

BILINGUAL IDENTITY:

Finnish-Canadians' linguistic and cultural identities and changes in them

Bachelor's Thesis

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English
May 2013

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Humanistinen tiedekunta	Laitos – Department Kielten laitos
Tekijä – Author Minna Ylänkö	
Työn nimi – Title BILINGUAL IDENTITY: Finnish-Canadians' linguistic and cultural identities and changes in them	
Oppiaine – Subject Englanti	Työn laji – Level Kandidaatin tutkielma
Aika – Month and year Toukokuu 2013	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 26 sivua
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tarkastella suomalais-kanadalaisten kaksikielisten kielellistä ja kulttuurista identiteettiä sekä tekijöitä, jotka aiheuttavat mahdollisia muutoksia identiteetissä. Tiedetään myös aikaisempien tutkimusten perusteella, kaksikielisen identiteetti on erilainen kuin yksikielisen, ja että ympäristöllisillä tekijöillä, kielellä sekä kulttuurilla on suuri vaikutus identiteettiin. Sen vuoksi oli mielenkiintoista keskittyä tutkimaan miten nämä kaksikieliset itse suhtautuvat identiteettiinsä ja millaisia muutoksia siinä tapahtuu, kun ympäristö, kieli ja kulttuuri muuttuvat.</p> <p>Kaksikielisyyttä on Kanadassa ja yleensä tutkittu paljon, mutta se on lähinnä keskittynyt yhteiskunnalliseen kaksikielisyyteen, kuten ranskankielisiin kanadalaisiin. Koska Kanadassa asuvien vähemmistöjen, kuten suomalaisten identiteettiä on tutkittu vähän, päätin ruveta tutkimaan näiden kaksikielisten yksilöllistä identiteettiä. Tutkimukseen osallistujat ovat kaikki syntyneet ja kasvaneet Torontossa, mutta muuttaneet Suomeen aikuisiällä. Osallistujien omakohtainen kokemus molemmista kielistä ja kulttuureista toikin tutkimukseen uuden näkökulman, joka tarkastelee muutoksia identiteetissä Suomeen muuton jälkeen. Tutkimus toteutettiin haastattelemalla jokaista osallistujaa.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittivat, että osallistujien identiteettiin ovat omalta osaltaan olleet vaikuttamassa heidän perheensä, suomalainen yhteisö Torontossa, sekä vahva suomalaisten perinteiden ylläpito. Kuitenkin muutto Suomeen on muuttanut osallistujien kuvaa siitä, mitä suomalaisuus oikeastaan on ja parantanut heidän kielitaitoaan, samalla vahvistaen heidän kulttuurista sekä kielellistä identiteettiään. Oli myös selkeää, että mitä kauemmin aikaa vietetään Suomessa, sitä vahvemmaksi suomalainen identiteetti muodostuu.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords suomalais-kanadalainen, kaksikielisyyys, identiteetti, ympäristö, kieli, kulttuuri	
Säilytyspaikka – Depository	
Muita tietoja – Additional information	

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1 INTRODUCTION

As Joseph (2004: 1) simply expresses, “identity is who you are”. All individuals have different identities, and these identities are shaped and moulded throughout life. Lestinen et al. (2004: 2) claim that for example changing personal relationships with others shapes one’s identity. In addition, surroundings, culture and language are factors that help shape and construct identity. This study will specifically focus on linguistic and cultural identity, and how it can be influenced and constructed by different elements, such as the aforementioned surroundings, relationships, languages and cultures. The individuals that this study aims to research are bilinguals, who indeed can have multiple linguistic and cultural identities.

Bilingualism is a global phenomenon. Today, all the more people live in multilingual environments and are affected by different cultures and languages. As Lestinen et al. (2004: 1) point out, multiculturalism is one of the distinctive features of our era. A good example of a multicultural and a multilingual country is Canada, where a great deal of research has been done on bilingual identity. In fact, in sociolinguistic research, a particular area of interest has been societal bilingualism in Canada, specifically French-Canadian bilinguals’ identity. According to Hamers and Blanc (2000: 6), societal bilingualism refers to a community of bilinguals sharing two languages. However, due to the great number of immigrants in Canada, there are also many individual bilinguals who have multiple sides to their identities, including Finns. For this reason, and because most previous research has focused on societal bilingualism, this study will focus on individual bilingual identity, specifically Finnish-Canadian bilinguals’ identities.

The bilingual individuals who I wish to research are second generation Finnish-Canadians who have been born and raised in Toronto in an English speaking environment, yet have been tightly connected to a Finnish community, through family and friends. All of them have moved to Finland as adults and currently reside here. As already mentioned, identity can be shaped and affected by many different elements over the course of a person's life. Therefore, in addition to researching how these bilinguals identify themselves linguistically and culturally, this study also aims to explore and research any possible changes in the participants’ linguistic and cultural identities, which moving to Finland might have caused. This is a new approach to researching Canadian bilingual identity, since it focuses on individuals, people, who have experienced both Canadian culture and the English language as well as Finnish culture and the Finnish language firsthand.

2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

Bilingual identity is a broad concept and has been widely researched in the field of sociolinguistics. Previous studies show that this particular topic area can be studied from many different perspectives, in many different frameworks, one of them being identity construction. However, this study will focus on individual bilinguals in contact with both their languages and cultures, and also explore how changing their surroundings has influenced their identities. In this section I will first explain what is meant by bilingualism and a bilingual person, after which I will move on to discuss the core concept of this study, identity. Secondly, I will define identity in relation to language and culture, and through it all, try to shed light on some of the elements that can influence changes in one's linguistic and cultural identity.

2.1 Bilingualism

As the aim of my study is to research Finnish-Canadian bilinguals' cultural and linguistic identity, and its possible changes after moving from one country to another, it is important to first define what is meant by bilingualism and a bilingual person. Previous research has shown that it is difficult to exhaustively define bilingualism. As Baetens Beardsmore (1982: 1) states, bilingualism has numerous definitions. It can also be defined in multiple different ways depending on the theoretical perspective in one's study. Some of these definitions will be presented here.

