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Language Learning and the Gendered Self:
Learner Identities and French Language Study in a US Context

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in French and Educational Studies
2015

Abstract

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Through actions and words, individuals stake claim to identities and subjectivities; consciously or sub-consciously, they tell others who they are. To the same degree, individuals tell themselves who they are and attempt to embody their identities and subjectivities. However, as much as an individual has agency, the possible identities are constrained by the societies in which they live. In second language acquisition and applied linguistics, there exists a need to deepen our understandings of the intersections between identity, language learning, and motivation.

At present, there appears to be general disinterest in learning modern foreign languages in the US, particularly among male-identified individuals. In a time of ever-increasing globalization, there is a need for the development of diverse linguistic skills if the US is to act globally without engaging in linguisticism. It is thus imperative that we inquire about how individuals understand themselves and one another in the US that may be contributing to such disinterest.

This study considers French in the US and was conducted at a private, urban research university in the southeastern US. The sample was purposive and of convenience. 47 undergraduates (33 male, 14 female) participated in focus groups (7) and interviews (4). Data analysis included three levels of coding and discourse analysis. Key findings include that gender was indexed by all participants in the discourses regarding language varieties. Furthermore, young adults hold and are able to readily articulate their gendered language attitudes. The French language was consistently gendered as feminine. Several narratives emerged that addressed the ways in which participants negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others' perceptions of a language. Implications for research include a call for reconsidering the role of instrumental and integrative motivation in language study as well as for research into the effectiveness of suggested pedagogical strategies including: presenting a variety of target language speaker models, goal setting, self-evaluation, asking students to articulate a future second language self, employing community-building strategies to cultivate a sense of belonging, advocating for the utility of the target language, and integrating culture throughout the program of language study.

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Acknowledgements

I am truly grateful to all who have supported me throughout this process. It indeed takes a village. I would not be here today were it not for all of care and guidance from my many communities. I am so very thankful to the many scholars, friends, family members, and my love for all of their time, energy, support, and care.

I was truly fortunate to find an amazing group of thinkers and genuinely good people to work with. Dr. Mei-Lin Chang so graciously served as my chair and advisor. I cannot thank her enough for the way she consistently, and so very patiently, pushed me to think harder, to dig deeper, and to express myself more clearly, while always attending to my whole spirit. I will always be grateful for way she provided guidance and allowed me to follow my own path. Dr. C. Aiden Downey, who served one of my committee members, always made me step back and see the big picture. He signed off on every email full of tough questions and humor with *smiles* and made sure I remembered to laugh by giving me shredded bags of paper as “feedback.” I am grateful for all of the times we sat in his office or stood in the hallway and took on “the big questions” surrounding my work. I am grateful to Dr. Don Tuten, one of my committee members, for never allowing me to think narrowly about language and for always pushing me to look at my work from every angle, to never forget the importance of what was unsaid and that which seemed irrelevant to me at first pass. I am thankful for our many long meetings and strings of emails. To my patient, kind, and caring committee of amazing scholars: Thank you.

I was also unbelievably fortunate to have an un-paralleled group of peers who picked up the phone when I called, read drafts, kept me company through the wee hours of the morning, listened to an uncountable number of presentations, and reminded me that one could not live on coffee alone. With your work and who you

each are as individuals, you have taught me about resilience, about equality, what it means to be methodologically sound, how to be critical yet supportive, what innovation looks like, and so much more. Working with you all has been one of the greatest joys of my life thus far. Each of you have helped me grow as a scholar and as a human being in profoundly important ways. You have all become good friends and have always been wonderful colleagues. Thank you.

I must also thank the hundreds of undergraduate students who participated in my studies for all of their time and openness. This project would have been impossible without their generosity of time and of spirit. Thank you.

I could never have made it to this point without all of the love and support of those near and dear to my heart. Thank you to everyone in my life who made me believe that I could do anything, especially during those times when I was two full pots of coffee in and days without a full night's sleep. Thank you for all of your love when I had lost the light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you for never letting me let go of my dreams and for all of your patience when I rambled incoherently and incessantly about my work, when I said just a few more minute of work and I'll take a break for hours on end, and through every trying moment. I am so very grateful for all of your love and support.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review.....	8
Definitions of Key Terms.....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	16
Identity Development and Construction	16
The Social Nature of Identity Construction.....	26
Gender, Sex, and Sexuality.....	37
Literature Review	57
Using Performativity Theory to Understand the Gendered Self as a Product of Linguistic and Social Performances.....	59
Language and Gender	63
Gender and Second Language Learning and Teaching	64
Lack of Male Participation in the Language Classroom in Anglophone Countries	66
The Case of French: Disproportionally Lower Male Enrollment and Achievement.....	67
Constructs for Understanding Motivation in the Field of Second Language Acquisition	71
Gendered Language Attitudes and Language Ideologies	73
Statement of the Problem	78
Purpose of the Study.....	81
Research Questions	82
Chapter Three: Method	83
Context.....	83
Sampling.....	83
Recruitment	83
Focus group participant selection.....	83
Interview participant selection	84
Addressing the relationship between gendered language attitudes and gender performance	85
Sample description	86
Confidentiality.....	86
Instruments and Protocols.....	87
Focus groups	87

Interviews.....	95
Data Collection and Management Procedures.....	98
Researcher Position	100
Analysis	103
Chapter Four: Results.....	112
Research Question 1: Indexing of Gender by Participants	112
Research Question 2: Influence of Individual Experiences or Group Members on Gendering of French	118
Research Question 3: Negotiation of Identities and Perceptions of Language Varieties..	123
The relevance of identity.	123
An alignment between one’s identity and perceptions of the target language.....	129
A strong sense of individuality, the free spirit, and rebel narratives.....	133
Instrumental excuse.....	137
Lack of choice narrative.	142
Cultivation of the self.....	145
Global identity.....	149
Evoking heterosexuality.....	151
“The language learner” as an identity.	155
A chance to be someone else.	156
Feeling more X: Not necessarily being another self, but bringing into focus a different texture of one’s identity.	158
The role of proficiency.	161
Remaining an ‘other’: Limiting cultural acquisition.	170
Maturity and language exposure.	172
Embarrassment and hiding an L2 self.....	178
Research Question 4: Relationships between identities, GLAs, Belongingness and	180
Motivation to learn French	180
Gendered language attitudes: Phonetics and phonology.	180
Gendered language attitudes: Personal experience and cultural associations.....	187
Gendered language attitudes: Grammatical gender.	201
Gendered language attitudes: Body language.....	202
Understanding the sources of gendered language attitudes.	209
Other emotions.....	218
Sense of belongingness.....	219

The role of language requirements.	240
The “good” language learner.....	243
Desire to speak with others in the target language.....	243
Conclusion.....	244
Chapter Five: Discussion, Implications, and Directions for Future Research	247
Research Question 1: To what extent is gender indexed by individuals in the discourses regarding language varieties?.....	247
Research Question 2: How does an individual’s gender, an individual’s linguistic experiences, or the participants in the linguistic exchange relate to whether discourses regarding the French language reference: 1) femininity, 2) masculinity, 3) both femininity and masculinity, or 4) neither femininity nor masculinity?.....	250
Research Question 3: In what ways do individuals negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others’ perceptions of a language variety (French)?	254
The relevance of identity.	254
Strategies of identity presentation.	257
An alignment between one’s identity and perceptions of the target language.....	258
Misalignment: Narratives of identity management.	259
Maturity.	268
Embarrassment.	269
Research Question 4: What relationships exist among an individual’s identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn a language (French)?	270
Gendered language attitudes.	270
Sense of belongingness.....	273
Language requirements.	277
Desire to speak with others in the target language.....	277
Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice	278
Directions for Future Research	282
Works Cited.....	284
Tables, Figures, and Appendices.....	307
Table 1. Knisely (2013) Quantitative Measures Summary Table	307
Table 2. Demographic Data for (2013) Quantitative Study Sample	309
Table 3. Research Design Summary	310
Table 4. Focus Group and Interview Design Summary	311
Appendix A: Contact Summary Form.....	312

Appendix B: Student Questionnaire	313
Appendix C: List of Research-Question and Literature-Driven Start Codes.....	334
Appendix D: Focus Group Protocol.....	335
Appendix F: Interview Protocol	338

Chapter One: Introduction
“Who am I?”

No one wants to say it; I know no one wants to say it... But, honestly, we all *really* thought you were gay. Like *gay* gay. You talked about a girlfriend, but we were convinced you were making her up because you didn't want us to know about, you know, being gay.

The above quote was articulated by an 18-year-old American male university student in a pilot focus group (male and female identified individuals who both have or have not taken French) during a study abroad program in Paris. The other ten students who were there during this conversation made faces of embarrassment, smiling in a way that I read as a high degree of discomfort. One student continued: “Sorry, but its true man, we all thought you were gay.” Their discomfort and apologies highlight the ways in which a non-heterosexual identity may be perceived negatively. Following up on these statements, I asked the students why they had drawn these conclusions. A student replied: “You’re just so... *French*.” Another student continued: “Yeah, you *really* love France. Like a lot.” I attempted to get the students to continue to talk about what made these observations lead to an assumption about my sexuality. Echoes of “I don’t know” filled the room. The student who had started the discussion spoke up once again:

You know. You knew about wine, and shopping, and food, and you just knew all these things about France. We didn't expect you were going to be a guy when you came to our [pre-departure] meeting. I mean they tell you you're going to have someone on the trip to help you because you don't speak French, and you *just don't think* it's going to be a *straight* guy! I don't know *why* but you just don't.

The other students nodded in unison. The students were trying to read clues to make inferences about my identity, to situate who I am in what they felt they knew about the world. Based on their connections between French, femininity, and homosexuality,

I then asked them if French was somehow gay or girly. They adamantly said “NO,” “Not at all,” or “*What?* No.”

This conversation is illustrative of a number of experiences I have had with inaccurate assumptions about my sexuality, both as matter-of-fact observations and as pejorative assumptions through insults such as *faggot*. While not all assumptions have been specifically marked as relating to my engagement with the French language and culture, several have explicitly referenced this status. This conversation highlights a number of the central ideas pertaining to identity, gendered language attitudes, and second language learning considered in this study. With this study I explore how identities, in their relationship to gendered language attitudes, contribute to motivation as well as the possibility of increasing student motivation by attending to and valuing students’ social and cultural identities (cf. Assis Sade, 2011). I address the ways that identity and avoiding particular associations shape the ways in which males participate in learning French and the appearance of embracing French culture. The aim of this study is, thus, to better understand how individuals describe themselves, including their pasts and imagined futures, and to relate such descriptions to their reported investment or lack thereof in learning French.

Many scholars have suggested that identity formation, and I will argue identity negotiation, is central to the process of language learning (Huang, 2011; Kramsch). “As [students] invest in the languages, they are investing in their own identities,” (Castillo Zaragoza, 2011, p. 91-92). One of the most salient aspects of identity is gender (Baker, 2008). Individuals tend to hold fast to gender identities from its early significance in childhood development onward. In modern US culture, gender is most often understood in a highly dichotomized and essentialized way: There is the masculine and male and there is its antithesis, the feminine and female. However

inadequate an understanding of the constructs of gender and sex this may be, however reductionist a classification system this binary is, it is perceived as real by many and is reflected in discourse. Thus, binary understandings must be held in tandem with the de-essentialized understandings that exist in the academic literature on gender identity construction.

Researchers have suggested that language learning writ large appears to be gender-norm-violating for males (cf. Pavlenko et al., 2001), with the intensity of the violation varying with the target language in question. The activity of French language study appears to be particularly feminized. This feminization may relate to the class associations with French; the language, in modern western societies, has been characterized as a highly prestigious language variety in that it is connected to being of upper class and to refinement. This feminization can be observed in enrollment and achievement rates. Although female individuals tend to be statistically more present across foreign language classes (cf. Pavlenko et al., 2001), there is a particularly marked lack of male participation, disproportionately lower male enrollment, and disproportionately lower male achievement in French as compared to their female counterparts and as compared to males learning other languages (Callaghan, 1998; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). Could this identification of French language learning as feminine be why males are the minority in French foreign or second language classrooms in the United States? Otherwise stated, does this perception of French language learning as highly feminine offer some explanatory weight in considering why males are the minority in French foreign language classrooms in the US? It is hypothesized that gender may be related to an individual's motivation to learn a particular language.

Language and identity are intimately related; Through actions and words individuals stake claim to identities; consciously or not, they “tell” other people who they are (Holland et al., 2001). To the same degree, or even more importantly, individuals tell themselves who they are and then attempt to embody their identities. However, identities are co-constructed: As much as an individual has agency, the possibilities for the identities they perform and embody are constrained by the discourses of the societies in which they live. Individuals work within their social systems to co-construct and to perform their identities, equally through actions and words. They have agency, but not sovereignty (cf. Kramsch). As Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte, and Cain (2001) note:

In such a diverse and contentious social world the author [an individual], in everyday life as in an artistic work, creates by orchestration, by arranging overheard elements, themes and forms, not by some outpouring of an ineffable and central source. That is, the author works within, or at least against, a set of constraints that are also a set of possibilities for utterance [and in turn for being]. These are the social forms of language that Bakhtin summarized: dialects, registers, accents, and speech genres (p. 171).

Indeed language is one of our primary means of communication and, in following with this, one of our primary means of identity construction and performance. We use language to situate our social selves (Myerhoff, 2003). With our utterances, we communicate both to ourselves and to others our senses of self and our relationship to the world (cf. Kanno & Norton, 2003).

As with other aspects of identity, there is a “linguistic texture” to gender construction (McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 94). The ways in which language is used - the words, the stylized iterations of the subject, the language varieties, etc. that are used - are resources for the gender identities that we claim and perform. However, there is anything but a 1:1 relationship between gender and language forms. As McConnell-Ginet (2003) has clearly articulated, the mapping of “gender onto

language choice is not straightforward but mediated through other identities and ideologies,” (p. 116). One cannot observe a speaker and check off a universal list of utterances to calculate the gender they are expressing. Rather, it is necessary to investigate the local context, the discourses of language and gender, and an individual’s self-understandings. In this study, I explain how certain language varieties (primarily English and French) we use are resources for gender identity construction and performance and on the assertion that the possibilities for gender that particular varieties afford or constrain are shot through with local, culturally-specific, perceptions and personal understandings. Underlying this focus is a consideration of how identity is (re)negotiated when one learns (or chooses not to learn) a second language variety. Because of the context- and variety-specificity of gender-related attitudes, I have selected one language variety, French, in one context, a university in the southeastern United States. The rationale behind this selection will be expanded upon in chapter two.

Current research in language learning has begun to recognize the central role that identity plays in motivation (Murray et al., 2011). Ryan and Mercer (2011), in discussing aptitude and popular views of natural language acquisition, note that they seek to consider how learners’ core assumptions may affect their motivation. This goal translates beyond considerations of aptitude to a consideration of how an individual’s views of language varieties, specifically those that are intertwined with gender, may relate to their motivation to learn a particular language. Ryan and Mercer emphasize the importance of considering the “situated and socially constructed nature of an individual’s belief system,” (2011, p. 164). Dörnyei (2009), alludes to such a motivational system noting: “Language learning is a sustained and often tedious business, and I felt that the secret of successful learners was their possession of a

superordinate vision that kept them on track,” (p. 25). Dörnyei (2009) highlights the importance of being able to articulate a future sense of self as a target language speaker for persistence with language learning. In a similar vein, Murray (2011) discusses the task of a language instructor as fostering “learner’s version of an L2 self” and facilitating “its realization,” (p. 77).

Using qualitative methods to investigate identities and language use, renders my own subjectivity pertinent to this study: I must present my own understandings of my identity and subjectivity, including the ways in which my experiences have led me to the questions I ask herein. I more deeply re-articulate my researcher position in the methodology chapter of this work. However, here I present the most essential pieces of how my identity and subjectivity interface with this study.

In binary terms, I identify as male. As opposed to hegemonic or subordinate, I would describe my masculinity as primarily complicit; I benefit from hegemonic masculinity without regularly enacting it. Because hegemonic American masculinity entails questions of sexuality, a point that will be expanded upon in chapter two, I must also mention that I identify as heterosexual. My non-marginalized status -as defined by my position as a white, middle-class, heterosexual male- contributes to my self-identification of performing a complicit masculinity rather than a subordinate masculinity (cf. Connell, 1995). I have experienced the strength of binary perceptions of gender in my life, especially when I mention my work on gender to new acquaintances. At the same time, however, because of my own work and perhaps because I closely follow the field of queer linguistics, I find my personal understandings of gender and sexuality extend far beyond a binary framework.

My journey as a second language learner started at age twelve, when I began studying French at school to fulfill a language requirement. I am now an instructor of

French at a university in the United States. In telling my story as a US-born, native-speaker of English who became a French language learner (and eventually a French language instructor), I nearly always evoke the themes of an original *lack of choice* and of a *coincidental happening*. I regularly articulate my relationship to the French language in the following terms: “I’m not really sure how I got here. I had to take French in middle school. I tried desperately to get into any other language, but they were all full. And then it just kind of stuck!” I frequently catch myself omitting the way I grew to love the language and the degree to which I have integrated it into my sense of self. Why does my discourse regarding my position as a learner of French have this texture? Could it relate to my experiences of the French language being highly feminized by others? Otherwise stated, do I present my engagement with the French language using a lack of choice narrative and a discourse of coincidence as a way of protecting my masculine identity because I am cognizant of the stereotype of engagement with the French language as a feminine endeavor?

In a time of ever-increasing economic and social globalization, the national development of diverse linguistic skills has been growing in importance. In tandem with the increasing relevance of multilingualism, there has been mounting interest in and need for research on second language (L2) education in the United States.

Although the need for international interaction is not gender-specific, there appear to be gender-related differences in language education. It is thus important to investigate the relationship between identity and second language learning and to consider the pedagogical implications of such understandings in order to develop classroom and curricular strategies that may foster a greater sense of motivation to learn a second language among a larger number of individuals.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Definitions of Key Terms

Agency: “The socio-culturally mediated capacity to act,” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112), which is “something that a person can achieve... only in transaction with a particular situation,” (Biesta & Tedder, 2006, p. 19). Agency does not imply sovereignty (cf. Kramsch); because one has the capacity to act does not mean they have full control over the action and its implications.

Artifact: Artifacts are cultural productions. They may be verbal, gestural, or material. Examples of artifacts include: tax forms, census categories, curriculum vitae. Artifacts are used to evoke identities (cf. Holland et al., 2001).

Community of practice: “an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor [an activity]. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor,” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 464).

Cultural norms: “Knowledge, shared by people in a culture, which gives rise to patterns of behavior,” (Kiesling, 2003, pp. 518).

Discourse: Traditionally defined in formal linguistics as “the linguistic level in which sentences are combined into larger units,” (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 44). To be held in tandem with this form-focused definition, is a definition that focuses upon function. “Discourse, in this view, is language in context: that is language as put to use in social situations, [...] contextually specific ways of using language,” (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 44-45). Discourse can be understood as a grouping of communicative acts and speech events, as a grouping of utterances, which may be recursively embedded (Kramsch, 2002).

Essentialism: A philosophical stance asserting that there are necessary properties to things based on meeting a particular set of necessary conditions, *a priori* to people and culture. A purely essentialist view of sex, for example, asserts that there is a natural (biological) male sex and a natural (biological) female sex that are designated based on a given set of conditions, chiefly anatomical differences, and that these categories are in no way culturally derived.

Ethnographic present: A methodological tool of temporal suspension, which detaches participants and their responses from their histories.

Face: Refers to a sociodynamic valuation: one's sense of dignity, status, or prestige in social contexts. The positive social value a person effectively claims related to the approval of social attributes, which may be lost maintained, or enhanced (cf. Brown & Levinson, 1987; Carr, 1994; Goffman, 1955; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Figurative identities: Also known as narrativized identities. A type of identity that relates to the characters, acts, and stories that define a particular cultural world.

Figured world: "A social and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts and particular outcomes are valued over others [...] These collective "as if" worlds are sociohistoric, contrived interpretations or imaginations that mediate behavior and so, from the perspective of heuristic development, inform participants' outlooks," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 52).

Folk linguistics: A term used by linguists to "refer (generally) to non-linguists' beliefs about language," (Cameron, 2003, p. 472).

Fractal: A theoretical framework for understanding a structure that has multiple interrelated pieces. This term originates from the fields of mathematics and physics, in which it is understood as a complex geometric pattern with great self-similarity because details of the overall pattern are repeated in part or in their entirety. Fractal sets have a notably complex recursive structure. See the entry for identity fractal for an explanation of how this term is used to describe identity in a non-fragmented and multiplicity-focused way.

Gendered language attitudes: See language attitudes. Stereotypes and perceptions of language related to gender. The connections individuals make between the non-linguistic traits of masculinity or femininity and individual linguistic features or entire language varieties.

Habitus: Lifestyles, values, dispositions, and values of a given societal group, which are acquired via everyday activities and experiences. An acquired set of schemata, which become a part of a society's structure when the original purpose of such behaviors and beliefs are no longer recalled and when they become socialized into individuals of the culture (cf. Bourdieu).

Hegemonic masculinity: Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group, one class, or one ideal, etc. over others. Hegemonic masculinity implies the existence of multiple masculinities that are arranged in a complex and multidimensional hierarchy, which is context specific – temporally, culturally, etc. – and open to internal contradiction. A normative construct, though not in the statistical sense. Hegemonic masculinity is an ideological construct and is regularly enacted by few if any individuals. Hegemonic masculinity seeks to avoid the essentialization of male-female difference by paying particular attention to differences within the male category. See Connell and Messerschmidt (2005).

Heteronormativity: The regularizing of or the assumption of heterosexuality

History-in-person: The idea that individuals and their identities are not a-historic, rather an individual has a lived past as well as an imagined future. Individuals live particular identities in specific times and places, which result in their unique formations of selves (cf. work by Holland and Lave).

Ideal self: A construct in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005, 2009), consisting of the characteristics that one would ideally wish to possess including individual hopes, aspirations, and wishes.

Identities: "A general notion of oneself," (Hannerz, 1983). Never accomplished, always forming self-understandings, which are improvised in that they are influenced by both the past and the present, are socially constructed, and are performed by individuals. Although closely related, identity is not synonymous with subjectivity or with face.

Identification: "The formation of a concept of self as an actor in the culturally devised system," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 120). Identification is "the point where the figured world in which one has been acting according to the directions of others becomes a world that one uses to understand and organize aspects of one's self and at least some of one's own feelings and thoughts, (see Quinn and Holland, 1987)," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 121).

Identity fractal: The term fractal has been borrowed from the fields of mathematics and physics and applied to identity theories. Applied to identity, the term fractal focuses on the non-fragmented nature and multiplicity of an individual's identities. Identity fractalisation argues that identities are multiple yet form a whole, with each aspect (fractal) of identity having a dynamic relationship with the others (Assis Sade, 2011).

Indexicality: Broadly speaking, an indexical relationship is one in which an utterance, behavior, etc. (directly or indirectly) points to or indicates something.

Otherwise stated a sign of some form references, points to, indicates, or helps to create something else (i.e. social identity, a norm).

Language: Language is a semiotic activity, “a non-linear, emergent process of meaning making, based on the relationality between signs and the triadic interaction between the self, the other, and the environment, resulting in various processes of sign making (semiosis),” (Kramsch, 2002, p.7).

Language attitudes: Culturally-bound and individualized stereotypes and perceptions of language, which may be applied to social groups, to individual linguistic features, or to entire language varieties. These positive or negative attitudes are typically drawn from stereotypes and perceptions of real or imagined speakers and the connections that all individuals readily make between linguistic traits and non-linguistic traits such as politeness and trustworthiness (Tamasi & Antieau, 2014).

Language ideologies: “Sets of *representations* through which language is imbued with cultural meaning for a certain community,” (Cameron, 2003, p. 447). While language related beliefs and attitudes are not entirely inseparable from ideologies, language ideologies is a social construct that focuses on how these beliefs, attitudes, and cultural meanings are *represented* in a particular community. Language ideologies are temporally and culturally specific.

Language ideologies are systems of ideas about social and linguistic relationships that interface with moral and political interests and are shaped by cultural systems.

Language variety: A specific form of Language that may refer to a language, a dialect, accents, registers, styles, as well as other sociolinguistic variation. This term is employed here within to avoid the use of language or dialect, the distinction between which is often made not only for reasons of linguistic similarity and dissimilarity but also for sociopolitical reasons. Consider, for example the fact that Mandarin, Wu, Yue, and Min are typically referred to as dialects of Chinese though they are not mutually intelligible. Conversely, Serbian and Croatian are typically referred to as separate languages though they are mutually intelligible.

Motivation: “the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it,” (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 8), which is inextricable from a socio-cultural context and processes of identity (co-)construction.

Ought-to self: A construct in Dörnyei’s L2 Motivational Self System (2005, 2009), which consists of the set of characteristics that we think we *should* possess and often those that others may place upon us.

Positional identity: A type of identity that relate to lived, day-to-day, relations of power, deference and entitlement, social affiliation and distance, with the social-interactional, social-relational structures of the lived world. Identities that mark an individual’s “apprehension of [his or] her social position in a lived world,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.127-128).

Self-concept: A collections of beliefs about oneself. One’s present self-concept relates to one’s perceptions of both past and future selves. Note that self-concept is not synonymous with self-awareness (the degree to which self-knowledge is defined and applied) or self-esteem (self-evaluation). See also work by Rogers and Maslow.

Social constructionism: A theory of knowledge that examines co-constructed understandings of the world. In this theory, language is the most essential system through which reality is constructed. Often positioned in opposition to essentialism (cf. Lock & Strong, 2010).

Social group norms: norms that “describe the connection between stances, act, and activities and the social identities of speakers,” (Kiesling, 2003 p. 510).

Social action norms: “norms that describe the indexing of stances, acts, and activities by linguistic forms,” (Kiesling, 2003, p. 510).

Speech genre: “conventional styles of speaking whose performances presume and depend (for their very meaningfulness) upon a figured world,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.171). Otherwise stated, the socially-specified modes of speaking or writing that people learn to mimic, weave together, and manipulate such as a university lecture, a personal anecdote, a grocery list, or a formal letter. See also Bakhtin.

Subjectivity: Referring to the condition of being a subject and relating to the actions and discourses that may produce the subject.

Subject positions: According to Davies and Harré, a subject position “incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one’s own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned. At least a possibility of notional choice is inevitably involved because there are many contradictory discursive practices that each person could engage in,” (1990, p.46). One of

the primary theorists of subject positions and subjectivization (the process of becoming a subject of or to discourse) was Michael Foucault in his 1973 work, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*. His definition of subject positions emphasizes the nature of power as categorizing individuals into different types of hierarchies.

Transportable identities: Those self-understandings that are not restricted to a particular figured world, but rather cut across a variety of figured worlds.

Transportable identities are often related to categories of major social division such as gender, class, race, and ethnicity.

Theoretical Framework

Identity Development and Construction

In this study, identities are understood as multi-faceted, as fractals resulting from social processes in which an individual has a certain degree of agency, despite being constrained by the possibilities for identification afforded to them by the society in which they live. These self-understandings, produced from the cultural resources available, are what individuals use to define themselves and to present themselves to others. Identities are simultaneously a part of inner activity and inner life (cf. Bakhtin) as well as part of social activity and life. "People tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are," (Holland et al., 2001, p.3). In this way, identities are simultaneously individually-held, highly personal self-conceptions and collective, social and culturally-bound understandings; "identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations," (Holland et al., 2001, p.5).

Identities are both plural and mutable, through time and differing social situations. Persons can be thought of "as composites of many, often contradictory, self-understandings and identities, whose loci are often not confined to the body but spread over the material and social environment, and a few of which are completely durable," (Holland et al., 2001, p.8). Each individual holds multiple selves "that are neither bounded, stable, enduring, nor impermeable," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 29). Wenger comments on the complexity of identities noting that "identity [...] is neither unitary nor fragmented. It is an experience of multimembership, an intersection of many relationships that you hold into the experience of being a person, at once one and multiple," (2000, pp.241-242). Expanding this emphasis upon non-fragmentation

and multiplicity, researchers such as Murray (2011) and Assis Sade (2011) offer a shift away from post-structuralist fragmented identities towards the concept of identity fractalisation. While identities may be contradictory and plural, these multiple identities belong to a single individual and thus form a single self. These identities are not fragmented in that they interact. Otherwise stated, identity fractalisation argues that identities are multiple yet form a whole, with each aspect (fractal) of identity having a dynamic relationship with the others (Sade, 2011).

Identities are evoked using artifacts:

we consider the practical artifacts of the moment – the verbal, gestural, and material productions – emerging from the situation, and ask how, and to what end, these artifacts might be taken up and, in later events perhaps, become conventionalized or made into culture (Holland et al., 2001, p.17).

In this way, individuals are combinations of and appropriations of cultural artifacts.

We echo others and appropriate different ways of communicating who we are so that we may make our identities seen and heard in readable ways.

Returning to the mutability of identity through time, this study conceives of identity as never achieved, always forming, and regularly refashioned. “Individuals and groups are always (re)forming themselves as persons and collectives through cultural materials created in the immediate and more distant past,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 18). Individuals cannot, however, develop any subjectivity that they so desire. Rather, they are constrained by their past experiences upon which they may improvise (Holland et al., 2001). That is to say that they are constrained by what is culturally intelligible (Butler, 1990). As such, identities are bound up in culture. Identities are culturally-specific concepts, there are “contours of culture that shape the self in profound ways,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 21). Identities, and their fractals, are thus localized both temporally and culturally in discourse.

Social constructionism and enduring aspects of the self. The emphasis on social constructionism is not meant to imply that there are not facets of selves that are enduring as one moves from moment to moment and from context to context. Social constructionism may be reconciled with Bourdieu's *habitus*, in which certain beliefs and behaviors of a given social group are acquired through everyday life and become part of the society's structure when their original purpose is no longer recallable and is socialized into individuals of the culture. Otherwise stated, we do not fully (re)construct our *selves* from one moment or situation to the next. Rather, there are pieces of ourselves that are more essential than others, that is to say more stable and enduring than others. These pieces "persist through time, regardless of change in social and material conditions," (Holland et al., 2001, p.27). As did Holland et al. (2001), I seek to move towards a theory of identity development and construction in which these "universal and culturally specific aspects of self" may be reconciled (p.22-23). In this study, I take a stance somewhere along the continuum between an essentialist view, where the self is not socially positioned, and a constructivist view where there are no durable aspects of the self. While the socially constructed and essentialist selves have often been presented as incompatible, (Holland et al., 2001), essentialism and constructivism may coexist; There are aspects of our selfhood that are durable and others that are heavily dependent on the immediate sociocultural situation. Identity can be thought of as a verb, as a self in process in which certain aspects sediment longer than others. Neither do we completely change nor do we rest entirely the same when placed into a new sociocultural environment. As such, the theoretical understanding of the self and its relationship to culture must be reconfigured, through neither a purely essentialist nor purely social constructionist

lens. This theoretical refiguring can be summarized in the following three points, as articulated by Holland et al. (2001):

- 1) Socially constructed discourses and practices of the self neither cover an identical self nor the mold that forms selves.
- 2) The self is treated as always embedded in (social) practice and (is) as itself a kind of practice.
- 3) “Sites of the self,” the loci of self-production or self-process, are recognized as plural. (p. 28).

That is to say that the socially constructed discourses and practices of the self are not entirely copies of an other’s self nor are they entirely created by others, an individual has agency without sovereignty over their self-presentation. The self is continually being formed and reformed within the constraints of society, given the available subject positions. We (co-)construct our senses of self in the plural, across multiple contexts.

Using the ethnographic present and history-in-person to consider identity.

At times in this study, I use the *ethnographic present*, in which participants are suspended in time and detached from their histories. This temporal suspension is used as a methodological tool, rather than a theoretical assertion, in order to describe the observable present to which the researcher has greater direct access than past or future senses of selves, always recognizing that individuals do not live in such ways. I am only able to see what a participant is willing to present to me in the moment that it is presented to me. Thus, I start by describing these temporally suspended moments. Then, I attempt to connect these suspended moments, this *ethnographic present*, with the individuals’ reported histories and imagined future selves. Just as “anthropology no longer endeavors to describe cultures as though they were coherent, integrated, timeless wholes,” neither do I attempt to describe cultures or individuals in this way (Holland et al., 2001, p.25-26). Identities cannot be described as coherent, integrated, timeless wholes. I describe what I am able to observe in the moment I am observing it

and then connect these suspended moments to the information I am provided, by the participant, about his or her lived past and imagined future. Both in the *ethnographic present* and in *history-in-person* moments of this study, observable behavior is not taken to reflect an essential self. Behavior is understood as observable portions of a self in practice rather than in essence (Holland et al., 2001). In asserting that behavior is a sign of identity practice or performance (cf. Butler, 1990), the particular sociocultural context in which identities and expressions thereof are formed must always be considered.

Holland et al. (2001) have expanded upon these points, noting:

The objects of cultural study are now particular, circumscribed, historically, and socially situated “texts” or “forms” and the processes through which they are negotiated, resisted, institutionalized and internalized [...] Selves are socially constructed through the mediation of powerful discourses and their artifacts – tax forms, census categories, curriculum vitae, and the like. To reiterate, social constructivists emphasize that are communications with one another not only convey messages but also always make claims about who we are relative to one another and the nature of our relationships. When we speak we afford subject positions to one another (p.26).

Forms such as the census require us to present ourselves within an existing framework, they oblige us to select from a given set of categories. Though less concrete, it is arguable that we are required to participate in similar sorts of negotiations surrounding possible categories in all of our socially and culturally constrained interactions. We may either comply with or resist, either uphold or flout existing norms in interactions. *What* we do and *how* we talk about ourselves and the activities in which we engage are undeniably tied to one’s identity, our conceptions of ourselves. Otherwise stated, how we speak and how we act is a part of who we are, it is a process of becoming.

Self-hood and cultural forms: unbound, non-discrete, incoherent. The task of describing senses of selves is, however, complicated by the fact that, like identities,

cultures are neither bound, nor discrete, nor coherent. To expand, “people are exposed to competing and differentially powerful and authoritative discourses and practices of the self,” which range from religious and philosophical texts to equally, if not more authoritative, popular discourses about the self (Holland et al., 2001, p. 29). As Miller and Ginsberg (1995) note, it is less important whether such discourses reflect reality, the validity of the beliefs and stances is less important than a consideration of the implications and consequences of such beliefs. Moreover, with this vast array of circulating discourses about the self arise questions of perspective and agency. The relationship between selfhood and cultural forms cannot be taken for granted because individuals have perspectives on the cultural worlds that produce these forms. Such perspectives likely differ based on markers of social position such as gender. Thus, subjectivity cannot be established by looking at rituals alone. Researchers must also consider “the role of cultural resources in the constitution of this experience,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 31).

Discursive subject positions. It is within this framework that this study seeks to examine how participants actively and socially construct their identities in relation to certain circulating discourses through the examination of their outward expressions and personal reflections upon said discourses and their identities. The researcher attempts to follow a perspective that has been termed “the new ethnographers of personhood.” In this perspective, a researcher seeks to describe the ways in which

specific, often socially powerful, cultural discourses and practices both position people and provide them with the resources to respond to the problematic situations in which they find themselves. Subjectivity [...] is seen to be developing at an interface within the interplay between the social and embodied sources of the self, in what might be called the self-in-practice [... The self-in-practice...] occupies the interface between intimate discourses, inner speaking and bodily practices formed in the past and the discourses and practices to which people are exposed, willingly or not, in the present (Holland et al., 2001, p.32).

These selves-in-practice, these discursively afforded subject positions, are taken up by individuals through investment therein. Otherwise stated, one must invest in a given subject position, in a given identity, in order to occupy it. Building on a Bakhtinian socio-historic perspective, “persons develop through and around the cultural forms by which they are identified and identify themselves, in the context of their affiliation or disaffiliation with those associated with those forms and practices,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 33). That is to say, that part of this investment is a perceived similarity with or dissimilarity from individuals that are perceived as marking the particular subject position, on the part of the individual or others. People, cultural forms, and social positions co-develop, or are linked in their creation and evolution as pieces of systems of meaning that are collectively formed (Holland et al., 2001). In this way people both work collectively to create systems of meaning and people identify themselves with forms and practices, they have agency and engage, to a certain degree in self-determination. However, to the same degree that individuals work to collectively create systems of meaning, they are also afforded and denied certain possibilities for being by these cultural systems.

Cultural determination versus self-determination. The perspective taken here is somewhere between purist cultural determination (cf. Bourdieu’s *habitus*) and fully self-determination. People may indeed refigure or remake the conditions in which they live; they may refigure and remake their reality (Holland et al, 2001). Individuals have a degree of agency with regard to their identity. Holland et al. (2001) identify four types of tools of identity: 1) emblematic narratives, which represent heuristic development of identities organized around life stories, 2) lexicon of types, which are “groups of labels, [which] position one another and in the process themselves, 3) diagnosis, which is “not necessarily ‘subjectified (personalized, drawn

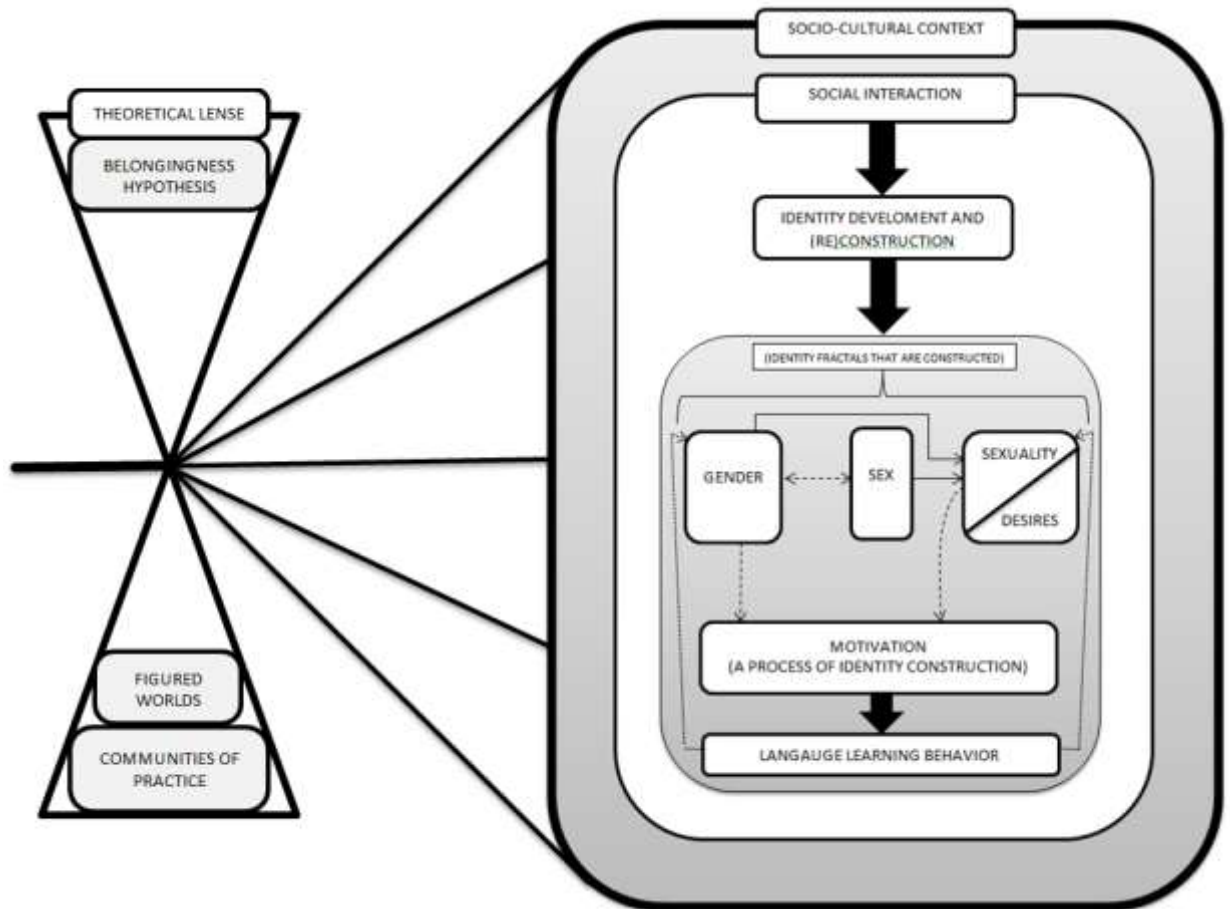
from inner speech),” and 4) “positioning by access to space, to associates, to activities, and to genres,” (pp. 42-44). At the same time, while individuals have agency in the moves that they make and the ways in which they present themselves using these types of tools, the moves that are available to them for appropriation are rarely, if ever, original (cf. Vygotsky’s 1978 mediating devices). We may identify certain productions as innovative. However, even these productions have developed in social interaction and are dependent there upon in order to have recognizable significance or effectiveness (Holland et al., 2001). That is to say that even productions that appear to be innovative have come into being in particular contexts and must be understandable subjectivities in said context. Even what we might call tools of agency, “are highly social in several senses: the symbols of mediation are collectively produced, learned in practice, and remain distributed over others for a long time,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.38). These social aspects of identity are participatory, in socio-culturally produced activities and in particular social worlds.

The implications of identities as socially constructed. While much of the focus of this chapter has thus far been on identities as self-fashionings, it is important to note the implications of identities as socially constructed and to expand upon this idea. As individuals, we apply labels to ourselves, but we are also labeled by others. These labels frequently refer to social, political, and attitudinal groupings into which individuals actively enter into or avoid (McConnell-Ginet, 2003). As a part of entering or not entering into these groupings, we may or may not accept the way others label us. Otherwise stated, labels that others attach to us may or may not become an identity (Holland et al., 2001). To clarify, these labels that others apply to us may fall anywhere on a continuum from fully assimilated to entirely unassimilated. These labels may be accepted as an identity in particular contexts, but not assimilated in all

areas of an individual's life. Beyond a consideration of labels alone, the emphasis on the social aspects of identity echoes social identity theory (cf. Tajfel, 2010), where “people's sense of who they are comprises aspects deriving both from them as individuals and from their membership of social groups [...] The way people think and behave depend strongly on the social groups they belong to, particularly in contexts where group membership is salient for some reason,” (Weatherall & Gallois, 2003, p. 491).

Connecting identity and motivation. Before addressing several facets of identity development and construction -1) its social nature, 2) the identity fractals of gender, sex, and sexuality, and 3) motivation as a process of identity construction- I present briefly here a diagram for understanding how these theoretical components relate to one another. This figure visually represents the relationships between the different components used in the theoretical framework of this study. Each of these components will be elaborated upon in the sections that follow.

Figure 1. *Diagram of theoretical relationships between components of an identity construction and motivation framework.*



All components exist within the frame of a particular sociocultural context, within which social interaction takes place. Identity is constructed in and through social interaction. Motivation is conceptualized as a process of identity construction. That is to say that a future ideal self, an identity, will motivate or demotivate an individual from engaging in particular activities or with particular communities. Gender, sex, and sexuality or desire are representative of distinct identity fractals that are constructed. Dashed lines indicate a potential but not required relationship between elements and arrows are meant to indicate directionality. As such, gender and sex may be closely related constructs but they are not necessarily constitutive of one another. Similarly, gender and sexuality are hypothesized to influence motivation. As opposed to dashed lines, solid lines are meant to indicate a required relationship. As

such, sexuality necessarily entails questions of gender and sex. Sexuality terms such as heterosexual and homosexual are dependent on binary conceptions of sex and gender. It is for this reason that desires are posited as an alternative way of discussing what has been traditionally the domain of sexuality; Using desires allow one to step outside of binary frameworks of sex and gender. The theoretical lenses of the belongingness hypothesis, communities of practice, and figured worlds are used as tools to examine identity and motivation in a sociocultural context.

The Social Nature of Identity Construction

Identities are simultaneously deeply personal and socially-constructed. This study uses three distinct, but compatible ways for understanding the social nature of identity construction, development, and performance: 1) figured worlds, 2) communities of practice, and 3) the belongingness hypothesis.

Figured worlds. Identities trace our participation in social activities, in socio-culturally constructed worlds. Holland et al. (2001) explore identity construction and development using what they term figured worlds, which can be understood as:

- 1) Historical phenomena, to which we are recruited or into which we enter, which themselves develop through the works of their participants.
- 2) Like activities, are social encounters in which participants' positions matter. They proceed and are socially instanced and located in times and places, not in the "everywhere" that seems to encompass cultural worlds as they are usually conceived.
- 3) Socially organized and reproduced [...] They divide and relate participants (almost as roles), and they depend on the interaction and intersubjectivity for perpetuation
- 4) [Are] populated by familiar social types and even identifiable persons, not simply differentially some abstract division of labor. The identities we gain within a figured world are thus specifically historical developments, grown through conditioned participation in the positions defined by the social organization of those worlds' activity. They are characteristic of humans and societies. (p. 41).

These imagined or embodied communities, these "as if worlds," are sites for dialectical and dialogical formation of identities and agency. In figured worlds, life

stories become cultural resources that mediate members' identities. Different figured worlds with different resources and frameworks for understanding afford individuals different positions. People may thus develop different relational identities in different figured worlds (Holland et al., 2001). It is important to note however, that just because these positions are afforded, does not mean that they are necessarily taken up by individuals.

Expanding upon these frameworks for understanding, Holland et al. (2001) argue that people assume the interpretability of their speech and acts by others based on a context of meaning. These contexts have a "standard plot," or a set of expectations about how life in the figured world is to look, which includes expectations for the behaviors of participants in the figured world. Standard plots as well as contrasted alternatives are often conveyed through storytelling, which is an active process of identity construction (Holland et al., 2001). These emblematic narratives are one of the tools of identity mentioned earlier. It is against this typical narrative that unexpected, unusual, or deviant stories and characters are identified. While the standard plot of a figured world is not necessarily prescriptive, it provides the basis for interpretation. This standard plot serves as the backdrop for understanding the meaning of individuals and events (Holland et al., 2001).

Figured worlds in relation to activity theory and discursive theory. Figured worlds echo earlier work under the title of activity theory and work in discursive theory. For activity theory, scholars such as Lontiev understood an individuals' actions and development within a framework of "historically assembled, social and culturally constructed *activity*," (Holland et al., 2001, p.56). Activities such as work and play set specific groups of roles, actors, institutions, settings, durations, and organizational requirements (cf. Wertsch, 1981; Engström, 1990, 1992). Figured worlds also evoke

elements of discourse (discursive) theory (cf. Foucault) in that, for both, cultural resources are “public forms and social tools originate outside of their performers and are imposed upon people, through recurrent institutional treatments within interaction, to the point that they become self-administered,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 62). For example, we have culturally constructed ways of enacting gender that get applied to people in interaction, and with recurrent application eventually become *naturally* embodied by individuals (cf. Butler). The created categories become associated with those enact them who and those who are subject to them. Such categories both afford and constrain ways of doing things as well as people (Holland et al., 2001). We begin to be able to say what it means to be X, what typical X’s are like, and what types of indices mark a typical X’s life. We construct associations that become forms of social obligations. In having these expectations and obligations, we then mark deviance, which is “a consequence of the breaking of rules and sanctions created by a group that is in a position of power and that finds the behavior unsettling,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.67). Deviance is thus a question of politics (Schur, 1980). In this study we will return to considerations of deviance through the lenses of performativity and hegemony with regards to gender. We will further interrogate the role of deviance, asking whether language study may be a mild form of deviance when it is behavior that is not always understood by others, or if there is something more which is needed for it to be classified as deviant behavior.

To summarize, figured worlds both form around and shape activities, discourses, performances, and artifacts. Figured worlds have tasks and activities which are carried out by individuals, characters, and types. These people, real or imagined types, have interactional styles and unique perspectives on figured worlds, their activities, and other individuals (Holland et al., 2001).

Communities of practice. Communities of practice provide a second framework for considering the social nature of identity, which is closely tied to that of figured worlds. As cultural models, both figured worlds and communities of practice provide dense, rich and reliable descriptions of cultural norms. Cognitive anthropologists have defined cultural norms as “knowledge, shared by people in a culture, which gives rise to patterns of behavior,” (Kiesling, 2003, pp. 518). Otherwise stated, senses of self or co-articulated identities mediate behavior (Holland et al., 2001). In both figured worlds and communities of practice, “identifying with the community is part of adopting an identity,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.81). Individuals learn the storylines of the communities to which they belong and begin to tell similar stories. These cultural models for understanding communities are particularly useful in that they provide an additional explanatory tool to the researcher without excluding traditional terms including prestige, power, and solidarity. On the contrary, cultural models localize understandings of traditional explanatory terms, which makes them more significant to the particular participants in a study and by way of this renders these explanations richer, thicker, and more nuanced (Kiesling, 2003).

Identities as an expression of membership in communities of practice. One of such cultural models, communities of practice, was first introduced by Lave and Wenger in 1991. Communities of practice research has focused chiefly on situated learning. Scholars who use this model conceive of “learning as simultaneously a form of association (situation), an act of recruitment and a (re)constitution of the basis for communities,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.57). In this model, identities are seen as important outcomes of participation in communities of practice, which Holland et al. (2001) have deemed analogous to the participatory formation of identities in activities

organized by figured worlds. McConnell-Ginet (2003) argues that social identities, including gender identities, chiefly arise through the expression of memberships in communities of practice. “A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor [an activity]. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor,” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 464).

Studying communities of practice allows us to address the plurality of identity. This theoretical framework allows us to consider interactions between gender identities and other identity fractals (cf. McElhinny, 2003) because “people’s access and exposure to, need for, and interest in different communities of practice are related to such things as their class, age, and ethnicity as well as to their sex,” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 472). Philips expands upon this idea, noting “people who are positioned differently in the broader sociocultural systems within which interactions occur will participate in different communities of practice. People of different genders, ages, and class positions will predictably participate in different communities of practice. One can expect to find gender ideologies that are specific to specific communities of practice and that are manifest in their discourse practices,” (Philips, 2003, p. 267).

Multimemberships in communities of practice. Further, as we consider the plurality of identities, we may also consider individuals as members of multiple communities. McElhinny suggests we “investigate how people manage memberships in different communities or different (perhaps hierarchical) positionalities within communities of practice, and how communities of practice are linked with other communities of practice,” (2003, p. 30). In considering these multimemberships, we begin to see that we have more clearly articulated senses of selves, more clearly articulated subjectivities, in certain communities than we do in others. We may be

more or less cognizant of different facets of our identities and have more or less clear ideas of ourselves as different types of participants in different social worlds. We may be highly aware of ourselves as types of actors in particular social worlds or we may have no clear idea of a self to avoid or to realize in a given social world. We may differ in the degree to which we explicitly attribute labels to ourselves and to others. We may avoid or circumscribe certain identity labels or we may consciously use labels as a source of prestige or pejoratively as symbols of disrespect (Holland et al., 2001).

A focus on the local. Moreover, to return to a point made in the opening paragraph of this section, a community of practice framework

encourages researchers to focus attention on the local linguistic accomplishment of identity, to focus on how gendered social identities are accomplished through the activities and practice of speech communities. The advantage of attending to the local and practical accomplishment of identity is that it avoids treating gender as a monolithic category and making universal claims about gender (Weatherall & Gallois, 2003, p. 505).

To extend the point made by Weatherall and Gallois (2003), the framework of communities of practice is a tool for attending to the local definitions of and effects of norms, which has been called for in much linguistic research (cf. Kiesling, 2003) and which will be returned to later in this chapter. This framework along with that of figured worlds addresses Palfreyman's call for a greater focus "on the social networks that support language learning, and research into how personal identity as a language learner develops in the context of social mediation," (2003, p. 246).

The role of figured worlds and communities of practice as organizing frameworks. Both communities of practice and figured worlds are used as organizing frameworks in this research for multiple reasons. First, a communities of practice approach, which has been prevalent in language research, allows for a deeper consideration of multimemberships and the management of multiple subjectivities.

Figured worlds are also used because the framework provides a tool for a rich consideration of an individual's positionality with regards to discourses of the world and cultural constructions that constitute the familiar aspects of life in a given world. Figured worlds and communities of practice serve as complementary tools for interpreting the positions an individual holds within identified discourses (Holland et al., 2001). Both communities of practice and figured worlds allow us to consider localized norms. While communities of practice allow us to deeply engage with a particular community and its implications for an individual's identity construction and development, figured worlds allow us to more broadly consider the external influences of broader worlds beyond the immediate community of practice. Speaking more broadly to a category of theoretical frameworks that encompasses communities of practice and figured worlds, Goodenough (1994) recommends theorizing culture with reference to activities. "Peoples activities [...] demand and are organized different sets of situated understandings and expectations [There's] no uniform, consistent or coherent set of meanings – no "culture" – that applies equally in every activity," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 57).

Building on Goodenough (1994), we must consider the embedding of activities in our figured worlds and communities of practice, paying attention their multi-layered nature and the larger structures of power and privilege within which they occur. Communities of practice are, however, somewhat larger than a consideration of activities. Analyzing issues of identity, particularly of gender, not exclusively in activities allows us to move beyond a consideration of identities of individuals alone and move towards also considering the identities, the genders of institutions by situating activities within larger social systems (cf. McElhinny, 2003).

Activities may thus be viewed as a methodological tool more so than a theoretical approach.

The belongingness hypothesis. Identities entail questions of belonging:

An identity is not an abstract idea or label, such as a title, an ethnic category, or a personality trait. It is a lived experience of belonging (or not belonging). A strong identity involves deep connections with others through shared histories and experiences, reciprocity, affection, and mutual commitments (Wenger, 2000, p. 239).

Labels are important for identifying groupings and signaling identities, but the label itself is not constitutive of an identity, a label is not in and of itself an experience of identity. Lived identities extend beyond questions of labeling to include experiences of belonging. The belongingness hypothesis is one theoretical way of focusing in on the articulations of identities in social relations and the importance thereof.

Positional and figurative identities. Relating the belongingness hypothesis back to the concepts of figured worlds discussed above, we can consider two types of identities: positional identities and figurative identities. The belongingness hypothesis is a means for consideration of the formation of, social consequences of, and interactions between positional identities. To clarify this distinction:

Positional identities have to do with the day-to-day and on-the-ground relations of power, deference and entitlement, social affiliation and distance, with the social-interactive, social-relational structures of the lived world. Narrativized or figurative identities, in contrast, have to do with the stories, acts, and characters that make the world a cultural world. Positional identities, as we use the term, is a person's apprehension of her social position in a lived world: that is, depending on the others present, of her greater or lesser access to spaces, activities, genres, and, through those genres, authoritative voices, or any voice at all, (Holland et al., 2001, p.127-128).

These personal and figurative identities exist in complex social networks. In identity construction, we may have a sense of belonging to immediately accessible communities. Through imagination, we may also have a sense of belonging to

imagined communities, to communities that are not immediately accessible, are diffuse, or are geographically widespread (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002).

