriate, I recorded a brief interview with follow up questions from the first in-depth personal interview or questions about the observed activity (see Appendix F for go-along interview guide). This occurred for five of the nine go-along interviews. The interview duration depended on the time of the occupation; varying between one and seven hours. I also wrote a detailed descriptive note after each interview as well as a reflexive memo.

Table 4.2: Interview date and go along activities with the participants from the church

| | In-depth interview | Go-along interview |
|---------------|---|--|
| Church | Church-1A: February 2019 Took place at the Church | <i>Did not participate</i> |
| | Church-2A: February 2019 (interview completed by Dr. Huot) Took place at the Church | <i>Did not participate</i> |
| | Church-3A: March 2019 Took place at the Church | Church-3B: March 2019 Hanging out and having lunch in a shopping mall |
| | Church-4A: March 2019 Took place at the Church | <i>Did not participate</i> |
| | Church-5A: April 2019 Took place in a coffee shop | <i>Did not participate</i> |

Table 4.3: Interview date and go along activities with the participants from community association (CA)

| | In-depth interview | Go-along interview |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Community association | CA-1A: February 2019 Took place in a coffee shop | CA-2B: February 2019 Going to a coffee shop in Vancouver |
| | CA-2A: April 2019 Took place at the participant's home | CA-2B: May 2019 Going to the Haitian Flag Day celebration |
| | CA-3A: June 2019 Took place in a public library | CA-3B: August 2019 Walking from the participant's home to the closest SkyTrain station |
| | CA-4A: June 2019 Took place next to the CA office | <i>Did not participate</i> |
| | CA-5A: June 2019 Took place at the participant's home | CA-5B: July 2019 Going to a shopping mall with the participant and the participant's child |

Table 4.4: Interview date and go along activities with the participants from the provincial organization (PO)

| | In-depth interview | Go along interview |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Provincial organization | PO-1A: January 2019 Took place at the participant's home | PO-1B: January 2019 Going to a workshop organized by a Francophone organization (different from the partner sites) |
| | PO-2A: January 2019 Took place in a coffee shop | PO-2B: February 2019 Going grocery shopping with the participant and two of the participant's children |
| | PO-3A: February 2019 Took place at the participant's home | <i>Did not participate</i> |
| | PO-4A: February 2019 Took place at the participant's home | PO-4B: February 2019 Going to a "playtime" activity at the Vancouver Public Library with the participant and the participant's child Playing in the park |
| | PO-5A: May 2019 Took place in a coffee shop | PO-5B: May 2019 Going shopping and having coffee with one of the participant's friends |

4.4.2.3 Key informant interviews

One representative of each partner Francophone community site was interviewed. The key informant interviews allowed me to hear the perspective of those occupying leadership positions at the community sites, the immigrants' needs they identified, and the way they meet these needs within the socio-political context (e.g., the minority context of the Francophone communities in B.C., the funding system for migration services, etc.) (see Appendix G for the key informant interview guide). These interviews occurred towards the end of the data collection within each site (in March, April and July 2019). I had completed some on-site observations and some interviews with the immigrants already; thus, I could ask questions regarding things I had observed.

The key informant interviews allowed me to “examin[e] the relationship between the social site of focused interest and other specific social sites” (Carspecken, 1996, p.42). These interviews facilitated more in-depth exploration of the social or political power dynamics that shape Francophone spaces, both from within and outside the FMC and therefore have a broader understanding of the situated nature of immigrants' occupations. One interview took place in a coffee shop, the second took place at the key informant's home, the third took place in the key informant's office. The interviews lasted between 60 and 80 minutes.

4.4.3 Data Analysis

The results of the study were generated from the interview transcripts and fieldnotes (personal, go-along, key informant). The analysis was ongoing from the first field exposure (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999a) and was recursive as the collection and analysis of data with the first participants helped better orient the data collection that followed. This ongoing analysis

allowed me to be guided by the information gathered; what was recurrent and what seemed to be important for participants as well as what was coherent or inconsistent with observational and participatory data.

Specifically, I transcribed all the recorded interviews (i.e., 15 in-depth personal interviews and five audio-taped go-along interviews) verbatim. Transcribing and then reading and re-reading the transcripts allowed me to do an initial “whole text analysis” useful to get a broad sense of each interview (Ryan & Russel Bernard, 2003; Tilley, 2016). The transcripts were entered into the software NVivo11. I coded the transcripts in their entirety using “low level” codes to name and describe what the participants were explaining about their experiences (codes such as “getting in touch with the community sites”, “participation - motivation”, “participation – outcomes”, “transmitting French to one’s children”). These low-level codes were very inductive and the coding process allowed me to further immerse myself in the data while starting to identify important or recurrent themes. Moreover, my analysis of the data was informed by transactionalism and Lefebvre’s concept of the production of space. A second level of coding occurred with “high level” codes, for theoretical concepts underlying the immigrants’ discourses, concepts that theorized the experiences being shared (e.g., “sense of community within the FMC”, “‘perceived space’ of the provincial organization”, “occupational separation in the FMC”) (Carspecken, 1996). This level of coding was more deductive and allowed me to clearly connect the data with the research questions.

However, the overall coding process was never fully inductive or deductive. As much as possible, I was looking for themes related to the research questions and theoretical framework, while remaining curious about other potentially relevant themes. I was interested in the role Francophone spaces played in participants’ daily lives in Metro Vancouver, I looked at how they

navigated different spaces attached to different languages, I explored how Francophone spaces were shaped by dominant discourses (conceived space), how immigrants perceived them (perceived space) and what happened in these spaces (lived space). However, I remained open to additional themes in the data. The codes were then organised into categories and further re-examined to elaborate the broad themes presented in the results section.

For the data analysis process, interview transcripts were not translated. In this thesis, the quotations from the interviews will be presented in their original French version, followed by an English translation completed by myself and reviewed by my thesis supervisor.

4.5 Ethics

This research was approved by the University of British Columbia's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (H18-02680). Participants were recruited through the partner sites, but I maintained the confidentiality of their participation unless they were comfortable disclosing their participation (e.g., by choosing to conduct the interview in the site).

Informed consent was obtained at the beginning of the in-depth interview. If the participant accepted to do the go-along interview, process consent was obtained at the beginning and throughout the go-along interview. The participants were able to withdraw at any time but none did.

Reciprocity was emphasized throughout this research. This project was done collaboratively with the partner sites and aimed at jointly elaborating recommendations for the FMC to better support immigrants' integration in Canada and participation in the FMC. I was considerate of the time participants dedicated to this research and made sure the research will

benefit the community. Participants received a \$30 gift card as an honorarium for each interview completed.

4.6 Quality criteria

In order to ensure the rigour of this qualitative research, I aimed at meeting a number of criteria designed by Ravenek and Laliberte Rudman (2013) as well as Carspecken (1996).

Ravenek and Laliberte Rudman (2013) suggest a ‘bridging approach’ drawing on quality criteria that are relevant to all qualitative works but also sensible to different paradigms and methodologies. They suggest five categories of bridging criteria (Ravenek & Laliberte Rudman, 2013, p.451):

1. Social Value and Significance of the Research

This research explored immigrants’ participation in a linguistic minority context. Participants had intersectional minority identity markers which, in a context of systemic oppression, can lead to forms of exclusion and hinder their integration in Canada (Huot et al., 2013).

French-speaking immigrants’ participation in Francophone community sites is understudied (Veronis & Huot, 2017, 2018) and there is a need to qualitatively explore French-speaking immigrants’ experiences in B.C. (Mulatris et al., 2018). This research brought a unique contribution to the Francophone community by exploring immigrants’ daily experiences in a variety of Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

2. Thoroughness of Data Collection and Interpretation

In this project, participants were recruited in a variety of settings and different methods were used. I aimed at recruiting a sample that was reflective of the diversity of the French-

speaking immigrants' population in Metro Vancouver and included participants from different countries of origin, dates of arrival, immigration statuses, genders, ages, among other characteristics.

Data collection included regular debriefing with my thesis supervisor and principal investigator. She and the co-investigators also provided guidance and feedback for the analysis. As noted previously, the coding of the data involved several levels, from descriptive coding to more theoretical coding.

3. Transparency and Reflexivity of the Authors

The iterative process of the research is transparently described at each stage, including the limitations and problems that I faced. The research also involved reflexivity and my co-construction of the data is acknowledged, as well as the influence of my positionality. After each data collection session, I wrote a note and reflected on questions such as “How is the interview impacted by the participant’s and my familiarity with our respective countries of origin? How do potential previous and/or current power dynamics between the participant’s countries origin and my country of origin impact the rapport? What does it change for the participant and for me?” Moreover, I was able to discuss these reflections with my thesis supervisor and committee members. These questions are addressed in the “positionality” section (1.2) and “return to reflection” section (6.2).

4. Coherence of the Research Approach

The ontological and epistemological location in a critical theory paradigm, the use of critical ethnography and the adoption of Lefebvre’s theory of the production of space as a theoretical framework are congruent with the research questions of this study. For example, the combination of a subjectivist ontology and epistemology with an ethnographic methodology,

particularly the use of in-depth and go-along interviews is well suited for the exploration of personal experience of occupation. Furthermore, my methodology and methods are well suited with the use of Lefebvre's theory of the production of space to focus particularly on the spatiality of occupation. Finally, my ontology and epistemology, methodology and theoretical framework are all congruent with the critical aspect of this research and the particular attention to power dynamics at play in immigrants' experiences.

5. Due Regard for the Research Participants

Beyond institutional requirements for ethics approval, I had a particular concern for participants' comfort, interest and protection throughout the project. For example, when participants were contacted by email, an information letter and the consent form (Appendix H and I) were sent to them in advance when possible. When meeting with me, they were given time to read it, review it with me and ask questions before signing and doing the first interview if they decided to participate. The consent form mentioned that participants were free to not answer questions if they did not feel comfortable doing so; and I insisted on this orally before starting the in-depth interview. The in-depth interview was completed in a place chosen by the participants, where they felt comfortable. Then participants were totally free to do the second interview and show me one of their daily occupation or not and it was made clear that this second meeting was optional and that they could complete the personal interview if interested in participating without having to do the go-along.

Nearly all on-site observations happened before the interviews and most participants were recruited during these sessions. Otherwise, participants were recruited by word of mouth or advertising in the community sites and they contacted my thesis supervisor directly, without having previously met a member of the research team. In the case I had met the participants

during on-site observations, rapport and trust building started in advance of the interview. Moreover, for the participants completing the go-along interview, their agreement to have me participate in one of their occupations might be considered as an additional sign of trust. This second interview also prolonged my engagement with them and in a more familiar and potentially intimate setting for them, of which I intended to be very respectful. For example, I recorded a conversation only if it seemed appropriate given what I was doing with the participant and what the participant talked about.

In addition to these bridging criteria, Carspecken (1996) suggests procedures to ensure quality of a critical ethnography in particular.

- “Using a flexible observation schedule” (Carspecken, 1996, p.88)

The first interview took place at a convenient time and location for the participants. The go-along interview was planned according to the participants’ schedules. I participated in one of the participants’ occupations at the time and place it is usually performed. The participants were free to choose the occupation for me to observe and participate in.

Additionally, for the on-site observations, which are not included in this thesis but are part of the ethnographic approach of the study, I attended events at different times of the day, week and year in order to observe a variety of activities and a diversity of settings.

- “Practicing prolonged engagement” with the participants (Carspecken, 1996, p.88)

For the larger study from which these thesis data are drawn, data collection occurred over a period of approximately eleven months. It included on-site observations in the partnering community sites, which allowed me to build a trust relationship with both the community and the

participants individually; and each participant had the possibility to complete up to two interviews, taking place on different days.

- “Interviewing the same subjects repeatedly” (Carspecken, 1996, p.166)

Every participant did the in-depth interview but the go-along interview was optional. For those who did complete both sessions, it enabled a stronger rapport with the participants. The in-depth interview was reviewed before completing the go-along interview. Thus, this go-along interview also allowed me to ask follow up questions regarding topics that had been raised during the in-depth interviews. Participants had the opportunity to clarify things and offer more insight. Furthermore, because the go-along interview occurred in an environment they were more familiar with and involved performing an activity for which they were more proficient than me, this allowed a better balance of power between the participant and myself as the researcher.

- “Encouraging subjects to use and explain the terms they employ in naturalistic contexts” (Carspecken, 1996, p.166)

The interviews were conducted in French. Indeed, one of the inclusion criteria was the ability to speak French and for many participants it was their first or one of their first languages. Interviews were led with a genuine and respectful curiosity about participants’ experiences and they were invited to explain elements that were unclear to me.

- Using a low inference vocabulary and later adding interpretations.

Theoretical and conceptual terms that can constitute “research jargon” for the participants were only used during data analysis and lay language was used for data collection. The questions had been designed so that the answers would provide insight about participants’ daily life experiences that could be analyzed in relation to my disciplinary location and theoretical interests. However, they never directly referred to the theoretical framework I adopted for my

thesis. Rather, they focused on topics for which the participant is expert, such as their engagement in Francophone community sites. My interpretation, informed by my theoretical framework, was layered later on, during the analysis process.

- “Conducting consistency checks between observed activity and what is said in interviews” (Carspecken, 1996, p.166)

On-site observations are not included in this thesis but they informed the conduct of the interviews. Moreover, for the participants completing the go-along interview, this allowed the nuancing of the information gathered during the in-depth interview. When coding the interview transcripts, I looked for codes that were congruent or that contrasted with the observational data. I intended to not privilege the observational data over the participants’ perspectives. That is, these data were considered as perceptions (the participant’s perception and my perception) and neither of them were considered objective or more valuable than the other. In case of inconsistency between both perspectives, I discussed it with the participant, when possible. If not, I reflected on the underlying reason why our perceptions might be different, what is shaping our different realities and I am transparent about it in this thesis.

4.7 Summary

This thesis is based on a critical ethnography. A partnership was established with three Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver. The methods included in-depth, personal interviews with fifteen French-speaking immigrants, recruited through the partner sites. The participants also had the option to complete a go-along interview, in which they participated in one of their daily occupations with me. Finally, I completed key informant interviews with a representative of each partner sites.

Throughout this section I have shown the alignment of my critical ontology and epistemology, my theoretical framework and critical ethnographic methodology, and my interest in how French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement is shaped by power dynamics, in and outside the FMC. That is, my methodology is congruent with my interest in space and the spatiality of occupation as I was able to observe, situate but also experience French-speaking immigrants' transaction with different spaces.

Chapter 5: Findings

This chapter presents the findings stemming from interviews with French-speaking immigrants recruited through the three partner Francophone community sites as well as key informants from these sites. Firstly, I describe the sites as I experienced them during data collection. Then, the findings are presented in three themes: (1) Speaking French in participants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver, (2) Engaging in occupations in French fluidly across permeable and interrelated spaces, and (3) Producing Francophone Spaces for the diverse population of the FMC. The first theme explores the role of the French language in participants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver. The second theme focuses on the spatial aspect of this occupational engagement in French. The third theme investigates how Francophone spaces are produced through the occupational engagement of diverse French-speaking immigrants.

5.1 Description of the sites

As explained in Chapter 4, the data collection for this research involved interactions in three partner sites as well as with fifteen individual participants recruited through these sites. A brief description of each site was provided in section 4.3, based on information available on their website or general observations I made during data collection sessions. In this section, I introduce the sites as they were described by the key informants, some of the immigrant participants, and as I have experienced them during on-site observations and throughout the data collection process. I also explain how the partnerships were developed. This section is meant to provide ethnographic context in order to situate the immigrants' participation in these sites.

5.1.1 The church

The church seemed to be well known in the Francophone African community and the Congolese community in particular. As the research team sought to include a place of worship, the community advisor on this project recommended this church and visited it with my thesis supervisor. Indeed, as opposed to the two other sites that had head offices and full-time employees reachable by email, the church was a less formal site. In order to further introduce ourselves and our project, my thesis supervisor and I attended a Sunday service to speak with members of the congregation in person. During this service, I noticed that the church members seemed to know each other well, they called each other by their names and seemed to have developed intimacy over occupations at church and elsewhere. They seemed to constitute a close-knit community. I considered that in order to establish good rapport with both the community and the members individually, I had to attend regularly (i.e., at least once a week for Sunday service, as church members did). It also allowed me to experience the lived space of that site myself. I attended church activities for about three months, including Sunday service every week and one of each weekday activity, including choir rehearsals, bible study session, intersession prayers, etc.

Over these three months, I observed that most church members were Black (several participants recruited through this site self-identified as such) and, as I interacted with Church members, I learned that most of them were Congolese, including the pastor. All participants recruited from this site had a refugee background and some had lived in other countries before coming to Canada. Overall, church members seemed to have family-like relationships. During the personal interviews, several participants from this site used the word “family” to describe the church community. The key informant said that people occupying leadership positions in the

church, such as those responsible for the choir or other departments of the church, were immigrants. The informant explained that it was not intentional to have mostly immigrants occupying leadership positions but because most members of the church were immigrants this occurred by default. The key informant insisted that people were in leadership roles because of their skills and not other identity markers, such as country of origin.

The church was located in an area where the cost of living tends to be more affordable than other areas in Metro Vancouver (MetroVancouver, 2019). The church members lived close by, in other surrounding cities. According to the pastor's sermons (e.g., mentioning financial issues) and some interviews with participants, it seemed like the members of the church had relatively low incomes.

At church, people were speaking, singing and praying in different languages, including English, French, Lingala, Swahili and other African languages. However, the pastor's sermons were always in French with simultaneous interpretation in English by a church member. The church communications (e.g., event posters, text displayed on a TV screen in the church) were in both French and English.

The key informant described two mandates of the church: a social mandate and a religious mandate. On one hand, the church was a religious community that aimed at the spiritual growth of its members and the conversion of new members. On the other hand, the church intended to do charity work and provide support to people in need. Despite the predominance of immigrants among its congregation in the lived space; it appeared that, in the conceived space, they aimed to reach a broader population. I noticed, nevertheless, that sermons were oriented towards immigrants and in particular immigrants from African countries or communal cultures,

for instance by referring to experiences of migration similar to the pastor's own, mentioning Africa, and speaking about remittances sent to one's family in the home country.

The church did not offer activities specifically for immigrants but provided one-on-one support depending on the needs of the members. The church provided a broad range of services, from financial to emotional support, housing and employment searching, and help with administrative procedures (e.g., immigration procedures such as family reunification). It appeared that the support was offered by the pastor or members of the church who were particularly involved. The support was often based on networking and experience sharing. Meeting the needs of immigrants served both mandates of the church, it was about supporting those who are religious in their faith (e.g., emotional support, life advice and self development) and providing social support in people's daily lives.

5.1.2 The provincial organization

The partnership with the provincial organization was established in a more formal way over email and in meetings at their head office. It was the only site in which I started interviewing participants before the first on-site observation. They shared our recruitment poster through their Facebook page and to their members, some of which circulated it within different Francophone schools in Metro Vancouver. Interested parents responded to the advertisement by email or phone. As we noticed that some participants engaged with this community site online through their Facebook page and website, and through the schools, our observations reflected these modes of interaction. One observation session occurred during a meeting of one of the associations for parents in a Francophone school. Another observation was an analysis of the association's Facebook page, examining its recent posts at one point in time during data

collection. To the extent possible I used the same criteria as for physical on-site observations to generate fieldnotes about this virtual space.

During on-site observations of the occasional activities offered in Metro Vancouver, the interaction between the participants were cordial. Some people knew each other and had stronger relationships, but overall, there did not seem to be a strong sense of belonging to a community. For activities that were offered a bit more regularly (i.e., twice a week during the school year), participants appeared to be better able to create connections as they would meet again. Lastly, during the annual general meeting (AGM), attendees (representatives of the parent associations) seemed to know each other well. They had been involved in this association for a long time and were familiar with each other, thus there seemed to be a more significant sense of community.

Among the five participants recruited through this site, one had a European parent and a Middle-Eastern parent and she had lived in both regions before coming to Canada. The four other participants were European, White women. They were born and had mostly lived in France or Switzerland. Among the five interviewees, three were unemployed (one was a homemaker, another was looking for employment, the last one could not work because of her immigration status). Participants recruited through this site lived in neighbourhoods where the cost of living is quite high (MetroVancouver, 2019).

According to the key informant, the association's mandate was to support and represent Francophone parents. The organization serves a population that is spread across the entire province, through virtual (online) or indirect (through the schools) interactions. They also organised 'in person' activities for families and children in Metro Vancouver. The activities were often organised in collaboration with other Francophone organizations. Bringing parents together

and developing an overall sense of community could be helpful, but it was not the primary goal of the site. In its communication online and during activities, the association mostly used French.

During the interview, the key informant explained that the site did not offer activities targeting immigrants specifically, except for one workshop they had organised in collaboration with the settlement services offered in Francophone schools. In the conceived space, in the leadership's vision for the site, there seemed to be attention to the growing diversity of its members, in terms of country of origin or linguistic skills, in order to best meet their needs. Their mandate and activities, however, were not particularly oriented towards immigrants, but rather towards parents in general.

It appeared that no board members of the provincial organization were from visible minority groups (as observed during the AGM). However, the key informant indicated that the staff was receiving training regarding welcoming and supporting the immigrant population. She identified a need for more training regarding parenting in different cultures in order for the team to provide services better suited to people with different cultural backgrounds.

5.1.3 The community association

The community association was chosen as a partnering site because our community advisory panel indicated that many French-speaking immigrants settle in the city where the community association operates. The cost of living in this city tends to be lower, and the population more diverse than in Vancouver (MetroVancouver, 2019). The association underwent changes over the period of the research project. Both the executive director and the president changed during the time of data collection and they both agreed to continue the research collaboration. In January 2020, following the completion of data collection, the organization changed its name with the intent to better represent the population it served. During the on-site

observations, the members were friendly and many seemed to know each other. The activities were often festive, the atmosphere was warm and people were welcoming, which could facilitate the development of a sense of belonging. The organization communicated via email, they had a Facebook page, but participants also said they received phone calls to keep them updated regarding the association's activities, or simply to keep in touch with them and follow up with newcomers.

The participants recruited through the organization were the most diverse of the three sites in terms of country of origin. Two participants had lived in Metro Vancouver for several decades. One participant had arrived one year ago and two participants had arrived within the previous year.

The organization's communications (e.g., newsletters, email) were often in French, but sometimes bilingual. Officials from the municipality or other government entities often attended their celebrations and were invited to speak to the members. Official speeches tended to be translated from English to French and from French to English; however, members tended to speak French to each other.

The key informant mentioned two main mandates of the organization: bringing Francophone people together and supporting them. Part of their activities were celebrations to unite the Francophone population and their other activities consisted of providing social support to Francophone people, such as job searching assistance or referrals to other services, within or outside the FMC.

The diversity of the Francophonie was a major theme in the key informant interview. It appeared to be at the core of their work, in the conceived space, given the area's diverse population and the profile of the association's members. Indeed, most of people participating in

the site were immigrants, often coming from racialized groups. The festivities organised were often about celebrating the diversity of the Francophonie (e.g., celebrating Black history month, showcasing different members of the community, serving food from different countries). The board and the staff seemed to reflect this diversity.

It seemed like the services provided by the organization aimed at being culturally appropriate. The key informant seemed aware of difficulties faced by immigrants in Canada (e.g., change in parenting norms or in family dynamics). Besides one-on-one support referred to by the key informant, they also organised activities to tackle these issues in a culturally respectful and relevant way.

The city where the community association operates is geographically removed from the Francophone organizations and services centralized in Vancouver. The key informant's vision for the organization was to foster their services and to be the major point of contact for all French-speakers in this city, welcoming them, providing the services when possible or orienting people to other services. In line with the other mandate of bringing Francophones together, the key informant mentioned her desire for the organization to be an "umbrella" for all the country-specific associations in the city (e.g., the Congolese or Burundian community). She mentioned providing financial and logistical support, such as providing venues, material or human resources. This vision had not yet come to fruition but the key informant hoped this collaboration would also help the organization to reach more Francophones.

