

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA



TESIS DOCTORAL

El mantenimiento de la lengua nativa entre multilingües: el caso de inmigrantes iraníes que hablan inglés en España

Heritage Language Maintenance Among Multilingual Speakers: The case of English Speaking Iranian Immigrants in Spain

MEMORIA PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE DOCTOR

PRESENTADA POR

Niloofar Fathizaviyehkord

DIRECTORAS

Joanne Neff van Aertselaer
Paloma Tejada de Caller

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

In recent years, Spain has become immersed in a process of social and cultural integration as a consequence of increasing immigration from other countries. The ultimate goal of these immigrants is to enter into the labor market and to improve their standard of living and family situation (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; Sevillano, et al. 2014). According to Instituto Nacional de Estadística report on population figures in July 2022 and migration statistics in the first half of 2022 (available and updated online), the population of Spain increased by 182,141 people during the first half of the year 2022, standing at 47,615,034 inhabitants. The growth was due to a positive migration balance of 258,547, which compensated for a negative natural increase of 75,409 people. Comunidad de Madrid (0.82%), Illes Balears (0.68%) and Comunitat Valenciana (0.66%) experienced the largest increases in population. This is a clear indication that the problem of immigrants and their acculturation process is a key social, economic, cultural, and political issue not for the immigrants only but for the whole country, including the native Spanish people since they are involved in this process as well.

Due to the paradigm shift in the outlook concerning identity beginning with Norton (2000, 2001), post-structuralist theories of language and identity have offered new perspectives on language learning and teaching. These pioneering studies introduced Norton's construct of 'investment' to the field. As Block (2007a, p. 864) states, a post-structuralist approach to identity 'has become the approach of choice among

those who seek to explore links between identity and L2 learning mainly due to acknowledgment of the dynamic and comprehensive nature of this concept'.

Narrowing down the concept of identity, one can define ethnic identity as a subjective experience of being a part of an ethnic group (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004), and in the case of L2 learning and use, the ethnic groups in question typically are learners' own (ancestral) ethnic group and one or more target language (L2) communities.

The construct of ethnic identity embraces the feelings, experiences, and behaviors that in their totality amount to individuals' positioning with respect to their membership in a single or multiple ethnic groups.

According to Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004), three elements of ethnic identity are: centrality of the group to one's self (perceived importance of the group membership), positive affect associated with the group (feelings of joy and pride of being a group member), and in-group ties (perceived strength of affiliation to one's group).

The question of how individuals' sense of ethnic identity relates to their linguistic performance is of particular interest to researchers interested in L2 development; and in the case of the present study the possible connection between identity in general and ethnic identity in particular on one hand and the heritage language maintenance by the Iranian immigrants in Spain on the other.

From another related perspective, identity is connected to Berger and Luckmann's (1966) concept of secondary socialization (as opposed to the primary one), with all its ramifications especially when we consider the possible cultural, political, economic, and social rift between immigrants' own and those of the host country or community.

The problem gains considerable momentum when we consider the unprecedented mobility on the part of millions of immigrants or refugees who either under coercion or on their volition are in the search of better life in some countries in the world which are considered the promised lands for them.

Different economic, social, political, religious as well as ethnic factors can be postulated to have varying effects on immigrants' sense of identity and consequently on the degree of their successful acculturation in the mainstream host cultural and linguistic community. This in turn, can be reflected on the different strategies the immigrants use to either lose their heritage language on their way for convergent acculturation or maintain it in the form of divergent acculturation. Besides the point mentioned, the presence of English as the lingua franca which is the foreign language in immigrants' home country as well as the host country can add to the complexity of maintaining or losing the immigrants' heritage language on their acculturation process.

The effect of English can be mediated by factors such as the job opportunity, age, educational level, gender, the neighborhood, immigrants' different senses in connection to their own cultural and linguistic background and those of the target community, their aim and goals, the kind of motivation (integrative vs. instrumental), and the amount of the investment they had had in acquiring English.

In line with what was previously mentioned, the main aim of the current study was to study the possible relationship between Iranian immigrants' ethnic identity in Spain and their first language maintenance or loss. The other equally important aim was to investigate the relationship between English as the lingua franca and the process of Iranian immigrants' heritage language maintenance or loss in their acculturation in Spanish community. To this end, the main interest of the current study is finding out

the relationship between different sub-components of Iranian immigrants' identity in connection to different aspects of their home country as well as to different socio-cultural variables in the host Spanish culture.

The general aim of the research was divided into sub-components derived from the related questionnaires in the field. These aims ran the gamut of finding out the Iranian immigrants' gender, education, their attitudes towards different social, cultural, ethnic, economical, and psychological or effective variables of interest.

In part, the aim was to find out the aforementioned immigrants' attitudes towards different factors related to English as the intermediary language in the process of acculturation and more specifically the maintenance or loss of their heritage language. The last aim was to find the different strategies that Iranian immigrants in Spain opted for in maintaining or losing their heritage language in the process of acculturation or more specifically on their maintenance or loss of their heritage language.

1.1. Background and Aim of the Research

The inherent problem in immigration which must be dealt with by the immigrants is the issue of identity. The concept of identity has gained significance in the past two decades and keeps appearing in most articles on language learning and teaching (Norton & Toohey, 2002; McKinney & Norton, 2008; Norton, 2010).

1.2. Area of interest and Purpose of the Study

The concept of ethnic identity is potentially of prime concern for all immigrants anywhere, and Iranian immigrants in Spain are no exception. Due to the psychological, social, political, and cultural transformation that Iranian immigrants have to go through in the process of acculturation to the mainstream dominant Spanish culture, it is hypothesized that depending on their linguistic, cultural, ideological and political malleability, they might undergo varying degrees of transformations of ethnic identity; hence they might experience varying degrees of hardship in this process.

It is hypothesized that their ethnic identity might be related to their effort or lack of it in taking measures to maintain their heritage language (Persian). This might be manifested in the micro language policy they adopt at home like using their heritage language, or opting for schools where their heritage language is used as the language of instruction. This might be reflected in their attitude in talking about their heritage language, participating in some festivals or ceremonies reminiscent of their heritage culture and language, keeping their bond with other Iranian immigrants, observing some dressing code representing their ethnic identity and observing some religious duties, to name a few.

As far as Iranian immigrants in Spain are concerned, the problem is augmented due to the fact that Iranian immigrants under the educational system in their home country are supposed to learn English as the foreign language. This is done in governmental schools and universities as part of the educational requirement or in private language institutes to achieve their ambition to be fluent English learners.

Given the predominance of English as a strong L2 from early childhood in Iranian schools and culture, it stands to reason that English would play an important role in the process. In line with Vygotsky's concept of ZPD (1987), acting as the scaffold, English is in turn hypothesized to undergo varying degrees of maintenance or loss by the very immigrants in the interplay between their heritage language and the Spanish language as the mainstream language that exerts its undeniable force or effect on all aspects of their life.

Based on what was mentioned, the aim was to find out the immigrants' attitudes towards different factors related to English as the intermediary language in the process of acculturation and more specifically the maintenance or loss of their heritage language on the one hand and different strategies they opted for in this process to maintain or lose either their heritage language or English as the intermediary language on the other hand. Another aim was to investigate the degree of success of each of the strategies employed by them in the process and their attitude towards each of these strategies.

The main reason for the current research interest in the variables mentioned can be due to the fact that heritage language and ethnic identity tend to be interwoven in the process of acculturation and the English language is hypothesized to have a decisive role in this regard because of the reason mentioned previously that it is the starting point for almost all of the Iranian immigrants; since it is the compulsory foreign language to study in their home country.

In her study on Aboriginal language and culture maintenance, Babae (2010b) discovered that if an individual loses his or her heritage language, it could be as if part of his or her identity is lost, hence affecting their ethnic identity.

The importance of studying ethnic identity and heritage language maintenance

is indicated by the fact that individuals who lose their heritage languages report feeling shameful and guilty because of it (Canagarajah, 2013; Kouritzin, 2006; Kouritzin, 1999). Lee (2002) found that because the importance of language maintenance was not socially recognized, immigrants were not motivated enough to maintain their heritage language.

Finally, a regression analysis revealed that heritage language proficiency correlated with the strength of bi-cultural identification (Lee, 2002), which again can have some bearing on immigrants' identity in general and their ethnic identity in particular.

In the case of Iranian immigrants this gets even more complicated due to the intermediary effect of English whose effect cannot be denied at all in almost all aspects of Iranian immigrants' life. Therefore, the role of English either in their ethnic identity and language maintenance must be taken into account.

Equally the other reason for the invested interest in the current study in these factors is that the intermediary effect of English along with ethnic identity and heritage language maintenance can influence familial patterns between parents and children as the building blocks of society.

From a familial perspective, research shows that some children who had lost their heritage languages faced challenges in communicating with their parents and community members who could not speak the dominant language (Wong Fillmore, 2000; Kouritzin, 1999). Moreover, in some instances, the family structure changes as children and parents talk less and less (Rodriguez, 1982), and according to Wong Fillmore, a greater generation gap might be created.

The other significant point in the relationship between ethnic identity and language maintenance can be from a human rights' perspective; monolingual

(dominant language medium) education can lead to linguicide because the dominant language often morphs into a killer language, which is consistent with the UN definition of linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002a). Linguicide, or linguistic genocide, refers to 'the deliberate elimination of a language, without killing its speakers' (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2008, p. 6).

According to Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty, linguicide can occur by 'forcibly transferring children of [a minority] group to another group' (United Nations International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948, E 793, Articles 2e); or 'prohibiting the use of the [mother tongue] in daily intercourse, or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group (from the 1948 Final Draft of the above, not part of the Convention)" (p. 8). Skutnabb-Kangas (2002a) states, 'Prohibition can be direct or indirect' (p. 182).

The use of minority languages is indirectly prohibited in daily intercourse in schools if no minority teachers exist in the preschools or schools and the minority languages are not used as the main media of instruction. In such cases, "It is a question of linguistic genocide" (p. 182).

Heritage language maintenance can prevent linguicide through, for example, using heritage languages as a medium of instruction and providing heritage language courses to linguistic minority students. Although many studies have been conducted on language maintenance and loss (see, for example, Babae, 2010b; Chen, 2010; Guardado, 2006; Kouritzin, 2006; Kouritzin, 1999), no specific research has been conducted on the Iranian immigrants' ethnic identity and heritage language and English language maintenance as a way to cope with the hegemony of Spanish language and culture.

On the concept of linguicide, in the case of Iranian immigrants, the force with which Spanish language supersedes the heritage language might be mediated via English, i.e. the Spanish language might not replace the heritage language altogether, and English language might still be used at work, i.e. the immigrants might use English, Spanish and their heritage language in tandem, depending on many interweaving variables such as their language proficiency in English or Spanish.

Based on what was previously mentioned, the problem of ethnic identity with its entire personal, affective or psychological, sociopolitical, and ideological ramifications must be considered an important issue for most of the immigrants including Iranian immigrants who have left their home country due to political and economic problems in search of a relatively better prospect in Europe. Therefore, heritage language maintenance is an issue that most, if not all, immigrants must deal with.

The degree of the desire to maintain one's heritage language can depend on lots of factors such as personality or perception about one's language and culture in relation with the language and culture of the majority; the number and the kind of relationship between the immigrants who share the same heritage language and culture; and the extent of cohesion between the immigrants, their desire to be regarded as the immigrant from certain country or to do their best to fuse into the host language and culture to the extent that they might not be recognizable as an immigrant any more, to name a few.

Relevant among these hosts of factors, the role of English as the mediating language in the process of acculturation of Iranian immigrants, with varying degree of importance between the first and the second-generation immigrants, cannot be denied at all.

The point that adds to the immediacy of English to be considered even more than a mere mediating language in the process of acculturation, is the prevalence of English more than any other languages in the context of Iran where English has the lion's share of foreign languages both in institutes and the fact that it rules the roost in almost all schools and universities with no other rival foreign languages to claim a share of the market.

Based on what was mentioned, the present study intended to find out Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards different factors related to English as the intermediary language in the process of acculturation and more specifically the maintenance or loss of their heritage language. It also intended to investigate different strategies they used in the process of acculturation to Spanish language and culture, maintaining or losing either English as the intermediary language or Persian, their heritage language.

The aim was to explore the interplay among the role of English as the intermediary language as the main foreign language they were all expected to master as the educational requirement in their country on the one hand, Spanish language and culture as the mainstream dominant language and culture and Persian language and culture as the heritage language and culture on the other; and how this interplay influences their attitudes in dealing with the varied situation in which they find themselves and on the selection and use of the strategy they deem appropriate.

The main reason for the purpose mentioned was that heritage language maintenance is significant to linguistic minorities from personal (Babae, 2010b), familial (Wong Fillmore, 2000; Kouritzin, 1999), and human rights (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002a) perspectives. It can also serve host societies for socio-economic and political reasons (Brecht & Rivers, 2000), and undoubtedly, investigating

English as the intermediary language in this process is worth the effort, both theoretically and practically.

Taking aforementioned points into account, it is worth mentioning the other rationale which makes the current study worthy of conducting: acculturation has been commonly described as a process affecting people with two languages, one of them being their host language. However, in the current study, the effect of a third language has been taken into account which is assumed to be interesting, and novel in research, when languages such as Spanish and Persian are examined.

In the case of Iranian speakers, English may be said to constitute a first stage into acculturation, i.e. the adoption of a new 'cultural environment' (achieved while at home, i.e. just through symbolic displacement). This might have paved the way of Iranians into other cultures, for instance, Spanish in a context of migration. Based on the issues raised and investigated in the current study, a new perspective about the role of English in acculturation can be mentioned.

In the case of acculturation, the pervasive norm is that another culture and language is assimilated into English, the dominant language and this happens in an English speaking country like US. However, in the current study, English took the secondary position, an auxiliary language in the process of acculturation of Iranian immigrants in Spain with Spanish as the dominant language. In other words, the purpose in the current study was to investigate the role English played in the maintenance of the heritage language when it was not the host language.

Based on the situation and the interaction among the three languages involved (Persian, as the heritage language of the Iranian immigrants in Spain, English, the language they learned at home as the foreign language, and Spanish as the dominant language), for Iranians, English may be considered a kind of pseudo-heritage

language in a context of migration to Spain, an identitarian language to be maintained instead of/in addition to their heritage language, for instance when Spanish constitutes the host language. The interplay among these three languages was the main research interest in the current study. The assumption was that English may become an intermediary language exerting a positive effect on the process of acculturation of multilingual Iranian immigrants in Spain.

1.3. Research Questions

Based on the aforementioned points the present study will focus on the following research questions:

1. What is the role of English in the definition of Iranian immigrants' identity in relation to different social and attitudinal factors in Spain?

This question includes many sub-questions. The first has to do with the role of English in the sense of hostility experienced by Iranian immigrants during their acculturation to Spanish culture. The rest of the questions in turn dealt with the role of English in the sense of hatred, rejection, disdain, superiority, acceptance, admiration, experienced by Iranian immigrants in their acculturation to Spanish culture and social norms.

2. What are Iranian immigrants' attitudes to the role of English on their heritage language maintenance in Spain?

This main question includes the following sub-questions:

The first sub-question was about Iranian immigrants' attitudes regarding the importance of English on the religion they were brought up to their sense of identity. The other sub questions probed the importance of

English on variables of color of their skin (an indicator of the degree they considered racism as a relevant factor), the region or city where they lived, the country where they were born, the region or city where they grew up, and the main language spoken at home during their childhood

3. What are Iranian immigrants' attitudes to English language maintenance in Spain?

Like the previous main questions, this main question also was divided to the following sub-questions:

The sub questions probed under this main question were related to the lexical vs. syntactic significance of English on the process of their acculturation, their sense of pride towards English, the importance of fluency vs. accuracy in English, and the correlation between the occupational status of Iranian female immigrants and their sense of urgency to learn Spanish. The rationale for this was to see if the employment status (being at home mainly or being employed out) had any significant relationship with their sense of urgency to learn Spanish on their process of acculturation.

4. What specific measures do Iranian immigrants take for heritage or English language maintenance in Spain?

This research question had the following sub-questions: the Iranian immigrants' active participation in their heritage cultural events as a strategy to maintain their heritage language, the frequency of learning the grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary of

their heritage language explicitly, respectively as a strategy to maintain their heritage language, opting for Farsi schools if available, using their heritage language in public with peers sharing the same language to protect the privacy of their conversation, reading Farsi passages aloud for kids as a strategy to maintain their heritage language, acknowledging Farsi homework assigned by heritage language teachers; watching Iranian films; reading Farsi books and magazines; using heritage language with peers who share the same heritage language; the language spoken at home; and the language chosen to read or speak, all are different strategies to maintain their heritage language.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The current thesis is structured in the following way: the first chapter includes background and aim of the research, area of interest and purpose of the study and research questions.

The second chapter aims to cover the related literature. It includes concepts such as identity in its general form which is followed by the concept of identity in post-structuralist theories of language. This in turn is followed by investment, motivation, and SLA. The next topic in this regard is imagined communities and imagined identities.

Factors affecting immigrants' identity and language maintenance are the next topic to cover critically in this section. The topic is narrowed to heritage Language maintenance which is the topic of interest in the current study. The next part deals with the role English language plays in immigrants' acculturation in general and their maintaining or losing the heritage language in particular. To have a comprehensive background, heritage language programming in Europe is covered in the next part.

The third chapter, methodology, comprises the participants of the study which were the Iranian immigrants in Spain and their main characteristics which are important and relevant to the current study.

The next part includes the materials used in the current study which are the questionnaires related to immigrants' sense of identity on different aspects in their home country as well as the cultural, economic, political factors in Spain. Another questionnaire, (Nandi & Platt, 2012, Appendix A), is related to their attitude towards the role of English as the intermediary language and the connection between different roles that English plays and the process of their acculturation. The other questionnaire, (Babae, 2014, Appendix B), is about the different strategies that Iranian immigrants took in Spain in order to maintain their heritage language or depending on their attitude towards acculturation, to lose their heritage language for the sake of increasing the likelihood of successful acculturation. The next material is the semi-structured interview to gain in-depth information for the qualitative part of the study to triangulate the quantitative findings. The following part in the section includes the design of the study and is preceded by the detailed procedure to conduct the study. This part constitutes the procedure to select the participants and the way to collect and analyze the quantitative and qualitative data. The required statistics for data analysis is explained in the final part of this section.

The fourth chapter, which is about results and discussion, delineates the answer to each of the major research questions and their sub-questions. The statistical part is presented using the Chi-square goodness of fit. This is followed by the qualitative information collected via the semi-structured interview. Finally, the fifth section includes conclusions, linguistic and sociolinguistic conclusions drawn from the research and future lines of research.

PART II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Identity

Identity is the main issue that must be dealt with by most if not all immigrants. According to Norton and Toohey (2002), McKinney and Norton (2008), and Norton (2008), and Norton (2010), identity as an important concept has been studied repeatedly in TEFL.

Because of the significant change which was introduced by Norton (2000; 2001), a new outlook had been adopted in teaching and learning language. The inevitable link with another related concept, investment, was introduced by Norton. According to Block (2007a, p.864), the connection between investment and the mainstream theories in TEFL has gained momentum due to the premium it offers to the dynamic nature of this concept.

According to Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004), ethnic identity as the sub-group of the umbrella term identity, is everyone's experience of being part of an ethnic group and in relation to L2 learning and use. The ethnic groups typically are learners' own ethnic group and one or more target language (L2) communities. In fact, ethnic identity is the driving force behind shaping one's feeling, experiences and behavior with respect to their membership in a certain group.

Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe believe that three elements determine ethnic identity: perceived importance of the group membership, feelings of joy and pride of being a group member, and perceived strength of affiliation to one's group.

The important question in this regard is how individuals' sense of ethnic identity is related to how they perform linguistically and in the case of the present study the possible connection between identity in general and ethnic identity in particular on one hand and the heritage language maintenance or loss with the role of English as

the intermediary language on the other.

According to Berger and Luckmann's (1966), identity is associated with secondary socialization along with all its complexities particularly when cultural, political, economic, and social chasm between the norms of the immigrants' own country and those of the host country is taken into account. This issue becomes even more important when the widespread immigration in different parts of the world either in the search for better life or to escape the intolerable conditions for asylum seekers is concerned.

Successful acculturation in the host country can be postulated to be affected by the host of economic, social, political, religious as well as ethnic factors. This in turn, can be reflected on the different strategies the immigrants use to either lose their heritage language on their way for convergent acculturation or to maintain a parallel structure in the form of divergent acculturation. Besides the points mentioned, the presence of English as the lingua franca which is the foreign language in immigrants' home country as well as the host country can add to the complexity of maintaining or losing the immigrants' heritage language in their acculturation process. The effect of English can be mediated by factors such as the job opportunity, age, educational level, gender, the neighborhood, immigrants' different senses in connection to their own cultural and linguistic background and those of the target community, their goals, the kind of motivation (integrative vs. instrumental), and the amount of the investment they had had in acquiring English.

Because of the significance of the concept of identity in the current study, let us now review Norton and Toomey's (2011) summary of the main points of identity and language learning researchers:

i) In contemporary identity theories the individual language learner is part of a larger

social world. This is contrary to the static view of second language learners depicted by previous theories of language learning in which the learners were considered as either motivated or unmotivated or introvert vs. extrovert categorically, with nothing in between. In post-structuralist identity theories these affective descriptors are constructed as dynamic variables over time and space, and sometimes affect each other in contradictory ways within a single individual.

Identity theorists highlight the diverse positions from which language learners are able to participate in social life, and demonstrate how learners can, but sometimes cannot, appropriate more desirable identities with respect to the target language community.

Language learning theory and research needs to address how power in the social world affects learners' access to the target language community, and thus to opportunities to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing, widely acknowledged as central to the SLA process.

(iv) L2 learning is not entirely determined by structural conditions and social contexts, partly because these conditions and contexts are themselves in states of production.

(v) The sociological construct of 'investment' complements the psychological construct of 'motivation' in SLA. Since the concept of motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) was static and unchanging, it fell short of dealing with the dynamic and complex nature of learning a second or foreign language.

(vii) The theoretical constructs 'imagined community' and 'imagined identity' contribute usefully to understanding SLA. An imagined community assumes an imagined identity, and a learner's investment in the target language can be understood within this context.

2.1. Identity in Post-structuralist theories of language

Post-structuralist theories of language have become increasingly attractive to identity and language learning researchers. From a structuralist point of view with Chomsky as one of the leading proponents, language competence was the main priority which was studied in abstraction and the concept of language performance fell out of the scope of that paradigm. However, post-structuralist theories of language, proposed particularly by Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1986), saw language as situated utterances in which speakers, in dialogue with others, struggle to create meanings rather than a set of idealized forms independent of their speakers or their speaking.

For Bakhtin, language had no independent existence outside of its use, and that usage was of course social. While structural theories might see language learning as a gradual individual process of internalizing the set of rules, structures, and vocabulary of a standard language, Bakhtin saw language learning as a process of struggling to use language in order to participate in specific speech communities, emphasizing how social positions outside language might affect any individual's speaking privileges or rights.

Bakhtin (1981) was particularly interested in how position or status was signaled in language in conversation i.e. how contexts shape positioning among particular interlocutors. Scholars (such as Foucault, 1980; Hall 1997) have reminded us that identities are contingent, shifting and context-dependent, and that while identities or positions are often given by social structures or ascribed by others, they can also be

negotiated by agents who wish to position themselves. As Davies and Harré put it: 'discursive practices constitute the speakers and hearers in certain ways and yet at the same time are a resource through which speakers and hearers can negotiate new positions' (1990, p. 7).

The concept of speaking rights as an example of power was elucidated by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's work which directly addresses the poststructuralist study of the politics of language (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Bourdieu 1991). Bourdieu explicitly drew attention to the importance of power in structuring discourse, with interlocutors seldom sharing equal speaking 'rights'. According to Bourdieu, 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' speakers were distinguished by their differential 'rights to speech' or their 'power to impose reception' (1977, p. 648). For Bourdieu, using language was a social and political practice in which an utterance's value and meaning was determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks. Recognizing that the ascribed value of a person or group can vary, depending on circumstances or contexts, he saw linguistic discourse as 'a symbolic asset which can receive different values depending on the market on which it is offered' (1977, p. 651). One can see the relevance of this notion in the context of immigrant society in the host country with all its intricate ramifications entailing the notions of identity, power and linguistic privileges on either the natives or the immigrants.

2.2. Investment, motivation and SLA

Most early motivation studies in SLA framed motivation as a fixed characteristic of individual language learners, and hypothesized that learners who failed to learn

the target language did not, for various reasons, have sufficient (or appropriate) desire to learn the language. Seeing language learning as mainly an individual accomplishment, these studies of SLA motivation were not, by and large, concerned with power relations between language learners and target language speakers.

What Norton (2000) found was that high levels of motivation did not necessarily result in good language learning, and that unequal relations of power between language learners and target language speakers were often salient in her learners' accounts. Accordingly, she found it necessary to develop the construct of investment to complement constructs of motivation in the field of SLA (Norton, 2000, 2010). The construct of investment in language learning draws on economic metaphors, associated particularly with the work of Bourdieu. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) used the term 'cultural capital' to refer to the knowledge, credentials, and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups. They argued that cultural capital has differential exchange value (or 'currency') in different social fields. Drawing on these metaphors, Norton observed that learners 'invest' in the target language at particular times and in particular settings, because they believe they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital. As the value of learners' cultural capital increases, so does the learners' reassess of their sense of themselves and their desires for the future. Norton argued that investment and identity together signal the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it.