An operational understanding of the belongingness hypothesis. This study uses the belongingness hypothesis, primarily as articulated by Baumeister & Leary (1995), to interrogate such experiences of belonging and their relationships with identity. The belongingness hypothesis states that in the vast majority of situations, individuals freely and effortlessly form attachments to others and avoid threats to already existing social attachments. That is to say that individuals seek to maintain attachments they have previously formed. Furthermore, the hypothesis states that a “lack of attachments is linked to a variety of ill effects on health adjustment, and well-being,” and that “the need to belong is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivation,” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 497). The belongingness hypothesis continues to postulate that enduring, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships are more satisfactory than those that are not enduring, or than interactions with a regularly changing group of individuals and that approval is required for the creation and maintenance of said bonds (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A large portion of human behaviors are guided by this motive. In addition to behaviors, this fundamental and interpersonal motivation guides emotions and thoughts (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Similar postulates have been articulated by a number of researchers, in ways that do not always equate the need to belong with both frequent interaction and persistent caring as do Baumeister and Leary (1995). Consider, for example, Maslow’s motivational hierarchy of needs, which includes “love and belongingness needs” after basic needs and before the needs of esteem and self-actualization (1943; 1968). Baumeister and Leary’s (1995) belongingness hypothesis roughly maps into

Maslow's (1943) *love needs*, but also addresses the ways in which love needs may interface with what Maslow has termed *esteem needs*. In Maslow's hierarchy (1943), *physiological needs* and *safety and security needs* must be met prior to meeting *love and belonging needs* followed by *self-esteem needs* and finally *self-actualization needs*. Although it would be difficult to deny that meeting basic needs, surviving, would remain unattended to while an individual considers belonging and self-esteem needs, the belongingness hypothesis allows for a consideration of social needs across tiers of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Additional theories that relate closely to the belongingness hypothesis also include attachment theory (Bowlby 1969, 1973) and related claims (Horney, 1945; Sullivan, 1953; Fromm, 1955, 1956; de Rivera, 1984; Hogan, 1983, Epstein, 1992; Ryan, 1991; Guisinger & Blatt, 1994). In the literature on language learning and motivation, the belongingness hypothesis has not been widely used. However, language motivation researchers have used theories that also highlight the importance of the social aspects of language learning (cf. work by Gardner). Much of this work has focused on achievement in language acquisition.

In a similar vein, Baumeister & Leary (1995) link the belongingness hypothesis with research on achievement, stating "people prefer achievements that are validated, recognized, and valued by other people over solitary achievements," (p. 498).

Stating that the need for belonging is a fundamental motivation means that it should:

(a) produce effects readily under all but adverse conditions, (b) have affective consequences, (c) direct cognitive processing, (d) lead to ill effects (such as health or adjustment) when thwarted, (e) elicit goal-oriented behavior designed to satisfy it (subject to motivational patterns such as object substitutability and satiation), (f) be universal in the sense of applying to all people, (g) not be derivative of other motives, (h) affect a broad variety of behaviors, and (i) have implications that go beyond immediate psychological functioning (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 498).

This study assumes that the need for belonging is a fundamental motivation and seeks to elucidate the ways in which male motivation to learn French in the United States may be affected by the need to belong in particular communities of practice and figured worlds. Otherwise stated, how is a sense of belongingness negotiated by male-identified students of French and is taking French perceived as an affront to men's need to belong? How can questions of belongingness further our understanding of "behavior as indicial claims to social relationships with others," (Holland et al., 2001, p.127)? If French study does pose a possible threat to belonging for college age American males, it is hypothesized that the potential for ostracization springs from the combination of gendered language attitudes and restrictive definitions of masculinity. In other words, it is the interplay between homophobia, hegemonic masculinity, and the perception of French foreign language study as feminine that may dissuade college age American males from undertaking the study of French. As such, these theoretical concepts – homophobia and hegemonic masculinity – must be clarified in the sections of this chapter that follow.

Whether viewed through the lens of figured worlds, of communities of practice, or of the belongingness hypothesis, "participants in collaborative activities [...] engage [...] in conversation and interaction that invariably construct their own social position and their social relations with one another," and in turn, the ways that we speak including the languages that we use are claims to particular identities (Holland et al., 2001, p.133). These questions of identity and belonging relate to motivation in that a sense of not belonging can result in demotivation and a sense of belonging in motivation (cf. Assis Sade, 2011)

Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

At the heart of sociolinguistic work are questions of the relationship between language and identity (Coates, 1998). Gender, sex, and sexuality each constitute a separate, though related, identity fractal to be explored. The identity fractals of gender, sex, and sexuality exist within a socio-cultural context and are created in social interaction through processes of identity development and (re)construction. As is true with other notions of identity, so is it true with gender and sexuality that

the dialect we speak, the degree of formality we adopt in our speech, the deeds we do, the places we go, the emotions we express, and the clothes we wear are treated as indicators of claims to and identification with social categories and positions of privilege relative to those with whom we are interacting (Holland et al., 2001, p. 127).

There is no one-to-one relationship between gender and language, however, as the same utterance produced by different individuals in different contexts can be perceived very differently (Coates, 1996). We cannot make a universal list of linguistic ways of performing a given gender or sexual identity. As Connell (1987) has noted, gender would be more transparently articulated as a verb as opposed to as a noun; we *do* gender. I argue that the same holds true for sexual identities, we *do*, we *perform*, sexuality and gender as part of socio-relational dynamics. “Women and men live gendered ideologies in day-to-day encounters,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.150) and live sexual ideologies as well. We must then consider how gender and sexuality are *performed* in a given context by particular individuals.

Transportable identities: context and identity. While it is always important to attend to, the degree to which context shapes an individual’s identity may be variable. Holland et al. (2001) have noted that while many identities and their specific articulations are particular to figured worlds, there are also transportable identities that cut across a variety of figured worlds. Certain linguistic behaviors are

indices of relational identities that are not particular to any figured world [...] social categories [...] can have meaning across many figured worlds. These categories are by and large associated with the major social divisions – gender, class, race, ethnicity- that separate those who are routinely privileged from those who are not (Holland et al., 2001, p. 130).

I will argue that while this is true, the ways that these categories are appropriated and embodied by individuals may be colored by the particular social situation in which they are being performed. The salience of specific facets of our identities and the ways in which we perform them vary, to differing degrees, based on our social context. Consider, for example, the fact that while males are routinely privileged in the broader US society, this privilege is complicated in some ways in the figured world of French language study, a point to which we will return in the literature review. This is not to say privilege disappears entirely, privilege and power are systemic, but rather that it may differ in its articulation and distribution in different contexts. In the worlds of Holland et al. (2001), “conventions of privileged access associated with gender, caste, or some other major social division may or may not have been taken up, elaborated, and made hegemonic in a particular figured world or field of power,” (p.131).

Just as articulations of categories of gender and sexuality may be influenced by social situations, so too may certain endeavors be understood as saying something about a participant’s gender or sexual identity. As Holland et al. (2001) note, “gendered dispositions to participate, or not, in given activities, develop in places where gender participation in activities is treated as a claim of gender specificity,” (p. 143). However, that knowledge of these claims may be tacit. An individual may enter into a figured world and develop relational identities in this world without reflecting upon the social claims made by the forms of their actions. Holland et al. (2001) present one such case stating that their participant’s

acquisition of the dispositions that marked a particular gender identity had occurred without her awareness, and the moment of recognition was disorienting [...] One simply participates in the typical arrangements of people [...] or one simply takes part in everyday activities [...] the usual path to relational identit[ies] is through simple associations that pass unnoticed in any conscious way. It may not be until later that the associations between social positions and entitlements become a matter of reflection (p.139).

As we perform gender and sexuality, we are typically not thinking of *how* we are doing it, we are typically not aware of the process of doing gender and sexuality. That is to say that we may not think of the ways in which certain behaviors may be read by others as informing our gender or sexual identity and conversely we may not be able to consciously articulate the reasons for which we read a particular individual as pertaining to a specific gender or sexual category. Rather, we are only conscious of the product. Most often, we do not think of ourselves as following norms set by others, but as moving in the world as ourselves or expressing ourselves. Specifically treating language use and gender construction, Kendall, in line with arguments made by Ochs (1992), notes that

women and men do not generally choose linguistic options for the purpose of creating masculine or feminine identities; instead they draw upon gendered linguistic strategies to perform pragmatic and interactional functions of language and, thus, constitute roles in a gendered way. It is the manner in which people constitute their identities when acting within a social role that is linked with gender that is, being a “good mother”, being a “good manager,” for example (Holmes & Myerhoff, 2003, p. 13).

Thus, it is unlikely that individuals learn languages to consciously increase their sense of masculinity or femininity or similarly to construct a particular sexuality. However, gender and sexuality may be negotiated as gendered and sexualized perceptions of language varieties exist in the form of language ideologies. That is not to say that certain aspects of relational identities are not matters of conscious reflection and choice. In fact, some aspects of and indices of positional identities may be or may become conscious and in turn may exist as both intra- inter-personal tools (Holland et

al., 2001). These conscious and subconscious pieces of identity are not exclusive forms, but rather are representative of ends of a continuum.

Distinguishing gender and sexuality. In discussing both gender and sexual identities, it is important to distinguish between the two. Gender and sexuality are closely related concepts, even mutually constitutive in many cases (Cameron, 2005), but are not synonymous. It is true that “gender is not an integral resource in the enactment of other forms of social identity in the way that it is in the enactment of sexual identity” (Sauntson, 2008, p.275). For example, the concept of homo/heterosexuality depends entirely upon the existence of the concept of gender. “Currently in Western capitalist countries, “objects of desire are generally defined by the dichotomy and opposition of feminine and masculine; and sexual practice is mainly organized in couple relationships,” (Connell, 1987, p. 113). [...] Assumptions about heterosexuality as normative thus directly inform notions of sex and gender, while normative notions of sex and gender inform those about heterosexuality,” (McElhinny, 2003, p.23). This idea of heteronormativity will be revisited and expanded upon in the sections that follow. Gender and sexuality, however, are neither equatable nor reducible to one another (Sauntson, 2008). Nor is their relationship simply additive; the two cannot be considered as *gender plus sexuality*, rather, another way must be found to discuss the relationship between the two (Eckert, 1998). Because labels for sexuality are readily recognizable by individuals, and because much of the work done in linguistics on gender and sexuality use such terms, I engage with these constructs. Holmes and Meyerhoff have written extensively on the importance of engagement with essentialist understandings of gender. I would argue that such arguments are also applicable to work on sexuality. Holmes and Meyerhoff

argue that purist applications of the dominant constructivist and performative approaches, which dismiss essentialist views of gender in their strongest articulations,

may ignore facts about gender and language which have been repeatedly pointed out in the language and gender literature over the decades, and which, as socially responsible academics, we cannot and do not want to ignore. No matter what we say about the inadequacy or invidiousness of essentialized, dichotomous conceptions of gender, and no matter how justifiable such comments may be, in everyday life, it really is often the case that gender is “essential.” We can argue about whether people ought to see male and female as a natural and essential distinction, and we can point to evidence showing that all social categories leak. However, that has not changed the fact that gender as a social category *matters*. There is extensive evidence to suggest that gender is a crucial component of people’s social world; many people really do find it vital to be able to pigeonhole others into the normative, binary set of female-male, and they find linguistic or social behaviors which threaten the apparent stability of this “essential” distinction extremely disturbing. Thus, they censure women (overtly or indirectly) for behavior that is typically associated with males, they beat up transvestites, they pathologize or murder homosexuals (Holmes & Myerhoff, 2003, p. 9).

Reactions to non-normative behaviors, particularly the idea of homophobia, will be taken up in later sections of this chapter. Here, let us focus upon the importance of recognizing the validity of and importance of holding essentialist and non-essentialist understandings of gender in tandem. Many researchers, especially in variationist work, treat gender as an identifiable social variable in analyses arguably because a majority of individuals can agree on a common conception of what it means to be male or to be female (Holmes & Myerhoff, 2003). There are also however, many researchers who question gender’s existence as an identifiable social category, seeking to complicate such categories by giving equal attention to the linguistic and the broader social aspects of their work. This latter approach is particularly characteristic of work done in a social constructionist framework. Within this approach, gender is emergent through time in social interactions and language is a resource for creative performance of identity (Holmes & Myerhoff, 2003). With this in mind, I argue that it is of utmost importance to be mindful of the ways in which individuals perceive

gender and sexuality as dichotomous and essentialized categories, recognizing this *perception* as existent regardless of its validity, while also considering the ways in which gender is constructed and performed. Holding these seemingly divergent ways of understanding gender and sexuality in tandem may yield greater insight into why and how gender matters in the lived experiences of individuals.

A similar approach to the relationship between gender and sexuality is taken here. It is recognized that terms such as heterosexuality and homosexuality, which rely on gender dichotomies to define sexuality in a similarly seemingly clear-cut way, reflect common conceptions of sexuality. Despite their arguable inadequacy, they are *real* and they *matter* for individuals in everyday life. Such an understanding of sexuality is held in tandem with an attempt to move beyond the gender-sexuality double-bind through a consideration of sexuality in terms of desires. While some identifications, relational configurations, and desires may be captured by existing categories of sexuality, these existing categories fail to capture others which may be more available for consideration through a deeper interrogation of desire without using such labels. This is a conservative application of the assertion made by Kulick: we need to “think about desire rather than sexuality” in order to yield “inquiry grounded in culturally grounded semiotic processes,” (2003, p.123). Perhaps it is not that we must consider desire rather than sexuality, but that we must simultaneously consider both sexuality and desire, each in their own right. Perhaps we must consider sexuality as a *perception* that matters in the lives of individuals and desire as a means of more adequately understanding the mechanisms that underlie culturally-constructed sexuality. In discussing desire, both the objects of desire as well as the modality of desire must be considered (Kulick, 2003). Objects of desire can be understood as being that which we are desirous of, the subject of our sexual attractions. Modality

may be understood as the form through which or the manner in which we express such desires and through which such desires are made intelligible. For example, the hegemonic modality for making intelligible bodies, relations, and desires is heterosexuality.

Distinguishing gender and sex. A distinction between gender and sex must also be considered. As Romaine has noted, “just as scholars may have erred in assuming sex-based differences to be derived from social class differences, some may have misinterpreted gender differences as sex differences,” (2003, p. 109). It is thus important to draw a clear theoretical distinction between sex and gender. This separation is among the foundations of Western feminism (McElhinny, 2003). Feminist scholars who differentiate sex and gender do not necessarily imply that no biological differences exist between women and men, but rather seek to clarify that which is attributable to such biological difference (Shapiro, 1981). Often gender is defined as that which is social, cultural and psychological as opposed to sex, which is often defined as the biological. Drawing the distinction in this way, however, is problematic. Defining these terms as social and biological complements of one another implies the existence of two genders that overlay two sexes. This dichotomous conception of gender over-emphasizes similarity within each category and under-represents similarity across categories (McElhinny, 2003). Moreover, this understanding assumes the necessity of such differences for procreation via heterosexuality (McElhinny, 2003).

Attempting to move beyond dichotomous conceptions of sex and gender is, however, linguistically cumbersome for there exists, in some sense, a need to use dichotomous terms such as male and female even while arguing against the use of dichotomies. As Freed succinctly notes,

it is the popular and prevailing understanding of *gender* as the social and behavioral manifestation of *sex* that lies at the heart of the issue we are dealing with. That *language* is the vehicle for conveying expectations about gendered behavior further complicates matters because this deeply entrenched view of gender is recursively articulated and becomes naturalized and normalized through countless everyday language activities and linguistic practices (2003, p. 704).

Consider, for example, the constraints of the pronouns he and she, which are inscribed with binary understandings of sex and gender as well as a collapsing of the two constructs. It remains difficult to move beyond dichotomies when a dichotomous conception of sex and gender remains so predominant in popular culture and in popular understandings of the construct. However inadequate a dichotomous understanding may be, this dualism remains *perceived* as real and remains deeply ingrained in the language available to us as we discuss sex and gender. “So as we contemplate the public perceptions of language use that are distinct from established linguistic evidence, we need to recognize the ways that our own use of language infiltrates and partly shapes what we are able to say,” (Freed, 2003, p. 705).

Always recognizing the pervasiveness of dualistic perceptions and the importance thereof, we must recognize the highly complex nature of the relationship between sex and gender. If we can say that gender is socially constructed, so too is sex (Nicholson, 1994). In Butler’s words,

Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex [...] gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which “sexed nature” or a “natural sex” is produced and established as “pre-discursive” prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts (1990, p. 7).

The existence of a male sex and a female sex as natural, biological categories is in and of itself a result of cultural understandings of bodies. There exist differences in the

ways that cultures understand bodies and certain definitions of sex and gender become hegemonic or contested in different societies (McElhinny, 2003).

In attempting to better understand gender in a given context, we must ask: What difference does gender make and how did it come to make a difference (cf. McElhinny, 2003)? We must ask not only how gender is being performed but also how and why gender is being constructed and perpetuated in the ways it is observed. We must ask what gender is being normalized and though what behaviors.

Norms. In discussing figured worlds and communities of practice above, the importance of the larger structures of power and privilege within which activities in these worlds and communities was noted. A consideration of the distinctions between sex, gender, and sexuality also lead to questions of power and privilege, as all three concepts appeared bound up in the construction and perpetuation of cultural understandings. Two salient constructs relating to power and privilege in this study are that of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. A clearer distinction will be drawn between gender and sexuality through the discussion of these two frameworks for understanding the broader concept of norms.

This study chiefly uses the constructs of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity to discuss male gender norms. Before discussing these specific constructs, however, it is important to outline a framework for understanding norms writ large. It is important to articulate that a multi-directional, intersectional or web-like view of norms is taken in this study; Norms relate to one another. Kiesling (2003) outlines two larger forms of norms: social group norms and social action norms. In his words,

the first important distinction that needs to be made is between norms about the social identity of the speaker (*social group norms*) and norms about the social meaning of a linguistic item (*social action norms*) [... There may be a linguistic feature that connects a social group norm with a linguistic norm.

Consider for example...] the connection between authority and masculinity is a social group norm, while the connection between low pitch and authority is a social action norm (Kiesling, 2003, pp. 509-510).

Ochs (1992) has described such a connection, between social group norms and social action norms, as *indirect indexicality* as opposed to *direct indexicality* because, rather than a 1:1 relationship, multiple social actions (i.e. a stance, a speech act or activity) that mediate a linguistic feature and the group that uses the feature most frequently. A second important distinction to make between broad categories of norms is between descriptive and prescriptive norms. Prescriptive norms can be understood as prescriptions or directives for what *should* be. Descriptive norms, on the other hand, are descriptions or illustrations of what *is* or, stated differently, how individuals actually speak or act in reality. Returning to the earlier notion of the multi-directionality and interrelatedness of norms, while prescriptive and descriptive norms may be presented as a dichotomy their relationship is infinitely more complex, as they inform and influence one another. Consider, for example, the fact that average difference (the descriptive reality that on average there exists difference between two categories) “has been turned into prescriptively categorical difference, such that men and women are prescriptively completely separate categories and differ categorically on many traits [...] Men should not be like women and women should not be like men,” (Kiesling, 2003, p. 511). While this will be broken-down further in the following section on hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity, Freed offers us a consideration of the social utility of norms while simultaneously recognizing their problematic nature that particularly treats gendered linguistic norms and their link to stereotyping:

These deeply entrenched gender-specific linguistic stereotypes apparently serve critical social purposes; they appear to maintain not only a status quo that advantages men over women [in the majority of contexts] and heterosexuals over homosexuals and lesbians [in the majority of contexts], but

one that helps establish and maintain rules of feminine and masculine behavior even if these generalizations fail to reflect social or linguistic reality (Freed, 2003, p. 706).

Hegemonic Masculinity and Heteronormativity. As a part of understanding the potential relationships between gender and language study it is important to clarify the concept of hegemonic masculinity. This clarification is particularly important due to the use of the term in a variety of fields with an even greater number of definitions since the 1980s. In educational studies, hegemonic masculinity has been used to investigate gender-neutral pedagogy (Martino, 1995) and to understand classroom dynamics, bullying, and teacher strategies and identities (Skelton, 1993). The contested nature of the concept of hegemonic masculinity renders a clear definition even more essential. Hegemonic masculinity is an ideology. Any specific form of hegemonic masculinity, however, is but one gender ideology. It is important to note that there exist multiple, competing gender ideologies in any given society (cf. Philips, 2003).

This study, drawing specifically upon the work of Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), conceptualizes hegemonic masculinity as implying the idea of multiple masculinities that are arranged in a complex and multidimensional hierarchy, which is context specific and open to internal contradiction. The concept highlights its normative nature but does not imply a statistical norm. In fact, it is likely that few if any men consistently and fully embody a hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Pascoe, 2007). It is however assumed that most men construct their masculinity, consciously or subconsciously, in relation to this dominant ideal. Cameron extends this point, noting that “hegemony involves control by consent, rather than force,” (2003, p. 471). Hegemonic masculinity, as are all masculinities, for the purposes of this study, is defined as a culturally and temporally specific concept.

To assume a single or fixed hegemonic masculinity across time and space “violates the historicity of gender and ignores the massive evidence of change in social definitions of masculinity,” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 838). As masculinity, in general, is social (Hacker, 1957) and thus locally constructed (Willis, 1977) and subject to change (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), so too is its hegemonic form. Different discourses are hegemonic in different spaces and at different times (Holland et al., 2001). To elaborate,

Masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.836).

Hegemonic masculinity seeks to avoid the essentialization of male-female difference by paying particular attention to differences within the male category. As the concept of hegemonic masculinity developed, questions of sexuality were often evoked; Chiefly, the subordination of homosexual men was a key issue (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985). Subordination is a mechanism of hegemony writ large. “The representational practice of stereotyping plays a central role in [hegemony], by endlessly reiterating what amount to caricatures of subordinate groups,” (Cameron, 2003, p. 471). In addition to stereotyping, hegemonic masculinity is thematically characterized as involving the policing of heterosexuality (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), one instancing of “the power of social groups to enforce group norms,” (Coates, 1998, p. 10). In line with this history, attention is paid to homophobia in this study.

As a culturally and temporally specific construct, the form of hegemonic masculinity addressed in this study is characterized by the theme of dominance, both men’s dominance over women and men’s dominance over other men. It is also extremely concerned with heterosexuality. These, however, are not the only defining

characteristics of hegemonic American masculinity. Hegemonic American masculinity is deeply rooted in ideas such as practicality, pragmatism, and responsibility (Rosenthal, 1999). Moreover, it is often wrapped up in technology and industrial pursuits (Rosenthal, 1999).

Homophobia. The operational definition of homophobia employed here within can be understood as including, but being more than, a fear of gay men. Homophobia is indexed by discourses of sexualities. In particular, discourses of gay male sexualities as aberrant are a representation of homophobia. However, homophobia is employed by individuals in ways that extend far beyond the domain of sexuality. Drawing on work that considers US masculinity, homophobia is broader than concerns surrounding sexual identities in that it encompass “the fear that other men [or other individuals more broadly] will unmask us, emasculate us, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men,” (Kimmel, 2004, p. 88).

Heteronormativity. Returning to questions of the relationship between gender and sexuality, this study hypothesizes that masculinity is intertwined with heteronormativity, that it is being policed by homophobia and that certain behaviors violate the hegemonic, or ideal, masculinity. The violation of gender norms can sometimes be an intentional identity marker. One may purposefully flout norms as a means of presenting a particular identity. For example, Zwicky (1997), notes that gay male identity may be constructed less in opposition to women than in opposition to straight men, thus resulting in their sexuality being framed as a rejection of gender norms (p. 30). But just as a rejection of gender norms can indicate group membership for homosexual males, so can an adherence to gender norms indicate heterosexuality. Similar statements may be made about femininity and certain lesbian subjectivities.

Gender and sexuality as publicly displayed forms of power. Gender and sexuality are both organizing categories of social life, and as such may go beyond being the property of individuals as identity markers and private practices, and may be themselves, publicly displayed forms of power (Pascoe, 2007). The term heteronormative, highlights the regularizing of or the assumption of heterosexuality. When considered in conjunction with the idea that sexuality can be public and intertwined with power, it is heterosexuality, especially for men, that is most powerful. Considering sexuality in addition to gender brings to the forefront the “routinely unquestioned heteronormative expectations and proscriptions that exist as a background context in contemporary US culture,” (Nielsen, Walden, & Kunkel, 2000, p. 292). Heterosexuality is a norm that people hold others accountable for performing correctly. As such, heterosexual and gender normative behaviors are policed by others. This policing often comes in the form of homophobia, especially for males.

Heteronormativity, homophobia, and the French language. It is within this context of homophobia as a mechanism for policing gender and sexuality, especially in males, that this study seeks to elucidate the degree to which French language study is gender norm violating for college-age American males. Homophobia is particularly marked form of gender policing for males, who tend to be subject to more rigorous constraints regarding the performance of male gender than are female individuals in modern American culture. We move among these broad social trends, these ideologies (i.e. hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity), these collective ways of considering experience (i.e. figured worlds and communities of practice), and localized, individualized ways of viewing experience because, as Holland et al. (2001) note, “only by moving between the institutional and the intimate, between history in its usual sense and history-in-person, can we do justice to social life,” (p.111). It is for

this reason that the theoretical framework for this study is comprised of so many different pieces, some of which may, at first glance, appear redundant or conversely appear contradictory. It is the researcher's contention that only in considering each of these pieces of the collective and the individual, of broader society and of particular communities, of History and history-in-person, through a matrix of theoretical perspectives that the complexities of the formation, re-formation, development, negotiation, and performance of identities can be elicited and explored.

Conceptualizing language learning motivation. This study's exploration of learner identity is framed by a consideration of its relationship with motivation. Motivation, here, is defined as "the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it," (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 8), which is inextricable from a socio-cultural context and processes of identity (co-)construction. Motivation is conceived of as a complex system of social belonging in which a plurality of identities influence one another as they emerge, are reconfigured, and change in their degree of saliency (cf. Assis Sade, 2011). Further, "motivation underpins both the short-term choices made by learners to enhance their learning and overcome their deficiencies [sic.] as well as inspiring their vision of future competence," (Malcolm, 2003, p. 199). While it remains important to note that there are many possible sources of motivation that cannot be captured by considerations of identity and belongingness (cf. Lamb, 2004), the focus of this study remains centralized around these two constructs, which are conceived as being two important faces of a motivational framework.

Seminal understandings of motivation and motivation as a process of identity and belongingness. Motivation has not always been understood through identity and belongingness as it is in this study. Rather, "motivation theory has broadly developed in a positivist cognitive paradigm, which is characterized by

psychometric measurement and the development of abstract computational models of mental processes and learning outcomes and behaviors,” (Ushioda, 2011, p. 11). In addition to considering motivation through quantitative means, I expand and re-figure how motivation is explored based on a reexamination of how motivation is conceptualized, following Ushioda’s call for a “contextually grounded and qualitative inquiry,” (2011, p. 11). Motivation is simultaneously a phenomenon which allows us to make relatively broad generalizations and is a phenomenon that is lived in the particular and thus can be considered through rich descriptive analysis. While cognitivist and sociocultural paradigms have often been pitted against one another, one should not necessarily exclude the other; “motivation [is] a dynamic force involving social, affective, and cognitive factors manifested in desire, attitudes, expectations, interests, needs, values, pleasure and effort,” (Lúcia Menezes De Oliveira E Paiva, 2011, p.63). Rather, as Holmes & Myerhoff have argued, “we will make greater progress if we seek to accommodate insights from a variety of sources, rather than dismissing, in a blinkered and unreflecting manner, results from currently unfashionable paradigms,” (2003, p. 16). Ushioda argues for the importance of qualitative, socioculturally-based inquiry, stating that “if our pedagogical concern is to engage with the motivation of particular (rather than generalised) learners, then we need a theoretical perspective that addresses its uniquely personal and contextually grounded nature,” a theoretical perspective that understands motivation as having at its center, a “process of engaging, constructing, and negotiating identities,” which she terms a “person in-context relational view of motivation,” (2011, p. 12). Considering motivation in this way implies focusing upon participants as persons with agency (though not sovereignty), thoughts, feelings, identities, personalities, unique histories, and individualized goals, motives, and intentions as opposed to theoretical

abstractions. Otherwise stated, individuals are complex and unique and they must be engaged with as such rather than treated exclusively as theoretical types of students. Motivation arises in “social relations, activities, and experiences, in multiple micro- and macro-contexts,” in organic ways “through complex system[s] of interactions,” (Ushioda, 2011, p. 13). The importance of the consideration of context is echoed by Holland et al. (2001): “The social-interactional context of learning must be considered in any account of the formation of personal engagements,” (p. 122). If motivation is, at least in part, a question of identity negotiation within a socio-cultural and interactional context, we must once again remain attentive to the plurality of identities that each individual may hold. In the context of teaching and learning, we must focus on

how to engage with the complex and uniquely individual people in [...] classroom[s]; people for whom learning a language is just one small part of their lives; people who are not just ‘language learners’ and perhaps who do not see themselves in these terms (Ushioda, 2011, p. 13)

and on pedagogical practices that encourage the development and expression of identities, so that students integrate what they learn into who they are and so that who students are is integrated into their learning. When students in language classrooms are unable or unwilling to speak as themselves, they fall short of authentic communication, approximating a sort of pseudo-communication for the purpose of practicing language rather truly expressing themselves through language. Authentic communication involves speaking as oneself, an authenticity of self, as well as engaging in real communication during which ideas, thoughts, information, or feelings are shared, an authenticity of the communicative task. The communication in these types of situations remains inauthentic regardless of the authenticity of the task (Legenhausen, 1999). As instructors and as researchers, we must then “engage with [students] as ‘people’ rather than as simply ‘language learners’,” (Ushioda, 2011, p.

18) and consider the plural identities they hold as we consider how and why they are motivated or demotivated to engage in authentic communication in a target language or to learn (or not learn) a particular language at all.

There is an intimate connection between our goal-directed behaviours and the identities we pursue; between the activities we engage in and the social groups we want to identify with [cf. the belongingness hypothesis]; between what we do and the kind of person we see ourselves as or want to become [cf. Dörnyei's Motivational L2 Self-System, discussed below] (Ushioda, 2011, p.19).

Re-casting self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory. Motivation, in this study, thus recasts existing motivational theories such as self-determination theory (LaGuardia, 2009) and expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2009) to address the role of identity construction and development. Motivation, here, is theorized as value-based and identity oriented and may relate to achievement as well as non-achievement related goals such as “need for affiliation, need for power, or various social and peer-related goals (e.g. Wentzel, 2000, 2007),” (Ushioda, 2011, p. 18). As such, a theorization of motivation must also be able to accommodate goal multiplicity; an individual may have multiple, even seemingly contradictory, sets of motivators and demotivators. In language education, these motivators may be considered through an individual's desires for particular linguistic or cultural identities and for personal or professional identities that are at least partially constituted by proficiency in a given language (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). An

identity perspective [on motivation] also highlights a dimension of student motivation that is particularly concerned with self-expression, which has unique relevance, of course, when the object of learning is a language (Ushioda, 2011, p.22).

Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005, 2009) expands Markus and Nurius's (1986) psychological theory of possible selves in which persons have “ideas of what they might become, what they

would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and so provide an important conceptual link between self-concept and motivation,” (Ushioda, 2011, p. 20). The central concept of Dörnyei’s L2 Motivational Self System is the *ideal self*, which consists of the characteristics that one would ideally wish to possess: individual hopes, aspirations, and wishes. Closely related to the ideal self, is the *ought-to self*, which is the set of characteristics that we think we *should* possess and often those that others may place upon us. Ushioda notes that “a basic assumption of Dörnyei’s theory is that if proficiency in the target language is part and parcel of one’s ideal or ought-to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current self and possible future selves,” (2011, p. 20). Individuals will “do what they think has to be done in order to reduce the discrepancy between the actual and the ideal self, or to avoid negative outcomes,” (Castillo Zaragoza, 2011, p. 93). Conversely if proficiency in a given target language is not a part of or is in opposition with one’s ideal or ought-to self, this will serve as a powerful demotivator. “Who I am or want to be is also defined in terms of who I am not or do not want to become,” (Ushioda, 2011, p. 21). These ideal and ought-to selves influence individuals experiences as students – their engagement with material, choices, struggles and negotiations – and thus who individuals become and what individuals actually do (Kaplan & Flum, 2009). It is important to note that just as other identities are multiple, so may be ideal and ought-to selves. Castillo Zaragoza notes: “this ideal self may coexist or come into conflict with other ideal selves in the learner’s identity framed by life contexts, in which language learning is but one element,” (2011, p.121).

Considering identity development as it is related to motivation, we return to the importance of an attention to context:

Identities grow and change, partly in response to encouragement and pressure from the culture at large, or from socializers, peers and significant others within one's social circle; and these emerging motivational dispositions and identities can solidify and develop into core values and more long-term stable identities (Brophy, 2009, p. 155).

In this way, perhaps we should discuss identity co-construction rather than identity construction to attend to the social nature of identity. We must also recognize that motivation is not held within the individual but is rather "socially distributed, created within cultural systems of activities involving the mediation of others," (Ushioda, 2006, p. 154).

Such attention to the social and identity related facets of motivation is consistent with the sociocultural perspectives on language learning, which argue that in addition to a cognitive task, language learning is a social act related to identity construction (Donato & McCormick, 1994; Gao & Zhang, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Assis Sade connects this social perspective on motivation with the idea that motivation is not a personal trait but is rather an experience of belonging because "human beings are positioned in webs of social relations that not only mediate their actions, but also contribute to processes of identity emergence and social belonging," (2011, p. 42-43). In following this, context must be considered as a part of the social system, as part of a motivation-identity system, rather than only as a frame or background for action (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). As a part of the identity system, socio-cultural context bears heavily on language learning motivation (Assis Sade, 2011).

Our thoughts, actions, and ultimately, our own identit[ies] are constrained by those "other voices" that speak to, in, and through us (cf. Bakhtin, 1981) [...] any individual born in[to...] a society is compelled to act in accordance to this set of prescribed and stabilized values [...] many times, individuals engage in this enterprise [of language learning] because this knowledge is considered cultural capital in a specific society. Other times, the knowledge of a second language is a necessary condition to achieve a desired social identity, and consequently, belong to specific social practices (Assis Sade, 2011, pp. 44-45).

The perspective on motivation employed in this study requires that the close interrelation between the processes of emergence of social identities, through processes of social belonging to communities of practice, and motivation continue to be explored and clarified (cf. Assis Sade, 2011).

To understand motivation and identity, and their relationship to one another, theories of motivation (L2 Motivational Self System) and theories of social identity and its emergence (the belongingness hypothesis, performativity theory, figured worlds, and communities of practice) are held in tandem. I move among these theories, between collective and individualized considerations, between history and history-in-person, in order to attempt to capture the complexities of social life in which identity and motivation emerge and evolve. To facilitate this exploration, I cast my primary focus on gendered aspects of identity and on motivation as they relate to learning a particular language variety (French) in a particular context (a university in the US in 2014).

Literature Review

Only in the past few decades have researchers formally recognized that “gender is one of the central organizing principles around which social life revolves,” (Baker, 2008, p. 4). Even more recently we have begun to understand that “gender is no longer widely considered to be a property of individuals,” no longer viewed as inevitable (Bucholtz, 2004) but rather “in terms of performativity, where it is the outcome of linguistic and social performances,” (Linstead, 2006, p. 1278). The social construction of gender and sexual identities has been a major theme of gender research both within and outside of the context of language.

In this section, I first present performativity theory as a way to understand processes of gendered becoming. I then give a brief overview of research in the field

of language and gender, highlighting major periods of research as well as themes that have persisted through time in the field and outlining how this research laid the groundwork for queer linguistics. This review leads into a discussion of the ways in which I seek to bring together the field of language, gender, and sexuality with work on language attitudes and motivation with work on second and foreign language learning. To draw this connection, I trace work that has been done on gender and language learning, focusing on the discourses surrounding male under enrollment and underachievement in modern foreign language. This literature sets the stage for a presentation of existing hypotheses regarding the sources of this achievement. To further this discussion, I present work on a specific language variety, French, in a specific context, Anglophone countries. As this literature moves from an achievement to a motivational focus, I then explore constructs that have been used in the literature on language learning motivation and then connect this work to language attitudes and language ideologies research, foregrounding the construct of gendered language attitudes. I consider the potential sources of gendered language attitudes as they relate to the French language before moving to the next section in which I present my statement of the problem and the purpose of this study. This chapter concludes with the research questions that guide this study.

Using Performativity Theory to Understand the Gendered Self as a Product of Linguistic and Social Performances

This concept of performativity stems from the work of Judith Butler, which provides a framework for understanding all forms of subjectivity as an iterative process of becoming and thus provides a philosophical foundation for the consideration of issues of gender identity in second language learners. With the concept of performativity, Butler argues that the coherence of the categories of sex, gender, and sexuality is culturally constructed through the repetition of stylized acts in time (1990). Coherence, in this case, is meant to indicate a natural-seeming continuity or a seemingly logical interconnection, such as that of masculine gender and heterosexual desire in male bodies. The latter closely relates to the concept of heteronormativity. These stylized bodily acts, in their repetition, establish the appearance of an essential, core gender. Thus, gender, sex, and sexuality are performative in that people create their perceived gender through these acts. A stable view of the self that goes about performing various gender roles cannot be assumed, rather, it is the very act of performing gender that constitutes the gendered self. Otherwise stated, gender identity is not a stable attribute but rather, like other aspects of identity, is the result of “individual choice and effort,” (Cameron, 2005, p. 490). It is not, however, a daily choice, which can be made and altered at will (Butler, 1993). Relating Butler’s performativity theory to Bourdieu’s habitus, individuals are constrained by the available subject positions in a given society. They are constrained by the socialized expectations, the schemata, of particular social groups acquired through everyday life. Nor is gender construction, for Butler, a voluntary choice, but rather, she terms them “regulative discourses,” “frameworks of intelligibility,” or “disciplinary regimes,” (Butler, 1990). These terms address societal norms. It is not

the individual who decides what kinds of sex, gender, and sexuality are possible but rather, it is already decided what possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality are socially permitted to appear as coherent or natural (Butler, 1990). To clarify, Butler draws on Derrida's particular version of citationality, the theory of iterability:

Performativity cannot be understood outside of a process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms. And this repetition is not performed *by* a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject. This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the force of prohibition and taboo, with the threat of ostracism and even death controlling and compelling the shape of the production, but not, I will insist, determining it fully in advance (Butler, 1993, p. 95).

Kramsch summarizes this idea evoked by Butler in stating that individuals have agency in but not sovereignty over their identity formation and performance as they are constricted by the available subject positions.

Identity as never-accomplished and homophobia. This idea that gender is never accomplished, but is always being constructed through these performances has implications for the policing of gender through homophobia. Because gender is never accomplished, those seeking to avoid being pejoratively labeled as gay must constantly work to avoid this label. This pejorative gay label, or "fag" position as Pascoe (2007) terms it, is what Butler (1993) terms an "abject identity," the unacceptably gendered self. This unacceptably gendered self may as previously noted, may itself be an integral part of certain individuals identities. Although gender and sexual norms are strong, individuals may choose to flout these norms. However despite individuals who may choose to embody such a non-normative identity, the majority of individuals will seek to avoid such labels. Further, this abject identity must exist and be regularly referenced as a part of interactionally accomplishing gender; it must "be constantly named to remind individuals of its power," (Pascoe,

2007). Cameron (1997) notes that men in particular use epithets with homophobic content in reference to absent male others as a part of enforcing heterosexual male gender conformity. "One of the central insights of performativity theory [is] namely, that who we are and what we say is in many ways dependent on who we must not be and what must remain unsaid, or unsayable," (Kulick, 2003, p. 119). Gender, in the Butlerian model, is "constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all 'inside the subject as its own founding repudiation," (Butler, 1993, p.3). The repudiation, which itself is continually constructed through interactional processes of repudiation, creates and maintains this "threatening specter" (Butler, 1993, p.3) of unacceptable or failed gender. This model suggests that individuals who embody a normative male gender will repeatedly seek to place others in the abject category, the gay or fag category, while they themselves consistently seek to avoid this label. Heteronormative or hegemonic forms of masculinity are policed through homophobia. This homophobia is not simply sexualized, however, it is also gendered (Pascoe, 2007; Plummer, 2001). While the term homophobia is used here, there is an important relationship between masculinity and homophobic insults. As such, the abject category, the gay or fag category, is not a static identity nor is it necessarily attached to gay men. Rather, any individual can be labeled as gay at any time and may move in and out of this position, typically through homophobic insults (Pascoe, 2007). To elaborate on the relationship between masculinity and homophobic insults,

becoming a fag has as much to do with failing at the masculine tasks of competence, heterosexual prowess, and strength or in any way revealing weakness or femininity as it does with sexual identity. This fluidity of the fag identity is what makes the specter of the fag such a powerful disciplinary mechanism. It is fluid enough that boys police their behaviors out of fear of having the fag identity permanently adhere and definitive enough so that boys recognize a fag behavior and strive to avoid it (Pascoe, 2007, p.54).

The homophobia described here, is a gendered homophobia that is concerned equally with masculine gender transgressions and sexuality.

The limitations of Butlerian gender. While a Butlerian conception of gender is useful for analysis, it is important to consider the limitations of such a framework and to address these limitations, where possible. As Hall has noted, despite its utility “Butler’s theory also has its limits for ethnographic sociolinguistic research. Most pressing in this regard is the restricted agency awarded the subject in a post-structural focus on discursive determinism (see Livia & Hall, 1997) together with the under theorization of the local in a philosophical text concerned with universal explanations for how gender works,” (2003, p. 373) as seen in the early 21st century. Butler’s theory may occur through an attention to the particularities of gender in context through the use of concepts of communities of practice and of figured worlds in this study. Hall also highlights the need for attentiveness to “the emergent properties of specific speech events” in addition to Butler’s focus on the “rigid regulatory frames that make femininity and masculinity intelligible,” (2003, p. 373). In this study, an attempt is made to consider not only the constraining qualities of gender and language, as Butler would emphasize, but also to rework a Butlerian model to consider the creative qualities or unique affordances of gender and language. To do this, Austin’s classic performative is considered: “while the words of a performative do in some sense “fit” the world, conforming to the conventions that govern their success, they also constitute it, so that by their very utterance, the word is also made to fit the world,” (Hall, 2003, p. 374). Further, this study is meant to recognize the ways in which non-normative identities and behaviors may be contextually useful, they may allow for an authentic expression of self as well as engagement in behaviors that may provide positive effects.

Language and Gender

Both performance and practice have been major themes in language and gender research (cf. Bucholtz, Liang, & Sutton 1999; Hall & Bucholtz, 1995; Pavlenko et al., 2001). For generations, however, the consideration of gender and language was focused on a consideration of correlations between linguistic features and sex by sociolinguists. The treatment given to gender followed the mode used for other demographic characteristics such as socioeconomic status and ethnicity (Bucholtz, 2004). Early work focused on describing women's language (cf. Lakoff, 1975) and the use of nonsexist language. In the 1980s, the field's focus shifted to considerations of difference (cf. Tannen, 1990, 1993) and dominance (Bucholtz, 2004), themes which continue to appear in language and gender research. Multicultural feminism was particularly influential during this time, driving inquiry into intersections of gender and race in language (Bucholtz, 2004). More recently, queer theory has prompted a greater consideration of sexuality and language, particularly with respect to lesbians and gay men (Bucholtz, 2004). Such research has provided a foundation for continued work in the field of language, gender, and sexuality.

With this study, I seek to further expand the field of language, gender, and sexuality to consider how the relationship between gendered language attitudes and learner identity influences motivation in the context of second and foreign language learning. There has been limited work in the teaching and learning of second languages addressing the (re)construction of gender identities. The existing work on language learning and gender focuses on identities in bilingual schools, identities and study abroad experiences, English as a second language, and achievement (Pavlenko

et al., 2001). Work on gendered language attitudes and language learning remains even more limited.

Gender and Second Language Learning and Teaching

There has been work on the teaching and learning of L2s that addresses the (re)construction of gender identities, however, this work remains chiefly concentrated on primary and secondary students who are still developing their gender identities and are thus argued to be more influenced by societal norms and expectations than young adults (cf. Carr, 2002; Carr & Pauwels, 2006; Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009; Jones & Jones, 2001; Netten, Riggs, & Hewlett, 1999; Sunderland 1988; Taylor, 2000). Much of the existing work on language learning and gender also focuses on identities in bilingual schools, identities and study abroad experiences, English as an L2, and achievement (Pavlenko et al., 2001). This section presents the related literature including early work that reports a differential presence in language courses between males and females and later work that begins to investigate the possible reasons behind the differing degrees of interest in learning modern foreign languages, with a focus on studies treating the French language in Anglophone contexts.

Gender-based differences in language learning. Individuals in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) research who focus on achievement have uncovered gender-based differences in language learning in both general and in language-specific contexts. Among these findings are gender-based differences in French language acquisition. Males are the minority in the French foreign or second language classroom in countries where English is the most commonly spoken language (Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). On the whole, those males who are enrolled are reported to be lower achieving in French as compared to their female counterparts (Callaghan,

1998; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). I seek to build on the current body of research that reports on this disproportionately lower achievement by exploring the mechanisms through which these observable differences have been occurring.

In the past decade of second language acquisition research, the reasons for this thoroughly-documented disproportionately low male enrollment and achievement have come under question (Kissau & Turnbull, 2008). Some researchers have ascribed the existence of these gender-based gaps in enrollment and in achievement to a lack of motivation (Kissau, 2006; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008) or to a lack of encouragement (Kissau, 2007). Some have turned to biological differences between males and females, but the majority of researchers agree that socio-psychological factors are most likely to be the primary contributors to this gender gap in foreign language learning (Callaghan, 1998; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008).

The limits of existing empirical studies. Research has been conducted on this topic in other national contexts, especially in Canada, but has been scarce in the United States (Kissau, 2007; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010). Furthermore the current body of research has tended to focus on students at the primary and secondary levels (Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Quach, 2006; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008), rather than addressing the issue at the post-secondary level. Empirical investigation into the reasons for disproportionately lower enrollment and achievement is even scarcer (Kissau & Turnbull, 2008). Additionally, while work on this topic has considered the social aspects of low male enrollment and achievement, this work has yet to explicitly ground itself in a consideration of how learner identities relate to learner perceptions

of language varieties as gendered, to gendered language ideologies. Thus empirical investigation of learner motivation and its relationship to learner identities and language attitudes in a US university has emerged as a way to extend the existing dialogue surrounding gender-related differences in language learning.

Lack of Male Participation in the Language Classroom in Anglophone Countries

Research conducted in several English-speaking countries across the world such as Australia (Carr, 2002) England (Callaghan, 1998; Taylor 2000), and in Anglophone Canada (Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008; Kissau & Quach, 2006) has suggested that males are generally disproportionately less enrolled. The ratio of males in the modern foreign language classroom to males in the education system is significantly lower than the ratio of females in the modern foreign language classroom to females in the education system. Additionally, present male enrollment rates in modern foreign languages are lower than the enrollment rates of the past (Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). This body of research has also suggested that males are uninterested in modern foreign language programs (Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). The enrollment rates of males and male interest in French second or foreign language courses appear particularly low (Callaghan, 1998; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008). Despite such findings, there have also been a limited number of reported cases in which males thrive in language classrooms, including those that figure on the list of languages in which marked male disinterest has been reported such as French (Kissau & Salas, 2013). This existing body of literature points to French language learning in primarily Anglophone countries, such as the United States, as a prime site for continued exploration of language learning motivation.

The Case of French: Disproportionally Lower Male Enrollment and Achievement

Attitudinal questions surrounding the presence of males in French language study first arose in a seminal article addressing the state of education in French as an L2 in Canada wherein the researchers noted that adolescent males were less present in advanced-level French courses than their female counterparts (Netten, Riggs, & Hewlett, 1999). Attitudinal questions surrounding the presence of males in French language study first arose in a seminal article addressing the state of education in French as an L2 in Canada wherein the researchers noted that adolescent males were less present in advanced-level French courses than their female counterparts (Netten, Riggs, & Hewlett, 1999). In the existing literature, there appears to be a significant disparity between male and female enrollment and achievement in a variety of modern foreign languages and markedly so in French in several primarily Anglophone countries (cf. Williams, Burden & Lanvers, 2002; Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Salas, 2013; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008). In the case of French in England, females are significantly more represented in French foreign language classes and, those who do study French are consistently higher achieving, with two times as many females receiving “top grades” at the GSCE level on public exams, a national standardized test, in 1992 (Callaghan, 1998). The situation in Canada is quite similar. Kissau (2006) notes the overarching decline in male enrollment in core French courses across all Canadian territories, specifically mentioning the dwindling enrollment figures at the noncompulsory level in high schools in Ontario seen at the end of the twentieth century. The Canadian case is particularly interesting due to French’s status as an

official language, in addition to English, in Canada. This persistent decrease seen in Canada appears to be a general trend across Anglophone countries.

To summarize the existing literature, significant research has been conducted on this topic in a variety of national contexts, especially in Canada, and recent literature has begun to address this topic in the US (Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau, Kolano & Wang, 2010; Kissau & Salas, 2013; Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009). However, the current body of research has tended to focus on students at the primary and secondary levels (Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Quach, 2006), rather than at the post-secondary level. Researchers in this area have suggested that adolescence is a time of significant gender-identity development, and thus have remained focused on students in this age group. Research on the generalizability of existing research on gender and language learning motivation to post-secondary students remains under-considered. Statistics suggest that similar patterns of enrollment exist at the post-secondary level. According to the US Department of Education, the ratio of males in the modern foreign language classroom to males in the education system is significantly lower than the ratio of females in the modern foreign language classroom to females in the education system in the United States. For example, in 2008-2009 42.8% of bachelor's degrees conferred were received by males and 52.2% were received by females (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). However, according to the US Census Bureau, 68.5% of bachelor's degrees conferred in the US in 2009 in languages were awarded to female individuals (Siebens & Ryan, 2012). Further, 19% of degrees in French were received by males compared to 81% received by females (Snyder & Dillow, 2011), 12.5% more than the 68.5% of all bachelors' degrees in language awarded to females reported by the US Census Bureau (Siebens & Ryan, 2012). In French language and teacher education the

difference is even more marked, with 15% of degrees in 2008-2009 being granted to males and 85% being granted to females (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). There also exists a need for further investigation into the reasons for disproportionate enrollment and achievement at the post-secondary level (Kissau & Turnbull, 2008). The existing research also remains focused on the binary legal sex of the students in relation to motivation and appears to be under-engaged with how student self-perceptions and language attitudes enter into considerations of motivation (Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009).

Explaining gender-based differences in language learning. From the consideration of the causes of this disparity arise two main stances: 1) essentialist biological differences between males and females are the primary causes; or 2) psycho-social and sociocultural factors are the primary cause (Callaghan, 1998; Carr 2002; Dempster & Jackson, 2009; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Salas, 2013; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010; Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008; Macaulay, 1978; Taylor, 2000; Van Houtte, 2004).

The first stance began to be disputed as early as the 1970s by Macaulay (1978) and more recently by Sunderland (1998) whose results showed the existence of biological sex differences in language abilities to be inconclusive. While the biological argument is pervasive (Kissau, 2006), it fails to explain world-wide variation in language achievement. The significant number of multilingual males in the world serves as further disproof of this stance's validity in that it provides evidence for the capability of males to learn languages. Additional support is lent to non-essentialist arguments by a developing body of literature that notes contexts in which Anglophone adolescent males are motivated and successful in language learning (Kissau & Salas, 2013), suggesting that under the right conditions males may

be present, motivated, and achieve successful outcomes. Carr and Pauwels (2006), for example, have reported that there are some contexts in which males are more prevalent than females in L2 classrooms. Studies on traditional (Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010) and on single-sex (Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009) high school Spanish classrooms also reported generally high levels of male motivation to learn the language. These studies, while important, do remain limited in number at this time.

In line with researchers such as Macaulay (1978), Sunderland (1998), and Kissau (2006), the author of this paper thus rejects the essentialist biological argument as the primary explanation for gender-based difference in enrollment and achievement in language in favor of a psycho-social and sociocultural argument. More specifically, under the term psychosocial, this study considers gender identity-related and perceptual influences on language learning. In exploring these gendered trends in several areas of second language acquisition, this study considers not only the learners as gendered but also learner language attitudes in which languages themselves may be perceived as gendered.

“Underachievement”. Before expanding upon how gender-identity and perceptions of language may influence the language learning process, it is important to critically consider the implications of the ways in which the literature reviewed here has often treated gender. Swann argues that “current discussions of “underachievement” prioritize one gender’s interest over another,” qualifying the discourse of underachievement as a sort of “moral panic” and as overly focuses on “anti-academic ‘male-culture’,” (2003, p. 634). Moreover, Swann (2003) notes that the underachievement debate is highly binary; two discreet gender categories are almost always used and little attention is paid to both the construction of gender and to intragender variation. There is a sense of a fixed reality surrounding gender, but,

“reality is indeed in the eye of the beholder,” (Freed, 2003, p. 704). As was discussed in the theoretical framework, a gender binary is *real* and *matters* in the lived experiences of individuals despite its arguably restrictive and inadequate nature. The majority of existing research, however, has failed to recognize the male-female binary as a *perceptual* reality or as a methodological choice. Otherwise stated, a binary approach to gender has been naturalized in much of the current underachievement literature and scholars in this field appear to have been limited in their engagement with gender identity construction. If we are to better understand how gender contributes to motivation and achievement in a given domain, we must better understand how gender itself functions therein.

Constructs for Understanding Motivation in the Field of Second Language Acquisition

Integrative and instrumental motivation. Much of the motivation literature in the field of second language acquisition has engaged with Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) constructs of integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Gardner and Lambert define an integrative motivation as “a willingness to become a member of another ethnolinguistic group,” (1972, p. 12). Gardner and Lambert contrast an integrative motivation with an instrumental orientation, which is “characterized as a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantage through knowledge of a foreign language,” (1972, p.14).

More recent work in the field of second language acquisition has sought to reconfigure the ways in which these constructs have been traditionally understood. Chiefly, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) re-cast integrative motivation as less outwardly focused and more internal. As explained by Ushioda, “the process of identification theorized to define integrative motivation might be better conceived as an internal

process of identification within the person's self-concept, rather than identification with an external referenced group," (Ushioda, 2011, p.19-20). Recent scholarship has also sought to critically examine the relationship between integrative and instrumental motivation. While these two have been traditionally compared and contrasted, more recent scholarship on language learning motivation has suggested that these labels are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but may rather reference different aspects of the motivational process (cf. Dörnyei, 2003). That is to say than an individual may simultaneously be integratively and instrumentally motivated. Dörnyei and Csizér's (2002) and Ushioda's (2011) reconceptualizations of integrative and instrumental motivation have allowed for greater dialogue between these traditional motivational constructs and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005, 2009). Castillo Zaragoza has engaged in empirical study that overlays Gardner and Lambert's work with Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. In the findings from such work, Castillo Zaragoza notes:

when students, from a self-perspective, have principally an instrumental of English [for example], with a prevention focus – i.e. regulating the presence or absence of negative outcomes (Dörnyei, 2009, 2010), which is more related to the ought-to self – they are less interested in investing time and effort in learning it. However, if they see something else besides the utilitarian aspect, thus having a promotion focus – i.e. hopes, aspirations, and accomplishments (Dörnyei, 2009, 2010), which is more related to the ideal L2 self – the interest in learning English grows (Castillo Zaragoza, 2011, p. 100).