5.2 Speaking French in participants' occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver

As I interacted with the participants, I was interested in the link between the languages they spoke, the occupations they performed and the spaces they accessed in their daily lives. I paid particular attention to the importance of French in their daily lives and whether their use of

French was connected to particular occupations. It appeared that rapport between people and their use of the French language varied from one individual to the next, despite the common Anglo-dominant context of Metro Vancouver. That is, speaking English was necessary for most participants and provided occupational opportunities, since this language was perceived as being ‘everywhere around’. However, depending on whether speaking French had been an enabler to engage in occupations, such as employment, some immigrants could actually use more French than English in their daily lives. Participants’ use of French was not always a deliberate choice, but it often enhanced satisfaction in occupational engagement. The meaning of performing occupations in French also varied in relation to factors such as linguistic skills (e.g., performing occupations in French was crucial for participants who did not speak English), participants’ attitude towards the Francophone community, family status and enrolment of one’s children in Francophone schools. The temporality of the use of the French language over participants’ life course was also highlighted.

5.2.1 English as ‘the language of the outside’

For the majority of participants, English was needed in order to engage in most daily occupations within Metro Vancouver. Some participants had existing English language skills before migrating whereas some participants began learning it following their arrival to Canada. Indeed, some participants were taking lessons and were proactively trying to acquire stronger English language skills at the time of data collection. Several participants perceived English as “the language of the outside” that one has to speak in order to access most services without assistance. That is, while French was a language used in the private sphere and could facilitate access to some services, English was required to meet most of one’s needs.

English was perceived as the dominant language and for some participants, this language was associated with the “outside.” They expressed the idea that French was a “private” language used mainly in intimate spaces such as the home, while English was everywhere else.

Je parle français avec vous, **quand je sors dehors**, je parle, le propriétaire, je dois parler anglais, quand je vais à [épicerie], je dois parler anglais

I speak French with you, **when I go out**, I speak, with the landlord, I have to speak English, when I go to [grocery store], I have to speak English

(Community association, participant 5)

on parle français ici, avec mon conjoint on parle français euh si de temps en temps quand on rencontre des québé- parce que des fois quand on parle dans la rue français entre nous, il y a certains québécois qui entendent et du coup qui essaient de discuter en français euh ... non sinon euh globalement non, **quand on sort on parle anglais**

We speak French here, with my partner we speak French [...] occasionally when we meet Quebecois people – because sometimes when we speak French in the street, there are Quebecois people who hear us and so they try to chat in French ... no otherwise, overall no, **when we go out we speak English**

(Provincial organization, participant 4)

The interview with this participant took place in her home. For her there seemed to be a distinction between what was happening inside her home and outside where meeting Francophone people was rare.

Being able to speak English was often described as enabling more autonomy, facilitating access to the different types of services needed. For example, one participant who had arrived very recently could not speak English and had to rely on Francophone service providers, even when accessing Anglophone organizations. The Francophone organization [name redacted for anonymity] she accessed had directed her towards *WorkBC* and *BC Housing* for employment and housing support; however, these Anglophone agencies were either unable to serve her in French, or she found the services they could offer in French were of lower quality. Equivalent services

were unfortunately not available in French. She required accompaniment from employees from the Francophone organization to act as interpreters. Further, given the lack of follow up she had experienced from the Francophone organization this became problematic for her.

The community association key informant noted that speaking English allowed people to navigate between Francophone and Anglophone services and potentially access faster and better-quality services. Indeed, several participants discussed how speaking English enabled them to feel more comfortable using the first service they encountered, whether it was in English or French (as explained by this participant in the bolded sentence).

Comme la connaissance en anglais que j'avais [...] c'était un atout qui m'a permis euh d'intégrer soit la communauté anglophone sans beaucoup de crainte, sans beaucoup de difficultés comme quelqu'un qui ne connaissait pas l'anglais déjà au départ [...] cela m'a, m'a rapproché aussi, cela m'a permis de me rapprocher de gens – parce que lorsque j'ai comme une question euh j'ai besoin d'une information quelconque, j'ai soit la communauté déjà la communauté francophone et j'ai la communauté – comme je vais dire ? **La première personne que je vais rencontrer, je m'adresse à cette personne sans beaucoup de difficultés**

Like the English skills I had [...] it was an asset that allowed me to integrate into the Anglophone community without a lot of worry, without a lot of difficulties like someone who didn't know English already from the beginning [...] it brought me also, it allowed me to connect with people – because when I have a question, I need any information, I have the community, first the Francophone community and [second] I have the [Anglophone] community – How will I say? **The first person I am going to meet, I talk to this person without a lot of difficulties**

(Church, participant 4)

For participants, speaking English was key to navigating different spaces 'outside' of the private sphere. The Anglo-dominant environment of Metro Vancouver pushed the participants to quickly learn English, as this language enabled access to occupational opportunities.

5.2.2 The meaning of engaging in occupations in French while in Metro Vancouver

There was a broad range in the extent to which participants used French in their daily occupations. Some participants used very little French, even when participating in Francophone

spaces, such as one participant who explained that he spoke English even with French-speaking friends, in Francophone spaces. This participant had lived in Anglo-dominant environments for a long time and English had become more natural for him. For some participants, if speaking French was not leading to tangible opportunities and people had to function in English for many years, their attachment to the French language could become mainly symbolic, though not irreversibly. For others, French was used in most of their occupations and enabled their participation in Metro Vancouver. For example, many of these participants were working in the FMC and often had a large Francophone network. Thus, speaking French appeared to be linked to how many opportunities the participants had to speak French, as well as to the benefits they could derive from speaking French.

I investigated participants' motivations for engaging in occupations in French while being in an Anglo-dominant environment. The meaning of choosing to engage in an activity in French rather than in English varied in relation to several considerations, such as participants' linguistic skills, the access to occupations in either language or the desire to use French for more satisfaction in specific occupations. That is, while speaking French was a necessity for the immigrants who did not speak English; the meaning of performing occupations in French for bilingual participants was related to the enhanced satisfaction and comfort they had to use the French language in a particular activity.

For participants not yet fluent in English, language represented a barrier in most of their daily occupations in the mainstream society. Thus, performing occupations in French was essential to them. Speaking French was associated with a sense of relief (as opposed to the stress when engaging in occupations in English), it could allow more comfort and safety in these immigrants' occupation. One participant who had come as a refugee said it was important for her

to receive services in French to ensure she could fully understand, have control over the situation and feel safe (e.g., for her asylum claim and other procedures related to her settlement in Canada).

Chercheuse : pourquoi vous avez souhaitez obtenir ces services-là spécifiquement en français ?
[...]

Participante : parce que, parce que j'aime pas signer pour signer, au moment de signer, avant de m'engager, je dois d'abord comprendre alors c'est comme – parce que des fois on t'amène des papiers, tu signes, tu signes, ici, par ci, par-là, alors je voulais pas de ça

Chercheuse : oui, oui, oui

Participante : **c'est pour ça que j'ai exigé que tout se passe en français pour une bonne compréhension, voilà**

Researcher: why did you wish to receive these services specifically in French?

Participant: because I don't like signing for the sake of signing, when I sign, before committing, I must understand first, so it's like – because sometimes people bring papers to you, you sign, you sign, here and there, so I didn't want that

Researcher: yeah, yeah, yeah

Participant: **that is why I requested everything to happen in French, to ensure a good understanding**

(Church, participant 1)

For participants fluent in both English and French, performing occupations in one language or the other was not always a conscious or deliberate choice. That is, participants were led to occupations in English or French because of their network or because it was convenient, depending on the opportunities they had, without the language necessarily being an important factor. For example, one participant came to the church because he had been put in touch with the pastor upon his arrival to Vancouver. Otherwise, he would not have sought a Francophone church since he is fluent in English and had been to Anglophone churches when he first arrived in Canada.

Chercheuse : c'est important pour toi qu'il y ait aussi le français [à l'église] ou ... ou pas ?

Participant : tu sais, j'ai vécu, j'ai vécu 12 ans ici

Chercheuse : ouais

Participant : au Canada, [...] c'est le, je pense la première fois d'aller dans une église francophone quoi [...]

Chercheuse : il se fait que c'est francophone donc, c'est comme ça mais tu, ça fait pas partie des choses qui te motivent à participer

Participant : non, c'est pas, c'est pas, ça a jamais été comme un critère quoi [...] ça a jamais été les critères d'une église d'anglais, d'une église de français, ça n'a jamais été un truc dans ma tête [...] je n'ai jamais pensé comme ça

Researcher: is it important for you that there is also French [at the church], or not?

Participant: you know, I live, I have been living here for 12 years

Researcher; yeah

Participant: in Canada, [...] it is, I think the first time I go to a Francophone church [...]

Researcher: it happens to be Francophone so, that's how it is but you, it is not part of the things that motivate you to participate

Participant; no it's not, it's not, it has never been like a criterion [...] it has never been a criterion of the English church, of the French church, it has never been a thing in my head [...] I never thought like this

(Church, participant 3)

For certain occupations, however, bilingual participants purposefully chose to use French. Despite their proficiency in English, certain occupations were either more comfortable or more enjoyable for them in French. For example, for most participants networking was easier in French. The language was a 'rare' shared characteristic to connect, some participants would meet other Francophones on the street and the French language would catch their attention and allow spontaneous connection. The language was also a means of better communication with some nuances being easier to express in French. Some participants preferred accessing health services in French as the vocabulary might be too specific and it was easier to express things in one's mother tongue. One participant (PO-2A) also said that it was easier for her to take her children to a Francophone dentist as it would make her children more comfortable in a context where they would usually be stressed.

For other activities such as shows and performances, the French language made the experience more pleasant. Some participants felt like they could not enjoy a performance in English as much as they would in French; that their understanding would always be partial.

Participant : du fait que l'anglais [...] ne soit pas ma langue maternelle, il y a des blagues, il y a des nuances, il y a des références que je ne ...

Chercheuse : que vous ne percevez pas, oui

Participant : que je ne perçois pas et à l'écrit je pense que c'est beaucoup plus facile, parce que c'est plus lent, vous pouvez aller chercher, demander « tiens qu'est-ce que ça, ça veut dire ? » etcetera, quand c'est *live*, quand c'est comme ça, en, tout de suite, les gens rient et moi j'ai aucune idée de ce qui se passe, c'est des références que je n'ai pas [...] **par exemple pour ce qui est de, du théâtre, des spectacles en anglais, je pense que je profite pas pleinement de l'expérience dû à mon niveau ... je peux pas vous dire ... c'est-à-dire je, il y a des nuances que je pourrais jamais percevoir**

Participant: because English [...] is not my mother tongue, there are jokes, there are nuances, there are references that I don't

Researcher: that you don't pick up, yes

Participant: that I don't pick up and in writing I think it is much easier, because it is slower, you can go search, ask "oh, what does that mean?" etcetera, when it is live, when it is like that, in, right there, people laugh and me, I have no idea what going on, it is references that I don't have [...] **for example when it comes to theatre, shows in English, I think that I am not enjoying the experience fully because of my level ... I cannot tell you ... that is, there are nuances that I will never be able to sense**

(Provincial organization, participant 2)

In summary, despite residing in an Anglo-dominant environment, the extent to which participants used French in their daily lives varied considerably. For many participants, using French in their daily occupations meant feeling more comfortable. For those who could speak English, choosing to engage in occupations in either French or English, was not always a conscious choice; but the enhanced satisfaction could be the motivation for them to choose to participate in occupations in French.

5.2.3 French over the life course

Participants' use of the French language was dynamic and shifted over time in relation to different factors, such as how long they had lived in B.C., their family status and stage of life (e.g., age, employment situation). This highlighted not only the spatial but also the temporal aspect of language use through occupations. Some participants explained that upon arrival they had initially avoided engaging in occupations in French as they thought it would impede their integration into the Anglo-dominant environment. For some participants being or becoming parents had fostered their use of the French language and their participation in the FMC as occupations related to their children were to be performed in French. However, when participants' children graduated and were leaving home, their engagement in the FMC diminished since the motivation of supporting the use of French for their children was no longer relevant. Nevertheless, these findings have to be nuanced since other participants started engaging in occupations in French precisely after their children had left home.

The attitude of participants toward the French language seemed to have evolved over time. For example, some participants described being ambivalent towards the Francophone community upon arrival to Metro Vancouver. They knew the area was Anglo-dominant before coming, some had chosen to migrate to B.C. specifically for this reason as they wished to learn English. They had the belief that speaking French and participating in the Francophone community was going to prevent them from learning English quickly and that their integration was going to be limited to the FMC, which is relatively small. Thus, many initially preferred to avoid performing occupations in French and/or related to the French language (i.e., with others from their country of origin and members of the FMC).

on est venu une première fois, il y a donc un an et à ce moment-là moi je voulais améliorer mon anglais, du coup je voulais pas du tout me rapprocher de la communauté – fin **c'était un choix de pas me rapprocher de la communauté française parce que je voulais améliorer mon anglais** et en fait avec le recul j'ai regretté en fait parce que je me suis dit que j'avais fait très peu de rencontre – fin au niveau social c'est pas facile de rencontrer du monde et autre du coup je me suis dit « cette fois-ci je fais pas la même erreur » [rire]

We came the first time, so one year ago and at that time, I wanted to improve my English, so I did not want to connect with the community – I mean **it was a choice to not connect with the French community because I wanted to improve my English** but in fact, retrospectively I regretted it because I realized I had met very few people – regarding the social aspect, it's not easy to meet people and so I told myself “this time, I do not make the same mistake” [laugh]
(Provincial organization, participant 4)

This participant indicated she eventually realized that learning English and participating in the FMC were not incompatible or counter-productive. After an initial period of avoiding the FMC, she became involved in the community as she noticed it allowed her family to build a network and find support more easily than in the Anglophone community. Also, she was a mother and she received important parenting support in the FMC.

For participants who were not comfortable in English, it was important to receive parenting support in French (e.g., consulting a gynecologist, receiving advice regarding breastfeeding, etc.). One participant (CA-2A) who was bilingual prior to arrival, explained that she had received Anglophone services when seeking employment and housing, but had gone to the FMC for occupations related to her children. Also, for some participants, the FMC provided the support they would have received from extended family members if they had been living in their countries of origin (e.g., babysitting).

For some participants who had school-aged children, linguistic transmission (i.e., teaching French to one's child) was important. Ensuring that one's child could be fluent in French was a new issue faced by many of the participants. For those coming from countries

where French is predominant, linguistic transmission had never been a concern for them, given that the child would have naturally grown up surrounded by the French language. However, in the Anglo-dominant context of Metro Vancouver, parents had to proactively and purposefully give opportunities to their child to use French in occupations in and outside the home. Thus, they engaged in different occupations in French and participated in the FMC with their children (e.g., play time, story time, extracurricular activities). It is important to note the role of Francophone schools in the FMC as they could act as a first point of contact between ‘ayant-droit’ Francophone parents (as explained section 2.2) and the community. Enrolling one’s children in Francophone school was often the first occasion to learn about the FMC and be introduced to the broader community and other Francophone sites. The following quotation highlights the major role of Francophone schools in supporting linguistic transmission. When asked what her motivations and expectations were to participate in these activities in these sites, the participant explained:

alors au niveau des enfants, je pense que c’est important pour eux comme pour notre famille, qu’ils puissent parler français, s’exprimer en français, ils ont encore une arrière-grand-mère, leurs grands-parents parlent uniquement français donc je pense que c’est important pour leur identité aussi, on est au Canada, les deux langues sont officielles, donc **c’est important pour eux je pense de – comme pour nous qu’ils deviennent bilingues, donc ça je pense que c’est ma première motivation pour les envoyer dans une école francophone**

so regarding the children, I think it is important for them as for our family, that they can speak French, express themselves in French, they still have one great-grandmother, their grandparents speak only French so I think that it is important for their identity as well, we are in Canada, both languages are official, so **it is important for them I think, as for us, that they become bilingual, so this, I think, is my first motivation to send them to Francophone school**

(Provincial organization, participant 2)

For participants who had gotten involved in the Francophone community through their children’s school, having their children graduate and leave home influenced their engagement in the community. Supporting their child’s use of the French language had been a primary

motivation for getting involved in the FMC. Given that their children were no longer living with them, these parents tended to participate less or their participation changed. In the following quotation, the participant explained how her interests in engaging in the FMC shifted from supporting Francophone education toward more cultural activities; when asked about how her engagement in the FMC changed over time, she responded:

je suis contente de la question parce que je pense que ça arrive à tous parents [...] quand ils [ses enfants] sont sortis du secondaire bon déjà je suis sortie de, de l'implication en tant que parent, du conseil des parents, et j'ai suivi, bon j'ai suivi de loin mais maintenant les activités de [association communautaire] [...] c'est-à-dire **j'ai eu comme un retrait de la francophonie sauf, en fait, je l'ai retrouvé particulièrement dans mon implication dans [association culturelle liée au pays d'origine de la participante]** [...] mais pour ce qui est du milieu scolaire, j'avoue que si, si c'est pas quelque chose qui me parle [...] donc maintenant c'est les - ce qui prouve l'importance de l'association culturelle [...] c'est à travers la culture que maintenant je suis retournée au scolaire.

I'm happy you ask this question because I think it happens to every parent [...] when they [her children] finished high school, so first I ended my involvement as a parent in the parent board and I followed, so I was following from afar the activities of the [community association] [...] that is, **I stepped back from the Francophonie except, in fact, I found my way back through my involvement in [cultural association related to the participant's country of origin]** [...] but regarding the scholar environment, I have to say if it wasn't, if it wasn't something that speaks to me [...] so now it is the – which proves the importance of cultural associations [...] it is through culture that I went back to the educational [environment]

(Community association, participant 2)

Based on my observations, parenting occupations seemed to be intimate and strongly shaped by culture, including linguistic aspects of culture. Thus, for many participants it was important to receive culturally relevant services and advice. Services in French were often preferred as it was more comfortable for participants. However, it is important to note that when it came to informal advice and exchanges among parents, participants described preferring to go to people from their countries of origin or from countries with similar cultures (i.e., individualistic or communal). That is, participants were searching for more than just a shared language, but also a similar cultural understanding. For example, the European participants

quoted earlier mentioned support they had received in sites where other participants tended to also be White Europeans or Canadians. It seemed that participants from the church did not engage in those same sites. However, the church had its own support system for parents. There was a “groupe des mamans” (mothers’ group) and a “groupe des papas” (fathers’ group) that each met once a month. The fathers’ group organised prayers while the mothers’ group seemed to organise more social activities. For example, I attended a gathering of the mothers’ group, it was a shared dinner at the pastor’s home. Participants also mentioned that this group organised baby showers and bought gifts for women who had recently given birth. It appeared that language and culture were intersecting in participants’ choice for parenting occupations.

It is important to note that I had a majority of women in my sample and only two fathers. These two participants did talk about parenting and linguistic transmission but these topics were addressed more importantly with participants who were mothers. Moreover, an important caveat with these findings regarding the importance of parenting as a factor enhancing usage of the French language, is that all the participants quoted were females and most of them had Francophone partners. However, a male participant who was retired said his participation in the Francophone community started only once he divorced from his Anglophone partner and did not have children at home anymore.

Participant : à vrai dire quand j’étais marié, quand j’étais marié, j’y allais pas [dans les sites communautaires francophones], je faisais pas, je faisais pas

Chercheuse : depuis quand du coup vous avez commencé à y aller ?

Participant : ben quand j’ai divorcé [...] voilà, mais euh, non ma femme, mon ex, elle était anglophone [...] aucun de mes enfants parlent français [...] mais non j’ai, j’ai jamais euh, ça m’est jamais passé par la tête à vrai dire, c’était une différente vie aussi, ouais c’était une différente vie

Chercheuse : oui, ben oui si vous aviez l’enfant etcetera, c’est pas ... une préoccupation quoi

Participant : il y a ... puis le travail, tout ça ... puis on avait une maison, ça ...

Chercheuse : oui entretenir la maison tout ça

Participant : ça prend, ça prend beaucoup de temps

Participant: to be honest when I was married, I wasn't going [to Francophone community sites], I didn't do, I didn't do

Researcher: so when did you start going?

Participant: when I got divorced [...] but no my wife, my ex, she was Anglophone [...] none of my children speak French [...] but no I never had, **it never came through my mind to be honest, also it was a different life, yeah it was a different life**

Researcher: yeah, if you had children etcetera, its is not ... a priority

Participant: there is ... and then work and all ... and we had a house, it ...

Researcher: yeah maintaining the house and all

Participant: it takes, it takes a lot of time

(Community association, participant 1)

At the time of the interview, this participant was very attached to the French language and it was important for him to be able to speak it. However, it appeared that his use of French had evolved over time, depending on the occupations he had had to prioritize. Ultimately, the participants' use of French evolved not only over space but also over time depending on their life situations, attitudes toward the language, and experiences as immigrants integrating into an Anglo-dominant area.

5.3 Engaging in occupations in French fluidly across permeable and interrelated spaces

While the previous theme focused on the importance of participating in daily occupations in French, this theme explores the spatial aspects of this occupational engagement. When participants were asked about where and in which occupations they had the opportunity to speak French they mentioned both formal sites (i.e., organizations such as the partner sites or other associations) and more informal spaces or occupations. In this theme I explore the meaning of these different spaces for participants, but also the fluidity between them.

Francophone community sites were found to be important ‘landmarks’ for immigrants to receive services in French. That is, these sites were identifiable spaces emphasizing the use of the French language in the Anglo-dominant landscape of Metro Vancouver. They could facilitate access to the labour market and information to support settlement. The sites also supported occupational engagement more broadly. For example, they could enable immigrants to maintain continuity by engaging in occupations similar to those they enjoyed prior to immigrating. The use of French was fluid across spaces and occupations. Participants mentioned spaces that they felt were attached to the French language without these being ‘formal’ Francophone community sites. Finally, the FMC seemed to be a ‘permeable’ minority because it was diverse and influenced by its Anglo-dominant surrounding. The embeddedness of the community within and throughout Metro Vancouver allowed it to play an important role in French-speaking immigrants’ integration into the broader Canadian society.

5.3.1 The Francophone community sites as landmarks supporting integration and occupational engagement

It appears that formal Francophone community sites, such as the partner sites were perceived as clear, identifiable physical spaces where participants could speak French. They could act as Francophone ‘landmarks’ in the Anglo-dominant landscape of Metro Vancouver. These spaces were important for Francophone immigrants to access information and services in French. For some participants, the Francophone community sites had played an important role in their integration, such as into the labour market, directly (e.g., job offers in Francophone community sites, employment support services), or indirectly (e.g., reference letters, gaining Canadian experience). Francophone community sites also enabled participants to access information facilitating transitions to their new daily lives in Canada. Participants with varied

levels of English fluency preferred receiving services in the Francophone community. Some participants felt that the services received in the FMC were better suited to their culture or way of thinking. Especially for participants from more communal cultures, it was important for them to find people with similar values. However, participants also identified limitations in the Francophone services they had received, citing limited hours of operation, and inadequate or insufficient support. Beyond integration needs, participating in Francophone community sites supported immigrants' occupational engagement. The activities offered enabled a sense of continuity with occupational interests they had prior to arriving in Metro Vancouver. Further, participants' engagement in the FMC tended to have a 'snowball effect'; the more they participated, the more they accessed opportunities for increased and/or ongoing participation.