Perhaps one of the most popular ways to define bilingualism is Bloomfield's, i.e. "the native-like control of two languages" (Bloomfield 1935, quoted by Hamers and Blanc 2000: 6). In fact, a person who is equally and fully fluent in two languages has long been considered to be the "real", the "ideal", and the "perfect" bilingual (Grosjean, 2008: 10). However, this is not the only definition of bilingualism, and it is also not the definition I will use in this present study. A more realistic definition of bilingualism in my view can be found in Baetens Beardsmore's (1982: 3) claim that bilingualism must be able to account for the presence of at least two languages within one speaker, but that ability in these languages may not necessarily be equal. A third and a similar definition of bilingualism, or *bilinguality*, according to Hamers and Blanc (2000: 6) is "the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication". The bilinguals researched in the present study can therefore be defined as individual bilinguals according to the second and third definitions, as they have access

to two languages, English and Finnish, though they may not necessarily be equally proficient in both.

2.2 Language and Identity

Identity is central to this study, and hence I begin by defining the concept of identity and explaining the relationship between language and identity. In addition, I will touch upon how code-switching can be used to construct and express identities. Østern (2004: 659) suggests that identity explains something that is central for an individual. In other words, identity refers to who or what a person is. Furthermore, Djité (2006: 7) describes identity as being something or someone that people perceive that they are. It is about both “sameness with others and uniqueness of the self”. People have a need to belong but at the same time they want to be recognised as unique individuals. Moreover, according to Joseph (2004:15), group belongings are represented in individual identities, at least to some extent.

Language has different functions and purposes. Djité (2006: 4,12) claims that communication is perhaps one of the most obvious and important functions of language. Therefore, language cannot be isolated from the people who speak it (Djité 2006: 12). Furthermore, Joseph (2004: 15) claims that in addition to communication, language has another primary purpose, which is representation. Representation, according to Joseph (2004: 15), is discriminating or categorising things using the words that are provided by our language. Linguistic identity, on the other hand is defined as a subtype of both communication and representation since linguistic interaction among people is deeply connected to linguistic identity.

Language and identity are inseparable. As has already been established, language is an important element of identity. In fact, it is “a fundamental resource for identity production”, as Bucholtz and Hall (2004: 382) point out. In other words, language is one of the most important elements when discussing the concept of identity. According to Joseph (2004: 188), there is no real separation between language and identity because they are completely bound up with each other on every level, both personal, national, and beyond. To emphasise further, Joseph (2006: 262) states that linguistic identities allow us to categorise “who we believe people really are according to how they speak”. Thus, language constructs one’s identity. However, previous research indicates that having two languages can sometimes confuse and frustrate bilinguals, as Østern (2004) found in her study on Finnish-Swedish adults' linguistic and cultural identities. Particularly one participant expressed contradictory feelings towards both Finnish and Swedish languages and the

representatives of those language groups, and found it difficult to place himself anywhere in terms of linguistic identity.

Identity, in addition to being defined as who one is, is a process which changes according to one's surroundings. It is "the current result of interaction between individuals and their surroundings", as Lestinen et al. (2004:2) state. Therefore, since bilingual people are usually surrounded by and in contact with more than one language and culture, they can have multiple identities. This also suggests that when one's surroundings change, one's identities are in turn affected, which makes identity a constantly changing process. The main goal of my study is indeed to find out how new and different circumstances and surroundings, specifically moving from one country to another has influenced these second-generation Finnish-Canadian bilinguals' identities, and whether one side of their linguistic identities has gained more importance than the other.

Identity can be expressed in language and communication. Therefore, one important aspect in researching bilingual identity is to shed light on how bilinguals use and choose and perhaps mix their languages; that is how they negotiate or express their identities. In order for bilinguals to use both their languages, they need to have at least a minimal competence in both languages, which has already been established. Furthermore, language use will reveal which language a bilingual person is more or less dominant in or which language he or she prefers for a specific domain or topic (Hamers and Blanc 2000: 30). Instead of choosing which language to use, sometimes bilinguals might use both languages, switching between them in conversations, which is called code-switching. Hamers and Blanc (2000: 258) point out that this often occurs when two or more speakers that are bilingual in the same languages communicate with each other. Code-switching can also be done in order to exclude or include others and to draw distinctions between different social groups (Burck 2005: 29). In addition, according to Burck (2005: 29), language switching is a resource through which identities can be made salient. Code-switching is also used to construct identities.

Previous research, such as Mills' (2001) study of language, culture and identity shows that bilinguals use code-switching for different purposes. This study of third generation Asian children reveals that these particular bilinguals code-switched in instances where they either lacked fluency in the other language and wanted to express themselves more clearly or where they simply preferred specific words in the other language. Moreover, all these instances were in conversations with other bilinguals who spoke and understood the same languages. This would indeed suggest that bilinguals construct and express their identities and belonging to two

linguistic groups through code-switching.

2.3 Cultural Identity

In addition to linguistic identity, cultural identity is another key concept regarding bilinguals since most often they are a part of two cultural groups. I will begin with defining the concept of culture and how it is used in this study. Firstly, culture could be defined as a combination of factors that a group of people have in common, something that brings people together and unites them as a group. Hamers and Blanc (2000: 198) define culture as “a complex entity which comprises a set of symbolic systems”, such as knowledge, norms, beliefs, art, customs, habits and skills, as well as values. Secondly, they point out that language is an important component of culture, which would suggest that it is difficult, if not impossible to separate language and culture. In addition, as has already been established, language is also an important feature of identity. Therefore, it could be argued that linguistic and cultural identities go hand in hand. In fact, Lestinen et al. (2004: 4) claim that in order to understand a culture, one must acquire its language since cultural communication requires and presupposes common codes.

Although linguistic and cultural identities usually go hand in hand, there are bilingual individuals who may identify with culture more than language, and vice versa. An example of this can be seen in Østern's (2004) study on Finnish-Swedish adults' linguistic and cultural identities, where one of the participants has a minimal knowledge of the Finnish language, yet still feels proud of being a Finn and enjoys living in Finland. This indeed affirms that sometimes one's identification towards a culture can be strong even if one does not identify with the language as strongly.

