

**The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the
Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants:
Naturalised Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Women in Tuscany
(Italy) Attempting to Develop a Bilingual and Bicultural Identity**

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**A Dissertation
submitted to the Institute of Education and Humanities
University of Wales Trinity Saint David
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Bilingualism and Multilingualism
September, 2020**

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my tutor and supervisor, Dr Hywel Glyn Lewis, for his valuable advice, guidance and assistance during the whole period of my studies.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the participants for their collaboration and contribution to this research.

Finally, I want to thank members of my family who always supported and encouraged me in difficult moments.

Abstract

Language and identity constantly interact. Research demonstrates that biculturalism allows a minority language speaker to profit fully from his bilingual ability. However, in some contexts, immigrant second language learners may be impeded from developing a bicultural and bilingual identity position. Such contexts are not always easily recognisable due to the often implicit character of the ideology of the host society and unequal power relationships between different ethnolinguistic groups and their members. The purpose of this study was to attempt to expand the *poststructuralist* theory of *second language acquisition and identity* by uncovering any previously hidden contemporary contexts in which the identity of an adult immigrant might not be negotiable. The study raised such research questions as “*Why the participants do not manage to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity within the studied context?*”, “*How are the participants prevented from negotiating a bilingual and bicultural identity?*” and “*How do power and existing ideologies implicated in their everyday language practices influence the relationship between the second language acquisition and identity negotiation of the participants?*”.

The present qualitative study employed a *multiple-case study* research strategy based on a developed hypothesis. It applied various methods of data collection, such as self-completion structured questionnaires, personal diaries and semi-structured interviews. The study illustrated a particular contemporary context, not covered in previous research, in which five Russian ethnolinguistic minority women in Tuscany (Italy) failed to negotiate a desired bilingual and bicultural identity. The data analysis demonstrated that the respondents were unable to resist the powerful positioning of the dominant language speakers. According to the research findings, although the analysed context was placed within a modern liberal democratic society, it was underpinned by various power inequalities and an implicit *ethnist* ideology on the part of the host language group, which was impeding the participants from obtaining membership of it. Considering that this is a small-scale study, there appears a need to expand it in other Italian regions and among other immigrant ethnolinguistic minorities in Italy in order to check for any possible differences in ideologies and power imbalance between different individuals and groups. In addition, a follow-up survey could help to evaluate the frequency of the illustrated phenomenon on a larger national scale and to explore its features in various categories.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The relationship between *language* and *identity* is extremely complex and dynamic, and immigration appears to influence the way this interaction occurs (Dicker, 2003; Pavlenko, 2004; Block, 2007, 2008). Baker (2011: 135) notes that “*language learning is not just a cognitive activity operating in the mind, but is also about becoming part of a new language community and developing multiple identities*”.

Academic views on the relationship between *language* and *identity* of immigrant second language learners are contradicting. (Block, 2007; Blackledge et al., 2008; Salaberry, 2009). The present study was based on the *poststructuralist* theoretical approach to *second language acquisition* and *identity*. Unlike previous theories based mainly on syntactic and psycholinguistic aspects of *second language acquisition* (SLA) (Pavlenko, 2002: 277), this contemporary socially-oriented approach views the context of immigration, underpinned by various ideologies and power relations between different groups and individuals, as an important variable affecting the way *language* and *identity* interact (Norton, 2010: 349-350).

Poststructuralists (Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001; Norton Peirce, 1995; Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001) consider *identity* a fluid social construct which is *negotiated* rather than attributed. However, under certain conditions, ideologies and unequal power relationships between groups and individuals can impede the process of identity negotiation (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). Such contexts are not always easy to recognise due to the often *implicit* character of ideologies and the strong interconnectedness of the context itself with *language* and *identity* (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). The purpose of this study was to attempt to expand the *poststructuralist* theory of *second language acquisition* and *identity* by uncovering any previously hidden contemporary contexts in which the identity of an adult immigrant might not be negotiable. The present study incorporated Bourhis’ typology of language ideologies (2001) in which bilingualism and biculturalism were also viewed in relation to power.

It was both the challenging geographical context in which the researcher found herself and some gaps in the literature which triggered the present study. Being a part of the Russian ethnolinguistic group in Italy, the researcher had an opportunity to meet some members of the same minority and to listen to their stories of immigration, which varied not only regarding their host language acquisition, but also regarding their identity transformation outcomes. On the one hand, *naturalisation*, which refers to the process of citizenship acquisition by a person who was not born in that country, provided these immigrants with the legal status of an Italian citizen. However, the fact that many of those individuals were not managing to develop a bilingual and bicultural identity despite their attempts was particularly striking.

At the same time, the phenomenon of *second language acquisition* and *identity* interaction among Russian ethnolinguistic minority members in Italy appeared to be poorly investigated. The available research among the members of this group represented by a study of Perotto (2009) explored this phenomenon predominantly through a linguistic and a socio-linguistic approach. Thus, the context of immigration and such social factors as *power* and *ideologies* were not evaluated in it. Moreover, a *survey* research strategy as applied in the above research of Perotto (2009) might have been unsuitable for the study of such complex and dynamic processes as *language* and *identity* interaction.

In contrast, the present research adopted a descriptive *multiple-case study* research design based on Yin's (2003) interesting and comprehensive approach to this methodology which is elaborated upon in Chapter 3 of the present paper. A research hypothesis was developed and tested within five cases placed within the same socio-historic and political context. The study attempted to explore each case from different angles and to apply various methods of data collection, such as self-completion structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and personal diaries. The collected data were analysed using a *pattern-matching* technique (Campbell, 1975) and a *cross-case* analysis (Yin, 2003). Being a small-scale case study, it was designed to remain within feasible and realistic boundaries corresponding to the resources available for its completion. Therefore, instead of encompassing all the Russian ethnolinguistic minority in Italy, it focused on a specific sub-group of its members with the following common characteristics: immigrant women with Russian as their first language (L1), originating either from Ukraine, Moldova or the Russian Federation, married to an Italian language native speaker and who had at least one child during the data collection. According to several Italian national statistical data sources for the years 2011-2012 and 2015 (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3-4; 2018: 28), these were the most frequently occurring known characteristics within the Russian ethnolinguistic minority in Italy.

Furthermore, the present study focused on a particular situation in which a bicultural identity was sought by a naturalised Russian ethnolinguistic minority woman who moved to Italy as an adult, but whose aspiration was not achieved. Grosjean (1996: 28) notes that "*much less is known about biculturalism than bilingualism even though one sees the term 'bicultural' almost as often as the word 'bilingual'.*" Research (Gardner and Lambert, 1972) demonstrates the importance of a bicultural identity regarding second language proficiency: being exposed to social pressure regarding cultural belonging, only bicultural individuals manage to profit fully from their bilingualism, compared to their peers who tend to identify themselves with only one cultural-linguistic group or not to identify themselves in any ethnic terms (Lambert, 1972: 232).

The study aimed to illustrate a context in which several Russian ethnolinguistic minority women in Tuscany (Italy) did not manage to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity, and to analyse

the role of power and ideologies in the process of their language and identity interaction. These aims were expected to provide answers to the following main research questions: “*Why the participants do not manage to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity within the studied context?*”, “*How are the participants prevented from negotiating a bilingual and bicultural identity?*” and “*How do power and existing ideologies implicated in their everyday language practices influence the relationship between the second language acquisition and identity negotiation of the participants?*”. There exist some differences in the way this term ‘minority’ is applied in different contexts even in international law (United Nations, 2018: 97). Generally, ‘minorities’ denote “*ethnic or racial groups in a given country in which they are in a non-dominant position vis-à-vis the dominant ethnic population*” (United Nations, 2018: 97). Within the present study, members of the same *ethnolinguistic minority* shared a common language and ethnicity.

Individual bilingualism can also be defined in multiple ways. The intended research adopts the definition given by Grosjean (1996: 21) who characterizes ‘bilinguals’ as “*those who use two (or more) languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives*”. All the participants were speakers of Russian as their first language and could be described as *sequential* bilinguals as they commenced their Italian language acquisition in Italy during their adulthood (Baker, 2011: 4). At the same time, they were defined as *circumstantial* bilinguals as their life circumstances forced them to acquire the Italian language in order to function well in the host society (Baker, 2011: 4).

The present study was expected to contribute to the existing *poststructuralist* theory of *second language acquisition* and *identity* within an immigrant context by describing and analysing contexts which had not been covered in previous research. The findings of the study may be important for the development of successful policies and campaigns against discrimination and marginalisation of adult immigrants in Italy after their naturalisation, which would eventually help them to profit from their bilingual ability in various ways: linguistic, cognitive and social. The members of the Russian ethnolinguistic minority in Italy, as well as other ethnolinguistic groups who find themselves in similar contextual conditions, may also benefit from this investigation by gaining a higher awareness of such social factors as *power* and *ideologies* and become more empowered. Norton (2000: 152) argues that “*as learners develop an understanding of how power acts on and through social interaction, they might learn to challenge social practices of marginalization*”.

The research aims raised the following objectives:

- to critically analyse the poststructuralist theories of SLA and identity;
- to critically analyse the previous research on the relationship between *language* and *identity* among the Russian ethnolinguistic minority in Italy;

- to investigate the available statistical data regarding the Russian ethnolinguistic minority group in Italy;
- to develop a research hypothesis which would guide the present case study;
- in each case, to analyse participants' views, perceptions, desires, experiences and meanings which they attribute to certain events and actions in relation to ideologies of the host society and power relationships between the respondents and the dominant language group speakers;
- to carry out a cross-cases analysis of the collected data between the cases.

Several research limitations had to be mentioned:

- a) The present study was conducted during stage 2 of the COVID-19 epidemic in Italy. Although free circulation of individuals was allowed during this period, some restrictions regarding social distancing were introduced. This might have altered the nature and the frequency of the participants' interactions with the Italian language speakers during data collection. Moreover, social distancing measures forced the researcher to opt more for Skype individual sessions with the informants rather than face-to-face contacts.
- b) The study was conducted in the region of Tuscany, in central Italy. The possibility was not ignored that, in other Italian regions, the power balance between different groups in question and ideologies of the host language society could be manifested with some variations.
- c) There could exist some inconsistencies between the following components of an evaluated attitude: *beliefs*, *feelings* and *behaviour* (Edwards, 1994: 97-98). What the participants claimed to think and feel might have differed from their related actions. This could have threatened the validity of the findings. Although the method of participant observation could possibly help to triangulate better the collected data and to decrease the risk of a bias in the evaluation of participants' attitudes, it was considered incompatible with the COVID restrictions regarding social distancing.
- d) Due to the academic purpose of the present dissertation project, the intended research had specific time and travel limits.

The following Chapter 2 of this dissertation consists of a literature review which covers the theoretical foundation of this study and a summary of relevant previous research among the Russian ethnolinguistic group in Italy and abroad. Chapter 3 is dedicated to the employed methodology, whereas Chapter 4 involves the presentation of analysed data. The findings of the study are discussed and interpreted in Chapter 5. The final part includes the summary of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The method of internal critical *analysis of documents* was applied to the Literature Review sources regarding such criteria as *authenticity*, *typicality*, *contemporality*, *completeness* and *measured variables*.

2.1. Poststructuralist Theories of Language

Poststructuralist theories of language reached the peak of their eminence in the last decades of the twentieth century thanks to the works of such academics as Bakhtin (1981), Bourdieu (1977, 1991), Hall (1997) and Weedon (1997) (Norton, 2010: 349). Within this approach, the same signs are believed to have different meanings to various members of the same linguistic group as a result of social inequality (Norton, 2010: 349-350). In comparison, *structuralist* theories of language, which are based largely on the works of Saussure (1966), theorise that a linguistic community ascribes a specific meaning to each sign (word).

2.1.1. Second Language Acquisition and Identity

Being a symbol of our identity, language provides some distinctiveness to the group in which it is spoken (Baker, 2011: 398). There exist different academic views on the way *language* and *identity* interact. The last century was dominated by theories which focused mostly on linguistic and psycholinguistic aspects of *second language acquisition* (SLA), such as for example Schumann's *acculturation* hypothesis (1978, 1986) and the studies of Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) dedicated to motivational variables and attitudes (Pavlenko, 2002: 277). However, in the 1990s the interest of researchers in social factors in SLA grew, and new visions of the relationship between *language* and *identity* amongst second language learners were proposed built on the *poststructuralist theories* of language by such researchers as Norton Pierce (1995) and Rampton (1995) (Pavlenko, 2002: 282-283). Presently, this umbrella approach to SLA and identity unites in itself several important concepts:

- a) A second language speaker is believed to possess a multiple and dynamic identity (Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001; Norton Peirce, 1995, Pavlenko, 2000).
- b) Within the poststructuralist approach *language* is considered a “*site of identity construction*” (Pavlenko, 2002: 284-285). On the one hand, language provides a means for expressing identities. On the other, it is through language practices that individuals become positioned by others with a certain identity (Tabouret-Keller, in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249).
- c) The process of language acquisition is viewed by poststructuralists such as, for example, Ochs (1993), Wenger, (1998) and Norton (2000), as a social practice affected by conflicting demands and not only as a cognitive activity.

- d) Bourdieu (1991) views language as *symbolic capital* which can be transformed in other forms of capital, such as for example, the economic one. Within the *poststructuralist* framework, various languages and vernaculars do not enjoy an equal status, and socio-economic and ideological factors tend to determine their prestige (Pavlenko, 2002: 283-284).

However, Pavlenko (2002: 282) remarks that what unites *poststructuralist* theoretical approaches to SLA is “*a common focus on language as the locus of social organisations, power and individual consciousness*”.

2.1.2. Identity Negotiation

Unlike *variationist sociolinguistics* in which individuals express their identity “*the way you would expect them to sound given the facts about their class, sex, age, and religion*” (Chambers, 1995: 100-101), *poststructuralists* maintain that *identity* is not fixed or given (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 244). Rather, it can be negotiated, assumed or even imposed by others (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 244). Norton (2000: 5) defines “*identity*” as “*how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future*”.

Another group of theoretical approaches to *identity* is *intergroup sociopsychological* approaches based on Tajfel’s theory of social identity (1974, 1981). Within this theoretical framework, it is believed that individuals may try to shift their membership in order to improve their self-image (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 244). These approaches are criticised by poststructuralists, such as Syed and Burnett (1999) and Hamers and Blanc, 2000, for not considering personal characteristics and situations of social inequality within each group (in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 244- 245). Moreover, the notions of ‘own’ and host group as two separate and homogeneous cultures also appear to be reductionist (Syed and Burnett, in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 245).

In contrast, *poststructuralist* theories view *language* and *identity* interaction through the prism of *social*, *historical* and *cultural* context of second language acquisition (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 245). In their analysis of how identities are transformed, Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001: 249) apply the concept of “*positioning*” introduced earlier by Davies and Harré (1990: 48). According to Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001: 249), the process of identity negotiation consists of:

- *reflective positioning*, which refers to self-representation, and
- *interactive positioning*, which represents how others categorise individuals and communities.

These continuous processes allow a new identity to emerge (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249).