Finding employment was essential for immigrants settling in Metro Vancouver to financially sustain themselves and their families. While the mainstream labour market could appear 'closed' to French-speaking immigrants because of expectations for strong English language skills or 'Canadian experience', participants explained that the Francophone community sites had constituted an 'open' space for them, as well as a bridge to access employment. Some participants had found employment directly in Francophone community sites. One participant explained how finding employment requiring English skills was not possible for her at first. Given that she could not speak the language, the Anglophone labour market was 'closed' to her but the FMC had provided her with an accessible and comfortable environment to work in. This had been particularly important for her to quickly be able to sustain her family upon arrival.

Mais vraiment la communauté francophone ici oh, pour moi c'est – ça m'a beaucoup aidé, pour mon intégration ici, parce que euh ... la langue anglaise ça me semble vraiment difficile depuis que je suis venue ici [...] au début c'était très, très difficile et j'avais envie de faire quelque chose. De rester à la maison du matin au soir, c'était pas vraiment très facile pour moi, et **je voulais**

avoir – être quelque part pour travailler mais par rapport à mon niveau d’anglais ça me permettait pas, mais dans le milieu francophone j’ai commencé à checker les emplois francophones à Vancouver, tout ça et du coup j’ai eu, je voyais des offres [...] j’ai été engagée et j’aime parce qu’il n’y a pas d’anglais là-bas, c’est juste le français donc je me sens à l’aise dans le milieu fran- avec la communauté francophone vraiment, c’est vraiment for- très bien, je suis très bien, à l’aise, vraiment pour mon intégration, ça a contribué beaucoup.

But really the Francophone community here, oh, for me it’s – it helped me a lot, for my integration here, because ... the English language, it seems very difficult to me, since I have come here [...] in the beginning and **I wanted to do something. To stay at home all day long, it was not really very easy for me, and I wanted to have – be somewhere to work but regarding my level in English, it didn’t allow me, but in the Francophone environment, I started looking at Francophone jobs in Vancouver** and everything and so I had, I saw offers [...] **I was hired and I like because there is no English over there, it is just French so I feel comfortable** in the Francophone environment – with the Francophone community really, it is really – very good, I feel very good, comfortable, really for my integration, it contributed a lot (Church, participant 2)

For other participants, the FMC had served as a facilitator or bridge to find employment in the larger community. Several participants explained that employers often demanded “Canadian experience”, which required access to opportunities (i.e., spaces and occupations to participate in). The Francophone community sites were spaces facilitating this participation for French-speaking immigrants. People who had volunteered in Francophone community sites were able to include this experience on their curriculum vitae or sometimes obtain a reference letter to secure employment in Metro Vancouver.

The sites were also important spaces for participants to access information and practical training (e.g., as part of an educational program) or hands-on experiences (e.g., volunteering, doing an internship) that enabled them to understand ‘how things work’ and adjust to their new lifestyles in Canada. Thus, the Francophone community sites also supported the immigrants’ occupational transitions in Canada.

Chercheuse : quel rôle est-ce que ça a eu de participer dans ces centres pour vous intégrer [...]

Participant : je sais comment – en fait, **à l’Educentré déjà on vous apprend même les petites choses, on vous apprend comment prendre le bus, comment recharger son go-pass parce que là c’est plus l’intégration**

Chercheuse : oui c’est vrai, des petites choses, il faut savoir, c’est vrai que ...

Participant : **comment aller à la banque, c’est quoi l’importance d’avoir un compte bancaire, c’est quoi une carte de crédit, on vous donne juste des informations qui a attrait à l’intégration**

Researcher: What role did your participation in these centres have on your integration? [...]

Participant: I know how – in fact, **at Educentré first they teach you even small things, they teach you how to take the bus, how to top-up your go-pass because there, it is more about integration**

Researcher: yes, it is true, small things, you have to know, it is true that ...

Participant: **how to go to the bank, what is the importance of having a bank account, what is a credit card, they just give you information regarding integration**

(Church, participant 1)

Beyond being more comfortable in French, some participants mentioned that they preferred going to the FMC because they would obtain better services there. For example, some participants found that the services they received in the FMC were better suited to their way of thinking and their culture. They felt better understood, thus more efficiently and appropriately addressed in regard to their cultural needs. However, it is likely that the cultural comfort felt in the FMC was due not only to a shared language of communication, but also to the presence of people from the same country of origin or similar cultures. For example, in the church where most congregants were Congolese, the importance of finding people with a similar communal culture was mentioned by many participants.

Participant : et quand je suis arrivée, j’ai trouvé mes frères congolais et ça m’a plus – ça a attiré plus mon attention parce que, mon attention parce que je me suis vue que je suis toujours en famille et ça va plus m’aider de renouveler encore la joie que j’avais auparavant dans mon pays tout ça, **parce que la vie ici c’est pas facile, c’est, c’est un peu une vie un peu, très individuelle, chacun pour soi et chez nous on s’est habitué avec cette vie de la communauté tout ça et à partir de cette église ça m’a aidée, je me suis retrouvée encore comme si j’étais chez moi**

Chercheuse : donc est-ce que ça aide à briser l’isolation suite à l’immigration un peu ?

Participant : oui, oui, oui, surtout pour l'isolation donc ça m'a plus aidé [...] parce que là, comme je suis là, je me sens vraiment en famille

Participant ; and when I came, I found my Congolese brothers and it caught my attention more, because, my attention, because I saw myself as I am always in my family and it is going to help me more to renew again the joy that I had before in my country and all, **because life here is not easy, it is, it is a little, a life a little, very individualistic, everyone for themselves and at home we were used to this community life and all and from the Church it helped me, I found myself as if I was at home**

Researcher: so does it help to break down isolation following immigration a little bit?

Participant: yes, yes, yes, especially for isolation so it helped me more [...] because here, as I am here, I really feel in my family

(Church, participant 2)

While participating in Francophone community sites was important for participants to integrate, some also identified limitations in the services they had obtained. Some participants highlighted the lack of available Francophone services. They also emphasized the lack of 'active offer' in Metro Vancouver, referring to services that could be delivered in French (i.e., federal services) but were not well advertised and thus not accessed because English was used by default. Participants also mentioned that services in the Francophone community were not always up to the standards they expected, partly due to lack of capacity. One participant (CA-3B) expressed disappointment about the lack of follow up she had received from particular Francophone services providers. She explained during the first interview, which occurred very shortly after her arrival in Metro Vancouver that she hoped to find guidance and support in the FMC; however, during the second interview three months later, she felt like the support she was receiving was inconsistent and sometimes negligent. She described having to seek information herself and she had received little orientation regarding Metro Vancouver. Participants talked about other difficulties they had faced such as limited operation hours or not receiving adequate answers to their questions.

Beyond settlement services for newcomers, Francophone community sites supported French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement regardless of their year of arrival. Participants mentioned a variety of occupations they engaged in, depending on what was offered in the sites they accessed. They engaged as participants or organisers in celebrations, events, festivals, church services, activities with their children, and workshops on different topics.

Some participants said that their involvement in Francophone community sites was in continuity with occupations and interests they pursued before coming to Metro Vancouver. For example, one participant explained that she had volunteered for and led organizations for women in her country of origin, thus she was interested in joining a women's association in Metro Vancouver. Also, many participants from the church spoke about the continuity of practicing their religion over their life course. It was important for them to be able to keep performing occupations related to their faith as it was an important part of their identity.

c'est pour servir que je viens à l'église, c'est pas pour soit pour gagner quelque chose ou – oui **parce que la vie à l'église, c'est la vie que je menais avant que je vienne au Canada, pendant beaucoup d'année** alors, je ne peux pas vivre en dehors de l'église, oui, parce que j'ai des responsabilités aussi vis-à-vis de l'église, oui, c'est pourquoi je viens chaque fois à l'église

it is to serve that I come to the church, it is not to earn something or – yes **because the church life, it is the life I had before I came to Canada, for many years** so, I cannot live outside of the church, yes, because I have responsibilities too towards the church, yes, this is why I come to church every time

(Church, participant 4)

For some participants, their occupational engagement in the FMC was an essential part of their regular routines. For participants who were retired or not currently employed, volunteering or participating in different occupations offered by the Francophone community sites was described as a meaningful and fulfilling use of their time. One participant had been sponsored by her husband to come to Canada but his work permit did not allow her to seek employment. It was

important for her to be able to engage in occupations in the FMC, as she was applying for permanent residency and hoped her volunteering experiences would be an asset for finding employment afterwards. Participating in the FMC was also described as being very important for her well-being:

Chercheuse : au final vous êtes engagée dans beaucoup d'endroits différents, ça vous apporte comme un équilibre, parce que vous avez à la fois la bibliothèque, les associations etcetera, vous êtes bien occupée [rire]

Participante : ouais, non, c'est [rire] j'ai le temps quand même de faire autre chose parce qu'on va pas – mais je suis pas, **je suis pas là, à – je peux pas hein ? m'asseoir là parce que, parce qu'il y a un temps où je, je me suis – comment on dit ?- déprimée [...] stressée**, oui, parce que « oh je veux partir, je veux aller à la maison » c'était pas facile

Chercheuse : donc là ça vous donne l'occasion de sortir et

Participante : oui, oui, oui, oui

Researcher: so you are involved in many different places, it brings balance to you, because you have the library, the associations etcetera, you keep busy [laugh]

Participant; yeah, no, it's [laugh] I have time still to do other things because we are not going to – but I am not, **I am not here - I cannot, right? Sitting here because, because there has been a time when I, I got – how to say? – depressed [...] stressed**, yes, because “oh I want to leave, I want to go home” it was not easy

Researcher: so there, it gives you an occasion to go out and

Participant: yes, yes, yes, yes

(Community association, participant 5)

For some immigrants, participation in the FMC had a 'snowball effect'. That is, the more they engaged in occupations within Francophone community sites, the more they became aware of other occupational opportunities. It allowed further networking, potential opportunities for leadership positions and better information about the FMC in general. Participants often felt increasingly comfortable in the Francophone community sites, which further motivated their participation. For example, one participant (PO-5A) had been very involved in her children's Francophone school. She had met many people from the FMC this way and she had been invited to sit on the board of other associations.

Participant : ben écoutes ce qui se passe c'est que jusqu'à maintenant c'est là où je suis, mais je sais que ça va être plus grand parce que c'est ça, parce que tu montes – c'est un peu monter une échelle, c'est un peu agrandir tes

Chercheuse : oui, c'est ça, de fil en aiguille, j'ai l'impression que

Participant : **de fil en aiguille, tu vois ce que je veux dire ? Donc euh même chose -parce que je me rappelle que, c'est ça, le plus que tu connais de monde, plus ça t'ouvre des portes et des esprits tu vois encore le fait que [nom de la directrice d'une association francophone] m'ait dit de rencontrer**

Chercheuse : oui, oui

Participant : tu vois ce que je veux dire ? [...] mais **même à l'école hein, je te dis, même à l'école, oui j'ai rencontré des parents et t'as ton réseau et t'as des amis et tout ça, mais avant de devenir vraiment [rôle sur le comité d'une Association de Parents d'Élève], je connaissais pas vraiment ce qui se passait dans la communauté**

Chercheuse : ouais, ouais, ok, ok, tu veux dire, ton degré de – fin pour obtenir l'information, il a fallu vraiment s'engager

Participant : ouais

Chercheuse : pour être vraiment au fait de ce qui se faisait dans la communauté

Participant : oui, et de comprendre comment ça marche, oui, absolument

Participant: well listen, what happens is that, until now, this is where I am, but I know it will be bigger because that is it, because you go up – it is a bit like going up a ladder, it is like rising your

Researcher: yes, that is it, one thing leading to another, I feel like

Participant: **one thing leading to another, you see what I mean? So euh same thing – because I remember that, that is it, the more people you know, the more it opens doors to you and minds, you see again the fact that [name of the director of a Francophone association] told me to meet**

Researcher: yes, yes

Participant: you see what I mean? [...] but **even at school, right? I am telling you, even at school, yes I met parents and you have your network and you have your friends and all, but before I became [position on the board of a Parent Advisory Council], I did not really know what was happening in the community**

Researcher: yeah, yeah, ok, ok, you mean, the degree of – to obtain information, you really had to get involved

Participant: yeah

Researcher: to be really aware of what was happening in the community

Participant: yes, and to understand how it works, yes, absolutely

(Provincial organization, participant 5)

Formal Francophone community spaces were important for the participants who perceived them as Francophone landmarks in the Anglo-dominant environment of Metro Vancouver. Despite being sometimes limited in the help they could provide to immigrants; the sites could constitute ‘open’ spaces that supported occupational engagement. That is, the sites could be easier to access for French-speaking immigrants (e.g., because of the language), in order to meet their occupational needs.

5.3.2 The fluidity of the Francophonie

While the Francophone community sites were physical spaces where the meaning and benefits of speaking French in Metro Vancouver seemed to crystalize; participants also mentioned other spaces, including virtual spaces, or occupations where they used French in their daily lives. Their engagement with la Francophonie went beyond entering formal, physical Francophone spaces. The use of French was fluid across spaces and occupations and sometimes depended more on the person they were talking to. Also, participants mentioned spaces that they perceived as associated with the French language, the Francophone community or their identity as Francophones that were beyond formal Francophone community sites. Indeed, restaurants, food stores, and libraries could support Francophone immigrants’ occupational engagement in French. Moreover, their participation in formal and informal Francophone spaces was fluid; one could lead to the other and they were not necessarily distinct for the participants.

Most participants said their motivation and the main outcome they had gotten out of their participation in formal Francophone community sites were meeting people and socializing. The sites were important for supporting these social interactions in French. However, speaking a language could be as much a matter of the interlocutor as the space. Some people were more comfortable telling me who they used French with than where they spoke the language.

Participants mentioned French-speaking friends that they met within or outside the FMC and with whom they would perform occupations and use the French language.

The use of French with one's Francophone friends was very fluid across spaces and occupations. Francophones would meet informally in a variety of public and private spaces and for different occasions. Some participants would go to predominantly Anglophone sites with a Francophone friend and thus, use French during their occupations there. Performing these occupations, although not in a Francophone environment, allowed them to build connections with French-speaking friends.

je fais un cours de chant, de yoga mais **c'est mené par une anglophone [...] et ça aussi ça me créé des liens**, du coup on s'est mises les deux, **avec ma copine française, puis on y va ensemble et puis du coup on s'est créé un lien elle et moi**

I am taking singing lessons, yoga but **it is led by an Anglophone [...] and this as well it creates connections**, so we registered both of us, **with my French friend, and we go together and so then it creates connection between her and me**

(Provincial organization, participant 1)

Participants' networking and occupational engagement in formal Francophone community sites, informal spaces and spaces that were not Francophone-specific were interwoven. For example, personal French-speaking networks were often connected to formal Francophone community sites in a bidirectional way. Participation in Francophone community sites could allow the creation of a French-speaking network (e.g., meeting French-speaking parents at one's children's school) that could be met later, informally in other spaces. And accessing formal Francophone community sites could occur through informal networking. For example, a participant explained how she had gotten in touch with Francophone settlement

services through word-of-mouth from French-speaking acquaintances and family members. It also seemed like it was important for her to confirm the information she had received.

Chercheuse : le premier contact avec la communauté francophone comment vous avez - c'est votre [membre de la famille] qui vous a orienté ?

Participant : hm le premier contact je dirais c'est quand je partais au bureau de l'immigration en ville alors j'ai rencontré des africains qui parlait français comme moi, [...] ils m'ont dit « non, non, il y a, il y a un centre francophone ici, patati, machin », j'ai dit « ok donnez-moi l'adresse », alors ils m'ont remis l'adresse, c'est quand **je suis rentrée chez [membre de la famille] que je lui ai montré l'adresse il a dit « ok, oh je connais quelqu'un qui travaille là-bas mais il y a longtemps qu'on s'est pas parlé, je vais essayer de prendre contact avec lui, on verra » et quand il a repris contact avec son ami, c'est ainsi que son ami lui dit « oh je continue toujours à travailler là-bas, vous pouvez venir »**, c'est là on a aussi eu quelques pistes d'information et voilà

Researcher: the first contact with the Francophone community, how did you – it is your [family member] who oriented you?

Participant: hm the first contact I would say it is when I went to the immigration office downtown so I met African people who spoke French like me [...] they told me “no, no, there is, there is a Francophone center, etcetera”, I said “ok, give me the address”, so they gave me the address, it is when **I came back at my [family member], that I showed him the address, he said “oh I know someone who works there but it has been a long time since we last talked, I will try to contact him and we will see” and when he contacted his friend, this is how his friend said “oh I am still working there, you can come”**, that is where we got some information

(Church, participant 1)

Some participants talked about spaces that might not be part of formal Francophone community sites but that they perceived as connected to the French language or to a part of their self-described Francophone identity. For example, several participants referred to restaurants or stores selling food from their countries of origin. These spaces were important as they allowed immigrants to connect with their culture. They could serve as landmarks to find information through informal networking. One participant explained how she found the church by going to different places, including her hairdresser and a food store, where she knew she could find French-speaking people. The informal spaces tended to be related to the participants' countries of origin.

Several participants said public libraries were also important spaces for them. Some participants used the Francophone library (at *la maison de la Francophonie*) and some also mentioned using branches of the Vancouver Public Library that were located close to their homes. Despite having mostly English-language materials, the library also had limited French books and DVDs. One participant also mentioned activities offered in French in some of these sites.

Regarding virtual spaces, it is interesting to note that they tended to mirror physical spaces. They could be related to a formal Francophone community space (e.g., the web site, Facebook page or newsletter of one of the partner sites), or they could be more informal and tended to be attached to a country or continent of origin. For example, several participants talked about “le guide du croutard”, which is a page existing in many cities around the world for French people and Francophone Europeans living abroad. This space allowed participants to network and obtain information. In any case there was fluidity between these spaces. For example, information obtained in an informal virtual space could lead to participation in a physical formal Francophone community space.

Finally, participants described engaging in occupations in French such as reading the news, using social media or listening to the radio (either French-Canadian or from their countries of origin). These occupations, while not being attached to a particular physical space were important for participants to engage with the French language. Sometimes media allowed participants to be informed about events occurring in the local FMC.

While formal Francophone community spaces played an important role in supporting immigrants’ occupational engagement in French, participants’ use of French was both fluid and interweaved across spaces and through occupations. Personal networks and informal spaces

could provide opportunities to use French in one's daily occupations. Participants' occupational engagement in French, in Francophone community sites and other spaces, was often interconnected.

5.3.3 A permeable minority

The Francophone minority spaces were embedded within the broader Anglo-dominant society; these spaces were in constant transaction with this environment and could not be considered as hermetic entities. Francophone community sites constituted part of the broader society of Metro Vancouver and they were influenced by their surroundings. In that sense, the Francophone minority spaces and the Canadian society co-constituted and co-constructed each other. I observed bi-directional co-construction during my fieldwork. For example, linguistic practices within the FMC demonstrated its permeability. Francophone spaces were not strictly Francophone; while French was dominant in these spaces, other languages were used, often English but also Créole, Lingala, Swahili and other languages. Sometimes the use of English in Francophone community sites was purposeful in order to make the sites accessible to people who might not speak French. The embeddedness of the FMC in the broader Canadian society was also visible through the outcomes of immigrants' participation in the community. Because the Francophone community sites were embedded in the broader Canadian society, the participants' engagement in these sites could allow them to develop a sense of belonging in Canada. It also opened occupational opportunities for them beyond the FMC.

Francophone community sites provided the participants with the opportunity to speak French. However, despite the will to advocate for and 'preserve' the French language in B.C., they did not represent a 'fortress' protecting French-speaking immigrants from the dominance of English. As mentioned in section 5.2.1, English was needed "outside" for most occupations in

Metro Vancouver. Yet, even within the FMC, English could be needed to engage in occupations. For example, one participant working in the FMC explained that she still had to learn English in order to complete employment-related training.

Chercheuse : mais le fait d'avoir un travail en français est-ce que ça enlève un peu la pression d'avoir besoin d'apprendre l'anglais dès que possible ?

Participant : non, **non ça n'enlève pas la pression là, non**

Chercheuse : parce que ?

Participant : **parce que, malgré c'est un travail francophone mais des fois je suis aussi un peu pénalisée par rapport à d'autres formations des renforcements des capacités qui se déroulent avec les éducatrices, tout ça, là ça se passe en anglais je peux participer mais ... assister mais participer dans des débats c'est un peu difficile parce que c'est en anglais** tout ça donc je suis obligée, c'est la raison pour laquelle je continue toujours à apprendre l'anglais chez moi mais après juin je compte vraiment retourner dans le programme du soir, trois fois par semaine.

Researcher: but the fact that you have a job in French, does it relieve the pressure to learn English as soon as possible?

Participant: no, **no it does not relieve the pressure, no**

Researcher: because?

Participant: **because, despite the fact that it is a French job but sometimes I am also disadvantaged regarding some capacity-building training that occurs with educators, all of this, it happens in English and I can participate but ... attend but participating in the discussions it is a little bit difficult because it is in English** and all so I am forced, that is the reason why I always keep learning English at home but after June I really intend to go back to the evening program, three times a week

(Church, participant 2)

People would often mix different languages and when both speakers were bilingual conversations could happen in both languages. This mix of languages was often new to immigrants who had lived in predominantly Francophone areas before coming to Metro Vancouver. During some interviews, it was common for participants to use English words to speak to me, and I also sometimes used English words. Some participants said they enjoyed being able to switch between languages depending on their comfort to express ideas in one language or the other.

For participants speaking languages other than French and English, particularly participants coming from former Francophone colonies, French was also mixed with Créole, Lingala or Swahili for example. The use of these languages was important to them, whether in spaces specific to their countries of origin or in spaces with other people speaking these languages. For example, at the church, where many people came from African countries, participants used many languages. It was interesting to note that some languages were attached to particular occupations. One participant explained that mixing French and other languages was common in the diaspora.

Chercheuse : Quand vous êtes dans la communauté haïtienne, vous parlez créole ou vous parlez français ?

Participante : Les deux.

Chercheuse : Et les deux mélangés ?

Participante : Et même beaucoup plus – mélangé, oui parce que **c'est un phénomène de la diaspora qu'on mélange les deux**, mais ce qui est intéressant c'est que nos réunions, nos AGA, bon dès qu'on a un invité [...] **s'il y a un ou deux anglophones...**

Chercheuse : Tout de suite on parle anglais.

Participante : On utilise l'anglais pour simplifier, mais souvent [...] je traduis. Mais en fait l'utilisation du créole va varier selon l'interlocuteur. Si j'ai des jeunes qui eux ont grandi [...] plutôt à Montréal, ils peuvent avoir compris le créole parce qu'ils l'ont entendu à la maison, mais ils ne vont pas le parler, donc bon à ce moment-là, généralement, en fait **l'anglais ça met tout le monde à l'aise.**

Researcher: in the Haitian community do you speak Créole or French?

Participant: Both.

Researcher: Both mixed?

Participant: and even much more – mixed, yes because **it is a phenomenon of the diaspora that we mix both** but what is interesting is that our meetings, our general assembly, anytime we have a guest [...] **if there is one or two Anglophones**

Researcher: right away, we speak English

Participant: we use English to simplify [...] but the use of Créole depends on the speaker [...] if I have youth who grew up in Montréal, they might understand Créole because they used to hear it at home [...] but they don't speak it, so in that case, in fact **English makes everybody comfortable.**

(Community association, participant 2)

In this quotation it is also interesting to note that English could be used in the FMC as a lingua franca depending on members' level of comfort in French. English was also often used to open Francophone spaces to the broader public. For example, the church was bilingual in order to reach more people. In this site, the use of English served two purposes: reaching those who might not speak French and helping Francophone immigrants to better integrate in the Anglo-dominant environment of Metro Vancouver.