Cultural identities, as well as linguistic identities give people a sense of belonging to a certain group. Joseph (2006: 261) states that linguistic identities function as a positive and a productive way to give people a sense of belonging. However, he adds that they may construct an “us” versus “them” ideology, which is not necessarily positive. Furthermore, Bucholtz and Hall (2004: 382) suggest that identity is a cultural effect, since it is not only the source but also the outcome of culture. A sense of shared values and feeling of belonging are essential features of cultural identity. According to Hamers and Blanc (2000: 201), cultural identity may comprise certain features which make one cultural group distinct from another. These features can be ancestry, territoriality, institutions, values, norms, and language. In addition, Djité (2006: 7) claims that every individual has a need to belong- in other words, an innate need to have a sense

of one's roots, where one comes from.

Moreover, Liebkind (1994: 21-23) states that interaction with one's own group and with members of other groups develops one's cultural identity. Indeed, as can be seen from Jurva and Jayas's (2008) research on identity among second-generation Finnish immigrant youth in Canada, participating in the culture of one's community is one important factor in maintaining one's identity. Even if an involvement in one's community is occasional instead of regular, it is still crucially important for the participants in experiencing symbolic ethnic or cultural identity and giving them a sense of belonging into that cultural group, as Jurva and Jaya's study (2008) would suggest. However, although their study is similar to mine, in the sense that it studies second-generation Finnish-Canadian immigrants' identity, it only includes bilinguals who have lived in Canada, but not in Finland. Therefore, my study offers a new perspective on how bilinguals' identities can be moulded and influenced through changes in surroundings and experiencing both cultures firsthand. This is a new point of view in studying bilingualism and identity since none of the previous studies I came across research changes in identity that would have been caused by moving from one country to another.

Hamers and Blanc (2000: 220) suggest that a bilingual's cultural identity is often quite different from a monolingual's cultural identity. Bilinguals, according to the definition used in this study, have two or more different cultures to position themselves within, and as Burck (2005: 27) points out, sometimes the perspectives of these cultures can be very different, even contradictory. Often bilinguals are also defined as bicultural, which means that they identify positively with both cultural groups that speak their languages. In addition, bicultural bilinguals feel a connection to and gain recognition as part of both their cultural groups (Hamers and Blanc 2000: 30). However, Hamers and Blanc (2000: 30) point out that bilingualism does not automatically entail biculturalism since bilinguals are individuals and can have different approaches to their cultural groups. Jurva and Jayas's (2008) previously mentioned study on ethnic identity among Finnish immigrant youth in Canada found that some participants consider multiculturalism a source of conflict between Finnish and Canadian cultures. According to several participants in their study, Canada's multiculturalism and diversity are the most positive qualities of Canadian culture whereas Finland's homogeneity can sometimes result in racism, which was a real experience for one of the participants during a visit to Finland. Therefore, I am interested in finding out whether the participants of my study also experience contradictions or conflicts between Finnish and Canadian cultures.

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Research Aim and Questions

The goal and purpose of this study is two-fold and therefore can be divided into two different questions. Firstly, the aim of this study is to explore bilinguals', more specifically, Finnish-Canadian bilinguals' identities. In other words, how do they view themselves and their identities both linguistically and culturally. Therefore, the first research question is:

How do participants identify themselves linguistically and culturally?

With this first question, I am interested in finding out how these Finnish-Canadians see themselves linguistically and culturally, and whether they identify with both Finnish and English language as well as both Canadian and Finnish culture. Secondly, another aim of this study is to research possible changes in these participants' identities caused by moving from Canada to Finland. The second research question is, therefore:

How, in the participants' views, has moving to Finland influenced their linguistic and cultural identities?

Change in surroundings and living in a different culture can have a significant impact on bilinguals' identity. Therefore, with the second question, I wish to discover what specific factors have changed regarding these participants' identities after they have moved to Finland.

3.2 Data and Methods

This present study's data consists of three interviews. Identity is a wide and a personal topic area, which is why interviews were chosen as data for this study. It is rather easy for the participants to express themselves in an interview situation because the questions are open-ended and not tied to specific scales or options. Also, the interviewer can easily ask additional questions if need be.

The interviews were all semi-structured, with fixed, mainly open-ended questions. However, depending on how the interviews progressed, and how wide or narrow the answers were, questions were added or modified along the way. I separated the interview questions into three different parts, firstly asking general questions on national identity and what the participants call themselves. Secondly, I asked them about language and identity: how they identify themselves

linguistically and how they use both languages in different situations. The third part of the interview was about cultural identity and the participants were asked questions about culture, cultural values and norms regarding both countries they have lived in. The aim was to find out whether they identify themselves with both cultures, and if they do, why and how this is shown in their lives. Throughout the interviews, there were questions regarding possible changes in their identities after moving from Canada to Finland, to find out how and why their identities have been moulded and shaped since they have moved to Finland.

The interviews all took place in Jyväskylä, Finland. One interview lasted for about 30 minutes while the other two interviews were both one hour long. All the interviews were recorded and some parts of them transcribed, according to the need in terms of analysing it. Moreover, I analysed my data according to my two research questions, looking for and coding themes in regards to linguistic and cultural identity, and in regards to how the participants' identities have changed.

3.3 The Participants

The participants in this study are three second-generation Finnish-Canadian bilinguals who were born and raised in Toronto, and who as adults have moved to Finland: Maria, Peter and Rachel. To ensure the participants' anonymity, these names are pseudonyms. Maria has lived in Finland for five and a half years and Peter for about five years. Rachel, on the other hand had previously lived in Finland for a year and wanted to come back to study. In addition to the year she previously spent in Finland, she has now lived here for about 5 months. Peter's parents are both Finnish whereas both Rachel and Maria only have a Finnish mother.

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 The Participants' Linguistic and Cultural Identities

In this section, I will present the findings of my study based on the three interviews conducted. The findings will be presented corresponding to the two research questions, one research question at a time, to make the process clearer. Extracts from the interviews will be provided as evidence. I will start with revealing and analysing the results corresponding to the first research question - how do participants identify themselves linguistically and culturally. The first and quite an obvious factor relating to the first question is that all the participants call themselves Finnish-Canadian. One of the reasons stated for using this particular term is that it reveals both

their identities, since they all grew up in Canada, yet Finland is a big part of their heritage. Maria mentions that Finnish-Canadian functions as an identifier. Relating to this she says:

(1) I'm Canadian, something else- Canadian. Just, I don't think there's a reason why I put one before the other really. (Maria)

Moreover, Maria points out that she has always called herself Finnish-Canadian and never really thought of there being another reason for this. Also Peter has always called himself Finnish-Canadian because he grew up in Canada but has deep roots in his Finnish nationality because he was involved in different Finnish groups in Toronto. Furthermore, Rachel mentions that she calls herself Finnish-Canadian because she grew up in Canada and her Finnish mother was very active in involving her in the Finnish community there. Jurva and Jaya (2008) found in their study of second-generation Finnish-Canadians that participating in one's community can be an important factor in experiencing cultural identity or belonging to a group; this can be seen with the participants of this study too, since they call themselves Finnish-Canadian, mostly as a result of their involvement in the Finnish community in Toronto.