The notion of investment recognizes that learners often have variable desires to engage in the range of social interactions and community practices in which they are situated. Previous work on motivation frequently conceived of individuals as

having unitary, fixed, internalized and historical 'personalities'. Investment, on the other hand, sees language learners as having complex identities, which change across time and space, and which are constructed on the basis of the socially given, and the individually struggled-for. Thus, while motivation can be seen as a primarily psychological construct (D'oranyi, 2001), investment is a sociological construct, and seeks to make meaningful connections between a learner's desire and commitment to learn a language and their changing identities.

A language learner may be highly motivated, but may nevertheless have little investment in the language practices of a given classroom or community, which may, for example, be racist, sexist, elitist, anti-immigrant, or homophobic. Alternatively, the language learners' conception of good language teaching may not be consistent with that of the teacher, compromising the learner's investment in the language practices of the classroom (Norton & Toohy 2001).

2.3. Imagined Communities and Imagined Identities

In modern daily life, people interact directly with members of many communities: they may be involved in neighborhood, workplace, educational, medical, and religious communities. As Wenger (2004) suggested, however, these are not the only communities with which people are affiliated; they also affiliate with communities of the imagination. Anderson (1991), who originally coined the term 'imagined communities', observed that nations are imagined communities, 'because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their

communion' (1991, p. 6). Thus, in imagining ourselves allied with others across time and space, we can feel a sense of community with people we have not yet met and with whom we may never have any direct dealings. The term becomes even more intricate when we consider the situation in which immigrants find themselves in the host country.

The term 'imagined community' was applied to SLA theory by Norton (2001), who was particularly interested in the relationship between imagined communities and imagined identities. These concepts were further developed in Kanno and Norton (2003) and Pavlenko and Norton (2007), and have proved productive in diverse research sites (see, for example, Silberstein, 2003; Carroll, Motha & Price 2008; Kendrick & Jones 2008).

There is a focus on the future when learners imagine who they might be, and who their communities might be, when they learn a language. Such communities include affiliations, such as nationhood or even transnational communities, which extend beyond local sets of relationships. Such imagined communities may well have a reality as strong as those in which learners have current daily engagement, and might even have a stronger impact on their investment in language learning. The corollary one can draw is that in the case of alignment of the imagined community and the actual one in which immigrants find themselves, their identity can be boosted which in turn can affect their investment in language learning positively; by the same token in the case of discrepancy between what is imagined and what is faced in reality, the identity and consequently investment can be expected to be impacted negatively.

2.4. Factors affecting immigrants' identity and language maintenance

Due to sociological, ideological, psychological, and political factors intertwined in the case of immigrants, one, realistically, should expect to consider an intricate web or matrix of these factors affecting each other to varying degrees.

According to Shohamy (2011), one of the negative effects is caused by prejudiced outlook of the dominant culture on the assessment of the bilingual immigrant. Shohamy states that the assessment policies and practices are based on monolingual constructs whereby test-takers are expected to demonstrate their language proficiency in one language at a time. In other words, multilingual functioning receives no attention in language testing practices. Further, multilingual users who rarely reach language proficiency in each of the languages that is identical to that of their monolingual counterparts are always being compared to them and thus receive lower scores. Consequently, they are penalized for their multilingual competencies, sending a message that multilingual knowledge is a liability.

The social and consequential validity of these tests (Messick, 1994) can have a deleterious effect on the morale, identity and investment (Norton Pierce, 1995; Norton, 2000) of immigrants in maintaining their mother tongue in the favor of the language of the host community in the hope of expectation to gain more success at the cost of losing their first language at varying degrees.

Of course an important point is that these factors affecting the immigrants and their language maintenance should not be considered fixed and immune to modification. The findings of Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Ng (2008) is relevant in that it demonstrated the changing and dynamic nature of the attitude of adolescents of one generation after their arrival in Catalonia is indicative of the dynamicity of

these factors. Their study shows that (1) differences in attitudes between youths of Spanish and Catalan background have softened; (2) disparities in status and solidarity have evened out; (3) language choice can be highly gendered; and (4) bilingual proficiency is now valued by and for both communities. These findings indicate the fluid and dynamic nature of identity and investment proposed by Norton Pierce (1995), and that the situation can get better if the auspicious situation is provided in the intercultural relationship between the immigrants and the native people of the host country.

Ideological clash can be another potentially important factor affecting immigrants. In this regard, the process of assimilation and adaptation for Muslim immigrants in general and Iranian immigrants, which by identity are Muslim in particular, gets worse due to recent rise of Islamophobia in Europe (Abbas, 2007; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011). This has painted Muslim immigrants as threats to the European way of life (Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999). Muslim immigration has slowly been increasing since 1990, to an estimated 2-3% of the current Spanish population (Muslims in Europe, 2005).

In response to the growing Muslim population, and a perceived Muslim threat, some Spanish lawmakers have begun to propose steps to limit immigration from Islamic nations and to limit expression of Islamic traditions in public (Hurd, 2012). Moreover, according to Hurd, many Spanish lawmakers and citizens perceive the Muslim population in Spain as unwilling and unable to adapt and fit into Spanish culture. Even though Spain has a relatively relaxed immigration regulations, and many Spaniards do not pressure immigrants to assimilate (Encarnación, 2008), the 2004 Madrid bombings and the fact that nearly 25% of Spaniards are unemployed (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2012) has led to questions regarding immigration

in Spain. In fact, many Spaniards have started to feel threatened by Muslim immigrants and have begun to not only blame immigrants for economic and social problems, but have started to demand immigrants either leave Spain or become 100% Spanish (Bad news days, 2010; Tremlett, 2012). Muslim immigrants are no longer believed, by a majority of Spaniards, to be willing to adapt to the Spanish society and therefore are not considered as welcomed in Spain.

Croucher, Galy- Badenas and Routsalainen's (2014) study explores the intricate relationships between a dominant group's fear of an immigrant group, religiosity, and the dominant culture's perception of whether an immigrant group is motivated to culturally adapt. Specifically, Muslim immigration to Spain was analyzed. The study found the following: 1) threat from an immigrant group was negatively correlated with perception of immigrant motivation to adapt, 2) highly religious members of the dominant culture were less likely to believe Muslim immigrants are motivated to culturally adapt, and 3) increased contact with Muslim immigrants led to higher levels of realistic threat and symbolic threat among Spanish Catholics.

Related to the phenomenon of Islamophobia and from a broader perspective, the sense of being threatened by the wave of immigration can set the stage against immigrants. When members of a dominant culture (i.e. Spanish) believe their values/beliefs and their group is threatened in some way, prejudicial reactions are likely to develop in response. Prejudice is defined as negative attitudes or beliefs generally expressed through negative emotions or communication toward an out-group (Duckitt, 1992). Factors such as personality, strength of membership in an in-group, adherence to cultural values/beliefs, and perceived differences with an out-group can all affect level of prejudicial expression (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). Allport and Ross (1967) argued that increased contact between groups, particularly

high quality contact should decrease prejudice between groups and facilitate adaptation into the host culture. Of course one cannot press this point because the other way round might prove possible, increased contact might possibly lead to high levels of prejudice. Thus, the amount of contact members of the dominant culture have with immigrants is related to levels of prejudice. Therefore, it can be said that adaptability on the part of immigrants and receptivity on the part of the dominant group can play positive role in assimilation or acculturation. Of course a caveat must be in order here in hasty jumping to the conclusion on the relationship between the amount of contact and the level of prejudice. It can be highly likely that the increased contact might lead to the escalation of the tension, i.e. the mere quantity of contact cannot be taken as the sole determining variable to obviate or escalate the tension; the quality rather than the quantity of contact should be given more premium and weight in this regard.

Receptivity is how accepting or open a society is to newcomers. Mass media portrayals pre- existing notions of groups, economics, and politics (Kim, 1988) all effect receptivity.

Conformity pressure is how much the host culture expects immigrant groups to adapt or conform to the values and/or norms of the dominant culture (Croucher, 2013). In more liberal societies, immigrants are generally allowed more freedom to maintain their own values and/or norms or native language; in more conservative (more ideological) societies, immigrants are typically expected to abandon more of their own values and/or norms for those of the dominant culture (Croucher, 2006). What is the key to conformity pressure and receptivity is that they affect an immigrant's motivation to adapt with loss or maintenance of their native language accordingly (Croucher, 2013; Kim, 1988).

Finally it must be stated that based on what was mentioned, considering the dynamic nature of relationship between the immigrant and the natives which can lead to prejudice on the one part, the opposite scenario can also be expected.

The result of Lara's (2014) study is a case in point, in which he examined the immigrant paradox hypothesis regarding life satisfaction. Using reports constituting an overall sample of 501 first-generation immigrant adolescents and 501 native adolescents living in Spain, it was found that immigrant adolescents were as satisfied with their lives as their native peers. This remained true regardless of factors such as immigrants' length of residence, age of arrival or mother tongue. The bilateral understanding or misunderstanding between the natives and the immigrant can be partially accounted for by interpreting, which according to Jun (2019) is an act of intercultural communication. The interpreter has to interpret across subjects, languages and cultures to make intercultural communication successful. Jun states that during such a communicative process, there are schematic gaps for the interpreter to overcome, such as language schema gaps or cultural schema gaps. More specifically it can include lack of shared schemata, failure to activate schemata, and activation of the wrong schemata. Rounded up, it comes to mutual awareness on the part of both natives and the immigrants to narrow down the schematic gap to enhance the quality of intercultural communication for the mutual betterment of the lives of both parties involved.

2.5. Heritage language maintenance

One of the inherent problems which is inextricably bound with immigration and identity issues is the heritage language maintenance. Due to its relevance and significance, the amount of research on heritage language (HL) use and maintenance has increased exponentially over the last decades and a picture is beginning to emerge of the developmental patterns that are seen to take place and of the main factors that impinge on HL use and maintenance in increasingly multilingual settings. Juan-Garau,(2014) studied the difficulties associated with HL maintenance at home, the impact of the different linguistic and cultural experiences HL learners go through on their identity, cross-linguistic influence between HLs and other languages present in the community, and issues related to HL education, particularly teacher language competencies. The prevalence of immigration and HR in contrast with the main language of the host country is so evident that according to Romaine's (2006: 385) apt remarks, 'bilingualism and multilingualism are a normal and unremarkable necessity of everyday life for the majority of the world's population'. It is estimated that more than half of the world's population uses two or more languages in Everyday life (Grosjean 2010).

More specifically as King and Ennser-Kananen (2013) note, the term HL is often used to designate the language used in home and familial contexts, even though some authors point to its wider cultural associations and significance. In this vein, Carreira (2004) argues that identity, language and family background should be taken into account when defining HL learners.

Recent research on bilingualism and multilingualism has paid increasing

attention to the contexts in which languages are acquired and used (Juan-Garau, 2014), since the familial, educational and social contexts in which second language acquisition takes place have been seen to have a bearing on acquisition outcomes (Siegel, 2003).

In the case of HL maintenance, inter-generational familial language practices are of vital importance. Based on children's and parents' accounts of language practices in the home space, some of the intricacies involved in participants maintaining the HL in the stronghold of their homes naturally including the analysis of the language(s) parents use with their children. This is what Piller (2001) refers to as *private language planning*. Nevertheless, many couples do not consciously ponder on the language(s) they address their offspring. In fact, subconscious and spontaneous choices are often made at both general and specific levels (Pavlenko, 2004). Indeed, parents' language choice may be affected by a myriad of factors including their preferred identity, but also attitude to languages, expected benefits, extended family and friends, and their children's own preferences (Tuominen 1999). Emotions have also been considered influential (Pavlenko 2004).

A common strategy among parents in households where two languages are spoken has been to keep the two languages separate by adhering to the 'one-parent-one-language' approach, with each parent consistently speaking his or her language to the child (see Barron- Hauwert 2004). Mixed patterns of exposure, however, where one or both parents speak more than one language to their children, are also common (Romaine 1995). And finally, sometimes parents exclusively use the minority (i.e. non-community) language, leaving the child to acquire the majority language formally or informally outside the home (Deuchar & Quay 2000).

Notwithstanding the importance of the language that parents use with a child, many other factors are considered to play a significant role in language acquisition, including the language parents use with one another, the language choices of siblings and caretakers, and environmental influences such as neighbors and friends, extended family, mass media and nursery school (Baker2011).

Heritage language maintenance as the consequence of acculturation phenomena takes place at two distinct levels: the cultural group level and the individual psychological level and according to Sam and Berry, (2006) might be affected by the following factors of the migrant groups in the dominant culture:

Purpose: Is the group in contact voluntarily (e.g. immigrants) or under duress (e.g. native peoples)?

Location: Is the group in its traditional location, with its land and other resources available, or is it displaced to some new, perhaps less desirable, environment (e.g. reservations, refugee camps)?

Length and permanence: do the migrants intend to stay in the certain host country temporarily or permanently which can have direct bearing on their investment to learn the target language or maintain their heritage language.

Population: How many are there; are they a majority or minority

Policy: To what extent does the group have an organized response to the contact and the resulting acculturation? If there is a policy orientation, is it one of resistance (to get rid of acculturative influence), of inclusion (accepting the influence) or of control (selective inclusion according to some scale of acceptability)?

Cultural qualities: Are there certain aspects of the pre-contact culture which

affect the acculturative process?

2.6. Factors Affecting Heritage language Maintenance

A complex issue like heritage language maintenance or loss inevitably should have different causes. Studies of second-generation immigrants in the USA report the effect of two-parent families and high levels of parental education and income and their contribution on heritage language maintenance (hence, fluent bilingualism) among children (Portes & Rumbaut 2006; Rumbaut & Ima 1998). Likewise, high levels of parental education and income seem to increase the likelihood of children in such families to speak only English (Alba et al. 2002; Bills, Chavez, & Hudson 1995).

The factors mentioned are but two of the many variables affecting heritage language maintenance and loss. According to Kipp, Clyne, and Pauwels (1995), generally, these intervening factors can be divided into two categories: individual level and group level. They believe that on the individual level, a person's age, gender, place of birth, education, marriage pattern, prior knowledge of the majority language, reason for migration, length of residency in the host country and language variety should be considered.

According to Kipp, Clyne, and Pauwels, on the group level, the size and distribution of an ethnic group, the language policy of the host country and the proximity/distance of the minority language to/from the majority language are important. Considering the result of the heritage language maintenance as bilingualism, the linguistics literature suggests that it is relative: very few people are balanced bilinguals with native-like control of both languages. In

other words, most bilingual speakers are dominant in one language (Bialystok 2001). Importantly, Fishman (1991) distinguishes between 'language transmission' (i.e. the passing of heritage language to young children as second-generation immigrants in a family context) and 'language maintenance' (i.e. the 'post-transmission process' that occurs in a wider society and is aimed at further development of what has been transmitted).

It appears that there are more success stories in transmitting language to children in middle to late childhood than in maintaining language among adolescents and young adults (Chumak-Horbatsch, 1999; Portes & Rumbaut 2001).

On the exerting power of social factors, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found that children from various national origins and backgrounds typically become English-dominant, if not English monolingual, by the time they reach adolescence.

In a longitudinal study of children of immigrants in Miami and San Diego, Portes and Rumbaut found that the preference for English increases over time: 88% of the respondents preferred to speak English by the time they graduated from high school, while only one-fourth of the students could be considered fully bilingual (defined as being able to speak, understand, read and write the language).

A study of the home languages of second and third-generation children in Chinese, Cuban and Mexican groups in the USA showed that a majority of these children spoke only English at home (Alba et al. 2002). Immigrant children in the USA seem to acquire English rapidly while losing their heritage language (Wong Fillmore, 1991), leading to the conclusion that, by age 18,

‘second-generation bilingualism is exceptional’ (Portes & Rumbaut 2001, 143). Another equally important factor affecting heritage language maintenance or loss is the familial context.

In this regard, Fishman (1978) described the process of heritage language loss as taking place across three generations. Members of the first generation go through instrumental acculturation speaking some English but preferring to use their native language at home. Members of the second generation speak English in school and with friends, and increasingly answer their parents in English at home, thus becoming bilinguals, whose language of choice in adulthood becomes English. Finally, the third-generation members lose the remains of the first generation’s native language due to the lack of support for it both at home and in the outside environment. Therefore, the heritage language loses its vigor succeeding through three generations, finally giving in to the unstoppable juggernauts of the host language, leaving behind no trace by the third-generation immigrants.

Researchers have identified the most significant factors that promote the preservation/maintenance of native/heritage language among children of immigrants.

Among the influential factors one can refer to the fact that both parents share the same heritage language and speak it at home; they have friends of the same national origin and they enjoy supportive ethnic networks (Alba et al., 2002; Hulsen, de Bot, & Weltens, 2002; Portes & Hao, 1998). Among these factors, language practice at home appears to be one of the strongest predictors of heritage language maintenance (Hakuta & D’Andrea, 1992). In addition, the birth order of children is found to influence the heritage language experiences

of immigrant children. Firstborn children experience more direct interaction with their parents in heritage language than later-born children, as evidenced by the studies of Russian mothers in Hungary (Jarovinskij, 1995) and Korean parents in the USA (Ellis & Johnson, 2002). Further, later-born children become more English-dominant than the firstborn as a result of a familial language shift prompted by the school entrance of the older child and increasing sibling interaction in English (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

Studies also show that children of immigrants prefer to use English when communicating with their siblings and peers, even those of the same background in the U.S (Kravin 1992; Tuominen, 1999).

The other influential factor in the heritage language maintenance or loss has to do with the immigrants' attitudes towards this issue. Generally speaking, one can expect to find a strong desire among the immigrants to teach their children their native language in order to transmit their culture and promote positive family interaction (King & Fogle, 2006; Park & Sarkar, 2007). While the use of heritage language by children in immigrant families is positively associated with cohesive family relationships (Tannenbaum & Howie 2002), the rapid and inevitable assimilation or acculturation of second-generation children contributes to a decrease in fluent communication between parents and children as the children abandon their heritage language gradually (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

Typically, with time in the USA, the children's English abilities exceed those of their parents, and they increasingly respond to their parents in English, thus undermining parental control and weakening parental authority, a situation which can be extrapolated to other situations in other host countries to varying

degrees. Overall, increased parent-child conflict as well as poor self-esteem and feelings of embarrassment about their parents' culture in families whose youth are not fluent in the language of their immigrant parents seems to be a predictable scenario in similar situations (Portes & Rumbaut 2001).

Although familiar factors have their own exerting power, they are not the only factors in heritage language maintenance. Societal context and heritage language supports studies suggest that for the continued development of a family's heritage language, parental input is not sufficient by itself; broader linguistic input from peers and support of the larger community are also necessary (Chumak-Horbatsch, 1999; Kravin, 1992).

Residential concentration and the availability of ethnic social networks provide immigrants with an opportunity to speak their native language, thus increasing heritage language maintenance (Portes & Rumbaut 2006).

Immigrant groups who have an opportunity to use their native language in various social domains (e.g. family, religion, work, government) are more likely to maintain it (Stevens, 1992). The availability of schools that are supportive of heritage language plays an important role in reinforcing parents' efforts in the process of inter-generational language transmission.

Studies found that the social networks of immigrants influenced patterns of heritage language maintenance, resulting in a shift to the dominant language among immigrants. Limited contact with speakers of one's native language in a new context had a negative effect on an immigrants' native language use, while personal contact with relatives in one's ethnic homeland had a strong positive effect (Hulsen, de Bot, & Weltens, 2002). In addition, intermarriage, by determining the language spoken at home, had a strong effect on the language

used by the third generation (Alba et al. 2002). In short, immigrants and their children who have an extensive social network have frequent opportunities to use their heritage language with family, friends, neighbors, colleagues and, consequently, they have a better chance of maintaining it.

2.7. The role of English on acculturation and heritage language maintenance or loss

Since English is the lingua franca and plays a vital role in the international communication and by the same token in the acculturation process and heritage language maintenance or loss of many other languages involved, in this part this issue will be dealt with more specifically. The importance becomes clear when we consider the point that according to the United States Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, the number of English learners in the United States reached 4,472,563 during the 2011-2012 school year, a number that comprised 9 percent of the nation's students (Profiles of English learners). Furthermore, this population is estimated to be increasing fast: according to Thomas and Collier, English learners are predicted to be 40% of the U.S. school-age population by 2030 (as cited in Arthur-Drake, 2014, p. 327).

The matter of fact is that the issue of maintaining one's heritage language of this considerable number of English learners (9 percent of the total student population in the USA) with various heritage languages is far from simple or straightforward due to multiple factors involved even at the policy making level. The discrepancy between these levels becomes clear when we find out

that what is valued and encouraged in one group of people in one circumstance is despised and discouraged in another.

As one scholar states, “Society admires the bilingualism of the diplomat but not the multilingualism of the cab driver” (Hakuta, 2011, p. 172). Concerning the role of English on heritage language maintenance at the level of language policy, what is happening in the US is just a case in point to indicate that discrepancy; while the U.S. government is pouring thousands of dollars into foreign language programs, the same country’s education system is neglecting and, in some cases, opposing the maintenance of English learners’ heritage languages, despite the fact that research shows the detriments of doing so. In some cases, this is the result of ignorance; in other cases, it is the result of bias on the part of both politicians and laymen alike.

Given that the United States is a country of immigrants, it is not surprising that heritage language maintenance has been an issue for quite some time.

According to Zelasko (1992 as cited in Craig, 1996, p. 384), Americans have had difficulty over the years deciding whether they ought to support bilingualism or oppose it; he makes the interesting point that Americans are generally favorable towards the idea of their children being bilingual, while they are more hesitant to support bilingualism in minorities (as cited in Craig, 1996, p. 384). More often than not, the pendulum has swung towards the side of opposition to bilingualism, the result of both negative, racist attitudes towards minorities and erroneous, early research by Macnamara and others that concluded that bilingualism caused cognitive problems and confusion (P. Lee, 1996, p. 500).

The resulting English-only policies give rise to school practices that “often

involved physical and emotional violence” (Murillo & Smith, 2011, p. 148) and produced monolingual students. Therefore, it is evident that the effect of English on the maintenance of the heritage language and the subsequent bilingualism is not a linguistic matter alone; rather it hosts a plethora of political as well as psycholinguistic considerations. Despite the fact that in 1962, Elizabeth Peal and Wallace Lambert published what would later be regarded as a landmark study in the field of bilingual research in which they found that bilingual children showed many cognitive advantages over monolingual children and could indeed achieve proficiency in more than one language (P. Lee, 1996, 503).

Many studies have since corroborated and expanded upon their conclusions, as will be discussed later, yet, decades later, many people are still convinced that exposing children to two or more languages will certainly cause confusion and retard their academic progress (Gkaintartzi & Tsokalidou, 2011; H. Y. Lee, 2014; J. S. Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Many point to the mixed success of bilingual programs as evidence, though scholars ascertain that few of the programs that label themselves “bilingual” are truly that (Krashen, 1991). As a result, parents and children are pressured to speak only English at home, a practice that “not only contributes to heritage language loss, but also is likely to lead to a less enriched language environment with fewer opportunities for interactions about interesting topics incorporating sophisticated vocabulary, ideas, and concepts, given that many immigrant parents have limited English proficiency” (J. S. Lee & Oxelson, 2006, p. 462-463).

The prevailing negative influence of English language on the heritage language loss is an undeniable reality in America as the most desired country.

Fishman (1991) found that “the heritage language in most families is completely lost within three generations” (as cited in Szilágyi, Giambo & Szecsi, 2013, p. 117) – a phenomenon that can still be observed today, not just in America but in most of the countries where the battle between the heritage language and English is raging on (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). Even those who maintain ability to comprehend the heritage language are often unable to speak it (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007, p. 372) and the situation is definitely getting worse by each generation. In terms of the relationship between age and heritage language loss, studies show that younger students are more at risk to lose competency in their heritage language if the proper preventative measures are not taken (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Dubinina, Polinsky & Montrul, 2021; Laleko, Kisselev, 2021; MacSwan, 2000; Moreno-Fernández & Lamas, 2023). Porcel, 2006).

According to Y. Wang, one of the main contributors to heritage language loss is the negative interactions between the heritage language and the school, specifically “negative peer pressure, discrimination, assimilative nature of curriculum,” and “lack of opportunities to learn and speak the heritage language in school” (2009, p. 15-16). Crawford (2000) concurs that societal pressure causes a shift of values within individuals which manifests itself in the neglect of the heritage language.

Besides the dichotomy of additive and subtractive bilingualism discussed above as the choice for the immigrants to opt for in the process of acculturation, according to which the immigrants either maintain their heritage language and add the host language to their existing linguistic repertoire or learn the host language at the expense of losing their heritage language;

another dichotomy that can be used to think about the two attitudes towards heritage languages is the idea of the heritage language as a problem to be overcome or as a resource to be utilized (Wiltse, 2008, p. 8). Many people, including teachers, curriculum designers, administrators, politicians, parents and, eventually, the students themselves fall into the first category.

The assumption that the heritage language is competing with the host language leads to conflict within the student's school and home. "Language instructors tend to look for gaps in knowledge, rather than assign value to the rich and varied linguistic backgrounds that these learners bring with them" (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007, p. 373). Parents who feel delinquent for ignoring the advice of educators and professionals that they speak only English in the home stop speaking the heritage language – a tragedy when one understands that the main support for heritage language maintenance is the choice to use that language in the home (Aalberse, Backus & Muysken, 2019) Goldberg, Paradis & Crago, 2008, p. 62).

Based on what was mentioned, the effect of English or any other languages on the language maintenance or loss in the process of acculturation cannot be restricted to linguistic factors and as mentioned a host of social, economic, affective, and even political factors must be taken into account. However, a point of relevance between what was mentioned on the role of English on acculturation process of different heritage language in America to the current research is that, in America, English is the first language, a linguistic Juggernaut which seems to be intolerant of the growth of any other heritage languages, a bully in the town, acting aggressively against any heritage language.