Because the FMC was embedded in the broader context of Metro Vancouver and because it was in constant transaction with this environment, participation in the FMC could support integration into the broader Canadian society. Indeed, several participants mentioned that they had developed a sense of belonging to Canada thanks to their engagement in the FMC:

Chercheuse : est-ce que ça, ça a aidé justement à vous intégrer puis à – comme à vous sentir bien ici au Canada, de savoir un peu tout ça ?

Participante : oui, oui, **ça m'a aidé beaucoup de choses, se sentir bien, se sentir, oui, ici au Canada aussi, je peux avoir une famille, c'est mon pays aussi**, oui, maintenant j'ai pas, peur, avant j'avais peur euh peut-être de partir dans la rue seule, mais maintenant j'y vais, je prends le bus, je sais comment utiliser [...], je sais comment acheter des choses sur le marché, oui c'est ça

Chercheuse : ok, ok, est-ce que vous avez un sentiment – parce que vous avez dit « le Canada c'est mon pays », est-ce que vous avez un sentiment d'appartenance comme c'est

Participante : oui, oui, **ces deux sites-là m'ont aidé à comprendre bien que le pays du Canada peut être aussi mon pays** parce que j'ai vu « oh », ici au Canada, il y avait aussi des personnes comme celles que j'ai rencontrées là, alors c'est cool, oui

Researcher: did it help you to integrate and – to feel good here in Canada, to know a little bit all of this?

Participant: yes, yes, **it helped me a lot of things, to feel good, to feel, yes, here in Canada too, I can have a family, it is my country as well**, yes, now I am not afraid, before I was afraid euh maybe to go out alone in the street, but now I go, I take the bus, I know how to use it [...] I know how to buy things on the market, yes that is it

Researcher: ok, ok, do you have a feeling – because you said “Canada is my country”, do you have a sense of belonging like it is

Participant: yes, yes, **these two sites helped me to understand that the country of Canada can also be my country** because I saw “oh”, here is Canada there were people like those that I met there, so it is cool, yes

(Community association, participant 4)

Finally, participating in Francophone community sites allowed participants to obtain information about activities in the FMC and also in Metro Vancouver more generally. This information was significant for participants to access new occupations and expand their occupational repertoire. Immigrants would access opportunities beyond the FMC as a result of their participation in Francophone community sites.

et ça je trouve que le fait de pouvoir justement discuter dans ce lieu là et d'échanger que ce soit là-dessus, que ce soit sur des sorties, des ballades, des choses à voir, à faire dans le coin euh parce que c'est vrai que bon ben Vancouver c'est chouette mais culturellement c'est pas Paris ou autre, fin je veux dire c'est génial, il y a des choses d'organisées et tout mais c'est pas – comment dire ?- euh il y a beaucoup de balade, beaucoup de choses à faire mais quelque part si on, si vous le savez pas euh c'est pas facile d'aller dans ce genre de choses donc c'est vrai, le fait de pouvoir échanger comme là « ben j'ai fait une super balade à vélo ici ou là » ben ça permet aussi de se dire « bon ben je prends le vélo et j'y vais », quelque chose comme ça, ça perme - ouais c'est beaucoup d'échanges.

And this, I found that being able to chat in that place and exchange, whether it be on that topic, whether it be about outings, hikes, things to see, to do in the area, because it is true that, well Vancouver is nice but culturally it is not like Paris or other places, I mean it is great, there are things organised and all but it is not – how to say it?- there are a lot of hikes, a lot of things to do but at some point if you, if you do not know about it, it is not easy to go to these kinds of things so it is true, being able to exchange like here “I had a great bike ride here and there” it allows to be like “ok so I take my bike and I go there” something like that, it allows – yeah it is a lot of exchanges.

(Provincial organization, participant 4)

The linguistic practices in Francophone community sites and the outcomes of immigrants' participation in these sites demonstrated the embeddedness of the sites in Metro Vancouver and their permeability. Given the predominance of the English language and the minority context of the FMC, Francophone community sites had to be open (e.g., to people with various linguistic skills). The constant transaction between the FMC and its Anglophone

surrounding allowed Francophone community sites to act as a facilitator of French-speaking immigrants' integration into the broader Canadian society.

5.4 Producing Francophone spaces for the diverse population of the FMC

As I engaged in the partner sites and with the participants, I noticed that the different mandates and ways to organize occupations led to different outcomes in each site, especially with respect to diversity. I was also interested in the meaning of the sites for the participants and their experiences in regard to diverse identity markers. This section considers how Francophone community spaces are produced in light of increasing community diversity stemming from international migration as French-speaking immigrants and refugees constitute a diverse population. Specifically, the study participants were from six different countries with varied cultures. In this section I examine the production of Francophone spaces occurring through their occupational engagement. In line with my interest in intersectionality and critical theory, I explore the role of diverse identity markers, occupation and power dynamics in the production of space.

At times, during the data collection and analysis, I noticed that there were some incongruencies between what I heard from key informants, from participants in personal interviews, and what I observed in the sites. These incongruencies highlighted differences between key informants' vision for the sites, participants' understandings of the sites, and practices occurring within the sites. I observed how these elements were sometimes in conflict and sometimes in alignment. Lefebvre's theory of the production of space helped me understand these different discourses, perceptions and practices as elements of the production of the Francophone spaces. I adopted the spatial triad of conceived, perceived and lived space as an

interpretive guide to distinguish but also to understand the interaction between the three elements in my examination of the spatiality of occupation.

5.4.1 The leadership's vision for the partner sites

In this section I address the power dynamics within and beyond the FMC that had an impact on participants' occupational engagement in Francophone community spaces. I explain how the sites were described by their leadership and what the vision was at the decisional level. I paid particular attention to the place of immigrants and diversity in this vision. For example, I examined the meaning of bringing Francophones together, and specifically of including immigrants, according to the key informants. I also considered power dynamics beyond the FMC and its impact on immigrants' participation in Francophone community sites. For example, the key informants mentioned the lack of recognition of the FMCs in B.C. and the lack of funding for Francophone community sites. Moreover, the spatial dynamics in Metro Vancouver, such as its geographic size, impeded the accessibility of the Francophone community sites to all French-speaking immigrants.

The vision regarding the presence of immigrants and the inclusion of diversity varied depending on the sites. For example, in the church, the key informant said he wanted it to be open to any person interested in the Christian faith. It was important for him that the church was inclusive and did not discriminate; and that faith was what united all members of the church. Given that most of the church members were immigrants, the question of immigrants' participation was mostly irrelevant during the interview:

Informateur : pour moi je crois que les gens viennent dans l'église, comme j'ai dit, de différentes origines, de différentes éducations, de différentes nationalités, différentes races euh différents âges, comme on dit âge lorsque les gens là vient, chacun a sa manière de faire les choses mais ce qui les unit, les rapproche c'est la vision de l'église, ce qui les rapproche c'est l'église, tu as des gens qui, ils se retrouvent dans la vision de l'église, parce que on peut pas – l'église c'est une

famille d'abord, c'est une équipe, pour être ensemble, pour aller de l'avant, il faut avoir une même objectif, une même vision, malgré que on ait la diversité

Chercheuse : la diversité, oui

Informateur : mais il y a l'unité, une diversité mais dans l'unité, donc chacun a une diversité, sa façon de voir les choses, sa façon de faire les choses, sa façon de regarder les choses

Chercheuse : chacun contribue à sa manière

Informateur : voilà, mais dans un même objectif

Chercheuse : oui finalement ces marqueurs d'identi- fin les gens se retrouvent autour d'un but commun donc ils contribuent de manière différente mais ça

Informateur : voilà, c'est tout, une diversité dans l'unité

Informant : for me I believe that people come to church, as I said, from different origins, from different educational backgrounds, different nationalities, different races, different ages, as we say age, when people come here, each have their way of doing things but what unites them, bring them closer, it is the vision of the church, what brings them closer it is the church, you have people who, they find themselves in the vision of the church, because we cannot – the church first is a family, it is a team, to be together, to move forward, we need to have a common goal, a shared vision, despite we have diversity

Researcher: diversity, yes

Informant: but there is unity, diversity but in unity, so each person has diversity, their way of seeing things, their way of doing things, their way of looking at things

Researcher: each contribute with their own way

Informant: exactly, but with a common goal

Researcher: yes, at the end of the day these identity markers – people gather around a common goal, so they contribute in different ways but

Informant: exactly, that is it, diversity in unity

(Church, key informant)

As mentioned earlier, the church was bilingual in order to be open to people who might not speak French. The aim was not specifically to bring Francophone people together, but rather people sharing the same faith. This faith was expected to be the core of a strong sense of community in that site, with family-like connections between the members of the church. The openness to diversity was meant to attract more congregants and was in alignment with the faith of the church. Beyond the bilingualism, this desire to create a strong sense of community and to be open to new members was demonstrated through the organization of regular or 'intimate'

activities as well as punctual ‘public’ activities. On the one hand, the regularity of weekly Sunday mass was an important factor in the development of a sense of community. Other weekday activities occurring in private settings such as the pastor’s home also contributed to the sense of closeness among the members. On the other hand, the church organized more ‘public’ events, such as the gala hosted in a public venue. These events were meant to attract new people in addition to gathering the current members for a festive occasion.

In the provincial organization, the immigrant population was not as predominant as in the church, although the key informant mentioned that she had noticed an increase in the number of immigrants from Europe and Africa among the parents. The leadership seemed to be reflecting on the services provided to this population but it also seemed like the inclusion and participation of Francophone immigrants was expected to happen organically; as a natural outcome of the increasing arrival of immigrants to the community who would enrol their children in French language schools. For example, the key informant explained that its board and those of its member associations reflected the population of the parents and since there were immigrants among the parents, they were automatically present on the boards.

Chercheuse : donc vous trouvez une mixité [entre personnes nées au Canada et à l’étranger] et dans vos participants et dans les employés de l’association et le conseil d’administration

Informatrice : absolument, absolument, ouais, **parce qu’il faut dire que là, au niveau des conseils d’administration euh c’est les membres en fait, faut qu’ils soient membre, donc un de nos membres, donc par le biais de ça**

Chercheuse : oui, ils sont représentés

Informatrice : c’est représentatif de ce qui – peut-être pas au niveau statistique là, mais certainement au niveau du nombre euh oui on est représentatif de ce côté-là, oui

Researcher: so you find a mix [between people born in Canada and abroad] in your participants and in the employees of the association and the board of directors

Informant: absolutely, absolutely, yeah, because **I have to say that there, at the level of the boards of directors, uh it's the members in fact, they have to be a member, so one of our members, so this way**

Researcher: yes, they are represented

Informant: it is representative of what - maybe not statistically, but certainly in terms of numbers uh yes we are representative in this regard, yes

(Provincial organization, key informant)

The associations for parents were said to be open to any parent, including immigrants, because there was no specific previous experience required to get involved. It was acknowledged that the increasing diversity among the members of the site required changes of the site itself to facilitate immigrants' participation and representation. However, it appeared that these changes had not yet completely occurred. The key informant mentioned efforts being made regarding linguistic insecurity and cultural sensitivity training of the team. For example, the key informant explained that it could be a challenge to offer parenting advice and explain 'how things work' in Canada while respecting the person's culture. At the provincial organization, it seemed like the creation of a sense of community could happen but was not pro-actively encouraged. The services and activities offered targeted the family unit. Besides the in-person activities that occurred regularly and in groups, the other services tended to be more individualized. Perhaps the sense of community was expected to develop at the level of each school.

At the community association, the diversity of the population was an important theme during the interview as uniting and supporting a diverse population seemed to be the daily task of the key informant. Very quickly in the interview the informant mentioned how the targeted population of the organization was changing due to immigration and the site was therefore also undergoing transformation: "le visage de la francophonie, le visage de l'immigration change de plus en plus, ici surtout à [nom de la ville], et que nous devons être vraiment en mesure de changer nous-mêmes.". ["the face of the Francophonie, the face of immigration is changing more and more, especially here in [name of the city], and so we have to be able to change ourselves"]

(community association, key informant)]. It was important for the key informant to create a sense of community among French-speakers in a minority context, in hopes that they would support each other, in the name of a common language while living in an Anglo-dominant environment.

et donc chaque personne arrive avec cette belle richesse, c'est une belle, énorme, belle culture donc mosaïque culturelle ici, ce qui est très important de garder cette cohésion, ce que je souhaite c'est vraiment de rester ensemble, et d'oublier je viens de quel coin du monde, c'est pas ça qui est important, l'important c'est que je me sens francophone, dans mon cœur, dans mon âme, donc je rêve en français, non seulement je parle en français mais je rêve en français, je mange français donc je sens français, le feeling, le sentiment donc c'est très important, nous sommes donc vraiment, vraiment comme les branches d'un même arbre même si les racines sont dispersées partout

and so each person arrives with this beautiful richness, it is a beautiful, enormous, beautiful culture so mosaic of cultures here, which is very important to keep this cohesion, what I really want is to stay together, and to forget I come from which corner of the world, that's not what is important, the important thing is that I feel Francophone, in my heart, in my soul, so I dream in French, not only do I speak in French but I dream in French, I eat French so I feel French, the *feeling*, the feeling so it's very important, so we are really, really like the branches of the same tree even if the roots are scattered everywhere

(Community association, key informant)

Beyond expressing a desire to celebrate the diversity of the Francophonie and bond the diversifying community based on a common language, the key informant explained that the shared minority context in Canada should help to overcome tensions related to the socio-historic contexts of immigrants' countries of origin:

« Tu viens de tel pays, moi je viens de tel pays » « moi j'ai été colonisateur, t'étais colonisé » par exemple mais c'est pernicieux, ça se dit pas mais ça c'est à, c'est à vraiment – comment dire ? – à prendre en considération énormément et à se dire « nous, nous sommes tous et toutes donc minoritaires ici et donc nous, il faut arrêter de dire, 'tu viens de quel pays ?' nous sommes francophones, ou francophile, nous sommes ensemble », il faut arrêter de diviser pour mieux régner comme on dit [...] non, non, il faut avoir vraiment la cohésion entre les membres de la communauté francophone, francophile, existante au Canada, en Colombie-Britannique, parce que sinon déchirer, être déchiré entre- ça ne fonctionnera pas.

"You come from this country, I come from this country" "I was a colonizer, you were colonized" for example but it is pernicious, it is not said but that is to, it is to really - how to say? - to take into consideration a lot and to say "we, we are all and all so a minority here and therefore we, we must stop saying, 'you come from which country?' We are Francophones,

or Francophile, we are together" , we must stop 'dividing to reign better' as we say [...] no, no, we must really have cohesion between the members of the Francophone community, Francophile, existing in Canada, in British Columbia, because if we tear apart, if we are torn - it won't work.

(Community association, key informant)

In order to create a sense of community among its members, the events of the organization tended to be festive or celebratory and include activities (e.g., performances, games, meals) that could be of interest to a variety of people. For example, they organized a summer picnic in a large school yard that had food, music and bocce. People were from different cultural and age groups, and seemed to have come for different reasons, including the festive atmosphere, the bocce, meeting friends, and volunteering.

The three partner sites mentioned difficulties related to the minority context of the FMCs in B.C. where the Francophone minority tended to lack recognition at the local and provincial levels:

Informatrice : donc, les conseillers de la ville donc participant donc toujours donc ils sont très intéressés mais même s'il y en a qui ne parle absolument pas français, oui il y en a qui comprennent très peu, **cette reconnaissance elle est là, néanmoins ce n'est pas assez encore à mes yeux**

Chercheuse : d'accord, ok, ok, qu'est-ce que vous aimeriez voir ?

Informatrice : c'est un exemple, donc quand il y a un magazine publié par la ville de [nom de la ville], pourquoi on peut voir donc 6 langues mais pas la langue française ?

Chercheuse : oui, oui

Informatrice : ça m'a attristé la première fois que j'ai regardé j'ai dit « il y a 6 langues différents ici, mais on voit pas la langue française, tandis que la langue française c'est une des langues officielles du Canada ! » et donc il faut que ça s'améliore

Informant: so, the city councillors participate always so they are very interested but even if there are some who do not speak French at all, yes there are some who understand very little, **this recognition is there, nevertheless it is not enough yet, in my opinion**

Researcher: okay, ok, ok, what would you like to see?

Informant: this is an example, so when there is a magazine published by the city of [name of the city], why can we see 6 languages but not French?

Researcher: yes, yes

Informant: it made me sad the first time I looked I said "there are 6 different languages here, but we don't see the French language, while the French language is one of the official languages of Canada!" And so, it has to get better

(Community association, key informant)

Moreover, the lack of funding was mentioned by informants from all three sites who felt like their resources to support Francophone immigrants were limited. According to the key informant from the provincial organization, the lack of funding was impeding the ability of the site, and of other Francophone community sites, to expand the geographic scope of their activities. For example, they might not have enough funding to offer certain activities beyond Vancouver. The key informant from the community association also explained that there was often a segmentation of the funding they received, which impeded targeting the entire community in its programming.

The dynamics in Francophone community sites were impacted by the geography of Metro Vancouver. Given the size of the metropolitan area not all Francophone sites were easily accessible to the French-speaking population depending on where they lived. At the provincial organization, the key informant said that activities were often offered only in the city of Vancouver, in part due to funding constraints as noted above. She mentioned the need to expand the geographic scope of the activities offered in order to serve more Francophones.

Informatrice : est-ce qu'il y a suffisamment on touche, avec [nom d'un programme d'activité], on touche vraiment un groupuscule ici à Vancouver, ça prendrait ce genre de, d'activité un peu partout dans toutes les régions de la Colombie Britannique, donc euh on couvre vraiment pas un grand territoire [...]

Chercheuse : parce que euh la [organisation provinciale] ça couvre toutes les APÉ de toute la Colombie-Britannique mais les activités que vous proposez avec les migrants c'est surtout dans le grand Vancouver

Informatrice : euh ben [programme d'activité] c'est juste Vancouver

Chercheuse : d'accord

Informatrice : la ville de Vancouver même, c'est même pas le grand Vancouver, c'est Vancouver même

Informant: is there enough to reach, with [name of a program of activity], we really reach a small group here in Vancouver, it would take this kind of activity almost everywhere in all regions of British Columbia, so we really don't cover a large territory [...]

Researcher: because the [provincial organization] covers all the Parent Advisory Councils from all over British Columbia, but the activities you offer with migrants are mainly in Greater Vancouver

Informant: well, [program of activity] is just Vancouver

Researcher: okay

Informant: The city of Vancouver itself is not even Greater Vancouver, it is Vancouver itself (Provincial organization, key informant)

The key informant from the community association mentioned obstacles faced by French-speaking immigrants in the city where the association operates, who were far from the center of Vancouver where Francophone services tended to be concentrated, creating a distance barrier to accessing these services.

Informatrice : la première chose la distance par exemple

Chercheuse : oui, d'accord

Informatrice : la distance c'est très important étant donné donc un manque de ressource matérielle pour ces gens-là [...]

Chercheuse : donc du côté des migrants ce serait plutôt un problème d'accès, en termes de distance et en termes de géographie

Informatrice : exactement et aussi donc de payer les billets aller-retour, donc quand, ça joue aussi

Chercheuse : est-ce que là vous parlez du contexte de [nom de la ville] qui est loin de Vancouver et des services qui sont à Vancouver ?

Informatrice : oui, je parle ici beaucoup plus, voilà, beaucoup plus

Chercheuse : oui, le fait que ces gens-là habitent à [nom de la ville], la plupart des services sont à Vancouver c'est ça ?

Informatrice : exactement, exactement

Informant: the first thing, distance for example

Researcher: yes, okay

Informant: distance is very important given the lack of material resources for these people [...]

Researcher: so on the side of the migrant it would rather be a problem of access, in terms of distance and in terms of geography

Informant: exactly and also so to pay the return tickets, so when, it also plays a role

Researcher: are you talking about the context of [name of the city] which is far from Vancouver and the services that are in Vancouver?

Informant: yes, I am talking about here, a lot more, a lot more

Researcher: yes, the fact that these people live in [name of the city], most of the services are in Vancouver, right?

Informant: exactly, exactly

(Community association, key informant)

La maison de la Francophonie, where many Francophone services and organizations were concentrated, was located in Vancouver, which created challenges for people living further away.

Being inclusive of the diversity stemming from international migration was envisioned differently in each partner site depending on their mandate. This was reflected in the way occupations were offered and how spaces were expected to be used. However, the Francophone community sites were also subject to power dynamics beyond the FMC, in the broader context of Metro Vancouver and B.C. The lack of recognition of the community, the attribution of funding and the geographical size of the metropolitan area also shaped how the sites were organized.

5.4.2 The meaning of Francophone community sites and diversity for the participants

In this section, I address participants' understanding of the Francophone spaces with regard to diversity. I examine how the participants perceived themselves as immigrants, and perceived other immigrants in these community spaces (i.e., what diversity should look like in Francophone spaces), as well as the meaning of the FMC for them given this diversity.

Within the FMC, some participants spoke to the increasing diversity they observed over the last two decades. Participants who had arrived in the 1990s and early 2000s said there were

not a lot of racialized people in Francophone spaces when they first arrived but that the diversity had increased since then. This highlighted the temporality of space production. That is, participants were producing space through their occupational engagement at a specific time. Other layers of space production had occurred beforehand and time was an important aspect to take into account when exploring the immigrant-space transaction.

Maintenant je vois, par exemple, **l'école où j'allais là, maintenant on voit c'est, il y a plus de, il y a plus de multi, les cultures quoi**, il y a plus de mélange, plus de mélange, plus qu'auparavant, il y a ... ça évolue, ça évolue, on voit les marocains, on voit des algériens, de toute l'Afrique, Afrique du nord ... **avant c'était zéro, c'était zéro, ma famille c'était, on était parmi les rares familles [noires] quoi**

Now I see, for example, **the school where I used to go, now we see it's, there are more, there are more multi, cultures**, there is more mixing, more mixing, more than before, there is ... it evolves, it evolves, we see the Moroccans, we see Algerians, from all of Africa, North Africa ... **before there were none, there were none, my family it was, we were among the rare [Black] families**

(Church, participant 3)

Francophone spaces were important because they allowed participants to connect with people with a similar culture, often from the same country of origin. These spaces were described as culturally safe and more comfortable for this reason. Some participants mentioned that in addition to receiving helpful advice provided through community sites that were not specific to one particular ethnic group; meeting with people from the same country of origin, having the same skin colour, and sharing similar lived experiences had been more relevant to them.

There was ambivalence regarding the need to bring together people speaking the same language (i.e., the Francophone community) or people coming specifically from the same country of origin. Many participants mentioned that the first support they had received came

from compatriots. This sentiment was shared from people coming from different parts of the world.

Chercheuse : donc là vous m'avez parlé de votre immigration, est-ce que vous pouvez parler de votre intégration et établissement ici ?

Participant : intégration, ma foi, **l'intégration s'est faite par, chose peut-être surprenante, par des haïtiens**. Ce sont de – **les premiers francophones que j'ai rencontrés ont été 4 haïtiens qui étaient ici de longue date**

Researcher: So here you told me about your immigration, can you talk about your integration and settlement here?