However, the concept of *identity negotiation* has some limitations. First of all, it cannot be applied in societies where ‘selves’ are perceived as *relational constructs*, and where its *individualistic* perception

is lacking (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). Secondly, *identity negotiation* is a very dynamic process, which may also be less manifested or not feasible during certain historic periods. For example, bicultural Chinese-American immigrant identities were practically not observed in the US until the end of the twentieth century (Pavlenko, in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 249). This is mainly as previous generations of Asian immigrants were not eligible for American citizenship and, as a result, were often socially and economically marginalised from the host society (Pavlenko, 2004: 48). Finally, some identity positions cannot be negotiated due to a strong power imbalance (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). It is possible to outline three different contexts regarding *power* and *identity positioning*:

- a) where interlocutors have relatively equal power relationships,
- b) where positioning induces resistance,
- c) where individuals are unable to resist the way they become identified by those with more power (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250).

The last instance is of particular relevance to the present research. Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001: 250) note that an individual's ability to resist the positioning of the majority language group changes, based on each context, ideologies and power relationship between different groups and members.

Norton (2000: 7) defines 'power' as "*the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated*". For example, a Jew identity in Nazi Germany or an identity of an 'enemy of the people' in the Soviet Union were imposed on individuals based on their ancestry or social background even if they opposed this type of positioning (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). However, individuals may be prevented from negotiating a desired identity, not only in overtly authoritarian regimes, but also in more common contexts (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250).

2.1.3. Access to and Participation in Majority Language Social Networks

Language allows an individual to construct and develop his identity through time and space which is done through a *negotiation of meanings* (Baker, 2011: 398). Which semantic interpretation is attributed to a word will depend on the status and power position of interlocutors (Baker, 2011: 133). Norton (2010: 350) argues that, in order to understand how *language* and *identity* interact, it is necessary to analyse how *power* operates within social relationships between individuals, groups and nations. Powerful groups are not always represented by the State (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 248). For example, as modern globalisation is advancing, the role of influential multinational corporations in language ideologies also grows (Heller, in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 248).

Access and participation in social networks by means of language allow an individual to negotiate

his identity (Weedon, in Norton, 2010: 350-351). Heller (1987: 182-183) maintains:

“To be a member of an ethnic group is to participate in certain social networks, and therefore to have access to certain social roles and to the resources controlled by members of the ethnic group.”

However, majority language proficiency may be an essential requirement for gaining access to social networks of the dominant language society. The paradox is that immigrants often do not manage to achieve a necessary competence and fluency in the target language as they are restricted in their interactions with speakers of that particular language (Norton, 2000: 47).

Spolsky (1989: 171) defines language acquisition which takes places outside of the classroom as *natural language learning* and maintains that this type of context is “*open and stimulating*”. In contrast, Bourdieu (1977: 648) notes that it is often assumed that the conditions for starting a conversation are secure for both interlocutors, and that “*those who speak regard those who listen as worthy to listen and that those who listen regard those who speak as worthy to speak*”. Within the *poststructuralist* approach to language, Bourdieu (1977: 648) introduces a concept of the *legitimate speaker* who apart from being understood wants to be “*believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished*”. Real life communication is usually unequally socially structured, and immigrants may be considered by native speakers neither as worthy listeners nor as worthy speakers (Norton, 2000: 113). Norton (2000: 2) argues that unequal power relations often allow a majority speaker to define *when, how much* and *what about* an immigrant can speak to him. For example, research (Bremer et al., 1993: 153) demonstrates that it is usually the second language learner who is expected to put an effort into the negotiation of meaning, though mutual involvement of both the language learner and the native speaker into the negotiation of meaning appears to be more productive.

Even if access to the host language networks is granted, an immigrant may face other obstacles in language acquisition. In her research, Norton (2000: 112) shows how participants feel embarrassed in case of a communication breakdown accompanied by some impatience and negativity on the part of native speaker interlocutors. A respondent in the same study (Norton, 2000: 55) reports being treated by dominant language speakers as “*less worthy than they are*” due to her accent. Thus, a feeling of linguistic inadequacy and anxiety may be socially constructed through negative experiences (Norton, 2000: 122-124). However, even after having acquired a local accent, some physical characteristics may make immigrants stand out from the dominant group and, as a result, prevent them from joining it (Norton, 2000: 51).

2.1.4. Investment in the Target Language and Motivation

According to the *social-psychological theory of second language learning* of Gardner and Lambert (1972), by successfully acquiring a second language an individual gradually adopts various aspects

of the behaviour of another group, including their style of speech and language (Lambert, 1972: 290-291). Within the above theory (Gardner and Lambert, 1972), it is possible to distinguish between *instrumental* and *integrative motivation*. *Instrumental motivation* reflects more utilitarian purposes, such as language acquisition for career opportunities, whereas *integrative motivation* is characterised by a desire to learn more about a specific language group and to become its potential member (Lambert, 1972: 291). *Integrative motivation* can also be driven by dissatisfaction with the heritage group (Lambert, 1972: 291). An individual may possess a mixed type of orientation to learning a new language or be interested in both cultures to the same degree (Lambert, 1972: 291).

Poststructuralists such as Norton (2000), Pavlenko (2002), Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001) are critical of *sociopsychological* approaches to SLA, including the above theoretical framework of Gardner and Lambert (1972). According to Pavlenko (2002: 281):

“The key weakness of the sociopsychological approaches is, however, the idealised and decontextualized nature attributed to language learning, which is presented as an individual endeavour, prompted by motivation and positive attitudes, and hindered by negative attitudes and perceptions.”

Instead of *motivation*, Norton (Norton Pierce, 1995) applies the concept of *investment in the target language* which addresses interaction between *power*, *identity* and *second language acquisition*. By investing in a target language, an individual is aware that it may subsequently allow him to gain some *material* and *symbolic resources* (Norton, 2000: 10). *Symbolic resources* may include education, language repertoire, work experience and friendship circles, whereas *material resources* comprise money, moveable and immovable properties (Norton, 2000: 7).

Although *investment in the target language* seems to resemble *instrumental motivation* (Gardner and Lambert, 1972), the former takes into account multiple desires of a person, his commitment to language mastering, his social and historical background (Norton, 2000: 10). Drawing on West's (1992) theoretical framework, Norton (2000: 8) maintains that “*identity references desire – the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation and the desire for security and safety*”. For example, the desire of affiliation may refer to maintaining ‘allies’ amongst family and friends which influence positively the way majority language speakers perceive the identity of an immigrant (Norton, 2000: 67). Baker (2011: 132) notes:

“A speaker wants to be understood but there is also a social dimension to this: being believed, respected and valued as a speaker.”

However, it is impossible to detach these desires and needs from material conditions which provide opportunities for their realisation (West, in Norton, 2000: 8). Norton (2000: 9) provides an example of how a minority language woman desires to have more interactions with her employer who belongs to the dominant language group and to obtain more access to the host group with all its benefits, but, at the same time, fears to put at risk her wages (material resources) and thus chooses to answer to the

employer in shorter sentences and gestures. The above case illustrates the conflicting desires to learn and to practice which are implicated in the construct of *investment in the target language*. Pavlenko (2002: 281) argues:

“In reality, no amount of motivation can counteract racism and discrimination, just as no amount of positive attitude can substitute for access to linguistic resources such as educational establishments.” (Pavlenko, 2002: 281)

2.1.5. Major Individual Variables

Members of the same ethnolinguistic group possess some common and unique individual characteristics. Appel and Muysken (1987: 42) notice:

“...minority groups are not undifferentiated, monolithic wholes, but comprise different sub-groups with different cultural attitudes and political opinions.”

In order to understand how power and ideologies affect the *language* and *identity* interaction among immigrants, it is necessary not only to consider their attitudes, opinions and beliefs, but to place them within a broader social context of gender, ethnic background and socio-economic status (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 254). According to Baker (2011: 133), the *poststructuralist* approach second language acquisition “*is also about who we are, what we want to become, and what we are allowed (e.g. by first language speakers) to become*”.

2.1.5.1. Gender

Gender may influence immigrants’ opportunities for socialising with the dominant language members and the nature of relationship with them (Piller and Pavlenko, 2006; Norton, 2000). Men may have more chances to develop their bilingual proficiency in societies where they are believed to be the main family providers and where the domestic work of women is economically underestimated (Piller and Pavlenko, 2006: 493). In their study, Cumming and Gill (1991, 1992) demonstrated how Punjabi-speaking men in Vancouver tended to interact more with the majority speakers in public domains and show a greater proficiency in the English language compared to their wives who appeared to devote themselves to family commitments and, therefore, are limited in opportunities for interaction in the majority language (in Norton, 2000: 44). Piller and Pavlenko (2006: 493) note:

“Often, a vicious circle emerges in which limited proficiency in the majority language limits access to paid employment, which, in turn, limits interactional opportunities in the majority language.”

Research (Goldstein, 1996, 2001; Holmes, 1993) shows that in case of female immigrants, professional occupation does not necessarily secure their access to the dominant language (in Piller and Pavlenko, 2006: 494). Norton (2000: 79-80) notes that for women language competence in the dominant language may become a tool to gain some mobility and economic independence.

2.1.5.2. Exogamy

Contemporary women in general appear to be more active in their attempts to get involved in a romantic relationship with a person from another ethnolinguistic group (Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 499). For example, a study by Takahashi (2001) demonstrated gendered differences in Japanese students in Australia, where women tended to perceive Australian men as desirable partners, whereas their male counterparts seemed to be reluctant to the idea of finding an Australian girlfriend (in Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 497). However, exogamy often causes disapproval of both heritage and the host group, especially in case of women immigrants (Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 495-496). For example, heritage groups and their members may react negatively towards a woman's exogamous choice which is perceived as a treason as mothers are usually expected to be the main transmitters of the minority language and culture to the next generation (Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 496). On the other hand, a monolingual and monocultural majority language group may also express negative attitudes towards exogamy when it is seen by its members as a 'threat' to the majority language maintenance (Bernard, 1994).

2.1.5.3. Parent Identity

An immigrant's parent identity may shape the way he or she forms and manages relationships both within the family and with the outside world (Norton, 2000: 98-100). Parents may consciously or subconsciously block intergenerational transmission if they perceive the dominant language as a symbol of power and success which could provide their children with opportunities to which they did not have access to (Dorian, 2006: 440). This may trigger *assimilation* into the majority language which is often perceived negatively by local ethnolinguistic communities (Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 501).

On the other hand, minority language speakers may perceive a dominant language as a threat to their relationship with their children which may increase their efforts in achieving intergenerational language transmission (Norton, 2000: 96). In such cases, the majority language speakers may resent immigrant mothers for resisting assimilation (Pillar and Pavlenko, 2006: 499-501).

2.1.5.4. Socio-Economic Status

Research (Heller, 1999; Norton Pierce, 1995) demonstrates that low socio-economic status tends to disempower immigrant second language learners in Europe and Canada by decreasing their opportunities for practice in the target language. Conventionally, *socio-economic class* denotes a group of individuals with similar attributes such as level of income, education, job position and ownership of capital. Connell et al. (1982: 33) instead argue that "*it is not what people are, or even*

what they own, so much as what they do with their resources” that mostly forms our vision of class relationships. Although immigrants may have symbolic resources in the form of educational qualification and work experience, they are not always able to make use of them in the host country. In Italy, the national system of income ranges regulates access to various public services and welfare benefits; such a system, nevertheless, appears to be unsuitable for the social science investigation purposes due to a broad income range encompassing extremely varied socio-economic positions in society. Thus, the present study adopts the above concept of *socio-economic status* proposed by Connell et al. (1982: 33).

2.2. Language Ideologies

Language ideologies are strongly interconnected with politics and questions of power (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 246). Within the *poststructuralist* approach to language, Bourdieu (1977, 1991) proposes the concept of the *symbolic power* of one language or its variety over others. The official language or its standard variety become misrecognised as superior by powerful groups and the dominated:

“Symbolic power is misrecognized as (and therefore transformed into) legitimate power.” (Bourdieu, 1991: 170)

Those who do not speak the ‘superior’ language automatically become dominated or marginalised (Bourdieu, in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 246-247). Woolard (1998: 19) argues that while ethnic and racial discrimination is illegal in liberal democratic societies, linguistic discrimination may be accepted and tolerated in them.

However, the notion of *symbolic power* of one language or its variety may extend also to such a mechanism as connecting a language with various stereotypes about its speakers (Woolard in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 246). Similarly, in the study of reactions to spoken language using *matched-guise technique*, Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum (1960) demonstrated that attributions which individuals make about personal characteristics of minority language speakers based on their speech are often biased and stereotyped (in Lambert, 1981: 4).

Within this discussion it is worth mentioning Bourhis’ typology of language ideologies (2001) which has many important features in common with the *poststructuralist* theoretical approach to language ideologies. Bourhis (2001) places the following four language ideologies on a continuum from *pluralist*, *civic*, *assimilation* to *ethnist*.

Pluralist ideology promotes bilingualism and multiculturalism in order to maintain social cohesion and harmonious relationship between different communities (Baker, 2011: 390).

In *civic* ideology, minority language speakers are allowed to preserve their heritage language and culture within their private life, but they are expected to adopt the public values of the majority in

society (Baker, 2011: 390).

Assimilationists believe that members of various cultural-linguistic groups should abandon their heritage language and culture and to embrace the lifestyle of the dominant society (Baker 2011: 391). Whereas some assimilationists hold an altruistic opinion that, by assimilating, immigrants obtain equal access to local resources and opportunities with majority language speakers, others maintain that assimilation may help to maintain the linguistic homogeneity of a country (Baker, 2011: 391-392). However, Baker (2011: 391) marks that “*the politically and economically dominant group often has a vested interest in preserving its privileged position*”. There exist various types of assimilation. Skutnabb-Kangas (1977) distinguishes between *cultural* assimilation, where minority language speakers give up their cultural identity, and *economic-structural* assimilation, which is supposed to provide them with equal access to resources and opportunities (in Baker, 2011: 392-393). According to Wiley and Wright (2004), *linguistic* assimilation aims at deculturation in order to reach subordination, and acculturation to encourage absorption (in Baker 2011: 392).

Finally, within *ethnist* ideology, minority language speakers are encouraged to abandon their cultural identity and to adopt the language and culture of the dominant group (Baker, 2011: 391). At the same time, this ideology attempts to marginalise language minority speakers and to prevent them from incorporating socially or legally even if they wish to be assimilated in one way or another (Baker, 2011: 391). This can be done implicitly or by force. By applying the principle of ‘*blood*’, *birth* and *kinship*, members of a powerful group often decide who can become a full or rightful member of their group (ibid.). Apartheid and policies of exclusion are extreme forms of this ideology (ibid.).

2.3. The Advantages of Bilingual and Bicultural Identity

In 1972, Gardner and Lambert conducted their studies of bilingual adjustment modes to social conflicts in the case of French Americans in New England and compared them with the earlier findings of Child’s study (1943) of second-generation Italians living in the same area (Lambert, 1972: 231-232). Based on their findings, Gardner and Lambert (1972) established four types of adjustments to social conflicts faced by immigrants and minority language speakers:

- a) by rejecting the heritage language and culture,
- b) by rejecting the dominant language and culture,
- c) by refusing to think about oneself in ethnic terms,
- d) by achieving a fully bicultural identity (ibid.).

The study of Gardner and Lambert (1972) demonstrates that it is not only second language acquisition which affects identity, but a learner’s identity positioning regarding his sense of cultural-linguistic belonging also influences language proficiency. It was concluded that only the *bicultural* subgroup

managed to become equally skilled in both languages (Lambert, 1972: 232). Other groups were engaged in some forms of *subtractive* bilingualism where an individual progressively abandons one of his languages rather than maintains his dual linguistic identity due to the social pressure (Lambert, 1973: 26-27). Participants who tended to identify themselves only with one cultural-linguistic group showed a greater language proficiency in the corresponding language and devaluated the language ability in another language (Lambert, 1972: 232). On the other hand, those who demonstrated ambivalent attitudes about their cultural identity, appeared to have some retardation of their language skills in both French and English compared to all other groups (Lambert, 1972: 232).