In the current research, the research question of interest would be whether Spanish is as strong a host language as English against Farsi and whether English dethroned from its lofty position, would still exert its power in the acculturation process of the Iranian immigrants and mediate in their heritage language immanence or loss. Put it differently, what could be alternatively highlighted is whether the contact with English (such a strong and singular language) affects the maintenance of heritage language even when English *is not a host* language.

2.8. Heritage Language Programming in Europe

Due to the unprecedented wave of immigration from different parts of the world to Europe in the search of a better life and consequently dealing with maintaining the heritage language as part of the acculturation process, it is worth dealing with this issue under a separate heading.

Twenty three official languages are spoken in the twenty seven member states in the EU (Kraus, 2008). However, politically and socio-economically motivated immigration (Extra & Yagmur, 2002) have led to increasing linguistic diversity within this context. According to Siguan (1995), today, more than 125 languages are spoken in the EU, causing a linguistic potpourri never seen before. Immigration has increased the linguistic diversity in the EU school population as well. By the early 1990s, around ten percent of the school population in the EU was comprised of linguistic minority students (Reid & Reich, 1992). Over 350 languages were counted as important amongst the school students in London, and 150 languages, apart from German, were reported as spoken by the children in Hamburg schools

(Buchel, Bühler-Otten, Fürstenau & Gogolin, 2001).

In Sweden, about 20% of students speak a language other than Swedish (Directorate for Education, Education and Training Policy Division, 2010). Between 40 and 95 percent of the school population and 75 percent of the pre-school population in Botkyrka, Sweden, were of non-Swedish descent (Runfors & Sjogren, 1994).

In Europe, the policy context for linguistic minority education and heritage language maintenance are based on 'the European Community's 1977 Directive to Member States of the education of children of migrant parents' (Cummins, 1998, p. 441). This directive placed emphasis on the right of linguistic minority children to learn the language of the country they reside in, as well as their heritage languages and culture (Council Conclusions on the Education of Children with a Migrant Background, 2009). Linguistic minority children in Europe might learn their heritage languages in heritage language classes or bilingual or trilingual programs at public schools (for example, Extra and Yagmur, 2002; Reid & Reich, 1992), although to what extent this directive is implemented and materialized in reality might be an open question not because of lack of facility but because of the willingness of the immigrants to acculturate and be part of the majority culture and language.

This concern is voiced by Extra and Yagmur (2002), claiming that the European Community's Directive 'was very limited in its ambitions regarding minority language teaching and has meanwhile become completely outdated' (p. 44). Based on this Directive, a number of projects were launched; however, the assessment of the majority of them revealed that heritage language learning was marginalized, and changes in educational conditions were not a concern (Reid & Reich, 1992). This implies that heritage language maintenance was not, among priorities of many

educational organizations in Europe.

In spite of the availability of some heritage language classes and bilingual or trilingual programs in the EU (for example, Extra and Yagmur, 2002; Reid & Reich, 1992), mother tongue medium instruction has been opposed in contexts including, but not limited to, Sweden and France, for educational or political reasons (Helot & Young, 2002; Runfors & Sjogren, 1994). In Sweden, the education of immigrant students has been based on the principles of freedom of choice, partnership, and equality since 1974 (Runfors & Sjogren, 1994). Freedom of choice highlights the right of immigrant families to choose to maintain their heritage languages and cultures. If so, policy allows heritage languages to be taught at school weekly (Runfors & Sjogren, 1994), depending on the availability of funding and teacher and the number of students (five for most heritage language classes) (prerequisites that cannot be taken for granted) (Kaplan & Baldouf, 2005).

Some immigrant students perform well at Swedish school; however, students residing in predominantly immigrant areas tend to perform poorly. Some teachers and authorities consider ethno-linguistic diversity a barrier to succeeding in the dominant society and try to discourage the teaching of heritage languages at school. As a result, more emphasis has been placed on the principle of equality, and learning (Standard) Swedish, rather than maintaining heritage languages (Runfors & Sjogren, 1994), and heritage language programs have tended to decline (Kaplan & Baldouf, 2005). Moreover, the majority of the EU members are reluctant to admit multiculturalism (Yagmur, n.d.), and tend to value only European languages, not immigrants' heritage languages (Helot & Young, 2002). For example, the use of a single language, that is, Standard French, is believed to represent unity in France. Therefore, immigrants are

forced to assimilate into the mainstream society and heritage languages tend to be viewed 'as the main obstacle to the acquisition of the French language and as a source of learning difficulties' (Helot & Young, 2002, p. 97).

In general, the 'ambivalent' orientation of some EU member states towards heritage language maintenance has resulted in some 'isolated and often short-lived initiatives' that tend to have little influence on 'the educational system as a whole' (Cummins, 1998, p. 444). Although heritage language programs in a variety of languages are available in the EU, dominant assimilationist ideologies in most of the member states (Yagmur, n.d.) and a potential devaluation of heritage languages (Helot & Young, 2002) might discourage language maintenance in linguistic minority children. Learning heritage languages, on the other hand, might be politically or economically motivated (Babae, 2014). Therefore, considering the points mentioned, heritage language maintenance must be a challenge for minority immigrant groups to varying degrees that must be dealt with.

PART III. Methodology

3. Introduction

Because the current study adopted a mixed method paradigm to be partially able to meet the complexity of the issues of interest, with the inherent qualitative and quantitative considerations, the researcher feels the need to elaborate on some of the difficulties and problems associated with the qualitative phase of the study which have been acknowledged by the experts in the field, hence these problems are the inherent limitations in the current study too.

In the qualitative phase of the current study, the qualitative paradigm had to be taken into account. According to Norton and McKinney (2011), methods that scholars use in identity approaches to language learning often draw on critical ethnography, feminist post-structuralist theory, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology. Consequently, it can be said that due to the ever-changing and malleable nature of these issues, methods that rely on static, inherent, and measurable learner s' variables are not consistent with some of the major understandings of these approaches (Yin, 2016). Other research methods are required to deal with such complexities, and the focus on issues of equity and power seen in this work calls for qualitative research designs that are informed by critical research. Therefore, to be in line with the mainstream research paradigm, in the present study, these qualitative approaches were in mind to have an appropriately and proportionately deep understanding of the relationship between ethnic identity of Iranian immigrants and their heritage and additional (English) language maintenance or loss. The main reason for opting for a

qualitative method of data collection and analysis is that in this mixed method research, qualitative aspect is a valuable aspect which must be paid due attention. The rationale behind this attitude is the awareness that analysis and interpretation of the mere static quantitative approaches fell short of the inherent intricacies involved in these multifaceted phenomena. However, before embarking on the qualitative approach, to have a better understanding of the issue at hand, we must be aware of some of the caveats in qualitative approaches that this study may suffer.

First, most scholars reject the view that any research can claim to be objective or unbiased. As practitioners following post-structural paradigm we must be reflexive about our own experiences, recognizing that our perspective on that which we are observing or analyzing is not the only one, and that our conclusions will inevitably be ‘situated’ and partial. This is not to say that qualitative research is lacking in rigor; but it is to recognize that all research is situated, and that the researchers and their tools are integral to the progress and ethical conduct of a research project (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007; De Costa 2010b). Ramanathan (2005) noted, for example, ‘Questions and issues of what are “present” and “absent” clearly underlie what are “visible” and “invisible”, to a large extent, by the researcher’s lens’ (2005, p. 15).

A second common understanding with respect to method is the “structure and agency” issue: that is, identity researchers must account for not only how structural conditions and social practices place individuals, but also how individuals struggle to situate themselves in the contexts in which they find themselves. For example, identity and language learning researchers must examine identity categories like race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other structural issues that might be associated with inequalities in access to language learning. However, they also need to ensure

that they leave conceptual room for the actions and investments of human agents. Human agency may be frail, especially among those with little power, but it happens daily and mundanely, and it deserves our attention. Effort will be made to take as many of these points about Iranian immigrants in Spain as possible, but keeping the first caveat raised in mind, i.e. despite all endeavors to accomplish as much objectivity as possible on the part of the researcher, this is inevitably going to be her perspective, the limits of which must be acknowledged within this paradigm.

A third and related point to consider is that the methods that identity researchers use must seek a better understanding of how political and economic issues interact with language learning, constraining or enabling human action (Fairclough, 2001; Pennycook 2007). Such researchers often draw on Foucault's (1980) insights about the relationship between knowledge and power, and the subtle and complex ways in which power circulates in society. Foucault's conceptualization of power as discursively produced and reproduced is of special interest to language educators as they investigate particular learning environments and how they privilege or stigmatize learners. Taken-for granted categories such as man, woman, class, race, ethnicity, nation, identity, awareness, emancipation, language or power must be understood as contingent, shifting and produced in the particular, rather than having some prior ontological status. This approach encourages language education researchers to reject "grand theories" and methods, and to come to understand the particularity of the persons, environments, and processes they wish to examine.

In the current research too, the ever-present concept of power in economic, political, religious or ideological grounds among the Iranian immigrants were taken into account in investigating the possible effect of each of these factors on the

relationship between the ethnic identity and the maintenance or loss of their heritage language (Persian) and the additional language, English they learned as foreign language in their native land.

3.1. Participants

The participants in the present study were Iranian immigrants in Spain. Because of the nature of the research questions it included adults, both male and female Iranians who have immigrated to Spain. The rationale to choose different sexes and age groups was to be able to collect comprehensive data on ethnic identity and purported relationship between the effect of English and ethnic identity to maintain both the heritage language while acculturating in Spanish culture.

The method of selection of participants was convenience sampling (Best & Khan, 2006) due to the acknowledged challenges of dealing with human participants and the related issues like mortality, history effect, halo effect, and hawthorn effect (Best & Khan, 2006; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Despite the existence of different sub-ethnicities in Iran, those sub-ethnicities were not considered a separate variable and the general nationality as Iranian sufficed to be participants. Another issue which could play a role and needed to be taken into account was the Iranian immigrants' socioeconomic status both in Iran and Spain because this could be hypothesized to be a potentially determinant variable in their mastery of English as the foreign language in Iran. The reason for this was that because of the inefficiency of state schools, most of the Iranian people seek to learn English either in private institutes or with the help of private teachers (Ardavani & Durrant, 2105), with either of which requiring

considerable financial resources. Therefore, to collect rich data reflecting this, the participants comprised those from different socioeconomic status because it could be partially hypothesized that it would have a bearing on both their ethnic identity and their heritage and additional (English) language maintenance and loss.

An important point on the issue of sampling either people or any other resource was that because the current study aimed to be mixed method in nature, and in line with Teddlie and Yu (2007) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, pp. 180–1), it must be remembered that it is commonplace for mixed method research to use more than one kind of sample (probability, non-probability) and to use samples of different sizes, scope and types (cases: people; materials: written, oral observational; other elements in social situations: locations, times, events etc.) within the same piece of research.

A major decision concerned was whether to have entirely independent samples in the quantitative and qualitative approaches – different members in each sample – or whether to have any overlap of members. Decisions on this matter depended on fitness for purpose.

Along with fitness for purpose which was a significant point to consider in mixed method research, another equally compelling factor was the feasibility or practicality and accessibility of the human participants and their cooperativeness in providing the researcher with the required data for analysis in either quantities or qualitative part. Therefore, in the current study, the same group of participants are used in the quantitative and qualitative part.

3.2. Instrument

Due to the nature of the current study which dealt with the variables of identity and first and additional language maintenance and loss, the current study made use of mixed method design and accordingly, different instruments were used to meet the requirements which are described below.

3.3. The semi-structured questionnaire

In this part, a series of questions, statements or items were presented and the respondents were asked to answer, respond to or comment on them as they wish. There was a clear structure, sequence and focus, but the format was open-ended, enabling respondents to reply in their own terms. This form of questionnaire was deemed suitable because according to Cohen, Marion, and Morrison (2018), the semi-structured questionnaire sets the agenda but does not presuppose the nature of the response; hence give the respondent freedom to express their true feeling without the restriction or limitation which is an inherent feature of structured or close-ended questionnaire.

The open-ended question was an attractive device to invite an honest, personal comment from respondents (Iranian immigrant in Spain) in addition to ticking numbers and boxes. It was useful for the researcher to provide some support for respondents, so that they knew the kind of reply being sought. Another reason for using open-ended questionnaires was that according to Baily (1994, p. 120) it was useful because the respondents' possible answers were unknown and the questionnaires were exploratory in nature, or there were so many possible categories of response that a closed question would contain an extremely long list of options.

The pilot study phase of the study which was done on Iranian immigrants with similar features to the main participants, helped the researcher ascertain that the questions were straightforwardly presented, comprehensible at first glance, concrete, specific, unambiguous and able to be answered, those questions that posed difficulty, were modified to this end.

In addition to open-ended questionnaire and in line with Oppenheim (1992, pp. 56–7), sentence-completion item format of the questionnaire was also used because it was a useful adjunct to an open-ended question.

To have a comprehensive understanding of Iranian immigrants in Spain, the following questionnaire adapted from Nandi and Platt (2012) was used to collect the data on the ethnic identity. As seen, it is a comprehensive questionnaire, comprising different social, psychological, linguistic, and cultural points. The important point was that this could be used in the form of questionnaire or to get an in-depth understanding of the ethnic identity, the questions could be used in semi structured interviews by the researcher in which each of the points could be addressed to the interviewee and could be followed by some related follow-up questions to fathom the inner and deep feelings which are ignored in the usual interviews. The other equally important point was that in this questionnaire the relevance of English was addressed for the purpose of the current study. This questionnaire was piloted on some Iranian immigrants with similar features to the main participants to find out any possible problematic items before being used to collect the data from the main participants.

How important is _____ to your sense of who you are?

- The main language spoken at home during your childhood
- English language

- Your religion/religion brought up in
- The region or city where you live
- The country where you were born
- The region or city where you grew up
- The country where your mother was born
- The country where your father was born
- The country where your mother's mother was born
- The country where your mother's father was born
- The country where your father's mother was born
- The country where your father's father was born
- The color of your skin

Do you feel proud of _____

- The main language spoken at home during your childhood
- English language
- Your religion/religion brought up in
- The region or city where you live
- The country where you were born
- The region or city where you grew up
- The country where your mother was born

- The country where your father was born
- The country where your mother's mother was born
- The country where your mother's father was born
- The country where your father's mother was born

Do you feel happy when you meet someone who _____

- speaks the same language spoken at home during your childhood
- English language
- Your religion/religion brought up in
- comes from the same country as you
- comes from the region or city as you were brought up in
- comes from the same region or city where you live
- comes from the same country as your mother
- comes from the same country as your father
- comes from the same country as your mother's mother
- comes from the same country as your mother's father
- comes from the same country as your father's mother
- comes from the same country as your father's father
- has the same skin color as you

How often do you eat the food that is typical of

- The country where you were born
- The country where your mother was born
- The country where your father was born
- The country where your mother's mother was born
- The country where your mother's father was born
- The country where your father's mother was born
- The country where your father's father was born

How important is _____ to your sense of who you are?

- Your English Skill
- Your profession
- Your level of education
- Your ethnic or racial background
- Your political beliefs
- Your family
- Your gender
- Your age or life stage

Adopted and adapted from Nandi & Platt, (2012)

The next series of questions (retrieved online from HCHS/SOL V2- Acculturation Questionnaire ACE/ACS- QxQ) validated by experts in the fields and were used to get appropriate information was “The Acculturation Questionnaire”

designed to assess language use, ethnic preferences for social interactions. The acculturation scale assessed participant's degree of integration into Spanish as the host culture. The first six items tap into language use, which is a good index of acculturation

Q1. In general, what language(s) do you read and speak?

Q2. What was the language(s) you used as a child? If asked to define "child", suggest less than 10 years of age.

Q3. What language(s) do you usually speak at home?

"*At home*" would be defined as within the dwelling of their current primary residence, whether this is with their family, spouse, roommate etc.

Q4. In which language(s) do you usually think?

Q5. What language(s) do you usually speak with your friends?

Q6. In general, what language(s) are the movies, T.V. and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?

If a participant responds with a statement of indifference, the interviewer continued to probe so that respondent chooses one of the response categories given.

These four items evaluated ethnic preferences for social interactions. The important point to remember was that the participants were likely to vary considerably in their levels of acculturation. The researcher adopted a non-judgmental and neutral attitude and emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers.

Q7. Your close friends are...

Q8. You prefer going to social gatherings/parties at which people are...

If a participant responded with a statement of indifference, the interviewer continued to probe so that respondent chooses one of the response categories given.

Q9. The persons you visit or who visit you are...

Q10. If you could choose your children's friends you would want them to be...

If a participant responded with a statement of indifference, the interviewer continued to probe so that respondent chooses one of the response categories given.

These questions were to establish how many times and for how long in the past year (12 months) the participant had visited their (or their family's) country of origin. The answer might have been 0 if they had not traveled to their or their family's country of origin.

Q11. In the past year, how many separate times have you returned to your country of origin/your family's country of origin?

Q12. Across all visits in the past year, for approximately how long did you stay in your country of origin/your family's country of origin?

The researcher made sure the participant understood that she meant TOTAL time spent in the country of origin within the last year, NOT the average length of each visit.

The next instrument which was used to quantify the evaluation and emotion of the immigrants and natives was radial model network proposed by Stephan and Stephan (1993). For the measure of prejudiced attitudes, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt distinct evaluative or emotional reactions towards

immigrants on a 10-point scale running from 0 = no, at all to 9 = extreme (Stephan, 1997). The evaluations and emotions included:

Hostility: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Admiration: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Dislike: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Acceptance: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Superiority: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Affection: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Disdain: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Approval: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Hatred: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Sympathy: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Rejection: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

Warmth: 0 (no, not at all) 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 (extreme)

(Adapted from Stephan, et al. 1998)

The next series of questions adapted from Babaei, (2014) aimed to probe heritage language maintenance strategies and was adapted to include English language along their heritage language.

1. Using the heritage or English language at home

2. Using the heritage or English language with peers who have the same heritage language
3. Heritage/English language maintenance strategies employed by the participants also involved watching Iranian films and cartoons, reading Persian/English books and magazines, and doing Persian/English homework.
4. Persian/English homework assigned by heritage language teachers, or done on their own volition. Homework mainly included copying reading passages aloud
5. Using heritage/English language in public with peers sharing the same language to protect the privacy of their conversation
6. Opting for Persian/English schools if available
7. Learning new words in Persian/English language
8. Paying attention to correct pronunciation consciously in Persian or English languages
9. Learning Persian/English grammar explicitly
10. Being an active member in or having a sense of involvement to L1 community: different aspects can be worked out. This can include traditional heritage language ceremonies like newruz (New Year festival). To study if they attended English customs or ceremonies, this part was added and asked of the participants.

To have a comprehensive understanding of the variables of interest, in the qualitative part of the present research, ethnographic observation was conducted in which the researcher observed and/or interacted with the participants in their real-life environment.

3.4. Observation

Observations took place in the context in which the researcher knew clearly and in advance what to look for, with categories and coding worked out before the observation takes place based on the respondents' responses to the questionnaires in the previous parts. Of course, she was aware of the shortcomings and limitations of this approach in that she could not have a thorough understanding with only a couple of questionnaire. This concern is voiced by Cohen, Manion & Marrison (2018) who states that this is not always the case. It is here that ethnographic and naturalistic observations are pre-eminent. Here the intention is to observe participants in their natural settings, their everyday social settings and their everyday behavior in them. According to (Flick, 2009) observation has to include many things here such as visual observation, document analysis, interviewing, direct observation and introspection (p. 226). It is a process, moving from *descriptive observation* (orientation to a field) to *focused observation* (narrowing one's field of observation to focus on those problems and processes that are most germane to the research purpose and questions), and on to *selective observation* (to find further evidence for those items identified in the previous step) (p. 227).

The advantage of participant observation is many: it is useful for enabling researchers to check their definitions of key terms that are used by participants (in the present case, immigration with its socio-politico-economic-linguistic ramifications), to observe events or behaviors that might not be mentioned or might be avoided in interviews, and to gather data on sensitive, unspoken topics (Kawulich, 2005). Participant observation can enable the researcher to 'get a feel' of a situation and how matters are organized in a group or subculture, find out about interactions and

relationships among the intervening or confounding variables, raise questions for further investigation (Schensul *et al.*, 1999), sensitize and familiarize a researcher to a context, and reduce reactivity in a short observation (Bernard, 1994). It also enables rich descriptions and interaction of ‘backstage culture’ (Persian) and the dominant culture (Spanish) to be gathered (DeMunck & Sobo, 1998, p. 43) and can reveal the dynamics of behavior, relationships and interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 143; Watts, 2011, p. 302)

Regarding the distinction between the participant as–observer and observer-as participant by LeCompte and Preissle, (1993, pp. 93–4), the researcher opted for the latter which requires less extensive contact with the group. Components of ‘thick descriptions’ in the observation involved recording, for example (Carspecken, 1996, p. 47): speech acts; non-verbal communication; descriptions, careful and frequent recording of the time and timing of events; the observer’s comments, placed into categories; and detailed contextual data. LeCompte and Preissle’ (1993, pp. 199–200) guidelines were considered in observation. According to this guideline, the following points were taken into account:

Who is in the group/scene/activity, who is taking part?

How many people are there, their identities and their characteristics?

How do participants come to be members of the group/event/activity?

What is taking place?

How routine, regular, patterned, irregular and repetitive are the behaviors observed?

What resources are being used in the scene?

How are activities being described, justified, explained, organized, labeled?

How do different participants behave towards each other?

What are the statuses and roles of the participants?

Who is making decisions, and for whom?

What is being said, and by whom?

What is being discussed frequently/infrequently?

What appears to be the significant issues that are being discussed?

What non-verbal communication is taking place?

Who is talking and who is listening?

Where does the event take place?

When does the event take place?

How long does the event take?

How is time used in the event?

How are the individual elements of the event connected?

How are change and stability managed?

What rules govern the social organization of, and behavior in, the event?

Why is this event occurring, and occurring in the way that it is?

What meanings are participants attributing to what is happening?

What are the history, goals and values of the group in question?

The aforementioned points were incorporated with the following points, stated by

Lofland (1971) on the observation of the participants:

activities (which last a longer time, for instance, a week, a term, months, e.g.

attendance at school, membership of a club);

meanings (e.g. how participants explain the causes, meanings and purposes of

particular events and actions);

- participation (what the participants do, e.g. membership of a family group, school groups, peer group, clubs and societies, extra-curricular groups);

relationships (those which are observed in the several settings and contexts in which the observation is undertaken);

- settings (descriptions of the settings of the actions and behaviors observed).

In providing observational report, attention was paid to Spradley (1979) and Kirk and Miller's (1986) suggestion that observers should keep four sets of observational data to include: notes made *in situ*; expanded notes that are made as soon as possible after the initial observations; journal notes to record issues, ideas, difficulties etc. that arise during the fieldwork; and a developing, tentative running record of ongoing analysis and interpretation.

A very important distinction between the objectivity vs. subjectivity in the observation raised by Silverman (1993) was between *etic* and *emic* analysis. *Etic* analysis uses an objective conceptual framework, perhaps that of the researcher, whilst *emic* approaches use the subjective conceptual frameworks of those being researched. Structured observation uses *etic* approaches, with predefined frameworks that are adhered to unswervingly, whilst *emic* approaches sit comfortably within qualitative approaches, where the definitions of the situations are captured through the eyes of the observed. Due to the nature of the variables in the current study and the fact that the researcher herself belonged to the same community as the Iranian immigrants, *emic* perspective was chosen.

3.5. Reliability and validity of observation

To ensure the reliability and validity of the observation the researcher made utmost attempt to take into account the potential risks inherent in any observation, many observation situations carry the risk of being bias, (e.g. Wilkinson, 2000, p. 228;

Moyles, 2002, p. 179; Robson, 2002, pp. 324–5; Shaughnessy *et al.*, 2003, pp. 116–17;; Jewitt, 2012; Breznau, 2016), examples are:

- *Selective attention* of the observer: what we see is a function of where we look, what we look at, how we look, when we look, what we think we see, whom we look at, what is in our minds at the time of observation; what are our own interests and experiences;
- *Reactivity*: participants may change their behavior if they know that they are being observed, for example, they may try harder in class, they may feel more anxious, they may behave much better or much worse than normal, they may behave the way they think the researcher wishes them to, or in ways for which the researcher tacitly signals approval (Shaughnessy *et al.*, 2003, p. 113);
- *Attention deficit*: what if the observer is distracted, or looks away and misses an event?
- *Validity of constructs*: decisions must be taken on what counts as valid evidence for a judgment. For example, is a smile a relaxed smile, a nervous smile, a friendly smile, a hostile smile? Does looking at a person's non-verbal gestures count as a valid indicator of interaction? Are the labels and indicators used to describe the behavior of interest valid indicators of that behavior?
- *Selective data entry*: what we record can be affected by our personal judgment rather than the phenomenon itself; we may interpret the situation and then record our interpretation rather than the phenomenon;
- *Selective memory*: if we write up our observations after the event, our memory neglects and selects data, sometimes overlooking the need to record the contextual details of the observation; notes should be written either during or immediately after the observation;

- *Interpersonal matters and counter-transference*: our interpretations are affected by our judgments and preferences – what we like and what we don't like about people and their behavior – together with the relationships that we may have developed with those being observed and the context of the situation; researchers may have to deliberately distance themselves from the situation and address reflexivity;
- *Expectancy effects*: the observer knows the hypotheses to be tested, or the findings of similar studies, or has expectations of finding certain behaviors; and these may influence her/his observations. Expectancy effects can be overcome by ensuring that the observers do not know the purpose of the research, the 'double-blind' approach;
- *Decisions on how to record*: the same person in a group under observation may be demonstrating the behavior repeatedly, but nobody else in the group may be demonstrating that behavior; there is a need to record how many different people show the behavior;
- *Number of observers*: different observers of the same situation may be looking in different directions, so there may be inconsistency in the results. Therefore there is a need for training, for consistency, for clear definition of what constitutes the behavior, of entry/judgment and for kinds of recording;
- *The problem of inference*: observations can only record what happens and what can be seen, and it may be dangerous, without any other evidence, for example, triangulation, to infer reasons, intentions, causes and purposes that lie behind actors' behaviors. One cannot always judge intention from observation, for example, a child may intend to be friendly, but it may be construed by an inexperienced observer as selfishness; a teacher may wish to

be helpful but the researcher may interpret it as threatening. It is dangerous to infer a stimulus from a response, an intention from an observation. Similarly, one may not see certain phenomena emerging over time (e.g. biographical processes);

- *Difference of interpretation of, and data aggregation and conclusions from, the same data:* Breznau (2016, p. 302) terms these ‘secondary observer effects’. The issues here concern validity and reliability. With regard to the validity of the observation, researchers have to ensure that the indicators of the construct under investigation are fair and operationalized, for example, there is agreement on what counts as constituting qualities such as ‘friendly’, ‘happy’, ‘aggressive’, ‘sociable’ and ‘unapproachable’. With regard to reliability; the indicators have to be applied fully, consistently and securely, with no variation in interpretation. Reliability resides not only in the instrument but their use by different raters (Hill *et al.*, 2012).