Participant: integration, well, **integration was done by, perhaps surprisingly, by Haitians**. These are from - **the first Francophones I met were 4 Haitians who have been here for a long time**

(Community association, participant 2)

Faut encore dire ça, on a eu du soutien de suisses, qui sont venus s'installer ici il y a onze ans et qui connaissent le mari de ma mère [...] donc avant d'arriver, moi j'ai beaucoup regardé, elle s'appelle [nom], et j'ai beaucoup posé mes questions à elle **donc j'avais un soutien suisse qui avait déjà fait toutes les démarches**

I have to say that, we had support from Swiss people, who came to settle here eleven years ago and who know my mother's husband [...] so before coming, I had a look, her name is [name], and I asked her my questions a lot so **I had a Swiss support who had already done all the procedures**

(Provincial organization, participant 1)

Participant : mais il y avait quand même une communauté, il y a des gens qui nous avez précédé ici, on vivait avec ... en Uganda, oui on s'est [inaudible] ils nous ont donné quand même quelques informations [...] **les informations qu'on a eues au travers les amis qu'on connaissait déjà à partir de, de l'Afrique [...]**

Chercheuse : oui, oui vous aviez ce réseau-là qui vous a aidé quand vous êtes arrivé

Participant: but there was a community, there are people who preceded us here, we lived with ... in Uganda, yes we [inaudible] they gave us some information [...] **the information that we had through the friends we already knew from, from Africa [...]**

Researcher: yes, yes you had this network that helped you when you arrived

(Church, participant 4)

Some participants were ambivalent regarding the cultural ease they felt in the FMC. For example, one participant explained that she felt more comfortable in Francophone spaces due to the language and because she “knew the codes,” especially as compared to the Anglophone majority. However, this seemed to be related to the presence of immigrants from countries with similar cultures, European immigrants in her case, as she explained she would not have “known the codes” of Francophones coming from other areas. Another participant said she was mostly looking for a space to speak French regardless of where other Francophones were from.

Chercheuse : est-ce que par exemple la couleur de peau ça a fait quelque chose, ça a fait une différence ?

Participante : pour que j'aille vers les francophones ?

Chercheuse : euh oui, oui

Participante : non

Chercheuse : d'accord, ok, ou la, les marqueurs d'identité chez la personne qui vous a accueillie par exemple, est-ce que ça a joué un rôle ?

Participante : [...] j'étais déjà attirée par cette communauté avant d'arriver ici [...] et puis quand je suis arrivée ici, la première personne que j'ai rencontrée c'est [directrice] de [Community association], **je me suis dit avec les gens qu'on partage la langue, ça va mieux se passer, ils vont m'aider réellement à m'intégrer et c'est comme ça**

Chercheuse : de votre point de vue à vous, peu importe d'où est-ce que ces francophones viennent du moment qu'ils parlent français c'était pas, c'était pas

Participante : oui, oui

Researcher: did skin color make a difference, for example?

Participant: so that I go to Francophones?

Researcher: yes, yes

Participant: no

Researcher: okay, ok, or the identity markers in the person who welcomed you, for example, did that play a role?

Participant: [...] I was already drawn to this community before arriving here [...] and then when I arrived here, the first person I met was [director] of [community association], **I said to myself with people that we share the language, it will be better, they will really help me to integrate and that's how it is**

Researcher: from your point of view, it doesn't matter where these Francophones come from as long as they speak French, it was not, it was not

Participant: yes, yes

(Community association, participant 3)

However, this participant was also ambivalent in the sense that while she was indifferent to the country of origin of the people welcoming her in the FMC and the French language seemed to be the most important factor, she explained that she did not feel the same “attachment” to, and support from the FMC as the community from her country origin.

Chercheuse : par exemple la communauté burundaise qu'est-ce que ça vous a apporté ?

Participant : euh j'ai trouvé des gens avec qui parler de mon pays euh qui peuvent ... je sais que si j'ai besoin d'eux ils seront là

Chercheuse : d'accord, ok, c'est un système de soutien que vous avez retrouvé euh

Participant : oui, oui

Chercheuse : et plus dans la communauté burundaise que dans la communauté francophone ou

Participant : **plus dans la communauté burundaise [...] la communauté francophone j'ai l'impression que ce sont, ce sont des, des relations ponctuelles [...] j'ai pas encore senti qu'il y a quelque chose comme un certain attachement**

Researcher: for example, the Burundian community, what has it brought you?

Participant: I found people to talk to about my country who can ... I know if I need them they will be there

Researcher: okay, ok, this is a support system that you found

Participant: yes, yes

Researcher: and more in the Burundian community than in the Francophone community or

Participant : **more in the Burundian community [...] the Francophone community I have the impression that these are, these are, punctual relationships [...] I have not yet felt that there is something like a certain attachment**

(Community association, participant 3)

Some participants particularly liked the diversity in Metro Vancouver's FMC. Several participants recruited through the community association mentioned the diversity of its members and one participant said it was an opportunity for her to learn about other cultures. For her, engaging in occupations with people from different countries and participating in activities

showcasing art or food from different places was mind-opening. A participant from the provincial organization also mentioned the diversity of the Francophone population she had met at her children's Francophone school.

je pense que ce qui est intéressant dans ces milieux francophones, c'est la diversité des francophones, c'est-à-dire, avant de quitter la France, et aussi, dû à l'âge euh je pense qu'on a – j'avais un esprit assez fermé du monde francophone. Oui, on était proche par exemple du Maghreb, de l'Afrique du nord donc on est au courant que le français est parlé dans beaucoup de pays dans le monde mais on se rend pas compte que c'est quelque chose qui touche au cœur des gens et ça je pense que c'est assez intéressant parce que la plupart des gens qui sont francophones sans être français, je pense que c'est quelque chose vraiment – est quelque chose de très émotionnel, euh, et c'est intéressant de voir les gens quand ils vous racontent comment ils ont voyagé en France, comment ils sont fiers de parler la langue de leurs ancêtres etcetera, quand vous avez grandi seulement en français, vous appréciez moins ce type de, de ... de richesse je pense, donc c'est intéressant quand vous allez dans ces milieux francophones de voir des gens par exemple l'école de mes enfants, on a beaucoup d'enseignants qui viennent de l'Iran, des enseignants qui viennent de Suisse, du Québec, de l'Ontario français, du Nouveau Brunswick, de Louisiane, des pays du Maghreb, euh Roumanie, Vietnam, donc c'est vraiment, c'est vraiment une – c'est là où on se rend compte que le français, c'est vraiment une langue internationale, c'est une langue qui, qui est parlée dans tellement de pays et de manières tellement différentes aussi, c'est intéressant de voir comment le vocabulaire des gens, les accents des gens, donc ça je trouve que c'est, c'est vraiment intéressant et c'est vraiment enrichissant d'avoir ce type de communauté à Vancouver.

I think what is interesting in these Francophone environments, it's the diversity of the Francophones, that is to say, before leaving France, and also, due to age ah I think that we – I had a fairly narrow idea of the Francophone world. Yes, we were close for example to the Maghreb, to North Africa so we were aware that French is spoken in a lot of countries in the world but we don't realize that it's something that touches people's hearts and I think that's quite interesting because most people who are Francophone without being French, I think that it's really something – is something very emotional, ah, and it's interesting to see people when they tell you how they travelled in France, how they are proud to speak the language of the ancestors etc, when you have grown up only in French, you appreciate less this type of, of ... of richness I think, so it's interesting because when you go in these francophone environments to see people for example my children's school, we have a lot of teachers who come from Iran, teachers from Switzerland, from Québec, from francophone Ontario, from New Brunswick, from Louisiana, from countries in the Maghreb, ah Romania, Vietnam, so it's really, it's really a – that's when we realize that French, it's really an international language, it's a language that, that is spoken in so many countries and in so many different ways also, it's interesting to see how people's vocabularies, people's accents, so I find that it's, it's really interesting, and it's really enriching to have this type of community in Vancouver.

(Provincial organization, participant 2)

Despite the presence of such diversity, one participant noted that the diversity was not yet well represented in the leadership of some organizations. For her this lack of representation could make racialized immigrants less comfortable to participate.

Chercheuse : t'as dit qu'il y avait des marqueurs d'identité où tu as ressenti une barrière ou fin c'est pas aussi naturel ou spontané, est-ce que là-dessus il y a des choses où tu penses ça pourrait être amélioré ?

Participante : oui, inclus- ben oui, ben euh un peu plus de diversité dans tout quoi, je sais pas j'avais remarqué l'autre jour euh c'était euh, qu'est-ce que c'était ? l'association, non, comment ils appellent ça ? [Organisation provinciale] par exemple donc ils ont un gala toutes les années, un nouveau CA toutes les années, tu regardes, tous, femme, même âge, même couleur, même – tu vois ce que je veux dire ?

Chercheuse : oui, oui, profil similaire quoi

Participante : faut un petit peu faire un effort, tu vois ce que je veux dire ?

Chercheuse : oui, oui

Participante : et peut-être que c'est l'effort aussi des gens d'autres ethnicité qui doivent le faire, tu vois ce que je veux dire ? Je me suis impliqué, je me suis tout ça mais ça veut aussi dire qu'elles se, qu'elles se sentent pas aussi confortables

Chercheuse : ouais c'est ça, parce que

Participante : puis elles sont pas impliquées

Researcher: you said that there were identity markers where you felt a barrier or it is not as natural or spontaneous, are there things you think that could be improved?

Participant: yes, included- well yes, well a little more diversity in everything, I don't know I had noticed the other day it was, what was it? the association, no, what do they call it? The [provincial organization], for example, so they have a gala every year, a new board every year, you look, everyone, women, same age, same colour, even - you know what I mean?

Researcher: yes, yes, similar profile

Participant: you have to make a little effort, you know what I mean?

Researcher: yes, yes

Participant: and maybe it's the effort of people of other ethnicities who have to do it, you know what I mean? I got involved, I did all of that but that also means that they feel, that they don't feel as comfortable

Researcher: yeah right, because

Participant: then they are not involved

(Provincial organization, participant 5)

Another participant found that the FMC tended to be divided by country of origin, which further impeded the recognition of the community and its ability to raise its voice. For her, Francophones should come together regardless of their countries of origin and unite to advocate for the French language and their collective rights as Francophones.

Chercheuse : est-ce que vous pensez que la communauté manque d'unité aussi parce que les gens ont tendance à se regrouper par pays d'origine ?

Participante : ouais

Chercheuse : ouais, ouais

Participante : je pense que ça manque d'unité aussi parce que

Chercheuse : on manque de ce mélange un peu

Participante : oui, parce que on se dit « **on parle, on est unis par une seule langue qui est le français bien-sûr, oui mais bon, au départ je suis française, elle est congolaise, elle est ivoirienne, elle est [...] on est pas ressortissants d'un même pays** » **mais on doit dépasser ça**, on doit dépasser ça parce que si on se dit « bon, je suis congolaise, je vais juste rester avec les congolais » et puis les ivoiriens avec les ivoiriens, les congolais sont minoritaires, les ivoiriens aussi sont minoritaires, c'est-à-dire que notre langue, le français sera sous-estimé, ça va pas aller de l'avant mais parce que on est conscient que on doit promouvoir la langue française, donner de l'importance, faire entendre la langue française, s'imposer ici, qu'est-ce qu'on doit faire ? **Essayer de regrouper tous les pays que ce soit africains, européens qui parlent français, mettons-nous ensemble pour former une forte communauté francophone**, c'est ça parce que si on va pays par pays euh pff, on va pas évoluer, on doit tous se mettre ensemble, créer un bloc pour créer une force

Researcher: do you think that the community also lacks unity because people tend to gather by country of origin?

Participant: yeah

Researcher: yeah, yeah

Participant: I think it lacks unity too because

Researcher: we lack this mixture a little

Participant: yes, because we say "**we speak, we are united by a single language which is French of course, yes but hey, at first I am French, she is Congolese, she is Ivorian, she is [...] we are not nationals of the same country**" **but we must go beyond that**, we must go beyond that because if we say "well, I'm Congolese, I'm just going to stay with the Congolese" and then the Ivorians with the Ivorians, the Congolese are in the minority, the Ivorians are also in the minority, that is our language, French will be underestimated, it will not go ahead but because we are aware that we must promote the French language, give importance, make the French language heard, impose yourself here, what should we do? **try to bring together all the countries, be they African, Europeans who speak French, let's get together to form a strong French-speaking community, that's because if we go country by country pff, we will not evolve, we must all put themselves together, create a block to create a force**

(Church, participant 1)

Some participants felt like the legitimacy of the FMCs and the French language in B.C. was not well established or was even threatened. One participant mentioned that the mainstream society knew very little about the FMCs, which she perceived was due to a lack of affirmation of a strong identity and culture to share and for the younger generations to refer to. For example, she felt there was no well-known Francophone events in the province. Another participant said that to him French was the language of ‘the East’, meaning Quebec, while Western Canada was Anglophone. He mentioned the absence of a strong community of Francophones born in B.C.:

Participant : mais le truc c’est euh l’ouest c’est anglophone hein ?

Chercheuse : comment ?

Participant : **l’ouest ici c’est anglophone**

Chercheuse : ouais, oui mais il y a aussi des centres francophones

Participant : [inaudible] mais l’ouest c’est anglophone [rire] [...] on essaie de, de ... comment dire ? – c’est une bonne chose qu’il y a le conseil scolaire francophone

Chercheuse : ouais ouais

Participant : ça c’est le gouvernement quoi, c’est le fédéral, c’est le – comment on dit ça ? – ça fait le, la publicité de la francophonie, de garder la francophonie

Chercheuse : ouais

Participant : yeah, mais vous allez voir tous ces, **la plupart de ces gens ce sont des québécois et des montréalais**

Participant: but the thing is, the west, it’s Anglophone, right?

Researcher: sorry?

Participant: **the West here is Anglophone**

Researcher: yeah, yes, but there are also Francophone centers

Participant: [inaudible] but the West is English [laughing] [...] we try to, to ... how to say? - it is a good thing that there is the French school board

Researcher: yeah yeah

Participant: that is the government, that is the federal government, that is the - how do you say that? - it does the advertising of the Francophonie, to keep the Francophonie

Researcher: yeah

Participant: yeah, but you will to see all of these, **most of these people are Quebecers and Montrealers**

(Church, participant 3)

Several participants also talked about the other languages spoken in Metro Vancouver, and how the numerical inferiority of French-speakers as compared to languages such as Mandarin and Punjabi influenced the lack of recognition of the French language despite its status as an official language. For instance, participants noted that services were not actively offered in French and that there were less services available in French than in other languages.

je dirais que pour les francophones, on trouve pas vraiment des services qui vous aident facilement, ici à Vancouver, déjà on est minoritaire, c'est pas l'idée que j'avais en tête, moi je me disais quand j'arriverai au Canada, facilement je trouverai quelqu'un qui parle français à tous les coins de la rue mais c'était pas le cas [...] partout on je passais, c'était l'anglais, l'anglais, l'anglais, les services de l'état, **on dit français et anglais mais quand tu essaies de parler le français, personne te comprend** alors j'étais un peu déçue, un peu choquée, et jusqu'à ce que j'ai découvert les services francophones dont je vous ai parlé, même chez eux aussi **ils sont limités, comparés au - je sais pas moi – au indiens, aux chinois qui sont ici, je pense que les services francophones ici, c'est vraiment, vraiment, vraiment limité**

I would say that for Francophones, we don't really find services that help you easily, here in Vancouver, first of all we are a minority, that is not the idea I had when I came, I thought that when I would arrive in Canada, I would easily find somebody who speaks French at every corner, but this is not the case [...] everywhere I went, it was English, English, English, the state's services, **they say English and French but when you try to speak French, nobody understands you**, so I was a little bit disappointed, a little bit shocked, until I discovered the Francophone services I told you about, even them, **they are limited too, as compared to – I don't know – Indians, Chinese who are here, I think Francophone services here, it is really, really, really limited**

(Church, participant 1)

The participants' perception of diversity in the Francophone community spaces seemed to be ambivalent. While the French language would allow a sense of community, it did not replace ethnic ties. Nevertheless, participants appreciated the diversity in Francophone community spaces and thought Francophones from various countries should be included and

come together to strengthen the community. The participants found that the recognition of the community was threatened by its invisibility to the mainstream population and its numerical inferiority, for example as compared to other immigrant communities that were predominant in Metro Vancouver.

5.4.3 The lived experience of diversity in Francophone community sites

While the two previous sections analysed how Francophone community spaces were envisioned by their leadership, in regard to diversity (conceived space) and how diversity in these spaces was perceived by French-speaking immigrants (perceived space); this section explores French-speaking immigrants' lived experiences of diversity in Francophone community spaces. I investigated the practices in the sites with respect to diversity; how the diverse members of the FMC came together, how French-speaking immigrants with different identity markers felt welcomed in Francophone spaces, and what possibly prevented their inclusion in these spaces.

During the on-site observations, I noticed that some sites tended to be attended mainly by White immigrants from Europe, while others were attended by Black people coming from former Francophone colonies. This separation by country of origin, which was often racialized, seemed to intersect with people's immigration and/or socio-economic status. Participants recruited through the church were all Black and had refugee backgrounds, while participants recruited through the provincial organization were White and voluntary, economic immigrants. The participants recruited through the community association were more diverse with respect to immigration category and ethnicity. Factors potentially contributing to the social separations observed are described in the following paragraphs and include: (1) the distance between the sites and the participants' homes, (2) the offer of occupations in the sites indirectly targeting

certain populations (e.g., specific country of origin), and (3) the openness of the Francophone community sites and the sense of belonging developed depending on certain identity markers.

First, the distance between the sites might contribute to the differences among their participants. Participants often lived relatively close to the sites through which they had been recruited, and the three sites were quite far from each other in Metro Vancouver. For example, while participants recruited from the provincial organization lived closer to the center of Vancouver where Francophone services tend to be concentrated; access to these services was more complicated for participants recruited from the community association and the church who lived further away. One of the participants recruited through the community association who had come to Canada as an asylum seeker from Burundi explained that there were activities, she was interested in that took place in Vancouver. These activities reflected the types of occupations she engaged in prior to moving to B.C.; however, she was not able to participate because of the distance and she could not afford public transportation to Vancouver.

Chercheuse : je me souviens on avait parlé un petit peu de réseau femme au début, au premier entretien, puis là vous m'avez dit la grosse barrière pour vous d'aller participer à réseau femme c'est vraiment le transport

Participante : le déplacement

Chercheuse : et le prix du transport, oui les coûts de transport

Participante : le prix du – ouais, parce que **si juste pour un coup, je dois dépenser 15 \$, je peux pas avoir cet argent**, sinon ça m'intéressait, ça m'intéressait énormément parce qu'à Montréal je, à Montréal je travaillais avec euh femme de Montréal, je faisais aussi du bénévolat là-bas, et si j'avais besoin de chose ils m'aidaient dans, dans tous mes besoins et en plus quand c'est « femme » ça m'intéresse parce que [rire] chez moi, je faisais partie de plusieurs associations de femme et dans mon travail je travaillais avec des, beaucoup avec les femmes parce que j'avais une émission qui s'adresse aux femmes

Chercheuse : oui, oui, **donc vous seriez intéressée de ... travailler avec elles**

Participante : oui, mais je suis bloquée

Researcher: I remember we talked a little bit about *Réseau Femme* in the beginning, during the first interview, and then you told me the big barrier for you to participate in *Réseau Femme*, it's really transportation

Participant: the trip

Researcher: and the price of transportation, yes, the transportation costs

Participant: the price of - yeah, **because if just for one time, I have to spend \$15, I can't have this money**, otherwise I was interested, I was very interested because in Montreal I, in Montreal I worked with Femme de Montreal, I also volunteered there, and if I needed something they helped me in, in all my needs and more when it's "woman" I am interested because [laughing] at home, I was part of several women's associations and in my work I worked with, a lot with women because I had a program for women

Researcher: yes, yes, **so you would be interested in ... working with them**

Participant: yes, but I'm stuck

(Community association, participant 3)

Second, the separation among members of the FMC seemed to be perpetuated by the types of occupations offered in different sites. For example, occupational opportunities provided in one site met the needs of some cultures or social groups better than others. One key informant remarked that daycare and pre-school services were less attended by immigrants coming from more communal cultures, although childcare is expensive in Metro Vancouver, thus access to these services might also be determined by income level.

Informatrice : je pense que oui, ce qu'on voit le plus c'est au niveau préscolaire **si on parle par exemple des garderies puis des prématernelles ce qu'on se rend compte beaucoup c'est qu'il y a peut-être moins de client- il y en a là mais moins de clientèle immigrante proportionnellement** qu'à l'école francophone par exemple [...] puis on n'a pas fait d'étude là mais **je suis certaine que c'est lié au fait que dans leur culture** probablement que c'est pas

Chercheuse : oui, c'est ce que j'allais demander

Informatrice : culturellement

Chercheuse : le système de garde est pas

Informatrice : c'est ça

Chercheuse : on fait pas garder son enfant...

Informatrice : on fait pas garder son enfant

Chercheuse : ...de la même manière

Informatrice : exactement, exactement on s'arrange peut-être avec le

Chercheuse : les amis

Informatrice : le système des amis ou la nounou ou un membre de la famille qui est là, grand-maman est peut-être plus proche – je sais pas – elle est venue peut-être immigrer avec la famille euh donc euh c'est ce genre de système là qu'on voit moins à la garderie

Informant: I think so, what we see the most is at the preschool level **if we talk for example of daycare centers and preschools what we realize is that there may be less of clientele - there are some but proportionately less immigrant clientele** than in French school for example [...] then we did not do a study there but **I am sure that it is linked to the fact that in their culture** probably it is not

Researcher: yes, that's what I was going to ask

Informant: culturally

Researcher: the childcare system is not

Informant: that's it

Researcher: you don't have your child looked after...

Informant: you don't have your child looked after

Researcher: ... in the same way

Informant: Exactly, exactly, perhaps they arrange with the

Researcher: friends

Informant: friends or a nanny or a family member who is there, grandma may be closer - I don't know - she may have come to immigrate with the family so that's the kind of system that we see less in daycare

(Provincial organization, key informant)

One participant (PO-4A) described that the provincial organization activities she had participated in with her child in Vancouver tended to be attended by “expats”. She explained that other participants in these activities were from European countries, had French as their mother tongue, and had a high socio-economic status. She suggested that the kind of activities offered might not be of interest for everyone, depending of levels of income.

Similarly, I noticed that the pastor's sermons addressed the needs or concerns of immigrants from communal cultures, such as providing advice regarding remittances (i.e., money sent by immigrants to their relatives in their countries of origin). While several participants who emigrated from Africa said that they were sending money to their relatives in

their home countries, no European immigrants mentioned this. Thus, activities and supports in the sites were geared to the interests of the participants who often shared certain characteristics (e.g., continent of origin, socio-economic status), thereby potentially excluding others by default.

Third, the sites' lack of openness to immigrants with various identity markers could contribute to separations within the community. While none of the participant spontaneously reported experiences of exclusion or racism, some immigrants noticed that they may be less comfortable in some spaces depending on identity markers such as social class, linguistic skills or religion.

One participant whose children attended a Francophone school in Vancouver said that getting involved in the association for parents could be intimidating for families with a lower socio-economic status: "pas si facile, surtout quand t'es sur la table avec beaucoup de, d'avocats, de médecins et tout ça, [...] faut pas être intimidé." ["not that easy, especially when you are at the table with many lawyers, doctors and all that [...] you have to not be intimidated" (provincial organization, participant 5)]. She explained that many parents had a high socio-economic status, and lower income earning families might be less comfortable to speak up. Also, the cost of activities, such as school trips could be high and some people might not be able to afford it, which could limit their participation.

One participant wore the hijab and shared her experience on the board of a parent's association in a Francophone school. She explained that she was initially nervous about how she would be welcomed and had to put forth a personal effort to participate. It took her time to feel comfortable enough to actively participate because she feared being excluded due to her visible identity markers.