By increasing the chances of developing ‘full’ bilingualism, biculturalism helps a bilingual individual to profit from his/ her bilingual ability in various ways. For example, the majority of contemporary research demonstrates that bilingualism provides specific cognitive advantages, such as increased metalinguistic awareness, divergent thinking, communicative sensitivity and access to additional cognitive processes and storage during the decline of memory associated with aging, particularly when it comes to a relatively ‘equal’ bilingual ability (Baker, 2011: 148- 157).

2.4. The Place of the Italian Language within the Investigated Context

The unification of different local cultural-linguistic groups under the Italian flag only happened in the 19th century and involved a civil war. Eventually, standard Italian, developed on the basis of the Florentine dialect, was introduced widely in public and institutional domains and became a strong symbol of the Italian national identity (Presidenza della Repubblica Italiana, 2011). Although other languages and dialects historically present on the territory of Italy are still in use in Italy, the Italian language remains the only official language of the Republic of Italy (Norme in Materia di Tutela delle Minoranze Linguistiche Storiche, 1999). Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001: 247) maintain:

“The official language or standard variety becomes the language of hegemonic institutions because the dominant and subordinated group misrecognize it as a superior language.”

For example, in the sphere of obligatory, statutory school education, minority language students are taught in the majority language in the same class as Italian native speakers (MIUR, 2010). Within this weak form of monolingual education for bilinguals in Italy, also referred to as *mainstreaming* (Baker, 2011: 211-215), some compensatory language teaching may be offered after school or during the school hours instead of other subjects (*pull-out* classes) (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, 2010).

Altogether, the above demonstrates the fact that presently the Italian language is not only the language of the majority, but also the dominant language within the contemporary Italian socio-historic and political context.

2.5. Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Members in Italy

The contemporary Italian immigration phenomenon can be characterised as extremely varied regarding the country of origin, religion and the first language (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2018). Russian is the first language of approximately 127, 000 foreign residents in Italy, which is around 3.5% of its total foreign population (2011-2012) (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 2). The group consists predominantly of adults aged eighteen years old and over (92.6% in 2011-2012) (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3). Besides, there is a strong gender imbalance within the group: around 79.3% (2011-2012) of foreign residents over six years old with Russian as their L1 on the territory of Italy are women (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3).

One of the known major characteristics of the Russian language minority in Italy is its heterogeneity regarding the country of origin (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3-4). In 2011-2012, 40.6% of the speakers of Russian as L1 in Italy originated from Ukraine, 25.5% from Moldova, 18.1% from the Russian Federation and 16.2% from other countries (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3-4). With the collapse of the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s, many individuals with ‘Russian roots’ automatically became citizens of other independent countries, formerly known as the USSR republics. At the same time, the fall of the ‘Iron Curtain’ facilitated immigration from Russia, increasing the number of Russians in the rest of the world (Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk, 2014: 6).

A similar heterogeneity regarding the country of origin can be observed in Italy among the speakers of Spanish as their L1, being from Peru, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Cuba, as well as in the case of the speakers of French as their L1, those immigrants originating from France, Senegal, Ivory Coast (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2014: 3-4). However, unlike the above French and Spanish language situations in Italy, those who claim Russian as their first tongue abroad, apart from the language, tend to share common history, cultural heritage, traditions, and some social practices of the Russian Federation and the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, immigrants with Russian as their first tongue in Italy may belong to a vast number of ethnic groups. Apart from ‘ethnic’ Russians, there are more than 190 other ethnic groups present on the territory of the Russian Federation, such as, for example, Tatars, Bashkirs, Germans, Armenians, Jews and Buryats (Federalnaya Sluzhba Gosudarstvennoi Statistiki, 2010). As for other territories, members of various ethnic groups from the former USSR republics such as Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan may also be speakers of Russian as the first tongue (Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk, 2014: 11). In the process of immigration, many of these individuals transmit the Russian language and culture to their children, preserve some emotional connection with Russia and may identify themselves as Russian or possess a bicultural identity. Padilla and Borsato (2010: 11) maintain that *ethnicity* may not necessarily be based on genetic heritage. Instead, it contains several domains such

as *cultural, social and psychological*, and thus can be considered a social construct. Hensel's (1996) study illustrates how *ethnicity* is constructed on the basis of common practice among the habitants of Bethel, Alaska, such as fishing and hunting. Heller (1987: 182-183) instead argues that "*ethnicity is based on boundaries; it does not acquire meaning except as a function of opposition to that which lies on the other side of the gap in social ties that differentiates one ethnic group from another*". Perotto (2009: 9) notes that Russian-speaking immigrants in Italy live in relative isolation and do not appear to show much interest in participation in events organised by various compatriot organisations. Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk (2014: 9-10) also mark this characteristic of Russian-speaking groups, but on a global scale. Although there exist a few exceptions, generally, Russians and Russian citizens abroad prefer to reside detached from each other, this tendency being accompanied by their low aggregation (Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk, 2014: 9-10). A consolidation of this group is possible under extreme circumstances, whereas social status appears to play a more significant role in their choice of vicinity than an ethnicity or a country of origin (Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk, 2014: 9-10). Ryazantsev and Grebenyuk (2014: 12) maintain that it is difficult to apply the term 'community' to Russian-speaking groups abroad due to considerable individual differences between their members not only within the same country, but also internally from one region to another. According to Perotto and Ambrosi (2009: 185), in Italy, the term '*Russian-speaking community*' is applicable only in the case of Russian as a *lingua-franca*, which also includes the speakers of Russian as a second language. Instead, the present study applies the term '*ethnolinguistic minority*' which accentuates a common *ethnicity* and *the first language* of its members.

2.6. Previous Research among Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Members in Italy

Recent research on the relationship between *language* and *identity* among members of various immigrant groups in Italy is represented by the works of such scholars as Pozzi (2014), Khachaturyan and Camilotti (2017), Paciocco (2018), Smith (2015). Research on *language* and *identity* among Russian speakers in Italy is extremely scarce, represented mainly by a qualitative study of Perotto (2009) which encompasses individuals who use Russian as a *lingua franca* rather than their first language (Perotto, 2009). In her research, Perotto (2009) demonstrates a thorough knowledge of various immigration waves of Russian speakers to Italy and historical processes which accompanied these phenomena. The analysis of the *language* and *identity* interaction in the above study (Perotto, 2009: 15-16) is based on the following linguistic and sociolinguistic parameters: 1) code-switching/ code-mixing, 2) language maintenance/language loss, 3) self-perception and linguistic identity. In this way, various language practices and preferences of the participants were analysed as a means of identity transformation. However, this type of approach has several weaknesses. Summarising Cameron

(1990), Johnstone (1996), Tannen (1993) and Williams (1992), Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001: 244) note that “*linguistic forms and strategies have multiple functions and cannot be directly linked to particular identities outside of interactional context*”. Moreover, *power* and *ideology* are not considered in it as important variables influencing the relationship between *language* and *identity*. Furthermore, a *non-probability snowball* sampling technique was used in the study of Perotto (2009: 13), which is considered unsuitable for a *survey* as the chosen sample does not reflect the main characteristics of the target population. This could have led to biased findings as Perotto (2009: 163) made some statistical generalisations in her study within the whole Russian-speaking minority in Italy. Finally, such processes as *language* and *identity* interaction may be too complex and dynamic for a *survey* as this method can analyse only a limited number of variables (Yin, 2003: 13). As a result, some important variables may remain hidden.

It was possible to outline several important findings from the above study (Perotto, 2009) which had a major relevance to the present investigation. First of all, Perotto (2009: 63) marked that some of the respondents felt more Italian abroad during their visits to Russia and Ukraine. Moreover, it was concluded in the study (Perotto, 2009: 163) that Russian-speaking immigrants in Italy did not appear to suffer from any particular type of social discrimination and managed to develop a bicultural identity.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Hypothesis

Based on the critical analysis of the above literature, the researcher developed a hypothesis for testing. Thus, the present case study was '*theory-first research*' which commenced with a theory and a hypothesis deduced from it (Punch, 2005: 16). Verma and Beard (1981: 184) define a '*hypothesis*' as "*a tentative proposition which is subject to verification through subsequent investigation*" and as "*hunches that the researcher has about the existence of relationship between variables*". Yin (2003: 22, 28-29) instead uses the term '*theoretical or study propositions*' within his approach to a *case study* to refer to propositions developed for testing which are supposed to explain why certain outcomes are observed and under what conditions.

The developed hypothesis contained a *necessary* condition "*where an outcome Y is only possible if condition X is present*" (Hak and Dul, 2009):

A participant fails to negotiate a desired bilingual and bicultural identity (outcome Y is present) only if she is unable to resist the positioning exercised by the majority language group within a given socio-historic context (condition X is present).

The ability to resist interactive positioning of the majority language group depends on the ideologies of the host society as well as the power balance between different groups and individuals (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001: 250). Therefore, these sub-components of the expected theoretical pattern X were compared with the empirical data in each case. The above hypothesis guided the present study.

3.2. A Multiple-Case Study

Rather than a data collection technique, a *case study* is considered within Yin's (2003: 13-14) approach as a "*comprehensive research strategy*" covering the reasoning which stands behind the research design, data collection and analysis methods. Formally, a *case study* could be defined as "*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*" (Yin, 2003: 13). It was considered suitable for the present study:

- 1) as the researcher planned to cover the context which was believed to play an important role in the language and identity interaction of the participants;
- 2) since there were no clear boundaries between the processes of second language acquisition and identity negotiation, and the context in which they interacted.

Furthermore, the present study met the following critical requirements outlined by Yin (2003: 3-9) for the situations when a *case study* could be used as a research strategy:

- a. *'How' and 'Why' posed research questions*: Instead of posing 'what', 'who', 'where' or 'how many' research questions typical of other research strategies (Yin, 2003: 5-7), the present study investigated 'how' the participants were hypothetically prevented from reaching a bilingual and bicultural identity position, 'why' these outcomes were observed and 'how' power and existing ideologies implicated in their everyday language practices influenced the relationship between their second language acquisition and identity negotiation.
- b. *No control over behavioural events*: The processes of interaction between the host language acquisition and identity negotiation among participants could not be manipulated by the researcher. A case study can be considered as a preferred research strategy in such situations, (Yin, 2003: 7). In comparison, although an *experiment* also raises 'how' and 'why' questions, participants' behaviour can be manipulated in it (Yin, 2003: 8).
- c. *Focus on contemporary rather than historical events*: The analysed cases were contemporary and placed in their real-life context. Compared to an *experiment* in which the studied phenomenon is artificially isolated from the context, the present research intentionally investigated contextual conditions which were believed to play an important role in the *language* and *identity* interaction of the participants (Yin, 2003: 13). Alternatively, the research approach of a *survey* would not allow one to investigate the influence of the present context in such depth, as it tends to evaluate only a restricted number of variables (Yin, 2003: 13).

The present *case study* belonged to *qualitative* research due to its focus on the natural setting, interest in viewpoints, experiences and meanings which the participants put into various events, and an emphasis on process (Open University, 2001: 41-47).

Overall, the applied research strategy of a *case study* was considered fitting the purpose of the present research. The researcher did not intend to make any *statistical* generalisations in which conclusions drawn about a population would be based on the results in a chosen sample group which represented this population (Yin, 2003: 32). Being common for *surveys*, a *statistical* mode of generalisation cannot be considered suitable for a *case study* research design (*ibid.*). This is because cases do not represent sampling units in a case study, and thus it is impossible to generalise from one case to another (*ibid.*).

In contrast, the intended study aimed at '*analytic generalisation*', where the empirical data from cases were compared with the related theoretical patterns of the developed hypothesis (Yin, 2003: 32-33). In this way, each case was tested to support or not to support the corresponding hypothesis.

Moreover, the researcher attempted to provide extensive and relevant details about the analysed cases in order to make them relatable to other similar situations. Denscombe (2010: 60) maintains that "*the*

extent to which findings from the case study can be generalized to other examples in the class depends on how far the case study example is similar to others of its type". According to Bassey (1981: 85), it is the *relatability* that could be considered a more important merit of a case study than its *generalisability*.

3.3. Sampling Procedures

The present research was a *multiple-case study*, where the *unit of analysis* was an individual who attempted to negotiate his/ her identity within a particular socio-historical context. Compared to a *single-case study*, the rationale for conducting a *multiple-case study* is similar to the one for conducting multiple experiments: the results of the first case could be strengthened by the results of the second case (Yin, 2003: 117). Five cases were selected by applying a *purposive theoretical sampling*. The cases were expected to support the theoretical proposition. This type of case replication is referred to as *literal* (Yin, 2003: 47). Two or more cases are usually sufficient to produce a *literal* replication in a multiple-case study (Yin, 2003: 47).

A *purposive theoretical* sampling technique was particularly advantageous here as it allowed the researcher to choose the cases which would help to explain why and under what conditions some Russian minority women failed to develop a bilingual and bicultural identity within the investigated context. This type of sampling also helped to exclude those individuals who were not Italian citizens as well as those who were neither *sequential* nor *circumstantial* bilinguals in the Russian and Italian languages.

3.4. Ethics and Integrity Considerations

The intended research was approved by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Ethics Committee. It adhered to the university's internal *Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice* (2017-2020) as well as external ethical codes and guidelines for conducting research in the United Kingdom, European Union and the Republic of Italy.

Potential participants were provided with a *Research Information* leaflet (Appendix 1) and a *Consent to Participate in a Research Study* form (Appendix 2). The informative leaflet contained information about the researcher, her contact details, the university and the faculty, the research title, the purpose and the nature of the study, the methods of data collection, how the results would be used, as well as details regarding how participants were to be recruited (Dawson, 2015: 152-153).

A *Consent to Participate in a Research Study* clarified and provided details regarding the title of the study, the research purpose, anonymity, confidentiality, the right to comment and to withdraw, the final report, dissemination and data protection (Dawson, 2015: 153-158). The present study was not

anonymous. However, all the information provided by the participants was treated with confidentiality. In order to avoid the disclosure of the participants' identities, some details were disguised. The participants were referred to in the report by their imaginary names which had been previously approved by them. Each participant was asked to individually sign two copies of the *Consent to Participate in a Research Study*. One copy remained with the participant, whereas the other was scanned and e-mailed to the researcher.

Consent forms and informative leaflets were distributed personally by the researcher amongst potential participants. During each individual meeting, the researcher explained all the conditions of the *Consent* form orally and answered all the questions. Potential participants could take all the time necessary before taking a decision regarding their participation. Besides, they were informed that they could contact the researcher and ask for any further information at any time. From the initial seven contacted individuals, five agreed to participate in the study and sent their signed *Consent* forms by e-mail.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

The study employed multiple methods of data collection which included *structured self-completion questionnaires*, *personal diaries* and *semi-structured face-to-face interviews*. First of all, in this way it was possible to triangulate the same data by checking it against several methods. Secondly, it provided the researcher with rich and extensive data to conduct an in-depth analysis of each specific instance and produce a detailed report. As a result, this also helped to increase the *reliability* of the present research.