In this way an imagined future self-state may involve identification of one's self-concept with proficiency in the language being learned or the target ethnolinguistic group (integrative motivation) or with a future role in which an individual will need to accomplish certain tasks that require certain linguistic skills (instrumental motivation). It has been noted in much of the most recent literature that the clearer an individual's articulation of this imagined self-state, the greater degree of motivation they expressed having (Murray, 2011).

Gendered Language Attitudes and Language Ideologies

It has often been noted that learners have differing motives for learning language and thus, “it is not surprising that they have different attitudes towards the languages being learned,” (Castillo Zaragoza, 2011, p.99). Broadly speaking, these language attitudes are stereotypes and perceptions of language, which may be applied to social groups, to individual linguistic features, or to entire language varieties. These positive or negative attitudes are typically drawn from stereotypes and perceptions of real or imagined speakers and the connections that all individuals readily make between linguistic traits and non-linguistic traits such as politeness and trustworthiness (Tamasi & Antieau, 2014). Language attitudes are culturally bound and informed by individual experience (Tamasi & Antieau, 2104). They are both personally held and regularly transmitted to others through discourse (Tamasi & Antieau, 2014).

While we tend to conceive of language as a means of communicating referential meaning – for telling each other what we think, what we want, what we see,” – languages are also systems that allow us to express social meaning – “nuances of emotion, attitude, social identity – without actually stating it in so many words,” (Eckert, 1998, p. 64). In interactions, linguistic cues in conjunction with language attitudes may index a host of beliefs about an individual speaker and reveal much about: 1) language itself, 2) how language is thought about, and 3) the speakers who transmit such attitudes (Tamasi & Antieau, 2014). In social psychology, attitudinal research has typically focused on group membership and interpersonal relationships as well as on the distribution of attitudes in society (Tamasi, 2003).

Related to language attitudes, language ideologies are “sets of *representations* through which language is imbued with cultural meaning for a certain community,”

(Cameron, 2003, p. 447). Language ideologies are systems of ideas about social and linguistic relationships that interface with moral and political interests and are shaped by cultural systems. Although language related beliefs and attitudes are not entirely inseparable from ideologies, language ideologies is a social construct that focuses on how these beliefs, attitudes, and cultural meanings are *represented* in a particular community, which are temporally and culturally specific.

The origins of language attitudes research. Language attitudes research began with work by Wallace Lambert in the 1960's. One of his earliest projects considered language attitudes towards English and French in Québec (Lambert et al. 1960; Lambert 1967). Language attitudes research has historically been related to the study of "folk linguistics," which considers the views non-specialists have of language. This sub-field of linguistics officially began when in 1964 Henry Hoenigswald proposed that linguists should be interested not only with language as it was formally understood at the time but also with how "people react to what goes on" in language and the ways in which they discuss language (1996, p.20). Responding to this area of research, perceptual dialectology by Dennis Preston urges researchers to consider not only the overt comments about language made by non-linguists but also the attitudinal subconscious (1989; 1993; 1997). For a detailed review of the development of folk linguistics and perceptual dialectology see Tamasi (2003). Folk linguistics writ large thus studies collections of "comments that reflect the way the common speaker understands language and language use," (Tamasi, p.10, 2003). Explorations of non-linguist's perceptions of different language varieties in bilingual communities quickly grew into a large body of language attitudes research (cf. d'Anglejan & Tucker, 1973; Wölck, 1973; Carranza & Ryan, 1975; Lambert, Anisfeld, & Yeni-Komshian, 1965). This work lead to work on second language

acquisition (MacNamara, 1973; Gardner and Clement, 1990) and language and gender (Sachs, Liberman, & Erickson, 1973; Kramarae, 1982), among other domains.

Language as content. All studies of language attitudes engage with the idea that language is more than a container for content, but is in and of itself a type of content that communicates “social statuses and personal relationships, [is] a marker of situations and topics as well as of the societal goals and the large-scale value-laden arenas of interaction that typify every speech community,” (quoted in Ryan, et al. 1982, p.2). Existing work has demonstrated that language attitudes, because they are representative of one aspect of an individual’s communicative competence, are acquired (Day, 1982; Giles, et al., 1983). By age ten, individuals tend to have developed the attitudes of the dominant culture (Day, 1982; Giles, et al., 1983), which have been argued to be a part of a social process of normalization:

If the mainstream society has been socialized through the educational system and through the mass media to accept a certain belief system, they will attempt to please and impress one another in their speech behavior and in the contents of their attitudes. It is this reinforcing pattern of behavior that accounts for the category of well-behaved citizens (St. Clair, 1982, p. 173).

If language attitudes are thus acquired, at least in part through education, it is reasonable to posit that these attitudes are alterable to some degree through education. This study extends the existing research on language attitudes, by considering the connections individuals make between the non-linguistic traits of masculinity or femininity and language varieties. That is to say that in addition to considering individuals as gendered, languages are also themselves considered as gendered. More specifically, this study focuses upon gendered language attitudes as they relate to French language study and how individuals navigate the presence of such attitudes held by others or that they themselves hold.

Gendered language attitudes. As Talbot has noted, gender is a problematic category that is particularly susceptible to stereotyping; “as a representational process, stereotyping involves simplification, reduction, and naturalization [it] fixes ‘difference’,” (2003, p. 470-471). Gendered language attitudes have several hypothesized sources. Among these is the idea that the phonetic and phonological differences between languages result in certain languages being perceived as more masculine or feminine than other languages. Consider for example, the tendency for a hard onset and closed syllables in German, which is often perceived as masculine, versus the tendency for romance languages such as French to have open syllables, which are often perceived as feminine (Fónagy, 1979). While phonetic and phonological differences may contribute to the perception of languages as feminine or masculine, these differences alone cannot account for all of the gendered perceptions of languages. As Lepetit (1995) has noted, relying on phonological and phonetic differences alone, it would be difficult to explain the perception of French as more feminine than languages such as Spanish and Italian. Similarly, it would also be difficult to explain attributions of femininity and masculinity that may vary with geographical and socio-cultural contexts. Thus, there must be additional criterion for identifying a language as feminine or masculine. Lepetit (1995) suggests that this additional information that contributes to the way the French language is perceived may come from the way the French civilization is seen, including stereotypes, clichés, and myths about France, the French culture, and French people.

Rosenthal (1999) elaborates upon the gender-coded stereotypes about France and the French in a US context, noting that,

for France as a country and a culture, the characterization is overwhelmingly feminine, so much so that even the masculinity of French men is open to question by more than a few Americans. There is evidence of a popular notion in the United States that France has qualities and faults that are

“characteristic” of the female gender and that compromise the virility of its men (p. 897).

The French culture is associated with feminine virtues, those of beauty, art, civilization, and elegance among others (Rosenthal, 1999). Platt (1995) describes France as the country of the four F’s: food, fashion, fragrance, and frivolity. The sonorous French language has been labeled the “language of love” and is thus once again aligned with femininity (Rosenthal, 1999). More recent research has echoed these earlier claims about the feminine-coded stereotype of French in the US; Participants in a study by Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002) qualified French as “the language of love and stuff” (p. 520). The stereotypic alignment of the French language with elegance, culture, aesthetics, and romance (Rosenthal, 1999; Platt, 1995; Williams, Marion, & Lanvers, 2002) stands in direct opposition to stereotypical or hegemonic American masculinity. “The management of feelings and of personal relationships are culturally coded as female domains, and have been throughout the modern era in the west,” Cameron, 2003, p. 461). More specifically, the archetype of American masculinity involves practicality, pragmatism, and responsibility, rather than frivolity, and certainly does not involve the degree of attention to fashion, style, elegance, art, and romance that is ascribed to the stereotypical Frenchman (Rosenthal, 1999). Further, “the white upper-middle-class male is slated to be unemotional, rational, focused on “business,” and endowed with global and objective knowledge,” (Eckert, 2003, p. 382). Similarly, definitions of archetypical American masculinity are often wrapped up in technology (cf. Wajcman, 1991) and industrial pursuits, a category in which stereotypes once again characterize France and the French as un-masculine. Despite concrete evidence to the contrary, such as a booming aerospace industry, advanced military and transportation technology, etc., France is also characterized as being industrially and technologically behind (Rosenthal, 1999).

As such, this study seeks to elaborate upon the perception of the French language as feminine as well as to elucidate the degree to which languages in general are gendered by college-age Americans. This study also considers perceptions of the gender appropriateness or inappropriateness of French language study.

Statement of the Problem

Deepening our understandings of the intersections between identity and motivation in language learning, and more specifically understandings of motivation and demotivation is essential given the present-day context of ever-increasing globalization, both economic and social, which requires national development of diverse linguistic skills. This necessity may be questioned due to the increasing global population of English speakers (Jones & Bradwell, 2007) as part of a *diffusion-of-English* paradigm. This view contrasts with an *ecology-of-language* paradigm. The former is representative of a “monolingual view of modernization and internationalization,” which focuses on “triumphant capitalism,” whereas an ecology-of-language paradigm focuses upon “building on linguistic diversity worldwide, promoting multilingualism and foreign language learning, and granting linguistic human rights to speakers of all languages,” (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996, p.38). This paper adopts a perspective more closely aligned with the *ecology-of-language* side of the continuum and thus takes a perspective that is focused upon: 1) human rights, 2) equality in communication, 3) multilingualism, and 4) linguistic and cultural maintenance (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996). This dichotomy simplifies the landscape of economics, cultures, and languages, as has been noted by scholars such as Pennycook (2006). These paradigms do, however, encourage a consideration of the potential effects of widespread monolingualism among Anglophones. Chiefly, it incites attention to the probability of linguisticism, “ideologies,

structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language,” (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996: 13), a form of language prejudice (Zuidema, 2005). These paradigms also invite consideration of the potential for the Americanization and homogenization of world culture, as well as for linguistic, cultural and media imperialism (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996; Pennycook, 2006). From this vantage point, the ever-growing need for international interaction provides reason for the ever-increasing lack of male interest in learning modern foreign languages to be of concern to the general public as it has become of concern to researchers.

The French language plays a particularly important role, as outlined by Shyrock (2009), because it is, along with English, the official working language of the United Nations, UNESCO, NATO, the OECD, the International Labor Bureau, the International Olympic Committee, the 31-member Council of Europe, the Universal Postal Union, the International Red Cross, and the Union of International Associations (UIA). Moreover, it is the dominant working language at the European Court of Justice and the European Tribunal of First Instance. Additionally, French, along with English, is an official language of the United States’ largest trading partner, Canada. It is the primary language of the Québec province, which is the United States’ sixth largest trading partner equaling billions of dollars of annual trade. Furthermore, the United States trades with more countries with French as a national language than with countries that have any other national language (Shyrock, 2009). Thus, the French language appears a logical choice for a specific language to consider when exploring issues of second language acquisition in the United States.

Much of the discussion that follows could be applied to other languages.

However, single language, in a single national context, with a specific age group of individuals is examined due to the complexity of the issues related to language attitudes and motivation to learn a language. “The same linguistic features [or languages] can, when used by different persons in different contexts and cultures, often mean very different things,” (Romaine, 2003, p. 111). French is specifically examined due to the fact that it has been labeled as particularly feminized in relevant academic literature (cf. Rosenthal, 1999; Platt, 1995; Williams, Marion, & Lanvers, 2002) and due to its particularly prominent role in a variety of international organizations and in the economy of the United States.

Lúcia Menezes de Oliveira E Paiva has noted the importance of examining the roles of identity and motivation in second language acquisition, stating: “Identity, motivation, and autonomy are key elements for successful sociocultural connections and SLA system evolution,” (2011, p. 61). Because language learning is a process that requires persistent effort over the course of a relatively long period of time and because identity construction and re-construction are at the heart of this process, relatively small changes in identity and motivation have been noted to result in important developments when an individual acquires a second language (Lúcia Menezes de Oliveira E Paiva, 2011). Much has been discovered about how identity and motivational processes relate to second language acquisition, however there remains much to be learned. Specifically, knowledge in this area could be strengthened by attending to specific aspects of identity such as gender. Further, the processes by which identities are negotiated and how contexts influence such negotiations could be elaborated upon. Murray has also issued a call for continued research in this area, stating: “The challenge for educators is to ascertain how they

might encourage or facilitate the emergence of learners' L2 selves," (2011, p. 85).

This study seeks to respond to the need for research in these aforementioned areas.

Purpose of the Study

Given the importance of language study broadly and the particular importance of the French language, the purpose of this study is to investigate how perceptions of French as a second language may relate to the observed lack of male participation, disproportionately lower male enrollment, and disproportionately lower male achievement in French. In such, this paper considers whether this perception of French language study as feminine that has been addressed among secondary school students extends to male post-secondary students who continue to be the minority in French L2 college and university classrooms in the US (Snyder & Dillow, 2011) and who have presumably more developed senses of self. More precisely, this study seeks to elucidate the degree to which gender is a factor in desire to learn French and in the type of goal-mastery orientation held by learners of the language. This study uses questions of belongingness as a theoretical framework to explore the potential relationships between learner identity and presentation, gendered language attitudes, perceptions of French as feminine, desire to learn French, and goal mastery orientation.

The examination of a single language, in a single national context, with a specific age group of individuals is conducted in order to better address the complexity of issues of language attitudes, identity, and motivation to learn a language. This examination is illustrative, in that a similar framework could be applied to other languages, other national contexts, and other groups of individuals. The case of the French language in a US context has been chosen both because relevant academic literature has noted its particularly feminized nature (cf. Rosenthal,

1999; Platt, 1995; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002) and due to its particularly prominent role in international organizations and in the US economy (cf. Shryock, 2009).

Research Questions

This study's exploration of learner identity, language attitudes, and motivation is guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent is gender indexed by individuals in the discourses regarding language varieties?
2. How does an individual's gender, an individual's linguistic experiences, or the participants in the linguistic exchange relate to whether discourses surrounding the French language reference: 1) femininity, 2) masculinity, 3) both femininity and masculinity, or 4) neither femininity nor masculinity?
3. In what ways do individuals negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others' perceptions of a language variety (French)?
4. What relationships exist among an individual's identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn a language (French)?

Chapter Three: Method

Context

This study was conducted at a private, urban, research university in the Southeastern United States in 2013 and 2014. In the fall of 2013, the institution had 7,836 total enrolled undergraduates. Admissions statistics for the class of 2017 include an admittance rate of 26.5%, with 1,376 students enrolling. The institution grants a stand-alone Bachelor of Arts degree in French. In the fall of 2013, 385 (263 Female, 122 Male) students were enrolled in undergraduate French courses.

Sampling

Recruitment

It is from this undergraduate population that participants will be recruited. The sampling method employed in this study was simultaneously purposive and one of convenience. As noted by Miles and Huberman, random purposeful sampling “adds credibility to [a] sample when [a] potential purposeful sample is too large” (1994, p. 28). The researcher contacted individuals who indicated that they would be willing to participate in future studies in the previously conducted quantitative study (described in more detail in the quantitative data and analyses sections of this chapter) via email, inviting each of the students to participate in a focus group on what they think about language.

Focus group participant selection

From the students who responded to the emails, focus-group participants meeting the demographic qualifications (outlined below) were selected using stratified random

sampling. Stratified, purposeful random sampling “illustrates subgroups” and “facilitates comparisons” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28), which was essential for answering the stated research questions. Individuals were identified as belonging to one of four sampling groups based on self-identified gender and French language experience: 1) Male, have taken French, 2) Male, have never taken French, 3) Female, have taken French, and 4) Female, have never taken French. Individuals placed into each group had an equal chance of being invited to participate in a focus group. Seven focus groups were conducted. A target sample of six participants per focus group was originally set forth. However, due to complications with sampling, each focus group was comprised of two to nine individuals (The focus groups and interviews conducted are summarized in Table 4). Though this is at the low end of suggestions that have been made by writers regarding the ideal size for a focus group (Merriam, 2009), smaller groups are more conducive to capturing a clearer sense of each participant’s reaction to the topics being discussed in that each individual is more likely to contribute more frequently in smaller groups than in larger groups (Morgan, 1997). Smaller focus groups are also more conducive to treating the aspects of participants’ senses of self that are more personal in nature.

Interview participant selection

At the end of each focus group session, participants were asked if they would be willing to be independently interviewed by the researcher. From the volunteers, stratified random sampling was employed (criterion discussed below and summarized in Table 4). For sampling purposes, each potential interviewee was identified as belonging to one of four sampling groups based on self-identified gender (degree of masculine identification) and strength of gendered language attitudes (stronger versus weaker as measured by the

quantitative instrument): 1) Male, Have taken French, Identified as highly masculine, Have strong gendered language attitudes 2) Male, have taken French, identified as highly masculine, have weaker gendered language attitudes, 3) Male, have taken French, not identified as highly masculine, have strong gendered language attitudes, 4) Male, have taken French, not identified as highly masculine, with weaker gendered language attitudes. Individuals placed into each group had an equal chance of being invited to participate in an individual interview. However, only self-identified male participants who have studied French were invited to participate in an interview. Males meeting these different criterion mentioned above were be selected in alignment with Rubin and Rubin's (2005) assertion that "findings are enhanced if you make sure you have interviewed individuals who reflect a variety of perspectives" (p.67).

Addressing the relationship between gendered language attitudes and gender performance

It is important to note that performing gendered language attitudes may be a part of performing gender, and particularly of performing masculinity. The potentially mutually-constitutive nature of these constructs was attended to and explored in the analysis and discussion portions of this study where the exploration of their relationship can be informed by the ways in which participants articulate these two facets of identity and subjectivity. Despite this tension, gender identity and gendered language attitudes are drawn as distinct for participant selection. This contradiction is inherent in any study of this nature, which seeks to explore how gendered language attitudes are performed by individuals who embody various gender identities.

Sample description

The sample for this study was 47 college undergraduates (33 male, 14 female) between the ages of 18 and 21 ranging in class rank from freshmen to seniors. The sample included 28 individuals who self-identified as White, 10 who self-identified as Asian, 5 who self-identified as Black, 2 who self-identified as Indian, and 2 who self-identified as Latino.

Confidentiality

Issues of confidentiality were addressed through the use of pseudonyms. When students received the invitation to participate in a focus group via email they were invited to present themselves to the other students with a pseudonym if they so choose. The message read: "When you arrive, you are welcome to present yourself to the other focus group participants using any name you choose. You may use your legal name, a nickname, or a name that you make up. I will call you by whatever name you use when you introduce yourself when you arrive and will not share your legal name with anyone if you choose not to use it." This assured confidentiality to the degree possible for the participants who wish to remain as anonymous as possible while also attending to the fact that some participants may already know one another as the undergraduate population at the research site is relatively small. Inviting participants to use pseudonyms if they so choose mitigated, as much as possible, issues such as those of self-censorship, defensive stances, and overly rosy accounts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As any act, linguistic or otherwise, is performance for someone, real or imagined, there is always a risk that self-censorship, defensive stances, or altered narratives will occur. Both allowing participants to introduce themselves with pseudonyms and employing both focus groups and one-on-

one interviews reduced the likelihood or the number of face-saving acts that individuals may have engaged in, which in turn increases the reliability of the data. Even if non-identifiability could be entirely ensured, this issue can only be attenuated and never fully resolved for there always exists the possibility that participants will be identified by others and that participants will not feel confident in their anonymity. Participants were informed that whether or not they chose to use pseudonyms during the focus groups, pseudonyms were used in any resulting publications. No participant, however, chose to introduce themselves using a pseudonym. Rather, all participants presented themselves by the first name they use in everyday life. Participants were individually invited to choose their pseudonym for publication purposes, however, no participant chose a pseudonym and thus all were researcher-selected.

Instruments and Protocols

Focus groups

Focus groups may be understood as a data collection technique that consists of “group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher” (Morgan, 1996, p.130). The data collected is socially and discursively constructed, thus this technique is underscored by a (co-) constructivist perspective. Patton (2002) elaborates, noting that

Unlike a series of one-on-one interviews, in a focus group participants get to hear each other’s responses and to make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say. However, participants need not agree with each other or reach any kind of consensus. Nor is it necessary for people to disagree. The object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others (p. 386).

That is not to say that participants may not feel social pressures to conform to dominant discourses and to agree with one another (cf. Accommodation Theory, Giles). In an

attempt to foster a diversity of perspectives, the participants were overtly be reminded that individuals need not agree with one another and that a variety of perspectives are encouraged. This tension to conform to the dominant discourse that emerges and what appears as unsaid or unsayable have implications for the findings of this study. Focus groups are an appropriate tool because their socially constructed nature is consistent with the way the relationship between language and gender is theorized by the researcher in this study. Additionally, because this study explores language and gender on a discursive level, focus groups allowed the researcher to capture the qualitative nature of such discourses among different groups of individuals. Moreover, as Morgan notes, the researcher is able to “ask the participants themselves for comparisons among their experiences and views, rather than aggregating individual data in order to speculate about whether or why interviewees differ,” (1996, p. 139). Further, this study frames itself in the understanding that identities are negotiated¹ socially, in reference to real or imagined others, and in particular contexts. Focus groups allow for the researcher to observe lived identities being discursively negotiated in particular social situations amidst a discussion of language attitudes.

Focus group protocol. The focus groups followed a thematic interview protocol with a semi-structured format. (Appendix D). As has been noted by individuals such as Kvale (1998), in more open-ended dialogues the researcher is asking participants to describe parts of their “life world[s],” which will result in the potential for the participants to come to new realizations and consider tacit knowledge in explicit ways. In

¹ While the terminology of negotiation may seem to imply a sense of equality (cf. Kramsch), power and privilege are always present in questions of subjectivity. While the term negotiation attends to individual agency, it is not meant to imply that individuals have sovereignty over their identity and subjectivity, rather it is always borne in mind that structures of power and privilege necessarily play out in identity performance.

this way, the study has the potential to be a transformative experience for participants. Simultaneously, my occasional responses, questions, and summaries of what I believe I was learning about the participants were forms of initial interpretations of the meaning of the participant's utterances (Kvale, 1998). In an open-ended focus group, participants also have the opportunity to reflect upon the utterances of others and the presented aspects of the life world[s] of others. In this way, knowledge is iteratively and discursively co-constructed in open-ended focus groups.

Little preplanning and structuring of the instrumentation occurred for the focus groups. Driven by the nature of the guiding research questions established for this study, this approach was taken in line with the arguments made by Miles and Huberman (1994) about the advantages of such an approach. Such advantages include increased attentiveness to site so that unexpected phenomena are not ignored. Further, "prior instrumentation is usually context-stripped; it lusts for universality, uniformity, and comparability. But qualitative research lives and breathes through seeing the context" (1994, p. 35). This attention to the local particularities allowed for an exploration of the iterative and mutually contingent relationship between particularities and generalities and for a reconciliation of etic and emic approaches. Particularities and generalities inform one another. It is possible for the particular to challenge the general and even for the particular to change the general. It is with this in mind that the relation of the particularities to the general and how they produce one another was attended to in this study. Of particular interest was the degree to which dominant discourses are repeated and the degree to which individuals blended dominant and alternative discourses.

The evocation of gender. Because one of the aims of the study was to determine whether, how, and why individuals index gender in discourses regarding language varieties and language learning, gender was not explicitly referenced by the researcher in the first portion of each focus group. Rather, the researcher asked participants to discuss their experiences with different languages and what they think about those languages. This approach was also taken because the concepts to be explored were “inductively grounded in local meanings,” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 36).

After having allowed some free-flowing discussion to occur, the researcher guided the conversation towards a discussion of language and identity, without specifically referencing gender. If a participant evoked gender, the researcher encouraged other participants to respond to the participant’s comments. Near the mid-point of the discussion, the researcher asked the participants to talk about the French language specifically. The researcher guided participants to reflect broadly on what they think about the language and their experiences with the language before he asked students to consider identity and the French language, without specifically referencing gender. This approach was taken so that I was able see how participants oriented themselves towards language and whether, how, and why gender was evoked by the participants in the first portion of the focus group discussions. This allowed me to see if gender was relevant to the participants in the study as well as to gauge their awareness of their gendered attitudes towards language and the readiness with which they expressed gendered language attitudes. If the participants evoked gender, I encouraged other participants to respond to the comments. Once I was able to see how participants did or did not orient the conversation towards gender, if gender was not evoked by any of the participants as

the conversation evolved, I more actively guided the discussion in this direction to see how individuals responded when prompted to discuss gender and language, both broadly and specifically regarding the French language.

The second portion of the focus groups was slightly more guided, in accordance with recommendations made by Miles and Huberman, because: 1) the context will be established with the first portion of each focus group, 2) gendered language attitudes and the French language are “concepts [that were] defined ahead of time by [the] researcher,” and 3) there will be multiple cases between which comparability is important (1994, p. 36).

Member checks. Each focus group lasted between one and a half and two hours. Participants in the focus groups were not be asked to review the conclusions drawn by the researcher, to engage in member checks (Miles and Huberman, 1994), unless they were among the individuals selected to participate in an interview.

Number of focus groups and types of participants. Seven focus groups were held (see Table 4).

Focus groups including both male and female participants. Four of the seven focus groups involved groups of both masculine and feminine identified individuals together: 1) Individuals who have never taken French, 2) Individuals who have taken French, and 3) Both individuals who have and individuals who have never taken French. These mixed-gender groups intended to capture the types of discourses about language and gender that may exist in a mixed-gender environment. The study’s design included three mixed-gender groups in order to observe any qualitative differences in the types of discourses that may exist based on language experience.

Focus group one. The first group (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) was held in order to explore how discourses about gender and French may play out amongst male and female identified individuals who have French language learning experience. It was hypothesized that there may be a sense of in-group norms to be followed amongst French language learners. As such, individuals may seek to save face with respect to strong perceptions of the French language as gendered, particularly in the presence of individuals for whom such a perception would render French language study gender-norm violating. This focus group was comprised of six individuals (3 female, 3 male).

Focus group two. Focus group two was a replication of focus group one in terms of structure (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) for the purposes of reaching saturation of the data with individuals meeting this criterion of having studied French. This focus group was comprised of three individuals (1 female, 2 male).

Focus group three. The third focus group (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) was conducted in order to exemplify the broader discourses that may exist regarding gender and the French language among individuals of multiple genders and with differing levels of exposure to French language study. With this and all other discussions of the French language, it was hypothesized that participants would discuss how they see the French culture due to the associations individuals draw between language and culture. This group served as a way to consider the discourses regarding gender and the French language that may exist among US college students and served as a point of comparison for any

discussions about in-group discourses among individuals who have or who have not studied French. This focus group was comprised of six individuals (4 female, 2 male).

Focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French). This focus group was intended to represent the types of discourses that may circulate about gender and the French language amongst individuals who have never studied French. It was anticipated that there might be a sense of covert prestige² with regards to never having studied French amongst participants in this group. An alternative hypothesis considers the concept of saving face, where individuals in this first group would not need to save face regarding strong perceptions of the French language as gendered. In all of the focus groups, I remained attentive to the linguistic backgrounds of the participants as well as to any discussion of other language varieties. This focus group was comprised of five individuals (2 female, 3 male).

Focus groups including exclusively male participants. Because masculinity is of primary importance in this study, the remaining three of the seven focus groups were conducted with exclusively male-identified participants (summarized in Table 4): 1) Men who have taken French, 2) Men who have never taken French, and 3) Men who have taken French as well as men who have never taken French.

Focus group four. The first of these three male-only focus groups (male-identified individuals who have taken French) was intended to explore the discourses that circulate around the French language and gender among men who have studied or were currently studying French at the time of data collection. This group was included because it was

² Covert prestige implies a sense of in-group prestige regarding something that is otherwise seen as non-prestigious. Using covertly prestigious language or expressing covertly prestigious ideas and attitudes may mark in-group status and contribute to a sense of solidarity. For more on covert prestige please see work by William Labov.

anticipated that amongst men who study French, there would be less of a need to save-face if French is viewed as male gender-norm violating. Additionally, it was anticipated that these individuals might compare and contrast their experiences with learning French as a male-identified individual, both with each other's experiences and with that of an imagined prototypical male. This focus group was comprised of two individuals.

Focus group six. The second group (male-identified individuals who have never taken French) aimed to capture the types of discourses that exist among men who have never studied French regarding gender and the French language. Men who have studied French were excluded from this group to lessen any potential for participants needing to save face regarding their gendered language attitudes. Otherwise stated, the researcher sought to explore whether men who have never studied French will express highly gendered language attitudes towards the French language when men who have studied French are not present. Moreover the researcher attempted to create an environment in which to explore, if the French language is characterized as feminine by participants in this focus group, whether participants will engage in any policing of masculinity through insults. This focus group was comprised of eight individuals.

Focus group seven. The third focus group (male-identified individuals who have taken French as well as male-identified individuals who have never taken French) was conducted in order for the researcher to be able to compare this group with the first two male-exclusive focus groups. This focus group was held in order to be able to observe any differences in the types of discourses that circulated around French and gender when experience with the French language or lack thereof was not a common point for participants. The researcher was interested in whether participants expressed stronger or

weaker gendered language attitudes as a part of prestige and saving face. This focus group was comprised of eight individuals.

Pilot focus group (male and female identified individuals who both have or have not taken French). In addition to the seven focus groups that will be conducted, a pilot focus group was conducted in order to inform the study's design. This focus group included nine participants (4 female, 5 male) who were all undergraduates, at the time of the focus group, at the same institution where the study will be conducted. Two individuals (1 female, 1 male) had studied French in the past, while the other seven participants had never studied French.

Interviews

In this study, identity is conceived as simultaneously socially constructed and personally held (cf. Holland et al., 2001; Assis Sade, 2011). While individuals have agency with regard to their identity they do not have sovereignty (cf. Kramsch). To the same degree that focus groups are an appropriate tool for capturing the social aspects of identities, subjectivities, and attitudes, interviews were conducted to explore the more personal facets of identity and attitudes. A person-to-person interview is "a process in which a researcher and [a single] participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study" (DeMarrais, 2004, p.55). Specifically, interviews were employed in order to understand participants' perspectives and in order to gain access to their worlds, to their feelings, thoughts and intentions, to the degree that they were able and willing to share this information with me as a researcher (Patton, 2002).

Interviews were conducted for three primary reasons. First, interviews were employed in order to explore the ways in which an individual's discourses regarding

gender and the French language remain similar to or are different from the types of discourses they expressed in the focus-group environments. Second, interviews sought to capture a more detailed account of how males who have studied French negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others perceptions of French. Third, the interviewer sought a deeper understanding of how identities, gendered language attitudes, and sense of belongingness, contributed to each interviewee's motivation to learn French.

Interview structure. As such the interviews followed a semi-structured format (Appendix F). While the focus groups were less-structured in order to provide attentiveness to context, the interviews were more structured in order to confirm or refute and expand upon themes noted in the focus-group data. The focus groups primarily *explored* the contextualized discourses regarding gender and language, whereas the interviews primarily to *confirmed* (or refuted) and *expanded* upon these group discourses. These primary goals are reflected in the different structuring of the focus groups and of the interviews. While each has either exploration or confirmation and expansion as a primary goal, both focus groups and interviews explored, confirmed, and expanded to differing degrees. Thus the process remained iterative. New ideas arose in both the focus groups and in the interviews and both phases of the study are placed in conversation with one another in chapters four and five. In line with this intent, participants in the interviews were first asked to broadly discuss their experiences with learning French. After an initial exploration of their personal histories, participants were given a list of topics to discuss that were developed based on concepts and ideas that had been evoked in the focus groups.

Four, approximately one-hour long, interviews were conducted (see Table 4 for a summary). Each interview was with a single participant who can be described, respectively, in each of the following ways: 1) self-identifies as a highly-masculine male, was taking French and expressed strong gendered language attitudes, 2) self-identifies as a highly-masculine male, was taking French and expressed weaker gendered language attitudes, 3) does not self-identify as highly masculine but does self-identify as male, was taking French and expressed strong gendered language attitudes, and 4) does not self-identify as highly masculine but does self-identify as male, was taking French and expressed weaker language attitudes.

For reliability and validity purposes, all interviewees were asked if they were willing to be contacted if the researcher had any follow-up questions. All participants agreed to answer such questions. Member-checks were performed with all interviewees for findings that are specific to an individual's interview. While participants were not allowed to censor, veto, or block the publication of material, all disagreements with conclusions drawn by the researcher or negative reactions from these member checks are presented in either the results or discussion sections of this study. Of particular interest to the researcher were moments where participants feel there are errors of fact or where participants provided alternative interpretations of the data. Such instances provide richer understandings of the participants' perspectives and in turn enhance the quality of interpretations, while lessening the potential for drawing "truncated or distorted conclusions" that could result from allowing participants to censor material (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.48).

Data Collection and Management Procedures

Quantitative Data. The quantitative survey data was obtained from Knisely (2013) and was used to aid in the development of the qualitative instruments and procedures.

The participants in this prior study were undergraduate students enrolled at four colleges and universities (3 public, 1 private) in the Southeastern United States ($N = 294$), including the university at which the present study was conducted. To recruit participants for the 2013 study, the researcher first contacted instructors at the selected institutions to ask for permission to administer the survey during their classes to those students who were willing to participate. All instructors of French were contacted and instructors in other fields were contacted at random. Approximately one-third of all of the instructors who were contacted allowed the researcher to administer the survey in their classes. For the participants, two sub-groups of individuals were considered: individuals who were enrolled at the time of data collection or who had previously been enrolled in at least one French language course ($N = 200$) and individuals who had never been enrolled in a French language course ($N = 94$). Both individuals who identify their sex as male ($N = 120$) and those who identify their sex as female ($N = 174$) participated.

The survey was administered in 19 classes, 11 of which were French classes. The non-French classes included one neuroscience course, two interdisciplinary liberal arts courses, three engineering courses, an English course, a measurement course, and an education course. Demographic data (sex, class, age, race, and institution) were collected as a part of the questionnaire and are summarized in Table 2. The sample was fairly balanced in terms of the sex of participants. The sample was primarily between the ages

of 18 and 24 (N = 266). A summary of the measures used in the quantitative survey instrument can be found in Table 6.

Qualitative Data. Qualitative focus group data was the first set of qualitative data collected in this study. The focus groups were audio recorded for reliability and validity. Recordings were stored on a password-protected device in a locked office for confidentiality reasons. Immediately after each focus group was held, the researcher recorded his observations and impressions of the participants and what had been discussed during the session in a memo. Included in these memos were descriptions of the way he perceived each individual's presentation of self. Particular attention was paid to gender presentation as evoked by speech, non-verbal behavior, and dress. Each recording was transcribed before the next focus group was held. This transcription process allowed the researcher to form general impressions of the types of discourses evoked in each focus group before moving onto the next focus group. After the transcription process, the researcher wrote a short memo about his preliminary impressions of what had been discussed and of the individual participants' contributions. After all focus groups had been held, the researcher re-read the transcripts and memos in order to identify potential participants for interviews. The data management procedures were similar for the interviews. The researcher audio recorded each interview. Notes were taken during the interview process regarding information not captured by the audio recording such as gestures and other modes of self-presentation. Immediately following the interview, the researcher wrote a memo about his impressions of the participant that may not have been captured in the audio recording. The interview was then transcribed before the next interview was conducted. Post-transcription the researcher will write a

memo about his general impressions regarding the interview. This process was completed for each interview. The qualitative data from the memos, interviews, and focus groups was all managed using the NVivo software program³.

Researcher Position

My position as the researcher is discussed briefly below to attend to the reflexivity of qualitative research. My research on identity is influenced by my identity and how my participants read me (my subjectivity). In positioning me, my participants position themselves. During data collection, I actively watched for how my participants positioned me and how my participants make plays for their own identities. Thus, in order to understand my data and to increase the degree of confidence in my interpretation, I must discuss my position relative to the topic of inquiry and relative to my participants. In more empiricist terms, Miles and Huberman note that

in qualitative research, issues of instrument validity and reliability ride largely on the skills of the researcher. Essentially a *person* – more or less fallibly – is observing, interviewing, and recording, while modifying the observation, the interviewing and recording devices from one field trip to the next. Thus [...it must be asked:...] How valid and reliable is this person likely to be as an information-gathering instrument? (1994, p. 38).

As I am the researcher, being mindful of my identity, subjectivity, and positionality can aid in mitigating bias, as much as is possible, in conducting research and in drawing conclusions from the data collected (cf. Merriam, 2009). Specifically, bias may be attenuated by calling explicit attention to the ways that my identity, subjectivity, and

³ NVivo is a software program that supports qualitative and quantitative data types, with an interface that is chiefly oriented towards qualitative (non-numerical) data. The program allows for the creation of a database of interviews, focus groups, surveys, audio files, social media websites, videos, and additional data types. The program offers search, query, linking, and visualization tools along with the ability to annotate data for analysis and qualitative modeling. The program was first developed by Tom Richards in 1999. In this project I use version 10 of the program. Please see the company's (QSR International) website for more information: http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx

perspective influence the data that are elicited and the ways in which I interpret the data. To clarify, explicitly treating the researcher's positionality is not method for eliminating "variance between researchers in values and expectations they bring to the study, but [a method for] understanding [how] a *particular* researcher's values and expectations influence the conduct and conclusions of the study" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 108). Exploring my subjectivity is a means for attending to how participants position me and the potential ways that such positioning influences what they shared with me and how they shared it. Thus, I present my own perspective on my position relative to my work and relative to my participants here.

The principle investigator in this study is a white, middle-class, male in his mid-twenties who self-identifies as heterosexual. The researcher began studying French at the age of 12 for the instrumental reason of fulfilling a requirement. His own story of his relationship with the French language highlights a lack of choice in originally engaging in studying the particular language. His discourse around why he began studying French is characterized by a sense of the language *happening to* him in a somewhat *accidental* way. While the researcher takes a descriptive, rather than a prescriptive approach to language, and thus does not believe languages are inherently masculine or feminine, he has observed the phenomenon of gendered language attitudes in his personal life. In his personal experience, the French language has been highly feminized by others. The researcher would describe his masculinity as chiefly complicit (cf. Connell, 1995), as opposed to as opposed to hegemonic or subordinate, in that he considers himself as an individual who benefits from hegemonic masculinity without regularly performing it. In some ways he feels that his non-hegemonic, non-normative masculinity may sometimes

be a subordinated masculinity, which can be described as the masculinity performed by men who are oppressed by hegemonic forms of masculinity (cf. Connell, 1995), particularly in the context of being a learner and instructor of French. The researcher experiences his positions as learner and as teacher as intersectional facets of his sense of self. However, it is important to note the differences between his experiences as a learner and as an instructor to the extent that this is possible because this study is primarily focused upon the identities of learners. The researcher would characterize his position as a learner of French as markedly less powerful than that of his instructor position. Being an instructor of French, in his opinion, authorizes his language use in that knowledge of and use of the French language is instrumental for this career. He feels that his position as a learner of French is thus much more open to policing. The researcher has frequently experienced the policing of his masculinity in the form of regularly being assumed to be gay both by individuals who have and who have not known him well. While sometimes this attribution of a homosexual identity by others has been a matter-of-fact assumption, it has often been attributed to him in a pejorative and homophobic manner. Insults such as *faggot* have been directed at him and he has experienced verbal and physical violence as a result of this inaccurate assumption. It is difficult for the researcher to disentangle his instructor and his learner identities for some of his more recent experiences of this nature with individuals who do know him well. It is his impression, however, that such comments and actions from individuals who do not know him well likely relate more to his learner identity, since it is unlikely that these individuals know that he is an instructor of French. The researcher also notes that the more aggressive and violent policing that he has experienced occurred chiefly during a period of time before he was an instructor,

from approximately the age of fifteen to the age of twenty-one. The researcher gravitates towards a complicit rather than subordinated label for his masculinity, however, because in the majority of day-to-day interactions he would not describe himself as oppressed by hegemonic forms of masculinity. Because of his status as a white, middle-class male, the researcher would not describe his masculinity as chiefly a subordinated one (cf. Connell, 1995), which can be defined as the types of masculinities performed by marginalized men who may perform a powerful masculinity but who are not powerful in terms of class or race.

Given the researcher's personal experiences with the content under investigation, he seeks to reduce bias through stating his positionality, through the use of member checks, and through the triangulation of multiple data sources. He is mindful of the fact that his experiences are representative of a single case and thus may differ drastically from the experiences of others. His identities and subjectivity render him both an insider with certain participants in this study and an outsider with others. His in-group status as a nonnative speaker of French and as a male may or may not have result in an in-group status with the participants depending upon their individual perceptions of him and their understandings of their own identities. During interactions with participants and the analysis of the data drawn from these interactions, the researcher sought to remain mindful of his own positionality and any potential effects of his identity on the elicited data and his interpretations thereof.

Analysis

Qualitative Analyses. *Preliminary Analyses.* Preliminary data analysis was conducted after each focus group and again after all focus group sessions occurred

because, as Miles and Huberman suggest, early data analysis “helps the field-worker cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating new, often better data” and because “it makes analysis an ongoing, lively enterprise that contributes to the energizing process of fieldwork” (1994, p. 50).

In this study, a contact summary sheet was created by the researcher after each focus group for each of the participants in that group. These contact summary sheets (Appendix A) included the following questions, which were drawn from Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 51) and expanded upon: 1) What focus group did this contact participate in? 2) How could the dress of the contact be described? 3) How could the behaviors of the contact be described, particularly with regard to gender presentation? 4) What were the main themes or issues evoked by the contact? 5) Which research questions and which variables in the initial framework did the contact bear on most centrally? 6) What new hypotheses, speculations, or hunches about the field situations were suggested by this contact? 7) Would this contact be a suitable candidate for an interview? If so, which target participant description does this individual match and what are particular topics of discussion to be explored with this contact in such an interview? These contact summary sheet serve two major purposes in this study: 1) to guide planning for the next contact and 2) to help with further data analysis.

In addition to contact summary sheets, first-level coding was completed after each focus group, prior to subsequent focus groups. First-level coding was also completed after each interview prior to subsequent interviews. These first-level codes were organized around the study’s primary research questions and consist, chiefly, of descriptive codes (A list of start codes that were constructed from the reviewed literature

and theoretical framework can be found Appendix C)⁴. Early coding occurred to avoid what Miles and Huberman caution against– “Some analysts reserve coding for the end of data collection. We think that is a serious mistake, because late coding enfeebles the analysis” –and in line with their recommendation of “always code[ing] the previous set of field notes before the next trip to the site [...] The ultimate power of field research lies in the researcher’s emerging map of what is happening and why,” (1994, p. 65). The purpose of this coding was to help me familiarize myself with the data and to begin to look for themes and patterns within the data to explore further. The list of codes was iteratively developed: Codes were added when needed and the expanded list of codes was used for coding the next transcript. During the process of coding an iterative code definitions sheet was created. At the same time that first-level coding occurred to summarize the data, and at each phase of coding, the researcher will recorded marginal and reflective remarks in order to expand this *developing map*.

Main Analyses. After all focus groups and interviews were conducted and transcribed, second-level coding was completed. The first-level codes (Appendix C) were expanded and several inductively derived, data-driven interpretive and pattern codes (cf. Miles and Huberman, 1994, pp.57-58) were added in order to allow the researcher to make sense of the data. In tandem with the development of the list of codes, the code definitions sheet was expanded and refined. This initial list of provisional codes was

⁴ As much as I looked for what was said, I attended to what was unsaid and what appeared to be unsayable. Simultaneously, I was particularly attentive to what appeared to be taboo and how discussions of taboo topics were received. Much communication was expected to occur in the back channels. It is thus important to attend to how participants subtly communicated ideas and stances. Near the end of the focus groups and the end of the interviews I asked participants to reflect explicitly on what was too much, what they felt uncomfortable about, and what they felt they could not say. In alignment with suggestions made by Kramsch, I also asked participants to free-write their thoughts on a topic before the group discussed an idea or question in detail during the focus groups in order to encourage a greater diversity of responses. It is an inherent risk that focus groups yield dominant discourses.

reviewed by the researcher and more abstract categories were created and used to group codes as was determined appropriate by the researcher. At the end of this procedure, the list of codes and the code definitions sheet was revised and the data went through a process of re-coding in a third-level coding because, as has been noted by Miles and Huberman:

For all approaches to coding – predefined, accounting scheme guided, or postdefined – codes will change and develop as field experience continues [...] there is more going on out there than our initial frames have dreamed of. Furthermore, some codes do not work; others decay. No field material fits them, or the way they slice up the phenomenon is not the way the phenomenon appears empirically. This issue calls for doing away with the code or changing its level. Other codes flourish, sometimes too much so. Too many segments get the same code, thus creating the familiar problem of bulk. This problem calls for breaking down codes into subcodes. [...] Still other codes emerge progressively during data collection. These are better grounded empirically, and are especially satisfying to the researcher who has uncovered an important local factor. (1994, pp. 61-62).

Coding was employed as a methodological tool. As any methodology does, coding has its limitations. Chiefly, coding privileges positive evidence. However, what is not present may be of equal or greater importance for answering the research questions. Furthermore it must always be borne in mind that what individuals say is not always a complete and accurate reflection of what they think. Thus, once I familiarized myself with the data and refined my emerging map of what is happening and why, I employed additional discourse analysis techniques to interpret the data. As a part of this interpretive process I used the concepts of identity, subjectivity, and face to attempt disentangle, as much as is possible, expressions of senses of self and the roles that individuals are performing for public consumption that may not actually reflect their senses of self.

Linking Qualitative Analysis with Previous Quantitative Analysis. This study represents a qualitative expansion of a previously conducted quantitative empirical study (Knisely, 2013). Thus, a mixed-methods approach was taken towards the linking of the qualitative data from this study with the quantitative data of the previous study. The methodology for the previous quantitative study is briefly presented below, followed by a description of the procedures that were followed for linking the quantitative and qualitative data.

Sample for Previous Quantitative Study. Demographic data (sex, class, age, race, and institution) that were collected as a part of the questionnaire are summarized in Table 2. Participants in the Knisely (2013) study were undergraduate students (N = 294) enrolled at four colleges and universities in the Southeastern United States (3 public, 1 private). The private institution in Knisely (2013) was the same institution at which the qualitative data for this study was collected.

Previous Quantitative Questionnaire. The measures used in Knisely (2013) to elicit data employed in this study are summarized in Table 1 and are briefly described below. The full quantitative instrument can be found in Appendix B.

Gendered Language Attitudes Measure. This measure was designed to capture whether individuals hold language non-specific gendered attitudes, or the degree to which an individual believes that languages may be masculine or feminine. As such, this measure also considers whether learning particular languages is a gendered behavior and whether there are gender-based differences in language learning aptitude. Using Rasch measurement, the scale's psychometric properties have been explored and validated in

Knisely and Wind (2014). Factor Analysis was also performed in Knisely (2013), and indicated good reliability ($\alpha = 0.73$).

Student Perceptions of the French Language. This measure, constructed by Kissau and Wierzalis (2008) and adapted by Knisely (2013), sought to capture gendered language attitudes specific to the French language.

Feelings of Belongingness with Respect to French Language Study. This measure was developed to investigate the relationships between sense of belongingness and French language study. The measure thus addresses bonds with French language learners, a sense of being a part of a community of language learners, patterns of disclosure, and feelings of pride and of shame with respect to French language study. Factor Analysis was performed, and indicated good reliability for this measure ($\alpha = 0.75$).

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. This measure captures motivational intensity, desire to learn French, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, French class anxiety, and parental encouragement (AMTB, Gardner, Clément, Smythe, & Smythe, 1979), which are each described below.

Motivational intensity. Four items measured motivational intensity, or the degree to which an individual is motivated to learn French.

Desire to learn French. Five items considered participant's inclination or ambition to learn the French language.

Goal-Mastery Orientation. Goal-Mastery Orientation is comprised of Integrative Orientation and Instrumental Orientation. Having an integrative orientation is illustrative of learning French for reasons such as "It will make me a better person." An instrumental

orientation represents completing an action a more pragmatic reason, such as for one's future career.

French class anxiety. This portion of the instrument aimed to capture the degree to which an individual felt distress, uneasiness, apprehension in French class.

Parental encouragement. Gardner, Clément, Smythe, and Smythe's (1979) questionnaire was adapted by Knisely (2013) to measure general encouragement from others to study French.

Previous Quantitative Analyses. In Knisely (2013), descriptive analyses, t-tests, and multiple regressions were conducted to explore gendered language attitudes and their relationships with sense of belongingness, gender identity and presentation, goal-mastery orientation, desire and motivation to learn French.

Procedure for Linking Qualitative and Quantitative Data. The focus groups from this study were intended to capture identities and attitudes in interactions and the interviews from this study sought to capture the more personal aspects of identities and attitudes. Together, both the focus groups and interviews sought to provide deeper understandings of individual experiences. The survey data from Knisely (2013) provide a broader understanding of trends in the relationships among identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn French. To use a term from Weinstein and Tamur, the quantitative data are used to "detect and describe *patterning* in a set of observations," (1978, p. 140). The information about patterning from the quantitative data considered with the qualitative data that elaborated upon the lived experiences of individuals that conform to or flout the quantitative patterns were used to enrich a grounded theorization of the relationships among the concepts in question (cf.

Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 41). Researchers have suggested several additional broad reasons for linking qualitative and quantitative data that are applicable to this study: 1) for confirmation or corroboration using triangulation, 2) for elaboration and development of the analyses, 3) for the development of new ways of thinking via an attentiveness to differences between the two data types (Rossman & Wilson, 1984; 1991), and 4) for expanding the scope and depth of inquiry (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). During analysis, quantitative data were used to determine the degree of generalizability of qualitative observations whereas qualitative data helped to validate, interpret, clarify, and illustrate findings from quantitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Focus and Sequencing. As previously noted, the focus of this study is chiefly upon the qualitative data. The quantitative data were collected prior to the design of this qualitative study. The results from the Knisely (2013) quantitative study were used to inform the design of this qualitative study in that they drew attention to conceptions to which the present qualitative study needed to be attentive (phenomena of interest) and to questions that were better suited to be explored via qualitative inquiry.

The Relationship between the Qualitative and Quantitative Data: Interactive versus Separate. The qualitative-quantitative linkage occurred between distinct data types, where the quantitative survey data were used to inform the qualitative study design and where the quantitative survey data was compared with the qualitative focus group and interview data. That is to say that the relationship between the distinct data sets occurred primarily during the phase of the study where data was interpreted to form conclusions. As has been noted by Merriam (2009) data triangulation, such as this, is a tool for increasing the internal validity, or credibility of findings. The data are linked at

the point of analysis because each data type treated different aspects of the phenomenon in question.

Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter the results from the focus groups and interviews are thematically presented and are organized by the guiding research questions for this study. Relevant findings from the quantitative portion of this study (Knisely, 2013) are presented alongside the qualitative results. The results from the qualitative portion of this study as well as similarities with and differences from the quantitative results along with the implications and the directions for future research that have emerged from this study are presented in chapter five. In chapter five these results are situated in the theoretical framework and existing literature presented in chapter two.

Research Question 1: Indexing of Gender by Participants

The pilot focus group (male and female identified individuals who both have or have not taken French) did not have the same protocol as the other focus groups. In the pilot focus group, I evoked questions of gender and language at the beginning of the discussion. Hence, this data cannot be used in a consideration of whether participants orient themselves towards an evocation of gender when discussing language. In all other focus groups except for focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) and five, gender was explicitly evoked by participants without prompting. Although participants in focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French) did not explicitly evoke gender for the first hour of the conversation, they used implicitly gendered terms such as aggressive, flowery, soft, and harsh without prompting. Once asked explicitly, all participants in focus group five (both male and female identified

individuals who have not studied French) readily made connections between gender and language, a relationship that was qualified as culturally and temporally specific (Don: male, French, Ryan: male, no French). In focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French), gender was not evoked by participants without prompting. Focus groups in which gender was evoked explicitly without prompting are presented, followed by a presentation of the discussion of gender and language in focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French).

Gender was first evoked indirectly by participants in focus group one (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French). When they were asked to talk about their identities when speaking different languages, participants used gender-related terms. When talking about the French language in particular, participants used terms such as beautiful (Sue: Female, French⁵), pretty (Sue), elegant (Sue)

One participant even agreed with feeling some of these feminine-associated terms only to momentarily recast his assessment of how he felt:

Sue: [French] feels pretty//

John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs): I feel like that//

Sue: whereas Italian feels busy and Spanish just feel like high school

John: Well, I don't feel *beautiful* [everyone laughs]//

Sue: Do you feel pretty oh so pretty?

John: Uh, NO. [laughs] But whenever I hear girls speaking French especially those that are fluent again I'll eavesdrop but I have no idea what they're saying but I'll just like whoa they're speaking French really beautifully! [exclaims] and I

⁵ After participant names, Male and Female are used to denote a participants' self-identified gender and the terms "no French" and "French" are used to denote an individual who has never studied the French language and an individual who has studied the French language for any period of time respectively. Additional information is provided for the four interviewees: Alan, Luke, Devon, and John. For these four participants, the degree to which an individual identifies himself as masculine (highly masculine or not highly masculine) and the participant's reported level of gendered language attitudes as measured by the quantitative instrument (strong GLAs or weaker GLAs) are also reported.

don't even have to look at them and I'll like you know what I'm talking about [all laughing] so...

Gender first was then explicitly discussed in terms of the gender of speakers of a language and was underscored with sexuality, when participants discussed whether French was more attractive when spoken by a woman or by a man.

Kelly (Female, French): I actually think that French sounds prettier when girls speak French than when guys speak French and I//

Sue (Female, French): I would agree//

Kelly: And I have no idea why I have no idea why it sounds prettier when no offense when girls speak French

John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs): Totally agree, totally agree [...]

Kelly: Is it the pitch? I don't know

Furthermore, these participants did not need to be prompted about whether they gendered the French language. Rather, one participant readily offered the stereotyping of the French language as feminine as an explanation for why other participants may find the French language prettier when spoken by females. In Carey's words, "Is that because of one of the main stereotypes with French is that it's a lot more feminine compared to the other languages?" (Carey: Female, French)

For focus group two (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French), less than thirty minutes into our approximately two-hour long discussion and less than five minutes after I asked participants whether they thought there was any relationship between language and identity, Kurt (Male, French) evoked questions of masculinity and femininity as a part of discussing what he termed "mindsets of language." His term, mindsets of language, loosely translates to a weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in which language and culture influence one another. Kurt continued to connect language, identity, and gender in stating that "some languages just

sound more masculine and sound more feminine so when you speak it you sound more masculine or feminine,” (Kurt).

Without prompting, participants in focus group four (male-identified individuals who have taken French) began to evoke gender as related to language and identity after less than twenty minutes of discussion, noting that one could make associations between an individual’s gender expression and the language they speak (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

In focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French), gender was not explicitly evoked by participants after fifty minutes of discussion. After a discussion of various other aspects of identity as it relates to language including race, power, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of personal identity, I asked “is there any relationship between gender identity and language in your opinion?” in order to direct participants to a discussion of gender. Don (Male, French) did not draw a connection between whole language varieties and gender, though he did have much to say about the ways in which parts of many languages re-inscribe binary gender norms. Multiple participants agreed with the idea that language re-inscribes gender norms (Tammy: Female, No French), though some discussed the ways in which one can use language creatively to express non-normative gender identities, consciously or subconsciously (Josh: Male, No French).