Chercheuse : c'est ce que j'allais te demander, est-ce que tu penses, **est-ce que t'as l'impression que quelque part ça t'a pris plus d'effort que si euh t'avais collé au profil cliché euh des**

Participante : ouais, c'est surtout ça

Chercheuse : toi t'as ressenti ça, que ça te prenais un effort supplémentaire

Participante : ben oui [...] je me dis « oh la la, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont penser là maintenant » mais j'ai appris à surmonter tout ça, mais c'est pas facile à apprendre à surmonter tout ça, tu vois ce que je veux dire ? Donc euh, et c'était un peu aussi, je vais te dire, ça j'aurai dû le dire, c'est un peu une idée moi l'idée d'être président de l'association des parents francophones ou – c'est aussi de montrer aux gens, peut-être que d'autres personnes vont se retrouver en moi et se dire « ah ben si elle l'a fait, je peux le faire aussi » tu vois ce que je veux dire ? [...] ils se sentent [...] non, non, pas rejetés mais ils ont moins le courage de s'impliquer [...] **je vais pas dire que c'était très difficile, non, mais ça prend du temps mais c'est vrai que par exemple moi, je vois qu'il y a des mamans par exemple qui se, qui s'impliquent dès le début et je sais que si, peut-être que si j'avais l'air différente, je me serai peut-être impliquée plus facilement**

Chercheuse : tu veux dire euh si t'avais trouvé, comment dire

Participante : non si carrément, si j'étais, j'avais le profil d'une maman française, québécoise [...] peut-être que j'aurai beaucoup plus de courage à m'impliquer plus tôt

Chercheuse : ouais, fin ça peut aussi être l'inverse où si tu avais vu euh

Participante : ou si j'avais vu

Chercheuse : un miroir tu vois « ah d'accord, quelqu'un qui me ressemble » - je sais pas où - tu sens une proximité euh pour telle ou telle raison

Participante : oui, oui, c'est sûr

Researcher: that's what I was going to ask you, do you think, **do you feel that it took you more effort than if you had had the cliché profile**

Participant: yeah, that's it

Researcher: you felt that, that it took you an extra effort

Participant: well yes [...] I say to myself "oh la la, what are they going to think there now" but I learned to overcome all that, but it's not easy to learn to overcome all that, You know what I mean? So, and it was a little bit, I'll tell you, that, I should have said, it is a bit of an idea for me the idea of being [position on the board of a Parent Advisory Council] or - it is also to show people, maybe other people will recognize themselves in me and think "ah well if she did it, I can do it too" you know what I mean? [...] They feel [...] no, no, not rejected but they have less courage to get involved [...] **I will not say that it was very difficult, no, but it takes time but it is true that for example me, I see that there are moms for example who get involved, from the beginning and I know that if, maybe if I looked different, I might have gotten involved more easily**

Researcher: you mean uh if you had found, how to say

Participant: no, so if I were, I had the profile of a French, Quebec mother [...] maybe I will have much more courage to get involved earlier

Researcher: yeah, but it can also be the opposite where if you had seen

Participant: or if I had seen

Researcher: a mirror you see "ah okay, someone who looks like me" - I don't know – with whom you feel a closeness for this or that reason

Participant: yes, yes, for sure

(Provincial organization, participant 5)

She found that the board of Francophone organizations was not diverse enough and that some people from minority groups might not find themselves represented. It was important for her to be involved in order to encourage the participation of other immigrants.

In the lived space, it appeared that French-speaking immigrants were separated between sites in relation to identity markers, such as race, socio-economic status or immigration category that tended to intersect. Possible factors influencing this were highlighted in the observational and interview data, including the distance between the sites and participants' homes and the attractiveness and openness of the sites to the diversity of the French-speaking immigrants.

5.5 Conclusion

The findings described in this section highlighted the link between occupation, space, language and identity markers. The first theme revealed how the use of the French language differed depending on various identity markers but was often associated with more comfort and satisfaction in participants' occupations. The second theme explored the spatiality of participants' occupational engagement in French. While Francophone community sites were important landmarks to support immigrants' integration and occupational participation in Metro Vancouver, the use of the French language was fluid over different spaces. Moreover, the Francophone community sites were found to be permeable and in constant transaction with their Anglo-dominant surrounding. The last theme focused more specifically on how the Francophone community spaces were produced, in a context of increasing diversity stemming from international migration. Immigrants' engagement with Francophone spaces was impacting the

production of these spaces at each level of Lefebvre's spatial triad (conceived, perceived and lived space).

Chapter 6: Discussion and conclusion

6.1 Discussion

This study explored French-speaking immigrants' experiences of participation in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver. The goal was to understand the role of these spaces in immigrants' broader occupational engagement and I paid particular attention to how intersectional identity markers shaped these experiences. This study also has a main focus on space and the spatiality of occupation.

Study findings emphasized the fluctuations and variations of the use of the French language as well as the fluidity of participants' occupational engagement in French. While the tangibility of some Francophone spaces was important as they could represent a landmark supporting immigrants' integration and occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver, the use of the French language was influenced by intersecting factors and was fluid over space. Finally, even within formal Francophone spaces, this fluidity was visible as these spaces were dynamically produced through occupational engagement, elites' conceptions and participants' perceptions of the space.

The contribution of this research is both empirical and theoretical. Empirically, this research is the first one focusing on adult French-speaking immigrants' engagement in Metro Vancouver's FMC. While many educational studies have explored immigrants' experiences in the school environment (Jacquet, 2009; Jacquet & Masinda, 2014; Jacquet et al., 2008; Laghzaoui, 2011; Levasseur, 2012; Masinda et al., 2014; Mc Andrew et al., 2008), my research used an occupational lens to explore participation in Francophone community sites in three different municipalities within Metro Vancouver. Focusing on space was particularly relevant in

Metro Vancouver, as the FMC is impacted by spatial dynamics due to the size of the urban area and the racial/socio-economic separation. Theoretically, this study draws from transactionalism and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space to shed new light on the spatiality of occupation in a migration context. This study contributes to the occupation-based literature by highlighting the fluidity of occupation across space and the need to take into account the multiple layers of spatiality through which occupations take place.

In this chapter, I discuss the findings in regard to the FMCs and the occupational science literature. In the first section, I explore the importance of the FMC and Francophone community spaces for French-speaking immigrants. It appeared that the role of these spaces was 'in-between' the role of immigrants' national communities from their countries of origin and the mainstream Canadian society. This was partly due to the permeability and embeddedness of the FMC in Metro Vancouver. The second section focuses on the openness and inclusivity of the FMC towards the diversity stemming from international migration. While immigrants might need to gather according to identity markers linked to their countries or continents of origin, it is important to ensure that spaces that are meant for all Francophones by their leadership, are indeed welcoming and attractive to all regardless of their identity markers. The last section specifically addresses the findings and analysis regarding the spatiality of occupation, drawing from transactionalism and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. I discuss how space is produced through the interweaving of power dynamics, perceptions and occupations. Moreover, spaces were found to be interrelated through occupations and it was important to look beyond the immediate surrounding environment to explore the spatiality of occupation. This chapter also includes sections discussing my positionality in this research retrospectively as well as the

limitations of this study and future research directions. Conclusions are presented in the last section.

6.1.1 The unique ‘in-between’ role of the FMC

In this section I discuss the importance of Francophone community spaces as compared to spaces related to immigrants’ national communities from their countries of origin or the broader receiving society. It appeared that the use of the French language and some cultural aspects related to the shared language, made Francophone community spaces more accessible to French-speaking immigrants. These spaces did not provide immigrants with the same cultural ease as in their national communities but they supported their integration into the Canadian society. Thus, for the immigrants, the role of Francophone community spaces seemed to be positioned ‘in-between’ those related to participants’ countries of origin and the Canadian society. Finally, this ‘in-betweenness’ that allowed the FMC to support French-speaking immigrants, seemed to be related to its permeability and embeddedness in Metro Vancouver.

In this research, Francophone community spaces were found to be important landmarks for occupational engagement in French within the Anglo-dominant landscape of Metro Vancouver. For newcomers not yet fluent in English, it was necessary to have these accessible spaces (in terms of language) for integration services and activities (e.g., working, networking, etc.). Yet even for immigrants who could function in English, Francophone spaces supported their engagement in meaningful occupations that helped them maintain well-being. French-speaking immigrants’ participation in Francophone community spaces in Metro Vancouver appeared to have benefits similar to those highlighted in research conducted in other provinces. For example, Huot and Veronis (2018) explored the role of Francophone community spaces in London and Ottawa, Ontario. The present study is a continuation of this program of research and

I used similar methods and interview guides (as explained in the preface). My findings in Metro Vancouver echo those from the study in Ontario, which found that Francophone community spaces were supporting French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement and integration. The spaces in Ontario were useful for providing information and "opportunities for volunteering, creating ways to get involved, meeting new people, gaining new experiences, and developing a sense of belonging" (Huot & Veronis, 2018, p.45). Huot and Veronis also discussed the ambivalence or tension between belonging and participation in immigrants' national communities as compared to the FMC. In London, Ontario the FMC was found relevant to bring people together, as opposed to participants' national communities that might be small, and thus unable to provide as many opportunities. In Ottawa, engaging in either the national communities from their countries of origin or the FMC seemed to come with the risk of 'ghettoization' and limited integration.

In my findings, the role of the FMC as compared to different communities from specific countries of origin was also discussed. As a multicultural community it brought together people from various origins around a shared language. Also, given the dominance of English and the small size of the FMC, some participants and key informants expressed the need to come together as Francophone, regardless of the country of origin in order to defend the French language in B.C. This was found both in the conceived space (the leadership's vision for the sites) and the perceived space (immigrants' understanding of what the FMC should be). Indeed, it appeared that Francophone sites served the role of a space 'in-between' participants' national communities and the mainstream society. The FMC was a space where participants did not necessarily have the same cultural ease as in their national communities, but the FMC could help

them integrate into the mainstream society (e.g., by helping them learn about Canadian customs) while having the ease of language proficiency.

Integration models such as Berry's model of acculturation have opposed engagement with immigrants' cultures of origin (separation) and with the host country's culture (assimilation). These two forms of acculturation and the different degrees of maintenance of one culture of origin as opposed to adoption of the host society's culture tend to be considered as a spectrum (Nayar & Hocking, 2013). One can question where engaging in a community such as the FMC lies on this spectrum. Nayar et al. (2012) completed a grounded theory study with Indian women immigrants in New Zealand and showed that they would engage with different cultural groups (e.g., other Indian immigrants or New Zealanders) to meet different needs. Engaging in occupations related to their culture of origin at home, in 'private' space, or in their national community provided them with a sense of safety and comfort, as they were free to engage in occupations the way they were used to in their countries of origin. However, they did need to engage in occupations in the mainstream New Zealand society, in 'public' space, in order to make a living. In public space, they had to adopt New Zealander ways of doing, as well as negotiate their Indian culture. Sometimes they were also blending and "Working with the Best of Both Worlds" (Nayar et al. 2012, p.70).

It is interesting to note similarities in my findings, regarding the spatiality of occupational engagement, between the inside/private and the outside/public space. While Nayar referred to cultural practices in these two types of spaces, participants in my study referred to the use of the French language in similar ways; being able to speak French when in private spaces but having to adapt and use English when engaging in public spaces. These findings also echo other studies regarding the power of language and the rapport between minority versus dominant languages.

That is, minority languages tend to be associated with informal, private or intimate spaces ‘intragroup’ interactions, while the dominant language is used for formal or ‘intergroup’ interactions, and proficiency in this dominant language, its colloquialisms and standard accent constitute a valued capital that allows social mobility (Huot et al., 2018; Landry et al., 2005).

The ‘in-betweenness’ of the Francophone spaces was highlighted in the level of comfort immigrants felt in these spaces. That is, the FMC was an ‘in-between’ space where participants appreciated forms of diversity within the FMC as well as the sense of comfort provided by the common use of the French language. The in-betweenness of the FMC also seemed to be related to its permeability and embeddedness in the Anglo-dominant society of Metro Vancouver. That is, occupations are situated in several layers of spatiality. In her research in New Zealand, Nayar showed that even when engaging in occupations in ‘private’ spaces, immigrants were aware of cultural norms ‘outside’ in the New Zealand society. They situated their occupations beyond the immediate private space into the broader surrounding (Nayar & Hocking, 2013). In the present research, Francophone spaces were found to be permeable and occupational engagement in these spaces was similarly situated in multiple layers of spatiality (e.g., the immediate environment, the FMC, the broader Canadian society). This was made visible through linguistic practices. Indeed, the increasing proportion of immigrants in the FMC population has led to the production of plurilingual spaces (Fourot, 2016) and the dominance of English in the environment of Metro Vancouver can enhance the use of English in Francophone spaces, among French-speakers or to allow the inclusion of non-French speakers.

The embeddedness of the FMC also allowed Francophone spaces to support immigrants’ integration in the broader Canadian society through the development of a sense of belonging or engagement in occupations beyond the FMC. Huot and her colleagues similarly found that

participation in FMCs could allow immigrants to develop a sense of belonging in Canada (Huot et al., 2014; Huot & Veronis, 2018; Veronis & Huot, 2017). Despite attention to French-speaking immigrants' integration into FMCs, researchers have not extensively explored how participating in Francophone community spaces enhances access to occupations beyond the FMCs. That is, Francophones spaces have been found to be "integration poles" (Farmer and da Silva 2012, p.20) that support social integration processes within and beyond the FMCs, yet research still tends to emphasize integration within FMCs. My findings highlight how participation in the FMC can provide French-speaking immigrants with information about and orientation towards activities beyond the FMC that are important to their integration into the broader Canadian society. Thus, the in-betweenness of the FMC, its permeability and embeddedness allowed it to support immigrants' integration into society. The community provided French-speaking immigrants with spaces that were accessible to them, especially when mainstream spaces might appear 'closed', while also allowing integration into the broader Canadian society by providing information, awareness of Canadian norms, and exposure to diversity that a community attached to one specific country of origin might not provide in the same way or to the same extent.

6.1.2 Diversity and openness of the FMC

In this section I discuss the FMC's inclusiveness to the diversity stemming from immigration. While the community tended to have an assimilationist and protectionist attitude towards the French language and the community's identity, it appeared that its strength lay in its flexibility and ability to take into account the diversity of its members, who engaged in multiple spaces beyond the FMC. While the use of the French language could be a motivation for participants to engage in occupations in the FMC, intersecting factors, such as culture, also influenced their participation in Francophone community spaces. During observations,

participants sometimes seemed to group themselves by country or continent of origin. Some spaces were also found to be less welcoming than others. That is, when a space was predominantly produced by a particular group, it could be less open to people who did not belong to that group. It appeared that the sites needed to go beyond an absence of discrimination but rather adopt a proactive attitude to be inclusive to the diversity among the French-speaking population.

The ‘landmark’ role of the Francophone community spaces and their ability to support immigrants’ integration and occupational engagement was found to be related to their openness, their embeddedness in the mainstream Anglophone society and their permeability. However, Huot and Veronis (2018) found that the FMC in Ontario could have a protectionist attitude to resist Anglophone assimilation. This attitude gave French-speaking immigrants the impression that the community was “a small enclosed box” (Huot & Veronis, 2018, p.43) from which they felt excluded. Moreover, Huot (2013) completed a critical review of government documents regarding Francophone immigration and integration and found that the provision of services to French speaking immigrants by the FMCs was meant to help immigrants but also “benefit FMCs by curbing their assimilation into the Anglophone community” (Huot, 2013, p.6).

There seem to be incongruencies between discourses regarding identity within the community and the intersectionality of FMC members’ identities. Francophone community spaces are thought to be for people to create a common identity as well as to defend the rights of the FMC (Forgues, 2010). My findings suggest there is a risk for sites in adopting an assimilationist approach, either by not addressing the specificities of the immigrant population’s needs and expecting them to assimilate, or by wishing to unify the community but also obscuring differences between its members. While Canada’s multiculturalist policies intend to allow

immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity (Madibbo, 2010b), multiculturalism is sometimes perceived in opposition to official bilingualism by the FMCs. The maintenance of identities related to countries of origin may be perceived as a threat to the development of a common Francophone identity in a minority context. Yet, Fourot (2016, p. 32) critiques that “one never asks whether bilingualism is detrimental to ethnic minorities, but always whether multiculturalism is detrimental to bilingualism” [our translation] (Fourot, 2016, p.32). Instead, some researchers have suggested addressing multiculturalism and bilingualism concomitantly and to consider diversity stemming from international immigration as enriching the FMCs (Fourot, 2016; Madibbo, 2016).

It also appears that the FMC needs to be flexible and non-restrictive regarding linguistic practices within Francophone community spaces. These spaces have been described as ‘fortresses’ protecting the sole use of the French language (Traisnel et al., 2013), that immigrants should join and never leave. That is, Francophone community spaces are framed as primary spaces for immigrants to belong. Moreover, the use of the French language by FMC members has been thought to be an indicator of community vitality (Forgues, 2010). However, my findings show that the use of the French language was very fluid over spaces. This echoes other studies that also explored the lived space (the lived experience in Francophone spaces instead of the discourses of the leadership of those spaces) and highlighted the use of multiple languages within Francophone spaces (Fourot, 2016; Levasseur, 2012). These authors suggested that Francophone spaces should acknowledge this plurilingualism, instead of imposing the sole use of the French language to be in congruence with the realities of the community members. Ultimately, the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver needs to take into account the

diversity of its members, who evolve in a variety of spaces within and beyond the FMC and who have intersecting identities.

While the potential to use the French language could influence decisions to engage in different occupations within various spaces, for instance by increasing comfort and satisfaction as noted in the findings, additional considerations were also important. For example, receiving parenting support in French seemed to be important, especially among participants recruited through the provincial organization. Transmission of the French language to their children was also important for participants who were parents, regardless of the site from which they were recruited. It is important to note a gender dynamic, in that, all participants from the provincial organization, which specifically targets parents, were women. My findings regarding parenting and linguistic transmission are also mostly drawn from participants who are mothers. My study highlighted that mothers' desire to transmit the French language to their children could be a motivation to engage in occupations in Francophone community spaces. Iqbal (2005) who studied Canadian-born French-speaking mothers in Metro Vancouver also found that becoming a mother had led participants in her study to engage in the local FMC to support linguistic transmission. However, in my study, for the immigrants who had been living in predominantly Francophone countries before migrating to Vancouver, linguistic transmission took on a stronger dimension in a context where French is not the dominant language. Furthermore, parenting occupations vary across cultures so occupations related to the social role of being a mother are situated within the familial, community and societal context. As these occupations are strongly influenced by cultural values (Price & Stephenson, 2009; Sethi, 2019), culture impacts both how parents define their role and determine the values that have to be transmitted through education to their child. Often it is important for immigrant parents to incorporate values from their

countries of origin into their parenting style (Nayar et al., 2012). My findings suggest that language was not the only factor leading mothers to seek support in certain spaces, and among certain communities. While most parent participants were engaging in parenting occupations in French, those from Europe had a sense of comfort when interacting with people from Eurocentric cultures, while the church had its own support system for parents attended by African people, illustrating that culture further influenced parenting occupations.

Participants' national communities also appears to be important beyond meeting immigrants' cultural needs. That is, in addition to the cultural ease felt with people from the same country or origin, participants also shared that, for integration purposes, the advice received in their national communities was sometimes more helpful than more general advice obtained in the FMC. For example, several participants said it had been important for them to learn from the experiences of people with the same skin color, with similar migration backgrounds or with the same culture. People from the same country of origin were said to be better able to understand participants' way of thinking and anticipate their needs or questions. This point echoes Huot and Veronis' (2018) research in Ontario, which also found that "Participants expressed feeling a sense of ease with members of their national community and stressed the importance of getting together with people from one's own culture and country of origin, to share experiences and support the integration of newcomers through help from the more established community network." (Huot and Veronis 2018, p.44). Madibbo (2016) who explored the experience of African French-speaking immigrants in Alberta also found that national communities provided immigrants with an empowering space. That is, engaging with their national communities allowed immigrants to reinterpret their minority identities and fight against racism and stereotyping (Madibbo, 2016).

Intersecting identity markers could lead to separation of immigrants by country or continent of origin. My findings echoes Gupta and Sullivan's (2013) in the US, showing the change in “socio-emotional connectedness” following migration, especially for immigrants’ coming from community-based cultures (Gupta and Sullivan 2013, p.26). The need for ‘socio-emotional connectedness’ could explain the grouping of people with similar culture. However, I observed that the separation of immigrants by country or continent seemed to be perpetuated by additional factors. There seemed to be a dialectic between lumping and splitting and there was no inclusion without exclusion (e.g., by creating a group for mothers, one excludes the fathers or people who do not have children). As mentioned section 5.4.3, I noticed the intersection of socio-economic status and race among the participants. Participants with higher socio-economic status tended to be White European and voluntary immigrants living in Vancouver, while participants with lower socio-economic status tended to be Black and with refugee backgrounds living in cities surrounding Vancouver. This separation was perhaps more visible given that participants tended to live close to the site through which they were recruited. However, Francophone community sites were more concentrated in Vancouver, including *la maison de la Francophonie*, where several head offices of Francophone organizations, such as the provincial organization, were located. When services are concentrated in one location, it can create difficulties for people living further away, to access these services. Thus, services and activities offered in Vancouver were attended by participants living in the city, who were predominantly White immigrants from Europe. Access to these activities, more numerous in Vancouver than in peripheral cities, was more difficult for racialized participants with lower socio-economic status who lived further away and faced additional barriers as a result, such as transportation expenses.

In my findings, it appeared that immigrants with visible minority identity markers could face more barriers in their participation in Francophone community spaces. Madibbo (2010a) explored French-speaking immigrants' belonging to their national communities, the FMC and the Canadian society and found that these belongings could intersect. However, they could also lead to different forms and combination of exclusions (Madibbo, 2010a). No participants from the present study said they had experienced racism or exclusion in the FMC. Yet, their participation in Francophone sites could be hindered if spaces were unwelcoming for immigrants with certain identity markers or from particular social groups. These findings echo studies led in Alberta and Ontario that have shown that French-speaking immigrants from visible minority groups could be discriminated against in the FMCs and constituted a minority within a minority who faced intersecting barriers to inclusion (Huot et al., 2013; Madibbo, 2006).

The absence of explicit discrimination in the Francophone spaces seemed to not be enough for these spaces to be welcoming. When compared to other provinces, the FMC in Metro Vancouver seemed to be more inclusive because there was no strong presence of a historically anchored community (Traisnel et al., 2013). While in some provinces there can be a differentiation between the historical FMC and more recently arrived French-speaking immigrants (Gallant, 2008), or a lack of interaction and 'mixing' between these two groups (Veronis & Couton, 2017; Veronis & Huot, 2017), this was not predominant in my findings in Metro Vancouver. However, I observed racial and socio-economic separation between sites. This separation seemed to be perpetuated in the constant production of the spaces. When spaces were predominantly used by one population, they were found less accessible or welcoming for people who did not belong to that group. The partner site in which I observed more heterogeneity seemed to emphasize the celebration of diversity, and bringing people together appeared to be

core to the site's mandate. The key informant from this site emphasized the need to listen to the immigrants and take their needs into accounts. While immigrants can be instrumentalized and viewed as numbers for demographic purposes (Mulatris et al., 2018), their integration into the FMC requires the community to put their needs first. This suggests that, beyond the absence of discrimination, sites need to adopt a pro-active attitude in bringing together the diversity within the FMC in order to create spaces that are inclusive for French-speaking immigrants.

6.1.3 The occupational and spatial fluidity of language

In this section I discuss the spatiality of immigrants' occupations drawing from transactionalism combined with concepts from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. While I considered occupations as transactions between immigrants and different spaces, Lefebvre's spatial theory allowed me to examine this transaction beyond the visible occupation and the immediate environment. In this section, I discuss how power dynamics and perceptions interweaved with immigrants' occupations in the production of space. The fluidity of occupation and language use over space was another important finding. However, while the findings highlighted the fluidity of the lived space, I discuss how the perceived and conceived space seemed to be what provided formal Francophone community spaces with stability and recognition. Finally, given the fluidity of occupation over space, it appears that in order to study the spatiality of occupation, one needs to take into account not only the immediate environment in which occupation takes place but also other related spaces, whether they are encompassing or parallel.