Another factor that all three participants pointed out about the way they identify themselves linguistically and culturally was that they all emphasise their uniqueness and the other identity depending on where they are. To clarify this, Maria explains that in Canada she calls herself Finnish and in Finland she calls herself Canadian. This is because most Canadian people originate from somewhere else and everyone's background and the other national identity is celebrated there. However, in Finland Maria calls herself Canadian mainly in situations where she feels like she is sticking out of the crowd in a negative sense, in order to show that she is different and has a reason for being different. Her Canadian identity is what differentiates her from other Finns. Peter sometimes also calls himself Finnish or Canadian, depending on the situation. He says that he can choose to be Canadian when he is proud of something that is happening in Canada and on the other hand, he can highlight his Finnish identity when there is a good reason to be proud of being Finnish. One example of this would be either Finland or Canada winning the ice hockey world championship. Maria and Peter had rather similar responses:

(2) I think, I think it actually is like where I am, then I will represent the other country. I can always kind of play the opponent, like well things are better there, you know, or or something like that. (Peter)

(3) But when I'm in Finland, people ask what I am and I'll say I'm Canadian and when I'm in Canada people ask you what are you, where are you from, I'll say Finland. (Maria)

Moreover, similarly to Maria, Rachel points out that since Toronto is a multicultural city and

there are people of all kinds of nationalities, one's background is always what people are interested in in Canada, and that is why she wants to emphasise her Finnish identity there. In conclusion, Djité (2006) pointed out that people have a need to belong and that identity is about sameness with others. However, people also want to bring out their individuality, which indicates that identity is also about uniqueness of the self. Similarly here, it is evident that these participants want to belong and fit in to both groups but at the same time, their desire to emphasise their uniqueness and what is different about them in relation to others is very strong. In addition, perhaps one reason for emphasising "the other" identity is that the participants want to be seen as "the other" compared to the group, since they are often asked to identify themselves.

Regarding how these participants identify themselves linguistically, I found that two of them consider themselves to be bilinguals whereas one does not. The definition of bilingualism differed slightly between the participants. Maria considers a bilingual person to be someone whose competence in two languages is at the same level. She considers Finnish to be her first language and English her native tongue. One reason for this could be the fact that Finnish was the language that she first learned to speak as a child. Although she sees herself as a bilingual person, she does not feel that her language skills in both English and Finnish are at an equal level, instead she states that she is more fluent in English. In other words, she identifies more with the English language, which is why she calls it her native tongue. Peter, on the other hand, responds *Of course!* when he is asked whether he considers himself to be bilingual. His definition of a bilingual person is someone who can speak two or more languages, whether equally fluently or not. Peter mentions that he has always been familiar with and able to speak the Finnish language, although his Finnish was *rusty* before he moved to Finland. Lastly, Rachel does not call herself bilingual but considers English to be her first and Finnish to be her second language. Rachel defines a bilingual person as someone who is fluent, although not necessarily equally fluent in two languages. According to her definition, however, a bilingual person knows these two languages really well. The reason why she does not consider herself as one, is because she rates her Finnish language skills as satisfactory, as she can understand Finnish better than she speaks. Rachel identifies with the Finnish language, yet does not claim proficiency in it. Here is what the participants comment on their language skills and bilingualism:

(4) ...so I'm not necessarily like fluent but I KNOW Finnish. My like kielitaito is maybe like satisfactory, like it's okay. (Rachel)

(5) I wish that I could be TRULY bilingual in that I could um, that Finnish and English were at the same level. But English is, I'm more fluent in English. (Maria)

(6) I would put both as my äidinkieli, even though my Finnish is not as good as my English. I have two first languages and one's a little worse. (Peter)

In interpreting the findings regarding bilingualism, there is a rather clear correlation between the amount of time the participants have spent in Finland and whether they consider themselves to be bilingual or not. Both Maria and Peter have lived in Finland for five or more years, immersed in the Finnish language and culture whereas Rachel has only lived here for about a year and a half altogether. Usually, the longer one is surrounded by and exposed to a language, the better and more fluent he or she will become in it, and also identify more with that language.

In the theoretical background, I introduced the concept of code-switching and how bilinguals can use it for different purposes, such as expressing one's competence in both languages in communication and reveal one's identity. Indeed, two of the participants, Peter and Maria, mix both languages and switch between them in conversations. Rachel has also occasionally used Finnish as a secret or a code-language in public places in Canada with other Finnish-Canadian bilinguals. As Burck (2005) asserts, this is usually done to exclude others or draw distinctions between different social groups. In Finland, Rachel came to realise that her secret language is no longer secret because everybody around her understands her. Since Peter and Maria have both lived in Finland for quite some time, their Finnish vocabulary has expanded and they have learned many new expressions and ways of communicating in Finnish, therefore are able to choose which language to use. This is how Maria comments on code-switching:

(7) I'll switch to English if I need to say something that I don't know the words to...
Now my children speak Finnish and English in the same sentence, and so I'll do it back to them and certain words we use are Finnish for things and certain words are in English, umm, and I do do it with my husband as well because sometimes you can just think faster in Finnish cause you're already using that word in Finnish so that when you're speaking English you just throw the Finnish word in there. (Maria)

As Maria mentions, she has children who sometimes use both Finnish and English in the same sentence and she will respond in the same manner. She also switches between languages when communicating with her husband, although their primary language of communication is English, since he is not Finnish. The reason she gives for this is that they have learned certain words in Finnish and it is easier to use the Finnish words in specific contexts. In addition, although her primary language is English, some terms and phrases that do not translate well into English she will communicate in Finnish. This is something she has started doing in Finland, and it is only with other bilinguals or her family, people who understand both languages to a degree. The fact that she has only started using code-switching in Finland would suggest that she identifies with the Finnish language more now than before, since she is able to switch between languages and she even prefers some Finnish words and expressions.