I feel like you can definitely express what gender you identify as through your speech and it’s not necessarily something that you do consciously it’s more of just something that you do uh for most people I’m assuming it’s just something that you learn to do just growing up and not thinking about it um but then like if you compare certain ways that stereotypically women talk and ways that men stereotypically talk then you see differences in like how people are perceived depending on how they talk like if um like if someone who is a man is talking in a way that’s stereotypically feminine people are probably going to question not

necessarily his gender but I think it's definitely really closely tied to sexuality too (Josh).

Despite Don's lack of connection between whole language varieties and gender, several other participants readily identified particular languages as perceived as masculine or feminine (Bara: Female, French, Josh, Gabrielle: Female, French) and their discussion of such perceptions resulted in Don (Male, French) expressing a recognition of the gendering of languages, though he insisted upon his understanding of such gendering as stereotyping and immature.

Yeah I think this is the same as like when you're a little kid and you think some colors are male colors it's not intrinsic to what it is but like people identify traits that are typically seen as masculine or feminine like masculine is tough and like feminine is caring and then place those onto language [...] so I think people see them as masculine or feminine but I think it's just as juvenile to do that as to say red is a boy's color and pink is a girl's color or something like that (Don: Male, French).

Don was the only participant in all of the focus groups who did not readily make connections himself between whole language varieties and gender, he did however recognize that such connections were commonly made by others. All other participants across the focus groups and interviews connected language varieties and gender in some way.

To summarize the qualitative data related to research question one, gender was indexed by the majority participants in the discourses regarding language varieties. Gender was explicitly evoked by participants without prompting in all focus groups except for focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) and focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French). In focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French) implicitly gendered

terms were used without prompting and explicit connections between gender and language were made once prompted. Once prompted, explicit connections between language and gender were also made by participants in focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French). All participants drew connections between language and gender.

These qualitative results serve to confirm and expand upon the quantitative results, in which the saliency of gender related to language varieties was less clear. In the quantitative study, when the full gendered language attitudes scale was considered, individuals slightly disagreed with the idea that they hold general gendered language attitudes ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .85$). In the quantitative portion of this study, the first factor of the gendered language attitudes construct was “language themselves as gendered,” which can be understood as the perception of languages as being masculine or feminine. Under the broad construct of gendered language attitudes, when we look at only the factor of languages themselves as gendered, the descriptive analysis indicated participants slightly agreed with the idea that languages are gendered ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.61$). Moreover, 65% of surveyed participants agreed with the idea that some languages are more masculine than others ($N=191$) and more than half of the participants (58%) agreed that some languages are more feminine than others ($N=171$). This would appear to suggest that while there was slight disagreement with the full gendered language attitudes measure as indicated by the mean, a majority of individuals do believe that languages are themselves gendered. Despite these mixed results in the quantitative portion of this study, in the qualitative portion, participants readily oriented themselves towards discussions of

gender when considering how they viewed different language varieties. Further, participants were readily able to identify and discuss their gendered language attitudes.

In the quantitative portion of this study, an independent-sample t-test revealed significant differences between male-identified ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .85$) and female-identified ($M = 2.76$, $SD = .85$) individuals on the full gendered language attitudes measure, $t(291) = -1.72$, $p < .01$. Such a gender-based difference in language attitudes was not seen during the discussion of gender and language varieties writ large. This gender-based difference did appear qualitatively, however, when the French language was specifically considered, with female-identified individuals evoking qualitatively weaker gendered language attitudes than their male-identified counterparts. Female-identified individuals were able to recognize aspects of the French language as masculine despite an overall perception of the language as feminine, whereas male-identified individuals did not recognize such masculine aspects of the language and qualified French as wholly feminine. These qualitative results will be expanded upon in the section addressing research question two.

Research Question 2: Influence of Individual Experiences or Group Members on Gendering of French

With the exception of Don (Male, French), all participants gendered particular languages as masculine or feminine. Specific to French, the stereotype of French as feminine was easily recognized by all participants across all focus groups.

These qualitative results serve to clarify the results of the quantitative portion of this study. In the quantitative portion of the study, the mean response on the student perceptions of the French language with regards to gender measure was 2.34 ($SD = .94$),

indicating that individuals moderately disagreed with the idea that the French language is feminine. In addition to the overall mean statistics for the student perceptions of the French language with regards to gender measure, mean statistics for individual items were considered. As was the case with general gendered language attitudes, for French, participants did not report a perceived difference in aptitude for learning French between females and males ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 1.3$), as measured by the item “I think females are better at learning French than males.” Participants do, however, qualify French as being a gentle and pleasant-sounding language ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.22$), which suggest the attribution of feminine qualities to the language. The item that measured this read “French is a gentle and pleasant sounding language.” Further, when asked directly if the language is feminine ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.5$) or girly ($M = 1.80$, $SD = 1.19$), participants tend to disagree. These items read “The French language is feminine” and “I think French is girly,” respectively. The qualitative data, however, illustrate that all participants except for Don (Male, French) perceive the French language as feminine as well as gentle and pleasant-sounding. While Don expressed not explicitly holding such an opinion of the language, he did recognize such a perception as common. The sections that follow expand upon this idea and discuss the ways in which such a gendering appears to take place.

In focus group one, which included both male and female participants who have studied French, participants identified this stereotype without prompting and minimally debated its accuracy as compared to other focus groups. It seemed to be enough for these participants to identify this gendering as stereotyping and then to move forward in discussing it whereas in other focus groups the accuracy of gendering languages seemed

to an issue that needed to be discussed before continuing discussions of the particular ways in which different languages were gendered. Participants in focus group one (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) did, however, discuss at length how they believed they formed such gendered associations with language and followed such discussions with a consideration of the accuracy of such assessments.

In all other focus groups, the validity of gendering languages was debated at length before the gendering of particular languages was discussed. All participants except for Don (Male, French) did, however, gender the French language as feminine. All participants, including Don, recognized this stereotype as a prevalent characterization of the French language. Thus, for male-identified participants, the French language appears to be consistently gendered as feminine regardless of who is present in the focus group. Although female participants shared this overarching perception, their gendering of the French language appeared to be more nuanced. Female-identified participants were more likely to identify certain aspects of the French language as more feminine and other aspects of the French language as more masculine across focus groups, though this tended to readily bleed into discussions of French culture. The presence of masculine aspects of the French language, however, did not impede female-identified participants from characterizing the French language as overwhelmingly feminine. Such qualitative data serves to complicate the quantitative results. In the quantitative portion of this study, an independent-sample t-test revealed no significant differences in mean responses between male-identified and female-identified individuals on the full gendered language attitudes scale, $t(54) = 1.0, p < .05$. While there appeared to be no differences in gendered language

attitudes writ large from the quantitative data, the focus group discussions revealed qualitative differences in the ways in which female-identified and male-identified participants gendered the French languages.

The qualitative results demonstrate that participants readily gender languages and offer a host of, often contradictory, explanations for how and why they categorize particular languages as masculine or feminine. Participants do not question whether people gender language varieties, but they do actively question the validity of such genderings and the implications thereof.

Specifically, Kurt (Male, French) notes that such genderings are socio-cultural constructions that reflect those doing the perceiving more so than any inherent properties of the language varieties in question. He states: “It may be more, have more to say about our ideas of femininity and masculinity than so much the language,” (Kurt). Although Maria readily accepted the assertion Kurt made, Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) offered a slightly different analysis of the situation. He suggested that language attitudes were not just about the individuals forming the attitudes, but rather, that the attitudes are also reflective of something present in the language or the speakers of the language in question at the same time that the ways in which meaning is assigned to these features may be driven by the one forming the attitudes. In his words, “I agree it’s definitely as much the observer as it is the speaker obviously I think,” (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Participants in focus group one (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) simultaneously recognized the fallacy of categorizing languages as inherently masculine or feminine and the reality that people hold these types of ideas.

While articulating the ways in which they gendered particular language varieties, Joe (Male, French) and Carey (Female, French) explicitly recognized the problematic nature of such categorizations highlighting that they were based on stereotypes that were reflective of an individual's perceptions and were not reflective of an inherent masculinity or femininity.

Joe: I think it's kind of silly that people associate yeah I think it's silly if people associate a language and femininity or masculinity because every language has speakers of both genders so it's not like French is more feminine cause there are probably just as many Frenchmen there are just as many men who speak French as women and like I think that maybe people like view other languages as masculine or feminine but you would never view your own language as masculine or feminine cause it's just like your language and you see everyone speak you see everyone of all different types of genders and races and everything speak [others are giggling a bit here I'm not sure why... because it is true and they're recognizing the oddity of the fact that they were able to make a masculine/feminine list or for some other reason?] English, so there's nothing, it's just English you don't think like English sounds really harsh you don't really evaluate your own language

Kelly (Female, French): Carey? [laughs]

Carey: Okay, well I was going to agree and just say how this question would more likely rather than reflecting the actual language on its own it would reflect our own perceptions of it from outside in our society and I guess what we would perceive as more masculine or feminine or in between and how we use that to shape and view how other languages seem to us rather than what they actually truly are

This discussion reflects that participants do not believe that individuals hold GLAs about their own language varieties, suggesting that GLA's may or may not be lessened or disappear once an individual has reached a specific degree of proficiency. Further, Carey (Female, French) highlights the fact that GLA's and related perceptions of particular language varieties are stereotypes and are not reflective of some inherent gendered property of language.

In conclusion, the participants in the linguist exchange did not appear to influence the gendering of the French language. Similarly, an individual's experience with studying

the French language did not appear to alter the gendering of French as feminine. Despite the consistency of this gendering of French as feminine across individuals who had and had not studied French, it was those individuals who had studied French who first questioned the validity of such a gendering in each focus group, noting its stereotypical nature. Regardless of French language-study experience, in general, individuals questioned the validity of gendering languages. Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) did, however, feel that there was something inherently feminine about the French language. Further, participants readily discussed potential sources of their gendered language attitudes including personal experience with particular language varieties. Although linguistic experiences and the participants in the linguistic exchange did not alter the gendering of the French language, there appeared to be a qualitative difference in the way female-identified and male-identified participants gendered the French language. Female-identified individuals appeared to gender the French language in a more nuanced way, with some aspects of the French language being identified as masculine despite an overarching perception of the language as feminine, than their male-identified counterparts who perceived the language as wholly feminine. Don (Male, French) was the sole exception to personally characterizing the language as feminine, though he did recognize the prevalence of this assertion.

Research Question 3: Negotiation of Identities and Perceptions of Language

Varieties

The relevance of identity. Parameters surrounding the relevance of identity to language learning and to language attitudes appeared throughout the focus group discussions and interviews. One such parameter appeared to be a threshold of familiarity

with the language. Extreme familiarity with a language variety, such as that held by a native speaker, appeared to render questions of language attitudes moot. Participants in focus group two (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) tended to think of their native language as the default and thus tended to have minimal, if any, reflections to express about their own native language variety. While they did discuss the role of accents in any given language, their own idiolect tended to be viewed as the default for them. Even more broadly, Kurt (Male, French) expressed how English writ large was a default for him and thus did not have significant implications for his identity. In his words, “when you’re talking in English you’re just like talking normally,” (Kurt). However, when considering other language varieties, a host of language attitudes were evoked including gendered language attitudes. These language attitudes appeared to be entailed with questions of identity. Extreme lack of familiarity appeared to have a similar effect, with participants expressing that if they had no knowledge of what a language sounded like, no attitudes came to mind when considering such a language. Participants also expressed a recognition of the fact that any attitudes they may have towards a language with which they were very unfamiliar could be based only on stereotypes and thus they believed their attitudes toward such languages to be invalid. Familiarity and the relevance of identity also appeared in the form of discussions of proficiency, which will be further discussed as a strategy for addressing incongruence between one’s identity and one’s perceptions of a language variety.

Participants in focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) explicitly recognized a connection between identity and language: “the language you speak is, when it comes to

your identity, is just who you identify yourself with,” (Bara: Female, French).

Participants noted, in particular, the connection between the language one speaks and the way one is perceived.

I think that the language you speak is part of your identity but also one individual speaking English in one instance and speaking another language in another instance is going to be perceived differently in each instance even though it's the same person (Tammy: Female, No French).

One participant even naturalized such perceptions, “I think it's natural to see people a little bit differently when they speak like a different language [...] in the moment that they're talking in a different language to other people it's like they kind of transform,” (Don: Male, French).

Josh (Male, No French) continued to clarify that these perceptions are contextually-dependent as are the ways that an individual presents themselves, highlighting the agency an individual has with their own identity presentation.

In different um either cultural or like linguistic contexts you're more likely depending on the context you'd be likely to foreground of prominent different aspects of your identity so depending on what context you're in your identity is going to be a little bit different even if they're all components of you but just different parts being foregrounded at different times (Josh).

Like Claire Kramsch has noted, so too noted my participants that agency does not mean sovereignty over identity but that identities may be placed upon an individual by others without their volition.

Language can kind of externally impose an identity on you especially in areas where there are a lot of people who speak a different language like tends to embody that other people may or how other people may react to you like in America like if you speak a certain language you might be seen as different so like if you speak Arabic then people think you're like evil and like the other cause America doesn't like you and then if you speak English then you're part of like the normal I guess default person so a lot of it is like the major I guess major language of like the default kind of imposing identities onto other groups based on the language they speak (Don: Male, French).

Beyond having a perceived influence on how one is read by others and how one presents oneself to others, participants also identified a relationship between the language one speaks and the people with whom one interacts. This relationship was stated both positively and negatively, in terms of members of one's linguistic community contributing to their identity as well as in terms of the languages one speaks limiting the individuals with whom one can interact.

The language you speak or the languages you speak will kind of help determine who you interact with and who you talk to and who you can communicate with um and you know those will be the people you're around which helps build your identity (Ana: Female, No French).

We should be like semi-conversational at least like a little bit like we should be able to communicate a little bit in so many other different languages because like then we just then completely limit ourselves to who we can communicate with (Gabrielle: Female, French).

Participants in focus group four (male-identified individuals who have taken French) readily connected identity and language, highlighting that language may play a more integral role in certain individual's identities over others (Taylor: Male, French, Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

I think it is um people can identify themselves by like their regional dialects and that sort of thing like in Quebec they identify as French Canadian when they're technically Canadians but just based on their language it becomes part of who they are and there are probably some people who don't really consider their language as part of their identity and don't even think about it until they're confronted with situations where someone else is speaking a language they don't understand and then they have to kind of reflect upon themselves, they're made aware of their own language and how it relates to who they are but just as a part of their culture in general I think it does relate to individual identities and group identities (Taylor).

Participants also acknowledged that they make inferences about the identities of others based on the languages they speak. Taylor noted that, "you can just based on someone's language you can infer a lot about them it might not be right but you can just like what

they've culturally been exposed to as well," (Taylor). Devon echoed Taylor's statement that language provides cues upon which one can draw inferences, correct or incorrect, about an individual's identity.

A language can help you make guesses about somebody and it may not always be right but um for the most part it gets you pretty close to like like trying to figure out like if you had no idea and you met somebody and you heard them speak you can definitely find out a lot about them just by like the language they speak and how they speak the language and um I think those are really like important tells if you're like trying to make an inference about people (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

When asked to elaborate on what types of inferences one can make, Taylor (Male, French) spoke of what experiences one has had in one's lifetime:

Just like uh what kinds of foods they grew up eating just like things like that just like where they lived and that sort of thing because if you live in Georgia your entire life you're not going to obviously be experiencing um like authentic French food in France all the time but if you spoke France I mean French and you grew up in Georgia it could throw people off so it's not always going to be correct but you can still infer that like I haven't grown up in France or anything else based on the fact that I don't speak the language but based on the fact that I do speak English with a specific accent or whatever you can kind of tell where I've been and what I've been exposed to in my history (Taylor).

Throughout this portion of the focus group, Taylor was particularly adamant that it was wrong to make these assumptions, regularly returning to the words "it's wrong" during a discussion revealing that he was very cognoscente of the fact that this regularly occurs.

Yeah I mean you could it's just wrong to assume things but you could assume that they like certain things or like they're not like going to like American football but like soccer or just based on like the language they speak but it's wrong to assume these things but you can and like most of the time you'll probably be right uh I think very few people in Portugal probably enjoy American football but I'm sure a lot enjoy soccer so just like that sort of thing it's wrong to assume but yeah it goes on along with just what national identity or whatever goes on there (Taylor).

Beyond questions of experience, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) discussed how one's gender expression could be associated with the language one speaks,

relating languages to particular countries and in turn to cultural stereotypes about masculinity and femininity. He particularly cited that speaking French in America could yield a perception of the individuals as “not that tough,” (Devon). For Devon, this recognition of the relationship between language and one’s perceived identity was starkly contrasted with one’s sense of self when individuals who chose to learn a second language was concerned.

Just cause I said I liked football in a different language doesn’t mean I like it any less so like having like been exposed to a different language like doesn’t change your personal identity but it would change your perceived identity so people would like perceive oh like he speaks French so he must like soccer or something like that but they don’t know [...] and so just cause you can express yourself in a different language doesn’t necessarily mean that you have these different tags associated with you (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

In conclusion, several narratives emerged from the data that addressed the ways in which participants negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others’ perceptions of a language variety. These narratives of relationship between identity and perceptions of language varieties can be categorized as either in alignment or misaligned. One participant explicitly identified an alignment between his sense of self and his sense of the French language and culture as well as others’ views of the French language and culture (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs). This case is presented first and is then followed by narratives in which the participants felt some degree of an altered sense of self or of misalignment between their or others’ perceptions of the target language and their sense of self. In the cases of an altered sense of self or misalignment, several strategies of self-presentation were employed. These narratives included: a strong sense of individuality, an instrumental excuse, a lack of choice, cultivation of the self, appealing to a global identity, evoking heterosexuality, the

language learner as an identity, a chance to be someone else, bringing into focus different aspects of one's identity, proficiency, limiting cultural acquisition, maturity, and hiding one's L2 self.

An alignment between one's identity and perceptions of the target language.

An alignment between one's identity and one's perceptions of the target language may serve as a motivator for learning a given language variety. For Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs), one of his primary motivating factors for continuing learning French was the alignment between his sense of self and his perception of the French language. He specifically cited his sense of the way French people take the time to appreciate life and how his knowledge of French culture has propelled him to give himself more time to do the things he enjoys, which he also sees as aligning with aspects of the French culture such as wine and food. In his words,

Going back to how I said how French is like sort of in parallel or associated with like who I am I mean I think when I was saying that what I really mean is like um the culture speaks to me a lot like I'm very fascinated with the culture um and it's kind of just the way like hey I love to eat um and I love my wine [laughs] you know? You know? Like that's something very associated there like they're very into their food I'll say that much um you know and I think for me it's just you know it's just that attitude and for me I feel like French is more like it's more like laid back too and that's how I feel I don't know I mean there's sometimes that I feel like I'm going at like ten thousand miles an hour but it's definitely something that like I think something I strive to I think that's the greatest I think it's a culture that I want to like strive to obtain it and try to get to cause it's something that I definitely want to see in myself whether or not I see it currently and like definitely where I'm at um is maybe not exactly where I'm at and what I want to do definitely as a student you're like hurry hurry hurry rush rush rush and I think it's by like learning French it's like I've just given myself time to just relax and like do something that like I enjoy and it's like learning about a culture that's like so great and like you know enjoys the things that I enjoy too and I think that's also why some people pick certain languages versus others it's like they're able to associate with that culture and it's like wow I really wish I could like you know it's like school it's like the school yard it's like *woah* that those kids over there on the jungle gym they're the coolest like I need to learn to like play on the jungle gym set so it's one of those it's like oh French I love the culture it's so great I need

to learn their language and like be associated with them so it's one of those things I think for me it's like I associate with the culture and because of it I really want to learn the language cause it's like such a sort of an association (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Alan generalizes his experience to others, suggesting that he perceives an alignment between the self and the target language and culture as being a common motivator for language learning. In line with Alan's suggestion, one participant evoked feelings of an alignment between his sense of self and the specific target language culture (Stephan: Male, No French). An exchange between Ryan (Male, No French) and Stephan revealed that Stephan experienced feeling more at home in his second language culture than in his native language culture the first time he went to Korea.

What I found really interesting when I first met this kid was he said that when he went to Korea for the first time he felt more what did you say? That you felt more home there than here despite that he grew up here [in the US] his whole life and it was like his first time there so I guess that's a question to you, what do you mean by that?

Stephan: Well, I guess um it's like Tarzan like when he comes to the new world you know it's like realizing wow like I don't feel weird like I don't feel like the odd one out like I don't feel like wow I'm the only like there's the American look at him you know like and despite like even that communication and everything else it just felt more fitting even (Ryan: Male, No French).

Stephan's (Male, No French) sense of an alignment between his identity and the target culture was based on his own experience living in the target culture. Contrasted with this, Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) accepted both his own perceptions of the target language and the way he believed others perceived the target language and his sense of self. Alan was the only participant to accept both his own and others' perceptions of the target language as aligning with his own identity. Other participants simultaneously rejected the ways that others' perceived the target language, which were in misalignment with their senses of self, and accepted their own perceptions

of the target language as in alignment with their senses of self. Stephan (Male, No French) was able to draw this distinction based on his own experiences in the target culture, while other participants drew such a distinction without having lived in the target culture. Illustrating this type of qualified alignment, two male-identified participants who have learned French (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs, Taylor: Male, French) recognized the ways in which French is stereotyped as feminine by others, but did not personally hold such opinions: “about the stereotypes based on ideas about masculinity and femininity, how they’re like going to cause an association between language and gender but personally I don’t really draw those conclusions to associate the two,” (Taylor: Male, French). This distance from the attitudes of others, allowed these two participants to feel that their identities were aligned with the target language and culture.

An ability to articulate this sense of self in relation to the target language was present in the interview with a high-achieving participant. Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) described his sense of self as being deeply connected to the fact that he speaks French: “I definitely think French is a big part of who I am as a person. It’s always been something I can use to set myself apart from others. Um, and just being able to have that has driven me to, like, pursue other languages as well, so,” (Devon). He continued to express the alignment he saw between the French language and his sense of self stating, “I see French as being, um, it’s useful, it’s diverse, um, it’s um, definitely global, and so that’s how I see myself as well. And I see it, I see it as an important tool to have. So you definitely need it in the future,” (Devon). This articulation of a multilingual and global sense of self served as a positive motivator not only for his

continued engagement with French, but also for engagement in the learning of other languages including Spanish and Chinese. Devon articulated the clearest sense of self with respect to the French language and thus expressed his intention to prioritize continuing French and fulfilling his requirements for his Neuroscience degree and his pre-medical courses over continuing learning Spanish and Chinese. In addition to outlining a connection in the present between his identity and the French language, Devon was able to articulate a future sense of self in the target language noting that,

Hopefully, like, if I, in the future when I have a family I'll hopefully pass it down. I just think having, being able to speak multiple languages is something everybody should have, have an opportunity, have an opportunity at. So, um, I definitely see it playing a big role in my life and in my future (Devon).

Devon both articulated a future sense of self in the target language and a valuing of multilingualism more broadly. Beyond the personal sphere, Devon also expressed interest in working in a neuroscience lab in France and finding other ways to integrate French into his career trajectory. Further, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) expressed that he saw the language as exclusively in alignment with his current and future senses of self:

I don't have any particular points of tension [between the way I see French and my senses of self]. Um, I think French is a great language and I see myself, I see myself using it for great things, um, so I think French is definitely going to help me achieve the stuff I want to achieve in my future and, uh, I couldn't do it without it, so (Devon).

Devon's narrative incorporated some of the strategies present in the narratives of those who did find points of tension between their identity and the ways in which the target language in question is perceived including a global identity, a valuing of multilingualism, and pragmatic reasons for learning the language.

To expand, when such an alignment is not present, where there is some disaccord or tension between one's identity and one's own or others' perceptions of the target language, either this misalignment was seen as prohibitive to an engagement with learning the target language or one of a variety of strategies was reported to be employed to engage in acquiring the language. The majority of these strategic narratives also addressed either extrinsic or intrinsic motivation to learn a given language variety. These narratives are presented below.

A strong sense of individuality, the free spirit, and rebel narratives. Three similar narratives emerged from the data, all dealing with the idea that a sense of individuality can allow one to navigate any perceived incongruence between the ways in which one perceives a language variety and one's sense of self. This narrative of individuality treated the rejection of normative gender expression and a valuing of difference to allow for an authentic expression of self through an engagement with activities that aligned with one's interests. Two versions of this type of narrative subverted certain gender norms while simultaneously appealing to pragmatism and one version of this narrative also entailed flouting the normative importance of utilitarian arguments. Discussions surrounding these narratives also revealed the complexities surrounding what is considered normative and for whom.

During his interview Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) suggested that he felt such narratives were a common strategy for mitigating any stigma associated with learning a particular language variety.

I can relate to just being able to take the language that nobody else is taking and, um, or that very few people are taking. Um, I can definitely, I like it, like I enjoy, when you're one of few it kind of makes you feel, um, more unique and if you're able to stick through it you definitely feel more accomplished at the end (Devon).

Devon suggested that engaging in learning a language that few others was learning could be understood as a positive experience, transforming a negative discourse of not fitting in into a positive discourse of uniqueness.

One such narrative evoked questions of self-acceptance in the flouting of normative expressions of gender; If you have “a strong sense of individuality,” and you “accept yourself then it is okay to just know that you’re not going to be normal and like this macho American guy or whatever,” (Tom: Male, French). Reactions to this narrative suggested that even its articulation was deviant in some way. One male participant in the focus group started laughing at the participant who shared this narrative of individuality, saying “sure,” which then lead to another participant saying, in a protective way, “C’mon guys leave him alone,” (Leo: Male, No French). While his strong sense of individuality allowed Tom to engage in studying the French language, which he noted to be stereotyped as a feminine endeavor, others marked this behavior and his narrative of individuality as deviant.

Similarly, two participants in focus group two (both male and female identified individuals who have all studied French) (Kurt: Male, French, Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) discussed an overt desire to do something different from other people by learning French (Kurt: Male, French), which, for Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs), translated into being different. While Kurt focused on utilitarian explanations for why he chose to learn French, Alan’s discourse ran contrary to a utilitarian logic.

There was big push towards learning Spanish in my area even my family pushed for it a lot I decided to go towards French because everyone else was doing Spanish and I figured it would be good to know a language no one else does um

cause you know if I know English and I know French and my friend knows English and he knows Spanish than we can cover a wider range (Kurt). I'm kinda like well I'm going against the, the grain like I'm a rebel I'm doing French [Maria laughs] and like look at all the people doing Mandarin and all those other things and I'm doing this other thing so in that way I almost feel like it's kind of like a counter culture movement almost to take French versus other languages [...] you people don't know me but you knowing me too I think it's I never do anything by the book I just don't but for me I think that's as I said I don't know if that's initially why I chose French over other languages but definitely progressing into it I was like well I think it's kind of cool like as I said France is like as you said if you think totally utilitarian wise, I mean you're right of the amount of speakers in the world that use it Spanish would probably be one that's better or Mandarin would probably be one that's more effective um but to me I was kind of like I think French is I like the region and I like where it is and I like that attitude that sort of like France sort of projects and to me it's something that kind of runs concurrent with who I am and so I was thinking that would be a nice language to learn and also one place to travel to cause it's just one place that I'm like more related with like I think as you said like Mandarin would be helpful but at the same time I don't see myself like having a desire to go to China as much as I would France so that's kind of like the connection for me too (Alan).

In addition to making an argument that ran contrary to utilitarianism, Alan explicitly evoked identity and the relationship of the French language to his own sense of self.

Maria (Female, French), however, provided a counter narrative to this; Although she recognized that there are many other languages that are seen as more practical by people in her life, Maria noted that she felt as though “everybody takes French” and is focused on Western Europe more broadly. After listening to Maria, Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) and Kurt (Male, French) agreed that French and Spanish are the most commonly offered languages in high schools in the U.S. but remained adamant that French remained an uncommon choice, especially once there was a broader variety of language courses available to them in college.

For some, it was this categorization of French as uncommon or as inappropriate that played into perceiving the language as aligned with their sense of self (Alan: Male,

French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs). Such narratives included those of being a free spirit or a rebel and going against the grain.

I feel like learning French I'm a free spirit and kind of like against the grain and that's something that kind of like throughout my life that's just been a general consensus of what I'm doing I'm never doing something like the way that I should be doing it but hey whatever [laughs] that's just life so I feel like you know it kind of just matches with who I am and kind of glues together I kind of hope that it becomes more a part of my life especially as I move away from academia but um I think it's something I want to kind of know about (Alan).

This uncommonness was also seen positively in that two participants highlighted a certain caché associated with speaking a language that was less commonly spoken (Bara: Female, French, Tammy: Female, No French). "I feel like if it's something people haven't really heard of people will be like kind of like it's way cooler than something that they have heard of," (Bara). Participants highlighted the fact that this cache is context dependent:

I would imagine if you're living in some part of Canada and you heard someone say oh yeah I speak French you would be like okay a lot of people speak French here um so I don't know I don't know generally when I find if I meet someone and I don't know them that well and I have a conversation with them and then they turn around and answer their phone in a different language I'm usually taken aback (Tammy).

With this contextual context of the perceived number of speakers of a given language, the commonly taught language was seen as retaining its uniqueness in the United States.

These types of individuality-related narratives appeared to allow participants to set goals for continuing language learning throughout and beyond their University careers by allowing for them to express their own perceived alignment with the way they view the French language in spite of or because of their recognition of the ways that others may view their engagement with the language.

During his interview, Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) suggested that a decision to learn any language variety was based on a desire to work within the target culture. He suggested that if one's identity was misaligned with the target language's cultures, one would have to have other reasons for desiring to work within the target cultures in the target language in order to be motivated to learn the language.

In the idea that I think people pick a language on more than, like, I, I, I think people who commit themselves to learning a second language are more likely to, are, are, are...saying yes I want to learn this language due to other factors than like, I don't know, this language sounded cool and I wanted to learn it. I do think that you are learning to sort of work within that culture. Right? And that's for whatever reason, right? Like, I'm going to learn Chinese because I need to adapt to Chinese business culture. Because Chinese business culture is the next big thing, so I have to learn Mandarin to, like, be able to communicate with these individuals. Or, I'm going to learn French because I want to adapt to their cultural beliefs - or Spanish, or whatever. But yeah, I mean I doubt, I think it's more, you know, you might see utility, but I don't think you're ever going to see someone learn a second language that's, like, against their cultural beliefs. Unless that's, like, somehow required of them (Alan).

Alan's narrative related closely to several of the strategies for negotiating misalignment between one's identity and the ways in which a target language is perceived that are discussed in the sections that follow.

Instrumental excuse. Certain individuality narratives were interwoven with pragmatic arguments, while others did not address the utility of the language.

Independent from individuality narratives, there were also those termed here as an "instrumental excuse" narratives. This narrative type can be understood as explaining engagement with learning a particular language variety with pragmatic reasoning that simultaneously serves to exempt oneself from treating questions of identity related to the

learning and use of the particular language variety. This theme first emerged in the quantitative data, and was given voice in the qualitative work.

In our conversations, my participants discussed a plethora of reasons for learning any particular language variety and in these discussions highlighted the changing nature of which language varieties were popular or considered useful at any given time. Much of the discussion characterized French as pretty but not useful, except for under specific circumstances. Chiefly, French was seen as useful in the European Union and in a number of specialized domains. For example, one of the male participants who had taken French highlighted the fact that he wanted to work in Europe and thought that the language was, in his words, “highly applicable in Europe.” (Tom: Male, French). He discussed how he would need the language to work. Another participant highlighted its importance for studying philosophy and art, and cited this applicability as an instrumental reason for learning the language (Kim: Female, No French).

Any broad connection to utility was made through identifying speaking French as a unique ability. The practicality of knowing the French language was evoked as Taylor (Male, French) and Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) discussed the ways in which they used the language and how they felt about its use. Taylor highlighted the differences between how he felt in French class versus using French in the rest of his life, noting how he felt cool if he knew something others did not in the latter case.

Not in class [Devon laughs] if I know something like if French is outside the class and I'm with someone who doesn't know it I feel like you know it makes me feel cool I guess but uh no not usually I don't feel refined or beautiful just cause I'm speaking French (Taylor).

Devon interpreted Taylor's statement as aligning with a utilitarian argument and expressed his own positive feelings about being able to employ the language in practical situations.

Yeah I guess I mean like knowing French um it's it's good when you can like use it practically so like when there's a menu or something and there's something in French and you're with a friend who's like what does that mean and you know what it means I guess it makes you kind of feel like yeah so like yeah you feel cool and you feel like yeah this language// (Devon).

//Educated (Taylor)

//[laughs] yeah. You feel like you've learned something and so like knowing the language like practical uses makes it like I guess that makes you feel the accomplishment but I guess if I'm just sitting in class and I'm speaking French to a teacher I guess I don't really feel like I'm beautiful or anything superior or like that but yeah like having practical uses and using it in like everyday life is when it really comes in handy (Devon).

As their conversation continued, this pragmatic approach to enjoying the language began to be interwoven with themes of education and self-cultivation and lead to their acknowledgement of a common characterization of French as impractical that ran contrary to their own pragmatic arguments.

I think it's just viewed as like a vacation language I guess like you learn it just so you can go on vacation and look cool and like know what you're doing but like they don't view it as like an everyday kind of usage kind of language whereas like if you were in Canada it would be like very useful in everyday life and like you could travel through Quebec and Montreal and all that and like get like get on by yourself but I guess here in the states you don't have like as much of a use for it because there's not that much of I guess concentrated French speaking population (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

In his interview, Devon outlined the efficacy of a pragmatic reason for learning a language in terms of its ability to mitigate any negative reactions one might be exposed to. He stated:

If you have kind of a purpose behind doing something and it's just seen as a useful tool, and so, like, it kind of takes away, like, the people wanting to attack you. It kind of takes away their ammunition to attack you because you're kind of doing it

so that you can make yourself better so that you can get a better job or something like that. So they have no way to, um, they have nothing to talk about (Devon).

Devon explained that, in his opinion, pragmatic reasons for learning a language rendered it impossible for others to unfairly critique the choice to learn a particular language variety.

In his interview, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) expressed a certain regret in not having recognized the potential utility of French in his professional life.

Language and French in general is something that I'm interested in definitely but it hasn't been to the point where my professional interests have aligned with my personal interests and I'm starting to see where that contrast is starting to hurt, well not necessarily hurt me, but for those who have found like their professional interests matching with their personal interests it's starting to come into something of like of its own so right now I'm doing a lot of interviewing and a lot of job searching and I spoke with some people at [...] this big accounting firm and I was speaking with someone in the accounting department which is consulting and I was talking with her about like some of the like different aspects of the job and she was talking a lot about travel and naturally the topic of language came up and you know when you're first starting college everyone is like yeah learn a different language get really proficient in a different language it will really help you out and it's different when it comes from a professional who's interviewing you and you start to see like wow I really wish like I spent more time on this cause like when you're at like the other side of the table it's kind of like not only should I be able to like talk about my interests but they should be part of me at this point like I should be able to speak French at like a French level but it hasn't so maybe I'll pick up French again I think at least I'll try to immerse myself more (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs).

John outlined the fact that he did not previously recognize the important role that being more proficient in French could play in his professional life. John had found personal motivation to learn the language, but expressed wishing that he had had a stronger sense of the pragmatic implications of being multilingual so that he would have pushed himself to a greater degree of mastery of the language. Interestingly, this professional domain in

which he felt he had not fully cultivated a second language sense of self was also the area in which he was able to see a future self related to the target language.

I think it would most likely be a professional setting [my relationship with French in the future] cause like I don't have like a French family like I have a couple friends who are French but like it's not like I don't think I'm going to ever marry like a French girl so I don't think it's going to be a part of my life that way but like in a professional setting I could definitely see that like happening (John).

Like John, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) recognized the potential for French to contribute to his professional life. Unlike John who was a senior at the time of interviews, Luke was a freshman and felt able to continue formally studying French in college. He expressed that his pragmatic reasons for learning French were what allowed him to make a shift from learning French in order to fulfill language requirements to a deeper level of engagement with language learning, saying "It wasn't until college that I said: Oh, French. I'm going for it," (Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs). He continued:

Part of it is the pragmatic response. I want to, well, major in International Studies. And if I just jump into the world only speaking English, no one is going to take me seriously. Um, and I've spoken or at least tried to learn French for so long that it's definitely, like, part of who I am and if I just cut it off that would just be bizarre. Um, so I, I have a pragmatic reason and it's just, I guess connected with my identity at this point (Luke).

While for many pragmatic reasons for learning a language was a means for avoiding questions of identity, for Luke, it was this instrumental motivation that allowed him to draw a connection between French and his sense of self over time.

It was just a slow thing over time that grew. Um, and it's, like I didn't realize that it was connecting with my identity until I went to college and there was the option to not take French. And I was just like, what, I can't not take French. That's not an option [...] Um, if I only had the English identity, even if I liked the French culture and I just never spoke the language, that would be an enormous divide. And so I think that is essential (Luke).

Luke's articulation of his pragmatic reasons for learning French and the ways in which he drew connections between the language and his sense of self bled into a sense of a global identity and a desire to act as a global citizen.

Despite a shared understanding that French was most often viewed as impractical, my participants' recognition of the ways in which the language could be useful to them in their lives appeared to be a strong motivation to learn the language and a perceived means of mitigating negative stereotypes about learners of the language. For some, pragmatic reasons were the primary source of motivation, whereas others felt they had not recognized the ways in which French could be used practically until recently and thus regretted not having had a pragmatic source of motivation earlier.

Lack of choice narrative. Another persistent theme in the data was that of a "lack of choice" narrative, which can be understood as a category of discursive moves that relieves the individual of agency in and thus responsibility for engaging in learning a particular language variety. Students regularly talked about how they were "forced" to take French even though they did not want to, with some individuals saying that it was the only language they were offered in high school. Both this lack of choice narrative and these instrumental excuses connect back to an early discussion I had had with my participants. In this earlier discussion they talked about how, in their words, "we only think of languages like French as feminine because we can," (Nora: Female, No French). Participants highlighted the fact that one had to have a choice in what languages they studied in order to start gendering languages. This observation seems to hint at the idea that instrumental reasons and lack of choice narratives avoid the language variety one chooses to study reflecting on an individual's gender identity. If someone has the

flexibility to choose what language variety they acquire then this choice seems to begin to have meaning for identity.

There were three main variants of the lack of choice narrative: 1) a disliking of learning languages, 2) a random choice, and 3) a limited degree of choice variant.

This first variant of the lack of choice narrative was a narrative of disliking language learning despite engagement therein. Don (Male, French) characterized himself as not enjoying language learning because of the way he perceived grammar as arbitrary and not fun. Don's narrative also echoes questions of effort raised in previous studies.

I didn't really like taking it [French] but I didn't really like taking any language in the first place because a lot of it is just like learning arbitrary rules of grammar that was never really fun to me and just a lot of studying that I didn't really like (Don).

Agency and effort repeatedly appeared to be of central concern for the formation of attitudes. Throughout the focus group discussion in which he participated, Taylor (Male, French) clarified six times whether "like they went to school to learn it or it's just their second language," when discussing how speakers of French are perceived. Each time he asked for clarification I invited him to discuss either. His continued concern with this question suggests that happenstance versus effort appears to be key for Taylor (Male, French), highlighting the importance of choice versus a lack of choice in questions of identity and language learning. Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) also drew a clear distinction between individuals choosing to learn a language and learning a language by happenstance, with the latter not influencing one's self-held identity in Devon's opinion.

I mean like somebody who is from America and just who happened to just learn French and so just cause you can express yourself in a different language doesn't necessarily mean that you have these different tags associated with you (Devon).

When asked to discuss his own relationship with choosing the language, Taylor (Male, French) evoked the second of the aforementioned variants, that of random choice. He expressed that he had made a choice but he didn't really know why, emphasizing the fact that he had to take one of two languages and almost characterizing his choice of French as random.

Um, I don't really see myself any differently because of my choice to uh learn French or take French classes uh I made the decision to do that at the beginning of high school and there were two choices French and Spanish and I don't remember my exact reasoning but it doesn't really affect how I look at myself others have asked me why I didn't take Spanish given that there's an increasing number of Spanish speakers in America like uh I don't even know I don't know why I just made a decision and stuck with it (Taylor).

Nearing the end of our discussion, however, Taylor explained his continuation with the French language as the third of the aforementioned variants, involving a limited degree of choice. He explained that his continuation of French resulted from his need to fulfill a requirement and its utility for his interest in film studies, once again somewhat removing his choice of studying a language.

I pretty much took it just so I could better understand French film and also to satisfy the requirement for a language but at the same time I thought it would be kind of like more useful I mean any language would be useful in watching film but just because of France's importance in film [...] cause I could fulfill a language requirement with anything any language so, I guess there had to be some kind of reason, I guess (Taylor: Male, French).

In direct opposition with a lack of choice narrative was Alan's (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) assertion that he made the choice to study French.

Relatedly, Kurt (Male, French) explicitly addressed having made a choice to study the language. His departure from a lack of choice narrative, however, was qualified by the fact that his choice to learn the language in middle and high school wasn't a conscious

choice. Being older and having had already studied the language for some time, Kurt identified continuing with the language as a conscious choice driven by arguments of practicality.

I don't think I really made the conscious choice to really learn French until I got to college cause uh when I got into college I had the choice to either go back and learn a different language or to learn French and I decided to learn French. I also realized that there is a lot of, I heard that French is one of the philosophical languages um German and Greek and French were the three big ones and philosophy was another thing that I liked so I liked the idea of being able to go back and read some of those texts (Kurt).

Relatedly, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) reflected upon the common use of a lack of choice narrative by others in his interview. In his words:

I feel like there's a lot of guys who say they're only taking it because they have to. Um, but I feel like once it's really a matter of finding somebody else who's also in your same shoes. Um, because I knew a couple people who took the class and I guess they only took the class because they had to. But, um, they met me and, like, other French speakers who were, like, fluent in French. And so when we communicated with each other, it kind of showed them, like, something they could strive for and strive to attain. And so I guess, um, we kind of like, took away the stigma that French wasn't cool. And just by speaking it they kind of wanted to be like, like, they wanted to get to the level where we were at so that we could all speak French together and stuff like that (Devon).

During this discussion, Devon suggested that a lack of choice narrative could be a stigma-mitigating strategy until one established oneself within a group of target language speakers.

In alignment with Devon's (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) assessment, the lack of choice narrative appeared to be a major strategy for addressing identity-conflicting attitudes, as illustrated by the fact that it was evoked by five participants.

Cultivation of the self. The other protective narrative of this type that was evoked was that of "cultivating oneself," which can be understood as engaging in acts presumed

to culture oneself and increase refinement. Participants discussed what they saw as a major difference between deciding to learn French as something one does on the side, as a hobby, to cultivate oneself, and making it “your thing.” The latter, for my participants, would result in negative perceptions. “So males that tend to study the French language [as their thing] outsiders will perceive him as being feminine or gay,” (Kim: Female, No French) but “the super masculine guys that I know that speak French it’s a different direction like hey I’ll culture myself a little bit more with this non-masculine activity” (Aaron: Male, French). To this another participant responded, “Oh yeah, I dooooo know a guy taking French and he’s like totally masculine but he just happens to take French,” “it’s not his thing or anything!” (Nora: Female, No French). Engaging in language learning as a non-primary activity was viewed as appropriate behavior whereas engagement in French language learning as a primary activity was perceived as gender-role inappropriate behavior for males.

This limited engagement was in fact seen positively, with five participants explicitly connecting language learning to intelligence. Alan’s (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) asserted that being multilingual is a sign of intelligence:

I don’t know if it’s specific for just French but definitely for like just learning another language it just seems like you’re a knowledgeable person um and I think it immediately imparts also that you’re like culturally aware of like others and like you know if you can speak another language it means you’re aware of another culture out there so I sorta think it kinda indicates to other people that you’re willing to accept other cultures and you’re definitely willing to immerse yourself in other cultures versus some others that are like not as interested as other people you know like other people are not as interested in like learning about other cultures and so forth so I think that’s kind of how it imparts for like speaking other foreign languages (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

In addition to his association of intelligence with multilingualism, in this quote, Alan evokes cultural awareness. His discourse suggests the potential that he sees learning

another language as a way to meet a culture on its own terms, or at least with a certain degree of openness to difference. This implicature suggests a potential means for suspending some of the presumptions of their native culture, and with it a suspension of some of the language attitudes grounded in said culture.

Tammy (Female, No French) echoed this connection between the cultivation of self narrative and the perception of multilingual individuals as intelligent.

It's really cool and surprising when they speak a different language and also yeah it sort of adds an element of intelligence to them I just something about the ability to speak fluently in more than one language makes me feel like that individual was more intelligent and I don't know if it was generally more intelligent or more intelligent in a particular way um independent of what language it is (Tammy).

Although Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) did not specifically discuss self-cultivation in those terms, he focused upon the intellectual tools that learning French has given him and the way that his linguistic knowledge has made him a more versatile individual.

I think French like learning French it doesn't really change me and like how I view myself and that but like learning French definitely it makes me it makes me more versatile I guess like I can now talk to more people and relate to more people also like being able to read and write in a different language definitely helps you in the long run cause you can help yourself in the future and knowing a new language is always beneficial cause I think languages are like we said in the beginning it's really important to be able to communicate with people in the language that they speak and also being able to read and write now or read and write better I can go to a French speaking country and I guess get around without anybody's help and I guess fit in into the culture um without really needing a translator or anything like that and yeah and so definitely like he said it doesn't really change how you view yourself but it gives you a lot of learning French is a really valuable tool (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Related to these evocations of intelligence and skills, one participant in focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French) noted that second language learning provided a new perspective from which to view

one's native language, stating that "knowing more than one language makes you realize your own language cause like you learn like what kind of words your language has and what kinds of words your language doesn't have," (Ryan: Male, No French). In his interview, John (Male, French, highly masculine, stronger GLAs) drew similar connections between intelligence and multilingualism, noting that language learning leads to intellectual enlightenment.

The intellectual pursuit, I think language is definitely a way to become more enlightened in that way. Language yeah it definitely adds a layer of complexity cause if you meet someone new or you've known someone for a long time and suddenly you learn they know a whole other language it's like whoa I didn't know you did Portuguese or whatever it's a whole like why do you know that? And it's like a whole other layer to that person and it's like it adds complexity. It's not something everyone has to have but when you meet someone who has that it's like definitely an interest factor and if you meet like a ton of people like in your career world or in your personal life then it's definitely a good thing to have (John).

John appeared to draw connections between intelligence, enlightenment, multilingualism, and social capital. Self-cultivation and linguistic skills were linked through a relationship with social status for other participants as well; one participant discussed the importance of English language skills in Korea for cultural capital (Don: Male, French):

In Korea English is kind of like a tool to show social status like even the people who want to work at a, to pick up the trash, a garbage man they require English tests I don't really understand why but uh it's sort of like a tool to um to show like social status so let's say if someone went to a college that speaks English people think like oh they have high social status just because they use English and even like in Korea it doesn't matter what major you did like companies hire people that I guess the first thing they look at is the ability to speak English so I guess like in a lot of Asian countries English is sort of a tool to like judge social status (Don).

Don's (Male, French) description of the role of multilingualism in Korea and the other participants' discussions of the positive associations between multilingualism and intelligence stood in direct opposition to an English-only American identity outlined by

John during his interview. After connecting the English language and an American identity, John (Male, French, highly masculine, stronger GLAs) continued to state:

And there's even kind of that anti-multilingualism but you know like the why aren't you speaking English and stuff like that and like the only reason someone would learn Spanish is like so that they could use it in some way but there's definitely a lack of you should learn a language for the sake of learning a language like if I was to say like the American mindset is definitely the more practical side of it for sure (John).

In conclusion, a degree of engagement limited to what can be described as self-cultivation was positively perceived by participants and was connected to intelligence and the development of practical skills and sociocultural capital in certain contexts. However, a greater degree of engagement with the French language in particular was perceived as gender-role inappropriate for males, potentially resulting in being labeled feminine or gay.

Global identity. One participant drew a connection between a self-cultivation narrative and a global identity narrative: [When I am speaking French] "I feel more connected to the global world I guess I think refinement was a great word for that" (Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs). This narrative of appealing to a global identity, as opposed to an identity that focuses upon American ideals appears to be one of a number of ways of discussing engaging with French language study that serve to protect, in some ways, a heterosexual male identity for those who accept the choice to learn French as their own. This strategy is characterized by using the French language to connect to other parts of the world and, in my participant's words, "become a more global citizen" (Tom: Male, French). Relating closely to the desire for a global identity evoked by other participants, Alan's (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs)

discourse included discussion of openness, or even appealing to another culture or way of viewing the world.

In addition to some participants' discussions of desiring a global identity, Kurt (Male, French) identified learning the French language as a means of learning about his own native language as well as an entrance point to learning numerous languages.

Another thing I really liked about learning French is that it seems like more of a gateway because by learning French you understand the differences in your language and the French language and I think it kind of helps you understand other languages as well. I know I tried to learn a little bit of Korean on my own because my roommate is Korean and it's not easy at all and it's not easy without a teacher so I've made very little progress but it has um been nice having taken French so I have a deeper understanding of languages as a whole (Kurt).

Maria (Female, French) agreed with this idea, but expressed that she felt that any language was a gateway to learning other languages. She added that in learning a language one acquires not only the target language but also knowledge about the possibilities for how languages function and about learning languages broadly, a statement with which Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine weaker GLAs) also agreed. Multiple participants (Alan, Maria, Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs, Tom: Male, French, Kurt: Male, French) discussed globalization as a significant motivator for learning a language, though not always explicitly connecting globalization and identity.

When not explicitly labeled a global identity, participants noted a desire to be connected with individuals in other parts of the world (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

I like just like taking language classes I always thought they were fun because you get to learn about the culture of other people who speak the language and like taking the different language I got to see more into the cultures of like the Spanish speaking countries versus like French speaking countries versus Chinese culture

[Interesting that he notes the first two as plural and the last as singular. He has a recognition of the plurality of countries that speak French. I wonder if all the guys who speak French do or not. Does the number of models they have play into all of this?] and those and just like it gives you a better perspective of the world and I feel like the more languages you learn the more connected you would be to the world because you just kind of know where people are coming from because just by being in the language class you're forced to learn about the culture because it plays an important part in how people speak and so you kind of have to learn one with the other (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Globalization as a motivating factor often related to identity through an appeal to a global identity. Learning additional languages and cultures was also viewed as a means for reflecting upon one's native language and culture as well as a gateway to learning additional languages.

Evoking heterosexuality. Participants regularly alluded to or explicitly addressed questions of sexuality. Male-identified participants, in particular, found ways of making a presentation of their heterosexuality relevant to the conversation. Seven male participants mitigated gender- and sexuality-related stereotyping by explicitly evoking heterosexuality when talking about learning French.

One participant insisted that he "hated French" and that now "it's kinda alright" because, as he said, "my girlfriend speaks French and she was like you should learn French so you know..." and then he began to laugh with the other males in the room (Aaron: Male, French). This comment was received by one of the other men in the room with "Well YEAH man, French girls! That's a damn good reason! Hahah!" (Leo: Male, No French), which served to validate his engagement with the French language as a tool of heterosexual male prowess.

More implicitly evoking his heterosexuality, Kurt (Male, French) brought up his girlfriend twenty times during the focus group discussion, particularly once we began

discussing language and identity. His use of mentioning his heterosexual relationship was much less sexually loaded and was more subtle than the other heterosexual male-identified participants in other focus groups. Rather than referencing his girlfriend to explicitly talk about his sexuality, Kurt (Male, French) spoke about his girlfriend within the context of what was being discussed and her opinions or discussion they had had together on the topic. The frequency with which Kurt mentions his girlfriend, however, begs the question as to whether he is seeking to highlight his heterosexuality while he simultaneously discusses his awareness of how learning the French language, an activity that he understands to be stereotyped as feminine, may result in him being read as more feminine. In one of his statements, Kurt removes the decision to learn French from his responsibility and places his girlfriend in the role of agent: “Jessica [Kurt’s girlfriend] divided it up as I will learn Spanish and I’ll learn Italian and you learn German and French and we’ll go to Europe” (Kurt).

In addition to individual evocations of heterosexual identities, concerns of the stereotyping of French as feminine are mitigated by an articulation of its general potential as a tool for heterosexual males: “but like at the same time like French is considered like a love language so like guys think it would be cool to like learn French so they could speak it to a girl,” (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs). Beyond being a tool for heterosexual romantic engagement, speaking French is also seen as a desirable trait in a female sexual partner by males. Without prompting, John offered such commentary:

whenever I hear girls speaking French especially those that are fluent again I’ll eavesdrop but I have no idea what they’re saying but I’ll just like woah they’re speaking French really beautifully! [exclaims] and I don’t even have to look at

them and I'll like you know what I'm talking about [all participants in the focus group laugh] so (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs).

When explicitly asked what participants thought when they heard someone speaking

French, Stephan (Male, No French) replied

It sounds hot! [all participants in the focus group laugh] Yo! French people sound hot cause like they could speak French oh my goodness that's a bonus! I think it's a nice language! [...When I think of French,] I think of girls [voice cracks] speaking French" (Stephan: Male, No French).

Don (Male, French) continued to evoke romance and beauty, as well as class:

I know some people think that like if some people speak French that it shows that that person is very romantic like sort of maybe even high class. Like I watched some American movies and like older people on Wall Street they want to deal with French because like I don't know it was they think that French people were very romantic, beautiful (Don).

Stephan responded to this comment, adding questions of art, of coolness, and of sexiness:

Yeah, hearing all this I think there is some stigma, is that the right word? Yeah. With European languages Italian Spanish French, very artistic um you know there's more of a desire than like when you hear more like even Chinese Japanese Korean I feel like that's not the first reaction oh artsy oh history that's not the first reaction but when you hear French and Italian it's like this kind of cool and sexier (Stephan: Male, No French).

Thus, giving voice to my participants reveals that the French language can be qualified as a tool for heterosexual prowess for both male- and female-identified individuals. This prowess is connected to the perceived romanticism and beauty of the French language as well as the connotations of the French language that relate to sociocultural capital and higher socioeconomic status.

Discussions that extended beyond consideration of the French language alone revealed that the relationship between different languages, speakers, and heterosexual prowess is perceived differently depending on the language in question. Heterosexuality was evoked not only in narratives of motivation to learn a second language, but also in

discussions of the way individuals who speak multiple languages are perceived. Certain languages were perceived positively, while others were perceived negatively. One male participant highlighted Spanish as being attractive for a female sexual partner, whereas German was noted by one female participant as being negatively perceived when spoken by her friends.

I have a friend and I didn't know that she speaks Spanish she's really pretty already but she so I was hanging out with her and she picked up the phone and maybe it was her mom or something and she started speaking Spanish and I was like that's so hot [everyone laughs] I was like girl, but that's all I have to say (Ryan: Male, No French).