3.5.1. Questionnaires

At the initial stage of the data collection, each selected participant received via e-mail a *structured* questionnaire for self-completion (Appendix 4). In a preliminary consultation via Skype, respondents were informed about the purpose of the questionnaire and, having explained the instructions for its completion, their related questions were answered. The questionnaire consisted predominantly of closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions. As a result, the anticipated time of completion was limited to a maximum of 15 minutes which helped to maintain the interest of informants to the questionnaire. Three types of measuring scales were used: *interval* scales – for questions related to age and residence duration in Italy, *ordinal* scales – for a question regarding the education level and employment status, whereas a 5-point *Likert* scale was applied to measure the intensity of participants' attitudes. Attention was given to avoid leading, presuming, hypothetical and offensive questions. The language of the questionnaire was Russian.

The questionnaire was designed to investigate the following categories suggested by the *poststructuralist* theories of *second language acquisition* and *identity* which helped to prove or disprove the research hypothesis:

- reflective and interactive positioning,
- access to and participation in social networks of the majority language speakers,
- conditions for starting a conversation in the majority language,
- socially constructed linguistic inadequacy,
- symbolic power of the local standard language variety,
- affecting language ideologies,
- investment into the target language: desire for affiliation, recognition and security, future plans,
- parent and gender identity.

Using this method of data collection allowed one to gather an extensive amount of data within a short period of time and in such a format which could be conveniently analysed.

Before being sent to the participants, the questionnaire was carefully piloted by administering it to two volunteers with features similar to the participants'. This allowed one to measure the total time of completion in order to verify whether the questionnaire appeared too lengthy to the volunteers. In order to check if there were any questions which caused some difficulties or which failed to provide all the range of possible responses, the researcher measured the time which was required for the completion of each question. The volunteers were asked to evaluate the clarity of the instructions and how attractive they found the questionnaire. The obtained feed-back was used to correct all the detected drawbacks. The data collected during piloting was then used by the researcher to test the adopted analytical procedures, to verify that all theoretical patterns were covered, and that no unnecessary data was collected. Respondents could contact the researcher for more information at any time. Questionnaires were returned via e-mail.

3.5.2. Diaries

After having completed and returned a questionnaire which introduced participants to the research, a personal *diary* form (Appendix 5) was sent to them by e-mail in which they were asked to record their experiences and practice of the Italian language in their everyday context. In a consultation held via Skype, participants were explained the purpose of the diary and the instructions for its maintenance. Apart from describing *when*, *where* and *whom with* they practiced their Italian language skills, the diarists were asked to reflect on those experiences: to describe their feelings and thoughts related to those events. The participants were encouraged to contribute to their diary activity as much as possible

for a set period of one month. Skype sessions were held with each diarist on a weekly basis in order to resolve any possible difficulties and to guarantee that the amount of inserted data was sufficient for the analysis. Diaries were maintained in the Russian language. The researcher was reachable by the diarists for more information and support by Skype or phone. The participants were instructed to return their diary forms via e-mail.

A *research diary* for reflexive observations was kept by the researcher during the whole period of data collection to track any changes in personal views and perceptions of the researcher which could interfere with the research process itself and the conclusions drawn from it. This was because the researcher was considered an integral part of the research process itself rather than a separate and impersonal research instrument (Open University, 2001: 50).

Before being distributed, two trial participants were invited to pilot the diaries and the instructions. The volunteers assessed whether the instructions were clear and sufficient and tried to maintain their records for a period of one week. Their return forms were then tested for the adopted analytical procedures.

The methodology of *diaries* was used to triangulate the data collected by questionnaires and thus to increase the weight of the research findings. Besides, this data collection tool helped to check for any newly emerged issues which were not covered in the structured questionnaire as diarists were more flexible regarding their decision about which event to describe. In order to collect some information on the participants' language use in real life situations, diaries were considered a good alternative to the method of *participant-observation*, which was impossible to apply due to research limitations related to COVID-19 (see Chapter 1). Alaszewski (2006: 115) notes that diaries “*are particularly effective in accessing information which is difficult to access in other ways*”. Moreover, compared to *participant-observation* in which the researcher reports various behaviour patterns and actions, a *diary* describes a participant's perspective on different events. Since the researcher was interested to adopt the role of the participants, diaries were found more relevant to the present study.

3.5.3. Interviews

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were applied at the next stage of data collection to explore some themes from questionnaires and diaries in more depth and to triangulate the earlier collected data in order to increase the validity of the findings. The advantage of using interviews was that they allowed the researcher to investigate human affairs through the eyes of each interviewee (Yin, 2003: 92). Secondly, they helped to collect some additional data of a more ephemeral nature for the analysis such as facial expressions, pauses and emotional responses of interviewees. *Semi-structured interviews* were particularly suitable at this phase as they provided the researcher with greater

adaptability while probing responses. Compared to *unstructured interviews*, this format of interviews helped to readily analyse and compare the data with the evidence collected by other methods and across the cases. While interviewing each participant, the researcher used a developed *interview schedule* (Appendix 6) with a list of topics to cover.

Before being conducted, *interviews* were carefully piloted. By using an *interview schedule* and an *interview summary form*, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview via Skype with the previously selected volunteers. During the piloting, a few questions which caused some difficulty to the interviewees were identified. The feed-back of the volunteers helped to resolve this problem. The interview duration time was measured and did not exceed 30 minutes. At the next piloting stage, the researcher analysed interview transcripts to verify if any unnecessary data was collected, if the gathered data was sufficient and covered all the theoretical patterns, as well as if there were any difficulties with its analysis.

All the interviews were conducted via Skype, audio and video recorded, and transcribed with the permission of participants. The interviewees were provided with a copy of an interview transcript which was then discussed with them in a follow-up Skype session regarding its correctness. The interviews were conducted in the Russian language.

To contribute to the analysis of the collected data, *interview summary forms* (Appendix 7) were filled in by the researcher straight after each interview. This was done in order to track the interview duration and to identify any newly emerged themes and possible difficulties related to questions and establishing rapport (Dawson, 2015: 115-117). Besides, *interview summary forms* helped to mark topics which caused a particular interest or a strong emotional response of the participants as well as what was agreed between the researcher and the interviewee at the end of the meeting (Dawson, 2015: 115-117).

3.6. Measures to Increase the Reliability and Validity of the Research Findings

Bell and Waters (2014: 121) define ‘reliability’ as “*the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions*”. Such measures as a *case study protocol* and *database* help to increase the *reliability* of a case study (Yin, 2003: 34). Therefore, a *case study protocol* (Appendix 3) was developed in order to guide the data collection, to remain focused on the research questions and to foresee some difficulties at various stages of the research (Yin, 2003: 69, 105). It ensured that if the same case study had to be conducted in the future, the developed *case study protocol* would help the researcher or other independent investigators to maintain the described chain of evidence, to follow the same procedures and, as a result, to arrive to the same findings. A case study *database* was created to allow other independent researchers to explore the collected evidence

without being restricted only to the final report (Yin, 2003: 102). Finally, the present research applied piloting procedures to questionnaires and diary forms to check whether the same questions and instructions meant the same to the researcher and other individuals, and in this way to find out how reliable these data collection tools were (Open University, 2001: 125).

To increase the *validity* of the findings the case study employed multiple methods of data collections following the principle of *triangulation* (Yin, 2003: 34). In addition, each participant was offered an opportunity to review a draft of a respective case study report and encouraged to make comments (*ibid.*). These measures helped to ensure that the researcher evaluated and described what she originally proposed to evaluate and describe and that no subjective criteria were used to collect the data (Yin, 2003: 35).

Chapter 4: Presentation of the Data

At the first stage of the data analysis, each case was described, analysed and reported individually. This was done by applying a *pattern matching* technique (Campbell, 1975): empirical data was compared with the theoretical patterns X and Y of the developed hypothesis. The collected raw data was characterised as qualitative. It was categorised according to pre-defined categories which helped to answer the main research questions. The following codes were assigned to different categories:

POS: reflective and interactive positioning,

SRES: symbolic resources,

MRES: material resources,

DA: desire for affiliation,

DS: desire for security,

DR: desire for recognition,

A&P: access to and participation in social networks of the majority language speakers,

CC: conditions for starting a conversation in the majority language,

SP: symbolic power of a language or a standard language variety,

P: parent identity,

G: gender identity,

EX: exogamy,

FA: future aspirations,

ID: ideologies.

The collected data was checked for any new categories which might have emerged during the data collection. The data collection overlapped with the data analysis. The researcher constantly and systematically analysed the collected data as she progressed with different stages of the data collection in order to make any necessary adjustments and improvements.

The raw data was considered sufficient for the analysis and included completed questionnaire forms, personal diaries, interview transcripts, interview summary forms as well as some field notes with comments taken during various follow-up activities. All the data was triangulated, and there were no inconsistencies found between the data collected with different tools.

At the second stage, a *cross-case* analysis (Yin, 2003: 133-137) was conducted to aggregate the findings from all the cases and to validate the initial hypothesis.

4.1. Case 1 – Alla

The analysed empirical data from Case 1 coincided with the expected theoretical patterns of the research hypothesis. Although the participant claimed that she desired to possess a bilingual and

bicultural identity in the past, she did not manage to develop it and identified herself only as Russian during data collection. Therefore, the observed pattern coincided with the outcome Y of the developed hypothesis:

“Originally I wanted to be both Russian and Italian, but, as time passes, I have learnt to accept who I am. For Italians, I will always be a foreigner.”

Alla, an immigrant with Russian as her first language originating from Ukraine, demonstrated being unable to resist the overwhelming positioning of the Italian language majority group within the studied context (expected pattern: X is present). The participant stated that she was usually labelled as a foreigner (*‘straniera’* in Italian), an East European or as a Russian. The above labels were perceived negatively by the participant due to various stereotypes attributed to them by the host society such as, for example, criminality. However, Alla stated that she had learnt to accept this positioning of the majority language group and did not show any signs of resistance to it:

“... I do not like it, but here they all do it. I have learnt not to pay attention to it.”

“I mean that I have managed to find a place here...Here things work like this and you have to adjust and to learn to accept it. It is pointless proving something to someone.”

The participant showed a strong desire to assimilate culturally, linguistically and economically in Italy. Alla appeared to associated the Italian cultural-linguistic group with her present and tended to perceive it more positively than the Russian one which she linked with her past. This fact affected her desires for affiliation:

“It is not that I do not want to be friends with Russian speakers, but I just find it easier with Italians. I do not want to look behind, I live here in Italy now. I do not know how to explain it... may be, I just share much more with Italians than with Russian speakers now.”

The desire to assimilate culturally and linguistically was also reflected in the intergenerational language transmission between Alla and her only son which was interrupted. According to the participant, she had made some initial attempts to transmit the Russian language to her child, but eventually gave up this idea. The respondent did not express any concern or doubt regarding the decision to send her son to a monolingual Italian language kindergarten. Her priority was her son’s socialisation with his peers and the preparation for the Italian school offered by the kindergarten. The interview data demonstrated that Alla did not regret that her son did not speak Russian and generally devaluated this ability within the given context:

“I think he would anyway not need Russian; he lives here, he is Italian – he should speak Italian.”

The respondent believed that, compared to other foreign languages like French and Spanish, the Russian language had little to offer to her son’s future in Italy.

Analysing the participant’s desires, it was found that although Alla wanted to be recognised in Italy

according to her professional qualification and skills acquired in Ukraine, however, she was forced to be employed as a domestic helper and to take some occasional work to improve her family's economic situation. The above situation was perceived negatively by Alla:

“This job is not only hard, but it is also not prestigious. I feel it is a pity to study for so many years and then to do this job.”

Within the investigated context, the participant was unable to transfer the above symbolic resources in material and to get a higher paid job. This affected negatively her socio-economic status in the host society.

As for the respondent's desire for affiliation, it was satisfied only partially. On the one hand, being oriented towards the majority language group, Alla did not show much interest in making friends with Russian ethnolinguistic minority members in Italy. On the other hand, the participant believed that her ethnic origins prevented her from having more Italian friends. However, she seemed to receive the support of her Italian relatives.

The participant evaluated as neutral both general conditions for starting a conversation with a hypothetical Italian native speaker and when a majority language speaker would start a conversation with her. Moreover, Alla noted that it mostly depended on what attitudes and views her Italian interlocutor had regarding immigrants. So there was some sign of anxiety acquired through negative experiences of the real-life communication with native speakers.

Speaking Russian in public places made Alla feel uncomfortable due to a possible negative reaction from Italian native speakers to her speech:

“People [Italian people] look at me in a strange way. It is unpleasant... You never know. I prefer not to risk.”

According to the participant, her heritage identity, accent and the Russian language in general were often perceived by Italian native speakers negatively. Revealing them could lead to some potentially dangerous situations.

The analysis of the data revealed that the participant tended to interact in the Italian language with a small number of mostly familiar interlocutors, though she sought more opportunities. The respondent highly evaluated her access to the social networks in the majority language which consisted of her Italian relatives and acquaintances as they could provide her with various important resources within the local context, such as employment opportunities:

“If you need to find a job, for example, it is more likely that you find it through your Italian acquaintances or relatives than through the internet.”

All in all, the participant appeared invested in the target language though it had to be taken into account that her essential material resources in the form of wages highly depended on her Italian language skills.

Alla claimed to participate in tasks where knowledge of the Italian language was required equally with her Italian native speaker husband which made her feel independent. Moreover, she did not perceive any gender inequalities regarding the available opportunities for language practice in the host language compared to her Russian male peers in Italy.

The informant affirmed to speak a local standard language variety to which she attributed some *symbolic power* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). According to Alla, it could provide an immigrant with more job opportunities, a higher quality service in public places and help a person find Italian friends. The local dialect was perceived by the informant as the language of the powerful majority:

“...it is the language that most people speak here, the language of the people who are from here, it is their place.”

However, Alla did not believe that the ability to speak a local dialect could help an immigrant to get access to the host cultural-linguistic group. Rather, she perceived it as a symbol of loyalty to this group:

“...like this you show some respect to their language, their traditions.”

Overall, the participant's material resources (e.g. employment) and symbolic resources (e.g. local work experience, the knowledge of the local dialect, access to social networks in the majority language) were insufficient to change her asymmetric power relationships with her Italian language interlocutors in her daily activities. Apart from her close family and one Italian friend, the interlocutors with whom the participant practiced her Italian language skills were usually individuals on whom her material and symbolic resources depended.

The analysis of ideologies perceived by the participant revealed that even after the acquisition of Italian citizenship, Alla expressed the impossibility of joining the language majority group. According to the respondent, ‘blood’, birth and being a native speaker were those necessary requirements which gave access to the above-mentioned ethnolinguistic group. A common negative image of a Russian speaker within the host society and some discriminatory experiences had pushed the participant to assimilate linguistically and culturally and to abandon her heritage identity. The above situation highlighted some important traits of *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) within the studied context.

Alla believed that Italian native speakers tended to perceive negatively exogamous marriages between Russian/ Ukrainian/ Moldovan women and Italian men due to some wide-spread stereotypes attributed to these immigrant groups. In order to avoid this negative reaction from Italian native speakers, the respondent usually attempted to justify her original motives for entering Italy, which were to find a job and not to get married:

“I think it is a stereotype. I always say that I came here to work not to marry, but it happened so that I met my soul mate here.”

In contrast, outside of the studied context, during her trips to other European countries, the participant

felt to retrieve partially the Italian part of her desired bicultural identity.