Peter uses code-switching for slightly different purposes than Maria. He explained that a mix of both Finnish and English, something he calls *Finglish*, was used in his family when he was growing up. He has also used Finnish as a secret language in public with other Finnish-Canadians in Canada, specifically when shopping at Walmart, in order to exclude others and draw a distinction between themselves and others. Peter associates Finnish as his home language, mainly because he has always used Finnish at home, first with his parents and now with his wife, who is also Finnish. Peter describes a situation where he uses code-switching:

(8) I think if I'm like passionate about something and really like, in English I can really get put some umph into the the thing, I'll switch over to English when I'm talking to my wife. Like so like just that it comes out easier it comes out quicker, I don't have to like think like like how do I make this, yeah I guess it comes out naturally like, that English is still the stronger language. (Peter)

Indeed, when Peter wants to express himself more clearly and really emphasise something, he will switch from Finnish to English because English is his stronger language, the language he still identifies more with. Also, when Peter does not know or remember a word or a phrase in Finnish or in English, he will say it in the other language. Similarly to Maria, Peter prefers certain Finnish words to the English ones because he is already using them in Finnish, in specific settings. Lastly, Peter has Finnish friends who are either bilingual or otherwise fluent in English, and he sometimes gets confused about which language to communicate in with them. As pointed out earlier, code-switching can be used for different purposes and is one way to construct one's identity.

Moving on to how the participants identify themselves culturally, they all find it difficult to define the concept of Canadian culture, yet are quite familiar with defining Finnish culture. When asked what culture is, Peter responds that culture defines what is acceptable and what the norm in a country is, not forgetting its roots and history that play a significant part in shaping what the culture has become. The participants have no difficulty describing Finnish culture and its characteristics according to how they see it. One of the obvious reasons for this is that they have lived most of their lives in Canada where "the other" identity is celebrated and emphasised and where they have always been asked to describe their country of origin. In addition, their families have kept many Finnish traditions alive. In regards to the Finnish culture, the participants mention things like *being close to the nature* or *down- to- earthness*, how Finns have fought for their country and now enjoy the postwar freedom, *isolationist*, *sauna*, *going in sauna naked with others*, *cottages*, and *fishing* to name a few. To sum it up, Maria states that Finnish culture is *whatever makes Finns proud of being Finnish*. Peter adds that the possible roots of

Finnish culture are in hunters and herders and that has a huge effect on the way Finnish people enjoy the nature today. These are all traits that the participants themselves, especially Maria and Peter, identify and are familiar with. However, all the participants find it more difficult to define or describe Canadian culture.

(9) It's harder to pinpoint what is Canadian. ... It is easier to talk about Finnish, oh my gosh! (Maria)

(10) I think there is a, there MAY be a Canadian culture but I was never exposed to it. Because Toronto is the melting pot and Canadian culture you think of like, well everybody if someone was like draw a few pictures and it has to be like something to do with Canada, like you would draw like lumberjacks with black and red platshirts and like hockey and stuff like this, that that has NOTHING (laughs) to do with Toronto. It, it would be something like that like the rest of Canada kinda fits into. (Peter)

(11) Mm, multiculturalism. So I think like there's groups within groups, so there's like I, I feel like I don't know, there's a lot of little hubs like Italian, like we have little Italy in Toronto, Chinatown. And there's a lot of just, I don't know, it's everyone's culture meshed together. (Rachel)

Maria simply states that it is harder to describe Canadian culture as opposed to the Finnish culture. One reason for this is that she has lived in Canada for most of her life, never having to define Canadian culture, whereas the Finnish culture has been the one people constantly ask about. Peter, on the other hand, has an idea of what people generally think is Canadian, namely lumberjacks, as well as moose and beavers, yet feels that he was never exposed to the Canadian culture because he has only lived in Toronto, which is a multicultural city and therefore different from the rest of Canada. Peter still adds that in a country that is based on immigration, the people who live there, except the actual natives or aboriginal people, are not "the definers of culture", meaning that since everyone has their own cultural traits, the aboriginal people are the only ones who could define Canadian culture. In addition, he thinks that because there are a number of different nationalities and cultures that meet and mix in Toronto, the original Canadian culture no longer really exists. Furthermore, Rachel points out that everybody experiences a bit of everyone's culture in Toronto, as she describes Canadian culture with one word:

multiculturalism. Because of the multiple cultures one experiences and is surrounded by in Toronto, the participants find it more difficult to identify with the traits that are described as characteristics of the Canadian culture. However, two things that all the participants agree on being characteristics of Canadian culture are multiculturalism and ice hockey.

As mentioned earlier, the fact that people in Toronto generally identify with "the other" identity, namely their background and roots would seem to explain why the participants also not only know more about Finnish than Canadian culture, but perhaps in some ways relate to and identify with it more. This, of course, is in addition to the fact that Toronto truly is a multicultural city, where many cultures mix, and therefore there is not a clear common strand of what is Canadian. Futhermore, all participants have Finnish parents, either one or both, who have instilled Finnish

values and cultural knowledge into them, according to Peter, Maria, and Rachel themselves. They were all raised to appreciate Finnish culture and cultural practices, growing up under the influence of not only their parents but a whole community of Finnish people in Toronto, which makes their identification with the Finnish culture stronger. Maria emphasises the importance and the effect of growing up in a Finnish community on her identity. Christmas celebration and other *Finnish things* they did were a huge part of her identity and according to herself she feels like she has *lived like a Finnish person* in Canada. To conclude, being Finnish is what has defined them in Canada and therefore has needed more explaining and defining.

One factor relating to how the participants identify themselves culturally, is that they all feel that they belong to both cultures, in other words are bicultural although two of them feel more Canadian than Finnish and one feels more Finnish than Canadian. All three participants feel a connection to both cultures, through their community, grandparents, a parent or parents, and personal experience. Canada is all of their home country, a place where they grew up, yet Finnish culture and values were present in their families, at least to an extent. Perhaps the most obvious reason as to why Peter identifies more with being Finnish and Maria and Rachel identify more with being Canadian is that Finnish culture has always been very strongly present in Peter's family and he has spent significant amounts of time in Finland when growing up; at least every other summer. This way he has become familiar with Finnish cultural practices as well as been able to speak Finnish regularly. Peter emphasises that he has always felt more Finnish than Canadian because he feels that he is a part of the Finnish community in Toronto and he also feels a connection to other Finns in Finland. Maria, on the other hand, has always felt that she is more Canadian than a Finn. She feels this way because she was born in Canada, and studied law and politics there, whereas she is not familiar with the Finnish political system. She is also proud of Canada's good reputation, history and the way the country is run. Bucholtz and Hall (2004) claim that identity is a cultural effect and a sense of shared values as well as a feeling of belonging are features of cultural identity. Similarly, Maria feels that her Canadian cultural identity is stronger because she is more familiar with the Canadian political system and society, therefore feeling that she is a part of that cultural group, sharing the same values and ideologies.