That's funny cause for me it was like kind of the opposite like I have a friends who speak German and like I know I shouldn't but like part of me is like German, I don't know it's so bad [Stephan (Male, No French) laughs], I know they're like my really good friends and I'm not like hating on them and I don't judge them for it but there's always that part of me that's like I don't know but I hear German and it's like I can't help it (Sally: Female, No French).

These differing perceptions of language varieties and their relationship to sexuality are congruent with the ways in which gendered language attitudes vary based on the language in question, re-iterating the close relationship between gender and sexuality in the minds of individuals.

Discussions of languages, gender, and sexuality gave way to a consideration of what was considered positively and what was considered negatively in terms of gender and sexual behavior. Ryan offered the possibility of languages altering the heterosexual masculine ideal to which one aspires:

And when I think of French my stereotype is like it fits both ways too like if I think of masculine it's like this player who tries to get all the girls I think of that kind of masculine it's a different kind of masculinity attached with different languages. I can't speak too much about femininity I can't speak so much for that cause I don't understand it but the masculine part of it I think there's a different type of masculinity attached with it cause like you can be an artist and still be masculine you don't have to be like a sports guy to be masculine there's a different kind of masculinity you know like American masculinity the stereotype

is football and then maybe the French kind of masculinity is like a player musician who gets all the girls kind of deal masculinity so I think there's a different kind of masculinity sometimes (Ryan: Male, No French).

Ryan's narrative was unique in offering an explicit discussion of the possibility for alternative acceptable forms of masculinity in conjunction with sexuality. The global identity and individuality narratives offered similar alternative masculinities, however, these identities were based on an acceptance of being non-normative as opposed to expanding or redefining what is considered acceptable expressions of masculinity.

In conclusion, heterosexuality was evoked in multiple ways. For eight participants, heterosexuality was made explicitly or implicitly relevant as a mechanism for mitigating gender- and sexuality-related stereotyping. Within these narratives, French was recast as a tool for heterosexual prowess through its connotative associations with romanticism and high socioeconomic status. These evocations included both those connected to the participants' own identities and general statements about all individuals. Discussions of languages other than French revealed that the relationship between heterosexuality, gender, and language varied with the language in question.

“The language learner” as an identity. For one participant, the experience of learning multiple languages created a space in which that experience became an identity for her.

For me, language in terms of identity is part of my identity but I wasn't thinking personally [...] my identity is tied to [...] I speak languages. I study languages for no purpose other than fun and whenever we [my family] travel anywhere they turn to me to translate to communicate even if we're in a country where none of us speak the language [...] that's my identity, I am the language daughter (Sue: Female, French).

Sue connected her identity with the process of language learning and using the languages as opposed to the particular language varieties she learned. This identity appeared to be

viewed positively, as there was a sense of multilingual individuals as being markedly smarter than monolingual individuals. “The people who know like more languages like they’re really smart [...] it really opens up different ways of thinking,” (Stephan: Male, No French). The paralleling of Sue’s language learning identity and comments such as that made my Stephan represents an interesting area for future inquiry, but allows for few generalizations to be made as Sue was the only participant in this study who expressed holding such an identity. Questions of gender identity cannot be explored for this same reason of such an identity narrative being limited to a single female participant.

A chance to be someone else. Sue (Female, French) also offered a unique narrative of language learning affording her occasions to explore alternative identities. She discussed the ways in which using different languages allowed her space for small identity shifts.

I love languages and so for me independent of any cultural anything is it’s just part of who I am independent of career independent of family just cause I like languages and within languages I kind of think like kind of like with the jokes almost when I’m speaking different languages I’m a little bit of a different person like my German self is a little bit different than my English self partially because my vocabulary is a little bit limited but just I don’t know it feels different I associate that language with a culture where I got to be a different person because nobody knew me going in they didn’t know what I was like in fourth grade so they couldn’t blame me for whatever I did that was so awful and so I got to be somebody else and so that somebody comes out even when I’m here and speaking German because to me that’s my German identity and then I’m I got a teeny little French identity that’s mostly connected with the music which is what I’ve connected with in the language and with Italian it’s mostly with the food but like with each one has their thing and so I think identity with me for me language can be informed by identity but also identity can be informed by language (Sue).

For Sue, knowing different individuals in each language allowed her to reconstruct her identity in each language without the same set of expectations she felt were placed on her by those who knew her previously and by speakers of her native language, English.

Although John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) did not use this strategy himself, when asked what someone does if they see their identity as misaligned with a particular language, he suggested that language could be a means by which to create a new sense of self. In his words,

I mean if someone is really averse to like they see it in that way, language can definitely be like a way to reinvent yourself so like if you didn't necessarily like where you came from or what people think of you, you could like try to learn a language and become a whole new person but if – but at that point I don't think that it really matters if they think that they are French or if they think they're Spanish – just as long as they're doing something new, they're looking for themselves so it's not necessarily that they have to align with that language it's just that they're not what they were before (John).

Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) also discussed the ways in which language learning can allow for a re configuration of one's identity. Although Luke expressed that he felt an alignment between his own sense of self and the ways in which he viewed the French language, Luke felt that language entailed identity work for all individuals.

There's a unique culture when you're learning a language. And I mean it can be, like, a very disciplined, like, here are the words you have to know them and like, oral assessment. Or it can be, like, a fun inclusive thing. Like, oh that's a ridiculous thing about that culture. Now I'm going to try and adopt it. Um, and like, the sketches we had in class, like, the skits, um, those were just really fun. And I feel like once I feel myself speaking the language, even if it was like, diligently pre-rehearsed and worked out, it's just a really good sense of accomplishment and identity with the culture (Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs).

Luke's narrative focused primarily on language practice in the classroom and on cultural acquisition in their relationship to trying new articulations of his identity.

In his interview, Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) also suggested that language acquisition re-shapes one's sense of self in important ways via cultural exposure and interacting with a greater number of individuals.

I definitely do in the idea that in speaking a language and by knowing someone else's culture, I'm sure it kind of changes your perception...in so far that it probably will change my views on different subjects and topics. So I think that's kind of interesting. Because, you know, I believe that every individual is kind of a reflection of society, right? So if you incorporate that new part of like, this whole different society into like who you are, then I'm sure my perceptions will change. But, like, I don't think, like, I'm going to go outright and I'm not going yell, like, "I'm French!" or like, "I speak French!", you know, as like, I don't know. But it's definitely, you know, I think it definitely will like, change who I am. Hopefully for the better. Because, like, plus it lets you interact with more individuals and it lets you get more perspectives, you know, in life (Alan).

For Sue (Female, French), John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs), Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) and Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs), the process of learning and using a new language holds the potential for allowing an individual to re-construct their senses of self. For Sue and Luke, this possibility appears more specific to language learning, with Sue focusing on language use outside of a classroom context and Luke focusing primarily on his classroom experiences. For John, this opportunity for re-invention appears possible with an engagement in anything new to the individual.

Feeling more X: Not necessarily being another self, but bringing into focus a different texture of one's identity. A variant of Sue's (Female, French) narrative of being able to be someone else was evoked by seven participants. Speaking in a different language was described as having not only the potential to make someone feel like a different version of themselves, but more subtly as having the potential to bring into focus different aspects of an individual's identity. This increased sense of elegance and refinement, for example, appears to be language and context dependent; The feelings individuals reported varied with the different language varieties they spoke. Moreover, the degree to which this occurred varied with individuals. While one individual (Sue)

reported feeling like a markedly different version of herself when she spoke in one of her nonnative languages, another participant (Joe: Male, French) remarked that he didn't feel like he had a different personality but that he did feel in some way different, a feeling upon which he was unable to elaborate when asked.

I guess I sort of see myself as I guess not a different personality uh maybe but at the point that I start speaking and I'm not translating from English to French but I'm just speaking French thoughts it makes me feel like I feel a little different I guess I think it's interesting (Joe).

Although Joe was unable to articulate in what ways and under what circumstances he felt different when speaking another language, other participants were able to make a connection between emotions they felt and their relationship to their senses of self in different languages. Specifically, the anxiety regarding correctness of form in the language class was reported to inhibit this type of identity work.

There's just something about it [singing in French or another second language] that is so thrilling. I don't know. I feel more elegant and refined and proper and more like an opera singer [...] but when I'm speaking in class I feel like an idiot. I don't like speaking in class. I feel very insecure, that's probably the best word to say [...] Italian I probably feel the most comfortable with because that's what a lot of art songs are in they're in Italian um if I'm singing in German I feel a little bit rougher around the edges kind of like you know the stereotypical big fat opera woman who has these horns on her head coming at it really aggressively and when it's French I feel more dainty I guess even if it's a really powerful song or a really loud song there's something about the words and how you say them when you're singing I don't know you feel I feel like softer like I'm floating on a cloud I know that's kind of ridiculous but there's something about it (Kelly: Female, French).

Related to the anxiety expressed about correctness of form in a language classroom setting, for some, identity effects also appear to be proficiency-dependent regardless of the context of language use. However, for others no such proficiency conditions exist. Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) noted, for example: "My only other language is French which is definitely not native fluency but I

feel more connected to the global world I guess I think refinement was a great word for that but I'm not fluent enough to almost have personalities based on that," (Luke).

Questions surrounding context were also evoked by Ryan (Male, No French), who discussed how each language one speaks represents a context to which one belongs, and that in each linguistic context one brings into focus different aspects of oneself: "you kind of portray yourself differently in every context it's not that you're being fake in any situation but it's just like you're kind of your brain just learns how to work differently in these different contexts [...] I definitely put on a different persona my brain kind of [makes robotic shifting noises] yeah it kind of does that," (Ryan). He continued to elaborate upon the ways using each of the languages he speaks influenced his identity expression, stating that he felt more logical and academic in English, but more chatty and emotional in Korean. Stephan (Male, No French), who is friends with Ryan, confirmed that he does appear differently when he speaks English and when he speaks Korean, noting that "when I hear him speak in English he's actually really careful about what he says you know he tries to make it so he doesn't sound dumb in any way so when he speaks English it's more slow than when he speaks Korean." The other participants in this focus group agreed with the statement that speaking different languages gives a different texture to one's identity. Sally (Female, No French) stated that she felt that "people are different when they speak different languages," a statement with which Jen quickly agreed.

Ryan (Male, No French) continued to highlight the way his gender identity shifts as he speaks different languages, explicitly stating that he felt more masculine when he spoke English and more feminine when he spoke Korean: "I think my English self is

more male like as I said like more logical is more of a peg and I think my Korean self is more emotional and more feminine. English is more active and my Korean self is more passive. I would say,” (Ryan).

Although participants readily drew connections between language and identity, several highlighted different ways that language was limited in the aspects of identity it influences or the degree to which one’s identity is influenced by language (Bara: Female, French, Tammy: Female, No French). Bara noted: “I think it’s just like, in my opinion it’s just like where you come from kinda thing cause like I act and like I identify myself as an actor and I feel like if I lived in Spain and spoke Spanish I would still identify myself as an actor kinda thing so,” (Bara).

In conclusion, the language in which one expresses oneself does appear to have some identity effects, though the range and degree of such effects appears to vary from person to person. This variance was related to proficiency for Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs).

The role of proficiency. Returning to the question of proficiency evoked by Luke, discussions of identity and the French language were frequently underpinned by questions of proficiency. A certain degree of proficiency in the target language seems to be a pre-requisite, for many participants, for adopting a French-language identity. Proficiency was tied both to feelings of insecurity and to feelings of pride.

Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) elaborated upon the way he views the relationship between proficiency in a language and a second language identity in his interview.

It definitely depends on proficiency. I feel a much better connection with the French culture than Arabic, at this point. I can say ‘hello’ several ways in Arabic.

I can say a lot more in French. So, until I can really communicate, um, which not be entirely the case with French, working on it, um, until I can really communicate in a language it's not really a part of my cultural identity (Luke).

Luke expressed feeling a greater sense of connection between his sense of self and the French language due to his greater proficiency in the language, as opposed to Arabic with which he felt little connection due to a highly limited level of proficiency. For Luke, one must be able to express oneself to a certain degree in a target language before that language is able to become part of one's own cultural identity.

Carey (Female, French) talked about how she felt "insecure about" French and hence that "for French I sometimes feel like I'm masquerading around when I try and speak it." A sentiment with which Kelly (Female, French) concurred saying "You're not the only one!" To a certain degree, Carey was able to forgive her lack of proficiency and insecurity in French in a way that she was unable to do with Lao, her parent's native language, because of the different nature of her connection with French. Carey identified Lao as being her language, whereas French was a language that she had learned but of which she did not claim this type of possession. In her discourse there was also an element of the possibility of improvement in the future surrounding French that was not present, for her, to the same degree with Lao.

French is definitely the one I'm least proficient at obviously and I'm concerned about that because I should probably become a bit more fluent in it eventually but I feel like with all my languages the one I would be most insecure about would be my own native language which is Laos because of my own limited vocabulary though cause that is the most restricting thing cause there are many things that I would like to um convey to my parents that I can't simply because they never taught me those words growing up so it has really limited my communication with them and when I talk to Lao people it's difficult to sound very smart when I know very basic grammar and very basic vocabulary whereas with French even though I'm not very proficient with it I'm okay with that because I'm going to eventually learn it and I have all these resources in front of me to get better at it and people who are also learning it too so I would be okay with messing up there I think the

Lao one is more difficult mainly because it has a more personal tie to me than French does, French I'm not that attached to that one so that's probably the biggest thing when it comes to language learning (Carey: Female, French).

Kelly (Female, French) also discussed her aspirations for greater mastery of the French language in the future, but unlike Carey, she noted that her goals for mastering the language came from the fact that she has French-Canadian family. So while close ties to a language for one participant (Carey) made her uncomfortable with making mistakes in the language (Lao) the inverse was true for another participant (Kelly) who was confident in the fact that she would become more proficient in the language in the future because of the motivation associated with having close ties to the language (French). The potential for increased proficiency in the future was a clear motivator for both Carey and Kelly, despite feeling limited in identity work by their current level of proficiency.

Kurt's (Male, French) articulation of the dependent relationship between proficiency and identity was the strongest of all participants. He expressed a need to be highly proficient before questions of their own identity could be pertinent in any way (Kurt), while others were able to discuss identity in at least limited ways by focusing on the positive reactions of native speakers of the target language regardless of one's level of proficiency (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

I think it was I think a lot of people are very receptive if you're trying to learn their language like cause it's kind of like oh look at least you're trying you know what I'm saying? [...] If I at least try and if I'm really not making any sense and I switch to English and the other person knows English they're like a lot more receptive to you and like changing to English rather than like if I were to just walk up to them and immediately try to speak in a different language and assume that they know it cause it's kind of like the one I think you're kind of like at least trying to be accepting of their cultures and like at least you know like who they are versus being ignorant and just thinking that your culture is somehow dominant over others and of course you should know English like come on who doesn't know English these days so I think it's one of at least if you're trying people are

willing to hear you out even if like you said I'm totally destroying the language (Alan).

Alan's (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) discussion of the importance of trying to use a language, regardless of the level of proficiency, evokes not only the hearer's identity ("I think you're kind of like at least trying to be accepting of their cultures and like at least you know like who they are versus being ignorant") but also the speaker's identity in terms of being someone who is open to and accepting of other cultures and who does not assume that their native language is dominant.

Participants also identified a connection between a lack of proficiency in a language and a status of outsider in that linguistic community.

There could also be an aspect of like if you don't speak a language particularly well and you're in an area where that language is spoken you may feel like you're a bit of an outsider and not necessarily be able to fully I guess be integrated into that society (Don: Male, French).

Relatedly, questions as to whether one has to live in the target culture and language in order for questions of identity to be pertinent were raised by Ryan (Male, No French), who thought that "you have to live in it to develop an identity [...] not to say it's better to have it," (Ryan). Ryan continued to re-iterate his view of languages as contexts for identity stating that "all of these things are different contexts that once you learn once your brain learns how to situate yourself in it you know you learn a different identity but there still has to be that you-ness in everything," (Ryan).

While proficiency was identified as a motivating factor, concern with a lack of proficiency was also identified as a major impediment to language acquisition.

I think the biggest barrier for me in another language has been feeling self-conscious about using another language incorrectly because like you know I had so many opportunities growing up from travel and from where I lived and you know I should have used my Spanish more but I felt so self-conscious about it

about saying something incorrectly or just being laughed at that I didn't use it as much as I should have so I definitely it's, it's a lot easier to speak a language in a classroom where everyone is learning than to speak to a native speaker and worry about saying something wrong which is a silly concern but that's probably been the biggest barrier in my foreign language learning (Tammy: Female, No French).

This concern with face was a recurrent theme, with multiple participants evoking questions thereof three or more times over the course of the focus group discussion (Tammy, Gabrielle: Female, French, Bara: Female, French).

I think this idea of public perception also affects how you communicate because like you don't want anyone to like second guess you or you don't want to be humiliated [...] it's just uncomfortable and awkward [...] when you're the one struggling it makes you hesitant and like afraid (Gabrielle).

Proficiency and face were deeply intertwined, with participants drawing a connection between a lack of proficiency and a sense of lacking control over one's identity and a fear of not knowing exactly what identity one is portraying (Josh: Male, No French, Gabrielle, Tammy).

I feel restricted because I don't have because I can't say everything I want to say because I don't know all the words and I don't know how to string them together in a way that makes sense so I feel like limited in how I'm able to communicate and how I portray myself [...] it's just interesting to think like what defines you you're taught to know like this basic knowledge like your birthdate and your city and your favorite color but there are so many other components to your personality that you don't really have the opportunity to learn [...] there are like other components of your personality and like your daily life that you just don't communicate because either one don't know how to say it or you're kind of afraid to say it and therefore you're kind of like shut off completely (Gabrielle). I'm always worried about what I'm actually communicating as opposed to what I think I'm communicating when I use another language [...] In English I know like there are different ways that you can sort of express yourself that you know are just you but then in another language it's like you're just I mean [...] really limited (Josh).

In addition to narratives of insecurity, discussions of the potential reactions of native speakers of the target language also included evocations of feelings of pride, both

explicitly and implicitly. When asked how he felt speaking French, Alan offered the most explicit pride narrative:

when speaking French one thing I feel is definitely like prideful like yeah I'm doing it way to go like it's great and it's all going well uh and then at the same time though I'm like woah oh my goodness Alan you're like totally butchering this right now like you know you're kind of totally just like if a native speaker heard you this would be like woah this is very basic like maybe middle school if probably less actually but you know (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Though Alan was the only participant in his focus group to explicitly discuss his pride in learning the language, much of the non-verbal behavior of the other participants (Kurt: Male, French and Maria: Female, French) along with more implicit verbal behavior suggested that others also felt pride when they were able to use the language. Maria talked about feeling cool when she was able to converse with native speakers in the French language and Kurt talked about feeling good and really enjoying when he was able to figure out how to say something in French. These statements combined with smiling and sitting up straight when they talked about this lead me to read these moments as more implicit expressions of pride.

John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) offered a narrative that combined a sense of anxiety about his limited level of proficiency with strategies for depicting coolness. John's narrative ran contrary to a discourse of proficiency inhibiting identity work that was evoked by four of the six participants in the first focus group. He cited a conscious manipulation of his perceived proficiency in the target language as an identity.

I just feel really dumb when I speak French but that's kind of like the identity I've taken like ever since high school like the franglais like the stupid French I've always just like I always thought it was so hilarious that I just kind of stuck with it

so like even if I wanted to speak French it would probably come out like *Je sais* know what you're talking about (John).

Despite the fact that John does quite well in his French classes and can easily hold a casual conversation in French with minimal errors, he chooses to perform a lower level of proficiency. The identity work that John is doing with an intentionally Americanized accent and the use of English and French words together aligns with an existing body of literature that has suggested that masculinity and effortlessness are often correlated, which will be further discussed in chapter five.

His and other narratives differed from the narratives offered by Kelly (Female, French) and Carey (Female, French) by simultaneously acknowledging a low-level of proficiency and identities in the language. Providing another narrative of this type, Sue (Female, French) noted that French was able to enhance her feelings of beauty irrespective of her level of proficiency.

Even though I barely speak any French and of course it all sounds terrible coming out of me I don't know it *feels* [emphasis] pretty I don't know Italian feels all colorful and like you're all busy and what not but French I don't know I feel more beautiful I guess when I speak it like *I speak French* [the women in the room laugh] kind of going along with like elegant feeling it doesn't matter how poorly it's coming out the language itself I don't... [it] feels pretty (Sue).

A lack of proficiency appeared, however, to affect the range of identities that seemed possible for participants to have in a particular language. Those who felt they were less proficient in the language noted that their second language identities were inflected with an apologetic and tentative self.

Specifically, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) noted that

as like an identity I would say definitely in French way more apologetic just cause of like the words that I'm saying cause it's always like *qu'est-ce que c'est* or *je suis désolé merci* like those are the only words I ever say that's just kinda like

because I actually don't know like *je ne comprends pas* that is probably like my most said phrase in like my entire French career (John).

Kelly (Female, French) echoed John's comments about having an apologetic identity, while Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) casted such apologies in a slightly different light. Luke expressed that he felt that he was more tentative when speaking French than he was in his native language, English and attributed being "less bold" to having a limited vocabulary and to a general lack of confidence when speaking the language. Kelly similarly talked about feeling awkward and like "a bumbling five year old." And all of these three participants evoked a sense of frustration and insecurity. There were moments where a lack of proficiency was tied up in sexuality. John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) noted that "eavesdropping on beautiful girls speaking French like they could be talking about the most gruesome stuff and I would have no idea," (John).

Participants also made a connection between proficiency and potential ownership of a language variety, explaining that if you could not make all of the sounds in a language that it would be difficult to make that language variety your own. They seem to perceive different degrees of accessibility for different language varieties.

I would agree. Our, our Fulbright scholar TA in the German house just at our last *stammtisch* was showing us words that are really hard to say and there was one I couldn't say I can't tell you what it is because I could not physically make those sounds I don't know where they come from apparently it's something you grow up cause you know if you grow up learning a sound it becomes part of what your vocal chords can do but I physically can't make that sound so to me that separates languages a bit in terms of how it'll feel to you learning it even because in French I have yet to run across a sound that I really can't do, sometimes in Spanish sometimes I'm not as good at rolling the r's and it makes Spanish sound different coming from me than coming from a native and German has a lot of those too and I think it creates a bit of a barrier where it's like *that* language whereas French and Italian so far they can be a bit more yours cause you can make all those sounds (Sue: Female, French).

In addition to highlighting the pride they felt in their successes and the anxiety they felt due to their challenges, participants discussed how their degree of proficiency related to the stereotypes they held of target language speakers and cultures, with stereotypes decreasing as proficiency increased.

Maybe I'm at like a certain stage where I haven't really accepted the culture so much, I mean like the culture it sounds like a lot of the aspects of living in a French culture are really healthy like cooking and not eating fast food all the time and so it all sounds good but I do think there's a big difference there and I also said this earlier but I think Alan actually raised it a lot better um I'm like the only one in my family who really learned to speak French so I think some of the stereotypes are stuck with me whereas my brother and sister and mom want to learn and have learned some Spanish so I think by learning that and gaining a deeper understanding I think it really gets rid of a lot of those stereotypes um because you know you get to learn more and it's not just some foreign thing (Kurt: Male, French).

Here, Kurt highlights both the importance of proficiency for removing one's distance from the target culture and dispelling stereotypes. He also alludes to the importance of having a community of learners when he discusses the importance of his siblings and his mother learning Spanish.

In conclusion, the degree to which participants oriented themselves towards questions of identity was deeply rooted in proficiency. For John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs), limiting his perceived proficiency was an important component of his second language identity, whereas for Kurt (male, French), identity remained irrelevant until he became more proficient in the language. Despite the range of articulated relationships between proficiency and identity, all participants spoke of proficiency with terms conveying emotion, from anxiety and shame to pride. Proficiency appeared to be a significant motivating factor for all participants.

Remaining an ‘other’: Limiting cultural acquisition. Considerations of proficiency extended beyond linguistic proficiency to also include questions of culture. Participants discussed their lack of acculturation and qualified such statements explaining that a high linguistic proficiency is a pre-requisite to acquiring a high level of cultural proficiency. These discussions continued to address the difference between cultural literacy and adopting aspects of the target culture.

I have to say learning French it’s always interesting to learn the cultures but I don’t know that I’ve necessarily somehow just exhorbed [sic] the culture. I mean when you go into the class they obviously teach you the culture and it helps in the learning but I spent, especially since I’m very limited in the amount of French culture I can have it’s not a lot it’s a lot easier to learn the language than to um to like exhorb [sic] their culture (Kurt: Male, French).

In stark contrast with a narrative of limiting cultural acquisition, was a narrative in which cultural knowledge was foregrounded. Although there were no instances of female-identified participants drawing a distinction between linguistic and cultural learning, several male participants expressed that they did not enjoy language learning but did enjoy learning about other cultures (Stephan: Male, No French, Taylor: Male, French). Some participants even noted that learning about other cultures is the reason why language learning has any importance (Stephan). An important distinction was drawn, however, between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation: “I guess they are open but not to the extent of like oh like I appreciate your culture but does it fit me? No, like living in the culture is a different story,” (Stephan).

In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) suggested that limiting cultural acquisition was somewhat impossible if one is enrolled in a language course.

I feel like just because you don't know a language very well doesn't mean that you didn't take the time to learn it. So like, even when you, even in language classes when you like, even if you might not be the best speaker or writer, um, you, you're forced, I mean just by being in a language class you're kind of forced to learn about other cultures who also speak a language. So, you kind of become more aware, like, whether it's writing assignments about topics of like, different French speaking countries or, like, some French classes you have to do, like, PowerPoints, stuff like that. Like, just like from the sheer course load you learn more and I guess that it, you may not realize that it defines you but it definitely makes an impact on who you are, um, whether large or small. It still makes an impact (Devon).

Devon highlighted the fact that a certain degree of cultural acquisition will take place by virtue of being present in a language class. He further suggested that linguistic and cultural acquisition, however minimal and however subtly, always influences an individual's identity in some way. Similarly, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs), who also felt his sense of self aligned with the French language, discussed the ways in which he felt a misalignment could be addressed. He noted that such identity-language tensions would be highly problematic: "I imagine that would be a pretty big divide. And you can't really feel at home or comfortable with that language if you feel that division," (Luke). He continued to suggest that alignment may be found after an immersion experience.

I guess immersion is the key. And if you really, if you want to align your identities you just go for it. You just go into the culture, go into the French experience and you try to tie it together. [...] I think tied with the language are a lot of cultural norms and, um, if you, like, if you spend some time living there, if you spend some time adopting French customs, then I imagine that would go a long way to uniting the identities (Luke).

His suggestion ran contrary to the strategy articulated by others of limiting cultural acquisition in order to limit the degree to which learning a particular language variety relates to one's identity, advocating for adopting certain practices present in the target culture.

Maturity and language exposure. Participants also evoked the idea that gendered language attitudes are less strong amongst more mature individuals and among individuals who had exposure to the language in question. Kurt (Male, French) particularly spoke to the potential of language exposure to allow for a reconsideration of one's own identity and the identity projected on the target language culture.

If you were to go to like an elementary school and you were to say start speaking French I think some of the kids might more make fun of you for femininity because of the language so what I'm trying to say is that I think that a certain amount of this requires a certain learning of the languages like I don't think learning French makes me especially masculine or feminine um and I think that comes with learning the culture and other things and you know I do think that like learning languages would contribute to my identity but like I said I think like learning a lot more in depth than just like the knowledge that an elementary school um student would have about language I think maybe it's able to shape my identity differently cause that could change my identity like the outlook on the person and how they shape the identity (Kurt).

Other participants continued to address questions of maturity, highlighting the fact that the gendering of languages occurs in a much more nuanced way among adults than among children.

You're making the argument very basic in that is it masculine is it feminine and if you're giving it to like a small child that doesn't have the cognitive capacity then you're making that distinction like masculine versus feminine but I think once you reach a more age of like you're learning more of these more complex social structures and more complex issues all of a sudden like saying is it masculine or is it feminine is kind of you're just making a very simplistic model of the society itself and yeah that's why I was saying I think for kids you might hear them say like oh you're speaking French you're more feminine it's like another language but I think once we get kind of to like our age you get to like you know it's more individual and definitely like how one represents their sexuality is like completely a complex situation you know it doesn't really alter like who they're like oh they're French therefore they're more feminine there are probably some very masculine French guys and some very feminine like other language and cultures so I think it's interesting how like at a basic level you might be able to but then it's a complex situation it becomes convoluted and I think we understand that as we grow older (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Don (Male, French) also highlighted the way he viewed holding gendered language attitudes as immature: “I think people see them as masculine or feminine but I think it’s just as juvenile to do that as to say red is a boy’s color and pink is a girl’s color or something like that,” (Don). In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) evoked a similar stance:

I feel like it’s very, like, juvenile to think about languages, like, um, ‘He speaks French. He has to be a soft, a softer guy or a more feminine guy.’ Just adding, like, adding those stigmas to a language or to somebody who speaks that language, I think that’s a juvenile thing to do. So yeah, I think being more mature does, uh, does definitely make you stop associating genders with language (Devon).

Maturity appeared not only to be related to a reduction in language attitudes, but also to an increase in interest. Josh reported learning a language due to requirements until he became older, at which point he expressed enjoying language learning.

My first exposure to any foreign language was in like elementary school we had to take like French and Spanish once a week and I thought it was really boring I didn’t like it and then in sixth grade they offered Chinese so I started taking that and I took it all throughout middle and high school and I’m continuing it now but I didn’t start finding it interesting until I got a little bit older (Josh: Male, No French).

This disinterest in language learning until becoming older was echoed by several participants (Bara: Female, French). Participants also reflected on wishing that they had learned languages at a younger age, connecting successful language acquisition and beginning at an earlier age (Taylor: Male, French).

I’m only fluent in English and I wish I had started learning other languages earlier on because I feel like learning them so late in life I’m kind of like struggling to it’s not really a second nature I’m not thinking in the language I’m kind of translating it and I just wish that in elementary school middle school that I had had language classes (Taylor).

Such accounts lend support to initiatives for beginning required language learning at an earlier age.

Participants expressed that maturing had allowed them to have a deeper understanding of their own identity, which in turn allowed them to accept their L2 selves and understand critiques thereof as immature and unwarranted (Ryan: Male No French, Stephan: Male No French).

Obviously we were a lot immature back then and I think the change is difficult for them [people who speak different languages] because they don't really have a sense of self yet and because it's this sense of self that is being portrayed in different ways in different languages and they don't quite get this center thing that is being expressed so when they suddenly have to change it's like a complete change and it's just so difficult and embarrassing for them to do that but you have to mature more and to learn more about yourself and when that happens this change you know it's just I'm just wearing different clothes I'm still me and once you learn that it's more comfortable it's more natural and if your friends make fun of you they're the immature ones I can see how growing up cause I'm trying to learn there's a lot of there's actually a good amount of conflict (Ryan).

This narrative was expanded upon, suggesting that not only does one become more immune to negative commentary with maturity, but that this commentary from others becomes less frequent with maturation.

You know like kids are mean! [laughs] Honestly like like they judge you so hard because they don't know any better but I think like once they like once they mature and like get more open to more cultures I think it's more easy for people like us to like be like oh we're not ashamed [...] I think today I think we're doing a lot better in just opening up especially in schools that's why I think like um I think it's good to like have in schools like teach a different language so they're like more open to different cultures you know (Stephan).

Running counter to this narrative, was Sally's (Female, No French) expression of the idea that a person choosing to learn a language that is perceived as gender inappropriate at a young age was less significant than choosing to learn such a language as an adult, with the latter being perceived more negatively.

I feel like it depends on the context like I'm thinking of a kid who decides like a guy who decides to learn French in like primary school or lower grades I feel like that's one thing but like once a guy you know who is like in college or graduated

college even decides to learn like a more feminine language it says something else (Sally: Female, No French).

A second counter-narrative was provided by Luke (male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) during his interview.

To me, a lot of it [viewing a language as masculine or feminine] is just an inherent subconscious feeling and I don't see it as something, like, I can rationally mature away from. Like, oh now I understand there are French men, too. I mean it's just a natural association I make so I don't think it's tied to maturity (Luke).

Luke felt that the gendering of languages occurred on a subconscious level and was outside of the realm of rational thought. Based on this subconscious and non-rational characterization of gendered language attitudes, Luke felt that maturity would not necessarily result in a reduction of such attitudes. Although he maintained his stance on gendered language attitudes existing outside of the realm of rational thinking, Luke continued to expand his discussion of maturity and gendered language attitudes to address questions of intercultural competence.

I guess I would qualify maturity with cultural understanding. Um, so, it's part of understanding the culture to recognize both parts, like masculine and feminine and you don't come in full of ignorant stereotypes and throw them around. But, when something's like, something's a feeling and it's not, like, a rational argument, um, I feel like I can't just reason away the feeling (Luke).

Luke noted that understanding target cultures in deeper ways could allow for a reduction of gendered language attitudes that he felt maturity alone could not provide. He felt that this deepened sense of cultural understanding along with personal experiences with members of the target culture were the two most likely means by which one could reduce gendered language attitudes.

My participants also recognized that their opinions are directly informed by their own position and experiences. They recognize that their gendering of languages occurs

from their position as an outsider to the linguistic community and are characterized by their temporal and cultural situation.

I'm looking at these languages and seeing how I view them as a person from the outside who doesn't really know the languages but even a person who does know the languages like I have a hard time like even understanding whether it's feminine or masculine. I think we might at different times and in different contexts like see it as different things (Maria: Female, French).

In addition to situating their gendered languages as personally held, my participants brought into question the assumptions of masculine superiority that had been coloring the conversation up until this point.

It's not necessarily that masculine is better than feminine too like it may be for a long time that was thought of but like that's definitely changing rapidly in like today's society so it's not necessarily that like masculinity is always better right? If anything sometimes we see it as detrimental as like as too abrasive and it's not as it's more rash and to be more intellectual and to be more like cognitive is actually to be more like of a feminine quality right is to not like don't like make conflict instantaneously it's more like think about it like cooperate with the other party than to just like make an aggressive standpoint so I think even making that distinction between good and bad is not necessarily like the case if you're saying something is feminine or masculine anymore (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Implied in this discourse are circumstances under which cultivating feminine attributes may be positive and allows for arguments of enhancing cooperation and cognitive abilities for engagement in language study.

In addition to greater exposure to a particular language variety, exposure to a greater number of languages was also identified as negatively correlating with strong gendered language attitudes. In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) expressed the idea that as one learns more language varieties, overarching stereotypes tend to fall apart. In his words:

If you're used, like when you see that a lot of languages are very similar to French, so it's like, it's not only French. Like if you're saying that French people

are soft because their language is for so and so reason, then you would have to say that Spanish people are soft for the same reason, people who speak Italian are soft, so you can't just say that all these people are soft. Because it's not, I mean it's definitely not true...and so, just knowing more languages definitely helps reduce the stigma, the stigmas associated to each one (Devon).

In this portion of our discussion, Devon explained that the more and more languages one tries to stereotype in a single way, the less and less these stereotypes appear logical to the individual. As one is exposed to a larger number of languages, one realizes that there is a great degree of similarity between certain language varieties and a great deal of linguistic and cultural diversity overall and, thus, one can begin to better appreciate languages and cultures on their own terms and in more nuanced ways rather than making large generalizations about other languages and cultures.

In conclusion, participants linked both maturity and language exposure to reduced gendered language attitudes. Language exposure was cited to provide opportunities for not only a reconsideration of perceptions of a target language but also of one's own identity. Maturity was evoked as having the potential for creating an understanding that gendered stereotypes were reductionist and the expression thereof inappropriate, for allowing individuals to have more security in their own identity, and for providing increased motivation to learn a second language. Sally (Female, No French) provided a counter-narrative in which she suggested that choosing to learn a second language at an older age was more significant in its reflection of one's identity. Despite their arguments that maturation lead to the reduction of gendered language attitudes, my young adult participants readily expressed their own gendered language attitudes. Thus, it is perhaps the constraints on such expression that are most closely related to maturity rather than the reduction of the attitudes themselves. Participants situated gendered language attitudes as

personally held, informed by experience, and as related to their own sociocultural positions.

Embarrassment and hiding an L2 self. Five participants expressed varying degrees of embarrassment regarding their second language selves, often expressed through terms of anxiety and insecurity about their language proficiency. One participant, however, told stories of wanting to hide their L2 self unrelated to questions of proficiency, particularly when he was younger.

It was really awkward cause that's why I actually never had play dates when I was young [laughs] cause I felt really awkward bringing [...] friends over because everything smelled like Korean food cause I felt like everything in my house stinks and like taking off shoes in the house and a lot of those cultural aspects but I think like you know growing up like I kind of go past that and like it was weird for me because I think I was more ashamed [...] it was like a whole identity issue rather than language and um I think identity actually has a huge aspect in the way you speak (Stephan: Male, No French).

For Stephan, the fact that his family spoke Korean and that he was a heritage speaker of the language was a point of embarrassment. He highlighted negative feelings surrounding his sense of being different from his monolingual peers, but noted that these feelings were strongest when he was young. Related to narratives of maturity, he expressed that adulthood has provided him with increased privacy about his multilingual self, a greater number of multilingual friends, and more confidence in who he is as a speaker of multiple languages.

To summarize the data for research question three, which addressed the ways in which individuals negotiate the relationship between their own identity and their and others' perceptions of a language variety: Through this idea of accepting oneself and feeling comfortable in oneself to violate norms, as well as through the alternative appealing to a global identity, my participants were able to rewrite their understandings

of their own masculinities and work beyond a monolithic heteronormative conception of American masculinity. However, it was more common for my students to work within a heteronormative monolithic understanding of masculinity and hold such an identity in tandem with pieces of their identities that did not fit such a model through instrumental reasoning or evoking heterosexuality and its connection to non-heteronormative behaviors. These moves, along with the lack of choice narrative, placed identity outside of the question of why they engaged in French language study. Participants also addressed identity conflicts through a limitation of their linguistic or cultural engagement and acquisition, in either real or perceived ways. Otherwise stated, my participants chiefly addressed the complications that arise within a heterosexual categorization by localizing non-conforming behaviors outside of their identities. Such conflicts were reported to be perceived as being reduced by language exposure and maturity.

This qualitative finding serves to confirm the quantitative finding that having French language learning experience was related to gendered language attitudes. In the quantitative data, *t* test revealed significant mean differences in gendered language attitudes between individuals who have taken French ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .86$) and individuals who have never taken French ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .82$), $t(292) = 2.48$, $p = .01$. Additionally, during the quantitative phase of this study, the majority of individuals indicated that they hold gendered language attitudes writ large. Most participants indicated that they believe that feminine and masculine languages exist. In the quantitative data, if an individual held language-non-specific gendered language attitudes, they were highly likely to perceive the French language as feminine. The qualitative component of this study also served to confirm this data, with all individuals

expressing some degree of gendered language attitudes. Further, all individuals except for Don (Male, French) identified the French language as feminine.

Research Question 4: Relationships between identities, GLAs, Belongingness and Motivation to learn French

Research question four asked: What relationships exist among an individual's identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn a language (French)? In this section, gendered language attitudes and their hypothesized sources (phonetics and phonology, personal experience and cultural associations, grammatical gender, and body language) are first presented. Other contributors to the identity and language learning nexus are then presented including a broad discussion of sexuality and emotions. Sense of belongingness are then addressed through a consideration of whether participants perceive men as learning French, how participants perceive the sexuality of men who learn French, questions of the perceptions of native speakers and of others in the participants lives, and the importance of knowing others who speak the target language. Additional contributors to motivation, such as the role of language requirements, self-efficacy as a "good" language learner, and a desire to interact with others in the target language, are then considered.

Gendered language attitudes: Phonetics and phonology. Gendered language attitudes have several hypothesized sources including phonetic and phonological differences as well as cultural associations, personal experience, grammatical gender, and body language. In this section, I will present evocations of the idea that the phonetic and phonological differences between languages result in certain languages being perceived as more masculine or feminine than other languages, which appeared to be the first and

most frequently cited source of gendered language attitudes across focus groups.

Phonetics and phonology seemed to play an integral role in the formation of gendered language attitudes, at least to the degree that participants are able to articulate the ways in which their gendered language attitudes are formed. Questions of phonetics and phonology as they relate to language attitudes were part of all focus group discussions. Consider for example, the tendency for a hard onset and closed syllables in German, which is often perceived as masculine, versus the tendency for romance languages such as French to have open syllables, which are often perceived as feminine (Fónagy, 1979). Glottal sounds, a tendency towards frequent or larger consonant clusters, and what participants described more generally as “harsh sounding” languages were considered by participants to be more masculine. Languages that were frequently cited as masculine were Arabic, Chinese German, Russian, Romanian, and other Slavic languages. Conversely, femininity was attributed to “soft sounding” and “smooth” or “rolling” languages. The languages that were most frequently labeled as feminine were French, and slightly less frequently Italian. The gendering of Spanish was highly debated.

Narratives contrasting feminine-sounding and masculine-sounding languages were abundant across focus groups. In the words of one of my participants: “Yeah French is very smooth on the palate and smooth when you hear it where German is very harsh I think of German, and I think French is very feminine and German is more [makes glottal noises, gargling, hacking] and like...” (Leo: Male, No French). Another participant remarked on phonology and gendered language attitudes saying: “soft sounds I consider feminine and hard sounds [masculine] actually this is why French has become more and more masculine since I’ve been here [in Paris] cause it’s way [tries to make French

glottal r but sounds more like gargling]” (Aaron: Male, French). This narrative of glottal sounds being masculine was echoed by another participant, who suggested that German was beautiful in its own right, but that it remained a harsh-sounding language and thus masculine:

which is a lot of the reason I think people think that German is such a harsh ugly language a lot of the sounds like [makes glottal fricative] you don’t get in French and it makes it a much smoother like if you had to paint a language I think I would paint it a lot more curvy waves rather than harsher German, but I think German is beautiful and I’m not saying it’s you know ugly harsh, just it is harsh (Sue: Female, French).

An additional participant echoed this assertion, and offered a visual parallel of the perceived harshness or smoothness of a language:

As an art history person [laughs] when I think of German and I think of Russian and I think of any harsher language I think of blocks on a page when I think of Italian when I think of Gaelic when I think of French when I think of Spanish I think of circles and of curvy lines which is getting back to what you said you know it rolls off your tongue a little bit easier than German or Russian or Romanian or you know whatever um comes out of your mouth that’s just visually as an art history person that’s how I see the languages like on the page (Kelly: Female, French).

Although for all other participants German was the most masculine language they could think of, Maria (Female, French) noted that Arabic was the most masculine language she could think of “cause I remember hearing these guys speaking [at school] in Arabic and it was so guttural and so deep in their throats and it sounded like coughing and throwing up a little bit and I didn’t like it so I thought it was more masculine.” While the language cited was different, her reasoning for its high degree of masculinity was the same as that used to define German as highly masculine. In addition to German and Arabic, Stephan (Male, No French), Don (Male, French), and Ryan (Male, No French)

identified Chinese as an aggressive and in turn masculine language based on the way they perceived the sounds of the language.

When I hear Chinese I feel like they're yelling at each other I'm like stop yelling at each other! Yo like oh my goodness it sounds so bad cause like I have a lot of Chinese friends too and I went to one of my friend's houses and he was saying something to his grandmother in Chinese and I was like are you yelling at her? And he was like no that's just how we talk and I was like oh okay my B [= my bad] I was like [laughs] but yeah it's it's interesting (Stephan).

This narrative outlining the masculinity of Chinese appeared to be less related to guttural sounds being present in the language than with the narratives surrounding the masculinity of German and Arabic. In similar contrastive narratives, Russian was also identified as a masculine language based on the way it sounded (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs, Taylor: Male, French) in addition to German "and like those kinds of languages more rough languages I guess," (Devon) whereas romance languages were considered largely feminine. Spanish was up for debate with some individuals not considering it gendered (Tammy: Female, No French) and others perceiving it as feminine (Devon), however French was consistently gendered as feminine without exception.

Spanish and French are kind of considered like the two romance languages um and things like that and I mean to like a Spanish and French speaker they don't really sound any different but I guess to somebody whose jumping I guess just like the flow like the fluidity of the languages like rolling letters makes some people consider the language like I guess more softer or more like more feminine and well like the Russian is like harder with a lot of consonants back to back and there are like not many vowels so it sounds like rough it sounds like very rough but um like you said it's definitely in the eyes of the person judging whether or not a language is considered masculine or feminine um there's not really a sex associated with the language er gender (Devon).

Devon's narrative differed from some of the other participants in that he explicitly addressed the role of perception, noting that any labeling of a language as gendered was

dependent upon the individual's perspective who was doing the labeling. Other participants also recognized that this gendering was not inherent in any language, but rather based on an individual's perceptions.

Yeah I feel like no language is inherently feminine or masculine but we just like stereotype them in certain ways based on I don't know for me I guess just based on like how they sound [...] if they sound like more harsh or rough um like German and then I think of the like a lot of the tonal languages like Chinese sound sort of harsher when you hear them so I stereotype those as more masculine so like the only feminine one I could think of is French [...] it's just like smoother and like I don't know I don't even know how to describe it, it just sounds more soft and feminine (Josh: Male, No French).

Although other participants were willing to gender languages that they expressed being relatively unfamiliar with, one participant, Maria (Female, French), expressed her belief that one must have at least minimal exposure to a language variety, specifically having heard it spoken or having a hypothetical sense of what it sounds like, in order to form gendered language attitudes about that language variety. Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) also added a qualifying statement to describe his own gendered language attitudes, stating that in general he does not have strong gendered language attitudes but that for French he sees the relationship between language and gender to be particularly strong.

While recognizing the perceived femininity of French, Luke also spoke to his perception of French as beautiful during his interview.

I mean mostly it's just a way to communicate if it comes to that but it's still, to me it sounds much more beautiful than English. Maybe that's because I'm desensitized to English or maybe that's because it just sounds more beautiful overall. But, I, I definitely have a respect for it and I really like the way it sounds (Luke).

This perceived beauty in the way the language sounds served as a positive motivator for Luke, despite the associations between the sound of French and femininity. Alan (Male,

French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) also spoke of a perceived beauty in the way the French language sounds during his interview.

I do believe it's how the language sounds. Because I do believe that has a play in it, right? Like, I don't think anyone would say Russian is particularly feminine. It's got a lot of rough sounds to it. Right? Versus, I think French, it's designed in such a way that it flows very nice. Like it flows very elegantly. And whilst there are exceptions to any rules, they've really only been put in place so that it sounds right. Like, a specific way. Like, that's kind of how Fre- it kind of sounds funny, but that's really, when we have exceptions to rules it's because somebody said, you know, "I don't like the original sort of verbiage or how it sounds," right? So they're going to change it so it sounds better. And French, I mean, to me, French sounds amazing. Like, I love just hearing people speak French. But because it's so, I guess, because it is so, um, I don't know how to say it. Ca- because the way it sounds is so important to the French language, I can definitely see how that's characterized as feminine, over other languages which have more harsh sounds. Um, so I definitely think that's how it changes from male to female (Alan).

For Alan, the way the French language sounds was a major contributor to its characterization as feminine.

In addition to the consideration of how a target language and its native speakers sound, my participants also considered how they, as individuals sound speaking another language.

I think when you learn a different language you have to learn it based on the tone so your own voice changes I realized that when I was speaking Japanese although my tone is already high it gets higher when I'm speaking Japanese you know and um and basic—I think we associate high tone feminine and low tone Russian [laughs] I mean low tone masculine (Stephan: Male, No French).

Stephan's discussion provides evidence that participants are cognizant of the way they sound in a target language and the implications that such vocal changes may have on their perceived identities.

Relatedly, beyond simply recognizing languages as harsher and more masculine or smoother and more feminine, gendered language attitudes stemming from phonetic and phonological distinctions were explicitly connected to motivation. One participant

connected this to the perceived motivation of others to learn a particular language variety: “I know a lot of girls in high school were like I want to take French because it sounds *so pretty* [approximates a valley girl or ditsy speech style]” (Kim: Female, No French). One gay-identified male participant characterized the French language as sounding romantic and pointed to this as one of his primary reasons, in addition to liking the French culture, for studying the language when he first needed to fulfill a language requirement in middle school.

[French is] a romantic language but it’s also I think it’s sort of like a romantic language and in the idea that phonetically it sounds very nice as compared to other languages and I was just like if I have to pick if I’m going to pick one I guess I’ll choose that one to do and since then I was always kinda in Fr[ench] (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

While this was one of his primary motivating factors for learning the language, he was not able to expand upon what made the language romantic sounding other than saying that it flowed well and was soft. In fact, he said that once he had characterized the language in this way, he chose to study the language and then “just stuck with it” (Alan).

Related to motivation, phonology, gender, and degree of aggressiveness were also linked by Alan and echoed by Maria (Female, French). Alan characterized Slavic languages as masculine and aggressive sounding: “it always sounds like they’re yelling at eachoth- like it sounds like they’re arguing all like for everything,” (Alan). He further suggested that this attribution of femininity/passivity or masculinity/aggressiveness influences desire to learn a particular language variety: “that kind of like draws certain people to certain languages and certain people away from certain languages,” (Alan). This understanding of speakers of certain other languages as “yelling at each other,” expressed by Alan in discussing Slavic languages, echoed earlier comments made by

Ryan (Male, No French) and Stephan (Male, No French) when they discussed their perceptions of speakers of Chinese. In both cases, this aggressively, “yelling at each other,” was understood as being a characteristic of masculine languages.

In conclusion, all participants agreed that the way a language sounds provides important information for identifying a language variety as masculine or feminine. This phonetically- and phonologically-based gendering of languages involved consideration of the guttural sounds and perceived aggressiveness of languages, noted as harsh and masculine, as well as the perceived fluidity of languages, noted to be smooth and feminine. This gendering was characterized as being based on individuals' perceptions of the sounds present in a language variety as well as how individuals felt when speaking a particular language variety. There was marked consensus on the perceived masculinity of Arabic, Chinese German, Russian, Romanian, and other Slavic languages, as well as on the perceived femininity of French and Italian. Spanish was frequently characterized as being feminine due to its status as a romance language, however, there was no consensus regarding its perceived femininity, as several participants felt Spanish could not be gendered in the same way as French.

Gendered language attitudes: Personal experience and cultural associations.

A second hypothesized source of gendered language attitudes are the cultural associations that a particular language variety evokes for an individual, which were intimately related to the personal experiences that were also evoked in discussions of gendered language attitudes related to phonetics and phonology. Although the emphasis that participants placed on phonology was recurrent, when asked if there were any other reasons that they might see a language as gendered in a particular way, participants cited individual

experience with or exposure to particular language varieties as a potential contributor to GLAs. Similarly to the fact that a certain degree of phonetic and phonological exposure to the language variety in question was posited as being a prerequisite for forming gendered language attitudes, personal experiences were hypothesized by participants to shape the types of attitudes held.

One of the types of personal experience that was noted to influence gendered language attitudes was the individuals a person has heard speaking a particular language variety and the contexts in which such exposure occurred. My focus group participants readily provided extensive instances of these kinds of cultural- and experience-based stereotypes about target language cultures and in turn target languages themselves.

For example, Stephan (Male, No French) cited the importance of his language teachers having been disproportionately female.

I think about all my language teachers they were all females like there weren't any guys that ever really taught me Spanish and like um yeah and if they were it was cause they grew up with that language it wasn't because like oh but yeah it's like is it learning a language is more for females than for males? (Stephan).

Much of the personal experience and exposure narratives extended beyond and educational context, including interaction with speakers of other languages in non-educational contexts, as well as interaction with technology and with media portrayals of speakers of other languages and of individuals from other cultures.

A lot of the languages that I wrote down and I determined that were masculine or feminine I've either heard it in a movie where like a specific character was like Russian and that person was male so therefore I always equate Russian with being a male dominated or a masculine language with English I've used GPS's for so long that I [Joe laughs] seriously that I associate English with being female or hearing a female voice so I think technology for me has sort of distorted my gender association with languages (Kelly: Female, French).

I would completely agree and disagree in the sense that um I actually wrote down that a lot of the way I view a language comes from where I've seen it most

commonly in the media I ended up surprising myself by writing down in the feminine column Spanish because if I think about the language independent of anybody speaking it I don't necessarily think a gender, but when I think of someone speaking Spanish I'm always thinking of the stereotypical Latina girl that you always see in images and all that kind of stuff it's always a Latina not a *Latino* and so I agree that the media and technology have a lot to do with it. I disagree in the sense that my GPS is always a British man so if I actually had to pick, I was actually thinking okay when you mentioned our own languages I hadn't considered English I would say neutral but if you held a gun to my head and said pick one I would pick masculine [almost sounds surprised by her own answer] I mean if I had to say one or the other, to me English is more masculine but I think the media and technology and all that stuff plays a major role, where do you mostly hear it? I think German would be mostly considered masculine because most of the actors that make it into big movies with big with strong German accents are male and they're Nazi images and whatever and so I think a lot of it is where do you hear it the most? (Sue: Female, French).

In stark contrast with the Nazi associations noted above, Sue asserted that she had an atypically non-gendered view of German because the majority of her interactions with German speakers had been with females though she was aware of the stereotype that German was typically viewed as masculine due to the way it sounds. These two narratives evoked by Sue highlighted the multiplicity of cultural associations and sources of personal experience and provide insight into the way multiple, conflicting experiences may interact to form gendered associations with a particular language variety. Sue notes:

Sue: I would agree that I feel French sounds prettier coming from women but with like Italian I think it's equal either way and for German I would say//
 Kelly: Probably masculine//
 Sue: I say it's the same either way but//
 Kelly: REALLY? [surprise]
 //Sue: But maybe that's my experiences with it that every single Fulbright scholar we've had in the German house the past three years has been female so, I maybe more for men but French is really the only one I associate with//
 //Kelly: A particular gender//
 Sue://women speaking French but//
 Kelly: hmmm//
 //Sue: but when it came to the idea like does it feel different when you hear someone else speaking you said you know you hear a woman speaking French and you automatically you know I think it also depends on the language and how it's composed and also your experiences with it because//

Kelly: Yes//

John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs): Yes//

In her discussion, Sue noted how the speaker may override associations between gender and language to reshape GLAs in important ways. She discussed how while speaking with nonnative speakers or with individuals in a classroom setting made her focus on the beauty of the language, speaking with native French speakers reminded her of negative experiences she had had in Paris and that as a result she was “thinking about them being hoy poloy snooty pattootie not wanting to give me directions,” (Sue). Sue’s assessment of the role of personal experiences in the formation of gendered language attitudes is indicative of the complexity of the factors that contribute to GLAs.

Stephan (Male, No French) and Ryan (Male, No French) also discussed the importance of type of exposure one has to a particular language variety in forming gendered perceptions of that language, drawing connections between German, Hitler, and masculinity, as well as between Japanese, Geishas, and femininity.