4.2. Case 2 – Valeria

The empirical results from Case 2 matched the theoretical patterns of the research hypothesis and supported the results of Case 1. Valeria, an immigrant with Russian as her first language originating from the Russian Federation, did not manage to develop a bilingual and bicultural identity in Italy despite her original desire to achieve it (outcome Y). Unlike Alla, Valeria chose to resist cultural and linguistic assimilation in the Italian language and maintained her heritage identity. The participant identified herself as Russian. Valeria stated to have transmitted the Russian language to both of her children. She perceived their bilingual ability as an advantage rather than a threat to her relationship with them. A monolingual Italian kindergarten was viewed by the respondent as an assimilative tool for immigrant children.

The participant demonstrated being unable to resist the powerful labelling by the majority language group members which corresponded to the expected pattern: X is present. Valeria believed that it was impossible to have a bicultural Russian-Italian identity in Italy as this type of identity positioning was not accepted by the Italian ethnolinguistic group. The informant affirmed being labelled by the majority language group as a foreigner (‘*straniera*’ in Italian), a non-European (‘*extracomunitario*’ in Italian) or Russian:

“I do not think it is possible. There seems to be some wall which cannot be overcome. It really does not only depend on what you want or think, but also on what locals think too.”

Being categorized as a Russian by the majority language speakers was negatively perceived by Valeria as this was often done inappropriately and with an intention to draw an invisible boundary between her and the host society:

“I mean it is usually said in order to discriminate me or to put me in my place, like ‘remember who you are, that you are not from here’, to remind me that I am a guest.”

Similar to the participant in Case 1, Valeria expressed the impossibility of joining the dominant language group. The respondent marked ‘blood’, birth and being a native speaker as necessary requirements to obtain a membership of the majority language group. Contrary to her expectations, access to the dominant language group was not granted to her after the acquisition of Italian citizenship:

“I was looking forward to becoming an Italian citizen. I thought that things would change then in the way I was treated by Italians, at least partially.... I am an Italian citizen, I vote, and I pay taxes here, and still I am like a guest here. There seems to be no difference between me and any person who came here, for example, illegally.”

Valeria believed that her ethnic origins were perceived by the Italian native speakers as an obstacle to developing friendly relationship with them:

“Oh, as I have understood they do not want to be friends with foreigners...In general when I meet people, at first they may talk to you, but as soon as they hear your accent and understand where you are from – they lose all interest in you and finish this conversation quickly.”

and socialising with her Italian relatives:

“I wanted to get along with them, but I think they could never accept the fact that their son has married a foreigner.”

An intense emotional response was observed during the discussion of exogamy between Italian men and Russian/ Ukrainian/ Moldovan women, which, according to the informant, was perceived negatively by the majority language group members.

The powerful positioning of the majority language group had some adverse effects on the participant's investment in the target language. As a result, Valeria made no more attempts to improve her language skills in Italian:

“I feel like there's no place for me here, that I will always be a guest whatever I do, no matter how well I will speak Italian. So, I think I stopped even trying to improve my Italian language skills.”

The same effects on investment in the Italian language results from Valeria's physical aspect which, according to her, also revealed her ethnic background to the majority language speakers who labelled her as a foreigner.

“You see, it is pointless to try to master Italian and to have a native accent if by looking at my face people ask me if I speak Italian. They will always spot a foreigner in me, so I gave up.”

According to the informant, an immigrant's ability to speak a local language variety could be perceived positively by its speakers, but only on a superficial level, as a sign of loyalty to them, but it could not guarantee a membership in their group:

“It makes you closer to them, but you would never be one of them.”

The described situation reflected some important traits of *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) within the host society.

Besides, the participant believed that there existed a hierarchy of languages in the perception of the majority language group where Western European languages tended to be considered more prestigious than other languages, including Russian. At the same time, she marked that, in her experience, the majority language speakers usually demonstrated a very low cultural awareness and knew few things about Russian language and culture:

“It is some sort of a class system. If you are coming from France or some other Western European country, it is cool, but if you are coming from some ‘not cool’ country according to them – then you get discriminated.”

The general conditions for starting a conversation with an Italian native speaker were defined by the respondent in the questionnaire as unfavourable. The analysis of the diary data also supported the above perceptions:

“How can you communicate if your conversation, by default, starts with the fact that you are worse, lower and coming from a less prestigious country?”

The participant's desire for professional recognition was not satisfied within the studied context. She was also unable to transfer her symbolic resources in the form of a Higher Education Degree into any material resources in Italy. Instead, the respondent's position as a housewife, according to her, tended to limit her social contacts. The above situation was closely related to the participant's gender identity. Valeria claimed that immigrant men in Italy had more opportunities for language practice due to the fact that they were usually more integrated in the local labour market. According to the informant, Russian speakers in Italy could do a limited number of poorly paid jobs:

“...apart from teaching Russian, the only jobs a Russian speaker can do here is a receptionist in a hotel, a domestic helper or a secretary in a company. These types of jobs are usually badly paid. It is not worth doing them, I think, if you have children.”

The above ideologies significantly decreased Valeria's participation in majority language social networks. Even when access to these networks was granted, the participant perceived a strong power imbalance between her and her native speaker interlocutors: she often felt unsafe, discriminated, dominated, ignored and humiliated due to her ethnic origins. The pattern of the participant being treated as an unworthy listener and speaker (Bourdieu, 1977) by majority language speakers was particularly prominent within the analysed data:

“There was a small meeting of our condominium about the maintenance of common areas. Everyone talked except me. When I tried to say something they just ignored me and went on.”

The participant noted that her interlocutors often expressed their impatience if she made some mistakes speaking Italian and preferred to address her husband instead of her:

“Sometimes, people, like doctors, prefer to talk to my husband instead of me though the topic has to do strictly with me and I understand everything perfectly and demonstrate that I can talk. It is just easier for them to explain everything quickly to a native speaker.”

The unequal power distribution was also found in the participant's relationship with some Italian-speaking parents of her son's classmates who openly suggested that Valeria conformed to their opinions perceived by them as the majority.

It was found that outside of the Italian context, during her visits to Russia and one other European country, the participant felt more Italian:

As for myself, I probably feel more Italian in Russia than here in Italy. May be due to some cultural contrast...I have never thought about it.”

Altogether, the above ideologies and unequal power relationships led to a conflict between Valeria's desire to have more opportunities for Italian language practice and the conditions for its realisation. Valeria escaped the above situation in the small world of her own close family and some Russian-speaking friends, where she was appreciated and respected as a speaker and as an individual.

4.3. Case 3 – Anna

The analysed data from Case 3 supported the research hypothesis and also augmented the results of the previous two cases. The participant did not manage to achieve a bilingual and bicultural identity in Italy, although she desired it, which matched outcome Y of the hypothesis. Anna, an immigrant from the Republic of Moldova with Russian as her first language, affirmed that she used to position herself as Russian upon her arrival to Italy. However, during the data collection, she claimed not to identify herself in any ethnic terms. The participant intentionally avoided any situations where she would have to reveal her ethnic background for fear of being discriminated:

“Anyway, even if I state my ethnic origins -nothing good is going to come of it. So, I just try to avoid these conversations.”

Anna tended to favour certain features of both Russian and Italian ethnolinguistic groups. She showed no loyalty to either of the groups when choosing a hypothetical friend. At the same time, she marked that her own ethnic origins were often considered by Italian native speakers as an obstacle to developing friendly relationships with her:

“As for Italians, many are pushed away by the fact that I am not a local...”

Intergenerational language transmission was not interrupted between the participant and her child. Anna perceived positively the fact that her child spoke Russian and considered that it made her closer to him. Similarly to Valeria (Case 2), she was against sending her son to a monolingual kindergarten for fear of linguistic assimilation in the majority language:

“I wanted him to speak Russian. If he went there [Italian monolingual kindergarten], it is unlikely that he would speak it[Russian].”

Overall, the analysed data matched the expected pattern hypothesis where X was present: Anna was unable to resist the powerful positioning of the majority language speakers. The participant affirmed being labelled as a ‘foreigner’ and a ‘non-European’. Similarly to the respondents in previous cases, Anna marked birth, ‘blood’ and being a native speaker as necessary requirements which could possibly provide an individual with full membership of the Italian language group.

In contrast, the acquisition of Italian citizenship by the participant did not influence the positioning on the part of the majority language group members:

“It looks like my citizenship is some sort of formality, a fake paper for Italians. They do not take it seriously.”

The participant perceived some pressure to assimilate culturally and to adopt the lifestyle of the majority language group. It was found that the informant attributed some *symbolic power* (Bourdieu (1977, 1991) to the local standard variety of Italian, but only on a superficial level. The ability to speak a local language variety was seen by the respondent as a sign of loyalty to the majority language group which, in any case, did not grant access to the local dominant language group:

“Locals anyway understand that you are a foreigner, but they appreciate the effort [if you speak a local language variety]. So, it works only in some every day, occasional conversations.”

Altogether, the above reflected the *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) of the majority language group. An interesting pattern emerged which was related to powerful interactive positioning and comprised not only the actual labelling of immigrants, but also the expectation of a certain type of behaviour from them in public and the penalising of them in case they did not meet the expectations of the dominant language speakers:

“If I go to some parents’ meeting and start expressing my opinion – they [Italian native speakers] take it badly. I think it is expected that I keep quiet since I am a foreigner for them.”

“I was once told in my face by one doctor that he did not want me neither to ask for anything nor to comment. He said that I just had to do everything he told me. I felt that I was not worthy even to explain what was done to me, like a cow and not a human – they do it and I had to accept it.”

Although the analysis of the data did not reveal any specific change in the self-identification of the respondent when being outside of the studied context, she affirmed feeling less pressure regarding her identification while being outside of Italy, such as on holidays in another European country:

“I definitely felt less pressure regarding my identity. People did not ask me every time they spoke to me where I was from. This was already making me feel better.”

Generally, the participant found Italy an unfriendly country for an immigrant to live in due to some discrimination of certain immigrant groups originating from Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa. According to Anna, these immigrant groups were treated as a “*slavery force*” or as “*second-category people*” by the local population. For instance, the informant stated that the available jobs for non-Europeans were usually badly paid and did not offer any career growth:

“For non-Europeans, there are mostly low-paid jobs...These jobs do not offer much of a career.”

Besides, a ‘non-European’ label was perceived negatively by the respondent due to some wide-spread prejudices on the part of the majority language group:

“I hear it [‘non-European’] mostly in a negative context. If a person wants to hurt you – he would use that word. It is one big group for them – non-Europeans.”

As a result, Anna felt uncomfortable speaking Russian in public places as it could reveal her ethnic background, though her physical aspects, according to her, could also suggest her ethnic origins to

Italian native speakers. In addition, Anna drew attention to a particular intensity and frequency of attempts on the part of the majority language speakers to categorise her ethnically. She noted that even when she refused to specify ethnic origins, a dominant language speaker would usually insist. Furthermore, according to Anna, the local population tended to perceive negatively exogamous marriages between Italian men and Russian, Moldovan or Ukrainian women which, made the respondent feel unwelcomed and marginalised.

The analysis of the collected data related to language practices showed that the participant had limited opportunities for language practice within the studied context and appeared rather isolated socially, although she stated that she was open to new acquaintances. There were some signs of socially constructed linguistic inadequacy: Anna felt confident speaking only with her family members and nervous when she was engaged in a conversation with other Italian-speaking interlocutors, fearing their negative reaction to her speech. This, according to her, affected negatively her performance:

“Italians almost never encourage you to speak more, they tolerate you and do not praise your efforts. Sometimes, I get corrected by them very roughly or even criticised. It makes me feel nervous, and I perform worse.”

The diary data confirmed the above data and revealed some negative experiences related to language practice in the Italian language due to the high linguistic expectations of some majority language speakers. For example:

“It made me upset. I felt like my speech was assessed by her [an Italian native speaker] and compared with others. Apparently, she [an Italian native speaker] had some expectations and standards about how well a person had to speak Italian after a certain time. I did not meet those expectations.”

The participant stated feeling uncomfortable both starting a conversation with Italian native speakers and being addressed by them. Overall, Anna appeared not particularly invested in the Italian language. Her desires for affiliation, professional recognition, security as an immigrant and as a woman were not satisfied within the studied context, whereas her future plans sounded uncertain or vague. All in all, a tension between the respondent's desire to have more opportunities for language practice in the Italian language and the conditions for the realisations of this desire was observed.

Unequal power relationships between Anna and her Italian native speaker interlocutors also appeared to have contributed to her inability to resist the interactive positioning of the majority language group. For instance, the analysis of the diary data demonstrated that these relationships were either unequally structured or perceived as oppressive by her:

“Went shopping. Sometimes I feel like they treat me as a subordinate though I know that it is I who is a client. There is some familiarity, something that makes me feel it is I who owes them and they do me a favour by serving me.”

Even in the position of a client she felt dominated by the majority language speakers due to her ethnic origins. For example, Anna chose not to participate in language practices related to the services

offered by a private provider who was an Italian native speaker in order not to reveal her ethnic background to him. According to her, in this way she did not put at risk her family's material resources:

"A person came to check our heating system. I did not come out at all. Sometimes, if they find out that the clients are not Italians or married to non-Italians, they do their job badly or ask for more money."

The material resources of the participant seemed relatively limited in order to change the power balance between Anna and her Italian language interlocutors. The respondent was either unable to transfer her symbolic resources (her Higher Education Degree and the knowledge of the English language) into material ones or these symbolic resources were not considered valuable within the studied context. The above was closely related to the participant's gender identity. She believed that men immigrants in Italy had more opportunities for language practice in the majority language as, according to her, they were incorporated better into the labour market.

The only symbolic resource which appeared to have contributed positively to Anna's *language* and *identity* interaction was her European driving licence. It improved the way some majority language speakers perceived her and increased her opportunities for language practice:

"When some neighbours and acquaintances saw me at the wheel, they started talking to me more and saying hello to me more often. I was so surprised, it appeared that people started respecting me more just because I drive now."

In addition, driving in Italy granted Anna more mobility. This was important as Anna felt less independent in Italy than in Moldova:

"I am looking forward to being more independent here. I do not want to depend on my husband all my life."

However, the above status of a driver could not compensate for the overall adverse influence of ideologies and power on Anna's *language* and *identity* interaction. Altogether, the participant tended to perceive the context in which she interacted in the majority language as a hostile environment where she was usually dominated by the majority language speakers. In her diary, the respondent defined language practices in the Italian language as a "*constant war*" in which immigrants were always forced to defend themselves.

4.4. Case 4 – Diana

In Case 4, Diana, an immigrant from the Russian Federation, positioned herself as Russian during the data collection though she desired to develop a bicultural Russian-Italian identity (outcome Y of the hypothesis). The analysis of the data demonstrated that the respondent tended to use both Russian and Italian languages in her daily activities. The intergenerational language transmission between Diana and her child was not interrupted. It was important for the participant to be able to communicate

with her daughter in her first language.

The participant owned her own small business where she was in contact with clients and other professionals. Diana's occupation influenced positively her socio-economic status and made her feel independent financially. Her desire for recognition as a professional seemed satisfied.

"If you have your own place – you are your own master. People look at you differently. You have some professional reputation...I feel satisfied...I do something that I like, something that I have studied to do."

Her gender identity did not appear threatened within the studied context. Diana perceived no gender differences regarding opportunities for language practice in the host language compared to her male peers.

Overall, the participant's job helped her to obtain a broad access to the social networks in the majority language in which she participated daily. There were no signs found of socially constructed linguistic inadequacy in the Italian language. However, Diana felt neither comfortable nor uncomfortable starting a conversation with Italian native speakers and being addressed by them. Overall, she did not express any interest in having more opportunities for language practice in the majority language and appeared only relatively invested in the Italian language.