(12) My Finnish identity or the Finnish part of me feels stronger now but I'm still Finnish-Canadian.
(Maria)

Although Maria feels that her Finnish identity is stronger now that she lives here, she still wants to highlight that she is something else than a pure Finn, declaring her identification with the Canadian culture. Similarly to Maria, Rachel only has one Finnish parent, her mother. Her father is Canadian and according to herself, that has an impact on her although Finnish is also a big part

of her. This is what Rachel comments regarding her bicultural identity:

(13) Obviously I feel like a stronger pull to Canadian culture, for the most part. Sometimes I think things are a little interesting the way they are done here. (Rachel)

Rachel calls herself bicultural, despite the fact that she feels a greater connection to Canadian culture and is more used to how *things* are done there, mainly because she has lived there for most of her life and as Maria, Rachel feels a sense of shared values with Canadians. She feels that she belongs to Canadian culture because its values and practices are her values and practices whereas she does not identify with the Finnish culture as much, although she is quite familiar with it.

4.2 Changes in the Participants' Identities after Moving to Finland

With the second research question I aimed to find out how the participants' identities, in their own view, have been influenced after they have moved to Finland. The first aspect of change regarding the participants' linguistic and cultural identities is that all of their Finnish language skills have improved. Joseph (2006) states that linguistic identities give people a sense of belonging. In addition, as Bucholtz and Hall (2004) claim, language functions as a resource for identity construction. Since language and identity are inseparable, it is obvious that the participants feel a stronger identification with being Finnish now and their Finnish identities are constructed as their Finnish language skills improve. Both Maria and Peter found it easy to speak Finnish when they first moved here because they had plenty of opportunities to practice and speak Finnish in Canada. For Peter, reading and spelling Finnish were skills that he learned in Finland. Before moving here, his Finnish was rusty and now, according to him, he finds writing in Finnish straightforward and his speech has improved immensely. Furthermore, his Finnish vocabulary is now much broader because of work and school. He has even learned some Finnish slang words and considers his pronunciation to be more accurate now, as opposed to how it was when he still lived in Canada. Maria points out that having to *figure things out for yourself* in a new country, such as buying insurance and finding the name of the electricity company, *navigating "neuvola" and KELA* helped improve her Finnish language skills.

(14) I think that's the best way to learn a language, to force yourself and live in the language. (Maria)

Although Maria spoke Finnish occasionally in Canada, here it has become compulsory and she feels that that is indeed the best way to learn a language when one has to speak it in different situations. In addition, through learning the language, Maria has become familiar with many

Finnish societal structures and cultural practices, which in turn has enhanced and strengthened her identification with the Finnish culture. In fact, as suggested earlier, linguistic and cultural identities go hand in hand, as it is impossible to separate language and culture.

While Peter and Maria found it fairly easy to speak Finnish right after moving to Finland, Rachel, on the other hand, had some difficulties with the language because she confused Finnish with French. In addition, she has many opportunities to speak English here in Finland because she studies in English and some of her English-speaking family members live in Jyväskylä too. It is evident that Rachel identifies more with English than Finnish. However, she currently has a work placement with the elderly where she is, in her own words, *forced to speak Finnish which is a good thing*. According to Rachel herself, her Finnish grammar has improved and she has learned many new words and meanings, which she is now able to use in conversations with native Finnish speakers. Despite this, Rachel along with Maria and Peter feel that they are or have been, to some extent, quite self-conscious about their Finnish language skills around native Finnish speakers and sometimes worried about sounding funny or making mistakes.

In addition to the fact that the participants' Finnish language skills have improved, two of the participants can now express the same kinds of thoughts and feelings in both languages, which has strengthened their readiness to express themselves in Finnish, thus strengthened their ability to perform or construct their identities through Finnish. Maria says there has been a clear change in the way she can express herself in Finnish since she moved from Canada to Finland, mainly because of certain relationships. Peter also points out that today he can express the same sorts of feelings and thoughts in both languages because he has used Finnish so much more in Finland, in different contexts such as school and work.

(15) There were six of us moms on mother's leave at the same time...and so when you're just hanging out and talking about your feelings and expressing yourself, I would pick up the language that THEY used and understand like the emotion behind it so then I was able to use the same language basically. Um but I have a feeling that if I cut that interaction out of my life, maybe I would have a harder time expressing like how I'm feeling or like that emotional side. It comes, or it came for me from hanging out with the gals every week, basically. (Maria)

(16) But I am like totally like at emotional level I can relate to Finnish cause I don't like, I, cause I've been here at, in school and different work places where I've had to speak Finnish. It's get...become more fluent...the more I use it everyday then I then I can do like I can do that better. (express the same thoughts and feelings) (Peter)

In the extract above, Maria points out that her relationship with these women and the language they used helped her use the same kind of language and that way construct her identity through Finnish. Without this particular interaction, she mentions, she would probably not be able to

perform her identity in Finnish as well as she can now. Moreover, Peter says that his surroundings and different situations in Finland have enabled him to relate to also Finnish on an emotional level, although English has been his dominant language. As discussed earlier, and as Lestinen et al. (2004) also suggest, identity is a constantly changing process, which is affected by one's surroundings. Similarly, it can be seen that these participants' surroundings, in other words school, workplace, and relationships with Finnish people have influenced their Finnish identities and enabled them to think and express themselves in a new way in Finnish.