The focus on space while exploring occupation in a migration context constitutes one of the contributions of my study to the occupation-based literature. Moreover, occupational scientists have often been examining the experience of a particular population (e.g., Karen

refugee women (Stephenson et al., 2013)) or the performance of a particular occupation (e.g. singing in an amateur choir (Raanaas et al., 2018)). Although I studied the specific context of the FMC in metro Vancouver, my sample was diverse in regards to identity markers such gender, race, country, culture of origin and migration status and I explored migrants' engagement in a variety of occupations and in different spaces. Thus, my findings drawing from this variety of experiences broaden the understanding of occupation in a migration context. Furthermore, my study responds to the call for a dynamic conceptualisation of space (Johansson et al., 2013); and while the use of theory has been inconsistent in the occupational science literature exploring international migration (Delaisse & Huot, 2020), my study draws on both a transactional approach to occupation and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, to deepen the knowledge on the spatiality of occupation in a migration context.

Combining Lefebvre's theory of the production of space and transactionalism allowed me to contextualize occupations more exhaustively, beyond the usual focus on lived space in occupational science. I examined immigrants' occupations as transactions with different spaces. Spaces were not considered as 'containers' of immigrants' occupations and instead were understood as being defined for and by the occupations performed there (e.g., the church was a church because it was designed as, thought of, and experienced as a space to pray and practice a religion). Participants were constructing or producing the spaces through their occupations while these spaces were enabling transformations for the immigrants (i.e., their integration into Canadian society). In that sense, the spaces and the immigrants were co-constructing each other through occupation. However, it was important to consider more than the observable occupations to understand the transaction. The analysis of conceived, perceived and lived space, coupled with transactionalism were essential to broaden my understanding of the spatiality of occupation.

Laliberte Rudman and Huot (2013) have suggested that a critical approach can complement transactionalism to situate occupations because person-space transactions occurring through occupations are influenced by power dynamics. They respectively used Foucault's notion of governmentality and Bourdieu's theory of practice to explore how power "operates within and through social relations" (Laliberte Rudman & Huot, 2013, p.61). Transactionalism facilitates study of the inherently spatial nature of occupation and its situatedness and was introduced to occupational science as a way to move beyond an emphasis on individualism within the discipline (Dickie et al., 2006). In line with this desire to expand beyond a focus on individuals, it is important to broaden our focus away from the immediate and observable surroundings of individuals' occupations. Lefebvre's spatial triad allowed me to step back from the observable immigrant-space transaction to rather examine space production from which this immigrant-space transaction is an integral part. In other words, this study had an occupational focus but the theory of the production of space highlighted the two other components of the production of space that are related to occupations in space without necessarily being immediately observable: conceived space (i.e., how the spaces are designed for what type of occupation) and perceived space (i.e., people understanding of how occupations are to be engaged in this or that space). In my findings, tensions in the person-space transaction highlighted the distinction between the three components of space production, where discrepancies were identified between what occurred in the lived space, what was perceived by people and what was planned or intended in the conceived space. Further, conceived and perceived space were omnipresent even in harmonious situations. A critical perspective tends to emphasize the negative role of power in creating divisions, but in some cases in my study, the conceived space played a unifying role, that was perceived and experienced positively by

participants. Conceived space was associated with the power of the leadership of the sites, but this leadership, although ‘top-down’, was found to be essential in establishing and shaping formal Francophone spaces. While the lived space was fluid, perceived and conceived space allowed the production of identifiable Francophone spaces (a ‘landmark’ for the immigrants).

In line with Lefebvre’s focus on the ontology of space, it is also important to emphasize that the power dynamics of the conceived space not only influenced the person-space transaction (i.e., the immigrants’ occupations in space) but they were ontologically part of space and they produced space concomitantly with immigrants’ occupations and their perceptions. The vision of each site’s leadership could not be considered as an external force; rather, they were part of space and were producing it along with other components of space production. For example, the pastor’s vision for the church was not external or independent from how people perceived the church and what people were doing in the church. There was a constant interaction between what had been planned, what people perceived they had to do and what they actually did. The fact that the church community had a family-like atmosphere between the members was the result of how occupations were planned to trigger strong and intimate relationships among the members, the fact that church members had this expectation of their religious community and the actual practices (i.e., the practical application of these family-like rapports during occupation). In that sense, conceived space was interwoven with perceived and lived space in the production of space. The intricacy of power dynamics and people’s occupations in the production of space is important to underline as this allows to “bridge the socially constructed dichotomy of structure and agency, or environment and person” (Laliberte Rudman & Huot 2013, p.56). Specifically, occupational possibilities (Laliberte Rudman, 2010) in Francophone space were shaped by

previous layers of space production that had occurred through both occupations and power dynamics but could also be challenged.

I was interested in understanding the fluidity of the use of the French-language in spaces and for occupations on the one hand, and the importance of tangible ‘landmark’ Francophone spaces on the other. That is, findings highlighted the fluidity of occupational engagement and language use over space. For example, some participants gathered in a Francophone space and also used other languages, or engaged in occupations in Anglophone spaces while using the French language. Additionally, regardless of their attachment to the French language, participants’ use of it and their engagement in the FMC varied at different life stages depending on the occupations they had to prioritize. If the use of the French language is fluid and French can be spoken anywhere depending of the speaker, what makes a particular space become a Francophone space?

It appeared that while informal Francophone spaces could be produced anywhere in a ‘bottom-up’ manner, starting from the occupation performed in French, even if only temporarily; formal Francophone spaces required a more stable perceived and conceived space to ensure the crystallization of the use of French in a particular space. This nuances the findings by Peralta-Catipon (2009) regarding space and occupation in the context of migration. She explored the weekly gathering of Filipina workers in Statue Square, Hong Kong. She showed the importance of a physical, identifiable space that had shared meaning for immigrants; how some physical elements of space, like a statue, could be an important ‘landmark’ to meet other immigrants but also carry symbolic meaning because of the occupations they engaged in when gathering in that space. Through their weekly gathering, Filipina immigrants connected with their culture of origin through shared language and shared occupations related to their culture, found identity validation

as breadwinners sending remittances to their families, and also escaped from or rebelled against their working conditions (Peralta-Catipon, 2009).

My findings highlight parallels to Peralta-Catipon's work regarding the importance of Francophone spaces for French-speaking immigrants that allowed them to connect with their culture, either from their specific country of origin or shared cultural aspects attached to the French language. These spaces also enabled the appreciation and promotion of linguistic capital (i.e., speaking French) that might not be valued elsewhere in the Anglo-dominant environment of Metro Vancouver. However, in the case of the Filipina workers, their use of space was temporary and remained 'bottom-up'. Statue Square was 'taken' every week by the Filipina workers who made it their own and it became a transformative space for them. Statue Square also carried shared understanding among Filipina immigrants; however, the space had not been conceived for these gatherings, in fact these gatherings could be considered an act of defiance of what the space was meant for. In the case of the Francophone spaces, it appeared that informal Francophone spaces could be 'bottom-up', while formal Francophone community spaces were more 'top-down', in that they had a clear leadership structure providing a frame for the use of French and the engagement in occupations in these spaces.

In any case, the lived space was fluid over locations and time as participants used French in different locations in Metro Vancouver. In that sense, the lived space was the most fluid component of the production of space and the less durable, while the perceived space was a little more 'fixed' and attached to locations as immigrants would not identify any physical space as 'Francophone'. However, the identification of Francophone spaces could vary from one person to the other, especially for informal spaces. Depending on people's countries of origin and where they engaged in occupations in French (e.g., restaurant, library), they might identify different

informal spaces. Nevertheless, formal spaces had more of a shared understanding through the perception of these spaces as ‘landmark’ to receive services and engage in occupations in French. Finally, the conceived space was what ensured some ‘stability’, official recognition and durability over time, with formal Francophone spaces playing a dual role. While they provided a ‘stable’, identifiable space that was an important ‘French-language landmark’ for immigrants, the sites had to accept and adapt to the lived space that was fluid, including the permeability of the FMC, its diversity and the intersectional identities of the French-speaking immigrants. The lived space could be very temporary if not supported by perceived and conceived space for more durability over time. However, the conceived space remained dependent on what happens in the lived space and perceived space (adapting to the evolving diversity of the community). While English was the dominant language in most spaces in Metro Vancouver, especially for intergroup communication, formal Francophone spaces emphasized the French language (Landry et al., 2005). Neither of these spaces precluded people from speaking another language but formal Francophone community spaces were made identifiably Francophone and more perennial over time by their conceived space (e.g., offering services in French, communicating in French, targeting the French-speaking population).

While Lefebvre tended to focus on physical space in the production of space, the triad also applied to the production of virtual spaces, with informal spaces relying more on the lived space (e.g. forums, Facebook pages like “le guide du croutard”), and formal spaces that needed the three component of space to ensure their sustainability (lived space, that is, regular activities and up to date posts; perceived space, that is, participants identifying the websites, newsletter or Facebook page as being part of the FMC or providing information about the FMC; conceived

space, that is, people in leadership positions, giving an orientation to the space in order to meet the needs of its target population).

A contribution of my findings to the occupation-based literature lies in the exploration of space production in a receiving country through immigrants' occupations. Occupational scientists have emphasized the importance of occupation in the settlement and integration process from the immigrants' perspective (Nayar & Hocking, 2006; Nayar & Sterling, 2013; Raanaas et al., 2018; Stephenson et al., 2013; Suto, 2013). My findings are congruent with this but they also point at the impact of immigrants' occupational engagement on spaces in the receiving society. While occupations (the lived space) were not the only element producing space, immigrants' presence and interaction with the spaces impacted the two other elements of Lefebvre's spatial triad (conceived and perceived space) thus playing a major role in Francophone spaces' production.

Finally, another highlight of my findings lies in the fluidity of occupation across space, or the interconnectedness of spaces through occupations. I have shown that lived space was fluid while perceived and conceived space were more attached to physical locations, and allowed the production of identifiable French-speaking spaces. However, the fluidity of occupational engagement in French also showed the fluidity and interconnectedness of the spaces themselves. While there is a risk in delimiting spaces and focussing on one occupation in one particular space, it is important to take into account how each space relates to (1) other encompassing spaces, as I have shown the permeability of Francophone spaces in the encompassing Anglo-dominant environment of Metro Vancouver; or (2) parallel spaces, as I have also shown how engagement in informal Francophone spaces could lead to participation in formal Francophone spaces and vice versa.

Huot and her colleagues used Bourdieu's and Goffman's work to examine how people perform different identities depending on the space. In the case of Francophone spaces, they found that immigrants were provided with the opportunity to perform their French-speaking identity (Huot et al., 2014; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). However, the performance of an identity through occupation could be influenced by the broader surrounding as shown by Nayar and Hocking (2013) who found that immigrants would perform occupations according to their culture of origin in personal spaces while being aware of expectations related to the mainstream culture outside of these intimate spaces. Thus, occupations are situated in multiple layers of spatiality and "occupation is always and inherently intersubjective" (Angell 2014, p.110). The interweaving of practices across spaces resonates with my own findings, while Nayar and Hocking (2013) focused on cultural practices, I focused on linguistic practices. The permeability of Francophone spaces, visible through the use of various languages beside French, showed how occupations performed in these spaces were situated in the immediate surrounding environment, but also the broader FMC and larger Canadian society that is Anglo-dominant in Metro Vancouver.

Moreover, occupations in one space could be related to other spaces. Not only are occupations located in multiple layers of spatiality but spaces are dynamic and interrelated over time. Some participants had come to engage in occupations in formal Francophone spaces because of other occupations in informal Francophone spaces and beyond. Occupational engagement in Francophone community spaces could, likewise lead to occupational opportunities beyond the FMC. That is, participants' occupational engagement "here" could be related to "there". Occupations were taking place in a network of interrelated spaces, (including virtual spaces) instead of strictly the sole immediate visible surrounding environment. There was

a continuity in the way people understood their occupations over spaces, as participants would not necessarily differentiate formal and informal Francophone spaces or would consider their private interactions with French-speaking people as part as their engagement in the FMC. Thus, it was important to account for this fluidity and interrelatedness when exploring the spatiality of immigrants' occupational engagement in French.

6.2 Return to reflection

In section 1.2 I introduced my positionality when I started this study. In this section, I reflect on my engagement in this research now that I have completed it. This project occurred as I was myself integrating into Metro Vancouver. First, I discovered the local FMC, the history of the FMCs across Canada as well as their struggles. I had not engaged in deep reflections about the Francophonie beforehand and what it meant to share a language with people coming from a variety of countries. I had a tendency to associate the use of the French language worldwide with colonial domination rather than a right to fight for as a minority linguistic community. As I engaged in the FMC in Metro Vancouver and as I traveled in Quebec for personal reasons, I came to understand that I shared more than a language with Francophone Canadians. For example, I could feel a sense of cultural closeness in Montreal or with other Francophone Canadians that I did not feel with the mainstream population in Metro Vancouver. As I engaged in the local FMC for data collection, I built both professional and personal connections. I kept engaging with the FMC beyond the research project and Francophone community spaces are important for my own occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver. I appreciate that they allow me to both keep speaking French without confining me in my culture of origin. I did feel that my engagement in these spaces contributed to my integration in Canada by learning more about the

local Francophone culture and engaging with multiculturalism. I felt welcomed in Francophone community spaces and I developed attachment to some of them.

My positionality implied a constant negotiation between an emic versus an etic approach, as I am a French-speaking immigrant and I came to the sites as a researcher. My positionality could influence the dynamic with the participants. For example, church members assumed I was Canadian when I first met them. As they learned I was French, I felt like it changed the relationship. Some participants told me they had family in France or they had travelled there. Knowing that I was an immigrant, the pastor offered to help me with immigration-related procedures. The power balance changed as he considered me as someone he could help. Other identity markers might also have played a role. For example, the fact that I am an educated White woman who speaks with a Parisian accent; I noticed that while I do make grammatical mistakes when I speak French or use Anglicism's, I was easily 'forgiven' and even sometimes taken as a reference. When it comes to race, it is interesting to note that it played a different role depending on the context. When interacting with groups that were predominately from one race or another, it could position me as an insider (e.g. being White at a provincial organization activity where most people were White) or outsider (e.g. being White at the church where most people were Black). In groups that were more mixed, like the community association, the role of race was mitigated. When interacting with participant one on one, I noticed that race was not the only factor affecting the rapport with the person. For example, when interacting with Black participants, I felt that social class or educational level could be more important than race in creating intimacy or distance.

Throughout this study I noticed that I could relate to some of the participants' experiences as a French-speaking immigrant myself. But I also reflected on how privileged I was

and how my experience differed from those of forced migrants (e.g., one participant who had to give up on her dreams to study and go to work quickly after her arrival in order to make a living), racialized immigrants (e.g., a participant who had experienced racism when searching for housing) and other immigrants with different identity markers. I questioned what the FMC and Francophone community spaces meant to me. Sometimes I questioned to what extent it was relevant to unite such a diverse population under the umbrella of a language; especially when participants did not perceive themselves as part of the same group. While I developed a sense of belonging to the local FMC and came to understand the FMCs' struggles, there were claims and attitudes I could not adhere to, such as the instrumentalization of immigrants (supporting immigration for the sole demographic purpose of the communities and for what they can contribute), the assimilationist attitude from the communities towards immigrants, the taboo around the racism occurring within the communities and the obliviousness to the colonial aspect of the French language. However, I observed these issues more when attending conferences or reading about the decisions and vision of those in leadership positions for the Francophonie more broadly in Canada rather than in the field in Metro Vancouver. I have developed an interest in the FMC and its issues both internally, towards its diversity, and externally, towards the Anglo-dominant surrounding. As I intend to stay in Vancouver to do a PhD, I will continue my engagement in the FMC both personally and in further research projects.

6.3 Limitations and future research directions

In this section, I discuss the limitations of the present study as well as directions for future research. This study was conducted in one of Canada's largest metropolitan areas. The results may not be transferable to more rural areas or other parts of Canada. However, this project is part of a broader research program, including projects in Ontario. This can allow

researchers to compare and nuance the findings. Further research could focus on other areas in British Columbia; for example, Maillardville, which used to be a “French-speaking enclave” in British Columbia (Moss 2004, p.93), and Prince George, which was recently selected as part of a ‘welcoming communities’ initiative for Francophone immigration funded by IRCC. It might be interesting to explore how the Francophone past of these cities shapes the local FMC and the integration of French-speaking immigrants.

This study’s sample was purposefully heterogeneous in order to explore diverse experiences and how these are shaped by a variety of identity markers. However, further research could focus on more specific populations (e.g., forced immigrants, racialized immigrants) in order to explore the specificities of their experiences in more depth. Additionally, this study brought new insights on the experience of participation of immigrants who had arrived at different times in Metro Vancouver. Some participants told me about how the FMC had evolved since their arrival and how they had felt when integrating at first as compared to several years later. Nevertheless, longitudinal study could allow more in-depth exploration of the on-going integration process of Francophone immigrants in Metro Vancouver as well as the development of the FMC and Francophone spaces, in relation to the immigrants, over time.

This research explored French-speaking immigrants’ engagement with the FMC and how their occupational engagement contributes to the production of Francophone spaces. Further research could explore the perspective of Canadian-born members of the FMC. On the one hand, for those who have lived in British Columbia for a long time, it would enable understanding of how they perceive increasing diversity of the FMC stemming from immigration. On the other hand, there is a large proportion of internal immigrants (i.e., people arriving from other Canadian provinces) within the FMC in Metro Vancouver. It could be interesting to conduct interviews

with both Canadian-born and foreigner newcomers to Metro Vancouver, to compare their experiences of settlement, how they engage in the FMC and what the community means to them, especially for those transiting from a predominantly Francophone area to the Anglo-dominant environment of Vancouver (i.e., Canadians moving to British Columbia from Quebec).

6.4 Conclusion

This thesis explored the experiences of French-speaking immigrants' occupational engagement in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver. Francophone immigration to British Columbia had been understudied, as had the engagement of adult immigrants in the FMCs beyond the educational environment in particular. Moreover, I focused on the spatiality of occupation, taking a dynamic approach to space and the person-space transaction embodied in occupation. Drawing from Lefebvre's theory of the production of space allowed me to look beyond immigrants' immediate observable occupations to see how these, but also perception and power dynamics, interweave in the production of space. Finally, I took into account the intersecting identity markers of French-speaking immigrants when exploring the production of Francophone spaces in regard to diversity.

Partnerships were established with three Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver; a church, a provincial organization and a community association. I conducted a critical ethnography over eleven months, completing in-depth personal interviews with fifteen French-speaking immigrants who were diverse in terms of gender, age, country of origin, date of arrival and migration status. Nine of them completed a go-along interview where I took part in one of their daily occupations. I also interviewed three key informants, one representative from each partner site.

Findings were presented around three themes linking occupation, space, language and identity markers. The first theme ‘Speaking French in participants’ occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver’ addressed the role of the French language in participants’ occupational engagement in Metro Vancouver, what it meant for them to speak French in this Anglo-dominant environment. The second theme ‘Engaging in occupations in French fluidly across permeable and interrelated spaces’ focused on the spatiality of immigrants’ occupational engagement in French. The third theme ‘Producing Francophone Spaces for the diverse population of the FMC’ explored how Francophone community spaces were produced with respect to diversity stemming from international migration.

In this chapter I discussed how the Francophone community spaces can play a role between immigrants’ national communities and the mainstream Anglo-dominant society in Metro Vancouver. These spaces were found to provide some cultural ease, although not as much as their national communities from countries of origin. However, they supported immigrants’ integration into the broader Canadian society. This was due to the permeability and embeddedness of the FMC in Metro Vancouver. I also discussed the attitude of the FMC towards the diversity stemming from migration. While spaces are meant to be open to everyone, they can be exclusive by the dominance of one specific group within the FMC. It appeared that the sites needed to be very proactive in unifying the diversity of the FMC and putting immigrants’ needs first to welcome and support them. Finally, several aspects of the spatiality of occupation were highlighted, such as how occupation interweaves with power dynamics and perceptions in the production of space. I also underlined the fluidity of occupation across space, the multiple layers of spatiality in which occupation is embedded and the need to look beyond the immediate visible environment when considering the spatiality of occupation.

This study has empirical and theoretical implications both for the FMC and French-speaking immigrants and for the occupational science literature. This thesis echoes other studies highlighting the importance of Francophone community sites for French-speaking immigrants' integration in Canada (Huot & Veronis, 2018) but also the need for FMCs to be open to diversity and welcome it as a richness (Madibbo, 2016) and the impossibility to consider Francophone community spaces as fortresses protecting the use of the French language by closing themselves in (Traisnel et al., 2013). However, this study also sheds new light onto the specific context of Metro Vancouver, where the racial and socio-economic separation seemed more predominant than Canadian-immigrant separation. While spaces specific to certain identity markers were found helpful, Francophone community spaces were also important as they represented landmarks, crystalizing the use of the French language in a particular space. This thesis also brings new insights into the spatiality of occupation. Combining transactionalism and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space enabled dynamic considerations of space and study of its many different facets. Moreover, the fluidity of occupational engagement and language use was a key finding highlighting the need to go beyond the exploration of a static environment encompassing occupation. Occupations were found to be a key factor in the production of Francophone community spaces and to have the power to bring people together, especially when they were purposefully meeting the needs of the diversity of the FMC.

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Appendices

Appendix A Observation table

This thesis does not include data from the on-site observations. However, they constitute a part of the ethnographic approach of this project and they informed both the collection and analysis of the data included in this thesis (semi-structures interviews and go-along interviews with French-speaking migrants and key informant interviews).

(This observation table was used during events or activities organized by the three participating community spaces. We consulted the participating organizations to identify relevant events and activities that we could attend and obtained their permission to conduct observations.)

| Type of information | Context and description (descriptive data about context – ‘ <i>context notes</i> ’, and comments - ‘ <i>thick description</i> ’) | Field notes (taken from memory after observation) |
|---|--|--|
| Date | D/M/Y | |
| Location | Organization name/site and address | |
| Time/observation schedule | Start: End: | |
| Organization(s) involved and their role(s) | Organization(s): Role(s): | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Type of information | Context and description (descriptive data about context – ‘ <i>context notes</i> ’, and comments - ‘ <i>thick description</i> ’) | Field notes (taken from memory after observation) |
| Location description (add as detailed as possible a description of the location/space) | <p>For example: Community site Outdoors or indoors Public site School Organization</p> <p>Size of space (e.g., size of hall, park) Atmosphere (formal, informal; busy or not, etc.)</p> | |
| Simple map or sketch of location (organization of the space, hall, activity) | | |
| Type of activity (describe in as much detail as possible; include official description of activity when possible; context) | <p>For example: Frequency (e.g., regular or punctual) Conference Workshop Service Program Educational, informative, social, religious activit , etc. Training Etc.</p> | |

| Type of information | Context and description (descriptive data about context – ‘ <i>context notes</i> ’, and comments - ‘ <i>thick description</i> ’) | Field notes (taken from memory after observation) |
|--|--|--|
| Target audience / to whom is activity geared (based on the official description) | For example : Francophones Immigrants Newcomers Families Age groups (children, youth, adults, seniors) Skilled workers Job seekers Students Women / men / other Ethnocultural communities Etc. | |
| Participants (describe in as much detail as possible; emphasize similarities and differences between participants) | Number of participants Type of participants Francophones Immigrants Newcomers Families Age groups (children, youth, adults, seniors) Skilled workers Job seekers Students Women / men / other Ethnocultural communities Etc. | |
| General atmosphere | Atmosphere (formal, informal; festive; tense; political; debate; etc.) | |

| Type of information | Context and description (descriptive data about context – ‘ <i>context notes</i> ’, and comments - ‘ <i>thick description</i> ’) | Field notes (taken from memory after observation) |
|---|--|--|
| Social and physical interactions and dynamics | <p>Describe what is taking place, by whom, why, behaviours :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what are participants doing? - What are participants attitudes? - how are participants interacting amongst each other? <p>Interactions and dynamics between participants :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formal, informal; - the participants are mingling with each other or not, formnig small groups; - mouvement or traffic; - people are seated, not moving; - debates or conflicts; etc. <p>Identify hierarchies :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vertical or horizontal relations | |
| Verbal social interactions and dynamics (conversations) | <p>Describe who is speaking, how, why :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who is speaking? - what are participants saying? - what types of exchanges are occuring? - what is the nature of the verbal interactions between participants? <p>Verbal interactions and dynamics :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nature of exchanges - who is interacting | |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Type of information | Context and description (descriptive data about context – ‘ <i>context notes</i> ’, and comments - ‘ <i>thick description</i> ’) | Field notes (taken from memory after observation) |
| Languages spoken or used | | |
| Themes, subjects, issues, questions asked during the activity (if relevant) | During the activity, what are the subjects, themes, issues, and questions raised - what are participants talking about? Generate a list of key words used by participants : | |
| Other observations | | |
| Journal entry (notes, comments, reflections following observation) | | |

Appendix B Invitation to participate

The role of community spaces in the social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver



For our research project, we are looking for **French-speaking immigrants and refugees** in Metro Vancouver.