Questionnaire and observations mentioned above are but two of the main techniques for data collection on the studies focusing on language identity and maintenance or loss. Besides these, fieldwork-based studies of identity and language learning often make use of other techniques of data collection, including diary studies, journal writing, and written responses (narrative or other) to researcher questions. Ethnography’s traditional reliance on longitudinal observation has characterized some such studies, and sociocultural theory “seeks to understand mental development and learning by considering not only the contextual specifics but also the process over time, rather than focusing only on a particular moment of spoken or written production” (Swain *et al.* 2010, p. xii).

One of the intriguing instruments for data collection in identity studies used in the current study which could prove very insightful and also practical was immigrants' narratives, collected either through fieldwork (Goldstein 2003; Miller 2003) or from autobiographical and biographical accounts if the researcher's own introspection constitutes part of the data (Pavlenko, 2001b; Johnson & Golombek 2002; Benson & Nunan 2005; Nunan & Choi, 2010) which was the case because the researcher shared the mother tongue, identity issue and the related variables of heritage and additional language maintenance and loss. Pavlenko (2001b, p.167) argued for the particular contribution that narrative can make: L2 learning stories are unique and rich sources of information about the relationship between language and identity in L2 learning and socialization. It is possible that only personal narratives provide a glimpse into areas so private, personal and intimate that they are rarely, if ever, breached in the study of SLA, especially through mere quantitative approaches, and at the same time are at the heart and soul of the L2 socialization process.

Connolly and Clandinin (1990) pointed out that narrative inquiry is a method that has potential for "the improvement of practice and of how researchers and practitioners might productively relate to one another" (1990, p. 12). Specifically, they note that as researchers recognize that their own lives and experiences have effects on their research efforts and products, narrative inquiry might become a way for researchers and research participants to produce "collaborative stories" (1990, p. 12).

3.6. Virtual ethnography

Another form of conducting the present research was virtual ethnography. Because this is a new way compared to the previously mentioned instruments of doing research, its main features as well as its shortcomings and strengths are elaborated.

With the advent and dominance of the Internet as a viable means of searching a repository of knowledge, a means of communication and a venue for connecting people – real or virtual (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 30) – so the virtual reality has, itself, become a source of ethnographic research. Online communication is a routine and integral part of people's everyday lives, and, given this, its part in ethnographic research is unsurprising as well as undeniable. Researchers can enter the Internet and study what is happening in and through it with respect to cultures and communities; the Internet is 'a place where cultural and social phenomena happen' (Webster & da Silva, 2013, p. 123) and where ethnographic interviews can be conducted online (Hanna, 2012).

The Internet is a 'socially constructed space' (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 30), albeit a virtual space (Hine, 2000, 2004), peopled by interacting participants with real and virtual lives, their own cultures, online communities, groups, rites of passage, negotiated roles, group membership and behaviors, and these can be researched as one would conduct an ethnography. The virtual, online environment is the site for the research (Evans, 2010), requiring different, computer-based tools for conducting the research. The computer screen is the on-screen location of the research, and the majority of the data is likely to be text-based, though this does not preclude other data types which are increasingly available on the Internet, for example, Skype, Zoom,

Whatsapp (Webster & da Silva, 2013), to name but a few of the social media available and accessible for millions of the users worldwide. ‘Virtual ethnography’ (Hine, 2004), netnography (Kozinets, 2010), netography and ‘webnography’ (Evans, 2010) can be conducted through social networking media, email, online interviews, message boards and messaging, bulletin boards, blogs, chat rooms, forums, discussion boards. The researcher, as in traditional ethnography, is still a participant observer or non-participant observer (Evans, 2010), permanently or intermittently immersed in and observing the virtual environment and what is happening in it, keeping systematic field notes (Hine, 2000).

The caveat to bear in mind when conducting virtual ethnography is that because virtual ethnography works with virtual people and alter egos (e.g. avatars), the researcher is often deprived of assurances of honesty and of several features of face to face ethnography conducted in the physical presence of the ethnographer and the ‘real’ participants in their real, physical, ‘natural habitat’ (Hallett & Barber, 2014, p. 306) (e.g. knowledge of gender, race, age, social status) (Hammersley, 2006, p. 8); it works *as if* participants are real – which they may or may not be – and the ‘natural habitat’ is now the ‘online habitat’ (Hallett & Barber, 2014, p. 308).

However, due to Corona virus pandemic which has made communication in the world a challenge, the advantages of the virtual ethnography outweighs the problems. Netographies overcome problems of time, location and space; they enable the anonymity, privacy and security of the real people to be respected, though this renders problematic the issues of identity and authenticity of the world being investigated. In short, the virtual world is a projection, true or false, of the face-to-face world; it may be no more or less real because of this (Boellstorff, 2015). The ethnographer proceeds as if the Internet world is the real thing, working with the data provided on the

Internet, with few, if any, checks on the correctness or authenticity of the actual people behind the avatars. As with other forms of online research, virtual ethnographies raise ethical issues of confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, disclosure, protection from harm to self and others, and informed consent.

One of the ways that the researcher ascertained the identity of the participants was focusing on ‘real people’ in their virtual communities (Hallett & Barber, 2014, p. 310), and on the data which they provide online rather than focusing on virtual people or avatars. This questions how far these are real, full-blooded ethnographies or simply partial and selective data posted online about specific topics of communal or shared interest by interested parties, i.e. extended discussions or sharing of opinions. Indeed Evans (2010) questions whether a virtual ethnography is, in fact, more like an extended online survey than an ethnography defined as a ‘faithful reproduction of a particular cultural setting’ (p. 7). For this reason, and to lessen this problem, this was only one of the complementary data collection procedures and not all of it.

In conducting a virtual ethnography, Evans (2010) suggests that researchers identify relevant ‘proactive communities’ (p. 9), raising issues of access, gatekeepers and ethical issues of privacy, anonymity, informed consent, covert or overt research, and permissions. Then researchers can identify key informants and key participants, negotiating access to people and groups and addressing the same ethical issues, with informed consent including both the process and product of the ethnography, and the audience and dissemination of the ethnography.

The researcher gathers ongoing systematically collected and systematically reviewed data and field notes (Kulavuz-Onal and Vásquez, 2013); indeed, online, digital data (including online interviews) may lend themselves to software for data analysis. Kulavuz-Onal and Vásquez (2013) comment that fieldwork practices in

ethnographies of online communities need to be ‘reconceptualized’ (p. 237) because they differ from practices in ‘in-person ethnographic fieldwork’, being software based and computer mediated.

Then the researcher will need to write the ethnography and the report, and seek respondent validation and member checks. This sequence echoes Kozinets’s (2010) comments that the methods of traditional ethnographers – gaining entry to the field and community, collecting data, careful analysis and interpretation of data, and reporting, all couched within ethical principles – apply to netographers. Whilst online research catches some of the social space and topical issues in the community of participants, whether this is sufficient to be called a true, fully fledged, genuine ethnography in the traditional sense of catching the all-round, overall, holistic picture of participants and their socio-cultural settings, is an open question. They are communities united by, or formed by, a common interest rather than having any other connections.

Whilst traditional ethnography sees participants in many settings, presenting many faces and aspects of self to many parties, and whilst participants may present different faces in virtual ethnographies, whether this happens sufficiently in a virtual ethnography for it to be counted as a full-blooded ethnography (rather than, for example, differing views on a topic or different stories from participants) is another open question.

Webster and da Silva (2013) and Hallett and Barber (2014) suggest that, in reality, to conduct a full ethnography could require researchers to study the same participants both online and offline, as the online world is as much part of their ‘real’ daily lives as the offline, face-to-face, physical interactions. It is a false dualism to separate the online and offline worlds of participants.

3.7. Design

The design chosen for the current study was mixed method. In this part a detailed account of the reasons for choosing this design will be presented. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), mixed method research recognizes, and works with, the fact that the world is not exclusively quantitative or qualitative; it is not an either/or world, but a mixed world, even though the researcher may find that the research has a predominant disposition to, or requirement for, numbers or quantitative data. This is clearly the case when one intends to study the immigrants and the plethora of factors and variables intertwined with each other in the research context. The main advantage of embarking on mixed method research according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) is that it brings together quantitative and qualitative data in a single research study or series of research studies (p. 5), the intention of which is to give a greater understanding of the topic or problem in question than either a quantitative or qualitative approach on its own would provide.

This is, in part, because research problems are not exclusively quantitative or qualitative, hence using only one kind of data (quantitative or qualitative), one methodology, one paradigm, one way of looking at the problem or one way of conducting the research, may not do justice to the issue in question (cf. Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 10). Further, a piece of research may have more than one phase, as was the case with the current study which had to deal with Iranian immigrants in more than one phase to do the justice to the issue at hand.

It must be emphasized that by mixed method research it doesn't mean that the current study was restricted to only combining data types; in line with Creswell and Tashakkori (2007), and Bergman (2011a) the intention was to extend much further,

into ways of viewing the world of Iranian immigrant in Spain; what their world is like and how to look at their world, philosophical foundations and paradigms; ontologies (views of reality), epistemologies (ways of understanding, knowing about and researching that reality), axiologies (values and value systems, e.g. value-free or value-laden research); methodology, research questions and design; instrumentation, sampling, validity, reliability, data collection; data analysis and interpretation; reporting; and outcomes and uses of the research within the possibility.

A cogent reason for opting for mixed method in the current study is that for a thorough study of a complex construct like identify and the intricate web of factors influencing it and the consequent language maintenance or loss, this method is quite promising in that as it has been stressed by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), it enables a more comprehensive and complete understanding of phenomena to be obtained than single methods approaches and answers complex research questions more meaningfully, combining particularity with generality, ‘patterned regularity’ with ‘contextual complexity’, insider (the participants) *and* outsider (researcher) perspectives (*emic* and *etic* research), focusing on the whole *and* its constituent parts, and the causes of effects. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 40) emphasize *emic* vs. *etic* dichotomy as constituting two complementary world views; constructivism (qualitative research), in which the objective of the research is to understand a phenomenon as it is seen and interpreted by the participants (Iranian immigrants) themselves, individually (e.g. Piagetian constructivism) or socially (e.g. Vygotskyian constructivism) in a world characterized by a multiple view of reality (immigrants vs. natives) and in which the researcher works with the world as it is construed or probably misconstrued by its participants (i.e. bottom-up).

Related to this multiple perspective, Denscombe (2014) also suggests that mixed method design can increase the accuracy of data and reliability through triangulation, reduce bias in the research, provides a ‘practical, problem-driven approach to research’ (p. 160) and enables compensation between strengths and weaknesses of research strategies. The practicality or flexibility of this design is especially a desirable feature considering the unexpected and unpredictable nature of the social studies that aim to study human participants with its related and inherent issues. This point is so important that unless the research question or problem unequivocally requires mixed method design, it is for the researcher to demonstrate that MMR in principle is preferable to a mono-method approach (Bergman, 2011a; p. 274).

Another reason for choosing mixed method for the current study is that in mixed method research, methodological pluralism is the sine quo non as this enables errors in single approaches, which are undeniably present in social studies, to be identified and rectified (Johnson *et al.*, 2007, p. 116). It also enables meanings in data to be probed, corroborated and triangulated, rich(er) data to be gathered and new modes of thinking to emerge where paradoxes between two individual data sources are found (Sechrest & Sidana, 1995; p. 115). For example, one can adopt a constructivist approach in developing a research problem or question, like the Iranian immigrants’ world view in Spain, and then adopt a pragmatic, post-positivist or transformative paradigm for investigating it (Flick *et al.*, 2012). Because of this, much mixed method research works beyond quantitative and qualitative exclusivity or affiliation, and instead operates in a ‘pragmatist paradigm’ (Ercikan & Roth, 2006; Gorard, 2012, p. 8; Johnson *et al.*, 2007, p. 113; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 4) which draws on, and integrates, both numeric and

narrative approaches and data, quantitative and qualitative methods where relevant, to meet the needs of the research rather than the allegiances or preferences of the researcher, and in order to answer research questions fully. Therefore, for the sake of comprehensively dealing and finding the answer to research questions, methodological puritanism should, and of course do) give way to methodological pragmatism in addressing research questions (cf. Caracelli & Greene, 1993; Greene, 2008; Creswell, 2009).

It should be stated that clearly pragmatism is no less value-based than other 'principles'; it is simply that its values differ from others. Pragmatism adopts a methodologically eclectic, pluralist approach to research, drawing on positivist, post-positivist and interpretive epistemologies based on the criteria of fitness for purpose and applicability, and regarding 'reality' as both objective and socially constructed (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Reams and Twale (2008, p. 133) argue that mixed methods are necessary and important in addressing information and perspectives, and that they 'increase corroboration of the data, and render less biased and more accurate conclusions'.

The researcher in the present study is aware that in approaching mixed method research designs, key decisions have to be taken on several issues (cf. Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 141; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 64–7): Why used a mixed methods approach? What will a mixed methods approach provide that a non-mixed methods approach does not? What, actually, will be mixed, and why, for example, paradigms, ontologies, epistemologies, theories and theoretical frameworks, designs, research purposes and questions, methodologies, populations and samples, data types, data-collection instruments and their contents, data analysis, interpretation and reporting?

In line with Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), the researcher was aware of and made use of different designs in conducting the current study. ‘*Parallel mixed designs*’ (p. 26) (also termed ‘concurrent designs’) were those in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches ran simultaneously but independently in addressing research questions, akin to the familiar notion of triangulation of method, theory, methodologies, investigators, perspectives and data. ‘*Sequential mixed designs*’ (p. 26) were those in which one or other of quantitative and qualitative approaches ran one after the other, as the research required, and in which one strand of the research or research approach determined the subsequent strand or approach. ‘*Quasi-mixed designs*’ (p. 142) were those in which both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered but which were not integrated in answering a particular research question, i.e. quantitative data might answer one research question and qualitative data another research question, even though both research questions were included in the same piece of research. ‘*Multilevel mixed designs*’ (in parallel or sequential research designs) (p. 151) (also termed ‘hierarchical’ research designs) were those where different types of data (both quantitative and qualitative) were integrated and/or used at different levels of the research (e.g. student, class, school, district, region), for instance numerical data may be used at one level (students) and qualitative data used at another level (school).

Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) *embedded design* (pp. 90–2) recognizes that each research question requires both quantitative and qualitative data, and qualitative data may be added to, embedded in or supplemented by quantitative data (e.g. in an experiment) or vice versa (e.g. a case study). In the former (the experiment), the qualitative data may be used to explain and interpret the quantitative data, whilst in the latter (the case study) the quantitative data may provide additional, more

generalized data on the case (e.g. frequencies). Depending on the kind of data in the current study and in line with Creswell and Plano Clark' classification, one type of data tends to have priority over another in this design: for example, qualitative data may be embedded within a largely quantitative study or quantitative data may feature within a mainly qualitative study. The authors also note that quantitative and qualitative data tend to be kept separate. It is important to decide when, and in what sequence, to collect the data: for example, concurrently and/or sequentially. In discussing an embedded design, Creswell and Plano Clark introduce a widely used notation:

QUAN = Quantitative data which have priority over qualitative data

QUAN = Quantitative data which are subordinate to qualitative data

QUAL = Qualitative data which have priority over quantitative data

QUAL = Qualitative data which are subordinate to quantitative data

The implication of the predominance of qualitative or quantitative data in a research is that it is for each research study to plan its own design. Even though mixed methods may be used, in some research the numerical approach may predominate – with its own sampling implications – whilst in others qualitative data may predominate, with an emphasis on purposive and non-probability sampling (cf. Teddlie and Yu, 2007, p. 85). This consideration definitely has ramifications for other dimensions of a research. Ivankova *et al.*, 2006, pp. 9–11; Greene, 2008, pp. 14–17 elaborate on these different dimensions as *the methodology dimension*, indicating which methodologies/ approaches should be used (e.g. survey; experiment; case study; ethnography, interpretive and interactionist approaches; action research; historical study), which will impact on the research design, sampling, instrumentation, data analysis, ethics. The other dimension is *the priority dimension* indicating which

and what has priority (if any), where and when – quantitative and qualitative (e.g. paradigms, methodologies, data types, data analysis). Finally, *issues in question* indicate around what issues do the mixed methods occur, for example, at the levels of constructs, variables, research questions and purpose of the research.

An important point to remember is that in reality, the cleanness of the designs set out above may not catch the reality of conducting research, which, in many cases, is characterized by multiple iterations, modifications and emergence rather than a pre-figured design. Indeed Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 105) note that designs may be fixed from the very beginning or may emerge as the study unfolds. For example, there is no golden rule which states that such-and- such a design or data type should precede or succeed another or that data can only be analyzed or mixed at such-and such a point or points in time; the decision is taken on fitness for research purpose and fitness for research question.

On the topic of validity in mixed method research, with the current study as a case in point, it should be said that designs that are appropriate for the research questions, methodologies and sampling; consistency with all the components of the study; procedures employed for analyzing data to be appropriate to answer the research questions; and the different strands or elements of the mixed method research to be connected appropriately guarantee the validity (Ivankova, 2013). It can be inferred from Tashakkori and Creswell (2007, p. 207) that the starting point for the validation in mixed method research is with a strong mixed methods research question' in that such a question could ask 'what and how' or 'what and why' (p. 207), i.e. the research question, rather than requiring *only* numerical or qualitative data, is a 'hybrid' (p. 208); i.e. the extent that the features and components of mixed method

research can answer the research questions appropriately and comprehensively, the validity of this type of research is ascertained.

3.8. Data Collection Procedure

Because this study aimed at gaining in-depth knowledge of the participants' understanding of ethnic identity and heritage and additional (English) language maintenance, a variety of data collection methods were employed, including observation, semi-structured interviews with participants, Critical Incident Report by each participant, field notes from the interviews, and field notes from Iranian families' homes (within possibility), to find out the way they interacted with each other. The main reason for opting for different data collection procedures was as mentioned before, due to mixed method nature of the current study, and in line with Teddlie and Yu (2007) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, pp. 180–1), the researcher had to make use of more than one kind of data from different sample (probability, non-probability) and to use samples of different sizes, scope and types (cases: people; materials: written, oral observational; other elements in social situations: locations, times, events etc.) within the same piece of research.

A major decision concerned was whether to have entirely independent samples in the quantitative and qualitative approaches –different members in each sample – or whether to have any overlap of members. Decisions on this matter depended on fitness for purpose. Along with fitness for purpose which was a significant point to consider in mixed method research, another equally compelling factor was the feasibility or practicality and accessibility of the human participants and

their cooperativeness in providing the researcher with the required data for analysis in either quantitative or qualitative part. Therefore, in the current study, the same group of participants was studied in the quantitative and qualitative part.

In both quantitative and especially qualitative part, important ethical considerations were taken into account in collecting; e.g. respondents were not coerced into completing a questionnaire. The researcher encouraged them occasionally, but the decision whether to become involved and when (and if) to withdraw from the research was entirely theirs. Their involvement in the research was likely to be a function of:

- their *informed consent*
- their *rights to withdraw* at any stage or *not to complete* particular items in the questionnaire;
- the potential of the research to improve their situation (the issue of *beneficence*);
- the guarantees that the research would not harm them (the issue of *non-maleficence*);
- the guarantees of *confidentiality*, *anonymity* and *non-traceability* in the research;
- the degree of *threat* or *sensitivity* of the questions (which might have led to respondents' over-reporting or under-reporting (Sudman & Bradburn, 1982);

Care was taken about factors in the questionnaire itself, for example, its coverage of issues, its ability to catch what respondents want to say rather than promoting the researcher's agenda, i.e. the avoidance of bias and the assurance of validity and reliability.

Another equally important point to ascertain the ethical considerations was about methodological *rigor* and *fairness*. Methodological rigor is an ethical not simply a technical matter, and respondents have a right to expect reliability and validity. Another point in this regard was the *reactions* of the respondents. For example, they might have reacted strongly if they had considered an item to be offensive, intrusive, misleading, biased, misguided, irritating, inconsiderate, impertinent or abstruse. For these reasons and to obviate these potential pitfalls, the questionnaires were piloted on the subpart of the participants who had reasonably similar characteristics to the main sample of the study to find out any potential problems and clarify them before the main phase of the study.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from Iranian immigrants, including men and women, as this was a valid and frequent data collection technique (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). The rationale for using the semi-structured interview was that, in these interviews the “attempt is to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples’ experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (Kvale, 1996, p. 1). Therefore, semi-structured interviews had the potential to allow the researcher “to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 1990, p. 196), which was the main goal of this research.

Field notes on the interviews were taken during and immediately/soon after they finished. Descriptive field notes included a detailed description of the event (time, date and duration of the interview, and the physical description of the place), reactions and non-verbal behavior of the participants, and any other related activity. Reflective field notes included the researcher’s own reflections on and interpretation of each interview. This method of data collection enabled the researcher to keep an accurate

record of each interview and facilitated the interpretation of the results and analysis of the emerging themes.

3.9. Data Analysis

Because of the mixed method nature of the current study, a caution must be in order in the qualitative part of data analysis. Challenges against qualitative methodology in research on language and identity have been recognized by other social scientists like Hammersley (1992) and Gao (2007) who point out that qualitative researchers often have difficulty presenting their data completely, in all their ambiguity and inelegance.

The data do not unequivocally support the conceptual framework in which the researchers work with some data being inexplicable. Another problem most researchers in qualitative approach encounter is how to decide which data are relevant, and how many data should be analyzed. In fact, rather than “smoothing” this messiness, qualitative researchers should expressly pay attention to data that do not fit their chosen conceptual framework. In so doing, they suggest, researchers can acknowledge the complexities of research participants’ experiences and can also advance theory-building in accounting for more of what they observe. With these points considered, the researcher can proceed.

In qualitative studies, data analysis involves “preparing and organizing the data [for example, transcripts and field notes] for analysis, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the

data in figures, tables, or a discussion" (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007, p. 148). In this study, after data was obtained, transcribed by the researcher, and edited by the participants. The expected result was a rich description of the participants' perspective on language maintenance and other issues under investigation. As Patton (2002) put it, "thick, rich description provides the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting. Good description takes the reader into the setting being described" (p. 437).

Data analysis in this study started with the field work and continued after each interview. Because some of the data was in Persian (the participants' mother tongue), potential translation issues were needed to be addressed in this research (see, Merriam, 2009). The researcher translated the transcripts into English, and identified the emerging themes and supporting evidence. Themes were "certain words, phrases, patterns of behavior, subjects" ways of thinking, and events (that are) repeated and stood out" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 161).

For less structured and unstructured observational data (e.g. from field notes, videos), the tools of qualitative analysis were used, for example: summarizing; narrative accounts (of individuals, groups, behaviors, events); thematic analysis and patterning; coding and categorizing; nodes and connections; constant comparison. For more detailed analysis, computer-based software for analyzing qualitative processing (e.g. NVivo, ATLAS.ti, MAXQDA) were used (the online version is also available. see also: www.surrey.ac.uk/sociology/research/research_centres/caqdas/support/choosing/index.htm). For video material, NVivo, Orion, Transana and VideoTrace were also available at the time of writing. Simpson and Tuson (2003, pp. 83–5) and Miles and Huberman (1984) indicate several strategies for data analysis of field notes and qualitative data, including, largely with reference to coding:

- Reviewing, analyzing and coding early rather than accumulating too much data before analysis;
- Coding densely at first (i.e. avoiding moving too quickly into summarizing); keeping track of the data analysis over time (e.g. key
- Codes and what they embrace, key people observed, keeping to the research questions (if appropriate, i.e. depending on the nature of the research);
- Verifying intuitions with data;
- Identifying themes and patterns (sometimes by counting frequencies or consistencies);
- Looking for clusters of events, activities, people, behaviors etc.;
- Writing metaphors to catch the essence of features;
- Being prepared to dis-aggregate as well as aggregate data in order to preserve fidelity to the events/people/situations;
- Putting codes into hierarchies (some codes are subsumed by others);
- Ensuring conceptual coherence to the analysis;

Another point that was considered in data analysis was Merriam's (1998) suggestion that it is useful for researchers to identify keywords, not only in the observed events, but in their analysis, together with attention to the start and end of observed conversations, as these are often significant and most easily remembered. The other important point in this regard was Kawulich (2005) who reports the value of 'quantizing' data, looking for frequencies, together with narrative descriptions of settings, participants, activities and behaviors. She commends the use of two types of field notes for analysis: (a) observed data, including verbatim conversations; and (b) reflections, questions to be asked, issues for further exploration and comments (i.e.

observations on observations). Hence observational data can be both mixed methods in themselves and in conjunction with other methods of data collection and analysis.