Regarding the participants' cultural identities, yet another influencing factor after moving to Finland is that they all have a personal experience of the Finnish culture now, instead of living it through their grandparents or parents. In fact, they point out that their identities have been updated in Finland, which in turn has helped them to feel more united with other Finns in Finland. Hamers and Blanc (2000) point out that culture is something that a group of people have in common, an entity with a set of symbolic systems and norms. Now the participants live in Finland where they experience the culture and the language firsthand, therefore being a part of the Finnish culture and its symbolic systems, thus feeling that their Finnish cultural identities are stronger than before. All the participants agreed that the idea of what is really Finnish and the Finnish culture that their parents and grandparents brought with them to Canada some decades ago is not the same as it is today in Finland. Although all the participants have grown up in a Finnish community in Toronto, Finnish customs and culture being somewhat familiar to them, they all point out that they have experienced an old and perhaps an outdated version of what Finnish culture really is today. Rachel comments that the people that moved to Canada years ago have an old-fashioned idea, their own idea of what Finnish culture is like, whereas in reality it is much more modern in Finland now. This has caused her own idea of Finnish culture to change, since she has now experienced the more modern culture. Here is what Maria and Peter comment:

(17) Yeah, I'm an updated Finn now cause I've lived here and then going back, going to the same Finnish like circles that I was hanging around there like I feel like I am more Finnish, more European because I live in that culture so it's not like, I'm not thinking like of Canada or North-America generally as like the centre of the world. (Peter)

(18) So in Toronto, uhm, a lot of people immigrated, in the fifties, sixties I guess, to Canada, and they brought with them their culture that existed at that time in Finland whereas in Finland things kept evolving right. And so a lot of Finnish people here tell me that I speak an old language, that I speak the language that I was taught because it was the language that was in Finland during the 1950s basically. (Maria)

Peter makes a very clear identity claim when he states that he is an *updated* Finn, showing that he identifies with the Finnish culture in a different way now, drawing a distinction between him and other Finnish-Canadians who still live in Canada. On the other hand, he creates a comparison and a distinction between his identification with the Finnish culture before and now.

In addition, as he mentions in the extract above, he feels that also his worldview has changed as a result of moving to Finland, causing him to feel more Finnish because he sees that North-America is no longer the only position to view the world from. Furthermore, Maria, points out in her comment that it is not only the culture that has changed in Finland but also the language. In addition to the fact that the Finnish language she learned was different from what it is today, culture can be different for different age groups. Since she always spent more time with people older than her, she never really experienced younger Finnish people's culture until she moved to Finland. Moreover, based on this, it is clear that not only culture and language change but also people and their identities change along with them.

One of the participants, Maria, really appreciates and likes the Finnish way of life. Although she mentions earlier that she *lived like a Finnish person in Canada*, her view of what is really Finnish has changed after she moved to Finland, and therefore her way of living has also changed. In fact, a Finnish way of life has become normal and more important to her than Canadian cultural practices, making her feel that she belongs to the Finnish culture, that she is like any other Finn. Maria describes quite a few aspects of the Finnish way of living, in her view, which she appreciates and identifies with as well as is planning to maintain in Toronto as she and her family are moving back.

(19) We are absolutely planning to live in a Finnish way in Canada when we get back. Me and my husband were just talking about how when we go back to Toronto, he's gonna be running to work and back and biking and he wouldn't have done that before we moved here and it's like normal here, it's a way to get around. So that's like one thing. Uhm, I like how in Finland everyone has the same schedule. So I know that if I wanna call someone and it's five o'clock all the families are here having dinner so I'll just wait until six (laughs). ... Everyone's so similar, it's so easy! (Maria)

Maria thinks it is normal and natural for Finns to run or to ride one's bicycle as a method of transportation whereas in Canada this is only done for leisure. It is also one of the many traits that she appreciates in regards to the Finnish way of living. In addition to this, Maria likes how families have the same schedule and how children are looked after and raised in Finland. Therefore, she wants to continue making home cooked meals and spend time outside with her own children. Moreover, buying domestic, quality products and generally consuming less are also typically Finnish features according to Maria, and something she has adopted into her own life. However, in Canada people generally buy a great deal of inexpensive items which could potentially become a challenge for her as she has decided to live in a Finnish way in Canada. Similarly, another potential conflict or a contradiction between Finnish and Canadian cultures in her opinion is that Finns and people in Finland generally prepare home cooked meals whereas it is more common in Canada to eat outside in fast food restaurants. Similarly, Jurva and Jaya

(2008) found in their study that certain elements can become potential sources of conflict between Finnish and Canadian cultures. Despite these challenges or conflicts, Maria is determined to live in a Finnish way in Canada because she has experienced life in Finland and identifies more with these cultural traits than with the Canadian ones. In addition, perhaps she again also wants to highlight "the other identity", namely her Finnish identity, to show that she truly is an updated Finn, drawing a distinction between not only her and other Canadians but between her and other Finnish-Canadians.

Finally, all in all, the participants feel that their identities have changed after they have moved to Finland, perhaps in different ways. Firstly, Rachel feels that her Canadian identity is still stronger and more dominant than her Finnish one, and that living in Finland has made her realise that.

(20) Like living here, you realise how much the Canadian culture has impacted your life and parts of you that are really Canadian. (Rachel)

Rachel mentions that she has observed how much of an impact the Canadian culture has had on her. It has also become evident to her that she is different from other Finns as she has been able to watch Finnish people closely and experience the culture firsthand. However, she points out that the longer she lives here, the more she will adapt to the culture. Maria, as already mentioned, wants to highlight her Finnish-Canadian identity, although *the Finnish part of her feels stronger now*. She feels equally comfortable speaking both languages and identifies with Finnish culture more than the Canadian or Torontonion one. Peter, on the other hand, feels that he lives like everyone else in whichever country he currently resides. In other words, where one lives determines how one lives, according to Peter. Therefore, now that he is in Finland, he lives like a Finn and identifies with Finnish cultural traits. In addition, Peter thinks that Canadian culture would have a greater effect on him if he was married to a Canadian instead of a Finn. On his Finnish identity and changes in it, he comments:

(21) Yeah I think like because it's like I'm constantly around Finnish people and like it's more and more normal to me. (Peter)

Peter points out that surroundings play a part in shaping and constructing his Finnish identity, as was discussed earlier. The concept of culture entails what the norm in a country is and as it is evident with Peter, the longer he is immersed in the Finnish culture, it becomes more and more normal to him, in other words, it becomes and has to an extent already become the culture he identifies more with.