The analysis of the collected data showed that the respondent was unable to resist the powerful positioning of the majority language speakers (expected pattern: X is present). Being labelled as a foreigner was perceived negatively by her:

"There is not much I can do about it. I find it unfair as I am an Italian citizen. Italians find it ridiculous when immigrants try to call themselves Italian. For them – I am a foreigner and I will always be."

Although the participant hoped to become a full member of the host language group after having acquired Italian citizenship, she soon realised that she could not be accepted by its members. According to the respondent, in order to be considered a 'true' Italian by the majority language speakers, an individual had to be born in Italy, to have at least one Italian parent and be a native speaker. At the same time, the participant indicated some existing pressure exercised on immigrants by the majority language group to assimilate linguistically and culturally. For example, according to Diana immigrants had to learn the host language as fast as possible and to integrate. By 'integration' she meant *"to find your place in this society, to adopt the local traditions, to start living like Italians"*. Altogether, the above reflected an *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) on the part of the host society as perceived by the participant.

Outside of the studied context, the participant perceived some differences in the way she positioned herself. In particular, during her visits to Russia she stated feeling like an *"Italian Russian or Russian Italian"*. Diana seemed aware of her Italian self-identity which, however, was though not negotiable in Italy:

“I have definitely absorbed some important part of the Italian culture, it is a part of me now.”

The respondent attributed some *symbolic power* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991) to the local dialect on a superficial level. According to Diana, the ability to speak a local dialect could be perceived by the dominant language speakers as a sign of social integration and helped an immigrant to avoid some unnecessary interest in his/ her ethnic background:

“I think that it can show that you live here, you know what is expected from you and how things work here. It sort of distracts the attention from the fact that you are a foreigner. It means fewer questions, fewer stereotypes.”

However, being able to speak a local dialect was not considered by the informant as a possible way to obtain a membership of the local ethnolinguistic group:

“Anyway, sooner or later Italians will know if you are a local or not.”

The respondent believed that it could even push away a potential friend belonging to a local linguistic group as he/ she could be suspicious of a foreigner who speaks a local dialect. Diana believed that the relationships between friends had to be natural and based on mutual trust. Instead, speaking a local dialect was perceived by her as an artificial effort made by an immigrant with certain intentions, unless it was his/her habitual way of talking. Some *symbolic power* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991) was also attributed by the respondent to standard Italian as the language of the majority in Italy, and as the main language used in institutional domains:

“It is the language that everyone speaks here, to whatever office you go, whatever official document you take – it is in standard Italian.”

Further analysis of ideologies implicated within various language practices of the participant revealed that she had experienced some difficulties in her professional activity due to the fact that the majority language speakers often negatively perceived her cultural-linguistic background and tended to have low expectations regarding her educational level and work experience. Similar to the emerged theme in Case 3, according to the participant, a certain type of behaviour was expected from immigrants. Unlike host society members, she was expected to accept low standards of services and not to complain:

“People here think that if you are Russian – then you must be uneducated, coming from a poor family and be grateful to just be in Italy. It is often taken badly if you complain about the quality of services; you are expected to be happy with everything.”

Diana attempted to explain the above attitudes in terms of some prejudices regarding the Soviet Union and everything that was related to it:

“Growing in a capitalist country, people here believe that everything was bad in the USSR.”

The analysis of the participant's desire for security showed that the respondent felt uncomfortable

speaking Russian in public places in Italy. Diana suggested a *neo-Nazi* ideology which, according to her, could be behind a negative reaction of some Italian native speakers to the Russian speech:

“In general, I think that Nazism has not been eradicated fully in Italy, and in Europe in general. You still see people expressing their fascist ideas in the streets here.”

Her desire for affiliation was satisfied only partially. Diana found support from her Italian and Russian relatives, but did not manage to develop any friendly relationships with any majority speaker during her whole period of residence in Italy. The participant believed that Italian native speakers tended to avoid making friends with immigrants:

“I think that Italians are rarely interested in making friends with immigrants.”

Furthermore, the informant believed that the majority language speakers tended to negatively perceive exogamous relationship between local men and Russian/ Ukrainian/ Moldovan women. She explained it by the fact that immigrant women from these countries were often considered to have married Italian men in order to profit from marriage materially. Contrary to the above stereotype, Diana was convinced that such situations took place also within endogamous marriages between Italian partners, but which appeared to attract less attention compared to exogamous marriages:

“This is far away from the reality. May be, it happened often during perestroika times, but not now. I think it is just that there is more attention to such marriages if a woman is Russian or Ukrainian...I think that it is unfair because it is not true.”

Analysing how power was implicated in the participant's relationships with different interlocutors, it was found that these were not always structured symmetrically. For example, the informant noted that her accent or her physical appearance often suggested her ethnic background to Italian native speakers which was perceived by them as a linguistic handicap to be exploited. As a result, Diana affirmed that the majority language speakers often tried to deceive her in one way or another, especially in her business activity, and that it was sometimes difficult to defend her rights, not being a native speaker. It was observed that the material resources of the informant occasionally allowed her to avoid some language practices where she risked being dominated by the majority language speakers. For example, the diary data revealed that Diana intentionally visited only private doctors who respected her not only as a patient but also as a worthy speaker:

“Today I went for a visit to my doctor. It is always nice to talk to him. He always listens to me carefully. I do not go anymore to the state hospital. State hospital doctors were always annoyed or impatient to listen to me. Once I was told that Russian preventive medicine is some shamanism.”

Instead, the power relationship between state hospital doctors and Diana was described by her as unequal. As a result, the participant was made aware of her vulnerability in state hospitals, which affected negatively her participation in language practices there:

“And you cannot tell them anything because you and your life depend on them.”

To summarise, although the participant had access to social networks in the Italian language and to some material and symbolic resources, as well as did not appear isolated, the ideology of the majority group prevented her from negotiating a desired bicultural identity.

4.5. Case 5 – Olga

The analysed empirical data from the fifth case matched the theoretical patterns of the research hypothesis and strengthened the results of all the previous cases. Olga, the participant originating from the Russian Federation, positioned herself as Russian during the data collection, though she affirmed that previously she desired to negotiate a bicultural Russian-Italian identity in Italy. Altogether, the above corresponded to the outcome Y of the research hypothesis. At the same time, outside of the studied context, during her visits to Russia, the participant affirmed to partially retrieve her Italian identity:

“I think, I feel slightly more Italian when I go back to Russia.”

The participant claimed to use both Russian and Italian languages in her everyday life and demonstrated a favourable attitude to the traditions of both ethnolinguistic groups. As for her parent identity, the informant transmitted the Russian language to her children and perceived bilingualism as a general advantage rather than a threat to her relationship with them. Olga stated that her husband, who was a native Italian speaker, also used the Russian language to communicate with their children and with her.

Although the respondent resided permanently in Italy, she spent up to three to four months a year in Russia where she had her own business. Olga defined the economic status of her family in the following way:

“We do not usually experience much financial difficulties. May be, we are just above a middle class.”

The participant possessed some material resources which made her feel financially independent and occasionally helped her to avoid some situations where she could be dominated by majority language speakers. For example, Olga preferred to use the services of professionals who respected her as a client even if she had to pay more for the same service. The participant commented in her diary her visit to a private paediatrician in the following way:

“You pay more, but at least they treat you well. They do not ignore me, which is important. I am relaxed when I go there. As for the quality of the service itself, probably, it is the same as any other doctor.”

On the one hand, Olga could not transfer her symbolic resources in the form of her Higher Education degree into material resources within the studied context as her qualification was not recognised officially in Italy. However, according to the respondent, her profession was not only considered

prestigious by the host group but, it was often associated with a high income:

“So when I say that I am a practicing xxx and I have my own office usually people remain impressed. I grow immediately in their eyes.”

Professional prestige and Olga’s economic status could be attributed to the symbolic resources of the respondent which appeared highly evaluated within the host society.

The analysis of the data regarding the interactive positioning demonstrated that being positioned as Russian by Italian native speakers was perceived negatively by the participant. She attributed it to some prejudices existing in the host society which devaluated her heritage identity:

“Well, I am Russian, it is just that many Italians have bad associations with Russia in general and with Russian people too. I do not like it.”

According to Olga, her accent and physical appearance could suggest her ethnic origins to a majority language speaker. However, she did not seem to mind this unless it was used to discriminate her.

Nevertheless, Olga felt excluded from the host society group when she was categorised as a ‘foreigner’. In the participant’s view, the ‘foreigner’ label had mostly negative connotations in the host society. Besides, it tended to be applied in a very general way to everyone who was not considered a member of the majority language group:

“I feel like there is ‘them’ and ‘me’. They have their club of Italians and I do not belong there. That word [a foreigner] is almost never used in any positive way. It is a very big generalisation.”

The respondent believed that the question of developing a bilingual and bicultural identity in Italy was directly related to the issue of membership of the Italian cultural linguistic group rather than to bicultural and bilingual identity itself:

“It is more about whether they accept me as Italian or not. I do not think it is really about having a double or triple identity. It is about becoming part of the Italian society which is difficult.”

Both questionnaire and interview data revealed that according to the participant an individual had to possess specific prerequisites in order to be considered a ‘true’ member of the majority language group. These included ‘blood’, being an Italian native speaker and birth. The latter was defined by the respondent as secondary:

“For example, American Italians would usually be accepted by the locals if they have Italian parents, if they speak Italian well, even though they were born in the States, but they would still not be considered the same as local Italians.”

According to Olga, Italian citizenship could not guarantee her membership of the majority language group:

“They do not care if you have citizenship, these are just formalities.”

The above perceptions were accompanied by some pressure to embrace the lifestyle of the host society, as demonstrated during language practices with Italian native speakers. In the participant’s

view, an immigrant who did not comply with the standards of Italian lifestyle could often be considered by the majority language group ‘strange’ or ‘not integrated’. Altogether, the above traits reflected *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001).

Although the respondent was interested in forming friendly relationships with majority language speakers, she faced some difficulties finding Italian friends. This was explained by Olga as some *Russophobia* within the majority language group and on a broader scale in the rest of the world:

“I would say that there is some Russophobia here. I think it is also difficult to meet a person here who knows something about Russian culture and history, who appreciates them. You need to have a certain cultural level to do that.”

The respondent noted that a speaker of the Russian language was often showed as cognitively impaired in some satirical programmes on Italian TV which negatively affected her investment in the target language:

“When they show a Russian person speaking Italian in programmes like xxx, it always sounds like that person is dumb and slow. I suppose that is what the majority thinks about how Russian sounds...It makes me upset to watch it. I do not even want to speak Italian after such things...”

As a result, the collected data from the interview and the participant’s diary demonstrated that Olga did not appear to have a wide access to any social networks in the majority language in Italy. The participant felt uncomfortable using the Russian language in public places not only due to a negative image of a Russian speaker, but also as it usually caused irritation of majority language speakers:

“I think that they do not like the fact that someone is using a language different from the Italian in their country.”

The participant used “them” to refer to the host group members and “their country” to refer to Italy which underlined the fact that Olga was aware of not being a part of the dominant language group. Prejudices against Russian immigrants as a theme emerged also in the discussion of exogamy between Russian women and Italian men. According to the participant, the majority language speakers tended to believe that Russian/ Ukrainian/ Moldovan women married Italian men mainly in order to improve their socio-economic status:

“It is usually considered here that a Russian woman gains something by marrying an Italian man, that it is some sort of social lift for her. Instead, I know many couples where Italian men gained more by marrying Russian women or both partners were equal financially.”

Some symbolic power was attributed by the respondent to the local variety of the Italian language. Olga confirmed not to speak this variety. However, she believed that such language ability on the part of an immigrant could be perceived positively by local speakers as a sign of cultural assimilation:

“...it can show that you accept and share the culture and values of the local population. So people know what to expect from you.”

It was found that the participant evaluated the conditions for starting a conversation with an Italian

native speaker as unfavourable. Olga mentioned feeling under pressure when practicing her Italian as, according to her, majority language speakers tended to have high expectations regarding the Italian language proficiency of immigrants and reacted negatively when they heard mistakes. Some signs of a socially constructed linguistic inadequacy in the Italian language were observed:

“It happens to me that I make a mistake and I get so embarrassed. I go home and I keep thinking about it and asking myself why I did it... Any pronunciation errors are spotted by them. And they do not lose an opportunity to show it to you. That puts me under pressure. I feel embarrassed about the way I speak, I wish I could speak better.”

There was a tension between her desire to have more opportunities for language practice and the conditions for its realisation. Various ideologies, prejudices, the high linguistic expectations of the majority language group, as well as unequal power balance between the participant and her interlocutors, prevented her from resisting the powerful positioning of the majority language group (expected pattern: X is present).

4.6. Cross-Case Analysis

A trustworthy and collaborative rapport was established between the participants and the researcher. This helped to obtain rich and extensive data for the analysis. All the participants returned their completed questionnaires and diary forms. Each respondent was interviewed once only, the obtained data being sufficient for the analysis.

All the participants were Italian citizens in the age group between thirty and thirty nine years old who lived in urban areas of Tuscany. The total duration of residence in the host country in each case was from eleven to twenty years. Apart from some common characteristics, each case had some unique features and reflected the different life situations of each respondent. In particular, the cases varied according to the *education level*, *employment* and *socio-economic status* of the informants. Some differences were observed regarding the *parent* and *gender* identity positions of the respondents. Finally, there were some variances in their modes of adjustment to the social conflict of loyalties (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). Whereas some participants attempted to become assimilated culturally and linguistically, others preferred to maintain their heritage identity or not identify themselves in any ethnic terms. However, in all cases, the decision regarding allegiances to one or another cultural-linguistic group appeared to be forced on them.

Despite the above individual differences, each case provided strong support for the research hypothesis. A literal replication was produced across the whole group of five cases which helped to strengthen the research findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Interpretation of the Data

By analysing the participants' views, perceptions, desires, experiences and meanings they attribute to certain events and actions, the present multiple-case study demonstrated how ideologies and power inequalities influenced the relationship between *second language acquisition* and *identity* of adult immigrants in a particular socio-historic context. It was discovered that being positioned as a 'foreigner' or an 'alien' ('*straniera*' in Italian) by the majority language speakers had a strong negative connotation for all five respondents. This was mainly due to some inconsistencies between the meaning which the minority women attached in above terms and how they were usually applied to them by the majority language speakers during language communication. For example, the participants believed that since they were Italian citizens they could not be labelled as foreigners or aliens in Italy. In Article 1 of The Declaration on the Human Rights of Individuals Who are Not Nationals of the Country in Which They Live (United Nations, 1985), an '*alien*' is defined as any individual who is not a national of the state in which he or she is present. In Italian, the term '*straniero*' (a foreigner) which derives directly from '*cittadino straniero*' (a foreign citizen) also refers to an individual with a non-Italian citizenship. Contrary to this definition, even when the majority language speakers were aware of the fact that the participants were Italian citizens they continued positioning them as foreigners. This created a situation where the respondents were discriminated against as Italian citizens. Moreover, it reflected an ideology on the part of the majority language group in which being an Italian citizen by itself was not considered as a sufficient requirement for social membership. As a result, some important traits of *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) on the part of the Italian language group emerged in all five cases. The participants believed that in order to be considered a 'true' Italian by the dominant language speakers an individual had to be born in Italy, have at least one Italian parent ('blood') and be a native Italian speaker. Although the local variety of the Italian language was *misrecognised* by the respondents as superior compared to standard Italian, they believed, however, that knowledge of it could not provide them with a membership in the dominant language group. Rather it was perceived as a sign of loyalty to this group.