PART IV: Result and Discussion

4.1. Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

In this part, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data will be presented. As mentioned in the previous chapter, due to the complexity of the issue at hand, both in data collection and data analysis, the researcher used triangulation to be able to partially meet the requirement of the mixed method approach to embark on answering the research questions. The procedure adopted to answer the research questions inevitably includes presenting both the quantitative and qualitative presentation of data.

To begin with, the demographic information on the 60 participants of the current study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Gender of the Iranian Immigrant Participants

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
male	27	30.0	-3.0
female	33	30.0	3.0
Total	60		

Table 2

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the Gender of Iranian Immigrants Participants

Chi-Square	.600 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.439

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0

As can be seen in Table 1, 27 or 45.0% of the participants were male and 33 or 55% were female, which according to the nature of the study which involved different phases of data collection, is satisfactory. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 2 did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = .600, p = .439$), indicating that as far as the distribution of gender was concerned the participants were representative of the Iranian immigrant society. The next piece of information presented in Table 3 is the educational level of the participants which was assumed to be an important factor for the variables of interest in the current study.

Table 3

The Educational Level of the Iranian Immigrant Participants

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Diploma	9	8.6	.4
BS or BA student	3	8.6	-5.6
BS or BA	21	8.6	12.4
MS or MA student	7	8.6	-1.6
MS or MA	14	8.6	5.4
PhD student	5	8.6	-3.6
PhD	1	8.6	-7.6
Total	60		

Table 4

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the Educational Level of Iranian Immigrants Participants

Chi-Square	33.567 ^a
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 8.6.

As presented in Table 3, twenty one participants (35%) were BA or BSc holders in different fields. This was followed by 14 MA or MSc holders (23.3%), reducing to 9 diploma holders (15%), followed by post graduate students with 7 participants (11.7%). The interesting point is that participants studying for their PhD were more than undergraduate students (5 vs. 3 or 8.3% vs. 5%). PhD holders with one participant constituted the minimum number. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 4 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(6) = 33.567, p = .000$), indicating that the number differed from the expected value significantly, i.e. the number of participants in some of educational level was significantly different from the other levels, a point which will show its effect on data interpretation later. Table 5 shows the marital status of the participants.

Table 5

Marital Status of the Iranian Immigrant Participants

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
single	32	30.0	2.0
married	28	30.0	-2.0
Total	60		

Table 6

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the Marital Status of Iranian Immigrants Participants

Chi-Square	.267 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.606

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 6 did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = .267, p = .606$), indicating that as far as the distribution of marital status was concerned the participants were representative of the Iranian immigrant society, a point which had to be taken into account in both data collection and data interpretation. The age of the participants is presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7

The Age of the Iranian Immigrant Participants

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
20-29	13	15.0	-2.0
30-39	25	15.0	10.0
40-49	15	15.0	.0
50-59	7	15.0	-8.0
Total	60		

Table 8

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the Age of Iranian Immigrants Participants

Chi-Square	11.200 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.011

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

As Table 7 shows, 25 (40%) of the participants were 30-39 years old which is the most in number. This is followed by 20-29 year-olds with 15 participants, comprising 25%, followed by 40-49 year-olds with 14 or 23.3% and trailing off to 50-59 year-olds with 7 or 11.7%. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 8

showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(3) = 11.200, p = .011$), indicating that the number of participants in some of the age ranges was statically significantly more or fewer than the expected value, a point that will affect data interpretation, since age can be expected to play a significant role in language maintenance and acculturation. The length of residence in Spain as an important variable is presented in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9

The Length of Residence of Iranian Immigrant Participants in Spain

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1-5	25	10.0	15.0
6-10	21	10.0	11.0
11-15	7	10.0	-3.0
16-20	2	10.0	-8.0
21-25	2	10.0	-8.0
26-30	3	10.0	-7.0
Total	60		

Table 10

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the Length of Residence of Iranian Immigrants Participants

Chi-Square	53.200 ^a
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 10.0.

Based on Table 9, twenty five participants (41.7%) had 1-5 years of residence in Spain which was followed by 21 participants (35%) with 6-10 years of residence. The number plummets sharply to 6 participants (10%) with 11-15 years of residence. Three

people (5%) had had 16-20 and 26-30 years of residence and the minimum number belonged to two participants with 21-25 years of residence in Spain. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 10 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2 (5) = 53.200, p = .000$), a factor that is definitely expected to have marked effect on the responses of the immigrant participants to the questions in the current study, since the number of immigrants' residence can be speculated to play a role in the variable of interest.

The other variable of interest and importance was Iranian immigrants' English language proficiency level. Table 11 shows the result of the chi-square goodness of fit for this variable.

Table 11.

English Proficiency Level of Iranian Immigrants in Spain

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Starter	1	10.0	-9.0
Elementary	18	10.0	8.0
Pre-intermediate	14	10.0	4.0
Intermediate	12	10.0	2.0

Upper	11	10.0	1.0
intermediate			
Advanced	4	10.0	-6.0
Total	60		

Table 11 shows the English language proficiency level of Iranian immigrants in Spain. One out of 60 participants was starter and four were advanced, the rest were somewhere in between with 18 elementary, 14 pre-intermediate, 12 intermediate, and 11 upper-intermediate. Table 12 shows the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit for this variable.

Table 12

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit of the English Proficiency Level of Iranian

Immigrants in Spain

Chi-Square	20.200 ^a
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	.001

Indicating that as far as their English proficiency level was concerned, they were different from the expected norm in the society.

An important point which must be stated here is the pattern of immigration of Iranian people after the 1979 Islamic Revolution which in a sense wreaked havoc on

nearly all social, political, and economic aspects, and the record-breaking brain-drain and mass immigration from the country was not an exception. In fact, although Iran has been seemingly isolated from much of the outside world since the Islamic Revolution of 1978-1979, its borders have by no means been closed. To the contrary, the country has produced and hosted abundant flows of emigration and immigration, a steady coming and going mainly driven by key political events. However, what makes Iran's migration story unique is that it has experienced immigration to extreme degrees. (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/iran-vast-diaspora-abroad-and-millions-refugees-home>). Ranging in number from one in North Korea to more than 1500,000 immigrants in the USA, with 12000 immigrants as in 20201 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iranian_diaspora) Iranians in Spain do not form a very large population, but they have a history going back for over a millennium. They are a part of the Iranian diaspora.

4.2. Research Question 1:

How do Iranian immigrants define their ethnic identity in the interplay between English and different social/attitudinal factors in Spain? This question can be reworded as: what are Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards different aspects of acculturation in Spain in relation to their ethnicity and heritage language? To answer this question, radial model network proposed by Stephan and Stephan (1993) was adopted. For the measure of Iranian immigrants' attitudes, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt distinct, evaluative, or emotional reactions

towards native culture on a 10-point scale running from 0 = no, at all to 10 = extreme (Stephan, 1997). Based on the questionnaire adapted from Stephan, et al. (1998), adopted, the evaluations and emotions included: hostility, admiration, dislike, acceptance, superiority, affection, disdain, approval, hatred, sympathy, rejection, and warmth. The result is presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Relationship between English and Different Socio-Affective Factors and their Acculturation

		Least	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Most
Hostility	Count	11	19	10	7	4	5	4	0	0	0	0
	Row N %	18.3	31.7	16.7	11.7%	6.7%	8.3%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	0.0
		%	%	%							%	%
Admiration	Count	0	1	1	1	14	24	11	5	1	2	0
	Row N %	0.0%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	23.3	40.0	18.3	8.3%	1.7%	3.3	0.0
						%	%	%			%	%
Dislike	Count	8	18	12	6	6	9	1	0	0	0	0
	Row N %	13.3	30.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	15.0	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	0.0
		%	%	%	%	%	%				%	%
Acceptance	Count	0	0	1	2	7	17	14	14	3	2	0
	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	3.3%	11.7%	28.3	23.3	23.3	5.0%	3.3	0.0
							%	%	%		%	%
Superiority	Count	0	0	1	6	10	14	12	6	6	0	5
	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	10.0	16.7	23.3	20.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	8.3
					%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Affection	Count	0	0	0	0	5	32	8	13	2	0	0
	Row N %											

	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	53.3	13.3	21.7	3.3%	0.0	0.0
							%	%	%		%	%
Disdain	Count	9	24	9	13	3	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Row N %	15.0	40.0	15.0	21.7	5.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	0.0
		%	%	%	%						%	%
Approval	Count	3	0	0	2	5	20	20	7	3	0	0
	Row N %	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	8.3%	33.3	33.3	11.7%	5.0%	0.0	0.0
							%	%			%	%
Hatred	Count	29	17	5	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Row N %	48.3	28.3	8.3%	6.7%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	0.0
		%	%								%	%
Sympathy	Count	0	0	0	1	2	22	18	14	2	1	0
	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	3.3%	36.7	30.0	23.3	3.3%	1.7	0.0
							%	%	%		%	%
Rejection	Count	0	0	4	2	6	17	13	9	7	2	0
	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	3.3%	10.0	28.3	21.7	15.0	11.7%	3.3	0.0
							%	%	%	%	%	%
Warmth	Count	0	0	3	0	3	16	12	19	7	0	0
	Row N %	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	5.0%	26.7	20.0	31.7	11.7%	0.0	0.0
							%	%	%		%	%

As can be seen in Table 13, different concepts were rated on the scale from the least to the most (0-10). This was a viable way to quantify the role of English in the definition of Iranian immigrants' identity in relation to different social factors of

interest which could play on their identity loss or maintenance in the process of their acculturation.

In this section to have a detailed account of Iranian immigrants' attitudes on each of these variables, they will be presented one by one and the result of Chi-Square goodness of fit on each one will be presented to see whether using English in tandem with either their heritage or Spanish language helped the Iranian immigrants in shaping their attitudes and perceptions on different levels of host culture was significantly meaningful. To begin with the first variable, hostility, it can be seen that 11 of the participants felt the least amount of hostility (0) indicating that they felt no hostility at all towards the host culture or native Spanish people, a positive factor indicating the role of English on the maintaining their heritage in the process of acculturation in Spanish culture, (a point that was expressed repeatedly by them in their interviews, e.g. interviews: 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 20, 23, 24, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 37, 36). This result could be an indication for a felicitous role of English language for a successful degree of acculturation.

Ten participants scored one, 10 participants scored two, seven participants scored three, four participants scored four, five participants scored five, and four participants scored six. No participants scored eighth, nine, or ten, numbers indicating a high degree of hostility towards Spanish culture or people. This indicated that most of the participants did not feel hostile, or if they did, the degree of this negative feeling was relatively low. To find out whether these frequencies were statistically meaningful, Chi-square goodness of fit was calculated to compare the observed frequencies with the expected frequencies. The result of Chi-square goodness of fit for 'Hostility' is presented in Table 14 and Table 15.

Table 14

Role of English in the Sense of Hostility Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
.00	11	8.6	2.4
least	19	8.6	10.4
2.00	10	8.6	1.4
3.00	7	8.6	-1.6
4.00	4	8.6	-4.6
5.00	5	8.6	-3.6
6.00	4	8.6	-4.6
Total	60		

Table 15

Chi-square goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Hostility Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	20.267 ^a
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.002

Note: a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 8.6.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 15 indicated that the role of English on the sense of hostility experienced by Iranian immigrants was important in reducing this sense to a significantly low level. The in-depth information gained through the interview showed that Iranian immigrants did not feel hostile towards the host culture. Except participants 9, 12, 24, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39, 46, 48, 55, the rest mentioned that if they had had such a negative feeling, they would have chosen another country for immigration. They stated that they had gained information on Spanish culture and social situation prior their immigration and they had made an insightful choice. On the effect of English, they stated that it did play a positive role in their gradual acculturation and the effect was more at the beginning since they

relied on English language more at the beginning. It seemed that Spanish people more readily accepted English as the medium of communication than the Iranian immigrants' heritage language (Persian) and showed less hostility on their interaction with Iranian immigrants when they opted for English.

The result of the role of English in the sense of hatred experienced by Iranian immigrants in relation to the Spanish culture and people is presented in Table 18 and Table 19.

Table 18

Role of English in the Sense of Hatred Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
.00	29	12.0	17.0
least	17	12.0	5.0
2.00	5	12.0	-7.0
3.00	4	12.0	-8.0
4.00	5	12.0	-7.0
Total	60		

Table 19

Chi-square goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Hatred Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	39.667 ^a
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 12.0.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit (Table 19) showed that, the use of English helped Iranian immigrants to experience this feeling even significantly less than the previous two negative feelings in the process of their acculturation within Spanish society and culture. Concerning the effect of English, they (e.g. participants 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, and 57) mentioned that through English, they obviated some of the misunderstanding that potentially could pave the way for escalation of some negative feeling such as hatred. So English seems to have played its fair share in either total elimination or decreasing this sense among Iranian immigrants. An important feeling related to acculturation was the role of English on the sense of rejection.

Table 20

Role of English in the Sense of Rejection Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
2.00	4	7.5	-3.5
3.00	2	7.5	-5.5
4.00	6	7.5	-1.5
5.00	17	7.5	9.5
6.00	13	7.5	5.5
7.00	9	7.5	1.5
8.00	7	7.5	-.5
9.00	2	7.5	-5.5
Total	60		

Table 21

Chi-square goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Rejection Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	26.400 ^a
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5.

As presented in Table 20 and 21, their perception about a sense of rejection due to the role of English during their acculturation in Spanish society deviated from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(7) = 26.400, p = .000$), indicating a positive feeling towards the host culture and people in maintaining their heritage language and identity as well as using/maintaining English language and moving gradually towards acculturation without a feeling of threat. Based on the qualitative data, some of the immigrants (e.g. 25, 28, 32, 34, 38) stated that the beginning phase of arrival up to the first couple of years was the most daunting period for them in which they had felt a sense of rejection by their Spanish neighbors; however, the situation had been ameliorated gradually and they had managed to live in relative peace and harmony. Participant two stated that rejection depended on the context if it was about applying for a job; most of the Spanish people rejected the immigrants and employed a native instead.

A point worth mentioning here was the beneficial effect of English in similar context which ameliorated the situation and tipped the balance in the favor of the job-seeking immigrants. Another example on the paperwork grounds was mentioned by participant three (similar to participant 10) who stated that the bank refused to open a bank account for him due to his nationality. The interesting point in this regards was that the sense of rejection was the least with those participants who were studying for their University degree, (e.g. participants 12, 18, 22, 26), presumably because the academic atmosphere was a cosmopolitan ambiance which included many foreign students from different countries and language background and as a result, the sense of foreignness and consequently rejection was not conspicuous for Iranian immigrants. In fact, opting for English besides using English was quite an acceptable

norm in academic situation which in turn, helped many international students feel at home by using English. Participant seven, a PhD holder in Spanish literature stated that she was initially rejected for a job position at university because of her nationality but was later accepted elsewhere. She had problems dating; men would tell her she was Arab. Eventually she ended up dating a half Iranian, half Spanish man. The result about the feeling of disdain is shown in Table 22 and 23.

Table 22

Role of English in the Sense of Disdain Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
.00	9	10.0	-1.0
least	24	10.0	14.0
2.00	9	10.0	-1.0
3.00	13	10.0	3.0
4.00	3	10.0	-7.0
5.00	2	10.0	-8.0
Total	60		

Table 23

Chi-square Goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Disdain Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	32.000 ^a
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 10.0.

According to the result presented in Tables 22 and 23, Iranian immigrants experienced significantly lower degree of this negative feeling than the hypothesized value ($X^2(5) = 32000, p = .000$). In the interview most of the participants (e.g.

participants number 5, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23) mentioned that they either had little or no such a feeling and they received this feeling to a lesser extent from the native Spanish people. As mentioned above, the level of this negative feeling was the least among Iranian immigrants who were university students and studied either for their first or second degree at Spanish Universities (e.g. participants 12, 18, 22, 26). The reason mentioned by them was the egalitarian atmosphere they experienced at university and the amicable relation which existed between them and their classmates or professors. An important reason for this positive atmosphere and relation according to them was the equal use of English and Spanish which was welcome by the native Spanish students and professors due to their high proficiency in English which made them feel at home equally in Spanish and English which in turn led to lower sense of the variable of interest, disdain, among the Iranian immigrants. The result of the role English played on Iranian immigrant's sense of superiority is presented in Table 24 and Table 25.

Table 24

Role of English in the Sense of Superiority on the part of Spanish People Experienced by Iranian Immigrants

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
2.00	1	7.5	-6.5
3.00	6	7.5	-1.5
4.00	10	7.5	2.5
5.00	14	7.5	6.5
6.00	12	7.5	4.5
7.00	6	7.5	-1.5
8.00	6	7.5	-1.5
most	5	7.5	-2.5
Total	60		

Table 25

Chi-square goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Superiority on the Part of Spanish People Experienced by Iranian Immigrants

Chi-Square	16.533 ^a
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.021

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5.

The result in Table 24 shows that the role of English in Iranian immigrants' experience of this feeling on the part of the Spanish native speakers was more than the feelings presented previously. This can be positive and negative; positive in the sense of maintaining their heritage language and identity as well as maintaining English in the process of acculturation. It can be negative too, leading to exclusion in extreme degree. This was backed by what most of the participants stated in the interview (e.g. participants number 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 25, 26, 42) in that they did not receive any racist comments or if they did, it was negligible. As could be expected, the picture was not rosy altogether and some disturbing experiences were reported: participant two mentioned that some of the Spanish people feel superior and "they enjoy criticizing you, teaching us life lessons and consider us third-world individuals, with zero level". For speaker four, elderly Spanish native speakers felt more superior towards the Iranian immigrants than the young ones; a rather sad experience for her was being shouted at by an elderly lady in metro in Madrid to go back to her own Covid-inflicted country.

According to these participants (e.g. participants number 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 25, 26, 42), in most of these situations, English played its alleviating role in softening the hard situation and reducing the negativity experienced by the immigrants.

Presumably, fluency in English was regarded a sign of being educated and being a member of middle class on the part of the immigrants by the Spanish native speakers. Even in some cases, it caused the feeling of supervisory on the part of Spanish native speaker to incline towards partial respect (participant two) which was reflected by the tone, intonation, and the choice of words. She had sensed this change in tone after choosing English in seeking job and in the social interaction with neighbors.

Up to this moment the focus was on analyzing the data on the negative feelings that Iranian immigrants could have towards Spanish culture and Spanish native speakers in the process of acculturation as a factor in maintaining their identity and heritage culture as well as English language as the auxiliary language in this process. In the next part, the focus is on positive feelings that these immigrants experienced. The effect of English on the feeling of acceptance is presented in Tables 26 and 27.

Table 26

Role of English in the Sense of Acceptance Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
2.00	1	7.5	-6.5
3.00	2	7.5	-5.5
4.00	7	7.5	-.5
5.00	17	7.5	9.5
6.00	14	7.5	6.5
7.00	14	7.5	6.5
8.00	3	7.5	-4.5
9.00	2	7.5	-5.5
Total	60		

Table 27

Chi-square Goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Acceptance Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	39.733 ^a
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5.

As shown in Table 27, the result indicated that Iranian immigrants received significantly high level of the sense of acceptance from Spanish culture and people. Some negative experiences were reported though; according to participant 8 and 51, the level of acceptance depended on the immigrants' Spanish language proficiency. In this line, participant 46 believed that "once you break past the language barrier life gets easier", and definitely English does play its positive role in getting accepted by the Spanish native speakers increasingly due to the prevalence of English as lingua franca.

The sense of acceptance showed itself in some of the strategies that Iranian immigrant parents adopted for their children; to be accepted in Spanish schools and by Spanish friends, they encouraged their children to improve their Spanish and English, and despite their desire to maintain the heritage language, they did not put their children under pressure to allocate the time they would use to improve their Spanish to improve their Farsi language. Most of the parents with children expressed their concern about their children's being accepted or not being rejected at school by Spanish classmates. In this line, participant 17 (a property developer), 22 (a PhD student) and 23 (a housewife) mentioned that their children as second-generation

immigrants were very successful in being accepted by the community than them as members of the first-generation immigrants. Stronger than the sense of acceptance was the sense of admiration and the role that English played which could determine the level and the degree of acculturation. The result is presented in Table 28 and Table 29.

Table 28

Role of English in the Sense of Admiration Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
least	1	6.7	-5.7
2.00	1	6.7	-5.7
3.00	1	6.7	-5.7
4.00	14	6.7	7.3
5.00	24	6.7	17.3
6.00	11	6.7	4.3
7.00	5	6.7	-1.7
8.00	1	6.7	-5.7
9.00	2	6.7	-4.7
Total	60		

Table 29

Chi-Square Goodness of fit on the Role of English in the Sense of Admiration Experienced by Iranian Immigrants in Relation to the Spanish Culture and People

Chi-Square	78.900 ^a
df	8
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 6.7.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 31 indicates that Iranian immigrants experienced significantly high level of the sense of admiration towards and from Spanish culture and people. What participants (e.g. 23, 34, 39, 47, 49) said in the interview about acceptance, could, to a large extent, be generalized to the sense of admiration. Most of the financial as well as emotional investment could be explained on the grounds that each immigrant aspired to gain that sense of admiration from the Spanish community which could be interpreted as the ultimate form of successful acculturation to actualize their imagined society (e.g. 15, 19, 21) (Norton, 2010). Of course, according to participant one, the source of the admiration extended beyond mere linguistic or cultural grounds to economic reason; because he was a wealthy man, he was admired. For participant four, it was a challenging and long process to alter the prejudgment on the part of Spanish people and gain their admiration. The role and effect of English in admiration was somewhat indirect; if Iranian immigrants showed an acceptable level of proficiency in both Spanish and English, the prospect looked good for them and they received the sense of admiration (e.g. 4, 11, 12). Table 30 and 31 present Iranian immigrants' sense of who they are, experienced through the effect of English on their awareness about their heritage language.

Table 30

Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Heritage Language

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
important	33	30.0	3.0
very important	27	30.0	-3.0
Total	60		

Table 31

*Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are,
Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Heritage
Language*

Chi-Square	.600 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.439

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

According to Table 30, out of four options of not important, little important, important, and very important, none of the participants chose the first two; 33 participants chose the alternative 'important' and 27 opted for 'very important', indicating the strong sense of identity associated with their heritage language. This might be the clearest indication of the degree they regarded their heritage language important in defining their identity.

Due to the distribution and frequency of responses, the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit presented in Table indicated the similarity of the sample of participants' responses in this regard to the hypothesized value or the expectation one could consider. The other complementary information on the main language of use during their childhood, with the exception of participant seven, was that all other participants' mother tongue was Farsi. The better-off participants had been sent to bilingual schools where they learned Farsi and English. Some of them spoke Azari (the language of the Northern provinces in Iran) as their mother tongue, along with Farsi as the language of education at schools.

They were not any cases who learned Spanish before the age of 10 (the age which was operationally considered the end point of childhood). They all mentioned that they had not learned even a word in Spanish before they embarked on the immigration, still they were hopeful that they would learn it after settling down in Spain. However, due to general weakness of public education in English, most of the immigrants stated that they had attended English classes at institutes and the effect of English in their awareness about their language and their sense of who they were was remarkable (e.g. participants number 5, 6, 7, and 22).

The effect of awareness they gained through the English on the main language spoken at home showed itself in the form of occasional code-switch with other siblings who knew English or with their parents who had some proficiency in English (e.g. participants number 32, 37, and 47). The effect grew considerably though when they immigrated to Spain where the rate of using English and Spanish was remarkably more than their heritage language and by the same token, the amount and number of code switching or even bilingual communication in their heritage language and English grew at home (e.g. 48, and 55). This was switched to code switching among three languages (heritage language, English, and Spanish).

The next factor was Iranian immigrants' sense of who they are, experienced through the effect of English on their awareness about their religion. The result is presented in tables 32 and 33.

Table 32

Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Religion

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	17	15.0	2.0
little important	27	15.0	12.0

important	14	15.0	-1.0
very important	2	15.0	-13.0
Total	60		

Table 33

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Religion

Chi-Square	21.200 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

As can be seen in Table 32, forty four participants considered religion to be not or little important in their sense of who they were, and 14 people deemed it to play an important role in determining their sense of identity.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 33 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 21.200, p = .000$). The low significance most of the Iranian immigrants ascribed to the religion might be interpreted as a positive factor in that, it can indicate their accepting attitudes towards other religious precepts which might be conducive to better acculturation process. The qualitative data collected from the interview, indicated that contrary to the religious precepts propagated or even imposed by the clerical regime in Iran, most of the participants had quite a negative attitude towards such coercion, and some of them stated that one of the main reasons for their immigration to Spain was sort of being away from the religious dogmatic regime (e.g. 41, 47, and 56). Therefore, it came as no surprise when statistically significant number of them had such negative attitudes about the religion, a point which could be extrapolated to a considerable number of Iranian people living in Iran. However a negative experience was reported by a

religious female participant (36) who experienced rejection because of wearing religious dress (hejab) and being the victim of hostile stare in public. Participant 40 was another victim of religious clichés, being mocked at the workplace, repeatedly harassed by a colleague on the subject of polygamy; whether it were true that Iranian men were allowed to have four wives at the same time. Age was a determinant factor for participant 45, a senior immigrant who had immigrated in old age; he had had issues finding friends and mingling in society. He said "everyone is respectful but no one wants to become intimate after knowing that I am a Muslim".