Stephan: I think when we think of a language as masculine you think of a person like German reminds me of Hitler I don’t know why! But for instance when I think of Japanese I think that’s more feminine because of Geishas you know and the whole aspect of guys wearing dresses I think that’s feminine too [laughs] and when I think of Chinese I think of masculine too because they’re like wow you know like it’s like I think it depends like

Ryan: On exposure? Does it depend on exposure then? So like the only German that you got not only but pretty much the only German that you got exposed to was Hitler’s speeches

Stephan: Yeah

Ryan: And pretty much the only Japanese you were exposed to was the Geishas and that culture and you pretty much were exposed to the Chinese culture was just on campus people that you had experiences with. So is it about exposure that you associate these languages with

Ryan and Stephan focused heavily upon the role of exposure and personal experience in their narratives.

In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) remarked upon how personal experience and cultural associations are deeply intertwined for him:

I definitely think it's like the cultu-- like, the history people have with a certain culture. Um, the way it's perceived or portrayed in the media. Um, because, like, here in the US when you think of France you think of like, the food, the exoticness, the, like things like wine, cheese. You don't really think of, like, strength, stuff that involves strength or fighting or war...or like, things that would be perceived as masculine. You think of things that would be more, like women enjoy wine, women enjoy cheese, women enjoy stuff that they can cook with and like, fancy restaurants and stuff like that. Whereas guys, they, I guess they don't prioritize it as much. And, so, because, I guess because they see the culture as feminine, they don't want to involve themselves in the culture as women would.

Devon spoke of cultural associations and how they become personal for an individual as they consider which language to study. He noted the ways in which French may become viewed as feminine and the possibility that this deters male students from engaging in studying the French language.

Despite this acknowledgement of the role of personal experience, however, participants recognized that exposure and personal experience alone are not sufficient for explaining the ways in which they gender language. Participants noted that they in fact have GLAs that run contrary to their personal experiences. Such realizations seemed to trouble the schemata that they had thought they had for explaining their GLAs and hence they found themselves unable to articulate how and why they gendered languages in the ways that they did.

Here was my list: German Russian and Latin I thought of as masculine and French as feminine and I couldn't decide for any other language but my Grandmother speaks German and my mother as well and they're and they're the German language influence I grew up with and there's no rationale behind it for me but I just I somehow associate German Russian Latin masculine and French feminine and I can't explain why (Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs)

In addition to phonology and personal experience, personal experience narratives began to bleed into narratives of cultural associations, which were also evoked as a key contributor to gendered language attitudes; Participants drew direct connections between their cultural perceptions, the American cultural imagination, and stereotypes of particular peoples and cultures and the ways in which they gendered languages. These widely-held stereotypes may explain some of the consistency observed in the gendering of particular language varieties. For example, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) noted that we often associate languages with particular cultures and, in making those associations, connect our assumptions about members of particular cultures with particular languages.

I think you can associate like different nationalistic things to like people's languages cause just like just like based on history um like I guess somebody like people in America like don't consider French people like tough I guess so like if you heard somebody speaking French like an American might make the assumption like he's not that tough of a guy or something like that or like if you hear somebody's English like people in America like people might see like he's pretty affluent or something like that just because he speaks with an English accent or something like that like you can make kind of like social or like just based off national nationalistic tags and like the language that somebody speaks you can associate with a country and from that you can like associate certain characteristics to that person (Devon).

Devon noted that, for him, the French language was particularly prone to these cultural associations because it is most often associated exclusively with France and not with the many other areas of the world where French is spoken.

Whenever I think of French I think about I guess the first thing that pops into my head is like France which is kind of like different for other countries cause like with English you don't always think about England as the first thing when you hear English but like you think about the US or like with Spanish you can it's like very widespread but French is kind of like or it's at least perceived as only spoken in France and so I guess like when you think of French you only think of the French France I guess French nationality associations to the language instead of thinking about like how widespread and how like um influence it has worldwide

um yes so I guess when I think about French I think about France which isn't always the case with other languages (Devon).

Taylor (Male, French) agreed with Devon's assessment noting that although he could name other areas where French was spoken, he always thought first and foremost of France when thinking of the French language.

When I asked participants to elaborate upon what people might think when they hear someone speaking French, Taylor appeared to be very uncomfortable. While prior to this statement he was outspoken and clearly articulated his thoughts, looking myself and the other participants in the eyes, in his responses following this question Taylor began to trail off at the end of his statements and look down at the table. After trailing off asking "you mean like stereotypes," Taylor expressed that the only stereotype that he was familiar with was the association of French with femininity: "I don't know a lot of, of French stereotypes except for that one and yeah I don't know that's all I can think of," (Taylor). A few minutes later he added "art," (Taylor: Male, French). Devon continued to elaborate on the stereotyping of French as weak and in turn as feminine.

People see French as like a weak or like some people see people who speak French as like pretty weak so like um so they might like consider a French speaker weak and like they're more feminine [...] I don't really understand it but there are like all those perceived things that aren't really true about the language but like um like a gender association I guess but um but I guess it's perceived (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

As an additional example, one participant, after an ongoing discussion of how the French language is feminine simultaneously echoed Taylor and Devon's characterization of French as stereotyped as feminine and as relating to art: "I think its cause the French culture in itself is very serious about their arts and a lot of female students are inclined to learn French because of its beauty is because they get that through like photography and

music and literature so they are like *ahhhhh* [feigning noises] *its really beautiful* so like they associate the artistic caliber towards the language so that's why they learn it. Why girls tend to learn French [is] cause they think it's all pretty and shit" (Kim: Female, No French). These narratives implied that the French language was stereotyped as feminine because the French culture was highly concerned with the arts, which are understood as being feminine. Another participant continued discussing this but began to argue that the French culture was inherently feminine itself: "People talk a lot more about French defeats than they do about French victories but something you do hear a lot about coming out of France is like fashion, arts, music, all this stuff that are naturally associated with creativity and like females [...] maybe it's just the culture that like places the emphasis on females versus male that kind of determines the way the language is perceived" (Kate: Female, No French). Concern with fashion was also cited as a reason why John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) did not see his own sense of self aligning with the way he views the French language.

Oddly no [I don't see the way I see the French language aligning with the way that I see myself] cause like all the people I've met who are French like I love being around them I love hanging out with them learning their background and their interests but it's just not something I've ever I think it's a lot of it is just like upbringing and like it's just so different cause like fashion is like such a huge thing in France and like I don't care about fashion so much and like they love like football, or like soccer, and I'm like not really that into soccer so no I wouldn't say that it's part of my identity, no. [...] I think I'm less intellectually inclined I think um I wouldn't say they're concentrated in the arts but I think they definitely have like a larger appreciation for the arts than like I do (John).

Unlike John, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) was able to see an alignment between his sense of self and his perceptions of the French language largely due to an ability to selectively make connections between the two. In his interview he noted that

I mean there, there're stereotypes for French, for sure. Um, and maybe I'm not, like, immersed enough to, like, feel like I have a claim to those stereotypes or I belong to them. Um, but I, I definitely have more of a connection and, like, a respect for that. But the, a lot of the, um, stereotypes attached to French...maybe I just, I'm not skilled enough in the language, but I don't see myself as entirely connected with that. [...] French stereotypes. Um, let's see, the French are excellent dressers. They like their wine and their cheese. Um, very relaxed. Definitely not uptight...um, not like the big macho man, but just going with the flow I guess. Which I guess that does come out when I speak French, so there's, a connection. Um, yeah so I, I guess parts of it I do connect with and I see, like, I identify with myself. Um, and others not entirely (Luke).

His narrative of selective alignment included considerations of proficiency and also an understanding of both his own and French masculinity as being a relaxed masculinity, a masculinity that did not adhere to a "macho" standard. Further, in the focus group he participated in, Luke mentioned the connections he had heard others make between France's military defeats, weakness, and in turn femininity.

One thing that just stood out to me was everyone makes fun of the French for like surrendering and losing wars and I did my final project senior year of high school on the French military and when I did research France actually has the best military record in Europe [...] and nobody believed me! So yeah so it's I guess it's just somewhat of a stereotype however true it may or may not be and that's certainly a deterrent (Luke).

Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) and Taylor (Male, French) also both referenced the perceived weakness of the French military, alongside phonetics, as one of the most likely sources of the characterization of French as feminine.

I think some like Americans might associate just like in wars and stuff and assume that they [the French] always lose and that sort of thing which isn't true but I think that plays a large part in it and they might not be currently as aggressive as like the United States you know with like military and that sort of thing (Taylor).

I think a large part of it has to do with like military strength even though like France used to have like a really really strong military like lead by Napoleon but like in the US I guess we don't think about that so we kind of associate weakness with France and also like French I guess how it like how it sounds it sounds kind of feminine I mean it doesn't sound feminine but just like the way you roll or like the fluidity of the words it kind of makes it seem um less masculine (Devon).

Kurt (Male, French) offered an additional evocation of the role of cultural associations in forming gendered language attitudes:

Well we already talked about the harsh versus the more flowing sound um I think German is also one that is like kind of considered masculine and I thought about what they're known for and what the French are known for cause they're considered more feminine and you know when you think about France you think food, art [Alan laughs] they gave us like the statue of liberty this big giant piece of artwork and then like when you think about Germany and how it's like an economical powerhouse and like it started a couple wars and I think post-WWI I don't really understand it but I think they were led by a bunch of generals and their government was like generals and you know like war an industry are kind of thought to be more masculine and food and arts more feminine um I kind of wonder if like the sounds went along with or if that developed alongside the culture (Kurt).

In this quote, Kurt identifies phonology as a key underlying component to gendered language attitudes but continues beyond phonology to discuss cultural perceptions of the target language cultures and the ways in which these perceptions contribute to the gendering of particular language varieties. Interestingly, he appears to connect the sounds of a language to these cultural perceptions, suggesting that he may perceive some type of inherent connection between what is perceived as sounding more feminine or masculine to the femininity or the masculinity of a culture. Other participants responded to Kurt's comments agreeing both with the cultural associations and the connection between culture and phonology (Maria: Female, French).

One participant hedged this type of commentary that made inherent connections between femininity and a culture, emphasizing the role of perception over any inherent cultural femininity, particularly referencing French language curriculum in the US: "At least in my high school French culture and France itself were like portrayed as very feminine cause yeah like I do understand cool you guys are strong your navy is awesome but a lot of times when we talked about European history, France is thrown to the curb

like a weak super power so I guess that almost in a way translated in a way to it being a feminine culture and a feminine population and so that definitely influenced who would take French,” (Nora: Female, No French). After this participant finished speaking another participant spoke up “French is normally the butt of the jokes!” (Aaron: Male, French), echoing comments cited earlier about comments surrounding France’s military history. This comment was followed by “That’s cause we’re Americans and we make fun of everything French!” (Tom: Male, French). The focus group participants all began to laugh hysterically and many of them, windedly voiced agreement “hahahah oh yeah! Yep! Yes!” Not a single participant disagreed with this assertion.

During an interview with Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs), he focused upon this divide between perception and reality, noting that these conclusions about those who speak and who learn French were heavily based on the perspective of the individual drawing the conclusions and not upon anything inherent in the French language. He stated:

In my focus group we were talking about the perceived femininity of French, um, and, um, just how other people who I guess aren’t familiar with the language perceive the people who speak the language as either flower or I guess romantic and not, um, it’s not considered as a tough language. But, um, but I definitely don’t think, I think, like, it’s a perception but not a reality. And I think a lot of people, I mean even people in France are tough. So the people everywhere, it doesn’t matter what language you speak, um, there are people who are tough and there are people who aren’t tough. So, I don’t think a language can define a person’s character (Devon).

Whether real or perceived, gendered language attitudes stemming from cultural associations appeared to have real effects in terms of motivation. While the perceived femininity of French deterred some individuals from studying the language, Alan (Male,

French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) reported an ambiguous attraction to the language in his interview.

You know there's something about the culture, right? I mean, there is something previously instilled with me I guess that kind of drives me toward, sort of - That there's something with French culture that I am, I guess, attracted to. [...] And obviously that's something I want to adopt. And, I guess going back to French culture, I mean, I don't know, I just love the, not just the language but, um, I mean I don't know. Heck, even the food is, like, great. You know what I'm saying? Right? [...] So like, the food is great. I just, there's a certain, certain, um, association with French culture. And I guess it's very... I guess the best way you could say it is down to Earth. It's a very down to Earth culture. Or at least that's kind of my perception of it [...] And those values align more with what I'm looking for (Alan).

For Alan, something about his own perception of the French culture resulted in him choosing to learn the language.

Gendered language attitudes also appeared to relate to images in popular culture. Discussing the femininity of French, Bara (Female, French) noted that “even when they have villains that speak French they look kind of girly and wimpy.” Responding to this, participants began to discuss the underlying cultural understandings of what makes something masculine or feminine. Gabrielle (Female, French) noted, “it just goes back to like how what do we identify as masculine or feminine so like being soft and docile and sweet, like French, is more feminine versus more harsh and cold and strict like therefore German is more masculine.” Interestingly, Gabrielle did not immediately question what about French was soft, docile, and sweet nor what about German was harsh, cold, and strict here. However, Tammy (Female, No French) later began to explore the source of these associations offering imagined target language speakers as a potential source.

I have to wonder if some of these associations we have between masculinity and femininity and language have to do with some of our prototypes of each language speaker we have like I don't know when I think of a French speaker I think of like a French woman or like Madeline I grew up reading the Madeline so I think of

like this nice sort French woman whereas when I think of German I think of a German man yelling or like you know even through my education about the Holocaust I think about people like Hitler so [...] sort of like the prototypes we hold of like each language speaker and I don't know if that's something that's innate based on the sound or sort of a cultural thing (Tammy).

Gabrielle (Female, French) agreed with Tammy's assessment of the role of prototypes, but added commentary that suggested there was something intrinsic in the target culture that related to its stereotype as masculine or feminine.

I think it's really interesting like what language says about a culture like German is very indicative of the culture itself it's like uh hard and fast and strict and there are a lot of guidelines to follow which I think is reminiscent of the culture and how society is organized (Gabrielle).

Gabrielle's implied inherent connection between language and culture related closely to Kurt's earlier comment about the connections between femininity in phonetics and phonology and femininity in a culture.

The role of cultural perceptions was further expanded upon by participants who evoked their perceptions of the degree of patriarchy versus gender-equality in a given society as indicative of whether they perceived the language variety as masculine or feminine (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs, Maria: Female, French).

When I was trying to class different languages I found that I was associating it with a lot of like the culture within that language and whether or not it's very masculine or whether it's more sort of like an equal equality based society and so and it was the same thing I was like what is the most masculine? It's like Arabic like the most masculine [...] and I was just thinking about that and it's kind of a very male-dominated society versus like other areas versus like I think more of like French and other like Western cultures are like more like the societies are more equal and therefore it's more like a feminized I don't know if I would say like more feminized but more just like in the idea that it's just like less masculine (Alan).

However, as the discussion continued, my participants began to realize that this classification system did not always explain the ways in which they gendered languages.

What threw me was [...] like south Asian like languages cause it's like a very male-dominated it's changing but it's a male-dominated society but I do agree with you it does sound less masculine than like Arabic [...] so I think I don't know where to place like that south Asian like I don't know what to do with it so I'm like all kinds of confused cause it kind of breaks all my rules (Alan).

Relatedly, Ryan (Male, No French) insisted upon the fact that any judgments of a language as masculine or feminine were based on our own cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity.

If we are from the standpoint of an English speaker we judge a language as masculine or feminine we are just judging them to be in the American standard we're just thinking of one or a group of people who speak that language and we're judging them on an American standard whether they are masculine or feminine according with the American standard that's what we're doing we're not judging the language in itself is my opinion (Ryan).

Ryan's narrative runs contrary to other participants' narratives who suggested that there may be inherently feminine or masculine aspects of a language or culture, and highlighted the role of perception in gendering a language variety.

In conclusion, personal experience and cultural associations were both important contributors in the minds of my participants to the formation of gendered language attitudes, though neither provided a coherent schema for explaining all of the gendered language attitudes held by participants. Personal experience was noted to include the individuals a person heard speaking a particular language and the contexts in which language exposure occurred. Narratives of personal experience blended into discussions of cultural associations, which included cultural stereotypes and representations of a target language and culture in the media. Although three participants explicitly evoked feeling that there were inherent connections between particular languages, their

phonetics, their cultures, and masculinity or femininity, the majority of participants questioned such assertions and suggested that any perception of a language and culture as masculine or feminine was deeply rooted in the position of the individual gendering the language, their experiences, and the culture from which they come. In addition to the numerous types of cultural associations and personal experiences, the complexity of how GLAs arise may also be seen in the fact that there were a number of languages which were consistently gendered as masculine or feminine across the majority of participants, while there were other languages on which participants diverged in their gender associations, such as Spanish and English.

Gendered language attitudes: Grammatical gender. Without prompting, grammatical gender was consistently evoked by participants in all of the focus groups as an additional source of gendered language attitudes. They appeared unable to express a connection between grammatical gender and their identity, but discussed how grammatical gender gave an identity to objects in the language.

I find it really interesting so like French specifically linking giving objects masculine and feminine forms just so in English that's not the case it's just like the chair and the table right but all of a sudden in French you're like giving objects like certain like I guess it's anthropocentrizing the object right it's like it has an identity and not only that it's like masculine and feminine which is like really bizarre to me and I remember when I first learned that I was just like wow that's really weird and like then my second thought was then like well who then decides? (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs)

In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) also expressed the experience of learning a language that had grammatical gender:

Um, I guess they do it [draw connections between gender and language] subconsciously. I don't think, I mean because, like, gender and a language aren't necessarily things that are very closely related. But there is some relation. Like, I think I said this before, um, like French and like, languages like French and Spanish, they have a masculine and a feminine way you write the word and how

you say the word and how you speak it. So, but like, and then a language like English there really isn't a masculine or a feminine for a word, like it's just a word. So, I guess, if you are, I mean I don't know the background of the people, of the people you've interviewed. But, I'm guessing that if you were not from a culture that has a masculine and a feminine word for things, it would be pretty shocking and so, just having something, just knowing that, like, a word has a feminine word to it as well, I guess it would be strikingly different to somebody who has never been exposed to, to it (Devon).

In Alan's interview he drew connections between grammatical gender, gender, culture, and language.

I do believe that [people think tend to think about or talk about gender] more-so in languages than in other aspects of society. Being that gender is like an important part of how that language is structured. French in particular has a masculine and feminine form for a lot of things. Same as English, same as many other languages. So you have to, and it's funny, how it does change depending upon, you know, which, which language you're in. And that really is, I believe, a part of how that culture has adapted. So that culture is perceived, whatever it is. Like, a chair is female. It has to be female. And other cultures are like, well that's stupid, it's a chair. Right, you know? But, like, that's what I was saying. So for like, different cultures, they've structured it. Language obviously has to be, like, gender has to be a part of language. So, I do believe that, in some way, as you say, maybe consciously, maybe subconsciously, right? When you're dealing with language, you are dealing with gender slash gender issues. And that's different with different cultures. So that's kind of, my take on it (Alan).

Alan expressed that language was particularly closely related to gender due to grammatical gender.

Gendered language attitudes: Body language. Body language also appeared as a potential source for gendered language attitudes. One participant in a single focus group, Jen, suggested that there is a visual aspect to gendered language as well, citing the way hand movements in Italian, for her, rendered the language more feminine:

But like also hand movements with language it's like my cousin's family they're from Naples and their hand movements in Italian are so flow-y like when they speak I always feel like that's always like more feminine whereas like other hand movements in like other languages might be more like I don't know like rough I don't know that sounds weird to associate with gender but like that's what I think of (Jen: Female, No French).

This idea that body language may contribute to gendered language attitudes was not evoked in any other focus group by any other participant, however, when discussed during interviews with four participants, all interviewees felt that it was appropriate to list body language as a contributor to gendered language attitudes. Specifically, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) noted that he drew close connections between body language and culture:

Body language I guess, I guess I also associate with the culture, the people generalized. I guess there's a big generalization that people abroad, in Europe in particular, tend to speak more with their hands. And stuff like that, because I know in particular Italians like to make more hand gestures and Spanish people, yeah, they do too as well (Devon).

Sexuality. Sexuality also appears to contribute to the identity and language learning nexus, through sexualized inflections of the way the target culture and language is imagined, through the close relationship of gender and sexuality, as well as through questions of the learners' sexuality. Sexuality was a recurrent theme throughout focus group discussions; participants evoked sexuality both implicitly and implicitly when discussing language learning motivation. Although participants did not always evoke questions of gender without prompting, questions of sexuality arose without prompting.

Questions of sexuality were addressed via discussions of attraction. While one participant asserted that any foreign language was attractive (Joe: Male, French), most participants felt that different languages evoked different reactions. One participant, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs), shared: "I feel like certain languages at least for me just sound much prettier than others and they all have their tones I mean German just sounds more intimidating than French." Kelly (Female, French) and Sue (Female, French) verbally agreed.

When I asked participants what they thought about the idea that “some people have suggested that guys don’t really learn French,” one participant offered an explanation for why men do take French classes, inscribing heterosexuality therein:

[Kelly (Female, French) mumbles something]
 Kris: You want to say that out loud?
 Kelly: It’s [Men learn French] to pick up girls?

One of my participants spoke to the particularly gendered and sexualized nature of the French language in US culture saying “What’s interesting is I don’t think the conversation would have gone in the direction it’s going now towards a little bit more sexuality and homosexuality and all that if it were a different language. I think French draws the conversation in that direction which really says something about our overall feelings about the language compared to like if we were talking about German or something like that” (Aaron: Male, French). Aaron’s reflection was not the only time that French was labeled as unique in its relationship to sexuality. Participants expressed that “French is known to be more like sexually fluid versus like other languages” (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs). Alan explained his comment, extending the study of the French language as a reflection of a learner’s acceptance of sexual diversity.

By speaking French you’re more sexually I don’t know how you say it more fluid and like more accepting cause that’s just how the culture is right like sex is just more it’s like more conversationally right like sex is more accepted and just like sexual attitudes are like a lot more diverse and like accepted than let’s say in the United States right now (Alan).

Not only did participants view language learning as indicative of acceptance of sexual diversity, they also expressed that sexual identity is a likely contributor to the choice of which language one studies.

I also think that has a big impact on like how people choose languages you know like if you're like if you're gonna be like a gay male I don't think Arabic is the language you're looking to choose here [laughs] cause what are you going to [laughs] cause just culturally you know it's not as accepting so why would you choose that language so I think I think it's interesting it's one of those kind of where language also dictates who you are (Alan).

Josh (Male, No French) extended this discussion, noting that when linguistic gender norms are violated, it is often an individual's sexuality, rather than their gender identity, that is brought into question. In his words, "If um like if someone who is a man is talking in a way that's stereotypically feminine people are probably going to question not necessarily his gender but I think it's definitely really closely tied to sexuality too," (Josh).

When asked what gendering particular languages meant for the identities of individuals learning languages, Stephan evoked his perception of the French language as sexy and expressed a discomfort with the idea of him learning a language he found to be sexy. In his commentary, sexy appeared to imply the object of his desire: "Like I think it would be really weird for me to learn French cause it think it sounds sexy and that would be kinda weird I don't know [laughs]," (Stephan: Male, No French).

In alignment with Josh's suggestion, participants evoked sexuality before any questions regarding sexuality were specifically asked. Additionally, gender and sexuality were revealed to be intimately linked if not conflated by participants.

I think once we get kind of to like our age you get to like you know it's more individual and definitely like how one represents their sexuality is like completely a complex situation you know it doesn't really alter like who they're like oh they're French therefore they're more feminine there are probably some very masculine French guys and some very feminine like other language and cultures (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

This intimate connection between gender and sexuality was highlighted again and problematized by Ryan (Male, No French). His narrative highlighted the close connections between masculinity and sexuality, defining masculinity as engaging in activities to “get girls,” a definition which Jen quickly countered by asking if gay men could not then be masculine.

Ryan: Honestly if what you're doing okay this is going to sound weird but if what you're doing is getting girls to like you then that's masculine to me like the artist he is masculine if that's making girls like him and you know like the sports guy he's masculine if that's getting girls to like him and the models who are trying to look pretty and are trying to do their job well if that's what makes girls admire them and like them then that's masculine to me

Jen (Female, No French): Does that mean then that a gay person can't be masculine? Cause like my best friend Roy is gay but he like watches baseball and like plays basketball and all that stuff [...] I don't know with your definition does that break your definition or is he not masculine then or? But like I don't think my friend Roy would learn French! [laughs]

Ryan (Male, No French): I guess that

Stephan (Male, No French): What is gay viewed as? Like most people what would they think of gays? You know would they think like oh they're masculine or are they feminine? You know. Like I made a statement about how gay guys tend to have higher voices why because females do you know females have higher voices and I was being stereotypical here you know I'm playing devil's advocate here but that's how people see things you know and um

Jen: that [Ryan's definition] assumes that a man who is masculine always wants girls to like him and that masculinity is then defined by sexual attractiveness in a heterosexual way

Ryan: right I wasn't thinking of that

Although sexuality was in many of the personal narratives of language learning motivation, when I presented it as possibly related to language attitudes in my interview with Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs), he expressed feeling surprised and being unable to draw a connection between sexuality and language: “Um, I'm kind of surprised with the, like, the last one, sexuality. Um, I don't really, I guess I don't really know how sexuality would be related to a language. Um, I mean, both straight and gay people have to speak a language, so...I don't really see how, I don't see

how there's a relation there," (Devon). After presented with the connection, however, Devon was able to see why other participants pointed to sexuality as a source of language attitudes:

I mean, I guess I could kind of see it...I mean, I think I'm not. I mean I guess, I guess the person that put it on the list would have the assumption that Europeans are more, I guess, or the language is more favorable towards not straight people. But, I mean, I can't really make that claim because I know a lot people who speak French who are very, like, anti-gay, or um, just don't have the same. So like, the sexuality thing doesn't make - I could see why someone would put it on the list but I definitely don't think it's a viable reason for the difference, or for like, the view of the language as feminine. [...], I mean it's like a, for me it's still a reach and I guess, I mean, you have to know people...the language can't really define a person, which is what. A language can help give you a clue about a person, like this guy speaks a language, yes, or something like that. But it'd be just like you'd be gay if you spoke English, so it doesn't really make sense (Devon).

His narrative drew into question comments such as those made by Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) that the French culture is accepting of sexual diversity. His comments stemmed from not only French individuals who are not accepting of non-heterosexual identities, but also upon the opinions of individuals he knew from other Francophone contexts. He felt that, despite an ability to recognize why others may feel that sexuality was an important source of language attitudes in a stereotypical logic, that the connection between the French language, sexuality, and a perceived femininity remained illogical. He further expressed that he understood connections between French and perceived "sexiness" better than connections between an acceptance of sexual diversity and French, but that this type of connection between "sexiness" and French remained based on stereotypes as well.

Sexuality was also referenced in discussions of perceptions of the French language in terms of romanticism. In his interview, John discussed the perceived

romanticism of the French language through its poetry after having discussed sexuality in terms of attraction:

So, I'm straight so if I did I would think about French girls or if I were learning Spanish I would think something about Spanish girls so yes but it's not like I wouldn't I think mostly it's like 90% the language 10% the people associated with the language but that's just like how I see language I'm sure other people have a different view of that. [...] I think people think of it [the French language] as the flowery the most flowery of the romance language and like not necessarily romantic but there's like definitely an appeal to it like a romantic appeal [...] Like French poetry in a way it just sounds like even if you had no idea what they were saying it could be construed in a way as like this is a romantic gesture but like English you can't really it doesn't really sound that way but I think like gender is like such a focus of it because it can be like if a man is speaking to a woman it will have that connotation or like if a woman is speaking to a man it will have that connotation (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs).

For John, individuals always think about members of the opposite sex who are speakers of the target language. Further, he felt the French language was perceived as flowery and romantic, in part due to the fact that French poetry has romantic appeal in his opinion and can be used as a tool for heterosexual prowess. Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) similarly noted that when he thought of the French language he immediately thought of French women. He expanded his commentary to identify French as not only feminine but also as sensual. In his words:

For me definitely I see, like, the feminine with the French. Um, I think it has more like a sensual feel than a lot of other languages. Um, and that's also a cultural stereotype, which I'm sure plays a role in the language itself. Um, so I think that's a pretty, uh, general stereotype or a general impression people hold more-so than with other languages. [...] It's just kind of like the, um, I don't know, it's just, it comes to mind when I think of French. I mean, it's called the language of love, and um, and I, I guess the culture is more accepting of that than American culture. And even among Europe, it's like, that's a reputation it holds (Luke).

Luke's narrative also evoked a certain romanticism surrounding the French language similar to that evoked by John as well as a sense of an acceptance of sexuality and sexual

diversity similar to that expressed by Alan. Luke noted that he believed sexuality to be less taboo in French culture than in American culture.

Um, in America it's [sexuality is] probably more taboo than it'd be in France, I'd assume. Um, but I imagine that it does, I'd assume a lot of people are thinking about that, making that connection [between the French language and sexuality]. So I suppose it would come up in conversation (Luke).

He contrasted this strong relationship between the French language and sexuality with his perception of Arabic, which he thought did not have a strong relationship with sexuality because he believed sexuality to be taboo in Arabic-speaking cultures.

In conclusion, despite Devon's lack of connection between sexuality and language, sexuality was evoked in personal narratives of language learning motivation as well as when discussing how speakers of other languages are perceived. Further, French was cited as having a unique relationship with questions of sexuality.

Understanding the sources of gendered language attitudes. From the focus group discussions, six possible sources of gendered language attitudes appeared: phonetics and phonology, personal experience with a language and its speakers, cultural associations, grammatical gender, sexuality, and body language. During each of the four interviews, I asked interviewees to respond to this list that I had compiled from the focus group data. I asked each interviewee whether they felt that any of these possible sources did not belong on the list for them, whether there were any possible sources that seemed more important or stronger than others, and whether they would add anything to the existing list. No interviewee felt that anything on the list was completely irrelevant to gendered language attitudes. However, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) stated that he would not personally connect sexuality and gendered language attitudes. All other participants felt that sexuality belonged on the list. Similarly, Luke

(Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) was surprised by grammatical gender and expressed being unsure of what to think about the connection others were making. After expressing his confusion, he stated that he would retain this factor on the list and felt that grammatical gender may render individuals more cognizant of gender as they learn the language and hence more likely to form gendered language attitudes. No participant expressed a desire to add anything to the list that wasn't already present. Next, I asked each participant to rank the importance of these factors in their contribution to the formation of gendered language attitudes and to draw the relationship between each of the factors. Below are their rankings and drawings followed by their discussions of their drawings. Each interviewee had distinct rankings for the six listed factors, though there were some consistencies in the patterning of responses. Sexuality was listed as the least important contributor to gendered language attitudes for all participants except for Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs), who ranked sexuality as number five out of six factors and placed grammatical gender as the least important factor. Body language also consistently appeared in the bottom half of the rankings, whereas cultural associations consistently appeared in the top half of the rankings. Before being presented with the list, Luke identified both cultural stereotypes and phonology as important contributors to gendered language attitudes.

I would say mostly the stereotypes that whatever culture we come from assigns to that culture. Like in America, um, there's like the impre- oh, the French always surrender. Like, the wimpy French. And they're just, they're, like, apart from a lot of the masculine stereotypes that I think a lot of Americans ascribe to. [...] For me, the sound of the language also does. I don't know if that's because of the cultural associations or not. But just hearing French, I think that makes it, I think John said it last time, like, if a girl speaks French, she's just more attractive for that. And that doesn't work for me with a lot of other languages (Luke).

Intertwined with his consideration of the importance of the way a language sounds in the formation of gendered language attitudes were questions of sexuality. Once presented with the list, all interviewees connected the different facets to one another, though in different ways and to different degrees. The different facets appeared most intertwined for John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) who, before being asked to relate these different factors, presented his own assessment of what contributed to the formation of gendered language attitudes.

I think culture definitely has like a play in it [qualifying a language as masculine or feminine] but then again like the mechanics of the language also have play in it. So, like grammar, I think grammar has something to do with it as well cause like it depends on like who is addressing who and like who is seen as the normative who is seen as the you know, I forget what it's called, but like the you know when you say someone is like humanity or like mankind instead of like woman kind like it's normative like mankind is normative so it's kind of seen like as male is like the base case anyways I don't really know how it is in French but it could be different or if they kind of like associate um objects or they associate prized possessions as feminine like if you do it with like countries or like cars or anything like that then it definitely adds to like that gender typification. Yeah I think it does like culture is like the easy answer cause what people will think or use of it obviously they'll have that like in their minds but and then again like the how you speak the language so the way you speak the language like if it's a shout-y language it will sound more masculine and if it's very soft and filled with like gestures and a lot of movement it will be more feminine in that way (John).

Without the list, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) identified culture, the ways in which gender was presented grammatically, and phonetics and phonology.

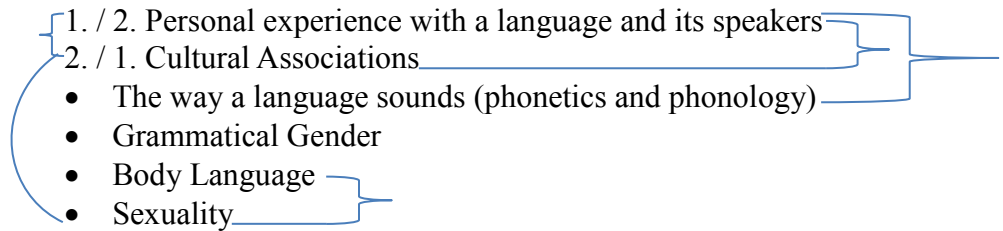
His discussion of each facet bled into the next.

- John:
1. Personal experience with a language and its speakers
 2. Cultural associations
 3. Grammatical Gender
 4. The way a language sounds (phonetics and phonology)
 5. Body language
 6. Sexuality

[John felt he was unable to draw the relationship between these factors.]

“I think the bottom three, probably those or like the cultural associations, grammatical gender, body language have like the biggest impact like if you really dissect the language and you try to see the subconscious motivations then definitely language sounds and personal experience. I’m not really sure what sexuality is supposed to have what does it really mean by sexuality [...] I was thinking more of not like sexual orientation but more like how do people sexually use it. Yeah I guess French would work. I guess it’s a pretty sexual language I guess, there are like a lot of sounds that have like sexual undertones to it so yeah I could see that [...] I think personal experience is probably the strongest then probably cultural association, grammatical gender then four, five, and six,” (John).

Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs):



[Alan felt he was unable to numerically rank all factors beyond identifying the first two factors as equally the most important contributors to the formation of gendered language attitudes.]

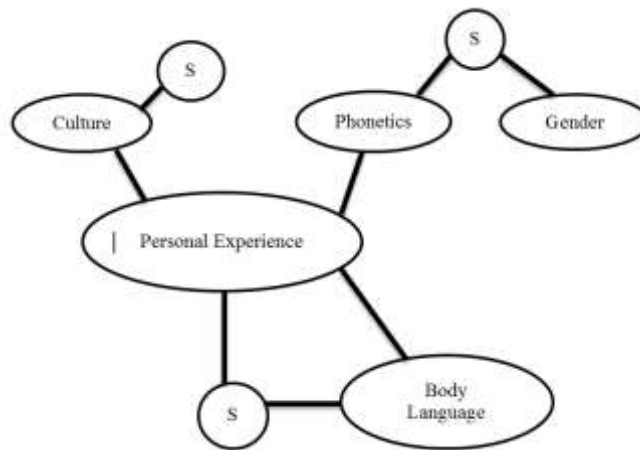
“so I wouldn’t add anything to it. But I think it actually is a pretty good list. Um, I don’t know, I, I think body language does play a role, but I would put that one probably as the lowest form, just because I think that is altered per individual. And I don’t know, maybe French is a very expressive language versus others, but I don’t really know how that plays into the, the, you know, feminization of it. Or just the, sort of, sort of, gender association with it. I don’t really see that. Maybe. I don’t know, but to me that isn’t really a big thing. Um, I mean I do believe sexuality plays a big part in it. And I also think that has to do, as I said, with how modern society is and how adaptive the culture is. And obviously if it’s very varied, if the culture is very sexually, um, prohibitive, then obviously it’s not going to be very...it’s not going to be really perceived as, like a feminine gender with it. Um, grammatical gender, I kind of pointed on that. I think cultural association is probably the strongest. I think the way the language sounds definitely is, as I said, a part of it, but I would - and I do like the idea of the personal experience with the language and its speakers, but I think that’s kind of going back to the cultural thing too. It’s kind of just mono versus plural. So, it’s kind of like you meet one individual and they live within that culture and you can kind of make the association with ‘I met this one person and therefore everyone in that culture obviously is like that.’ You know? ‘So I’m just going to make these broad generalizations about this culture because I met like one French person.’ But anyway, you know, so, cultural exp- cultural association and personal

experience, I do agree, are probably large associations with how French is perceived as feminine...and I mean I would, you look at marketing campaigns too, I mean, anything that is French in America, right? is mostly feminized, too, right? Like, it's always these cute Italian and French cars, right? And there's always pretty ladies next to these cars or driving the cars. Or it's a guy picking up a pretty lady in this sexy car. Right? Like, that's what I was say- so that, to me, so, or chocolate, right, or something...like, France is always associated with, like, and Belgium, too. What's this with chocolate? Chocolate is always associated with, like, love interest, too. So, I do believe it is very, it's kind of marketed to the U.S. as a very, like, feminized, 'we're a caring society, you need to be more-so like this.' Like, if you want to be caring too, obviously you need to buy French products, right? So, like, it's kind of that association with, like, they're more sophisticated than the United States. But in that sense, it's because you see that less of a gender identity or culture, you know, so that's kind of, I guess the way it's marketed to the U.S., too. They're more accepting of sexual identities, sexual fluidity, and, like, more of a relaxed cultural identity. Buy our products. Right? So that's kind of how it goes. I don't know. That's the way I see it. [...] So, going back to it, I think cultural associations, right, are definitely, definitely play into how, because I believe, right, like, a human being is sort of a product of not just genetics but also their cultural upbringing. Right? So, I, if you have a cultural experience with someone it's probably because they grew up in a different culture. Right, so I'd definitely say cultural associations, you know, are strong in playing for a personal experience. And at the same time, people make up culture, so that's kind of like the big circle. And if you want me to rank them, I would say that's probably like one and two. So, like, one slash two. Is like definitely - Woo! - is like personal associations and cultural experiences are kind of the circle of, like, they play off each other. And then, as in that way, I definitely think, um, cultural associations then sort of build your concept of sexuality. And that's, I think that's a big part now, you know, like someone in the U.S., right, our cultural associations are definitely shifting. We're becoming more liberalized. We're definitely, our sort of associations with gender are changing and therefore our associations with sexuality are changing too. You're sort of seeing this more acceptance of all these sort of sexual orientations and then also, like, sexual experiences too. Like, it's not like frowned upon. [Laughs] Well, you know, like in the 19th century, showing your ankles was a big deal. And now we're walking around in, like, skimpy dresses and tight jeans. It's like the new thing. And some of them are like vacuum sealed...my goodness! [...] Anyway, they're not hiding anything. But that's the thing. Cultural associations change sexual, you know, sexuality and sort of the way that's perceived. Um, and then, that...oh, this is, you're going to love this. [...] And then sexuality does affect how body language is perceived. And I think the more sexually, um, accepting a society is, the more accepting it is of more expressive language. Right? Because I think sexuality and the ability to express yourself is definitely how you kind of associate body language, if that makes any sense. You know, I can be expressive and that's no longer considered, like, feminine. Right? Like, if I'm very expressive that was, for the longest time, that was associated with, to being definitely a feminine sort of quality. Like, men don't

do weird body - like, men show emotions. And that's like, for the longest time that was like, men don't cry. Men don't wave their hands. Men don't, like, I don't know, do all these things. Right? That's not like, associated. But I think, so, sexuality changes your idea of body language. Um, and then, as in grammatical gender and how the language sounds, I think that goes back to, um, culture. Because that was, and, and that's why I was saying that culture and personal experience are one in two. And the idea that culture then dictates how the language is, sounded slash created, and that's sort of going back to it's grammatical gender, too. Right? And even that, you're seeing that's, like, changing now. Right? And the idea that we're now generating new words. So culture is changing- how culture is changing and the way we act, like, what we need new, like, you know, words, to describe these new things. Right? We don't even know, right? So that's kind of how I see it. [...]So, how we're to rank it...so culture and personal experience. Culture, which is, I guess, a reflection of experience, which kind of then affects the others. So that's probably the best way I can explain it.

Luke: (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs)

1. Personal experience with a language and its speakers
2. Cultural associations
3. The way a language sounds (phonetics and phonology)
4. Body language
5. Sexuality
6. Grammatical Gender



“Grammatical gender? Huh. [...]Well, grammatical gender stood out to me right from the start. I mean, I, English doesn't have the same masculine feminine and a lot of languages do. So, I'm not entirely sure what to make of that. Maybe the masculine feminine divide, maybe that brings it more to attention right from the start. Um, but that's an interesting one. I hadn't thought of that. [...]Yeah, and then body language was, I also didn't immediately associate that with language.

Um, but that's certainly a part of it. We all love our stereotypes about the body language too, that goes along with the languages. Um, and I hadn't really noticed the French body language that goes along with the French language. But I guess I'll pay attention now. [Laughs] [...] I think all of those have their place. [...] Okay, well, personal experience I'd put right in the middle. And I think, everything else is, like, a factor of that. Um, then, maybe culture would spin off since that's what you're born into thinking. Like, that's the impression you have before you can make your own opinion. Um, then another branch for phonetics, when you actually listen to how it sounds. Um, and then with that I guess I'd put the grammatical gender. Then I'd put body language as like a separate category. It's, I guess another thing, I guess there's not like a cultural expectation for body language and phonetics have nothing to do with that, at least directly. And, let's see, sexuality. I guess that's, huh. I guess that's a piece of all of these. There are cultural stereotypes about that. Then, I mean I guess a language can influence, just the phonetics can influence the sexuality...the gender of course. And then body language plays a big role in that as well. So I guess I'd make that a branch of all of those. And, let's see, yeah. There's my web [pictured above]. Um, I mean there's like, there's different body languages that can be, I guess more sexually appealing. So there's, I guess more open and more sexually reserved body languages. So I'd say that influences sexuality. [...] Um, when you have a language without grammatical gender, then I guess sexuality's further from your mind than if you immediately say masculine feminine and are denoting by those classifications. [...] It just makes it more present. If you're not even thinking about masculine versus feminine, then you're just having a conversation. But if you're thinking feminine word versus masculine word, then there's more of a, um, it's more relevant. [...] Phonetics and gender, um, I mean I...is there much of a difference in... [sigh]. I mean some words sound more masculine or sound more feminine in accordance with the gender that they're denoted, I guess. Um, like, I don't know, like 'blanc' versus 'blanche'... Personal experience would be number one because that's, um, I guess that's how we always see the world, through our own perception. And cultural is just something someone else told you, and I think personal is the foundation for everything. I'd put culture as number two because that's such a big part of what you're expecting to see and what you expect to see is generally kind of what you see unless it's really drastically different. Then, let's see. Phonetics would be number three. The sound of the language and how people are speaking, um, is the most...like, when I think language I think verbally, not written. And when I hear someone speaking that's like what I associate with language right from the start. Then I'll go body language as number four. I guess that's the next most present. Um, you just, you see it while they're speaking. Um, sexuality is five. Um, I think that's less obvious than the other ones. Even if it's still powerful, it's still there, it's not like, the first thought. And then, grammatical gender is six. That's more like a subtle reminder, or a subtle influence." (Luke).

Devon: (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs)

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1. Cultural associations
 2. The way a language sounds (phonetics and phonology)
 3. Grammatical gender
 4. Body language
 5. Personal experience with a language and its speakers
 6. Sexuality

“I drew arrows to try and show what I felt was a part of another. So, I felt, I numbered them because, um, third is the final one. So um, I felt like the grammatical gender plays a role in the way the language sounds and I felt like, um, because of the way that the language sounds you also have cultural association. And I felt like the body language is also a part of the culture, cultural association. Um, and for me the sexuality and personal experience are related because, um, because I feel like you gain the sexuality aspect by, because of somebody you met or because of having been exposed to that language. And so, to me, uh, these two in particular relate to each other strongly, while I felt the, um, body language, personal experience and the way the language sounds all pour into the cultural association [...], I definitely feel like cultural association is the number one way you perceive the language and it’s masculinity or it’s yeah, masculinity/femininity. Um, then, the way the language sounds because how you hear something definitely goes a long way in, um, determining, how you determine, like, what sex or what gender you’d associate with something. Like when you first hear somebody talk you can kind of assume whether they’re a guy or a girl...or likely, by the way you hear them talk even if you’ve never seen them before. And then it goes grammatical gender because when, when you’re actually exposed to the language and you hear it and then you actually see the language and um, like the grammatical gender, like when you say something, um, like different words in French, like you definitely hear the gender for the different words. Um, and just like when you’re speaking the language and body language was my fourth most important because, um, these are all like associated, when you see, when you hear somebody speak the language and you hear what they say and how they express what they say. Because they do say actions speak louder than words, and I definitely think body language plays a big role in how you perceive things. And then experience with the language and its speakers, um, I just think like this one I could have put as high as two. Um, number five could’ve been two and then two would’ve been three and three would’ve been four and four would’ve been five. Um, I mean that’s, to me they’re all, like you need to experi -- like you need to see somebody speak the language to be able to, be able to perceive all these things. So, so like, having, hearing and seeing somebody speak the language, um, definitely goes a long way into how you perceive the gender of the language or if the language has, had a gender. And sexuality is like a distance six.” (Devon).

In conclusion, all participants felt that phonetics and phonology, personal experience with a language and its speakers, cultural associations, grammatical gender, and body language were all significant contributors to gendered language attitudes. Participants differed in the significance they gave each of these factors and in the ways that they described the relationships among these factors. However, for most sexuality was viewed as relatively unimportant despite how often questions of sexuality were evoked in the focus group and interview discussions. During our interview conversation, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) was also particularly attentive to the potential implications of gendered language attitudes noting that, whatever their sources, gendered language attitudes would affect different individuals in different ways.

It depends on like where that person's locus of control is, like if they feel what other people's opinions of them carry great weight on their actions then definitely like having that connotation will affect whether they decide to learn the language and like if that person doesn't really care what other people think then you know they learn anyways but yeah it definitely depends on where that person feels the most pull (John).

John spoke of an external locus of control, identifying those individuals who were concerned with their appearance to others as those individuals who would be most affected by such gendered language attitudes. Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) echoed this differing relationship, noting that he remained unconcerned about what others think of him both in general and in relationship to femininity when it comes to the subjects he studies in school.

Like for me I don't care if I'm the only male in the class. It's not going to... I'll take a gender equality class. I'll take a female empowerment class. It's not like a, something that like, concerns me too much. But I'm sure there are some males out there that are concerned with taking on that sort of quality. So that's kind of where I see it (Alan).

Both Alan and John felt that they were less affected by gendered language attitudes than many individuals might be. They outlined that those concerned with the way they appear to others would be more likely to be influenced by gendered language attitudes than they felt they themselves were.

Other emotions. Emotions were recurrent in discussions with participants, who spoke of anxiety, pride, fear, joy, nostalgia, and passion in the context of learning and speaking a second language. Their emotive statements were demonstrative of their own orientation towards affective variables. Questions of emotion were primarily addressed within the context of other variables, however, there were two affective variables that did not fit within other narratives: nostalgia and passion.

Hearing certain languages may incite nostalgia because of feelings one has attached to a language variety, often based on particular experiences with that language. When asked how he felt about hearing Cantonese after he expressed not being able to help but eavesdrop when he hears the language, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) said that he felt “almost like nostalgic cause you don’t speak it very often unless you’re like at home so honestly it’s a little comforting to hear.” Carey (Female, French) echoed this feeling regarding Lao, the language her parents speak, saying that “yeah [...] it’s nice cause I don’t really hear people speak it that much.” Nostalgia was used to highlight the deeply emotional connections one can have with a particular language variety. Passion was used as a summative label by Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) to condense his gendered language attitudes stemming from both cultural perceptions and body language as well as his perceptions of himself.

I kind of think like one thing for French specifically um to sum it up I think would be passionate too I think passion is a big thing I think it’s just like I guess the way

French is portrayed and then also just linguistically and you use a lot of hand gestures and stuff and I think it's a very passionate language and I think that kind of correlates with who I am and I'm kind of more emotionally driven so yeah it's a very emotionally driven and yeah there's a lot of verbiage like a lot of expression in it I think that kind of connects with who I am (Alan).

He used this word, *passionate*, to describe the alignment he saw between his self-perceptions and his perceptions of the French language and culture.

Sense of belongingness. Self-perceptions and perceptions of target languages, target language speakers, and target language cultures appeared to be entailed by questions of belonging. Participants discussed how their own self-perceptions varied with the people they are speaking with as well as with the language they are speaking (Maria: Female, French, Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) and how this nexus related to their sense of belongingness. Specifically, Maria discussed how she modified her speech or switched the language variety she was using entirely in order to better relate to her interlocutors and in turn also to be accepted by others. She summarized the complexity and interrelatedness of her self-perceptions and others perceptions of her indexed via language by saying "I think language really does influence and in fact support my identities cause it affects how I perceive how others are perceiving me and that affects how I'm perceiving myself," (Maria). Alan further explained how he sees language and identity and languages as intimately connected, where languages make possible or impossible certain identities. Alan discussed that although his mother is Croatian and he has significant cultural knowledge, he does not feel comfortable claiming a Croatian identity because he cannot speak the language. These two broad examples are illustrative of numerous narratives that connected language, identity, and belonging. Such narratives treated belonging through a number of

lenses including the presence of men in French, perceptions of men who do learn French related to sexuality, how second language speakers are perceived by native speakers of the target language, opinions others hold of those who are learning French, and the importance of knowing others who speak the target language. Data related to these lenses are presented in this order in the sections that follow.

This data served to elaborate upon the quantitative finding regarding the importance of a sense of belongingness. In the quantitative portion of this study, sense of belongingness was significantly related to a desire to learn French. A hierarchical regression model was run using data from all participants to examine if gender identity, gender presentation, gendered language attitudes, and sense of belongingness are significant predictors of desire to learn French for this sample (Table 2). The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 274) = 12.63, p < .01$, and the full model explained 14% of the variance in desire to learn French. Further, belongingness was a significant predictor of desire to learn French ($\beta = .38, p < .01$). Gendered language attitudes and belongingness account for 14% of the variance in desire to learn French when controlling for gender identity and presentation. Sense of belongingness was also a significant predictor of motivational intensity (Tables 7 and 8) in the quantitative portion of this study ($\beta = .28, p < .01$). To elaborate, the hierarchical regression model that examined if gender identity, gender presentation, gendered language attitudes and sense of belongingness are significant predictors of motivational intensity for the full sample (Table 8) was statistically significant, $F(4, 274) = 9.78, p < .01$, and the full model explained 13% of the variance in motivational intensity. While gender identity and presentation accounted for 4% of the variance in motivational intensity, gendered

language attitudes and belongingness accounted for an additional 8% of the variance in motivational intensity when controlling for gender identity and presentation.

Sense of belongingness: Do men learn French? When I asked participants what they thought about the idea that “some people have suggested that guys don’t really learn French,” their responses were primarily in agreement. Participants cited their experience with French language learning being marked by a greater presence of female individuals in their classes than male individuals. “That’s pretty true, there’s three guys in my class out of probably like ten so thirty percent,” (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs). “When I think of my high school classroom there’s far more women than men,” noted Gabrielle (Female, French). Bara (Female, French) echoed these assessments stating that “the guys usually took Latin or Spanish” and explicitly connected this to the perceived femininity of French stating that, males, in general, are “probably not going to want to learn a girly language!” The only male who had learned French in focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) noted that he attended an all-boys school where the French language was a compulsory subject for some time (Don: Male, French). Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) also acknowledged that he had been in French courses with more women than men and expressed the possibility of this trend’s relationship to a gender-coded stereotype.

I noticed like at my high school uh like I took French in high school and all throughout high school and then like here I learned like I mean I always noticed there are more women in French classes I guess the stereotype [...] for whatever reason there tend to be more women and I guess I don’t know if learning the language is any different for them but I just notice that there are more of them taking the language and um continuing with it and eventually they become really good at it so I just noticed that there are more women I wouldn’t say that there’s like that it’s like a different learning experience just because you’re a woman but

there definitely are more women who women are definitely more inclined to stick it through and continue taking it I guess [...] overall women don't feel like the outside pressure of like it's a feminine language so they can so they feel more comfortable taking it whereas if a guy takes French he has like like I guess you might be asked by like your friends why are you taking such a feminine language and like I guess a lot of people don't see the language French as useful because there aren't there's like not really a large French speaking population in the United States or at least not here in the South so it's kind of seen as like a waste of time if you do decide to take it (Devon).

In his interview, Devon expanded upon this discussion to suggest that the language may, in part, be gendered as feminine because there are more women in the United States who learn French than there are men who learn French:

I definitely think most people in the US think the language is feminine, and like, I think it's a big part, I think it's due in large part to the people who want to learn the language and people that are receptive to the language. Um, French is usually used by, um, I mean, for the most part what I've seen is, like, a lot more women are in French classes or a lot more women seek to try to learn French. And they're, I guess they are also the ones that are more receptive to the language and they definitely get more involved in classes and I guess like, clubs, and things like that about the language. Um, they're definitely I guess, more I guess, towards it. Whereas guys, guys don't really pay attention to language. And, um, that's how I feel, that's just, I think that's just how I see it in the US. It's definitely more of a woman's thing to like and speak French (Devon).

Devon later continued to address this issue, suggesting that men were not in French classes because of a perceived incongruence between their sense of self as masculine and the way they viewed the language as feminine: "If somebody sees themselves as masculine and sees French as feminine, then they would avoid learning a feminine language. Um, yeah just avoid, um, I guess perceived stereotypes or something like that," (Devon). Taylor (Male, French) agreed that he had also been in French courses with primarily women, and also overtly connected this trend with gendered language attitudes, suggesting that the characterization of French as feminine resulted in men being more inclined to learn Spanish: "And I think more [women than men] are inclined to take the

class because they don't because the guys associate the things with French so I think they're steered towards Spanish," (Taylor).

While it was noted to be gender-role inappropriate for most males, this characterization was somewhat problematized; French was perceived as being a language for certain male-identified individuals to learn but not others. Specifically, French was characterized as being appropriate for artistic male-identified individuals but not for stereotypically masculine individuals (Sally: Female, No French, Stephan: Male, No French). Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) expressed concern as to how others would treat a man who studies French, though he did not report having received negative feedback about his own engagement with the language: "I definitely think sometimes people try to attack. Like, attack others who, like if you're a guy and you see yourself as masculine and you see French as feminine and you see another guy but you don't know how he sees himself but takes French, then you kind of want to attack him for taking French and you want to reduce him to the stereotypes of the language. And, um, I feel like that can happen sometimes," (Devon).

As conversations surrounding this topic continued, questions of sexuality arose with, in one case, the sexuality of Sally's (Female, No French) brother coming under question.