At the same time, all respondents reported strong pressure to assimilate linguistically and culturally, as shown by the majority language society. For example, one of the participants noted that those who did not embrace the local lifestyle were often considered by the host group members as 'strange' or 'not integrated'. On the other hand, the respondents felt excluded from the dominant language group as they did not meet the above requirements and realised the impossibility of being accepted as members of this group. Therefore, it appeared that it was not the concept of the bicultural identity of the language minority women as such that the dominant language group resisted. Rather it was the membership of the Italian language group which was not available to the participants as Russians due

to ingrained *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001). As one of the participants noted:

“It is more about if they accept me being Italian or not. I think that it is not really about having a double or triple identity; it is about becoming a part of the Italian society which is difficult.”

The exclusive character of *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) lead to the social isolation of the participants in several cases where the minority women were unemployed. Their everyday communication with the Italian native speakers outside of their family circle could be described as extremely limited.

In contrast, being positioned as a ‘non-European’ (*extracomunitario* in Italian) by the majority language group was perceived negatively by the participants due to some prejudices of the dominant language society against non-EU immigrants. Two respondents referred to an existing hierarchical system in which Western European countries and languages, including the Italian language, occupied a privileged position, whereas speakers of other languages were usually discriminated against. This reflected Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) notion of the symbolic power attributed to the Italian and Western European languages and a related mechanism described by Woolard (1998) by which stereotypes about languages were linked to their speakers.

Being positioned as a ‘non-European’ affected negatively the power relationships between the participants and the Italian native speakers. As a result, the conditions for starting a conversation in the majority language were often perceived by the respondents as compromised and unsafe. One of the informants referred to language practices in the Italian language as a “*constant war*” in which an immigrant was always forced to defend himself. In her study of immigrant women in Canada, Norton (2000: 111-113) demonstrated a similar situation where the context in which the language and identity of the participants interacted appeared hostile to them. Similar to the study of Norton (2000), a sense of vulnerability affected negatively the participants’ investment in the target language and created a conflict between their desire to learn the target language and to practice it in real-life situations.

The present research showed that the respondents’ opportunities for language practices were often restricted by the dominant language speakers who tended to show impatience and unwillingness to adapt to their communicative needs and even reluctance to communicate with them, especially if they were accompanied by an Italian native speaker. This is supported by the findings of Bremer et al. (1993: 153), as well as by Bourdieu’s (1977: 648) notion of the *legitimate speaker* discussed earlier in the literature review.

Despite the fact that four participants out of five identified themselves ethnically as Russian, being positioned as Russian by Italian language speakers was perceived negatively by all the respondents. This was mainly due to prejudices related not only to the Russian minority members in Italy, but Russia, its history, language and culture in general. A pervasive and damaging image of an uneducated

or cognitively impaired Russian-speaking immigrant coming from a poor social-economic background also negatively influenced the investment of some participants in the Italian language. The informants found it difficult to practice the Italian language without taking a risk of being discriminated against due to their ethnic origins. Thus, they often preferred to avoid language contacts with the Italian native speakers despite their desire to learn. In one of the cases, a negative image of a Russian speaker forced a participant to assimilate culturally and linguistically and to abandon her heritage identity even though she realised that she could not be considered a rightful member of the dominant language group. According to the United Nations (2018: 100), discrimination can be considered as the main mechanism for the social exclusion of ethnic minority members.

The intensity and the frequency of this interactive positioning also seemed to play an important role in the way the participants were prevented from negotiating a bicultural identity. For example, some participants found situations in which they were categorised as Russian as inappropriate and particularly frequent within a specific social context.

Ethnic origins were reported as an obstacle for finding a job and forming friendly relationships with Italian native speakers, which limited the participants' access to social networks in the majority language and their opportunities for practice in the use of the Italian language. Although the employed participants appeared to be more exposed to interactions in the Italian language compared to their unemployed peers, in all the cases the respondents' desire for having Italian friends was not satisfied after more than ten years of residence in Italy.

Such ideologies as *nationalism*, *neo-Nazism* and *Russophobia* were named by the participants in attempt to explain what stood behind some prejudices against Russian minority speakers within the local context. In all five cases the respondents reported that speaking Russian in public places made them feel uncomfortable, whereas some claimed it to be dangerous.

Prejudices against the Russian language minority women emerged as a pattern also during the discussion of exogamous marriages with Italian men. A negative attitude amongst the dominant language group was perceived by the respondents on different levels, both with unknown interlocutors and members of their extended family. The discussion of this pattern was accompanied by an emotional reaction from all five participants. This finding was supported, for example, by the earlier research of Bernard (1994) in which exogamy tended to be seen as a threat to a monolingual and monocultural francophone group in Canada.

One of the mechanisms through which some of the participants were disempowered within the context of their *language* and *identity* interaction was the poor transferability of their symbolic resources, in the form of education and work experience, into material resources. The respondents referred to complicated and costly bureaucratic procedures regarding the recognition of their

educational qualifications, an extremely limited number of jobs with knowledge of the Russian language and a local labour market which offered immigrants poorly paid jobs without a possibility of career growth. The above situation increased the social distance between some participants and the host language group and created a strong power imbalance between them. The quantitative study of Dell'Aringa, Lucifora and Pagani (2015: 10) supported the above findings and demonstrated a '*glass-ceiling*' effect for immigrant workers in the Italian labour market who, compared to native workers, were prevented from access to high paid jobs despite having acquired work experience and education in the country of origin. Baker (2011: 391) notes that *ethnist* ideology may often lead not only to social and political marginalisation but also to that of an economic nature.

Furthermore, it was discovered that, outside of the studied context, the participants tended to retrieve at least partially their bicultural identity. In particular, the respondents stated feeling more Italian during their trips outside of Italy or feeling less pressure regarding their identity. A similar pattern was also reported in the study of Perotto (2009: 63) where several Russian-speaking participants felt more Italian when they were abroad rather than in Italy.

The data showed that the participants with a relatively higher socio-economic status tried to avoid situations where they could be dominated by majority language speakers and sought for alternatives which would allow them to have more control over the situation in which they were involved. This was done by opting for a more client friendly and expensive alternative, such as a private doctor instead of a state hospital specialist. However, such alternatives did not exist in all domains. Even when the material resources available to an individual were plentiful, they could not cover all the contexts where powerful positioning was exercised by the majority group.

An interesting pattern, which emerged during the data analysis of three cases, was related to the fact that dominant language members seemed to expect subordinated behaviour from immigrants during the Italian language use and penalised them if they did not comply with such expectations. For example, a certain passivity and conformity was expected from the respondents' participation in group and private discussions with their Italian language interlocutors. One of the informants noted that, compared to the native speakers, she was often expected to accept lower standards of services and not to complain about them but to express her gratitude. This reflected a power imbalance between the participants and various individuals who belonged to the host society.

The present research findings did not support the earlier research claims of Perotto (2009) in which she concluded: a) that the Russian-speaking immigrants in Italy did not appear to be particularly discriminated against and b) that the majority tended to develop a bicultural identity. Unlike the study of Perotto (2009), the present case study did not intend to make any statistical generalisation within the whole Russian language minority group in Italy. However, it demonstrated that, when participants

wanted to develop a bicultural identity within the studied context they were always prevented from negotiating it due to the existing ideologies of the host society and a perceived power imbalance between them and the dominant language group. Thus, the negotiation of a bicultural identity was impossible within this particular socio-historic context and the Russian language minority women could not resist the powerful positioning of the dominant language group.

The differences between the research findings of Perotto (2009) and this study could be attributed to the fact that the present research encompassed only a specific geographical area in Italy – the region of Tuscany. Therefore, it is not excluded that, in other regions of Italy, ideologies and the power balance between the Russian language minority and the dominant language group are different and that they may leave some space for the resistance to the positioning of the majority language group. Secondly, since the study of Perotto (2009) was conducted eleven years earlier, it is possible that it dealt with a different socio-historic context from the present research. For example, the political and economic climate between Italy and Russia changed after the crisis in Ukraine and the introduction of the EU restrictive sanctions against the Russian Federation in March 2014 (Council of the European Union, 2020). Thirdly, some inconsistencies between the present research findings and those of Perotto (2009) could be due to a difference in the sample as Perotto (2009) included participants of both genders and speakers of Russian as a first and second language. Finally, unlike the present research, the study of Perotto (2009) was conducted in the Italian language by a majority language speaker, which could have affected the way the participants answered to certain questions due to the effect of social desirability and some power inequalities between the dominant language group and the Russian language minority in Italy.

Overall, the results of the study helped to expand the *poststructuralist* theory of *second language acquisition* and *identity* by illustrating and analysing a contemporary socio-historic context not covered in previous research in which a bicultural identity was not negotiable by an adult immigrant. The described context differed from other contexts illustrated within the *poststructuralist* approach in which an individual could not resist the powerful positioning of the dominant group (see Chapter 2): although it was placed within a modern liberal democratic society, it was underpinned by an implicit *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) on the part of the host language group rather than an explicit ideology of the state, as in societies under totalitarian regimes. The study also described an interesting tool with which the majority language group tried to dominate the minority women by forcing them to adapt their behaviour according to some of their expectations and penalising them in case of resistance.

Altogether, the research findings improved our understanding of the role of *power* and *ideologies* in the process of *language* and *identity* interaction within various contemporary socio-historic contexts

and contributed to a creation of a real and accurate picture of a particular immigration context not covered in previous research. The results may contribute to the development of successful policies and campaigns targeted against discrimination and marginalisation of naturalised adult immigrants in Italy while promoting their biculturalism, which would help to these individuals to profit fully from their bilingualism. The findings could also bring attention of the members of the Russian ethnolinguistic minority, as well as other ethnolinguistic minorities who find themselves in similar contextual conditions, to such social factors affecting *second language acquisition* and *identity* relationship as *power* and *ideologies*. This awareness could be used by them as a strong tool to get empowered in the future.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions

The present multiple-case study aimed to illustrate a contemporary context in which several Russian ethnolinguistic minority women in Tuscany (Italy) failed to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity and to analyse the role of *power* and *ideologies* in the process of *language* and *identity* interaction. It was initially hypothesized that the observed outcome occurred within the given socio-historic context if a Russian language minority woman were unable to resist the positioning exercised by the majority language group. According to the adopted *poststructuralist* approach to *language* and *identity*, the participants' ability to resist depended on the ideologies of the host language society and the power imbalance between this group and the participants.

The analysis of the collected data showed that all five cases supported the above research hypothesis. Whereas in some totalitarian regimes, such as Nazi Germany, individuals were unable to negotiate a specific identity due to an explicit ideology of the state, the present study described a contemporary context placed within a more or less liberal democratic society, which, at the same time, was dominated by an implicit *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001). According to the analysed data, it appeared that a rightful member of the dominant language group was expected: 1) to be born in Italy, 2) to have at least one Italian born parent and 3) to be a native Italian speaker. These requirements for joining the dominant language group were accompanied by strong pressure perceived by the participants to assimilate culturally and linguistically, as well as by a risk of being penalised in case of resistance. Despite the fact that the respondents had a legal status equal with that with majority language speakers by being Italian citizens, they were usually labelled by them as 'foreigners' or 'aliens'. However, the existing *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) of the majority language group did not seem to be targeted specifically against the desired bicultural identity position of the participants. Rather, it was preventing the respondents from obtaining membership of the dominant language group. Whereas it was natural to have a Sardinian-Italian or Friulan-Italian bicultural identity within the host society, it was not acceptable for an adult immigrant to self-identify as both Russian and Italian. A high frequency and intensity with which the participants were categorised with their monocultural Russian identity contributed to the existing *ethnist* ideology (Bourhis, 2001) and helped to build an invisible yet solid wall between them and the majority language group.

Through the analysis of various language practices of the participants, the present research illustrated the *symbolic value* (Bourdieu, 1977) attributed to the Italian language and its local standard variety by the host language society. Western European languages also appeared to occupy a privileged position in this hierarchical system, whereas the speakers of other languages, including Russians, were labelled by native Italian speakers as 'non-Europeans' ('extracomunitario' in Italian) and linked to a vast group of individuals with ascribed negative social and moral characteristics. This mechanism

of *misrecognition* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991) of a language helped to maintain the domination of the majority language group during the analysed language communication.

Poor transferability of symbolic resources, such as educational qualification and work experience acquired in the country of origin, into material resources contributed to the power imbalance between some respondents and the Italian language group. Material resources at the disposition of the respondents with a higher socio-economic status helped them to avoid some situations in which they risked being dominated by the majority language speakers, but could not compensate for the powerful positioning of the dominant language group throughout the whole context.

Prejudices against Russian speakers and such ideologies on the part of the host society as *nationalism*, *Russophobia* and *neo-Nazism* also appeared to impede the participants from negotiating a bicultural identity. Discrimination on the basis of ethnic origins led to the relative marginalisation of some respondents, especially if they were unemployed. The participants felt unsafe and vulnerable not only in practicing the Italian language, but also in using their heritage language in public places.

The study illustrated an existing power imbalance between the majority language group and the participants regardless of their socio-economic status. Moreover, it was discovered that according to the participants, majority language speakers tended to expect a subordinated and passive behaviour from those who did not belong to their group and could penalise them in the event of any resistance. Altogether, the above ideologies and the unequal power relationships between the respondents and the dominant language speakers had several adverse effects on their Italian language acquisition. First of all, they limited access to the social networks in the majority language and decreased the opportunities for language practice in the target language. Secondly, the participants struggled to gain respect and appreciation in such a hostile environment. Baker (2011: 133-134) notes:

“Gaining belief, respect and social value from dialogue with others is not straightforward as there is unequal dominance, status and power in relationships.”

This affected negatively the investment of the respondents in the target language and created a conflict between their desire to learn the Italian language and to practice it in real life situations, especially outside of their family context.

To summarise, the employed methodology of a multiple-case study was considered effective in responding to the main research questions. The analysed cases provided compelling evidence of the existence of a contemporary socio-historic context in which a Russian-Italian bicultural and bilingual identity was not negotiable by the participants. *Ethnist* ideology shown by the host society and the power imbalance between the respondents and majority language group members appeared to play a crucial role in the above process, whereas other described ideologies implicated within the various language practices of the participants helped to discriminate against them and to maintain their

subordination. The fact that outside of the investigated context the minority women tended to partially retrieve their Russian-Italian identity strengthened the above conclusions.

The present study offered several directions for future research. The issues raised in the research deserve wider investigation. Considering that the research covers only a small geographical area, there appears a need to expand it by conducting a similar multiple-case study a) in other regions of Italy and b) among other immigrant ethnolinguistic minorities in Italy in order to check for any possible differences in the existing ideologies and power imbalance between different groups and individuals. Moreover, a follow-up survey could help to evaluate the frequency of the illustrated phenomenon on a national scale and to investigate its features in certain categories. However, taking into account that the relationship between *language* and *identity* is unstable, it is possible that the illustrated situation could change in the future. Therefore, it is preferable to conduct the proposed studies in the nearest future and to plan a coordinated effort amongst different scholars with the same protocol across the national territory. This would increase significantly the validity of the research findings by excluding rare or extreme local phenomena and specific patterns which might be linked to unique ideologies or some external causes, such as, for example, massive local immigration absent in other places.

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Appendix 1

Translated from Russian

Research Information

You are being kindly asked to participate in this research. Below you will find all the main information regarding it. You can ask for any further details at any time if necessary.