The effect of awareness they gained through studying and learning English and being exposed to some books or films which they could not have access in translation due to the imposed censorship from the respective ministries on translators or publishers, had a huge impact on shaping their attitudes towards the religion and the religious dogmas which were propagated by the clerical regime in Iran (e.g. participants number 2, 3, 14, and 34). In fact, the very fact has turned to be a thorny issue for the Iranian religious leader and the top officials so much so that they consider English and the related issues as a blatant form of 'cultural invasion' from the West on Iranian Islamic culture (Borjian, 2013), the one which has lost its power under the auspices of the awareness most of the people and especially the young ones have gained through studying English.

The next determining variable on Iranian immigrants' sense of who they are is experienced through the effect of English on their awareness about region or the city where they were brought up. The result is shown in Table 34 and 35.

Table 34

Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about the Region or the City where they were Brought up

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	1	15.0	-14.0
little important	8	15.0	-7.0
important	31	15.0	16.0
very important	20	15.0	5.0
Total	60		

Table 35

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about the region or the City Where they were Brought up

Chi-Square	35.067 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

Table 34 shows that the majority of the participants (51 out of 60) considered the region or the city in which they live to be either important or very important in their sense of who they were. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 35 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(3) = 35.067, p = .000$).

Based on the qualitative data, some of the older participants had a better feeling to be in a neighborhood with some of their countrymen. However, this was not a general trend.

The effect of the awareness they gained through exposure to English was indirect in the sense that through social media and the Internet, most of the participants

especially the younger ones, developed a broader sense of their locality which extended far beyond their physical and immediate neighborhood (e.g. 8, 18, 32, and 47).

Generally speaking, the younger participants were not as socially conservative on social class casts as the older ones on the issue of neighborhood because as mentioned, through English they could find and communicate with people with similar mentality from all over the world and they were not restricted to the physical neighborhood. The broader or more inclusive perspective in this regard was the country where one was born. The result of the Iranian Immigrants' sense of who they are, experienced through the effect of English on their awareness about their country is presented in tables 36 and 37.

Table 36

Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Country

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
little important	3	20.0	-17.0
important	26	20.0	6.0
very important	31	20.0	11.0
Total	60		

Table 37

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Country

Chi-Square	22.300 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

The result shown in Table 36 indicates the significance of the concept of their country on their sense of who they are. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 37 confirmed it too.

The affiliation or bond one has with ones' country of birth can be a strong indication to their determination to maintain their heritage language or culture. In the interview, some of the participants mentioned that contrary to the concept of religion about which they had no strongly negative feeling, the notion of country of birth was very important for their sense of who they were (e.g. 21, 26, 40).

In fact, some participants stated that not only did they not hide their identity; but they also felt sort of proud to have come from a country with long history (e.g. 41, 47, and 51). This sense was the main reason of some of the participants' investment, though negligible, to encourage their children to maintain their heritage language, a futile attempt though in the long run, a point that they confessed.

The effect of the sense of awareness they gained through English on the importance of their country of origin to the sense of who they are can be interpreted as broadening their horizon on the notion of nationalism or patriotism and avoiding it, at least partially because now that they had changed their status from Iranian residing in Iran to immigrants residing in Spain, they realized that the very notion of

nationalism or patriotism on the part of Spanish native speakers could work against them (e.g. 52, 56, and 59).

Through the exposure they inevitably had via English, they realized that they could be proud of their country and being considered as Persian or Iranian but since they were forced to immigrate to a European country, they realized that they had better adopt a more cosmopolitan view on the issue.

The last variable the result of which is presented here is Iranian immigrants' sense of who they are, experienced through the effect of English on their awareness about their skin color. The result is presented in Tables 38 and 39.

Table 38

Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Skin Color

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	32	15.0	17.0
little important	26	15.0	11.0
important	1	15.0	-14.0
very important	1	15.0	-14.0
Total	60		

Table 39

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Sense of who they are, Experienced through the Effect of English on their Awareness about their Skin Color

Chi-Square	53.467 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 39 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2 (3) = 53.467, p = .000$). This can indicate that most of the Iranian immigrant had a positive attitude to people with different skin color or ethnicity, a point which can be interpreted as a positive factor in their successful acculturation in a culture or social situation that includes people from different races. This might have been partly important because through being exposed to different outlooks and cultures, their attitudes might have been less radical in this case which paved the way to adopting more cosmopolitan and accepting attitude on the matter of race and skin color (e.g. participants number 60, 1, and 4).

4.3. Research question 2:

What are Iranian immigrants' attitudes to the role of English on their heritage language maintenance in Spain? This main question includes the following sub-questions:

The first sub-question was about Iranian immigrants' attitudes regarding the importance of English on the religion/the religion they were brought up to their sense of who they are. The other sub questions probed the importance of English on variables of color of their skin (an indicator of the degree they considered racism was a relevant factor), the region or city where they lived, the country where they were born, the region or city where they grew up, and the main language spoken at home during their childhood

Table 40 and 41 present Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the effect of awareness they gained through English on the varying degree of importance of the main language spoken at home during their childhood to their sense of who they are.

Table 40

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the awareness they Gained through English on the Main Language Spoken at Home during their Childhood to their Sense of who they Are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
important	33	30.0	3.0
very important	27	30.0	-3.0
Total	60		

Table 41

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' attitudes towards the Effect of the awareness they Gained through English on Main Language Spoken at Home during their Childhood to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	.600 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.439

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

According to table 40, out of four options of not important, little important, important, and very important, none of the participants chose the first two; 33 participants chose the alternative 'important' and 27 opted for 'very important', indicating the strong sense of identity associated with their heritage language. This might be the clearest indication of the degree they regarded their heritage language important in defining their identity. Due to the distribution and frequency of responses, the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit presented in Table 41 did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(1) = .600$, $p = .439$), indicating the similarity of the sample of participants' responses in this regard to the hypothesized value or the expectation one could consider. The other complementary information on the main language of use during their childhood, with the exception of participant seven, all other participants' mother tongue was Farsi.

The better-off participants had been sent to bilingual schools where they learned Farsi and English. They were also some who spoke Azari (the language of the Northern provinces in Iran) as their mother tongue, along with Farsi as the language of education at schools. They were not any cases who learned Spanish before the age of 10 (the age which was operationally considered the end point of childhood). They all mentioned that they had not learned even a word in Spanish before they embarked on the immigration, still they were hopeful that they would learn it after settling down in Spain. The effect of awareness they gained through English on the main language spoken at home showed itself in the form of occasional code-switch with other siblings who knew English or with their parents who had some proficiency in English. The effect grew considerably though when they immigrated to Spain where the rate of using English and Spanish was remarkably more than their heritage language and by the same token, the amount and number of code switching or even bilingual communication in their heritage language and English grew at home. This was switched to code switching among three languages (heritage language, English, and Spanish). The next factor in the questionnaire to find out Iranian immigrants' attitude towards their heritage language or culture maintenance was the importance of the effect of the awareness they gained through studying and mastering English on religion they were brought up to their sense of who they were. The result is presented in tables 42 and 43.

Table 42

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the awareness they Gained through English on their Religion/the Religion they were brought up to their Sense of who they are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	17	15.0	2.0
little important	27	15.0	12.0

important	14	15.0	-1.0
very important	2	15.0	-13.0
Total	60		

Table 43

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on their Religion/the Religion they were brought up to their Sense of who they are

Chi-Square	21.200 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

As can be seen in Table 42, forty four participants considered religion to be not or little important in their sense of who they were, and 14 people deemed it to play an important role in determining their sense of identity. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 43 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 21.200, p = .000$). The low significance most of the Iranian immigrants ascribed to the religion might be interpreted as a positive factor in that, it can indicate their accepting attitudes towards other religious precepts which might be conducive to better acculturation process. The qualitative data collected from the interview, indicated that contrary to the religious precepts propagated or even imposed by the clerical regime in Iran, most of the participants had quite a negative attitude towards such coercion, and some of them stated that one of the main reasons for their immigration to Spain was sort of being away from the religious dogmatic regime. Therefore, it came as no surprise when statistically significant number of them had such negative attitudes about the religion, a point which could be extrapolated to a considerable number of Iranian people living in Iran. However a

negative experience was reported by a religious female participant (36) who experienced rejection because of wearing religious dress (hejab) and being the victim of hostile stare in public. Participant 40 was another victim of religious clichés, being mocked at the workplace, repeatedly harassed by a colleague on the subject of polygamy; whether it were true that Iranian men were allowed to have four wives at the same time. Age was a determinant factor for participant 45, a senior immigrant who had migrated in old age, he had had issues finding friends and mingling in society. He said "everyone is respectful but no one ones to become intimate". The effect of awareness they gained through studying and learning English and being exposed to some books or films which they could not have access in translation due to the imposed censorship from the respective ministries on translators or publishers, had a huge impact on shaping their attitudes towards the religion and the religious dogmas which were propagated by the clerical regime in Iran. In fact, the very fact has turned to be a thorny issue for the Iranian religious leader and the top officials so much so that they consider English language and the related issues as a blatant form of 'cultural invasion' form the West on Iranian Islamic culture, the one which has lost its power under the auspices of the awareness most of the people and especially the young ones have gained through studying English.

The next determining variable on Iranian immigrants' attitude towards maintaining their heritage language was the effect of awareness they gained through exposure to English on the importance they attached to the region or the city they live on their sense of who they were. The result is shown in Table 44 and 45.

Table 44

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they gained through English on the Region or City where they live to their Sense of who they are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	1	15.0	-14.0
little important	8	15.0	-7.0
important	31	15.0	16.0
very important	20	15.0	5.0
Total	60		

Table 45

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on the Region or City where they Live to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	35.067 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

Table 44 shows that the majority of the participants (51 out of 60) considered the region or the city in which they live to be either important or very important in their sense of who they were. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 45 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 35.067, p = .000$). This attachment to the region or the city where one lives can be a defining variable in one's sense of who they are, a defining variable in their attempt to maintain or lose heritage language as part of their identity. Based on the qualitative data, some of the older participants had a better feeling to be in a neighborhood with some of their countrymen. However, this was not a general trend. The effect of the awareness they gained though the exposure to English was indirect in the sense that through social media and the Internet, most of the participants especially the younger

ones, developed a broader sense of their locality which extended far beyond their physical and immediate neighborhood. Generally speaking, the younger participants were not as social conscious as the older ones on the issue of neighborhood because as mentioned, through English they could find and communicate with people with similar mentality from all over the world and they were not restricted to the physical neighborhood. The broader or more inclusive perspective in this regard was the country where one was born. The result of the Iranian immigrants' attitude on the effect of their awareness they gained through English on the importance they attached to the country they were born on their sense of who they are is presented in tables 46 and 47.

Table 46

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on the Country where they were Born to their Sense of who they Are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
little important	3	20.0	-17.0
important	26	20.0	6.0
very important	31	20.0	11.0
Total	60		

Table 47

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the awareness they Gained through English on the Country where they were Born to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	22.300 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

The result shown in Table 46 indicates that no Iranian immigrants considered the country they were born in to have no importance in their sense of who they are. In fact, the vast majority (57 out of 60) considered it either important or very important in defining their identity. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 47 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(2) = 22.300, p = .000$). The affiliation or bond one has with one's country of birth can be a strong indication to their determination to maintain their heritage language or culture. In the interview, some of the participants mentioned that contrary to the concept of religion about which they had no strong feeling, the notion of country of birth was very important for their sense of who they were. In fact, some participants stated that not only did they not hide their identity; they felt sort of proud to have come from a country with long history. This sense was the main *raison d'être* of some of the participants' investment, though negligible, to encourage their children to maintain their heritage language, a futile attempt though in the long run, a point that they confessed. The effect of the sense of awareness they gained through English on the importance of their country of origin to the sense of who they are can be interpreted as broadening their horizon on the notion of nationalism or patriotism and avoiding it at least partially because now that they had changed their status from Iranian residing in Iran to immigrants residing in Spain, they realized that the very notion of nationalism or patriotism on the part of Spanish native speakers could work against them. Through the exposure they inevitably had via English, they realized that they could be proud of their country and being considered as Persian or Iranian but since they were forced to immigrate to a European country, they realized that they had better adopt a more cosmopolitan view on the issue. The next factor affecting the sense of identity was the

effect of the awareness through English on the notion of the city or region where the Iranian immigrants had grown up. The result is shown in tables 48 and 49.

Table 48

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards The effect of the Awareness they Gained though English on the Region or City where They Grew up to their Sense of who they Are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
little important	5	20.0	-15.0
important	26	20.0	6.0
very important	29	20.0	9.0
Total	60		

Table 49

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on the Region or City where they Grew up to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	17.100 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

As expected, similar to their responses to the previous cases, while no one chose the alternative 'not important', most of the immigrants (55 out of 60) indicated that the city they grew up in was either important or very important in shaping the sense of who they were (Table 49). The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 38 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(2) = 17.100, p = .000$). A point which was emphasized in the interview was that due to the fact that Iranian society is grappling with grinding inflation, the social gap was the eye

soar which could not be ignored, and belonging to a certain social strata could be a source of pride for some of the participants. Of course, socio-economic factor was but one of the variables; the others which were mentioned were the distinctive feature that certain regions of certain cities or towns were associated with which gave them the sense of who they were. The effect of the sense of awareness through mastering English on the region or the city the participants lived to theirs sense of who they were was once more indirect. A bitter and harsh reality is that nowadays due to soaring inflation in Iran, attending English classes or having private tuition depends directly on how well off a person is and this in turn is correlated to the region of the city one lives in. Therefore, the moderating effect of the sense of awareness through English seems to be more important in those participants who are better off and by the same token live in relatively swanky neighborhoods than those who grapple with inflation and cannot afford to own a flat and have to resort to renting a flat in less prestigious part of the town. The last variable, the result of which is presented here is the Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the effect of the sense of awareness they gained through English on their color of skin on their sense of who they were. The result is presented in Tables 50 and 51.

Table 50

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on the Color of their Skin to their Sense of who they Are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	32	15.0	17.0
little important	26	15.0	11.0
important	1	15.0	-14.0
very important	1	15.0	-14.0
Total	60		

Table 51

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards the Effect of the Awareness they Gained through English on the Color of their Skin to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	53.467 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

According to the result shown in table 50, fifty eight out of 60 participants considered their skin color to be no or little important in their sense of who they were. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 51 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 53.467, p = .000$). This can indicate that most of the Iranian immigrants had a positive attitude to people with different skin color or ethnicity, a point which can be interpreted as a positive factor in their successful acculturation in a culture or social situation that includes people from different races. The effect of the sense of awareness on their attitudes towards the color of their skin in their feeling of who they were was partly important because through being exposed to different outlooks and cultures, their attitudes might have been less radical in this case which paved the way to adopting more cosmopolitan and accepting attitude on the matter of race and skin color.

4.4. Research question 3:

What are Iranian immigrants' attitudes to English language maintenance in Spain? To find out Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the role English language played in

defining their sense of who they were, the analysis of the data is presented in Table 52 and 53

Table 52

Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards English Language to their Sense of who they Are

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not important	3	15.0	-12.0
little important	14	15.0	-1.0
important	30	15.0	15.0
very important	13	15.0	-2.0
Total	60		

Table 53

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitudes towards English Language to their Sense of who they Are

Chi-Square	24.933 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

As seen in Table 52, and 53, the frequency is statistically significant ($X^2(3) = 24.933, p = .000$). The next point was the extent English language played its role in the acculturation process of Iranian immigrants. The result is presented in Table 54 and 55

Table 54

The Role of English Language in Iranian Immigrants' Acculturation

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
not helpful	8	15.0	-7.0
little helpful	27	15.0	12.0
helpful	22	15.0	7.0
very helpful	3	15.0	-12.0
Total	60		

Table 55

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' The Role of English Language in Iranian Immigrants' Acculturation

Chi-Square	25.733 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.0.

According to the data presented in Table 54 and 55, indicated a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 25.733, p = .000$), indicating that they believed that English language played a statically significant role in their acculturation process.

Qualitative data collected in the interview was quite revealing on the impact of English language on Iranian immigrants' acculturation in Spain. Most of the participants confirmed the helpfulness of English as an auxiliary language in the process towards mastering Spanish as the mainstream language due to some facilitative effect of the lexical transfer between English and Spanish language (Ellis, 2008) and as an affective anchor or leverage in the process of acculturation specially

during the early days of arrival to Spain when they had to resort to English to cope with and obviate some of the difficulties associated with communicating in Spanish in which they were less proficient compared to English.

The array of different attitudes of the Iranian immigrants is presented in more detail in this section. Participant one believed that in the business world, English leaves its mark, it does not matter what business. This was approved by participant 21 stating that it would be impossible to be in his current job if he didn't have a good level in English. The same point was stressed by participant 39 who considered English as helpful, saying that it really depended on one's job. For students and engineers, English was always a plus, if not a necessity. For him doors had opened because his English was good.

Not everyone had such a positive attitude about the helpfulness of English; in fact participant 27 believed that "even in his business if you don't know Spanish you'll be scammed so it's necessary to learn Spanish for work and everyday life". Also For participant 50, Spanish was very important. In fact, he had entered Spain with the hope that he would be able to get a job in an international law firm by only speaking English, but he had found it impossible.

For those immigrant participants (e.g. number two) who had more investment in leaning Spanish the payoff was their little dependence on English from the day of their arrival. This participant stated that she did not have a great level in English herself and spoke a good level of Spanish before moving to this country, but she pointed out that English could be a great help in her city, Barcelona because there was a greater variety of nations in comparison to Madrid; so chances are one could find more English speaking people.

The response of the third participants indicated the distinction made in the literature between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), or conversational proficiency, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), or academic proficiency (Cummins, 2008). He had presented a good IELTS score to the university and embassy of Spain in Tehran to get an admission and visa. Since he had moved to Barcelona, he'd been speaking English at the university and with his flat mates. On the importance of academic proficiency as opposite to interpersonal proficiency, participant 28 stated that, the more the immigrants stayed at university, the more they felt at home in English. Therefore, it can be said that both kinds of proficiency were helpful in the proper context, and depending on the field of interest, the appropriate investment was needed accordingly.

Perhaps the clearest case about the BICS and CLAP distinction was stated by participant 49 who received little help from English, says "you miss out a lot if you only depend on English, cannot bond with your housemates because of the language barrier". Her university life was better but she found the paper work very confusing since it was a hundred percent in Spanish. These participants believed that besides the academic ambiance and the English needed mainly for academic purpose, one has to be able to speak a certain level of Spanish for everyday affairs like grocery shopping, bank, immigration office and other similar situations. This idea is supported by the next participant (number 4), a PhD student stating that in her experience English did not help her much outside the university (proficient in CALP but no so much in BICS); she had suffered not speaking Spanish in numerous occasions, such as renting houses, bank transfers, shopping, public transportation and such.

Perhaps the strongest dichotomy between these two kinds of proficiency was expressed by participant 12, a Farsi professor in a Spanish university, strongly believing that unless one was doing a degree in English, it was not necessary to learn if an immigrant wanted to stay in Spain for long-term. This was confirmed by participant 58 for whom English was of little help. He believed it was not realistic for anyone to depend on their English level in Spain, unless they were doing a degree in English and later found a job that had to do with English only. The case was even more traumatizing for participant 60 who stated that English was little helpful for him. He stated that "if someone comes to Spain only speaking English, they would be in hell because the paper work and social life are great deal and almost impossible to handle if one doesn't speak Spanish".

This seems to be the guiding line for participant 22 for whom English had been of little help as he stated that he had survived so far because he decided to lean Spanish from the beginning. This was confirmed by participant 40 who did not receive much help from English. She said that English had helped her in the visa process and embassy interview. However, once she had arrived in Spain, she had found it impossible to survive without speaking Spanish; especially in her case, as a psychologist, a minimum of C1 in Spanish was required and finding a job would have been impossible otherwise. This was attested by participant 14 stating that he had contacted the company before moving to Spain in English, had sent his CV in English and never had a problem in the office for his low Spanish level. However, he did agree that everyday life could be challenging if one did not learn Spanish, meaning that one should not overestimate the auxiliary role of English if one wanted to acculturate successfully since English could partially be helpful and it could obviate the problems associated with acculturation altogether.

The affective side of not knowing Spanish and trying to tackle the problems only with English was stated by participant 42 for when she had moved to Spain, she spoke very little English and people were not willing to communicate so learning Spanish became a priority.

In this line participant 14 believed that "it is impossible to get ahead in your career if you don't speak Spanish. In fact, English got him nowhere". This was expressed in a different way by participant 18; for him English was little helpful in his acculturation because according to him, most Spanish people, even if they spoke good English, always preferred to communicate in Spanish. According to participant 20, the situation was bound to change in Spain in the future, as more and more people would speak English since all the schools were bilingual now. This was reflected in the response of participant 31 for whom English was of little help; she did not have a good level in English but sent her kids to a bilingual school, she wanted them to be equally good at English and Spanish, a sign of foreseeing a bilingual society in the future.

The social change due to the popularity and prevalence of bilingual schools were emphasized by participant 37 who had little help from English because at the time she entered Spain, the English speaking people were fewer, but then, thanks to bilingual school, things were changing. Participants 16 and 17 held different views, stating that in business; people spoke more English than the locals; therefore, English was helpful to varying degrees depending on the field of activity.

The other important point was the scaffolding effect of English in acculturation; i.e. the help participants received from it was more at the beginning but as they grew more proficient in Spanish, the reliance to and helpfulness of English diminished (e.g.

participant five and 11). For some participants (e.g. participant six) academic proficiency in English sufficed and proved useful as they restricted themselves in the academia; a dubious lifestyle since inevitably they would feel the need for socialization apart from academia. The effect of arrival in Spain in a young age which meant long years of exposure and acculturation obviated the great help from English (participant seven). However, for some participants (e.g. eight), mere survival would prove hard if not impossible, were it not for their high proficiency in English. The high status of Spain in attracting tourists from different countries whose main medium of communication was English was another factor in providing some Iranian immigrants with implicit input to pick up their English (e.g. participant nine)

The next point regarding English language was whether the participants considered fluency or accuracy to play more important role in their success in communication and acculturation. The result is presented in Table 56 and 57.

Table 56

Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on the Importance of Fluency vs. Accuracy on their Acculturation in a Spanish Culture

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
fluency	34	30.0	4.0
accuracy	26	30.0	-4.0
Total	60		

Table 57

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on the Importance of Fluency vs. Accuracy on their Acculturation in a Spanish culture

Chi-Square	1.067 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.302

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

The result of the data analysis in Table 56 and 57 did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2 (1) = 1.067, p = .302$), indicating that neither of these factor was regarded more important the other one and both were considered equally important for successful communication and acculturation. An important point which needs to be raised here is that the dominant approach to teach and learn English in Iran is communicative language teaching (CLT) according to which although both accuracy and fluency play their vital role in communication, fluency is considered more important. However, despite this point propagated by the system in most of the language institutes, the participants regarded both of them equally important and their idea on the importance of one of them over the other did not reach statistical significance.

The next part deals with the question whether vocabulary or grammar of English was considered more important for Iranian immigrants in Spain in the process of their acculturation. The result is displayed in Tables 58 and 59.

Table 58

Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on the Lexical vs. Syntactic Significance of English for their Acculturation in a Spanish culture

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
vocabulary	38	30.0	8.0
Grammar	22	30.0	-8.0
Total	60		

Table 59

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on the Lexical vs. Syntactic Significance of English for their Acculturation in a Spanish culture

Chi-Square	4.267 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.039

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

According to the result in Table 58 and 59, there was a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = 4.267, p = .039$), indicating that the significance of vocabulary over grammar reached a significant level among the participants.

This view seems to be in line with the dominant view in the field of ELT, attesting to the more significance of lexical mastery over syntactic mastery specially in comprehension of the input (Nation, 2010), although grammar gains significance in output hypothesis (Swain, 1985), according to which, the discrepancy between what learners want to say and what they can really say is a good feedback for them to polish up their grammar to narrow the gap. The importance of immigrants' lexical and syntactic level as a very important indication of their general proficiency level in English on the acculturation process seems to be in line with the finding of Houston, et al. (2019) according to which, proficiency in English correlated with success in accumulation in Spain. It can be posited that lexical and syntactic level attributes to this proficiency level of immigrants and there should be given due consideration in this regard. The next part dealt with finding out which language skills in English

Iranian immigrant found more important in tackling the problems during their acculturation process. The result is presented in Table 60 and 61.

Table 60

Iranian Immigrants' Attitude towards the Significance of English Language Skill for their Acculturation in a Spanish Culture

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
speaking	46	30.0	16.0
reading	14	30.0	-16.0
Total	60		

Table 61

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitude towards the Significance of English Language Skill for their Acculturation in a Spanish Culture

Chi-Square	17.067 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As shown in Table 60, none of the immigrant participants opted for listening or writing skills, making these two skills Cinderella skills. Out of the other remaining skills, 46 participants chose speaking and only 14 considered reading important for their acculturation. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 61 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = 17.067$, $p = .000$), indicating the significance of speaking skill over reading. The significance of speaking for the immigrants seems to be in line with the general inclination among the EFL learners (Harmer, 2007) according to which, for most of them speaking is the

most important skill, so much so that it marginalize other language skills in ELT classes (Nation, 2010).

An interesting point in the interview was that most of the participants with higher academic degree chose reading over speaking as more important, indicating that reading was more important for them in enabling them to deal with academic assignments.

The last point on the effect of English language was the immigrant participants' attitudes on the effect of English on Spanish language in general or on learning it in particular. The result is presented in Table 62 and 63.