Sally: For me I think of like guys learning French I don't know I mean it also depends on the guy I guess [...] like I can imagine like my brother learning French cause he's just like a really like artsy like kinda guy but like I don't know like some of my friends I couldn't imagine them learning French like I don't know

Stephan (Male, No French): Like really buff guys! [laughs]

Sally: Yeah

Ryan (Male, No French): So, let me: your brother being this artsy kind of guy that doesn't make him any less masculine right?

Sally: No [laughs] no. No but we just kind of make fun of my brother all the time for just like his it's kind of really bad it's just like he like he makes fun of himself too but we always joke like if he's gay and it's like [everyone laughs]

Stephan: I was going to say! I was waiting for that [laughs]

Sally: [laughs] it's really bad! But I don't know there's this one story that my brother told me that I think is really funny he uh like his friend just randomly during school came up to him and was like guess what and he said I'm not gay? And we always joke about him having a coming out party for him being straight like I mean like it's not we just like joke about it it's not I don't know [laughs] but I've never thought of him as being like not masculine but like I don't know but at like the same time he also goes to the gym all the time and stuff so like he does have that like kind of masculinity my brother is just like an interesting kid [laughs] I don't know.

Although Ryan sought to problematize the connection between the idea of Sally's brother learning French and any affront to his masculinity, when asked if men learn French, Ryan outright disagreed: "American guys don't learn French," (Ryan). Stephan countered this statement, saying that it was a stereotype but that this stereotype was indicative of how French is perceived by Americans.

I think it's a stereotype but I think there's always a reason to it. It's sad to say but you have to think of their perspective like why would someone say something like that and like what's a big thing in France? Like fashion, right? Like all those things like that's what like an American would view that fashion is feminine, right? And like a lot of those things I think has a huge influence in the sense that yeah guys don't speak French um and I think anyone I think I know I heard this from somewhere but one of my friends is actually into fashion and he really wants to learn French and just that idea and yeah just even not many guys are into fashion and stuff like that although that itself is a stereotype too but I think that's it says something about how Americans view certain things (Stephan).

Ryan continued to seek an explanation for his own beliefs as he highlighted the importance of considering the intersections with language learning and one's choice of major asking, "does language have anything to do with choosing a major you think? Like say Engineering is all guys majoring in Engineering but like Psyche or English other liberal arts education majors there's a lot of girls" (Don: Male, French).

Relatedly, in addition to French-language specific comments, participants expressed a belief that there are more female-identified individuals present in language classes than male-identified individuals, based on their own observations and experiences (Maria: Female, French, Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs). “There are more girls enrolled in language classes that I’ve seen in my life,” (Maria). And were careful to clarify that there were always some males present “I don’t think I’ve ever had a French class where there’s no guys, there’s always been some guys but at [University] it’s mostly been girls” (Kurt: Male, French). Interwoven in this discussion of the gendering of language-learning writ large, some of my participants thought there was a potential for men who do learn French to experience positive effects from their language proficiency, particularly in terms of their heterosexual prowess.

I’m trying to like go back to my class and think of like the diversity in it. I think there’s definitely a willingness of guys to learn French I think it’s I mean it’s a cool language and I mean let’s be honest it’s a romantic language too so like I mean if you’re interested in the girls it’s not a bad one to pick! [laughs] You know like there’s all that stereotypical women love guys who speak French, you know what I’m saying? Like it’s a romantic language and he’s so sensitive and blah blah blah so it’s not always a bad thing I think there’s definitely like a niche market quote unquote for French speaking guys (Alan).

Similar to the niche market described by Alan, Bara (Female, French) expressed the possibility of positive associations with being sensitive. “That could be to his advantage because if he’s sensitive...” (Bara). Interestingly, the strongest advocates for this narrative of potential heterosexual prowess were women and one gay male participant.

This relationship between heterosexuality and learning French was re-evoked by one female participant as she talked about how her brother was explicitly demotivated to learn French due to its characterization as a feminine endeavor.

I don't know where or how the notion that French is feminine comes from or how it shapes it but I definitely think it deters men like my brother from taking French cause he specifically said no, it's for girls so I mean unless you have like a personal tie to it like my dad who wanted to be connected to the family so he took French cause you know he wanted to get closer to the family but otherwise I don't think he would have so but that's just my approach picking up girls and the personal tie (Kelly: Female, French).

In this quotation, Kelly both identified the stereotype that French is feminine and thus males may be deterred from learning the language and that there are certain means by which this deterrent may be mitigated. Specifically, she talked about having a personal connection to the language variety and about desiring to learn French as intertwined with male heterosexuality. In response to Kelly's story, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) said that he had experienced this French as feminine stereotype play out in his own life. "I think there's definitely the feminine stereotype to French and I got a lot of similar reactions when I started French," (Luke).

Though all of the participants in this conversation agreed with the idea that men are not as present in the French classroom as women, one participant tried to find reasons for why this could be that were not explicitly related to gender. His rationale for why men do not enrolling French courses focused on the perceived practicality of another language variety in male-dominated domains such as business. This connection, though not explicitly connected to gender, relates back to American hegemonic masculinity being characterized as intertwined with concerns of pragmatism and practicality as described in the existing literature.

"It could be like that just like looking at like more like unexpected causes of things maybe less men take French because more men take Spanish because they're going into business or something [...] So just by like the log---- just by like the train of thought that like there are more men in business and in business Spanish is import--- so more men take Spanish or I don't know something like that so maybe other languages are taking away from French rather than people

being like oh French is feminine that's not for me though that could be a cause too I'm just trying to think of like other causes" (Joe: Male, French).

Joe's commentary related closely to Ryan's earlier noted questions of the relationship between men in particular majors and men in French classrooms. These questions of practicality were also evoked by participants when I asked them about whether they had ever been criticized for taking French. In fact, people do not seem to explicitly link their criticisms of men taking French with gender but tend to pass through arguments of practicality.

I mean [I have been criticized for taking French] not in terms of like anything serious but like people are like why would you take French and they don't have any reason behind it but they immediately question it I mean it could be the practical aspect as well that America has a stronger Spanish influence in terms of language at least but I got questioned a lot more like why are you taking French there wasn't like a follow up but that was there (Luke: Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs).

Issues of practicality are however reported as being more explicitly linked to issues of class in the stories of being criticized for learning the French language that my participants reported.

I've never gotten any flack but I've gotten like this you think you're being sophisticated like where are you going to speak French in your ivory tower of Versailles like [everyone laughs] so it's not necessarily flack as in its feminine but it's flack in terms of it's not practical or you know bourgeois (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs).

In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) specifically drew connections between the weight of feminine perceptions of the French language and men choosing to learn languages other than French:

I just think, I mean I don't think, I think that the French, I guess guys don't want to be -- since people in the US have a perception of French and, like, French people being soft, they don't necessarily want to be associated with the language. Um, and, or the culture and like, the language is a very big part of the culture. So if you associate with it I guess you're also seen as also being soft. So, I guess they

question their masculinity in that way. Um, while women aren't, I mean, they're not as threatened by the language because it doesn't bother them being seen as soft. So, to them I guess it's just another language that they can learn and there's no, like, double standard with it. There's no other weight with learning the language and they just see it as another language they can learn to use to speak to other people (Devon).

A difference between the perceived and the real was clearly drawn. When asked if learning French was any different for female individuals and male individuals, my participants noted that they could not think of any reasons why it should be cognitively different, but did note that they "would not be surprised if it was or if people felt like it was so," (Tammy: Female, No French). Josh expanded this dialogue to consider the potential experiences of a male-identified individual in learning a language that is perceived as feminine:

I feel like it's not actually any different but his experience in learning it might end up being different because pretty much everyone here you know when they were asked to name a feminine language French was the first thing that came to mind so I feel like in telling people like oh I'm learning French, he might sort of be stereotyped as more feminine himself because he's learning it or more sensitive I don't know (Josh: Male, No French).

Don (Male, French) agreed with Josh's assessment of the difference between intrinsic differences and the ways in which such language study would be perceived stating that, "I don't think that it's intrinsically different but the attitudes that people have towards it might cause it to be seen differently," (Don).

Questions of effort arose where males were described as equally capable of learning the French language, but it was noted that there were a number of males who did not make a serious effort to learn the French language.

The boys that were in my French class actually like a fair amount were pretty good but like the others they were just kind of a class joke and they made the learning environment like more fun and amusing but I wouldn't say that they were serious academic people (Gabrielle: Female, French).

In his interview, Devon also expressed that the effort extended by individuals who view the language as in conflict with their identity may be reduced. In his words:

If people do decide to take the language, they probably won't put as much effort, like, into learning the language as much as they could or should and they don't want to. Like if it's a required class they don't want to immerse themselves in the language. They just want to say, 'Oh I only took the class because I had to, not because, um, not because I wanted to.' And like, even if they find themselves enjoying the class they would try, um, try to, I guess, not admit to themselves that they really are learning or gaining something valuable from the class (Devon).

Contrary to this lack of effort narrative, Devon also noted that those who choose to learn the language and who extend effort to do so, are capable of success. He notes, "by sheer by numbers it would be guys don't learn French but guys who stay in the class actually learn the language," (Devon). However, both Taylor and Devon highlighted the fact that gendered language attitudes could dissuade those who believed them from taking French language classes but that if one chose to take a French course despite such attitudes, that the individual would acquire the language in the same way regardless of gender.

Aside from some people who might hold the stereotype and feel like they're true or whatever and not take French classes just because of that I feel like if you choose to take the class you'll learn just the same it won't be any different for you but those who choose not to take the French classes because of whatever they associate with French I think most certainly would experience something different (Taylor: Male, French).

In conclusion, overall, participants agreed that men are less present in French language classrooms than women. Further, participants largely agreed that men who learn French are likely to experience negative attitudes, chiefly related to the language's perceived impracticality and femininity. Such negative feedback was cited to treat perceived male gender-role inappropriate behavior via questions of class and sexuality.

Some males were suggested to be exempt from such criticism. Males in this exempted category included those with personal ties to the language, male artists, and those with explicit pragmatic reasons for learning the language. Participants also suggested that French language learning by males was socially acceptable when the language was employed as a tool for heterosexual prowess. Participants did, however, draw a clear distinction between questions of perception and questions of achievement. It was noted that while the social implications of learning French differed for males and females, the ability to and process of learning French was understood as being the same for female- and male-identified individuals. The degree of effort extended by males to learn a language was, however, debated.

Sense of belongingness: Are men in French gay? In discussions of whether men learn French, questions of sexuality were evoked. When asked to respond to the comment that men who learn French are gay, one participant quickly linked European masculinity with a perception of being gay. She was adamant, however, that this was not particular to French men but was generally applicable to European men due to their attention to appearance. She found the connection of French and Italian cultures with fashion made these cultures particularly effeminized in the minds of Americans and appeared to characterize French as the most closely associated with gay men.

I don't think that's related to the French I think that's related to European-ness my opinion of at least when I'm in Europe from an American perspective I would begin to think that they're all gay because they dress so well and it's so nice and I wish we would adopt that [everyone laughing] their clothes fit nicely they match they care about their shoes they care about their hair they spend as much time getting ready as the girls do and so I think a lot of that is associated so strongly with French and French culture because they are like the Italians so connected to fashion but it translates to the study of the language but I think it's that European culture of the way guys look in Europe and they do they look a lot more like the stereotypes associated with gay men and I love it they look fabulous [everyone

laughs. Interesting word choice here] but I know, fabulous! But I think that becomes associated with the language more so than studying Spanish because that's connected so much with Mexico because it's closer or um German because that's just such a harsh language to begin with you don't associate it with that type of image so I think it just sort of gets thrust onto French (Sue: Female, French).

Another female participant explicitly discussed the link between feminine stereotypes of the French language and the fact that we stereotype males engaged in feminine activities as gay.

I think it's because our stereotype for the French language is so heavily tied with femininity that if we if people see men trying to learn it who aren't French themselves they would start questioning that like why would you want to be more feminine or something like that and that's probably one of the reasons why it's seen that way and people would give some guys flack for wanting to learn French (Carey: Female, French)

While the female participants in this study readily discussed the possible origins of this stereotype, the male participants appeared to be very concerned with its factuality or falsity. They began asking for statistics (John: Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) and providing information on the perceived sexuality of their peers in their French classes (Joe: Male, French) as well as re-asserting their own heterosexuality (John, Joe, and Luke). When one of the female participants, Kelly (Female, French), sympathized with the male students having to deal with such a stereotype, the male students reacted by once again asserting their heterosexuality.

Kelly: Poor guys you get a bad rap!
 John: Psh
 [Luke laughing awkwardly/uncomfortably]
 John: I think it's selectively in our favor so
 Luke: Yeah
 Joe: HmMMM

By re-inscribing the act of learning French with heterosexual prowess, the male-identified participants in this focus group were able to subvert the stereotype.

This uneasiness or anxiety displayed by John, Joe, and Luke was also evident in the narratives of other participants. When I began to ask questions treating sexuality, all participants in the second focus group appeared nervous, with the exception of Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) who identifies as a gay man. Their nervousness appeared with frequent restarts and a difficulty choosing terms. For example, Maria (Female, French) said “I’m not sure what they classify as but I think that most of them are not homosexual that sounds bad sorry they’re what they classify as but I think that most of them are not homosexual that sounds bad I’m sorry they’re not gay.” My gay male-identified participant quickly and eagerly refuted the possibility that the majority of men learning French are gay, but did qualify his assertion stating that French may be among a group of languages viewed as spoken in cultures that are more tolerant of gay individuals.

My question! [...] I wouldn’t say so [...] I wouldn’t say that like we’re targeting one sort of language you know? [...] However,] I don’t think if you’re a gay male you would be choosing languages that were perhaps more like negative towards that sort of cultural identity talking about it earlier like I don’t think you’re going to get a lot of gay men that are going to go towards very traditional sort of cultural norms but I think that for if you just look towards that those are more accepting I don’t think you’re going to get one as like a standout example versus other ones so I don’t think I would say French is chosen for that (Alan).

Another participant reacted to the question by highlighting its relationship to the stereotyping of French as feminine: “it sounds like trying to draw parallels between two stereotypes,” (Kurt: Male, French), a connection that several other participants agreed with (Alan, Maria).

If French is more feminized and gay men are more feminized, therefore there are more gay men that speak French than any other language so I think it’s kind of like let’s just start joining [...] stereotypes together and that’s like an obvious conclusion someone makes but if that’s really the case? I’m going to say B.S. because there are some very masculine gay men and some very feminized quote

like heterosexual men so it's one of those things where I think you just like make an association where it's not (Alan).

Overall, participants across focus groups felt it was wrong to make an overarching generalization about the sexuality of men who learn French. However, the participants in focus group three (both male and female identified individuals, both individuals who have and who have not studied French) all laughed as Josh stated that “the only guy I knew that took French in high school was gay so I feel like it's definitely not true [that all men who learn French are gay] but I think you're more likely to maybe be stereotyped as gay.” Don (Male, French) quickly asserted his own heterosexuality while recognizing the existence of stereotypes of the French language as feminine and gay.

I took French and I'm not gay [...] but I can see that the stereotype exists not that I think it's true but I think that I went to like a Catholic all boys school and so if you did take people would kind of joke about French not being like the most masculine language (Don: Male, French).

Some participants appeared deeply upset by the discussion of this stereotype (Gabrielle: Female, French, Bara: Female, French) asking “Does it make you more masculine to speak German? [...] Or like more of a man if you speak Hungarian?” (Gabrielle) and “Why is it that the only way you can be gay is if you do something girly?” (Bara).

Questioning the sexuality of men who learn French appeared to inspire either defensiveness, laughter, or both for all participants. Defensiveness was more frequent in focus groups that either included both males and females or that included both individuals who had and had not ever learned French, whereas the reactions of participants in the all-male focus group for individuals who have studied French reacted primarily with laughter; Both Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) and Taylor (Male, French) laughed when I asked if men who learned French were gay,

but promptly acknowledged the fact that they knew people who thought that way and cited stereotyping as the source of such attitudes. Devon noted that he had never had someone overtly address the stereotype with him but that he suspected that individuals thought that about him before they knew him. In his words: “People are thinking it but they’ve never said it to me. That’s something people don’t dare say out loud,” (Devon).

In another focus group, focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French), illustrations of such thinking were recorded, with several participants agreeing that men who learn French are often gay (Sally: Female, No French, Stephan: Male, No French). However, in this focus group where individuals chiefly agreed that males in French are often gay, two participants strongly questioned the validity of such a statement, highlighting its stereotypical nature (Don: Male, French, Ryan). In this same focus group, others spoke to the fact that speaking French may also be a source of heterosexual prowess (Jen: Female, No French, Stephan).

Sally: Honestly? It’s plausible [that guys who learn French are usually gay].

Stephan: It sounds SO bad [laughs] but it sounds so bad [laughs] but I can see where it’s coming from. I can really see where it’s coming from.

Don (Male, French): Is it because of the way they speak?

Stephan: Yeah that but it’s just like it kind of creeps me out when a guy speaks French rather than a girl like I said I think of the French language as a very attractive language you know but when I hear a guy speak French I just get very I’m just like ugh god and when I hear a girl speak it I’m just like dang that’s pretty hot you know? [laughs]

Jen: Honestly that’s something though cause in my neuroscience class we just watched a video and the guy was French and the girls were like [screams] oh my god he’s so hot! And cause he’s French.

Stephan: The other thing though is that I would want to learn to speak French so I could get all the girls [laughs] it’s not like it’s not in the sense like guys speaking French sounds kinda creepy but hey I guess like that’s a way to get the girls [...]

Ryan: Again I think you have to build in that we’re talking about in an American context cause like we talked about fashion and in a different context it’s becoming a bigger thing in the male world fashion is but it’s still more of a feminine thing and there’s this stigma of like oh you dress well you’re gay kind of thing [Stephan

laughs] but in Korea that's not the case and actually a lot of Americans when they go to Korea they're like wow everybody's gay here
 Stephan: Like why are guys wearing purses? [laughs]
 Ryan: Yeah and that's not the case [not everyone is gay] and also a lot of at [University] I've met a lot of Korean international students taking French and my reaction was no reaction like oh you're taking French just like you're taking Chinese it's the same thing.

In conclusion, sense of belongingness and sexualized stereotypes about the French and individuals who study French were deeply connected. While its factuality was actively questioned, all participants recognized the stereotype that men who study French are gay.

Sense of belongingness: Native French speaker perceptions. Conversations regarding whether participants felt that they belonged in French language communities, including French language classrooms, evoked concerns with how they are perceived by members of the target language community (Kurt: Male, French, Maria: Female, French, Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs). Participants spoke chiefly of anxiety surrounding their level of linguistic proficiency, as was addressed earlier in this section of chapter four.

Sense of belongingness: Experience with the opinions of others. In addition to more generalized commentary on how learning French is perceived in the United States and how non-native speakers of French are perceived by native speakers, participants considered their own experiences with reflections upon their language learning by others. My participants discussed the ways in which others perceive French, often citing two possible categories: 1) those individuals who would also like to learn French and 2) those individuals who view French as impractical (Alan, Kurt).

Well why are you doing French? It's less useful than like these other languages so it's kind of like that dichotomy of like wow that's really cool that's really great

and I want to do it too or other people who are like why French cause it doesn't make any sense blah blah blah so I don't know I don't usually pay attention to those second kinds of people anyway (Alan).

Taylor (Male, French) expressed having had others tell him that French was not a useful choice, unless he intended on moving to a Francophone country: "they feel like it won't be as useful in the future unless I go to France or another French speaking country but they feel like it won't be as useful here because there are way more Spanish speakers," (Taylor).

Curiously, this dichotomy of opinions was only presented by male-identified participants, with female participants only recalling positive comments of how interesting, ritzy, glamorous, or cool it was that they were studying French (Maria: Female, French). Maria discussed how she felt these comments were aligned with her own feelings towards studying the language, "I feel like it can be kinda ritzy, it can make me seem a little more glamorous for whatever reason if I'm speaking French or I know French" (Maria). No female participants expressed having someone tell them that French was impractical.

Sense of belongingness: Knowing others who speak the target language. A sense of belongingness was intimately related to knowing speakers of the target language either within their own community or more distantly. More specifically, an individual's choice of which language to study was often related to whether individuals in their life spoke the target language (Tammy: Female, No French). Tammy expressed choosing to learn Spanish "largely because my peers were learning the Spanish language." She continued to express that her continued study of the language from 7th grade through the end of high school was driven by knowing others who were learning Spanish, despite

changing school districts multiple times. Her story would appear to lend support to a relationship between a sense of belongingness and retention. Similarly, Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs) expressed that his mother's knowledge of the French language was a significant factor in his learning thereof.

I know my mom was a big Francophile and I, like, I just had kind of a French...like, I didn't learn the language from a young age, but I had, like, a French influence. Um, so it wasn't so much like being forced to do it. It was more like there's, it just makes sense to do it. [...] She would speak French around me. Not specifically to teach me the language. But I remember in early high school-er, uh, in early grade school, um, like some people didn't know what *bonjour* meant. And I just assumed everyone knows *bonjour*. So it was more like an underlying assumption about French that it's just like, it's important. Everyone knows it's important. [...] If there was no French or Spanish influence, I probably would've gone with Spanish because everyone's doing Spanish and we're in America and you have to learn Spanish. Um, but this was what originally sent me down the track of speaking French and now I have my own reasons for taking it. Um, but I think that's what began it (Luke).

Although neither Luke nor Tammy were compelled by others to learn the specific languages they chose, having close relationships with others who spoke the target languages either natively or non-natively made the choice to learn the specific language variety appear logical to them.

In addition to knowing others who spoke the target language, exposure to individuals speaking the target language who weren't necessarily members of the participant's community also appeared to have a positive relationship with motivation to learn the language.

I started taking Spanish in southern California and it's a language that's where I grew up and it's a language that I had been exposed to for a long time sort of hearing it in the background because there are so many Spanish speakers and people in San Diego and I just thought it was interesting that the Spanish language sounds so familiar to me that it wasn't like startling when I heard someone speaking a different language behind me that was Spanish but like other languages like German, Japanese it was kind of startling to hear especially when like you

didn't know what's going on and the sounds are so different that I think it's just interesting (Tammy: Female, No French).

Exposure to a particular language variety appeared to decrease its perceived foreignness and create a sort of relationship between the participant and the language variety.

Beyond their existent communities, meeting other speakers of the target language was highlighted as a positive experience, though acceptance into a group of native speakers appeared to be a more problematic question. Social divisions between native speakers and nonnative speakers as well as between individuals from a country where the target language is spoken versus those not from a target language country were discussed.

When I hear people speak Korean it's like more inviting for me like oh this guy's Korean so like we have something more in common like you see people like back in high school there would be a Korean group of people cause like they're all more comfortable that way but like it's actually really hard for me personally cause I wasn't that fluent in Korean and although I was trying to gear towards more Korean people they weren't as inviting because I could speak and um it was that was like a big struggle especially in college like sad to say people do judge you know they would be like oh there's this guy who is from Korea like a Korean Korean and like there's this American and they would label you that as a Korean American not just Korean like no he's Korean American you know so it's I guess that also gets involved in a lot of things and like you think of everyone in college so there's a Korean club called Koosa and there's another one called Kisseem and that's where like international Koreans go cause like and they did a funny video where they're like not supposed to meet with one another and I thought that was I mean obviously they couldn't like stream there but it was funny cause like you could see that happening in a lot of things (Stephan: Male, No French).

In conclusion, knowing and meeting speakers of a target language appeared to have positive motivational effects. These effects were, however, problematized in that knowing native speakers did not always entail feeling a part of a target language community.

For Luke (Male, French, not highly masculine, strong GLAs), knowing others who speak French and being able to communicate with those individuals in the target

language served not only to provide a sense of belonging at present but also was an important component of how he envisioned his future. “[I see myself using French in the future in a context that is] Professional if that happens to be where I’m working. And personal...hopefully I have a lot of friends and know a lot of people that speak French too,” (Luke). He hoped to be able to use his French language skills in a professional context in the future if the opportunity arose, but expressed being particularly motivated by the possibility of constructing personal relationships with speakers of French in the future. Knowing speakers of French also allowed Luke to draw a clear distinction between stereotypes and reality. He noted that “a lot of the stereotypes are just, like, generalizations of behavior and I just, I don’t generally see them as going against the general American. Like, the stereotypes can go head-to-head but the actual people... they just, they’re people,” (Luke). The French speakers that he had met allowed him to highlight the similarities between himself and individuals from other cultures.

Additionally, beyond knowing individuals who speak the target language, knowing multilingual individuals more generally also appears to have positive motivational effects.

I guess that’s also like another incentive, right? It’s sort of like family roles... and like, my mom speaks multiple languages. And you know, and I don’t know, just like from that culture I guess, of like, the European culture, it’s kind of... Most of them speak at least two languages, if not more, right? Especially if you live on a border, if you interact with certain nations. And I don’t know it’s something that I’ve always wanted to do. I do believe it kind of keeps you also, engaged. Like it helps with studying. You know, I wouldn’t be where I’m at if, like, you know, I don’t know (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs).

Alan talked about a culture of multilingualism in his family stemming from the fact that his parents are both multilingual. He felt that this valuing of learning additional languages

has helped him continue his engagement with learning the French language, though neither of his parents speak French.

To summarize the findings related to sense of belongingness, narratives of self-perceptions and perceptions of target languages were entailed with questions of a sense of belongingness. These narratives addressed the presence of and perceptions of men in French classrooms, opinions others hold of those learning French, and the role of knowing others who learn and who speak the target language. French language learning was understood as having social consequences for males who did not have a personal connection to the language, an established alternative masculinity such as that of male artists, or who did not explicitly use the language as a tool for heterosexual prowess. Participants further recognized the stereotype that the French and men who study French are perceived as gay. In addition to concerns regarding how they were perceived by their peers and other Americans, participants considered their feelings of anxiety regarding the ways in which they are perceived by native speakers, particularly as it concerned their level of linguistic proficiency. Sharing their personal experiences with the opinions of others, male participants discussed the perceived impracticality of learning French, while no such narrative was present in the discourses of female participants. Knowing or having the opportunity to meet speakers of the target language, however, contributed positively to a sense of belongingness, particularly when one was accepted into a community of both native and non-native speakers of the language.

The role of language requirements. In addition to a strong sense of belongingness positively contributing to language learning motivation, language requirements were also often evoked as being central to an individual's engagement in

language learning (Gabriella: Female, French). Gabriella discussed how language requirements related to her engagement with language learning, noting that she wished she would have pushed herself to become fluent in a language. Her narrative shows that her retention in any language was closely related to requirements of the educational institutions she attended.

In the fourth grade I started learning another language. I started taking Spanish which was required for everyone to take it from fourth grade to sixth grade and then in seventh grade you had the option to continue with Spanish or to take Latin and so I opted to take Latin and um I wouldn't say I've totally immersed myself in any language or like foreign culture [...] I took French for four years in high school and then I just needed a break so I had to take a language this year but I think if I really had pushed myself then I could have become a stronger French speaker (Gabriella).

A lack of motivation to push herself to continue to study a language resulted in Gabby's limited language proficiency and engagement with language learning despite the desire she expressed to be fluent in a language and culture and her recognition of the importance of being able to speak another language.

I don't think I ever found a language interesting. There were certain aspects of the culture that I really connected with but I didn't have like a genuine passion and like drive to continue with a language and I think partly that was my own laziness cause it does require a ton of um self-advocacy because you constantly have to practice and memorize and just continue on with the language and I just really wasn't interested in that to be perfectly honest but I do very much regret not being able to speak another language because it's only going to hinder me in the future (Gabriella).

Gabby's story resonated with Tamara, who also expressed that she wished she had "stuck to one and kinda mastered one language instead of trying to learn more" (Tamara: Female, No French). This narrative of the exploration of several languages without mastering any language appeared to be a persistent theme, articulated by five separate individuals.

Jen (Female, No French) highlighted the importance of language requirements for engaging male-identified individuals in language learning, citing language learning amongst male-identified individuals as forced.

I think at least in America I think there is less and this could be stereotyping I think there is less of an inclination to learn language amongst men than there are for women and I noticed that in high school I noticed that there were more the girls were more willing to step out and try another language whereas for the guys it was maybe more of more forced to have to take a language (Jen).

Throughout these narratives, language requirements appeared to provide extrinsic motivation for those who did not have an intrinsic motivation to engage in language learning. Language requirements also appeared to be related to continuing with language learning. In his interview, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) discussed his strong desire to continue formally studying French, but having completed his language requirements was concerned about fulfilling other requirements and balancing a continued formal engagement with French. When I asked him what factors contributed to whether he would decide to continue studying French or not, it was this balancing of the different requirements placed on him that he discussed first and for the greatest amount of time. In his words “just the world load I would have to take in the coming years. Like if I wanted to finish it [a French major or minor] I could [...] So it’s just a matter of my, if I want to work, how hard I want to work,” (Devon). Similarly, John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) also discussed that the potential for him to discontinue his language study was more closely related to the other curricular demands he faced than to a lack of desire to continue French.

I think work load is the biggest factor because I have like 18 credits already and I’m not trying to tack on another language like 4 credits so it’s a substantial amount of work but it’s definitely something I would definitely like think about like even with the high course load like I might maybe move something here

move something there cause like I don't know I think it would be worth my while and you know they always say it's not what you do that you regret, it's what you don't do so I might just do it for the hell of it you know like Pass/Fail yeah I've got a couple of those left so (John).

John and Devon both continued to express a desire to find ways to continue language study and a desire for courses to be offered that would fulfill other requirements while allowing them to continue with the language.

The “good” language learner. In line with self-efficacy theories, previous success in language learning, regardless of the language in question, was perceived as fostering language learning motivation due to anticipated future success. Specifically, several participants expressed a belief in the fact that what makes a good language learner is having learned other languages previously (Maria, Alan, Kurt).

The only thing that I've seen that really seems kind of consistent is the people who know languages are better at learning languages [...] there is a certain utility in learning any language because as people we talked about a few minutes ago learning a language helps you learn other languages because it shows you some of the differences and the concepts (Kurt: Male, French).

Being a good language learner was defined not only in terms of previous success, but also in terms of enjoying the process of language learning.

I think one of the reasons why I enjoyed taking Spanish was because I felt like I was good at it so it came easily to me um had it been difficult for me in particular I don't think I would have enjoyed taking it. I don't think I would have continued with it as long as I did (Tammy: Female, No French).

Participants often related ease of language acquisition to the enjoyment thereof.

Desire to speak with others in the target language. Beyond a need for an ability to speak with others in the target language, and access to interlocutors, a desire to speak with others in the target language was cited as an important aspect of language learning motivation. Further, a perceived importance of learning additional languages was

identified as an important motivational factor for my participants (Devon), with a desire to communicate with native speakers of the target language identified as an underlying reason for this perceived importance of language learning (Devon, Taylor).

I like learning new languages and I felt like learning new languages lets you like connect to more people to like communicate with more people directly um and you lose less in translation when you can actually speak the language that other people are speaking and too so um for me that's kind of like why I consider language or learning languages important and I like it a lot so (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs)

An ability to speak with individuals in a target language was also connected to future professional success by Taylor who noted “it’s important just in especially in today’s very uh connected world where all you can speak with anyone anywhere it’s important for jobs and just communication so,” (Taylor: Male, French). In his interview, Devon reiterated that improving his language skills in order to be able to better communicate with and meet individuals who speak the language as key components of his desire to learn French.

I see it [French] not only as a tool to get better to be able to communicate with people. But I also see it as like, um, I enjoy the language. I enjoy meeting people who speak the language and like, um, just learning about the different, cause like, not all French people are the same. So it’s definitely fun to learn the different ways people speak French and how they use it too (Devon).

Conclusion

To summarize the findings presented in this chapter, gender was indexed by the majority participants in the discourses regarding language varieties and all participants drew connections between language and gender. With the exception of Don (Male, French), all participants gendered particular languages as masculine or feminine. Specific to French, the stereotype of French as feminine was easily recognized by all participants across all focus groups. The participants in the linguist exchange did not appear to

influence the gendering of the French language. Similarly, an individual's experience with studying the French language did not appear to alter the gendering of French as feminine. Despite gendering languages themselves, in general, individuals questioned the validity of gendering languages. Further, participants readily discussed potential sources of their gendered language attitudes including personal experience with particular language varieties.

Parameters surrounding the relevance of identity to language learning and to language attitudes appeared throughout the focus group discussions and interviews including familiarity with the language. Language attitudes appeared to be entailed with questions of identity. Language was recognized as being a source for making assumptions about others as well as a source of information for others to make assumptions about my participants. Several narratives emerged from the data that addressed the ways in which participants negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others' perceptions of a language variety. These narratives of relationship between identity and perceptions of language varieties can be categorized as either in alignment or misaligned. A narrative of alignment was less common than narratives of misalignment. When such an alignment is not present, where there is some disaccord or tension between one's identity and one's own or others' perceptions of the target language, either this misalignment was seen as prohibitive to an engagement with learning the target language or one of a variety of strategies was reported to be employed to engage in acquiring the language including: a strong sense of individuality, an instrumental excuse, a lack of choice, cultivation of the self, appealing to a global identity, evoking heterosexuality, the language learner as an identity, a chance to be someone else, bringing into focus different

aspects of one's identity, proficiency, limiting cultural acquisition, maturity, and hiding one's L2 self. Although some strategies allowed for a reconciliation of heteronormative conceptions of gender and sexuality or a re-configuration of their own senses of self beyond such a framework, participants chiefly addressed the complications that arise within a heterosexual categorization by localizing non-conforming behaviors outside of their identities. Such conflicts were reported to be perceived as being reduced by language exposure and maturity. Self-perceptions and perceptions of target languages, target language speakers, and target language cultures appeared to be entailed by questions of belonging.

Regarding the sources of such gendered language attitudes all participants agreed that the way a language sounds provides important information for considering a language variety to be masculine or feminine. Additionally, personal experience and cultural associations were both important contributors in the minds of my participants to the formation of gendered language attitudes, though neither provided a coherent schema for explaining all of the gendered language attitudes held by participants. Multiple participants also cited grammatical gender, body language, sexuality as contributing to gendered language attitudes.

After discussing gendered language attitudes, participants' identities, and language learning motivation in the focus groups and interviews, I had extended conversations with the four interviewees about possible strategies for increasing motivation amongst college-age American males to learn French. The themes and suggestions from these discussions are outlined in chapter five, after a discussion of all findings as they relate to the existing literature, as these discussions regarding

motivational strategies relate directly to the implications of this study for policy and practice.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Implications, and Directions for Future Research

In this chapter the results from the focus groups and interviews are thematically discussed, organized by the guiding research questions for this study, and situated in the theoretical framework and existing literature presented in chapter two. Following this discussion is a presentation of the implications and directions for future research that have emerged from this study.

Research Question 1: To what extent is gender indexed by individuals in the discourses regarding language varieties?

Gender was indexed by all participants in the discourses regarding language varieties, without prompting. All participants drew connections between language and gender. These findings suggest that individuals have a tendency to orient themselves towards questions of gender when discussing language varieties and language learning. The use of implicitly gendered terms by certain participants (focus groups three and five) before explicitly discussing gender and language suggests that much of the relationship drawn between languages and gender may be tacit knowledge that is made explicit only when attention is drawn to the topic.

Participants' discussions of gender and language readily bled into questions of sexuality, suggesting that the two are often conflated in the minds of individuals. This connection is congruent with the close relationship between these two constructs outlined by scholars such as Cameron (2005), Eckert (1998), and Sauntson (2008) and highlight

the fact that participants may not recognize the distinctness of the two categories. Holland et al. (2001) and Kulick (2003) have outlined the ways in which drawing this distinction is linguistically cumbersome as sexuality terms such as homosexual and heterosexual are dependent upon binary constructs of sex and gender.

Certain languages, including French, appeared to be particularly connected to gender and sexuality in the minds of individuals. This differential degree of perceived relatedness of languages to gender and sexuality echoes work done by Castillo Zaragoza, in which she notes that as learners have differing motives for learning language and thus, “it is not surprising that they have different attitudes towards the languages being learned,” (Castillo Zaragoza, 2011, p.99). The types of language attitudes and ideologies held by individuals in this study were language specific.

Although participants recognized that these gender and sexuality related language ideologies were likely not drawn from any essential truth about the language and perceived these characterizations as stereotypical, they nonetheless held such views of language. In doing so, participants implicitly recognized the ways in which gender and sexuality are organizing categories of social life that extend beyond the properties of individuals, becoming themselves publicly displayed forms of power (Pascoe, 2007). Further, the expression of their gendered and sexualized language ideologies entail a performance of gender and sexual ideologies in interaction (Holland et al., 2001, p.150).

These findings lend support to the idea that young adults do hold gendered language attitudes, which they are readily able to articulate, despite the prominent hypothesis in the existing literature that such attitudes attenuate with maturation (Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau &

Quach, 2006). Further, all participants, including those participants who reported lower gendered language attitudes, were able to recognize the dominant discourses regarding particular language varieties and gender and sexuality. This finding is congruent with the existing literature that suggests that by age ten, individuals tend to have developed the attitudes of the dominant culture (Day, 1982; Giles, et al., 1983), implying the ability to identify dominant discourses (Holland et al., 2001), which have been argued to be a part of a social process of normalization. Further, the dichotomization of sex and gender by participants aligns with the assertion of prominence of a dichotomous conception of sex and gender in popular culture and in popular understandings of the construct (cf. Freed, 2003). Among these dominant discourses that participants openly recognized included the dichotomization of sex, gender, and sexuality, the discourse of French as feminine, an understanding of what constituted the most powerful (hegemonic) form of masculinity, and a seeming naturalization of masculinity and heterosexuality in male bodies.

The saliency of gender and sexuality when considering perceptions of language varieties was less clear in the quantitative data. This may also be related to the tacit nature of such attitudes. The quantitative data suggested that individuals do gender languages as reported on the factor of languages as themselves gendered, but this finding was complicated by the fact that there was slight disagreement on the full gendered language attitudes scale. These mixed results may be related to the perception of holding gendered and sexualized language attitudes as inappropriate and immature. The way these attitudes appear unsayable participates relates to performativity theory (cf. Butler): “One of the central insights of performativity theory [is] namely, that who we are and what we say is

in many ways dependent on who we must not be and what must remain unsaid, or unsayable,” (Kulick, 2003, p. 119).

Research Question 2: How does an individual’s gender, an individual’s linguistic experiences, or the participants in the linguistic exchange relate to whether discourses regarding the French language reference: 1) femininity, 2) masculinity, 3) both femininity and masculinity, or 4) neither femininity nor masculinity?

The participants in the linguist exchange and an individual’s experience with studying the French language did not appear to alter the gendering of French as feminine. All individuals appeared to recognize the dominant discourse of the French language being feminine, and except for Don (Male, French), expressed sharing this assessment. This finding is congruent with work by Cameron (2003), Fónagy (1979), Lepetit (1995), Platt (1995), Rosenthal (1999), Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002) and others who have linked perceptions of the French language to American cultural understandings of masculinity. This finding is also congruent with studies on adolescents in which the French language was perceived as feminine (cf. Callaghan, 1998; Carr, 2002; Carr & Pauwels, 2006; Kissau, 2006, 2007; Kissau & Salas, 2013; Kissau & Turnbull, 2008; Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang, 2010; Kissau, Quach, & Wang, 2009; Jones & Jones, 2001; Netten, Riggs, & Hewlett, 1999; Sunderland 1988; Taylor, 2000).

Despite the consistency of this gendering of French as feminine across individuals who had and had not studied French, it was those individuals who had studied French who first questioned the validity of such a gendering in each focus group, noting its stereotypical nature. Regardless of French language-study experience, in general,

individuals questioned the validity of gendering languages. Although participants questioned the validity of these beliefs and stances (discourses and ideologies), their validity is less important than a consideration of their implications and consequences (cf. Miller & Ginsberg, 1995).

The way individuals complicated the gendering of languages may be explanatory of the quantitative findings, in which individuals moderately disagreed with the idea that French was feminine but in which they attributed feminine qualities to the French language including gentleness and pleasantness. During the quantitative portion of this study, individuals may have felt that it was inappropriate to express finding the French language to be wholly feminine without an ability to expand and express that they felt this gendering was stereotypical or other such qualifying statements. An overt expression of gendered language attitudes was marked as typically unsayable.

Further, participants readily discussed potential sources of their gendered language attitudes including phonetics and phonology, personal experience with particular language varieties, cultural associations, grammatical gender, body language, and sexuality. The areas noted by participants were congruent with work done by Fónagy (1979) and Lepetit (1995) on phonetics and phonology, as well as with work done by Lepetit (1995), Platt (1995), Rosenthal (1999), and Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002) on cultural perceptions. These sources however add questions of sexuality, evoked by Kissau (2006, 2007). Different from Kissau (2006, 2007), however, in this study it was the participants who explicitly oriented themselves to questions of sexuality. Participants in this study added personal experience, grammatical gender, and body

language as potential source of gendered language attitudes, which had not been explicitly address in the existing literature of this type.

Although linguistic experiences and the participants in the linguistic exchange did not alter the gendering of the French language, there appeared to be a qualitative difference in the way female-identified and male-identified participants gendered the French language. Female-identified individuals appeared to gender the French language in a more nuanced way, with some aspects of the French language being identified as masculine despite an overarching identification of the language as feminine. Their male-identified counterparts perceived the language as wholly feminine. Such a difference in perception may be influenced by the relationship between performing gendered language attitudes and performing gender. Performing an appropriate masculinity may entail performing stronger, more dichotomized gendered language attitudes.

When each of the four interview participants was presented with this hypothesis during member checks, they seemed to agree with the conclusion. John, a senior who self-identifies as highly masculine, has learned French, and presents strong gendered language attitudes suggested:

If you're a man's man you know what's expected of you and you're not going to say that French isn't seen as feminine, cause you know it is and as a man you have to just own up to that fact.

John's reaction suggests that he sees performing masculinity as deeply connected to performing gendered language attitudes and that a failure to perform gendered language attitudes was in some way a failure to perform an appropriate masculinity. Devon, a junior who self-identifies as highly masculine, has studied French, and reports weaker gendered language attitudes qualified this relationship:

Sure they're connected if you're trying to be a stereotypical masculine American guy or whatever, but that's not me so I guess I don't worry about it so much. But yeah, I bet that other guys feel like they have to say that French is feminine cause they know that's what other people think and what they're expected to say.

His assessment of the relationship between performing gendered language attitudes and performing masculinity included a qualification of the type of masculinity that required the performance of gendered language attitudes and simultaneously evoked the importance of conforming to dominant discourses when expressing a dominant form of masculinity. Luke, a sophomore who self-identified as not highly masculine, has taken French, and who reported stronger gendered language attitudes complicated Devon's assessment:

Yeah I think a lot of guys feel like a pressure to express strong feelings about languages being feminine or whatever, but I don't know if all guys who have strong attitudes have them because of that pressure. Like, I know they're just opinions and whatever and so like I'm not trying to be a macho man but like I have those feelings about language even if I know they're stereotypes but I'm not like this macho guy who think he has to be a certain way or whatever. So I think it's true but I think it's complicated to say when that's the case and when it's not, you know?

Alan, a senior who describes himself as not highly masculine, has studied French, and has reported weaker gendered language attitudes, also agreed that performing gendered language attitudes could be a part of performing masculinity. Unlike Luke, however, Alan felt that all men who perform a hegemonic version of masculinity would perform strong gendered language attitudes:

Oh yeah! Hyper macho masculine guys are going to have to have strong gendered language attitudes. You like have to say men are this way women are that way, languages are girly and languages are manly, you have to simplify everything about gender like that if that's the kind of man you're trying to have people see you as. Cause otherwise you're being like intellectual about it and macho men aren't intellectual about things and whatever [laughs]. That's what I think anyway.

To summarize, all four interviewees felt that a performance of hegemonic masculinity was related to a performance of gendered language attitudes, though two of the interviewees complicated the way this relationship is realized in the behaviors of individuals. It may be that the abject (cf. Butler, 1993; Pascoe, 2007) sphere of femininity for males needed to be entirely repudiated and thus identifying a complexity of feminine and masculinity existing in tandem was rendered unsayable for male-identified participants. Because gender is never accomplished, those seeking to avoid being pejoratively labeled as gay must constantly work to avoid this label. This abject identity must exist and be regularly referenced as a part of interactionally accomplishing gender; it must “be constantly named to remind individuals of its power,” (Pascoe, 2007). It is possible thus that male-identified individuals felt that they had to perform strong and binary gendered language attitudes in order to avoid the questioning of their own masculinity and heterosexuality. Evoking strong gendered language attitudes may afford male-identified individuals a more powerful subject position than would the performance of weaker or more complex gendered language attitudes.

Research Question 3: In what ways do individuals negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others’ perceptions of a language variety (French)?

The relevance of identity. There were several parameters that appeared to influence whether participants oriented themselves towards finding identity relevant to questions of language learning and to language attitudes and ideologies.

Such parameters included a threshold of familiarity with extreme familiarity and complete unfamiliarity rendering questions of identity irrelevant from the perspective of

participants. This suggests that language attitudes may be mitigated by increased familiarity with a language variety. Congruent with this assessment, individuals who had studied French tended to most strongly recognize gendered language attitudes towards the French language as stereotypical.

A second parameter involved a distinction between linguistic knowledge and language use, where in it was the act of using a language that rendered identity relevant in that participants felt they saw individuals differently when they spoke another language. Although participants felt that an individual had agency in choosing what aspects of themselves to foreground when using any language, using a particular language restricted the ways in which others could perceive them, the possible subject positions. In this way, my participants evoked the notion presented by Claire Kramsch that individuals have agency but not sovereignty over their identity.

Identity was also made relevant to language study and language attitudes for my participants through a connection between the language varieties one speaks and the individuals with whom an individual interacts, in both positively and negatively perceived ways. This idea evoked by participants highlights a connection with communities of practice and figured worlds. Being a second language learner necessarily affords an individual access to the communities of practice and figured worlds of the language learning classroom as well as those of the group of non-native speakers of the target language. Individuals must make plays for their identities in these communities of practice and figured worlds. Connected to this idea, Philips has noted “people who are positioned differently in the broader sociocultural systems within which interactions occur will participate in different communities of practice. People of different genders,

ages, and class positions will predictably participate in different communities of practice,” (2003, p. 267).

Participants also suggested an individual-related parameter regarding the relevance of identity to language study and to language attitudes. They suggested that some individuals will find language learning more relevant to their own conceptions of self, that knowledge of a non-native language will be more salient in its relationship to identity in certain contexts, and that certain individuals will find their language ideologies to be more integral to their world view and sense of self than others. This perception is congruent with the existing literature discussing the multiplicity of identities and the ways in which different aspects of identity will be more or less salient in any given context or at any given time to a particular individual (cf. Holland et al., 2001).

Participants such as Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) found the language variety one uses to express an idea significantly less reflective of identity than the idea expressed, suggesting that a core identity was maintained regardless of the language one speaks. With this idea, Devon foregrounded identity over subjectivity and agency over the ways in which others read an individual’s presentations of self. Devon also appeared to suggest that he conceived of identity and its relationship to attitudes and ideologies as stable over time. Conversely Taylor (Male, French) focused on the way individuals read other’s behavior, including linguistic behavior, and make inferences about the other’s identity. Taylor highlighted the fact that while one has agency over the ways in which one presents oneself, that sovereignty over identity was impossible and that other’s would make conclusions about a person’s identity based on their own language ideologies. Taylor’s discourse attended to the reality that identities are

constantly forming and are dependent upon factors outside of the individual (cf. Holland et al., 2001).

Strategies of identity presentation. Several narratives emerged from the data that addressed the ways in which participants negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others' perceptions of a language variety. These narrative types map onto two of the types of tools of identity presented by Holland et al. (2001): 1) emblematic narratives, which represent heuristic development of identities organized around life stories and 2) lexicon of types, which are "groups of labels, [which] position one another and in the process themselves.

The narratives of relationships between identity and perceptions of language varieties expressed by participants in this study can be categorized as either in alignment or misaligned. This case of alignment between one's self perceptions and their and others' perceptions of a language variety is discussed first and is then followed by a discussion of the narratives in which the participants felt some degree of misalignment between their or others' perceptions of the target language and their sense of self.

Participants often used multiple narrative-types to describe the relationship between their sense of self and their perceptions of the French language. The ways in which participants employed multiple identity narratives is congruent with the existing literature on both motivation and identity. Identities are multiple yet form a whole, open to internal contradiction, with each aspect of identity having a dynamic relationship with the others (Assis Sade, 2011). Otherwise stated, an individual holds multiple selves "that are neither bounded, stable, enduring, nor impermeable," (Holland et al., 2001, p. 29).

Additionally, an individual may have multiple, even seemingly contradictory, sets of motivators and demotivators (cf. Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Ushioda, 2011). Further, just as other identities are multiple, so may be ideal and ought-to selves. Castillo Zaragoza notes: “this ideal self may coexist or come into conflict with other ideal selves in the learner’s identity framed by life contexts, in which language learning is but one element,” (2011, p.121). Relating the multiplicity of identities and motivators to figured worlds and communities of practice, “identity [...] is neither unitary nor fragmented. It is an experience of multimembership, an intersection of many relationships that you hold into the experience of being a person, at once one and multiple,” (Wenger, 2000, pp.241-242). Multimemberships in communities of practice implies that individuals must “manage memberships in different communities or different (perhaps hierarchical) positionalities within communities of practice,” and link certain communities of practice with other communities of practice (McElhinny 2003, p. 30). In considering these multimemberships, it can be observed that individuals have more clearly articulated senses of selves, more clearly articulated subjectivities, in certain communities than in others. One may be more or less cognizant of different aspects of identities and have more or less clear conceptions of self as different types of participants in different social worlds and thus one may attend more or less, or in different ways, to identity presentation in different contexts.

An alignment between one’s identity and perceptions of the target language.

An alignment between an individual’s identity and their perceptions of a target language appears to be an ideal situation in which there is one less motivational barrier to acquisition. When one’s identity and target language perceptions are in alignment, one

can easily articulate a current and future sense of self as a target language speaker. This clear articulation of a target-language future self has been noted by researchers such as Dörnyei (2011) to enhance motivation to acquire the chosen language and has been linked to retention.

However, the data reveal that this alignment is less often seen than a misalignment between one's identity and perceptions of a target language. Only one participant (Alan: Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) reported a perceived alignment between both his own and others perceptions of French and his sense of self. Two participants (Devon: Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs and Taylor: Male, French) reported a partial alignment, they perceived their own perceptions of French as being aligned with the way they see themselves but not the perceptions held by others. As individuals, we apply labels to ourselves, but we are also labeled by others. These labels frequently refer to social, political, and attitudinal groupings into which individuals actively enter into or avoid (McConnell-Ginet, 2003). As a part of entering or not entering into these groupings, we may or may not accept the way others label us. Otherwise stated, labels that others attach to us may or may not become an identity (Holland et al., 2001). Although Alan fully accepted the way he was labeled by others and integrated those labels into the way he conceives of his own identity, Devon and Taylor did not.

Misalignment: Narratives of identity management. The more common situation is that of misalignment, a situation in which successful language learners use a variety of strategies to manage identity conflicts.

A strong sense of individuality, the free spirit, and rebel narratives. A strong sense of individuality corresponded to a strong sense of agency. Although participants recognized their lack of sovereignty with regard to the ways in which others read their identity performance, individuals using individuality narratives reclaimed their sense of power over their identities highlighting their perceived ability to manipulate the ways in which others read their behaviors and integrated being perceived as different into their sense of self. With this narrative type, participants claimed ownership of their flouting of norms. This narrative of individuality relates to the existing literature on flouting norms. As has been noted and as is exemplified by this narrative, the violation of gender norms can sometimes be an intentional identity marker. One may purposefully flout norms as a means of presenting a particular identity. Zwicky (1997) gives the example of how gay male identity may be constructed less in opposition to women than in opposition to straight men, thus resulting in their sexuality being framed as a rejection of gender norms (p. 30). For participants in this study, an articulation of an individualized sense of self entailed the flouting of gender norms.

The expression of an abject identity was not left unmarked, however (cf. Butler, 1993; Pascoe, 2007). In one focus group (the pilot focus group consisting of male and female identified individuals who both have or have not taken French), the expression of an individuality narrative was marked deviant by some of the other male participants. The responses of these male participants were illustrative of the types of gender-policing outlined by Pascoe (2007). This gender-policing connects with the theoretical framework of figured worlds and elements of discourse (discursive) theory (cf. Foucault) in that, for both, cultural resources are “public forms and social tools originate outside of their

performers and are imposed upon people, through recurrent institutional treatments within interaction, to the point that they become self-administered,” (Holland et al., 2001, p. 62). There exist culturally constructed ways of enacting gender that get applied to people in interaction, and with recurrent application eventually become *naturally* embodied by individuals (cf. Butler). The created categories become associated with those enact them who and those who are subject to them. Such categories both afford and constrain ways of doing things as well as people (Holland et al., 2001). We begin to be able to say what it means to be X, what typical X’s are like, and what types of indices mark a typical X’s life. We construct associations that become forms of social obligations. In having these expectations and obligations, we then mark deviance, which is “a consequence of the breaking of rules and sanctions created by a group that is in a position of power and that finds the behavior unsettling,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.67). Deviance is thus a question of politics (Schur, 1980). The individuality narrative was considered against these expectations and being incongruent with these norms, was marked as inappropriate, as abject, as deviant.

In flouting norms, participants using this narrative type questioned what is considered normative and for whom. Two types of individuality narratives were evoked; one type flouted the normative importance of utilitarian arguments while the other type of individuality narrative highlighted the importance of utilitarian arguments. With the latter type, participants outlined the benefits of choosing to be an individual and learning a particular language variety, thus creating a connection between certain individuality narratives and the instrumental excuse narrative type. Individuals may either comply with

or resist, either uphold or flout existing norms in interactions, and may uphold certain norms while flouting others.

For the narratives in which utilitarian norms were upheld, context was explicitly discussed as relevant. Participants explored the ways in which speaking French was seen as a unique ability in the United States but was normalized in the ways in which they perceived such an ability would be read in a Canadian context.

Instrumental excuse. Certain participants explained their engagement with the French language through pragmatic reasoning. For male participants, this exemplified the simultaneous flouting of gender norms related to learning French and the adherence that relate pragmatism to masculinity (cf. Rosenthal, 1999).

The way French was cited as being useful only in certain contexts (in the European Union and in the domains of art and philosophy) highlights the importance of an attention to the social structures in which individuals live. Discussions of the contexts in which French was perceived as useful also related to class associations with the language as participants qualified French as a vacation language, associating its utility with the financial ability to travel to French-speaking countries. The qualification of participants in the community of practice of French language learners relates to the ways in which Eckert and McConnell-Ginet describe how individuals are differentially drawn towards particular communities of practice based on aspects of their identity: “people’s access and exposure to, need for, and interest in different communities of practice are related to such things as their class, age, and ethnicity as well as to their sex,” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 472). These class-related perceptions of French language learners also connect with the ways in which Holland et. al describe how certain

linguistic behaviors are “indices of relational identities” including “gender, class, race, ethnicity,” the major social divisions “that separate those who are routinely privileged from those who are not,” (2001, p. 130).