5 CONCLUSION

A great deal of research has been done on bilingual identity in Canada, however, most of it has focused on French-Canadians. Since I know of many Finnish-Canadians who have moved to Finland, I found it extremely interesting to examine these bilinguals' identities. Therefore, the aim of this study was to research second-generation Finnish-Canadian bilinguals' linguistic and cultural identities and possible changes in these after moving to Finland. Generally, the findings show that at least to an extent, this goal was reached, since the participants brought up multiple aspects and perspectives regarding their identities and how they have changed, which made it fairly easy for me to record and analyse the findings.

The first research question was how the participants identify themselves linguistically and culturally. Regarding this I found that they call themselves Finnish-Canadian, and always want to emphasise "the other identity", highlighting their individuality as well as their connectedness with others. As discussed earlier and as Djité (2006) points out, identity is about belonging to a group and being an individual at the same time. Moreover, two of the participants, Maria and Peter, consider to be bilingual whereas Rachel does not because she identifies more with the English language. Maria and Peter also use code-switching to construct their identities but Rachel does not, perhaps because she is not as confident in her Finnish language skills as Peter and Maria are. In regards to cultural identity, all the participants identify strongly with many Finnish cultural traits and they found it easy to describe what they are whereas it was more difficult for them to define Canadian culture. One reason for this is that they have always been asked about their Finnish identity, which has differentiated them from others in Canada. Also, their involvement in the Finnish community in Toronto has strengthened their Finnish cultural identities. Lastly, all the participants consider themselves to be bicultural, in other words, belonging to both cultures although Maria and Rachel feel more Canadian than Finnish and Peter, on the other hand, feels more Finnish than Canadian.

Different factors have influenced changes in the participants' identities after they have moved to Finland. Identity is a changing process, which is affected by one's surroundings, as Lestinen et al. (2004) point out. First, all of the participants' Finnish language skills have improved, which is a sign of identity construction, as Bucholtz and Hall (2004) point out. Second, there were significant differences regarding how the participants are now able to construct their identities in Finnish. Maria and Peter are equally comfortable using both languages in describing their emotions but Rachel still finds this challenging in Finnish. Third, all the participants consider themselves to be *updated* Finns since they now have a personal, firsthand experience of the

Finnish culture and the language. This has enabled them to identify more with many Finnish cultural traits and the Finnish way of living. Especially Maria has adopted the Finnish way of life, which has become normal to her, thus strengthened her Finnish cultural identity and belonging. Finally, and in general, all the participants feel that their identities have been influenced or changed as a result of moving from Canada to Finland. Rachel is the only one who still feels a stronger identification with the English language and the Canadian culture. One of the obvious reasons for this is that she has spent significantly less amount of time in Finland as Maria and Peter have.

To conclude, the data, in this case the interviews were successful because the themes and questions were planned carefully in order for the participants to be able to answer as exhaustively as possible. The participants were very open and aware of their identities and factors that have influenced changes in them, which made their answers clear and easy to analyse. However, this study was limited because there are only three participants representing a group of Finnish-Canadian bilinguals who live in Finland, in which case the findings cannot be generalised. Perhaps, therefore, further research could and should be conducted to be able to understand and further research Finnish-Canadian bilinguals' identities.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What do you call yourself in terms of nationality? Why?

What does that term mean to you? Have you always called yourself that? What did you call yourself when you lived in Canada?

How long have you lived in Canada? Do you feel that Canada is your home country? Why?

Why did you move to Finland? How long have you lived in Finland?

Do you feel at home in Finland? Why/why not? While living in Canada, did you feel that Finland is home?

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

What is your first language? What is your second language?

Do you consider yourself to be bilingual? Have you always thought the same way or has it changed after moving to Finland?

Define bilingual.

Which language would you consider your primary language? Why? How does it show? Did you think the same way when living in Canada?

Are you fluent in Finnish? Were you fluent in Finnish when living in Canada? Was it easy to speak Finnish when you first moved to Finland? Why? Has your Finnish improved? In what ways?

How would you compare yourself to a native Finnish speaker?

Consider whether you can express the same sorts of thoughts and feelings in both languages. Why?

Are there any particular phrases or words in one language that cannot be expressed in the other?

Do you interact with people in a different way depending on which language you use? Why?

Do you speak English here in Finland? Do you feel that you look for opportunities to speak English rather than Finnish?

Did you speak Finnish in Canada? Why? How often did you use Finnish when living in Canada?

In what kinds of situations or with whom? Was it only in specific situations or with certain people?

How much do you speak Finnish here in Finland? Who with/in what kinds of situations?

How do you feel when speaking Finnish compared to when speaking English? Why? How would you compare speaking Finnish/English/your interactions in Finland to when living in Canada?

Do you mix both languages in speech/switch between languages in conversations? When/with whom/why? Did you do this when you lived in Canada?

CULTURAL IDENTITY

Do you feel that you are a Finn? What does being Finnish mean to you? Would you say it has changed since living in Finland? (Does it mean different things to you now than when you lived in Canada?)

Do you feel that you're more Canadian than a Finn? Have you always felt the same way?

Define culture.

How would you describe Finnish culture? What about Canadian culture?

Describe Finnish values and cultural practices. Describe Canadian values and cultural practices.

Do you place importance on/agree more with Canadian values? How about Finnish values? Has this changed somehow after moving to Finland?

Would you say that these things are (equally) important to you? In what ways?

Do you feel that you belong to both Finnish and Canadian cultures? = Do you consider yourself to be bicultural? Why/why not? Has your point of view/feeling changed somehow?

Are you proud of your Finnish identity? Were you proud of your Finnish identity/Finnish cultural heritage in Canada? Did you maintain Finnish habits and values there? Were you familiar with Finnish cultural practices and values in Canada?

Were you raised to like/appreciate Finnish culture, values and practices?

Are you proud of being Canadian?

Do you maintain Canadian cultural practices and values here in Finland? What does it mean in practice?

What were Finnish culture and your Finnish surroundings like in Canada? Has your view of what Finnish culture is changed since you moved to Finland?

Do you want to maintain both cultures' values and practices? Why? How? Do you think it is possible? Would you say there are any contradictions in these two cultures and their values and practices in your opinion? What kinds?

Would you teach or are you teaching your children both languages and cultural practices/values? Why? How? Did you think the same way when you lived in Canada?