Table 62

Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on Transferring Effect of English on their Learning Spanish

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
little important	10	20.0	-10.0
important	12	20.0	-8.0
very important	38	20.0	18.0
Total	60		

Table 63

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Attitude on Transferring Effect of English on their Learning Spanish

Chi-Square	24.400 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

As can be seen in Table 62, the options of 'not important' or 'little important' was not chosen by any of the immigrant participants. Among the other two remaining options, only eight participants chose important and the majority of them opted for 'very important'. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 63 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2 (2) = 24.400, p = .000$), indicating Iranian immigrants' high attitude on the important effect of English on Spanish language in general or learning in particular. The significance of English as the most widespread Lingua Franca cannot be ignored in any of the social, academic, economic, or political grounds, and hence acculturation involves all of these factors, the role or effect of English was aggrandized.

An important sociological factor which was of interest was the possible relationship between the employment status (whether they were employed or they were housewife) of Iranian immigrant women on the one hand and their sense of urgency to learn Spanish as the main language and English as an intermediary or auxiliary language; table 64 shows the result.

Table 64

The Correlation between the Occupational Status of Iranian Female Immigrants and their Sense of Urgency to Learn Spanish

			fem.empolyedvs.housewif	urgencytolearnSpanish
			e	
Spearman's rho	fem.empolyedvs.housewife	Correlation	1.000	-.692**
		Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	
	N	32	32	
	urgencytolearnSpanish	Correlation	-.692**	1.000
		Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	
	N	32	32	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 64, the relationship between the occupational status of Iranian female immigrants and their sense of urgency to learn Spanish as the main language was investigated using Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient. There was a strong, negative correlation (Cohen, 1988) between the two variables [$r = -.692$, $n = 32$, $p < .000$], with being employed outside home associated with lower levels of urgency to learn Spanish as the main language. The coefficient of determination of the obtained correlation is calculated as 47.88, indicating how much the two variable share. Less than 50% percent for coefficient of determination in spite the high correlation is due to the number of the participants which is 32; were it high, the degree would be higher.

The qualitative data collected revealed some points on the reluctance of Iranian female immigrants to learn Spanish as the main language on the one hand and their eagerness to continue learning English as the auxiliary language on the other. Of

course, an important point in this regard that must be clarified with haste is that this point expressed their preferences rather than what they had to do to abide by the necessities of daily life; i.e. there was a discrepancy between what they preferred, learning English, and what they had to do, learning Spanish. One of the reasons mentioned was on the utilitarian grounds, since they had been exposed to English as the foreign language in their home country (Iran), it was easier for them to continue it rather than start a new language from the scratch. However, as they stated, this desire based on their lack of sense of adventure to embark on a new language, could not keep the urge or need to keep Spanish language at bay for a long time and sooner or later they had to start it one way or the other.

Related to this was the possibility of communication with the spouse or roommate in English most of the time and the fact that rallied against this and forced them to learn Spanish was their children as the second-generation immigrants who could master Spanish language with relative speed and ease. On the same grounds, the reluctance to master Spanish was based on their ability to meet the various demands of life using English only. Of course, this flew in the face of different and various situations in which they felt the need that the situation could not go on like that and if they wanted to be able to socialize, they had to invest more in learning Spanish, rather than enjoying the safe haven they had with English.

4.5. Research question 4:

What specific measures do Iranian immigrants take for heritage or English language maintenance in Spain? To answer this research question, the collected

quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed and presented in this section. Table 65 and 66 show the frequency of Iranian immigrants' opting for being an active member or having a sense of involvement in L1 community or other occasions associated with English: different aspects could be worked out. This could include traditional heritage or English language or ceremonies like Nowruz (New Year festival) or Valentine.

Table 65

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage or English Language Maintenance Strategies: Involving in Ceremonies reminiscent of L1 and English

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	22	30.0	-8.0
no	38	30.0	8.0
Total	60		

Table 66

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage or English Language Maintenance Strategies: Involving in Ceremonies reminiscent of L1 and English

Chi-Square	4.267 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.039

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

According to the result in Table 65, twenty two participants indicated that they were active members in their community and took part in some of the national ceremonies like Nowruz to maintain that sense of heritage identity and language; however, 38 participants opted for the opposite case (e.g. 1, 5, 10, 13, 17, 19, 23, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32, 37, 38, 39, 41, 46, 47, 48, 53, 54, 55). The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 66 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(3) = 4.267, p = .039$).

The qualitative data collected in the interview revealed that as shown in the quantitative part, more Iranian immigrants preferred to participate in the host culture traditional ceremonies, a clear indication about their willingness to acculturate. In the interview, considerable number of them mentioned that if they had preferred Persian ceremonies or parties, they would have stayed in their home country Iran (e.g. 3, 7, 11, 35 and 45). However, the few Iranian immigrants who took part in Persian traditional festival like Yalda or Nowruz seemed to have done it out of a sense of homesickness and realizing that it was important for their psychological well-being to keep in touch with their heritage culture and traditional festival. They believed that going to Iranian parties and festivals and speaking their heritage language with other immigrants made them happy in a way no fancy foreign party ever did.

A point worthy of mentioning is that these participants were over 40 years old and had lived in Spain more than other immigrant participants in the current study. A point is that most of the participants mentioned that through exposure to English either prior to moving to Spain or after their arrival, they had become familiar with some of the traditional and cultural events in Spain and other countries such as England or the US (e.g. participants number 59, 52, 40, 36 and 33).

Through the comparison with their own traditional or cultural events, they had a rather cosmopolitan and fair view of these festivals or other traditional or cultural events in Spain and because of that they did not experience cultural shock or cultural trauma because they had already been familiar with considerable number of these events either in reading texts or in the YouTube and the English films. The next strategy the Iranian immigrant participants responded was about learning Persian and English grammar explicitly via study the related books. The data analysis is presented in Table 67 and 68.

Table 67

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: the Frequency of Learning Persian/English Books or Grammar Explicitly

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	1	30.0	-29.0
no	59	30.0	29.0
Total	60		

Table 68

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: the Frequency of Learning Persian/English Books or Grammar Explicitly

Chi-Square	56.067 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As shown in Table 67, the data in this regard is drastic and even shocking, 59 out of 60 people answered negative to this question (Table 68); by the same token the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 58 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = 56.067, p = .000$), a forgone result based on the frequency of the responses. Some of the possible explanations for this might be found in the interview or the qualitative part of the data. The qualitative data collected from the interview revealed that since most of the parents lacked the academic knowledge to deal with the Persian grammar explicitly and because they could not afford to have a private tutor to do the job and because doing the assigned homework in Spanish was too time-consuming and challenging for their children, the option of teaching the Persian grammar seemed too far-fetched for them and even if

they ventured to do so, that it could be a continuous effort and investment would be highly unlikely due to undeniable omnipresence of Spanish language outside home. Regarding English, the findings were interesting. The matter of fact was that English is a foreign language in Iran and is restricted to classroom teaching and learning. On the other hand, despite the effort to introduce Communicative language Teaching (CLT) as the mainstream approach to teaching and learning English; due to lack of facilities, the effort has not been successful (Foroozandeh, & Forouzani, 2015). The consequence has been resorting to Grammar Translation method in teaching with deductive and explicit instruction of grammar by the teacher in the class. Therefore, almost all of the Iranian participants had learned grammar through deduction and explicit instruction and they were familiar with how it was done.

However, due to the fact that their linguistic competence in their first language Persian (implicit), was completely different from their competence in English (explicit), they did not manage to fuse these two and learn the grammar of their mother tongue explicitly. However, some of them reported to have studied the English grammar explicitly due to availability of source-books and their prior familiarity with the procedure (e.g. participants number 7, 25, 26, 14, and 15). A related strategy to maintain their heritage language was the learning of new words in their heritage language and English. The result is presented in Table 69 and 70.

Table 69

*Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies:
Learning New Words*

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	59	30.0	29.0
no	1	30.0	-29.0
Total	60		

Table 70

*Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language
Maintenance Strategies: Learning New Words*

Chi-Square	56.067 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

- 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As presented in Table 69 and completely in line with the strategy of paying attention to pronunciation and in sharp contrast to improving their grammar explicitly, almost all of the Iranian immigrants participating in this study indicated that they did learn new words in their heritage language.

Consequently, as presented in Table 70, the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(1) = 56.067, p = .000$). The relevance of English in this case was clear; most of the participants stated that they had experienced the problems for either reading comprehension or expressing their idea in English language and they realized the significance of vocabulary for successful and optimal communication. They seemed to have generalized their awareness of the importance of vocabulary in English to

improve their vocabulary in Spanish as the language of the majority. The other important strategy was opting for Persian and English schools if available; the result of which is presented in Table 71 and 72.

Table 71

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Opting for Persian/English Schools if Available

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	5	30.0	-25.0
no	55	30.0	25.0
Total	60		

Table 72

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Opting for Persian/English Schools if Available

Chi-Square	41.667 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As shown in Table 71, only five out of 60 Iranian immigrant participants in this study opted for Persian school if available. Consequently, the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 72 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(1) = 41.667, p = .000$). This is an interesting finding on the Iranian immigrants' strategy to maintain their heritage language. Whereas most of them seemed to care about learning new words, or paid attention to the correct pronunciation in communicating with their children, when it came to schooling, they tried to make the best of sending their children to Spanish schools rather than the ones where the dominant mode of communication was Persian to facilitate the

acculturation process. They deemed attending Persian schools as a hindrance rather than a facilitative factor for acculturation. Therefore, it can be said that they had two seemingly contradictory approaches to maintaining their heritage language: maintaining it at home but mastering the language of the host country outside home to enable their children to be a viable member of the host community.

The effect of English was quite remarkable here. The first-generation immigrants deemed proficiency in English paramount to the success for the second-generation immigrants along with the proficiency in Spanish as the language of the majority and for this reason they deemed anything that deviated the second-generation immigrants from this goal a hindrance (e.g. participants number 5, 11, 15, 27, and 55). For them, the appropriate investment was in Spanish and English schools and schooling and taking the precious time by sending their children to Persian schools was not in line with this goal.

The next strategy to maintain the heritage language and English was opting for using heritage language or English in public with peers sharing the same language to protect the privacy of their conversation. The result is presented in Table 73 and 74

Table 73

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Language chosen in Public with Peers Sharing the Same Language to Protect the Privacy

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	25	30.0	-5.0
no	35	30.0	5.0
Total	60		

Table 74

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Language chosen in Public with Peers Sharing the Same Language to Protect the Privacy

Chi-Square	1.667 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.197

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

According to the information presented in Table 73, twenty five participants opted for this strategy while 35 did not approve of it as a viable strategy to maintain their heritage language and English. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 74 did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(1) = 1.667, p = .197$).

Based on the information in the interview, it seemed that the more years the immigrants were in Spain, the more Spanish friends they seemed to have. However, since most of them had moved to Spain as adults, they kept speaking in their heritage language with their peers who shared the same heritage language or with their family members if they were available.

It was revealed in the interview that speaking in Spanish with Spanish friends was more like a tendency to assimilate or acculturate rather than a mere desire. Therefore, most of the friendship was for a practical reason and whenever they could, they opted for their heritage language which sounded like a respite, boosting their morale. English played its role mostly with PhD and master's students (e.g. participants 3, 4, 6, 7, and 40) who were more at home with English speaking friends

they were acquainted with at university, since the medium of communication was English besides Spanish and finding international students with a different heritage language with appropriate level of proficiency proved a safe haven and a preferred way of socialization for both parties involved. Relying on English, the language they had already learned and was handy was a lot more preferable than using Spanish, the language they were not as competent. Assignment of homework in Persian and English was the other strategy in the questionnaire and the followed up interview. The result is seen in Table 75 and 76.

Table 75

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Persian/English Homework

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	3	30.0	-27.0
no	57	30.0	27.0
Total	60		

Table 76

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Persian/English Homework

Chi-Square	48.600 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As shown in Table 75, only three (e.g. participants number 1, 6, 9) out of 60 Iranian immigrant participants in the current study stated that they had some homework assigned by heritage language teachers to their children as a strategy to maintain it. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 76 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2(1) = 48.600, p = .000$). This result is in complete conformity with Iranian immigrants' inclination to opt investing in Spanish and English language rather than 'spending the precious much-needed time' on maintaining their heritage language, indicating that the desire for a successful acculturation overrides the desire to maintain their heritage language in the case of their children as second generation immigrants. English was dominant here next to Spanish.

Most of the Iranian first-generation immigrants deemed English along with Spanish a good investment for their children's successful acculturation and practical success in different aspects of their prospective life and for this reason, they preferred to encourage their children to practice both Spanish and English to be able to embark on the challenges they will most likely encounter (e.g. participants number 2, 7, 15, and 16).

The results of the qualitative data showed that, there are no Persian schools for Iranian immigrants in Spain. Most children, who start the kindergarten in Spain, learn Spanish and English and the parents fail to teach them their heritage language or they seem reluctant to teach them written Persian. On the other hand, to have a viable means of communication, the parents are willing and want their children to speak Farsi because they themselves lack the desired proficiency in either Spanish or English. The point is that there seems to be a discrepancy between what the parents'

desire and what they actually do; although they repeatedly stated that the maintenance of the heritage language in the family was important to them, in reality they never made an actual effort like hiring a Persian tutor for their children. They were simply afraid that their children would not be able to find friends at school and later not be able to socialize and find suitable jobs.

In the process of assimilation and acculturation, they preferred to adopt a pragmatic stance rather than idealist one in the favor of being a successful member in the host community rather than an immigrant with a strong sense of heritage culture and language. In other words, they took pride in the degree their children could speak English or Spanish as criteria for successful acculturation rather than sticking with Farsi as the heritage language.

In the case of children whose parents immigrated to Spain when they were older than ten, they had a decent level of written as well as spoken Farsi, but after a couple of years of residence, they forgot or neglected written Farsi as a result of going to Spanish schools, but they continued speaking Farsi at home with their parents to varying degrees. However, that too inevitably diminished with each passing years due to the dominance of the mainstream language outside home, leading to total elimination in the case of second generation.

Another reason mentioned in the interviews on parents' reluctance to ask their children to do Farsi homework was that, learning English and Spanish was daunting on their own right and pushing the children to do their best to maintain their heritage language seemed to be too much to ask; in fact, it was deemed to be a sort of hindrance rather than a facilitative move in line of progress or success in acculturation progress.

Most parents' inability to teach their children academic Farsi was another reason and the added expense of hiring a professional Farsi teacher rendered it difficult if not impossible for many of the participants to invest in it. All they could manage to offer was reading Farsi books at home with diminishing frequency with each year passing.

The above-mentioned points on the parents' attitudes to put the premium on learning Spanish as the mainstream language and English as the lingua franca on the utilitarian view, flies in the face of the findings that bilingualism has been shown to provide solid cognitive benefits (Baker, 2006; Bialystock, 2009; Budiayana, 2017). Cummins, 2000; Liang, 2018), indicating that social or practical factors override mere cognitive ones. This social situation does not seem to be restricted to Spain and Iranian immigrants in Spain. According to Porters and Hao (1998, 2002), in America, the situation is not better, although the United States has always been a multilingual and a multicultural society, as a society it has not prided itself on maintaining or fostering the languages of its immigrants. In fact, the mother tongue of most immigrants has hardly ever continued beyond the third generation. Using the heritage and English language with peers who have the same language was the next heritage language maintenance investigated. The result is presented in Tables 77 and 78.

Table 77

Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Using the Heritage and English Language with Peers who Share the Same Languages

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
yes	54	30.0	24.0
no	6	30.0	-24.0
Total	60		

Table 78

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Using the Heritage and English Language with Peers who Share the Same Languages

Chi-Square	38.400 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

As can be seen in Table 77, fifty four out of 60 participants responded positively to this question, i.e. spoke in heritage language with peers who had the same heritage language. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 78 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(1) = 38.400, p = .000$). One of the reasons for this might be having some privacy beside the unconscious desire to maintain their heritage language.

However, when it came to parents' attitude on their children's option for choosing friends or associating with Spanish or Persian friends, the qualitative data collected from the interview revealed some interesting information.

Almost all adult participants who had children stated that they wanted their children to have Spanish friends. They reasoned that they had moved to Spain so that their children would socialize and make friends with Spanish people to improve their language faster and enter the community faster. The ones who had moved to Spain with children older than five were very concerned about their children not being able to make friends or seem as the 'queer foreigner' at school, so they hired Spanish tutors to precipitate the process of language learning. The parents whose children had been

born in Spain or had moved to Spain when they were toddler were less concerned with this matter, since they would grow up in the host language setting and culture and become Spanish native speakers. The role of English was revealing here. Parents as the first-generation immigrants did not have negative feeling towards English; in fact, they considered mastery in English as valuable a matter as that of Spanish language and deemed both languages important for a successful acculturation and practical success in the outside world (e.g. participants 20, 24, 38, and 58). An important strategy was the language the Iranian immigrants opted for at home. The result is seen in Table 79 and 80.

Table 79

*Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies:
Languages Used at Home*

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Persian	11	20.0	-9.0
Spanish	28	20.0	8.0
English	21	20.0	1.0
Total	60		

Table 80

Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies: Languages Used at Home

Chi-Square	7.300 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.026

0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

Contrary to what could be expected, as shown in Table 79, heritage language came third with 11 participants compared to English language with 21 and Spanish language with 28 participants. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table

80 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($X^2(2) = 7.300, p = .026$). This can be an indication that whereas the dominance of Spanish as the mainstream language could be expected at Iranian immigrants' home, it also indicated the significance of English language as an intermediary language in maintaining the socio-familial structure among Iranian immigrants in Spain. The supporting data comes from the qualitative part of the research, since the current study was mixed method.

According to the qualitative data, participant one mentioned that he used Persian at home but he had to opt for English at work due to his limited level at Spanish proficiency; in other words, English was used as the auxiliary or a survival language in daily communication. According to this participant, because he managed to do whatever he wanted via English, he never exerted any further effort to improve his proficiency in Spanish, a clear example of Lez effect studied by Schmidt (1983), who managed his daily communication by resorting to pragmatic competence at the expense of grammatical competence which consequently remained at a low level. Social factor was the other determining factor in the choice of language of communication; participant two mentioned that the main reason for using Spanish at home and work was due to her marrying a Spanish man which necessitated mastery of this language and using it as the main means of communication. Related to this point, a recurring theme which emerged in the interview was marrying Spanish men or women that necessitated using Spanish rather than English extensively by some Iranian immigrant participants in the current study. Limited years of exposure to Spanish language and doing a post graduate course which was run in English was the main and recurring reason for some participants studying for their degrees for choosing English as the medium of communication both at home and university; i.e.

socio-pragmatic considerations were the determining variable in choosing English for these participants.

The other reason for choosing Spanish language was the difference in the acculturation between the first generation and the second generation Iranian immigrants in Spain; participant five mentioned that because her two children had no tendency to use the parents' heritage language (Persian), the parents had to use Spanish at home. The main reason could have been overriding effect of children's exposure to Spanish as the mainstream language and the gradual subtractive bilingualism (Landry & Allard, 2010) in which the second language gradually substitutes the first language.

The effect of period of exposure was seen in the responses of some of the participants; according to one of them (participant nine), the kind of job he had (running a restaurant) put this participant in direct contact with people from different heritage backgrounds and made using Spanish the safest option in meeting the demand of communication with them and the long years of residing in Spain (25 years) made it possible for this participant to be a functional and viable member of the community.

The affective variable played a role in choosing the language too; participant 11 stated that despite his fluency in Spanish and his ability in using it for flawless communication, he enjoyed reading Farsi books, so he did it whenever he could. The field of work determined the language of use for some participants, a case in point was participant 13, a computer programmer, who stated that the language of programming was internationally English so he did not make further effort to excel in Spanish beyond the elementary level and that level sufficed in survival level. The utilitarian consideration was the most important reason for some participants in

choosing the certain language; participant 14 was a lawyer for Iranian immigrants and his job required him to speak mainly Farsi in presenting cases in the court of law. However, he mentioned that for the successful communication with the judges or other respective people he had to seek the assistance of professional translators too. Living alone and lack of necessity to use English were the reason mentioned by this participant to adopt a relaxed attitude to improve his Spanish.

Exactly the same reason, the universality of language of music was a similar reason participant 15 (a musician) mentioned for his lack of effort to improve his Spanish. The English housemate was another reason this participant had to resort to English in meeting the communicative requirement.

The effect of occupation could be seen in the other participants; participant 18 who was a salesperson felt pressure to improve his Spanish on daily basis and this was done at the expense of studying or using either Farsi (his heritage language) or English less and less.

Generally speaking, the continuous but unstoppable effect of Spanish on gradual diminishing Persian language was a sad fact that had to be recognized by some immigrant participants. A case in point was participant 43 who stated that "he's happy overall but upset that his ten year old son is not willing to speak Persian even when we talk to him in Persian, he responds in Spanish". However, when the language spoken or read in general was the question as the strategy to maintain the heritage language, a different picture emerged. The result is seen in Tables 81 and 82.

Table 81

*Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language Maintenance Strategies:
Language Spoken or Read*

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Persian	38	20.0	18.0
Spanish	10	20.0	-10.0
English	12	20.0	-8.0
Total	60		

Table 82

*Chi-Square Goodness of Fit on Iranian Immigrants' Heritage and English Language
Maintenance Strategies: Language Spoken or Read*

Chi-Square	24.400 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

According to Table 81, Persian language dominated in this regard with 38 participants using it for reading and speaking, with Spanish language coming second with 12 and English in the third place with 10. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit in Table 82 showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value ($\chi^2 24.400 (2) =, p = .000$). a distinction which must be made in this regard is that the degree of using the heritage language decreases considerably by each generation and in the second generation Spanish, English, and Persian are used in that order, if Persian is used ever.

4.6 Discussion

In this section, the findings of the current study will be put in the perspective of the theories and will be compared and contrasted with other studies on the similar topic to see what niche it fills.

One of the most important questions investigated in the current study was the effect of English as the intermediary language on Iranian immigrant identity issue, the different components of which were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings in both quantitative as well as qualitative part attest to the concept of identity raised by McKinney & Norton, (2008); Norton, (2010); Norton and Toohey, (2002); on the significance of this concept among Iranian immigrants in Spain.

The various experiences expressed in the qualitative part were a clear indication of the vicissitudes that Iranian immigrants went through in using or considering English as the intermediary language in connection to their process of acculturation. Most of what they did such as opting for Spanish or English schools rather than heritage language school and the parents' unwillingness to make their children as the second generation immigrant maintain their heritage language and instead invest their time and effort to improve their proficiency in English and Spanish languages can be interpreted as their effort towards convergent acculturation (Schumann, 1986) and English language played its key role in this regard because most of the first-generation immigrants considered it as a solidifying factor in social and economic success of their children as the second-generation immigrants.

Iranian immigrants' accounts both negative and positive are in line with cross-cultural transition (Kenedy, 2001) in which the immigrants face challenges in deciding to maintain or lose their heritage language depending on a plethora of

factors. In the current study, the situation got even more complicated due to the interweaving effect of English as the intermediary language. The data clearly showed that it mediated in almost most of the strategies adopted by the Iranian immigrants and the decisions they made in the categorical or partial maintenance or loss of their heritage language.

The Iranian immigrants' feeling on different aspects of their heritage language constituted all three components of ethnic identity proposed by Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe, (2004) and the relevance of English as the intermediary language to all these three variables: According to Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe three elements of ethnic identity are: centrality of the group to one's self (perceived importance of the group membership), positive affect associated with the group (feelings of joy and pride of being a group member), and in-group ties (perceived strength of affiliation to one's group).

In the current study, the detailed analysis of the data revealed all of these elements among Iranian immigrants; the way they felt towards different aspects of their heritage language, culture, the place of their birth, religion on the one hand, and different strategies they adopted to both maintain their identity and acculturate. English as the lingua franca played its important role to varying degree and the impact was far from straightforward and simple; it was bound with career, addressee, socio-economic status, gender, to name a few.

As stated, English influenced all three factors; the centrality of the group to one's self was affected as there was a gap between the first and the second-generation immigrants on the use of English as the intermediary language to either fill the proficiency gap or as the catalyst for smooth acculturation. It also affected the

positive effect associated with being a member of the ethnic group because the trend in the second-generation immigrants was more likely towards adopting either English or Spanish languages at the expense of losing their heritage language.

The findings of the current study were a clear and tangible illustration of the identity issue postulated by Berger and Luckmann's (1966) as the concept of secondary socialization (as opposed to the primary one) with all its ramifications associated with the intermediary effect of English language especially when we consider the possible cultural, political, economic, and social rift between immigrants' own and those of the host country or community and the different ways through which this rift was about to be bridged with varying use of English in tandem with various strategies adopted by the Iranian immigrants. Besides this, the different variables involved the choice of appropriate strategies to maintain or lose the heritage language or English language as the intermediary language in the process of acculturation was in line with what Toohey (2011) considered relevant in contemporary identity theories in that the individual language learner is part of a larger social world.

The dynamic relationship between the identity maintenance or loss of the Iranian immigrants in Spain was a clear indication that as Toohey stated, this is against the static view of second language learners depicted by previous theories of language learning in which the learners were considered as either motivated or unmotivated or introvert vs. extrovert categorically, with nothing in between.

The result of the quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that in line with post-structuralist identity theories, these various affective, economic, cultural, social, and familial descriptors should be constructed as dynamic variables over time and

space, and sometimes affect each other in contradictory ways within a single individual; and once more the effect of English must not be ignored because as seen in different parts of data analyses, its effect was more than marginal in the acculturation process. An example of this seemingly contradictory strategy as an indication of dynamic nature of investment (Norton, 2010) as opposed to the static nature of motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), was seen among adult Iranian immigrants who, on the one hand and on the psychological grounds, desired to maintain their heritage language by participating in some of the heritage culture ceremonies as an emotional haven to cope with difficulties associated with acculturation and heritage language or English language maintenance; and on the other, it shows the interplay of sociological factors in their desire to aspire for the best as far as their children as the second-generation immigrant were concerned, so they did their best for their children to be part of the host culture and community even at the expense of forgetting their heritage language and for this purpose they put premium on improving their English language and Spanish language proficiency.