Lack of choice narrative. A lack of choice narrative removed agency from the individual regarding their engagement with language learning, focusing on the external forces that compelled them to learn a given language often including language requirements and a restricted number of languages to choose from. This “doing what you have to do” approach to explaining engagement with learning a language that was stereotyped as feminine served to reconcile gender non-normative behavior via an appeal to the gender norm in which men complete what is required of them, the commonly referenced “suck it up and take it like a man.” The requirement of agency, of choice, for language learning to have identity-related implications illustrates a focus on the agency one has over one’s identity presentation as opposed to the constraints placed on such agency. Agency and effort were central to the formation of language attitudes.

Cultivation of the self. Effort was restricted in a cultivation of the self narrative. With this narrative type, individuals perceived learning French as a non-primary activity and as such removed questions of identity from their relationship with the language. Several narratives, including a cultivation of the self narrative, connect back to an existing body of literature that has suggested a relationship between masculinity and an appearance of effortlessness. A limited engagement with the French language mitigated negative stereotypes and provided positive assessments regarding intelligence and cultural awareness. In this narrative, questions of utility arose again, with the language being relegated to a tool that one could use in appropriate situations. A degree of

engagement that was stronger, however, was explicitly articulated as being likely to evoke stereotypes of the individual as feminine or gay.

This explicit connection between homosexuality and a “failed” masculinity is supported by theories that identify a pejorative gay label, a “fag” position (Pascoe, 2007), an “abject identity,” (Butler, 1993). This research highlights the ways in which the majority of individuals will seek to avoid such labels and the fact that this abject identity must exist and be regularly referenced as a part of interactionally accomplishing gender; it must “be constantly named to remind individuals of its power,” (Pascoe, 2007). Cameron (1997) notes that men in particular use epithets with homophobic content in reference to absent male others as a part of enforcing heterosexual male gender conformity. Participants in this study were highly cognizant of the ways in which their masculinity may be policed with such epithets.

Global identity. The importance of context was particularly apparent in global identity narratives. Narratives of this type allowed individuals to flout American gender norms in favor of an alternative set of norms in an effort to “become a more global citizen.” Global identity narratives also included evocations of a desire to connect with individuals in other parts of the world, which is connected to integrative motivation and is representative of seeking a sense of belongingness among said individuals.

Evoking heterosexuality. Participants regularly alluded to or explicitly addressed questions of sexuality, with male-identified participant making their heterosexuality relevant to the conversation. Consciously or subconsciously, male participants who had studied French recognized that they may be stereotyped as feminine or gay and seemed to seek to mitigate the attachment of these labels to them by overtly expressing their

heterosexuality. The frequency with which such connections were made by participants, as often as twenty times in ninety minutes by Kurt, speaks to the fact that the threatening sphere of an abject identity (cf. Butler, 1993; Pascoe, 2007) must constantly be avoided by individuals.

Further, male participants sought to subvert the stereotype of French as gay by highlighting it as a tool for heterosexual male prowess. The romance and beauty attributed to the French language were translated into being qualities that a female speaking the French language would have, transferring the possible pejorative connotations onto an acceptable female object of desire. Such connections may be representative of strategies used by participants in an effort to save face. During discussions of sexuality and the French language, socioeconomic connotations were once again revisited with participants suggesting speaking the language was “classy.”

Different language varieties were perceived as differentially related to sexuality, congruent with the ways in which gendered language attitudes vary based on the language in question (cf. Castillo Zaragoza, 2011). These connections also re-iterated the close relationship between gender and sexuality that exists in the minds of individuals.

The “language learner” as an identity. One participant’s (Sue) experience of learning languages became an identity for her. Although Assis Sade (2011) argues that we must consider learners as people, accepting the fact that they may not identify themselves in terms of their status as a language learner, this narrative suggests that we must simultaneously leave room for individuals who conceive of their engagement with language learning as an integral part of their identity. Sue’s narrative also highlights the

possibility of connecting identity with the act of language learning as opposed to with a particular language variety learned.

A chance to be someone else and feeling more X. Although Sue was the only individual to evoke an identity based on engagement in language learning, other participants did discuss the ways in which using different languages allowed for the exploration of alternative identities and possible shifts in the ways individuals perceive themselves. This narrative highlights the ways in which using a non-native language can allow for play, for individuals to experience and “try on” different possible selves. In this way, using a language allows an individual to experiment with and work through articulations of a future sense of self in a target language (cf. Castillo Zaragoza, 2011; Dörnyei, 2009, 2010) through selves-in-practice (Holland et al., 2001).

Narratives of this type also relate to the importance of context, as individuals expressed an awareness of the different expectations individuals had for their behavior in different target language cultures, in different figured worlds and communities of practice. Such explorations allowed participants to see their own culture as one of many possibilities rather than necessarily rooted in an inherent truth about the way the world is and should be. One participant (Ryan: Male, No French) explicitly identified each language one speaks as being representative of a different context to which one belongs, in which one presents oneself somewhat differently. Recasting Ryan’s words, each figured world or community of practice allows for shifts in one’s identity, for different aspects of one’s identity to come in and out of focus as they are re-articulated in different contexts.

Proficiency. Proficiency was intimately connected to the relationship between language and identity for participants.

Anxiety surrounding correctness of form appeared to inhibit identity work. However, many of the goals that individuals expressed with regard to continuing with the target language in question were articulated in terms of proficiency.

Further, this connection was made in that participants identified a certain degree of proficiency as a prerequisite to being able to have agency in identity expression in a non-native language. Relatedly, limiting proficiency in the target language was noted to limit the ways in which the language reflected aspects of one's identity. If one was not very proficient, participants felt that the language in question had no bearing on their identity. This perception was purposefully used by John, who intentionally performed at a lower level of proficiency of French than he was capable of including the use of an intentionally Americanized accent and the combining of French and English words in a single sentence. However, a high degree of proficiency was also connected, in the minds of participants, to a reduction of stereotypes and a reduction of gendered language attitudes.

Remaining an 'other'. In addition to linguistic proficiency, cultural proficiency was also treated by participants, with the former being perceived as a prerequisite to the latter. Only male participants, however, drew a distinction between linguistic and cultural learning. And one male participant, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) suggested that linguistic and cultural acquisition always influence an individual's identity, however subtly this may occur. Exposure to additional cultures has the possibility of inviting individuals to join additional communities of practice and figured

worlds, in which different subjective positions may be available, informing the ways in which individuals think about the possibilities for self-presentation. Whether or not an individual chooses to take up a particular subject position, exposure to different possibilities of being will result in the potential for individuals to consider their identities in respect to the ways of being they have been exposed to. Otherwise stated, these selves-in-practice, these discursively afforded subject positions, may or may not be taken up by individuals through investment therein. As noted by Holland et al., “persons develop through and around the cultural forms by which they are identified and identify themselves, in the context of their affiliation or disaffiliation with those associated with those forms and practices,” (2001, p. 33). That is to say, that part of this investment is a perceived similarity with or dissimilarity from individuals that are perceived as marking the particular subject position, on the part of the individual or others. “Identifying with the community is part of adopting and identity,” (Holland et al., 2001, p.81). Individuals identify themselves with others and make plays for belongingness in given communities or dis-identify themselves with others and distance themselves from particular communities of practice and figured worlds.

Maturity. Maturity was cited as allowing for deeper self-understandings and for a nuancing of gendered language attitudes. Maturity was seen as rendering the expression of gendered language attitudes as unsayable for many. As individuals became older they felt that many of the commentaries about another’s gender and sexuality were immature and that insults were unacceptable. Making such commentaries had the possibility of causing the individual to lose face.

The discussion of language attitudes and maturity was interwoven with considerations of context. Being more mature, for my participants, coincided with a recognition of the ways in which dominant discourses in the particular context they were a part of directly informed their own position and experiences, from which their gendered language attitudes and ideologies were drawn. To relate this to the framework of figured worlds, while the standard plot of a figured world, the dominant discourses, is not necessarily prescriptive, it provides the basis for interpretation. This standard plot serves as the backdrop for understanding the meaning of individuals and events (Holland et al., 2001). Participants were cognizant of the ways in which their cultural frameworks limited the possibilities for being that they had access to, but also provided opportunities for the reframing of their understandings of self and of the world. In this way, maturity was seen as allowing for a balancing of their agency and the constraints thereof.

Maturation was also characterized as relating to an increase in interest in language study, despite the fact that beginning at a younger age was perceived as being related to achieving high levels of proficiency.

Embarrassment. Operating outside of the realm of what was acceptable and anxiety about language proficiency often resulted in a sense of embarrassment about their second language selves, with five participants expressing varying degrees of embarrassment. Embarrassment was evoked in the context of a recognition of the norms of behavior, linguistic or otherwise, and a failure, purposefully or otherwise, to meet such expectations. Embarrassment was an expression of insecurity about performing aberrant identities.

Research Question 4: What relationships exist among an individual's identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn a language (French)?

Gendered language attitudes. Participants readily discussed potential sources of their gendered language attitudes including phonetics and phonology, personal experience with particular language varieties, cultural associations, grammatical gender, body language, and sexuality. Although not all participants evoked all of the listed sources of gendered language attitudes, all of the four interviewees recognized each of the following as sources that inform their gendered language attitudes to differing degrees. Interviewees differed in the significance they accorded to each factor and in the ways that they described the relationships among these factors.

Participants were unable to provide a single framework that was explanatory of all of their gendered language attitudes, suggesting that such gender-related language attitudes are subject to internal contradiction. Exceptions and contradictory categorizations troubled the schemata that individuals had for explaining their gendered language attitudes.

Further, the majority of participant recognized the ways in which gendered language attitudes were based on stereotypes and perceptions as opposed to any inherent masculinity or femininity. Participants further recognized that such ideologies were based on their ideologies of masculinity and femininity. This recognition did not, however, inhibit participants from holding and describing their gendered language attitudes. Gendered language attitudes were explicitly connected to increased or decreased motivation by participants. John (Male, French, highly masculine, strong GLAs) and

Alan (Male, French, not highly masculine, weaker GLAs) noted that those individuals who had an external locus of control and those who were concerned with saving face would be most affected by gendered language attitudes.

Phonetics and phonology. Congruent with work by Fónagy, (1979) and Lepetit (1995), phonetics and phonology were seen as significant contributors to gendered language attitudes by all participants. Folk linguistic (cf. Tamasi) terms were regularly evoked when describing languages including harshness, smoothness, roughness, softness, deepness, highness, aggressiveness, romanticism, and others. Participants did explicitly recognize that such characterizations were based on perception, once again highlighting the importance of the sociocultural context for attitude formation.

Personal experience and cultural associations. The cultural associations that a particular language variety evokes for an individual was a second major source of gendered language attitudes. These cultural associations were both informed by personal experience and by dominant cultural imaginations. These results are connected to discussions of the way French and France are perceived in the cultural imagination of the United States (cf. Rosenthal, 1999; Platt, 1995; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002). The cultural associations drawn by my participants were congruent with those in the study by Williams, Burden and Lanvers (2002), with French being connected to beauty and love and German being connected to war and Hitler, for example. Personal experience, however, was cited as having the capacity to rewrite an individual's perceptions of a particular language and culture that run-contrary to dominant cultural discourses

Grammatical gender. Participants felt that learning languages with grammatical gender made questions of gender identity more salient for them. Although they were

unable to clearly articulate how these connections related to their senses of self and their gendered language attitudes, this was a persistent theme as it was discussed in each focus group without prompting. Their discussions of this connection between language structure and gender appeared to relate to the ways in which languages are inscribed with gender ideologies. This articulation of a connection between language structure and gender may be connected back to the ways in which attempting to move beyond dichotomous conceptions of sex and gender is linguistically cumbersome. As Freed notes, “*language* is the vehicle for conveying expectations about gendered behavior [which] further complicates matters because this deeply entrenched view of gender is recursively articulated and becomes naturalized and normalized through countless everyday language activities and linguistic practices (2003, p. 704).

Body language. Non-verbal communication was also connected to gendered language attitudes. The visual cues drawn from body language reinforced cultural stereotypes and phonological stereotypes about language varieties, wherein gestures described as “flowy” or “big” were considered to render the language in question more feminine. Individuals look for linguistic cues for reading the gender and sexuality of their interlocutor. Similarly, as highlighted by my participants, individuals may look to non-verbal behavior for additional information.

Sexuality. Sexuality contributed to the identity and language learning nexus through sexualized inflections of the way the target culture and language is imagined, through the close relationship of gender and sexuality, as well as through questions regarding learner sexualities. This connection between language and sexuality was noted by participants to be particularly relevant to the French language. Participants evoked

heterosexuality when asked if men learn French, suggesting that knowing the language could be a tool for heterosexual male prowess through its connections to romanticism, beauty, and sensuality. Heterosexual prowess was cited as being inextricable from masculinity. However, participants also suggested that evocations of homosexuality would not have occurred if we had been discussing a language other than French.

It was also suggested that learning French was indicative of an acceptance of sexual diversity, though this narrative was rejected by Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) during his interview. This perception may relate to the ways in which learning a second language involves a certain degree of investment in the (perceived) target language culture and a certain degree of affiliation with target language communities.

Further, participants suggested that it was not an individual's gender identity that was likely to be questioned when one engages in gender-norm violating behaviors, but rather one's sexuality. This assertion corresponds with the existing literature on the policing of masculine gender expression through the use of homophobic epithets (cf. Pascoe, 2007). Gender and sexuality were intimately connected if not conflated by participants

Sense of belongingness. Questions of belonging were central to perceptions of target languages, target language speakers, and target cultures. Participants reflected on how face and their understandings of how they were being read by others contributed to their own self-perceptions and their sense of belongingness or of non-belonging. In the quantitative portion of this study, a strong sense of belongingness was the most predictive of a desire to learn French and of motivational intensity. This data supports Baumeister

and Leary's (1995) claim that belongingness is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivation.

Do men learn French? Participants echoed the enrollment statistics outlined in chapter two, agreeing with the idea that men do not tend to learn the French language. They spoke of their experiences in French classes where the majority of students were female-identified. In discussing these experiences, participants explicitly connected this differential enrollment to the feminine-coded stereotype of French. Participants further felt that it was likely that these enrollment figures re-inscribed such a stereotype. A recognition of this stereotype and these enrollment trends challenged the sense of belongingness of several male-identified participants to the language learning community, particularly those individuals who self-identified as highly masculine. Individuals such as Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) suggested that engagement with the French language opened oneself up to "attacks" by others and Kelly (Female, French) talked about knowing individuals who had been discouraged from studying French because it was considered to be a feminine pursuit. These attacks echo the existing literature on the policing of masculinity (Pascoe, 2007).

Are men in French gay? Considerations of whether men learned the French language bled into discussions of sexuality. In line with Rosenthal's assessment of the ways in which the masculinity and sexuality of French men is questioned by many Americans, participants readily connected French masculinity with a perception of being gay. Further, it appeared that the masculinity and sexuality of French language learners were also questioned by participants in this study. A connection was made between an engagement in feminine activities and being gay. Sally (Female, No French) and Ryan

(Male, No French) engaged in questioning Sally's brother's masculinity and heterosexuality in connection to his engagement with the French language. Additionally, participants in focus group five (both male and female identified individuals who have not studied French) suggested that many men who learn French actually are gay. Although several participants were able to recognize this as stereotypical thinking, they recognized such a stereotype as *real* in the minds of many individuals. Participants did, however, recognize what they termed a "niche market" for men who spoke French, connecting knowledge of the language with heterosexual male prowess. The articulation of this niche market was an articulation of the ways in which normative perceptions of French language study could be subverted and connected with an expression of an "acceptable" masculinity.

Native French speaker perceptions. There was concern regarding belongingness to the language learning community, to their own communities outside of the language-learning context (friends, family, etc.), as well as to the community of native target language speakers. Concern regarding native speakers was chiefly expressed through anxiety regarding their level of linguistic proficiency, which can be interpreted as concern regarding saving face when making linguistic errors. This concern with belongingness to a community of target language speakers relates to McConnell-Ginet's (2003) argument that social identities, including gender identities, chiefly arise through the expression of memberships in communities of practice.

Experience with the opinions of others. Participants who had experienced negative commentary related to their engagement with French-language learning tended to report practicality-related arguments rather than explicit considerations of gender and

sexuality. In some cases, these pragmatic considerations may be gendered in their connection with the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and pragmatism. Participants did express the fact that they felt that criticism based on gender and class, though present, was unsayable. Further, negative comments were only reported by male-identified individuals, with female-identified participants only recalling positive comments characterizing their language study as ritzy, glamorous, or cool. The importance of these evaluations by others is highlighted by Brophy: "Identities grow and change, partly in response to encouragement and pressure from the culture at large, or from socializers, peers and significant others within one's social circle; and these emerging motivational dispositions and identities can solidify and develop into core values and more long-term stable identities" (2009, p. 155). That is to say that the reflections of others on an individual's engagement with language learning may influence the ways in which they relate their own identities to language study, positively or negatively.

Knowing target-language speakers. Despite concern regarding their ability to save face with native target language speakers, a sense of belongingness was intimately related to knowing speakers of the target language either within their own community or more distantly. Knowing target-language speakers and meeting target language speakers were both connected to an increased motivation to begin learning the language and to retention, contributing to the ability to imagine a target-language future self. An imagined future belonging to a community of target language speakers was also related to an articulation of a target-language future self.

Language requirements. Language requirements were evoked as being central to engagement in language learning for multiple participants. This discussion of language requirements was connected to instrumental reasoning and extrinsic motivation for language learning. Having other curricular requirements to fulfill was often connected to a lack of continuing with language study regardless of interest therein.

Desire to speak with others in the target language. A desire to interact with speakers of the target language was cited as a significant motivational factor. This desire to speak with others in the target language connected with belongingness and a desire to become part of one or many target-language speaking communities. This desire is also representative of an integrative motivation for language learning.

In summary, there is evidence that young adults hold and are readily able to articulate their gendered language attitudes, despite the prevalent argument that such attitudes are reduced with maturation. With respect to French, this gendering is nearly always feminine regardless of an individual's gender, their linguistic experiences, or the participants present during the discussion of language attitudes. An alignment between an individual's identity and their perceptions of a target language appears to be an ideal situation in which there is one less motivational barrier to acquisition. When one's identity and target language perceptions are in alignment, one can easily articulate a current and future sense of self as a target language speaker. The more common situation is that of misalignment. A situation in which successful language learners use a variety of strategies to manage identity conflicts.

Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

The existing literature on identity and language acquisition has focused on creating a sense of alignment between one's sense of self and the target language, however in my data misalignment is the more frequent reality and misalignment appears, with certain strategies of identity presentation is allowing for individuals to continue with language study through advanced levels of proficiency.

Given the possibility for individuals to be motivated to and achieve success in learning languages irrespective of a situation of alignment or misalignment between their identity and their perceptions of a given language variety, it is through both seeking ways to foster alignment and considering the productive strategies of those individuals displaying misalignment that we may develop pedagogical strategies that foster sustained language study for a larger number of individuals.

The strong sense of individuality narrative reveals the importance of valuing difference to allow for an authentic expression of self through an engagement with activities that aligned with one's interests. This implication reflects Assis Sade's (2011) suggestion that there is a possibility of increasing student motivation by attending to and valuing students' social and cultural identities. Valuing difference includes valuing the unique skill set afforded to individuals who speak additional language. These types of individuality-related narratives appeared to allow participants to set goals for continuing language learning throughout and beyond their University careers by allowing for them to express their own perceived alignment with the way they view the French language in spite of or because of their recognition of the ways that others may view their engagement with the language. The pedagogical implications of this narrative type

include support for presenting a variety of target language speakers from a variety of contexts so as to provide additional target language speaker models with which students may identify. Further, this narrative highlights the importance of valuing a variety of perspectives that may be evoked during discussions. This narrative also provides support for goal setting initiatives: asking students to set clear short and long term language goals and to evaluate their own progress on achieving their goals.

Across narratives of identity alignment and misalignment goal setting including an articulation of a future language self and a sense of belonging both in the language-learning context and beyond appeared to be important for continued language study.

Goal setting was particularly prominent for those individuals employing an instrumental excuse. While this type of pragmatic reasoning has often been argued by scholars such as Gardner to be less effective for motivating students at higher levels of language proficiency, my participants often evoked either simultaneous instrumental and integrative reasons for learning a particular language or spoke of the ways in which their instrumental reasons for learning a language lead to a more integrative motivation, such as that of speaking with members of the target language community. This relationship between integrative and instrumental motivation is aligned with recent work in the field of second language acquisition that has sought to reconfigure the ways in which these constructs have been traditionally understood and to critically examine their relationship (Dörnyei, 2003; Dörnyei and Csizér, 2002; Ushioda, 2011).

Discussions surrounding instrumental motivation characterized French as contextually limited in its usefulness, highlighting the need for discussions outlining the ways in which French can be practically employed by individuals in a variety of careers.

During member checks, several participants suggested that this type of information would be best received from individuals who had learned French and use it in their careers.

These types of discussions are recommended to take place during the beginning semesters of language study so as to reach the greatest number of individuals, including those who employ a lack of choice narrative.

Any continued theorization of motivation must also be able to accommodate goal multiplicity; an individual may have multiple, even seemingly contradictory, sets of motivators and demotivators, as was demonstrated by the participants of this study. In language education, these motivators may be considered through an individual's desires for particular linguistic or cultural identities and for personal or professional identities that are at least partially constituted by proficiency in a given language (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

Participants who employed a lack of choice narrative often focused upon disliking learning languages, characterizing it as focused on grammatical knowledge, which in the words of my participants was "arbitrary" and "not fun." This characterization supports initiatives to integrate cultural study throughout the curricular program, from the first semester onward. During our discussions, Devon (Male, French, highly masculine, weaker GLAs) explicitly suggested that a lack of choice narrative could be a stigma-mitigating strategy until one established oneself within a group of target language speakers. Devon's commentary lends support to community building efforts both within and beyond the classroom, to allow students to create important connections with other individuals who speak the target language. The global identity narrative further lends support to such initiatives, and suggests that the creation of international communities,

through virtual spaces or in grounded reality, may be particularly important for intercultural competency. This work responds to Palfreyman's call for a greater focus "on the social networks that support language learning, and research into how personal identity as a language learner develops in the context of social mediation," (2003, p. 246) by considering the possible structures that may positively contribute to recruitment, retention, and achievement by language learners.

The narrative of evoking heterosexuality would, in an ideal world, call for a re-negotiation of gender and sexuality norms, to broaden the scope of what is considered acceptable. This narrative calls for continued research into sexuality and language learning and for open discussion of stereotypes and the acceptance of a variety of identities including encouraging students to move beyond a heteronormative monolithic understanding of masculinity.

This narrative and other narratives such as the chance to be someone else and bringing into focus different aspects of one's identity, highlight the ways in which identity work is a part of the language acquisition process. These narratives suggest that pedagogical moves that bring attention to and facilitate identity work in the second language may be particularly useful. Asking students to reflect on their developing identities in the target language in formats such as reflection journals, autobiographies or letters to themselves from their future selves, may all prove useful.

Broadly speaking, taking pedagogical and curricular steps to guide students towards finding an alignment between their sense of self and aspects of the target language and towards being able to articulate a clear future second language self is likely to contribute to increased student motivation. Such steps entail fostering a sense of

belonging through community building, engaging students in goal setting and self-evaluation, integrating culture in all courses including the presentation of a variety of target language speaker models, and advocating for the utility of the target language in question. On the path to alignment or where alignment is not possible, identity management strategies that do not impede the development of linguistic and intercultural skills should be encouraged. The perception voiced by participants that language exposure and maturity allow for a reduction of or better maintenance of language attitudes underscores the particular importance of taking such pedagogical and curricular steps at the very beginning stages of language study during the time when students are often enrolled in order to complete language requirements.

Directions for Future Research

Continued research in the area of identity, language attitudes and ideologies, and language learning motivation will need to consider the efficacy of the pedagogical strategies discussed above for motivating, recruiting, and retaining students of modern foreign languages. As this study was limited to a single language (French) in a single national context (the United States) with a given age group of individuals (University students ages 18-21), future research will need to be conducted to assess the generalizability of the findings of this study to additional languages, national contexts, and groups of individuals. Future research in this area must continue to consider how one may engage with complex and uniquely individual people, with people whose identities may include but extend far beyond that of language learner (cf. Ushioda, 2011).

Future work on identities, language attitudes and ideologies, and language learning must engage with the following questions: 1) What does it mean for gender and

sexual identity construction that a stereotypical framework is so pervasive that non-conforming behavior must be detached from gender and sexual identities? 2) How - or should we – seek to broaden the definition of male heterosexuality in the US context? And 3) How are other aspects of identities, including socioeconomic status and race, implicated in the identity-attitudes-motivation nexus?

Promising areas for continued inquiry also include a consideration of how the identities and attitudes of instructors relate to students' experiences of language learning as well as a consideration of the ways in which the use of digital technologies and participation in digital communities relate to questions of language and identity for second language learners.

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Tables, Figures, and Appendices

Table 1. Knisely (2013) Quantitative Measures Summary Table

Measure	Factors	Sample Item	Modifications	Adapted From	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Causal Attribution Measure</i>	Internal	I can overcome the obstacles of learning French if I work hard.		Tremblay & Gardner, 1995	2	.70
	External	The reason that my French grades are not higher is because French is a difficult subject.			2	.80
<i>Goal Salience Measure</i>	Goal Specificity	I want to learn French so well that it becomes second nature to me.	Not used in analyses	Tremblay & Gardner, 1995	-	-
	Goal Frequency	If it were up to me, I would spend all my time learning French.	Not used in analyses		-	-
<i>The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery</i>	Motivational Intensity	I really work hard to learn French.		Gardner, Clément, Smythe, & Smythe, 1979	4	.80
	Desire to Learn French	I really have little desire to learn French. (reverse coded)			5	.73
	Integrative Orientation	French is important because people will respect me more if I have knowledge of a foreign language.			4	.72
	Instrumental Orientation	Studying French is important to me because I'll need it for my future career.			2	.80
	French Class Anxiety	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in French class.			4	.84
	Parental Encouragement	People in my life really encourage me to study French.	General Encouragement: "My parents" to "People in my life"		6	.90
<i>Grade 9 French Survey</i>	Peer/Teacher Encouragement	I feel that I have been encouraged by my teachers to continue studying French.	Not used in analyses	Hewlett et al., 1999	3	.50
	Self-Efficacy	Items not used.	Not used in analyses		-	-
<i>Student Perceptions of the French Language</i>	Gender-based differences in the way the French language is perceived	I think French is more suitable for females than males.	"Girls" and "Boys" to "Females" and "Males"	Kissau & Wierzalis, 2008	5	.73

<i>Feelings of Belongingness with Respect to French Language Study</i>	Having a community in which others also learn French	I feel like I'm part of a community of people who learn French.	Constructed	9	.79
	Patterns of disclosure	I tell people that I'm learning French.			
	Feelings towards learning French with respect to belongingness	I am proud that I am learning French.			
<i>Gendered Language Attitudes</i>	Perceptions of languages as themselves gendered	I can think of a masculine language.	Constructed	10	.79
	Gendered language learning behaviors	Women take certain languages and men take other languages.			
	Aptitude for learning language with respect to sex or gender	Women are better at learning languages than men.			

Table 2. Demographic Data for (2013) Quantitative Study Sample

Variable	Categories	N	Percentage
Sex	Male	120	40.8
	Female	174	59.2
Age	18-24	266	90.8
	25-30	17	5.70
	31+	8	2.50
	Missing	3	1.00
Race/Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	16	5.40
	American Indian or Alaska Native	1	.30
	Asian	84	28.6
	Black or African American	43	14.6
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0
	White	125	42.5
	Bi- or Multi-racial	20	6.80
	Missing	5	1.70
Birth Country	Born in the US	238	
	Foreign-born	37	12.6
	Missing	19	6.50
Institution Type	Private, Urban	108	36.7
	Public, Urban	115	39.1
	Public, Suburban	71	24.1
Class Level	Freshman	30	10.2
	Sophomore	86	29.3
	Junior	86	29.3
	Senior	85	28.9
	Non-traditional student or dual enrollment	4	1.40
	Missing	3	1.00

Table 3. Research Design Summary

Research Question	Methods	Data/Evidence	Linkage with Quantitative Data
1. To what extent is gender indexed by individuals in the discourses regarding language varieties?	Qualitative analysis of all focus group and interview data	All Focus Group Data All Interview Data	No planned data linkage for this research question.
2. How does an individual's gender, an individual's linguistic experiences, or the participants in the linguistic exchange relate to whether discourses regarding the French language reference: 1) femininity, 2) masculinity, 3) both femininity and masculinity, or 4) neither femininity nor masculinity?	Qualitative analyses of the focus group and interview data. Transcripts from each of the focus groups will be analyzed for trends regarding the gendering or lack thereof of the French language. Correlations between the indexing of gender in each of the focus groups and interviews will be compared to see what possible relationships among these factors emerge. Particular attention will be paid to moments where participants make gender, linguistic experiences, or others present explicitly relevant in their stances.	All Focus Group Data All Interview Data Results of Analyses of Quantitative Survey Data	Findings from the qualitative analyses will be compared to quantitative findings from Knisely (2013) regarding the relationships between gender identity, experience with the French language, and gendered language attitudes. Qualitative data will serve to illustrate and complicate, expand upon, or call into question the quantitative findings.
3. In what ways do individuals negotiate the relationships between their own identities and their own and others' perceptions of a language variety (French)?	Qualitative analyses of the interview data will seek to provide four narratives of ways that individuals negotiate their identities. Qualitative data from the focus groups will provide examples of such negotiations in practice. Triangulation of these two sources will serve to highlight whether participants are conscious of their discursive strategies for identity negotiation and will additionally reveal any discrepancies between what individuals say about how they negotiate their identities and how they perform such negotiations.	All Focus Group Data All Interview Data	Quantitative data will be used to establish a baseline regarding whether individuals hold gendered language attitudes. These quantitative findings will be compared and contrasted with the qualitative findings in order to highlight the particularities of individuals present in the qualitative study and to describe similarities and differences between the trends in the larger quantitative sample and the smaller qualitative sample. The qualitative data will serve as the primary means for discussing the ways identities are negotiated, always being mindful of the trends discovered in the quantitative data.
4. What relationships exist among an individual's identities, gendered language attitudes, sense of belongingness, and motivation to learn a language (French)?	Interview and focus group data will be analyzed for any explicit references to different aspects of participants' identities. Relatedly, correlations between certain identities and certain attitudes, feelings of belongingness (or lack thereof), and motivation (or lack thereof). The findings from the qualitative data sources will be compared and contrasted with the quantitative findings to deepen understandings of such relationships.	All Focus Group Data All Interview Data Quantitative Survey Data	The quantitative data will be used to discuss trends in these relationships. The qualitative data will be used to explore how these relationships are lived by individuals. The quantitative data will be used to hypothesize about the generalizability of qualitative findings while the qualitative data will be used to expand upon and illustrate the quantitative cases and findings.

Note: The design of the qualitative study was informed by findings of the Knisely (2013) quantitative study, particularly in shaping the research questions and guiding hypotheses about what would be found using qualitative inquiry. With this exception, all linkages between the qualitative and quantitative data occurred in the analysis phase of this study.

Table 4. Focus Group and Interview Design Summary

Focus Group † /Interview ▲	Self-Identified Gender*	French Language Experience*	Reported Gendered Language Attitudes*	Number of Participants	
Pilot Focus Group	Male and female-identified individuals	Both individuals who have and who have never taken French	N/A	9	
Focus Group 1	Male and female-identified individuals	Have taken French	N/A	6	
Focus Group 2	Male and female-identified individuals	Have taken French	N/A	3	
Focus Group 3	Male and female-identified individuals	Both individuals who have and who have never taken French	N/A	6	
Focus Group 4	Exclusively male-identified individuals	Have taken French	N/A	2	
Focus Group 5	Male and female-identified individuals	Have never taken French	N/A	5	
Focus Group 6	Exclusively male-identified individuals	Have never taken French	N/A	8	
Focus Group 7	Exclusively male-identified individuals	Both individuals who have and who have never taken French	N/A	8	
Interview 1	A male-identified individual	Highly-masculine	Has taken French	Strong gendered language attitudes	1
Interview 2	A male-identified individual	Highly-masculine	Has taken French	Weaker gendered language attitudes	1
Interview 3	A male-identified individual	Not highly-masculine	Has taken French	Strong gendered language attitudes	1
Interview 4	A male-identified individual	Not highly-masculine	Has taken French	Weaker gendered language attitudes	1

* As measured by quantitative survey instrument.

† Each focus group was comprised of two to six individuals, based on sample availability, and took place during a one to two hour time-frame, with the exception of the pilot focus group which included ten individuals.

▲ Each interview was one-on-one with the researcher and participant and took place over the course of approximately one to one and a half hours. Participants were asked about their willingness to be contacted with follow-up questions and were asked to participate in member checks regarding findings specific to their individual interview, to which all interview participants were amenable. Participants were not allowed to censor, veto, or block the publication of material but any disagreements or negative reactions were presented in the dissertation.

Appendix A: Contact Summary Form

Contact Summary Form: (Contact Pseudonym)

Contact Type: ____ Focus Group ____ Interview

Date: _____ Location: _____

- 1) How could the dress of the contact be described?

- 2) How could the behaviors of the contact be described, particularly with regard to gender presentation?

- 3) What were the main themes or issues evoked by the contact?

- 4) Which research questions and which variables in the initial framework did the contact bear on most centrally?

- 5) What new hypotheses, speculations, or hunches about the field situations were suggested by this contact?

- 6) Focus group participants: Would this contact be a suitable candidate for an interview? Yes/No.
If so, which target participant description does this individual match:

What are particular topics of discussion to be explored with this contact in such an interview?

- 7) Any additional notes:

STOP.

Appendix B: Student Questionnaire

Languages and Learning: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Motivation

- Researcher: Kris Aric Knisely, Emory University
If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, you may contact the researcher via email: kknisel@emory.edu or via telephone at: (508) 507-8839.
- Estimated Time: This survey should take approximately ten to twenty minutes to complete.

Before completing this study you must read and sign the informed consent form which explains the study's purpose, the potential risks and benefits of participating in the study, that your participation is entirely voluntary, that there is no compensation for taking part in this study, and how your information will be kept confidential. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and there will be no consequences for choosing not to participate. **If you choose not to participate in this study, simply return this survey packet** to the researcher administering the survey.

SECTION A

Have you ever studied French? _____ Yes _____ No

If you answered “Yes” to the question above: please answer all of the questions in the yellow packet.

If you answered “No” to the question above: please answer all of the questions in the green packet.

Green Packet

This packet is for individuals who have NEVER studied French before (past or present). Instructions: Please take your time to complete all sections to the best of your ability. Please feel free to write any comments you may have on the statements or questions.

SECTION B: Gendered Language Attitudes*

Some individuals may feel that languages are masculine or feminine or that women or men are better at learning languages. We want to know what you think.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer. Please only choose one response for each statement. You may write any comments you may have.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1 = strongly disagree | 2 = moderately disagree | 3 = slightly disagree | | | | |
| 4 = slightly agree | 5 = moderately agree | 6 = strongly agree | | | | |
1. Some languages are more masculine than others. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 2. I can think of a feminine language. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 3. Which language one learns is a matter of personal preference. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 4. I can think of a masculine language. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 5. Some languages are more feminine than others. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 6. Languages aren't feminine or masculine. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 7. Women take certain languages and men take other languages. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 8. Men are better at learning languages than women. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 9. Anyone can learn a language regardless of gender or sex. 1 2 3 4 5 6

 10. Women are better at learning languages than men. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

Green Packet

This packet is for individuals who have NEVER studied French before (past or present).

SECTION C: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)*

People may have different goals in language learning. We would like to understand your goals.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer. Please only choose one response for each statement. You may write any comments you may have.

1 = strongly disagree	2 = moderately disagree	3 = slightly disagree
4 = slightly agree	5 = moderately agree	6 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I wish I had begun studying French at an early age. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Learning French isn't really an important goal in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I wish I were fluent in French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. People in my life really encourage me to study French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I want to learn French so well that it becomes second nature to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Studying French would make me a more knowledgeable person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. As I get older, I find I'm losing any desire I had in knowing French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. People in my life feel that I should learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. I haven't any great wish to learn more than the basics of French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. I would like to learn as much French as possible. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. People would respect me more if I had knowledge of a foreign language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. People in my life feel that I should really try to learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. I am afraid the other students would laugh at me if I spoke French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. If it were up to me, I would spend all my time learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. I have little desire to learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

Instrumental Orientation: Item 6

Integrative Orientation: Item 11

Desire to Learn French: Items 1, 7, and 15

Motivational Intensity: Items 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, and 14

French Class Anxiety: Item 13

Encouragement: Items 4, 8, and 12

Green Packet

This packet is for individuals who have NEVER studied French before (past or present).

SECTION D: AMTB and Belongingness*

People may feel differently about the idea of learning French and how they feel others might feel about them learning French. We would like to understand how you feel and how you feel others might feel.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = moderately disagree 3 = slightly disagree
4 = slightly agree 5 = moderately agree 6 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I would be proud to be learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. I wouldn't want others to know that I took French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I feel like I would be the only person I know who took French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I think it's cool to learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I'm afraid people would laugh at me if I was learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. I would not tell others that I am learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. I have many friends who take French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. I would rather take a different language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. I would be ashamed of learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. I would tell people that I'm learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. I wouldn't worry about what people think of me learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. I would feel like I'm part of a community of people who learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

AMTB Encouragement: Item 5

AMTB Desire to Learn French: Item 8

Belongingness: Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12

Green Packet

This packet is for individuals who have NEVER studied French before (past or present).

SECTION E

An individual's life experiences and identity may influence their perspectives on and feelings about languages and language learning. We want to understand how your responses might relate to your experiences and identity. This is why we ask you for some personal demographic data in this section. Please be assured that your personal demographic information will remain entirely confidential.

Please answer the following questions:

What sex is listed on your driver's license or official government ID?

- Male
 Female

Age: _____

How would you describe yourself? (Please check all that apply)

- Hispanic/Latino
 American Indian or Alaska Native
 Asian
 Black or African American
 Native Hawaiian or Pacific
Islander
 White

What are your intended major(s) and minor(s), if any? _____

Please circle your class level: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Please list all languages you have ever studied (past or present):

What is the highest degree your **father** has received?

- High School Diploma
 Some College
 Associate's Degree
 Bachelor's Degree
 Master's Degree
 Doctorate

Please describe your gender in words:

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

Instructions: Please take your time to complete all sections to the best of your ability.

SECTION B: Gendered Language Attitudes*

Some individuals may feel that languages are masculine or feminine or that women or men are better at learning languages. We want to know what you think.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer. Please only choose one response for each statement. You may write any comments you may have.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1 = strongly disagree | 2 = moderately disagree | 3 = slightly disagree | | | | |
| 4 = slightly agree | 5 = moderately agree | 6 = strongly agree | | | | |
1. Some languages are more masculine than others. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 2. I can think of a feminine language. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 3. Which language one learns is a matter of personal preference. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 4. I can think of a masculine language. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 5. Some languages are more feminine than others. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 6. Languages aren't feminine or masculine. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 7. Women take certain languages and men take other languages. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 8. Men are better at learning languages than women. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 9. Anyone can learn a language regardless of gender or sex. 1 2 3 4 5 6
 10. Women are better at learning languages than men. 1 2 3 4 5 6

*Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

SECTION C: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery*

People may have different goals in language learning. We would like to understand your goals.

For each of the following statements circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree	2 = moderately disagree	3 = slightly disagree
4 = slightly agree	5 = moderately agree	6 = strongly agree

1. Studying French is important to me because it will allow me to be more at ease with others who speak French. 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in French class. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. I wish I had begun studying French at an early age. 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Studying French is important to me because I'll need it for my future career. 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Learning French isn't really an important goal in my life. 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in French in class. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Studying French is important to me because it will allow me to meet and speak with more and varied people. 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. I really work hard to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. People in my life really encourage me to study French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
11. I want to learn French so well that it becomes second nature to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. Studying French is important to me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person. 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. As I get older, I find I'm losing any desire I had in knowing French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. I don't really want to learn more than the basics of French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. People in my life have stressed the importance French will have when I leave school. 1 2 3 4 5 6
16. People in my life try to help me with my French. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

For each of the following statements circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = moderately disagree 3 = slightly disagree
 4 = slightly agree 5 = moderately agree 6 = strongly agree

- 17. French is important because people will respect me more if I have knowledge of a foreign language. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 18. I think about dropping French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 19. People in my life feel that I should try to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 20. Studying French is important to me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 21. I am afraid the other students will laugh at me when I speak French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 22. People in my life encourage me to practice my French as much as possible. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 23. Studying French is important to me because it will someday be useful in getting a good job. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 24. If it were up to me, I would spend all my time learning French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 25. I really have little desire to learn French. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 26. People in my life show considerable interest in my French studies. 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 27. Studying French is important to me because it will enable me to understand and better appreciate the art and literature of French-speaking countries. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

Instrumental Orientation: Items 4, 12, 23, and 27
Integrative Orientation: Items 1, 7, 17, and 20
Desire to Learn French: Items 3, 13, 18, and 25
Motivational Intensity: Items 5, 8, 11, 14, and 24
French Class Anxiety: Items 2, 6, 9, and 21
Encouragement: Items 10, 15, 16, 19, 22, and 26

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

SECTION D: Causal Attribution Measure*

Individuals may have different experiences with success or difficulty in French. We would like to understand your thoughts on success and difficulty in French.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree	2 = moderately disagree	3 = slightly disagree
4 = slightly agree	5 = moderately agree	6 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I can overcome the obstacles of learning French if I work hard. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. When I receive a poor grade in French it is because the subject was not interesting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. If I receive a poor grade in French, it is because I didn't study enough. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. At times when I don't succeed in French exercises as much as I want to, it is due to a lack of effort on my part. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I am destined to be successful in French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. When I get a poor grade in French class it is because the topic was complicated. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. If I do well in French, it is because I am lucky. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. The reason that my French grades are not higher is because French is a difficult subject. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who **HAVE** studied French before (past or present).

SECTION E: Student Perceptions of the French Language*

Some individuals may feel that French is masculine or feminine or that women or men are better at learning languages. We want to know what you think. Individuals may also have different experiences with encouragement and discouragement. We want to understand what your experiences have been.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree

2 = moderately disagree

3 = slightly disagree

4 = slightly agree

5 = moderately agree

6 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I think females are better at learning French than males. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. I feel that I have been encouraged by my teachers to continue studying French | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. French is a gentle and pleasant sounding language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I think many men learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I think my teachers feel French is as important as other subjects. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. I think French is more suitable for females than males. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. I think my friends feel it is important to learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. The French language is feminine. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. My friends make fun of me for learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. I am afraid of what people will think of me if I study French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. I feel I have been encouraged more by teachers to study other subjects, such as math, science and computers, than French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. I think French is girly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

SECTION F: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery and Belongingness

People may feel differently about learning French and how they feel others may feel about them learning French. We would like to understand how you feel and how you feel others may feel.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer.

For each of the statements below, circle the number which best represents your answer.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = moderately disagree 3 = slightly disagree
 4 = slightly agree 5 = moderately agree 6 = strongly agree

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I'm proud that I am learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. I don't want others to know that I take French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I feel like I'm the only person I know who takes French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I think it's cool to learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I'm afraid people will laugh at me because I'm learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. I don't tell others that I am learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. I have many friends who take French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. I wish I took a different language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. I'm ashamed of learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. I tell people that I'm learning French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. I don't worry about what people think of me taking French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. I feel like I'm part of a community of people who learn French. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Note: Scale labels did not appear on the instrument used during data collection.*

AMTB Encouragement: Items 2 and 5

AMTB Desire to Learn French: Item 8

Belongingness: Items 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12

Yellow Packet

This packet is for individuals who HAVE studied French before (past or present).

SECTION G

An individual's life experiences and identity may influence their perspectives on and feelings about languages and language learning. We want to understand how your responses might relate to your experiences and identity. This is why we ask you for some personal demographic data in this section. Please be assured that your personal demographic information will remain entirely confidential.

Please answer the following questions:

How long have you been learning French? _____ years

Sex of your present French teacher: _____ Male _____ Female

Sex of your previous French teachers (the past 3 years):
 _____ all female
 _____ all male
 _____ both male and female

Do you intend to continue studying French next year?
 _____ Yes
 _____ Unsure/Undecided
 _____ No

What sex is listed on your driver's license or official government ID?
 _____ Male
 _____ Female

Age: _____

How would you describe yourself? (Please check all that apply)

- _____ Hispanic/Latino
- _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
- _____ Asian
- _____ Black or African American
- _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- _____ White

Please indicate the degree to which you feel you are masculine or feminine by circling the number closest to where you would place yourself on the line below.

Masculine ----- Feminine
5 4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Please feel free to make any comments you have about the degree to which you feel you are masculine or feminine:

Please describe your gender in words:

Appendix C: List of Research-Question and Literature-Driven Start Codes

Research Question 1: Indexing of Gender	RQ1	1.1
RQ1: Masculinity	RQ1-M	1.1.1
RQ1: Femininity	RQ1-F	1.1.2
RQ1: Language Variety X/Y/Z, etc.	RQ1-X, etc.	1.1.3etc.
Research Question 2: Participant's Gender	RQ2-1	2.1
RQ2-1: Participant's Masculinity	RQ2-1-M	2.1.1
RQ2-1: Participant's Femininity	RQ2-1-F	2.1.2
RQ2-1: Ambiguous Gender Ref. (participant)	RQ2-1-A	2.1.3
Research Question 2: Linguistic Experiences	RQ2-2	2.2
RQ2-2: Masculinity of Experience	RQ2-2-M	2.2.1
RQ2-2: Femininity of Experience	RQ2-2-F	2.2.2
RQ2-2: Specific Ling. Exp. (Spec. Variety)	RQ2-2-SLE	2.2.3
Research Question 2: Participants present in the exchange	RQ2-3	2.3
Research Question 3: Negotiation of Identities	RQ-3	3.1
RQ3: Related to own perceptions of a language	RQ-3-S	3.1.1
RQ3: Related to other's perceptions of a language	RQ-3-O	3.1.2
Research Question 4: Participant's Identity ⁶	RQ4-1	4.1
RQ4-1: Linguistic Identity	RQ4-1-LIN	4.1.1
RQ4-1: Learner Identity	RQ4-1-LRN	4.1.2
Research Question 4: Gendered Language Attitudes	RQ4-2	4.2
Research Question 4: Sense of Belongingness	RQ4-3	4.3
RQ4-3: (Positive) Sense of Belonging	RQ4-3-POS	4.3.1
RQ4-3: Sense of NOT Belonging	RQ4-3-NEG	4.3.2
Research Question 4: Motivation	RQ4-4	4.4
RQ4-4: (Positive) Motivation	RQ4-4-MV	4.4.1
RQ4-4: Demotivation	RQ4-4-DMV	4.4.2

⁶ Gender Identity is not included under RQ4-1, because it is treated in RQ2-1.

Appendix D: Focus Group Protocol

[Approximately 20 minutes for casual conversation. Wait for everyone to arrive.]

-Introductions. Sit in circle/around table. Informed consent discussion.

[Start Recording. Let participants know.]

[Relatively Unstructured Portion]

- I want to start just by having a very open-ended discussion about language: about your thoughts about different languages and language learning. [Reminder: Keep everything confidential, be open and honest, no right or wrong answers to any of my questions, etc.]
- So let's start by you taking a couple minutes just to free-write on the topic: Do you have any thoughts about different language? Have you learned any languages? What are your thoughts about the languages you have learned? Do you have any thoughts about languages you have not learned? Write anything down that comes to mind regarding your experiences with or thoughts about language. This is a sort of brainstorming.
- Discuss: So let's talk about your thoughts and experiences. [Free-flowing discussion, probes for more information and to ask them to reflect on what each other are saying.]

[More Structured Portion]

- I want you to turn to a new page in your notebook now and jot down some notes about your thoughts on whether language has anything to do with identity and if so how and if not why not? I'm going to give you a few minutes to brainstorm on your own and then we'll talk again some more.
- So, what do you think: Are language and identity related at all?
 - o Probes:
 - Yes → How? / No → Why not?
 - What about different languages? How do different languages relate to identity?
 - What about someone knowing multiple languages? Does that have anything to do with identity? (What does that have to do with identity?)
 - What parts of identity or what kinds of identity relate to languages if any?
- [If after a while no one has brought up gender: What about gender- Is there any relationship between gender and language in your opinion? Turn to a new page in your notebook and jot down some of your thoughts on that and then we'll talk about it.
- So what are your thoughts on gender and language: Is there any relationship there for you?
 - o Probes:
 - Yes → How are they related for you?
- Can I ask you to flip to a new page in your notebook again? I want you to reflect on whether or not you can think of any languages that are masculine or

any languages that are feminine. If you can: make a list for me of language, whether they're masculine or feminine, and if you have any thoughts about what makes them masculine or feminine, write down a few notes about that. If you can't think of any, free-write about that.

- Alright: So let's talk a little bit about this idea that languages might or might not be masculine or feminine. What do you all think?
- [If the French language hasn't already come up in detail:] I want you to turn to a new sheet in your notebook again. Think about the French language and free-write about whatever comes to mind.
- [After a few minutes:] Now draw a line across the page wherever you're at. Underneath that, reflect on gender and the French language. Do you see the French language as masculine, feminine, neither, or both? Where do you think these ideas come from?
- Let's talk a little bit about the French language. What kinds of things were you writing down? [Ask participants to respond to one another's reflections.]
- [Some free-flowing discussion.]
- Turn to a new page in your notebook again and free-write a little bit about your own experiences with the French language: How has the experience been for you? [Then, Discuss.]
- Draw a line under what you wrote before and this time I want you to reflect specifically on how you see yourself, your identity, and learning and speaking French. [Then, Discuss.]
- Do you think that learning French is any different for guys than it is for girls? [How so? In what ways?]
- Do you think other people might have any preconceived notions about what it means to learn French? [What makes you say that?]
- Have you ever had people express any opinions about you learning French, either explicitly or more implicitly? [Encouragement/Discouragement? How did you feel about that or how did you respond to that?]
- Some people have suggested that guys don't really learn French. What do you think about that?
- I've also heard that guys who learn French are usually gay. What do you think about that?
- I want to open up our conversation now for you to bring up anything you've thought of or anything you want to talk about that we haven't discussed yet. Is there anything that came to mind for you that we haven't talked about yet?
- Are there any questions that I should have asked you all that I didn't ask?
- Turn to a new page in your notebook again and take a minute to reflect on our discussion today: Is there anything that you want to share with me that you haven't said yet? Was there anything you thought of that you didn't feel comfortable saying today? Was there anything you felt was unsayable?
- Okay, finally, at the bottom of the page will you let me know if you would be willing to talk to me again if I have any more questions in the future? This

isn't a commitment; it's just for me to know if I have your permission or not to contact you and see if you might have time to talk a bit more if I have follow-up questions.

- Thank you!

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

1. Catch up
 2. I'm going to ask you some more specific questions in a bit but wanted to give you the chance to talk about anything that you might have had on your mind since our focus group discussion. (After reply: You can bring up anything that comes to mind at any time. And just remember that there are no right or wrong answers to anything, I just want to know whatever you think. And I also want to remind you that you can say whatever here, and that anything you say stays between us.)
 3. Have you been studying French this semester at all?
 4. Talk to me a little bit about how you see your relationship with French right now.
Probe: What's the relationship between how you see yourself (your identity) and French right now? (Or is there any relationship for you?)
 5. Do you plan on continuing to study French in the future? (Why or why not?)
 6. How do you see your future self and the French language?
Probe: How do you see your relationship with the French language in the future?
 7. Does the way you see the French language align with the way that you see yourself? (Follow up: Are there any points of tension?)
Probe: What do you do about those points of tension?
 8. Do you see a strong relationship between language and gender, a weaker relationship, or no relationship at all?
Probe: Would you describe languages as highly gendered?
 9. How would you describe your own gender?
Probe: How would you describe your sense of your own masculinity?
(Possible probe: How would you describe your sense of your own sexuality?)
-
- Transition:* Now that we've talked about the way you see yourself and the way you see the French language, I want to share with you some of the things that others have shared with me and see what you think about those ideas – good, bad, or indifferent. And I just want to remind you again that there's no right or wrong answer to anything. I just want to know whatever you think, you can say anything to me and it goes no further than here.
10. In some focus groups gender came up on its own and in other focus groups we didn't talk about gender until I brought it up. Do you think people tend to think about or talk about gender when they talk about language either implicitly or explicitly, consciously or subconsciously?
 11. Some people said they thought the French language was feminine, other people didn't think you could say any language was masculine or feminine. – What do you think of the French language and what do you think most people think?
 12. What do you think contributes to qualifying a language as masculine or feminine?
 13. Others have suggested that
 - The way a language sounds (phonetics and phonology)
 - Personal experience with a language and its speakers
 - Cultural associations
 - Grammatical gender
 - Body language
 - Sexuality

contribute to whether a language is seen as masculine or feminine. What do you think about that?

Probe: Do any of these seem more or less important to you?

Probe: Do any of these seem unimportant to you?

Probe: Do you think there's anything missing from this list?

Probe: If you can, how would you draw the relationship of these things to gendering a language as masculine or feminine?

14. What do you think happens when someone sees their identity as mis-aligned with a language?

Probe: Do you think people learn a language that they sees as in conflict with their identity?

Probe: For example, if someone sees French as feminine and themselves as masculine, what do you think happens?

Probe: Do you think there are ways that people deal with these kinds of conflicts?

15. So there were some ways people addressed these kinds of conflicts between their identities and the ways they viewed certain languages and I want to share them with you and just see what you think. (I'll share them one by one and you can just go ahead and react to them and say whatever comes to mind.)

- Individuality, being a free spirit, being a rebel
- Having an instrumental or clear pragmatic reason for learning the language, which they perceive as rendering any questions about their identity as irrelevant
- Saying that they had no choice but to learn the language
- Learning the language is characterized as being just one thing that they do as a part of cultivating themselves
- The identity they want to form is a global identity
- One of their identities is being a "good" language learner
- The language gives them a chance to be someone else
- The language doesn't change the core of how they see themselves but only brings into focus certain aspects of themselves
- Not being very proficient in the language means that it doesn't influence or reflect their identity
- Limiting their understanding of the culture limits its influence on identity
- Being more mature means that people don't think about languages as gendered
- Being exposed to more languages means people don't think of languages as gendered

16. Thinking about everything we've talked about, what do you think could be done to encourage men to study French, to continue with French, and to do well in French?

- Probes:
- 1) Policies and Laws
 - 2) Universities and Schools
 - 3) Teachers and ways of teaching
 - 4) Class content
 - 5) Anything else

17. Do you think talking about attitudes towards languages could help? (Follow up: If so, do you have any ideas about where, when, or how these kinds of conversations should be had?)

18. Is there anything you want to talk about that we haven't covered or anything that has come to mind during our conversation today that you want to share?

- The way a language sounds (phonetics and phonology)
- Personal experience with a language and its speakers
- Cultural associations
- Grammatical gender
- Body language
- Sexuality