Research title: The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants: Naturalised Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Women in Tuscany (Italy) Attempting to Develop a Bilingual and Bicultural Identity.

Researcher: Elena Glare

University/Faculty: University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Institute of Education and Humanities

Programme: MA Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Researcher's contact details: +393457681213, elena.glar@hotmail.com

Research purpose: The purpose of this study is to attempt to expand the poststructuralist theory of *second language acquisition* and *identity* by uncovering any previously hidden contemporary contexts in which the identity of an adult immigrant may not be negotiable.

Research results: The researcher intends to use the research results for academic purposes related to a graduate dissertation project. Participants will be asked for permission in case the question of publication arises.

Potential participants: The research is conducted among individuals who meet all the following criteria: 1) 18 years old and over, 2) females, 3) speakers of Russian as their first language and Italian as their second language (or one of their second languages), 4) originating either from Ukraine, Moldova or the Russian Federation, 5) married to an Italian native speaker, 6) have at least one child, 7) resident in Tuscany (Italy), 8) Italian citizens, 9) immigrated to Italy as adults (aged 18 years old and over). Participants will take part in the research on a voluntary basis and will not be paid for their participation. Altogether, five to six participants will be called to participate in the present research.

Data collection procedures:

Questionnaire:

Your participation will involve filling in a self-completion questionnaire. This is necessary to collect some preliminary information about your views, perceptions and attitudes covering such topics as Russian and Italian languages, immigration and identity, as well as to gather some personal data which can help one to understand better what stands behind these attitudes, perceptions and opinions. It will take you approximately 10-15 minutes.

Personal diary:

You will be then asked to maintain regularly a personal diary for a period of one month to record your opportunities for Italian language practice in your everyday life. This will include briefly *when*, *where* and *with whom* you practised your Italian language skills, as well as *how* it made you feel. You will not be asked to specify any names of individuals or places. The language of the diary will be Russian.

Face-to-face interview:

At the final stage, the researcher will ask you to participate in an interview in order to talk in more details about your experiences, attitudes, views related to immigration and second language acquisition. It will be held via Skype and will last approximately 20-30 minutes.

Research duration: The research will last until 01.09.2020 maximum.

Thank you for your help with this research.

Appendix 2

Translated from Russian

You are kindly asked to participate in this research conducted by Elena Glare from the Institute of Education and Humanities at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David as part of her graduate dissertation project. Please read carefully and ask any questions if necessary before you agree or disagree to participate.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Research Title:

The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants: Naturalised Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Women in Tuscany (Italy) Attempting to Develop a Bilingual and Bicultural Identity.

Research Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to attempt to expand the poststructuralist theory of the relationship between second language acquisition and identity by uncovering any previously hidden contemporary contexts in which the identity of an adult immigrant may not be negotiable.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you will not be paid for your participation in it.

Research Methods:

Your participation in this study involves: filling in a questionnaire, maintaining a brief diary over a period of one month and a face-to-face interview which will last approximately 20-30 minutes.

Anonymity:

This study is not anonymous: the researcher will be able to tell which responses came from which respondents.

Confidentiality:

However, all the information you provide will be treated confidentially. You will not be identified or presented in any identifiable form in the research report. This will be done by changing your name and disguising any personal details which may reveal your identity or the identity of people of whom

you speak. Disguised extracts from your interview may be quoted in the final report. In case of any illegal activity which might be revealed, the researcher is obliged to notify the authorities.

Audio-Recordings:

The interviews in which you participate will be audio-recorded and erased immediately after being transcribed. You will be provided with a copy of an interview transcript to verify your statements.

Right to Comment:

You have a right to comment and ask for more information at any time. If questionnaires or interviews contain words which are not clear to you, you can stop and ask for a more detailed explanation at any time.

Right to Withdraw:

Even if you agree now to participate, you have a right to withdraw from the research study or not to answer any of the questions any time without any consequences.

Data Transfer:

Your processed data will be transferred outside of the European Union to the United Kingdom for research purposes only. The transfer of your processed data will be done in accordance with Chapter V of the REGULATION (EU) 2016/679 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (EU General Data Protection Regulation). EU law will continue to apply in the United Kingdom during a transitional period until 31 December 2020.

The Final Report:

The final research report will be assessed by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David for examination purposes only. You will receive a copy of the final report.

Dissemination:

You will always be asked for permission in case the question of publication arises.

Data Protection:

This study complies with the Personal Data Protection Code – Legislative Decree n. 196 issued in

Italy (Decreto Legislativo 30 giugno 2003, n. 196, Codice in materia di protezione dei dati personali) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation of 27 April 2016. Your personal data will not be communicated to third parties and will be treated according to security measures in order to provide their protection and to prevent their loss, non-authorized access or treatment which does not comply with the normative regarding personal data collection. Digital files containing your personal data will be encrypted and locked with a safe password.

You are provided with two copies of this form.

By signing this form, you agree with the above:

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix 3

The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants: Naturalised Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Women in Tuscany (Italy) Attempting to Develop a Bilingual and Bicultural Identity

THE CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

A. Introduction

1. **Aims:** to illustrate a specific context in which several Russian ethnolinguistic minority women in Tuscany (Italy) did not manage to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity, and to analyse the role of power and ideologies in the process of language and identity interaction.
2. **Purpose:** to attempt to expand the poststructuralist theory of second language acquisition and identity by uncovering any previously hidden contemporary contexts in which the identity of an adult immigrant might not be negotiable.
3. **Type of Case Study Methodology:** multiple-case-study with a literal replication across the whole group of cases.
4. **Case study questions:** *“How are the participants prevented from negotiating a bilingual and bicultural identity?”, “Why the participants do not manage to develop a desired bilingual and bicultural identity within the studied context?” and “How do power and existing ideologies implicated in their everyday language practices influence the relationship between the second language acquisition and identity negotiation of the participants?”.*
5. **Hypothesis:**
A participant fails to negotiate a desired bilingual and bicultural identity (outcome Y is present) only if she is unable to resist the positioning exercised by the majority language group within a given socio-historic context (condition X is present).

B. Fieldwork

1. **Number of cases:** five
2. **Time boundaries:** 01.06.2020 – 22.07.2020
3. **Sample recruitment:** Informative leaflets, Case Study Database, Consent Forms to Participate in a Research Study
4. **Questionnaires:** Piloting; distribution; 1 questionnaire per participant; follow-up activity.
Distribution date: 14.06.2020
5. **Diaries:** Piloting; distribution after a filled in questionnaire is returned; preliminary consultation; 1 diary form per participant; 4 weekly sessions to guide and support; follow-up activity.
Distribution date: 17.06.2020
6. **Interviews:** Piloting; audio and video recording equipment; conducted only after the analysis of questionnaires and diaries; max duration 30 min; an interview summary form; a verbatim transcription produced and checked for correctness with each interviewee in a follow-up activity.
Interview dates: 19.07.2020 – Case 1 and Case 4,
 22.07.2020 – Case 2, Case 3, Case 5

C. Analysis

1. Pattern matching technique (within-case analysis)
2. Cross-Case synthesis (across all the cases)

D. Report

1. Presentation
2. References
3. Appendixes
4. Proofreading

Appendix 4

Translated from Russian

Completed by the researcher only	
Participant:	
Date distributed:	
Date returned:	

Questionnaire

Research Title:

The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants: Naturalised Russian Ethnolinguistic Minority Women in Tuscany (Italy) Attempting to Develop a Bilingual and Bicultural Identity.

Respondents:

The present self-completion questionnaire is designed for individuals who meet all the following criteria: 1) 18 years old and over, 2) females, 3) speakers of Russian as their first language and Italian as their second language (or one of their second languages), 4) originating either from Ukraine, Moldova or the Russian Federation, 5) married to an Italian native speaker, 6) have at least one child, 7) resident in Tuscany (Italy), 8) Italian citizens, 9) immigrated to Italy as adults (aged 18 years old and over).

Instructions:

Please answer the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers here. Instead, this questionnaire is designed to find out your opinions, attitudes and experiences related to language and identity, as well as some personal data which can help one to understand them better. It will take you approximately 10-15 minutes.

Section A.

1. Presently, do you think about yourself in ethnic terms?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

2. If yes, how would you identify yourself? (You may give several answers if necessary):

3. What terms do Italian native speakers usually use when referring to people of the same ethnic origins as yours? (You may give several answers if necessary)

Section B.

1. Do you use the Russian language in your everyday life in Italy (communication, reading, watching TV, etc)?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

2. Do you have any Russian-speaking friends in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

3. If no, would you like to have them?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

4. Do you have any relatives in the country of your origin?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

5. If yes, do you keep in touch with any of them?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

6. Do you maintain any Russian traditions or customs in your family in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

7. Do you happen to use the Russian language in public places in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

8. If yes, please agree or disagree with the following:

“I feel comfortable speaking Russian in public places in Italy.”

☐

Strongly disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Agree

☐

Strongly agree

Section C.

- 1. Do you use the Italian language for communication in your everyday life in Italy? (If no, please go to question 4.)**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

- 2. Does your current knowledge of the Italian language satisfy your communication needs in everyday life?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

- 3. With whom do you usually happen to practise your Italian in your everyday life? Please mark all relevant boxes:**

- ☐ Relatives
☐ Friends/ Acquaintances
☐ Public services providers
☐ Private services providers
☐ Occasional interlocutors
☐ Colleagues/Clients
☐ Other (please give details)
-

- 4. Would you like to have more opportunities for Italian language practice in your everyday life?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

5. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“I feel comfortable when I have to start a conversation with an Italian native speaker.”

☐☐☐☐☐

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

6. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“I feel comfortable when an Italian native speaker starts a conversation with me.”

☐☐☐☐☐

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

7. In your opinion, do you have an accent which can suggest your ethnic origins to Italian native speakers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

8. If yes, have you ever experienced any negative treatment in Italy due to your accent?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

9. To your mind, do you have any characteristics of your aspect which can suggest your ethnic origins to Italian native speakers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

10. If yes, have you ever experienced any negative treatment due to those characteristics?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

11. Do you have any Italian native-speakers friends in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

12. If no, would you like to have them?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

13. Do you have any other Italian relatives apart from your husband and children?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

14. If yes, do you personally keep in touch with them?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

15. Do you maintain any local Italian traditions or customs in your family in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

16. How many children do you have?

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3+

17. Does your child (children) speak Russian?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only some of them

18. If your child (children/some of your children) presently does (do) not speak Russian, would you like him (her/them) to master it in the future?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

19. Does your child (or any of your children) go to school/kindergarten?

☐ Yes

☐ No

20. Have you ever been advised by kindergarten/schoolteachers, speech therapists or other professionals in Italy to use less Russian language in communication with your child/children?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

Section D.

1. Do you speak a local variety of Italian?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I am not sure

2. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“It is important to speak a local variety of Italian in the place where I live.”

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

3. Compared to standard Italian, can speaking a local variety of the Italian language provide an immigrant with more job opportunities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

4. Can it help him/her to find more Italian friends?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

5. Can it help him/her to obtain a higher quality service in public places (e.g. hospitals, postal office)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

Section E.

1. Could you please specify your current employment status?

- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Other (please specify):

2. If you are currently employed, do you work according to your professional qualification?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

3. Have you ever experienced any difficulties finding a job in Italy due to your ethnic origin?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

4. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“I find Italy a friendly country for an immigrant to live in.”

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

5. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“I find Italy a safe country for a woman to live in.”

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

6. Please agree or disagree with the following:

“I find that a female immigrant in Italy has usually more opportunities to practise the Italian language than a male immigrant.”

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

7. Do you see your future in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

8. Do you see the future of your child/children in Italy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

9. In order to be considered as ‘truly’ Italian by Italian native speakers, what requirements does a person have to meet? Please mark all relevant boxes:

- ☐ to be born in Italy
- ☐ to have at least one Italian born parent
- ☐ to have an Italian citizenship
- ☐ to be a native Italian speaker
- ☐ to graduate from an Italian school
- ☐ other (please specify)

Section F.

1. How old are you?

- ☐ 18 – 29
- ☐ 30 – 39
- ☐ 40 – 49
- ☐ 50 – 59
- ☐ 60+

2. Could you please specify your country of origin?

3. Could you specify the type of area in which you reside presently?

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ I am not sure

4. For how many years have you resided in Italy?

- ☐ 0 – 5
- ☐ 6 – 10
- ☐ 11 – 20
- ☐ 21+

5. Please specify the level of your educational qualification:

- ☐ Primary obligatory education
- ☐ General secondary education
- ☐ Upper secondary education
- ☐ Professional training
- ☐ Higher education

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

Appendix 5

Translated from Russian

Completed by the researcher only	
Participant:	
Date distributed:	
Date returned:	

Personal Diary

Research title:

The Role of Power and Ideologies in the Relationship between the Second Language Acquisition and Identity of Adult Immigrants: Naturalised Russian language minority women in Tuscany (Italy) attempting to develop a bilingual and bicultural identity.

Instructions:

Every time you speak to someone in Italian you practice your language skills. This personal diary is designed to get better insights into how power and ideologies influence these language practices in everyday life.

Please describe *when*, *where* and *with whom* you had an opportunity for language practice in the Italian language. You do not need to mention any names of people. Rather, try to define in general terms your relationship with them, e.g. a close relative, a neighbour, a colleague, a shop assistant, a friend, a government clerk etc.

After that, please describe how this language practice made you feel. For example, you can write about your feelings, thoughts or preoccupations related to it. Any contribution will be appreciated.

Try to maintain your diary regularly during the whole period of one month. You can write as much as possible and as often as possible. The language of the diary is Russian.

Four weekly Skype sessions will be arranged to provide you with guidance and support. However, you can always contact the researcher at any convenient time by phone or Skype for more information if necessary. Please return your completed scanned diary via email.

Thank you for your help with this research!

Elena Glare

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mobile: +393457681213

When	Where	With Whom	Feelings/Thoughts

Appendix 6

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FORM

Interview Number:	
Participant:	
Date Conducted:	

List of topics to cover

- ☐ Reflective positioning: before, now, outside of Italy
- ☐ Interactive positioning: attitude to it, possible ideologies which stand behind it
- ☐ Possibility of having a double cultural-linguistic identity
- ☐ Italian citizenship
- ☐ Perceived expectations of the host society regarding an immigrant
- ☐ Italian friends
- ☐ Russian friends
- ☐ Italian relatives
- ☐ Russian relatives
- ☐ Opportunities for language practice: evaluation of the participant
- ☐ Possible difficulties using Italian in everyday activities
- ☐ Conditions for starting a conversation
- ☐ Discrimination: accent, physical appearance
- ☐ Work: qualification, type of job, attitude, use of the Italian, try another type of job, difficulties finding a job due to ethnic origins
- ☐ Local language variety
- ☐ Foreign languages repertoire
- ☐ Using the Russian language in public places
- ☐ Safety in Italy as a woman immigrant and independence
- ☐ Possibility of returning to the country of origin
- ☐ Future plans

- ☐ Intergenerational language transmission
- ☐ Kindergarten/school and children: assimilation, relationship with other parents
- ☐ Exogamy: attitudes of the majority language group, reasons behind them, experiences
- ☐ Family's socio-economic status.

Appendix 7

INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

Participant:	
Time and Date:	
Interview duration:	
Further interview required:	
Difficulties establishing rapport:	
New emerged themes:	
Uncovered patterns:	
Topics which caused a particular interest of a participant:	
Topics which caused a particular emotional response:	
Facial expressions, pauses, voice tone:	
Other:	
Agreed to:	