The goal of our study is to collect information regarding the experiences of social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in different francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

The participation to our study consist of:

- **A main interview of 60 to 90 minutes** with a researcher, about your experiences of settlement and integration in Canada, as well as your participation in Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.
- **A participatory interview (optional)** that would consist of participating in one of your daily activities with a researcher who would observe and participate with you.

Your participation to the first interview does not oblige you to complete the second interview.

If you want to participate or if you want more information, please contact the primary researcher:

Dr. Suzanne Huot

Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of British Columbia



Appendix C Demographic questionnaire

This demographic questionnaire was given to the immigrant participants to fill out before starting the semi-structured personal interview.

Demographic questionnaire

We ask that you complete the following questionnaire for the purpose of helping us better understand the people who are participating in the study. Your participation is voluntary and all information provided will be kept confidential. If you do not feel comfortable answering some questions, leave them blank. For each question, please circle the most appropriate answer, or insert the answer in the space provided.

1) What is your age range?

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55 +

2) Where were you born? _____

3) What is your gender? Male Female Other (specify) : _____

4) What is your marital status?

Married

Never married

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Other (please specify): _____

5) Do you have children? Yes No

6) If yes, how many? _____

7) Do your children live with you ? Yes No

8) What is your highest degree?

Less than a secondary degree

Secondary degree

Community college degree

Technical degree

University bachelor degree

Higher education degree

Other (please specify): _____

9) What is your employment status?

Full time

Part time

Unemployed

Other (specify): _____

10) Under which category did you enter Canada?

Qualified worker

Express entry

Family sponsorship

Immigrant Investor

Working permit

Provincial nominee

Refugee

Asylum seeker

Other (specify): _____

11) How long have you been in British Columbia ? _____

12) Did you migrate with somebody else ? Yes No

13) Did you have to wait for family reunification ? Yes No

14) Are you currently waiting for family reunification ? Yes No

15) Have you lived in other locations in Canada before Metro Vancouver? If yes, please specify where:

16) In which country(ies) have you been living before moving to Canada ?

17) What is your main transportation mean ?

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. Your answers will remain anonymous and confidential. If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Appendix D Demographic data from the demographic questionnaires

| Variables | Community association | Provincial organization | Church | Total | Percentage |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Male | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 20 |
| Female | 4 | 5 | 3 | 12 | 80 |
| Age | | | | | |
| From 18 to 24 years old | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| From 25 to 34 years old | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 20 |
| From 35 to 44 years old | 1 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 40 |
| From 45 to 54 years old | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Over 55 years old | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 20 |
| Unavailable | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Civil status | | | | | |
| Married | 2 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 53.33 |
| Never married | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Divorced | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Common law | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Unavailable | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 13.33 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|
| Number of child(ren) | | | | | |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 26.67 |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 20 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 26.67 |
| 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 20 |
| 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Common residence | 1 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 53.33 |
| Non-common residence | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 20 |
| Educational level | | | | | |
| Less than a secondary degree | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Secondary degree | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 20 |
| Community college | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| University bachelor | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 33.33 |
| Technical degree | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Graduate degree | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 20 |
| Employment status | | | | | |
| Full time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 40 |
| Part time | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Unemployed | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 20 |
| Self-employed | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Maternity leave (employed) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Retired | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Unavailable | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Searching for employment | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|-------|
| Immigration category (upon arrival) | | | | | |
| Skilled worker | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Family sponsorship | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 40 |
| Refugee | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 20 |
| Asylum seeker | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Working Holiday permit | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Tourist | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Permanent residency with their family (as a child) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Time of arrival Canada | | | | | |
| Very recent (0-5 years) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 53.33 |
| Recent (6-10 years) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Settled (11 years and more) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 33.33 |
| Applicant type | | | | | 0 |
| Applied with their family | 3 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 66.67 |
| Applied alone | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 33.33 |
| Family sponsorship | | | | | 0 |
| Came to Canada through family sponsorship or is currently sponsoring a family member to come to Canada | 3 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 33.33 |
| Did not use family sponsorship | 2 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 66.67 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| Canadian city of previous residence | | | | | |
| Montreal | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 13.33 |
| North Delta | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Winnipeg | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Arrived directly in Vancouver | 2 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 73.33 |
| Country of residence before coming to Canada | | | | | |
| Burundi | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 13.33 |
| France | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 26.67 |
| Haiti | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Mauritius | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Rwanda | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Switzerland | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Syria | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Uganda | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 13.33 |
| USA | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6.67 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|---|---|-----|-------|
| Country of birth | | | | | |
| Burundi | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13.33 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 33.33 |
| France | 1 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 33.33 |
| Haiti | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Mauritius | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Switzerland | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Main transportation means | | | | | |
| Public transit | 4.5 | 3 | 2 | 9.5 | 63.33 |
| Walking | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6.67 |
| Car | 0.5 | 2 | 2 | 4.5 | 30 |

Appendix E Guide for semi-structured personal interviews

Participants in personal interviews were French-speaking immigrants or refugees (men and women) who participate and/or are social engaged in varied Francophone community spaces in Metro Vancouver

| Theme: Introduction | |
|---|--|
| Description of the participant's migration and settlement experience | <p>Can you please introduce yourself? Tell me about your experience of migration and settlement in Canada.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you tell me a bit about your immigration experience? (For example, where are you from, how long have you been in Canada/Vancouver, your immigration category, your family situation, did you arrive with someone, etc.) - Can you tell me a bit about your settlement and integration experience to date? (For example, getting settled, orientation, access to services, job seeking, social networks). |
| | <p>Before moving on, are there additional ideas or information you would like to share about your immigration and settlement experience in Canada to date?</p> |
| Theme: participation in varied Francophone community spaces | |
| French-speaking immigrants' and refugees' experiences of participation | <p>We are now interested to hear you speak about your experiences of participation and social engagement in diverse Francophone community sites:</p> <p>1) Antecedents / Motivations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why, how, where and when did you start participating in varied community sites after your arrival in Canada/Vancouver? - What were your motivations and expectations tied to this participation? |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Were you engaged in community activities in your country of origin/before coming to Canada?- (summarize spaces already mentioned) Are you familiar with other community spaces? Do you frequent/are you engaged in those other spaces (e.g. centres, associations)?- (summarize spaces already mentioned) Are you familiar with other activities offered by the Francophone and/or immigrant community? Do you participate in those activities? If so, why? If not, why not?- What do you think about the Francophone community sites and the opportunities they offer for participation in Metro Vancouver?- Why were you interested in obtaining those services and/or participating in those activities in a Francophone space? <p>2) Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Can you describe how it was/is to participate in various community sites? Can you share your experiences of social engagement in Metro Vancouver/Francophone community sites? What do you/did you like? Is there something you did not like?- Were you presented with interesting opportunities during your experiences of participation and social engagement in various Francophone community sites? Can you please discuss these?- Did you encounter barriers during your participation in various Francophone community sites? Can you please explain these?- Do you think that your identity markers (gender, class, legal status, ethnicity, race, language competencies, etc) have influenced your experiences of participation and social engagement in various Francophone community sites? Can you explain? <p>3) Consequences / Benefits / Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What have your experiences of participation and social engagement in various Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver brought you? (e.g., obtained services and/or support, access to social networks, better understanding of the Francophone |
|--|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>community and of Canadian society, obtaining training/competencies, Canadian experience, references, job opportunities, sense of belonging, etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What role (where appropriate) did participation/social engagement in various Francophone community sites play in your experience of settlement, integration, and inclusion in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver and/or Canadian society more generally? - Have you found that there were advantages (immediate or longer term)? - Do you think your identity markers (gender, class, legal status, ethnicity, race, language competencies, etc) influenced the outcomes/results of your experiences of participation and social engagement in various Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver? Please explain. - What role (where appropriate), did your experiences of participation play in your obtaining a job? Please discuss. <p>Additional questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In your opinion, how do you think that participation and social (or even civic) engagement in various Francophone community sites could be improved? (e.g., better information about possibilities for participation in French and/or in Francophone community organizations in the region, more welcoming community sites, more diverse opportunities for participation, etc.) |
| | <p>Before concluding, do you have additional comments about these issues that you would like to share?</p> |
| <p>I thank you for your time and interest in participating in this study.</p> | |

Appendix F Guide for the participatory interviews (“Go-Along”)

These participatory interviews had the goal of ethnographically observing one of the participants’ daily activities, while also conducting an interview in a natural setting, allowing more spontaneous responses. A researcher accompanied a participant during one of their activities, completed in as close a way as possible to their regular habits. If the activity permits, the researcher also participated. The researcher observed both the activity itself, but also the environment and social context. The research could ask the participant questions about his/her motivations for completing this activity in a certain way and at a certain place. The questions were open ended like those included below but could also be guided by the participant’s responses and the context.

The information sought related to the interactions between the activity, the environment and identity. For example, the researcher paid particular attention to the way that identity markers, such as being a French-speaking immigrant, influences daily activities in an environment like Metro Vancouver, or places where French-speaking migrants enact their Francophone identities in a largely Anglophone environment. The participatory interviews enabled this information to be captured in a unique way, offering the possibility of being closer to participants’ daily lives and experiencing a part of their routine. The interviewer recorded these observations from memory following the interview. With permission, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Primary prompt: In this interview, I will observe you, follow you along, and participate with you in one of your daily activities. The purpose is to show me a regular activity and to do it as you would normally. At the same time as we are completing this activity, we will discuss it. The goal is to become more familiar with your daily life, as a French-speaking immigrant in Metro Vancouver.

Additional prompts:

Can you explain to me the activity we are going to do?

How often do you do this activity?

Is the context that I am going to observe today (the people, places) the same as when you usually do this activity?

Is there a particular reason you have chosen to show me this activity?

Why do you do this activity in this way?

At this place?

Appendix G Guide for the key informant interview

The key informants were representatives of community organizations in Metro Vancouver (immigrant and ethno cultural associations, settlement agencies, community centres, churches, or other Francophone organizations or institutions) in different types of positions or working with French-speaking immigrants and refugees in different capacities (for example, executive director, program manager, program coordinator, social worker, front-line staff, association leader, priest etc.)

| Theme: Introduction | |
|---|---|
| Description of the organization and of professional responsibilities | <p>Please, introduce yourself and tell us about the organization where you work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please, describe the organization you work for (or are member of) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is your mandate? b. What are your main activities? 2. What is the context or the focus areas (e.g., services, activities offered) that generally lead you to deal with French-speaking migrants? 3. For which reasons do French-speaking migrants access your organization? 4. How would you describe your organization's relations with French-speaking migrants? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you think your organization has been able to reach them? b. Do you think they are informed of the services, programs and activities that your organization is able to provide them with? 5. Do you have employees (members) who were born outside of Canada? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Members of your executive board? |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>Before moving forward, do you have any other ideas you would like to share about your organization, yourself and/or your experiences working with French-speaking migrants?</p> |
| <p align="center">Theme: Participation of French-speaking immigrants in different organizations in Metro Vancouver</p> | |
| <p>Participation of French-speaking immigrants in community sites</p> | <p>We would like to know more about social participation and engagement opportunities that your organization offer to French-speaking migrants</p> <p>1. The organizational context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What kind of opportunities for participation are offered to French-speaking migrants by your organization? - Is there an official program (services, activities, groups) for French-speaking migrants? - What is the usual duration of French-speaking migrants' participation/engagement? - What is the nature of their participation/engagement (type of activity, social interactions, etc.) <p>2. French-speaking migrants and social participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you describe/provide an overview of the French-speaking migrant population who participates in your organization (while maintaining confidentiality and anonymity)? - Can you say why French-speaking migrants are inclined to participate in different Francophone community sites? - Have you noticed trends or a pattern in terms of populations of French-speaking migrants that socially participate and get involved in different Francophone community sites? (For example, based on length of time in Canada, legal status, socio-economic class, sex, ethnicity/race, language skills, familial context, among others) |

- In your opinion, do difference markers (e.g., legal migrant status, date of arrival, country of origin, socio-economic class, sex, ethnicity/race, language skills, familial context, among others) have an influence on the practices, the experiences and the results of French-speaking migrants' social participation and engagement? (e.g., for their economic, social and cultural integration and inclusion, etc). Please explain.

3. Social engagement and participation in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver:

- What are the advantages or the benefits for French-speaking migrants to socially participate and engage in different Francophone community sites?

- Have you noticed factors which facilitate or on the contrary, restrict their participation experiences in different Francophone community sites?

- What could be the obstacles or challenges faced by French-speaking migrants in terms of social participation and engagement in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver?

- In your opinion, what is the effectiveness of social participation and engagement for the integration and inclusion of French-speaking migrants in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver?

- In your opinion, what are the main obstacles faced by French-speaking migrants in their efforts to integrate into the Francophone community? And in Metro Vancouver?

- What are the main obstacles faced by the Francophone community in trying to help French-speaking migrants to integrate?

- More generally, what role do you think social participation and engagement can play to facilitate the settlement, integration and inclusion of French-speaking migrants in the Francophone community as well as in the Canadian society more broadly?

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>- In your opinion, how could social participation and engagement opportunities be improved for French-speaking migrants in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver?</p> <p>- In general, how could the relationships between French-speaking migrants and established members of the Francophone community be improved in Metro Vancouver?</p> |
| | <p>Before concluding, are there any other ideas or comments that you would like to share regarding French-speaking migrants' participation in your organization or in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver?</p> |
| <p>I thank you for your time and your interest in participating in this study.</p> | |

Appendix H Information letter and consent form for the semi-structured personal interviews

This information letter and consent form was given to immigrant participants. When possible, it was sent in advance for the participant to review it. Then, before starting the interview, I reviewed the letter and the consent form with the participant. They were given time to ask questions, before signing the form, filling the demographic questionnaire and starting the interview.

INFORMATION LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The role of community spaces in the social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver

You are being invited to take part in a research study that aims to collect information related to French-speaking immigrants' and refugees' experiences of social participation in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate in this study. Before you decide, you need to understand what the study is for, what risks you might take and what benefits you might receive. This consent form explains the study.

Please take the time to read this carefully. At any time, you can ask the researchers questions if you have concerns or if you want more clarification. You can contact the Principal Investigator, Suzanne Huot, by phone at [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED]

I. STUDY TEAM - Who is conducting the study?

The researchers:

Dr. Suzanne Huot

Assistant Professor

Department of
Occupational Science and
Occupational Therapy

University of British
Columbia

Vancouver BC V6T 2B5



Dr. Luisa Veronis

Associate Professor

Department of Geography,
Environment and
Geomatics

University of Ottawa

Ottawa ON K1N 5N6

Dr. Gillian Creese

Professor

Department of Sociology
University of British
Columbia

Vancouver BC V6T 1Z

II. SPONSOR – Who is funding this study?

The project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

We do not have any connection with the Canadian government and participating in this project will not affect your migration status

III. STUDY PURPOSE – Why are we doing this study?

The goal of this study is to collect information related to experiences of social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

Your participation will help the research team to identify the motivations of immigrants and refugees to socially participate in different Francophone community sites, the factors that influence their experiences of social participation, and the potential benefit or results of this participation. This information will help the research team to develop recommendations for the implementation of policies and practices to help French-speaking migrants to fully participate

and to feel integrated in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver, as well as in the Canadian society more broadly.

IV. PROCESS – What happens if you choose to participate in the study?

If you choose to participate in our research project, the study will proceed as follows:

Personal interview (60-90 minutes):

Your participation will consist of filling in a demographic questionnaire and answering questions during a personal interview with a researcher that will last approximately 60-90 minutes. This conversation will be recorded (audio) and will help collect information about French-speaking immigrants' and refugees' social participation in various Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

Participatory interview (60-90 minutes):

You also have the option of participating in a second 'participatory' interview. Your participation in this session will consist of letting the researcher observe one of your daily activities and participate in it with you. This observation could entail note taking and/or audio recording to help the researcher collect information about the daily activities of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver.

Your participation to the first interview does not oblige you to complete the participatory interview.

You are under no obligation to participate and if you choose to participate, you can withdraw from the study anytime and/or refuse to answer the questions. If you choose to withdraw, in the course of the study, the data collected until that point could be used in this research project, unless you ask to not use them.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY – How will the information you are going to share with us remain confidential and anonymous?

All information that you will share with the researchers will remain strictly confidential. The information that could be published in the study results disseminated as public information will be free from any personal identifier and combined with other results. If the researchers choose to, they will be able to use anonymous quotations of this interview in scientific articles in order to present important and relevant results. Those quotations, if they are used, will be referenced using pseudonyms or codes and will not contain any information that would allow the identification of participants.

The personal interview will be recorded, and if you agree, the participatory interview could be recorded as well. The notes, the audio-recording and the transcript will be kept by the principal investigator (Suzanne Huot) for the sole purpose of this study. She will keep those notes in a locked cabinet in her personal office for 5 years and then all documents and files will be destroyed. You can ask for a copy of the written transcription. The audio recordings will be destroyed once they are transcribed.

VI. RESULTS – Will you get the results of the study?

If you would like to receive a summary of the study results, please indicate so on the last page of this consent form. Findings from this study may also be presented at professional conferences and published in scientific journals.

VII. RISKS – What are the risks of participating?

There are no anticipated risks in participating in the interviews. You are under no obligation to answer every question that will be asked. If you have any concerns regarding this, do not hesitate to discuss it with a member of the research team.

VIII. BENEFITS – What are the benefits of participating?

You might not directly benefit from your participation in this study. However, your participation will inform the elaboration of recommendations for the implementation of policies and practices facilitating the integration of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver's francophone community and in Canadian society more broadly.

IX. HONORARIUM – Will you be compensated for participating?

You will receive a gift card valued at \$30 for the personal interview, and a second \$30 gift card if you choose to complete the participatory interview.

X. TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY – Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

For any question or concern regarding this project or this consent form, or to withdraw from this project, the primary researcher can be contacted by phone at this number [REDACTED] or by email at this address: [REDACTED]

XI. FOR ANY OTHER COMPLAINTS – Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the interview?

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint

Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail
RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

XII. CONSENT AND SIGNATURE

Your participation to this study is completely voluntary. When accepting to participate, you do not give up your right to withdraw from the study if and when you want to.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study

- 1) I confirm that I have read and understand the research project and have had the chance to ask questions.
- 2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and this will not affect me in any way.
- 3) I give my permission for the interview(s) (if I complete the participating interview) to be recorded.
- 4) I would like to receive a summary of the study findings

Participant Name

Date

Participant Signature

Appendix I Information letter and consent form for the key informant interviews

This information letter and consent form was given to key informant participants. When possible, it was sent in advance for the participant to review it. Then, before starting the interview, I reviewed the letter and the consent form with the participant. They were given time to ask questions, before signing the form and starting the interview.

INFORMATION LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The role of community spaces in the social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in Vancouver

You are being invited to take part in a research study that aims to collect information related to French-speaking immigrants' and refugees' experiences of social participation in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate in this study. Before you decide, you need to understand what the study is for, what risks you might take and what benefits you might receive. This consent form explains the study.

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Department of
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Vancouver BC V6T 2B5



Dr. Luisa Veronis

Associate Professor

Department of Geography,
Environment and
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University of Ottawa

Ottawa ON K1N 5N6

Dr. Gillian Creese

Professor

Department of Sociology
University of British
Columbia

Vancouver BC V6T 1Z1

II. SPONSOR – Who is funding this study?

The project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

III. STUDY PURPOSE – Why are we doing this study?

The goal of this study is to collect information related to experiences of social participation and engagement of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in different Francophone community sites in Metro Vancouver.

Your participation will help the research team to understand the perspective of representatives from community spaces about the social participation of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in these sites. This information will help the research team to develop recommendations for the implementation of policies and practices to help French-speaking immigrants and refugees to fully participate and to feel integrated in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver, as well as in the Canadian society in general.

IV. PROCESS – What happens if you choose to participate in the study?

If you choose to participate in our research project, your participation will consist of answering questions during a key informant interview with a researcher that will last approximately 60-90 minutes. This conversation will be recorded (audio) and is being completed to help collect information about the needs of French-speaking immigrants' and refugees' various Francophone community sites, as well as how the sites meet these needs in Metro Vancouver.

You are under no obligation to participate and if you choose to participate, you can withdraw from the study anytime and/or refuse to answer the questions. If you choose to withdraw, in the course of the study, the data collected until that point could be used in this research project, unless you ask to not use them.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY – How will the information you are going to share with us remain confidential and anonymous?

All information that you will share with the researchers will remain strictly confidential. The information that could be published in the study results disseminated as public information will be free from any personal identifier and combined with other results. If the researchers choose to, they will be able to use anonymous quotations of this interview in scientific articles in order to present important and relevant results. Those quotations, if they are used, will be referenced using pseudonyms or codes and will not contain any information that would allow the identification of participants.

The interview will be audio-recorded. The notes, the audio-recording and the transcript will be kept by the principal investigator (Suzanne Huot) for the sole purpose of this study. She

will keep those notes in a locked cabinet in her personal office for 5 years and then all documents and files will be destroyed. You can ask for a copy of the written transcription. The audio recording will be destroyed once it is transcribed.

VI. RESULTS – Will you get the results of the study?

If you would like to receive a summary of the study results, please indicate on the last page of this consent form. Findings from this study may also be presented at a professional conference and published in scientific journals.

VII. RISKS – What are the risks of participating?

There are no anticipated risks in participating in the interview. You are under no obligation to answer every question that will be asked to you. If you have any concerns regarding this, do not hesitate to discuss it with a member of the research team.

VIII. BENEFITS – What are the benefits of participating?

You might not directly benefit from your participation to this study. However, your participation will help the elaboration of recommendation for the implementation of policies and practices facilitating the integration of French-speaking immigrants and refugees in the Francophone community in Metro Vancouver and in Canadian society more broadly.

IX. HONORARIA – Will you be compensated for participating?

You will receive a gift card valued at \$30 for this interview.

X. TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY – Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

For any question or concern regarding this project or this consent form, or to withdraw from this project, the primary researcher can be contacted by phone at this number [REDACTED] or by email at this address: [REDACTED]

XI. FOR ANY OTHER COMPLAINTS – Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the interview?

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

XII. CONSENT AND SIGNATURE

Your participation to this study is completely voluntary. When accepting to participate, you do not give up your right to withdraw from the study if and when you want to.

- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study

1) I confirm that I have read and understand the research project and have had the chance to ask questions.

2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and this will not affect me in any way.

3) I give my permission for the interview to be recorded.

4) I would like to receive a summary of the study findings

Participant Name

Date

Participant Signature