The reason for stressing English to be mastered along with Spanish language was because they considered it as an equally important variable in paving the way to their children's success in different fields.

The Iranian parents' desire for their children's successful acculturation can be interpreted on the basis of the relationship which was postulated between imagined community and imagined identity and in the case of the current study the role that English as the intermediary language played on the actualization of this (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; Silberstein, 2003; Carroll, Motha & Price 2008; Kendrick & Jones 2008), because according to these researchers

most of the investment is in line with what the learners or immigrants imagine where they would find themselves in the future and they invest to achieve those goals accordingly. This can explain seemingly diverse strategies adopted by different immigrants, including, sending their children to bilingual schools (Spanish or English) rather than sending them to heritage language schools, putting the premium on learning Spanish and English at the expense of heritage language because that was regarded as the necessary prerequisites for success in the target community.

According to Kanno and Norton, (2003), such communities include affiliations, such as nationhood or even transnational communities, or based on the data in the current study, it can also include the neighborhood, colleagues, and classmates at schools, colleges, or universities, which extend beyond the local sets of relationships.

Such imagined communities may well have a reality as strong as those in which learners have current daily engagement, and might even have a stronger impact on their investment in language learning; an example of which was mentioned previously. The corollary one can draw is that to the varying degree of alignment of the imagined community and the actual one, the immigrants' sense of identify can be boosted which in turn can affect their investment in language learning positively. By the same token, due to the discrepancy between what is imagined and what is faced in reality, the identity and consequently investment can be expected to be impacted negatively. In the current study, different aspect of Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards different aspects of native Spanish speakers' perceptions about the immigrants and the mediation of English language in this regard were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively and the result attested to this notion.

The finding also seems to be contrary to a regression analysis reported by Lee (2002) according to which, heritage language proficiency correlated with the strength of bi-cultural identification, since in the current study, utilitarian considerations were deemed more important than bicultural and mutual understanding between Iranian immigrants and Spanish speakers with English playing its important roles as the intermediary language.

The Iranian first-generation immigrants' emphasis on their children's proficiency of Spanish or English language stems from what Shohamy (2011) states as one of the negative effects of prejudiced outlook of the dominant culture on the assessment of the bilingual immigrants.

The social and consequential validity of the test native speakers and immigrants are tested by (Messick, 1994) can have a deleterious effect on the morale, identity and investment (Norton Pierce, 1995; Norton, 2000) of immigrants in maintaining their heritage language in the favor of the language of the host community in the hope of expectation to gain more success at the cost of losing their first language at varying degrees.

On the grand scale, one can say that these educational orientations cannot be considered detached from the general social, political, as well as economic policies imposed from above to enforce conformity on the part of the immigrants. A clear example of this can be the situation in the U.S. as one of the most sought-after destinations for the immigrant where, generational differences in heritage-language maintenance can tangibly be seen between the succeeding generations so that the majority of third- and later-generation immigrant family members speak only English (Alba, Logan, Lutz, & Stults, 2002). The same situation was clearly in the current

study in which the difference between the first and the second-generation Iranian immigrants in gradual vanishing of the heritage language was quite discernible.

The effect of English as the intermediary language was not in the favor of heritage language maintenance but to marginalize it even further by claiming a portion of the immigrants' time and effort to master English besides Spanish language and leaving less and less time to be invested to maintain the heritage language.

The qualitative data collected via the interview in the current study is in conformity with the findings of Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Ng (2008) in that the factors affecting the immigrants and their language maintenance should not be considered fixed and immune to modification.

The participants in the current study both in Madrid and Barcelona stated that with passing years and gaining proficiency in Spanish and making use of English as the intermediary language appropriately to fill the gap in the interaction with the Spanish speakers, some of the negative attitudes on the part of native speakers changed for better, a result that is in line with the attitude of adolescents in Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Ng's study on generation after their arrival in Catalonia as indicative of the dynamicity of these factors. The similarity between the responses of the current study's participants and those of Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Ng can be summarized in (1) differences in attitudes between native speakers of Spanish and immigrants soften with passing years, if not completely, but to varying degrees; (2) disparities in status and solidarity even out, again not categorically but in a varying degree with many intervening variables; and as some of the Iranian immigrants expressed their eagerness to send their children to bilingual schools, (3) bilingual proficiency is now valued by and for both communities.

The results of the current study confirm the fluid and dynamic nature of identity and investment proposed by Norton Pierce (1995). Related to this finding is the notion reported in Schecter et al.'s (1996) study of Latinos' maintenance of Spanish in San Francisco and also documented in this study that successful maintenance or loss of the heritage language is not the result of a one-time decision but of a series of choices that serve to affirm and reaffirm the commitment to the heritage language maintenance or loss with awareness.

Despite all these, the significance of the strategies the Iranian immigrant parents adopted at home cannot be ignored. As Fishman (1991) argues that the home environment and language habits are the most critical indicators for maintaining heritage language through the generations. Tse (2001a, p. 681) notes that parents can affect the amount of heritage language that their children are exposed to by their use of it at home, by locating outside opportunities that use the heritage language, by having their children attend heritage language-specific schools or programs, and by visiting the country or countries where the heritage language is spoken. The effect of English on evening out the differences between the Iranian immigrants and Spanish speakers was remarkable due to the positive attitude on the part of Spanish speakers towards English, i.e. English was used as the leverage to lessen some of the tensions between these two groups.

Ideological clash can be another potentially important factor affecting immigrants. In this regard, the process of assimilation and adaptation for Muslim immigrant in general and Iranian immigrants which by identity are Muslim in particular gets worse due to recent rise of Islamophobia in Europe (Abbas, 2007; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011).

The qualitative data in the current study, though negligible, depicted some cases of hatred on the grounds of religious reason; cases of being harassed or insulted in the work place or public transports such as metro were examples that indicated this negative attitudes on the part of Spaniards towards the Muslim community. The interesting point was that most of the Iranian immigrants did not associate themselves with a certain religious affiliation, i.e. they were not religious fanatic and still they had to tolerate some cruel social stigmas because of some stereotypes. The main reason for this case is that this has painted Muslim immigrants, including Iranians, as threats to the European way of life (Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999).

Due to increasing number of Muslim immigrants in Spain since 1990, to an estimated 2-3% of the current Spanish population (Muslims in Europe, 2005), some punitive measures have been adopted by Spanish lawmakers (Hurd, 2012) and all Muslims including Iranian immigrants with their cosmopolitan attitudes towards religion seem to bear the social, economic as well as educational brunt. These negative attitudes which were stated and expressed by many participants in the current study supports the issue raised by Hurd that many Spanish lawmakers and citizens perceive the Muslim population in Spain as unwilling and unable to adapt and fit into Spanish culture.

Regarding the effect of English as the intermediary language, it did not seem to have that much to play in this regard. It seemed that the negative attitude towards religion outweighed the alleviating positive effect English language could have in reducing the tension between the two groups. Of course, once more, this cannot be considered categorically, rather the effectiveness of English varied depending on extra-linguistic variables such as social, political, historical variables to name a few.

Even though Spain has relatively relaxed immigration regulations, and many Spaniards do not pressure immigrants to assimilate (Encarnación, 2008), the 2004 Madrid bombings and the fact that nearly 25% of Spaniards were unemployed (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2012) led to questions regarding immigration in Spain. In fact, many Spaniards started to feel threatened by Muslim immigrants and began to not only blame immigrants for economic and social problems, but started demanding that immigrants either leave Spain or become 100% Spanish (Bad news days, 2010; Tremlett, 2012). Muslim immigrants are no longer believed, by a majority of Spaniards, to be willing to adapt to the Spanish society and therefore are not considered as welcomed in Spain and proficiency in English though an important variable in other cases, seems to be not that much helpful in this regard.

Sadly, associating Iranian immigrants with Islam and the unwillingness to make a distinction between Iranian and Arab makes the situation worse for many Iranian immigrants. The fear, unfriendliness and the reluctance to communicate that participants in the current study expressed is in line with Croucher, GalyBadenas and Routsalainens's (2014) study that explores the intricate relationships between a dominant group's fear of an immigrant group, religiosity, and the dominant culture's perception of whether an immigrant group is motivated to culturally adapt.

One point must be added here; proficiency in English is a potential factor which is an indication of an immigrant group's willingness to acculturate, however, the degree of this potential variable differs from context to context and it hosts a plethora of factors for its actualization. However, the results of the current study contradict some of the findings of Croucher, GalyBadenas and Routsalainens's study.

Contrary to their finding that threat from an immigrant group was negatively correlated with perception of immigrant motivation to adapt, the Iranian immigrant participants in the current study, showed resilience to overcome this barrier and most of them seemed to have achieved success to varying degree in this regard and as stated previously English as the intermediary language played its role from negligible to considerable degrees in this respect.

The second finding of that study is that highly religious members of the dominant culture were less likely to believe Muslim immigrants are motivated to culturally adapt, but it was not seen in the current study, perhaps due to the fact that the participants in the current study did not encounter such religious native speakers.

Related to the phenomenon of Islamophobia and from a broader perspective, the sense of being threatened by the wave of immigration can set the stage against immigrants. In the current study, different elements and components of prejudice were analyzed and the result attests to the prejudiced attitudes held by Spanish native speakers towards immigrants in general and Iranian immigrants in particular. When members of a dominant culture (i.e. Spanish) believe their values/beliefs and their group is threatened in some way, prejudicial reactions are likely to develop in response.

The negative prejudice defined as negative attitudes or beliefs generally expressed through negative emotions or communication toward an out-group (Duckitt, 1992), reflected itself in the form of rejection reported by some Iranian immigrants. On the other hand, the reported success on the relationship between the second-generation Iranian immigrants in Spain and the Spanish native speakers seem to be a clear indication that as Allport and Ross (1967) argued, increased contact

between groups, particularly high quality contact should decrease prejudice between groups and facilitate adaptation into the host culture.

An important point in this respect was the role English language played in obviating some of the contentions between the Spanish speakers and Iranian immigrants, those Iranian immigrants who had high proficiency in English managed to sort out the tension more easily than those who lacked that proficiency. Thus, as the result of the data analyses, especially the qualitative one indicates, the amount of contact members of the dominant culture had with Iranian immigrants was partly related to levels of prejudice. Therefore, it can be said that as shown by the data, adaptability on the part of Iranian immigrants and receptivity on the part of the dominant group played positive a role in assimilation or acculturation.

The final point is that, due to multi-factor variables involved in the process of acculturation and the heritage language maintenance, any finding must be reported with caution. For example, the points mentioned by some of the participants on the negative aspects of heritage language maintenance on employment flies in the face of the point mentioned by Vallance (2015) according to which, the chance of being employed for multilingual people is highly likely due to the need increasing need in international companies to such skill. The reason is that language skills may be part of the solution to the growing need for multilingual and multicultural citizens.

PART VI: CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Final remarks

Having thus examined the qualitative as well as the quantitative data collected via questionnaires and interview and also discussing the findings in the previous section, the current section aims to draw together a synthesis of the key findings resulting from the analysis and discussion aforementioned. Some conclusions derived from them will be made along with ideas for possible further study of the subject matter. Moreover, the research limitations of this thesis, as well as potential areas of study will be included. But before moving on to the most significant findings derived from the transitivity and gender analysis, it is convenient to revise the hypotheses this dissertation opened with.

5.2. Degree of confirmation of the hypotheses

As explained in the introductory chapter, the work undertaken in this thesis has investigated four main research questions, both quantitatively to test the respective hypothesis through Chi-squared goodness of fit and qualitatively to fathom the detailed probable explanations for the approval or rejection of the hypotheses. The four main research questions were investigated from 71 different perspectives or sub-questions to have as comprehensive view of the variables of interest as possible.

The first research question was how Iranian immigrants defined their ethnic identity in relation to different social/attitudinal factors in Spain. This main research question was explored through some detailed sub-questions.

The second research question was what Iranian immigrants' attitudes were to their heritage language maintenance in Spain. This main research question was investigated from different perspectives drawn from the related literature on the variable of interest.

The third research question was what Iranian immigrants' attitudes were to English language maintenance in Spain. This research question was studied using 14 sub-questions. The final research question was what specific measures Iranian immigrants took for their heritage language maintenance in Spain, which was detailed through sub-questions.

5.3. Conclusions

The prime objective of this dissertation was to explore the relationship between the ethnic identity of Iranian immigrants in Spain and their first language maintenance or loss with regard to the role of English as a multicultural identity marker while acquiring the L3, Spanish. In particular, different variables which could play a role on each of these cases were explored at first quantitatively using Chi-square goodness of fit and then qualitatively using the data extracted from the interviews were used to come to a viable conclusion.

The first research question intended to investigate how Iranian immigrants defined their ethnic identity in relation to different social/attitudinal factors in Spain. For this purpose, the Chi-square goodness of fit was run to test the sub-hypotheses. The first element was Iranian immigrants' sense of hostility they experienced in relation to Spanish culture and people. The result of the statistical analysis showed that Iranian immigrants experienced significantly low level of hostility from Spanish people, a positive sign for the acculturation process and maintaining their identity and

heritage language or using English language as the intermediary language in this process.

The second component was Iranian immigrants' sense of dislike they experienced in relation to Spanish culture and people. As expected, the result was similar to the previous case, indicating a significantly lower level of the feeling of dislike experienced by Iranian immigrants in relation to Spanish people and culture. The third component related to the main research question was Iranian immigrants' sense of hatred in relation to Spanish culture and people. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed that, Iranian immigrants experienced this feeling even significantly lesser than the previous two negative feelings.

The other feature investigated in this regard was Iranian Immigrants' sense of rejection in relation to Spanish culture and people. Despite the fact that Iranian immigrant's attitudes towards a sense of rejection was less positive than their feeling towards the previous variables, generally, their perception about a sense of rejection significantly deviated from the expected or hypothesized value indicating a positive feeling towards the host culture and people in maintaining their heritage language and identity as well as using English language and moving gradually towards acculturation without a feeling of threat.

The next variable in relation to the main research question was Iranian immigrants' sense of disdain in relation to Spanish culture and people. The result showed that Iranian immigrant experienced significantly lower degree of this negative feeling than the hypothesized value; another indication of a positive feeling on the part of the Iranian immigrants towards the host Spanish culture and natives.

Iranian Immigrants' sense of superiority in relation to Spanish culture and people was the next variable in this regard. The result showed that Iranian immigrants experienced this feeling on the part of the native speakers more than the feelings presented previously.

The next factor was Iranian Immigrants' Sense of Sympathy in Relation to Spanish Culture and People. The result showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that Iranian immigrants received significantly high level of the sense of sympathy from Spanish people.

The next variable was Iranian immigrants' sense of acceptance in relation to Spanish culture and people. The result indicating that Iranian immigrants received significantly high level of the sense of acceptance from Spanish culture and people, a positive sign for the acculturation process and maintaining their identity and heritage language or English language as the intermediary language in this process.

Iranian immigrants' sense of admiration in relation to Spanish culture and people was the next variable studied in relation to the first research question. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that Iranian immigrants experienced significantly high level of the sense of admiration towards and from Spanish culture and people.

Iranian immigrants' sense of warmth in relation to Spanish culture and people was investigated and the result showed that Iranian immigrants experienced significantly high level of the sense of warmth towards and from Spanish culture and people.

The last variable related to the first main research question was Iranian Immigrants' sense of affection in relation to Spanish culture and people. The result showed that Iranian immigrants experienced significantly high level of the sense of affection towards Spanish culture and people, a positive sign for the acculturation process and maintaining their identity and heritage language or English language as the intermediary language in this process.

The second research question was what Iranian immigrants' attitudes were to their heritage language maintenance in Spain. The first sub-question to investigate this main question was Iranian Immigrants' attitudes towards the main language spoken at home during their childhood to their sense of who they were. The result of the Chi-square goodness of fit showed that they considered this variable significantly important to varying degree; an important variable in the process of maintaining or losing their heritage language and English as the mediating language during their acculturation process in Spanish culture.

The second component in relation to the main idea was Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards their religion/the religion they were brought up to their sense of who they were. The result showed that most of the Iranian immigrants ascribed low significance to religion which could be interpreted as a positive factor in that, it could indicate their accepting attitudes towards other religious precepts which could be conducive to better acculturation process.

The third sub-question was Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the region or city where they lived to their sense of who they were because it was hypothesized that the attachment to the region or the city where one lives can be a defining variable

in one's sense of who they are, a defining variable in their attempt to maintain or lose heritage language as part of their identity.

The result showed a significant difference in that Iranian immigrant did consider the city or the region they lived as an important factor in their identity formulation. Iranian Immigrants' attitudes towards the country where they were born to their sense of who they were, was the next variable connected to the main research question. The result indicates that the vast majority considered it either important or very important in defining their identity. This was hypothesized to play a role in their identity and the strategy they adopted for their mother language maintenance or loss along with English as the mediating language in the process of their acculturation in Spain.

The next point in this regard was Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the region or city where they grew up to their sense of who they were. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized indicating that they considered this variable significantly important.

The last variable related to the main research question was Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards the color of their skin to their sense of who they were. The result showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that Iranian immigrant regarded differences related to skin color as an indication of race and identity as less importance, hence having a cosmopolitan attitude to inter-racial communication.

The third research question was what Iranian immigrants' attitudes were to English language maintenance in Spain.

The first sub-question in this regard was Iranian immigrants' attitudes towards English language to their sense of who they were. The result showed that statistically significant number of Iranian immigrants considered English language either important or very important in their sense of who they were in the process of acculturation in Spain, which was hypothesized to have practical implication on their life style and communication. The next factor in this regard was Iranian immigrants' sense of Pride towards English Language. The role of English language in Iranian immigrants' acculturation was the next variable related to the role of English. The result of the analysis showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that they believed that English language played a statically significant role in their acculturation process.

The third variable which was investigated was Iranian immigrants' attitude on the importance of fluency vs. accuracy. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed that neither of these factors were regarded more important than the other one and both were considered equally important for successful communication and acculturation.

The other variable in this regard was Iranian immigrants' attitude on the effect of their lexical vs. syntactic proficiency in English on their acculturation in Spain. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed that the importance of vocabulary over grammar reached a significant level among the participants, indicating that they considered vocabulary as more important than grammar in their successful communication via English as an auxiliary means during their acculturation process.

Iranian immigrants' attitude towards the significance of English language skill for their acculturation was the next variable related to the third main research question. In this regard, the result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed the significance of speaking skill over reading which could have practical implication for investing on one skill rather than the other.

Finally, Iranian immigrants' attitude on the effect on English on Spanish Language was investigated. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed Iranian immigrants' high attitude on the important effect of English on Spanish language in general or learning in particular.

The fourth research question was what specific measures Iranian immigrants took for heritage language maintenance in Spain. The first component in this regard was Iranian immigrants' being an active member or having a sense of Involvement in L1 community. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value, indicating that they took part in some traditional events to maintain their sense of involvement in their heritage culture to maintain their sense of integrity.

The second point was Iranian immigrants' frequency of learning Farsi books, Farsi grammar explicitly. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value; a forgone result based on the frequency of the responses.

The third component was Iranian immigrants' paying attention to correct pronunciation consciously. The result showed a significant number of the participants did pay attention to the correct pronunciation so that their children as the second-generation immigrant would be exposed to the correct pronunciation, which based on

the undeniable effect of the Spanish culture and mainstream language, it was more like fighting a losing battle and most of the parents did so only as an ego trip rather than a viable strategy to maintain their heritage language. Iranian immigrants' learning new words in Farsi language was the next variable.

The result showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value, indicating that Iranian immigrant did learn new words in their L1 explicitly to be updated. Iranian immigrants' opting for Farsi schools if available was the next point in this regard. It was clear that the majority of the Iranian immigrants opposed sending their children to Farsi schools if available. The main reason stated was because they deemed opting for Farsi schools as a hindrance to the smooth acculturation process of their children as the second-generation immigrants; a point they considered of utmost importance for the prospective success of their children and judged the appropriateness of every strategy based on the alignment with this criterion.

Iranian immigrants' using heritage language in public with peers sharing the same language to protect the privacy of their conversation was the next factor. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit did not show a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that the Iranian immigrant participating in the current study who were in favor or against this did not outnumber each other statistically significantly and approximately equal number of the immigrants opted for or refrained from using their heritage language to fend off their privacy with peers with the same L1.

The next variable related to the fourth research question was Iranian immigrants' reading Farsi passages aloud for kids. The result of the Chi-Square

goodness of fit showed a significant deviation from the expected or hypothesized value indicating that a vast majority of Iranian immigrants did not do this. The reason mentioned was children's reluctance to communicate in their parents' heritage language, and parents' reluctance to put their children under undue pressure to maintain their heritage language at the expense of losing the needed time to invest in their Spanish or English as much-needed languages for successful acculturation.

The next variable of interest was Farsi Homework Assigned by Heritage Language Teachers. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit indicated that vast majority of Iranian immigrants did not opt for this strategy. There seems to be a discrepancy between what Iranian parents desired and what they actually did; although they repeatedly stated that the maintenance of the heritage language in the family was important to them, in reality they never made an actual effort like hiring a Farsi tutor for their children because they regarded it some sort of depriving their children of the valuable time and energy they considered essential to master either English or Spanish language as the diving board for the successful accommodation in the target culture.

The next heritage language maintenance strategies were Iranian immigrants' watching Iranian films and cartoons, reading Farsi books and magazines. The result of the Chi-Square goodness of fit showed that vast majority of Iranian immigrants participants in the current study, either sometimes or often were engaged in these activities. The other strategy for maintaining the heritage language on the part of Iranian immigrants was using the heritage language with peers who had the same heritage language. The result showed that most of the Iranian young participants stated that they resorted to this strategy to have some privacy. However, when it came

to their parents, the result of the qualitative data analysis showed that the parents desired otherwise, wanting their children to have Spanish interlocutor, on the practical ground to master their Spanish to accommodate better.

Using language at home was the next variable of interest as the strategy used by Iranian immigrants to maintain their heritage language. The analysis of the data showed that Spanish was the most frequently used language at home by the Iranian immigrants. This was followed by English used as the auxiliary language for acculturation. The least frequently used language was Iranian immigrants' heritage language Persian.

5.4. Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Conclusions Drawn from the Research

Since the current study dealt with Ethnic identity of Iranian immigrants in Spain and their first language maintenance or loss with regard to the role of English as a multicultural identity marker while acquiring the L3, Spanish; different aspects of language in tandem with social aspects were involved and studied. In this section, these different aspects will be illustrated.

The first sociolinguistic issue to consider was the relationship between the age of arrival and the language proficiency (as discussed extensively in the related literature) and as a result, the degree of acculturation. Based on the data analysis, especially the qualitative one, it was clear that this variable played a decisive role on the degree of acculturation among the young or the second- generation immigrants in their success in acculturation. However, this was accomplished at the expense of losing their heritage language; a point which was supported by their parents as the first-generation immigrants who encouraged their children to invest in Spanish or English. The age of arrival seemed to affect almost all aspects of language.

The next sociolinguistic issue observed was related to Vygotskyan concept of ZPD as English played an important role in supporting the identity of Iranian immigrants in the acculturation process, acting as scaffold whose importance would gradually decrease as the immigrant mastered the mainstream language. In the same vein, for those immigrants who had invested in learning Spanish, the dependence on English was minimum from the day of arrival.

Similar to what was mentioned on the effect of English on Iranian immigrants' acculturation was the affective aspect of English language, more specifically the concept of motivation as the extensively debated issue in the field of ESL/EFL. The data analysis showed that, there was a mixed feeling in this regard; half of the immigrants had instrumental motivation towards English language, using it as a scaffold to go through the acculturation process, while the other half who felt proud of their English, were assumed to have integrative motivation; considering English not as a transient language in the process of acculturation, to be neglected in the later stage of acculturation but rather as a language being used along with Spanish language in different occasions. In this regards, it can be stated that generally speaking, the scaffolding effect of English on Iranian immigrants was undeniable due to the number of participants who regarded it as either helpful or very helpful, indicating the significant role English played as the lingua franca not just in Far East but in a European country like Spain.

The effect of English as a lingua franca especially in the world of business was so tangible with Iranian immigrants that it overrode the effect of even Spanish language as one of the most widespread languages in the world in Spain; hence, mastery of English is a guarantee for success in this aspect for some immigrants

Another point on the effectiveness of English for acculturation of Iranian immigrant can be explained on contrastive linguistics grounds between the English and Spanish languages. The lexical similarity between the two languages seemed to have facilitative effect on the transfer process which acted as a positive effect for those immigrants who were below the ideal proficiency level in Spanish as the mainstream language. This can be considered from the point of view of strategic competence in that the immigrants sometimes had to resort to avoidance strategy and opt for using English equivalents of those words they lacked in the Spanish language.

The other important linguistic issue observed in the data, was the distinction made in the literature between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), or conversational proficiency, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), or academic proficiency (Cummins, 2008). The point here was that, the proficiency level on one of these aspects did not guarantee the success in the other one, hence, some participants, depending on the social or academic as well business ambiance in which they found themselves, had to resort to one or the other of these proficiency aspects more or less.

The overriding effect of BICS was quite evident in the qualitative data of the current study according to which the participants stressed its significance for optimal and viable social interaction. For some, in the absence of this, the CALP did not or could not be expected to guarantee the successful communication.

The other linguistic conclusion drawn from the result of the current study was that the dichotomy between accuracy vs. fluency in English for the immigrants did not prove important since both were regarded important by the immigrants. This indicates that contrary to the principles propagated in some approaches or methods on

the supremacy of one over the other, both aspects must be dealt with equally in the language institutes if the optimal result is expected.

Another linguistic dichotomy was the importance of vocabulary vs. grammar in English as the auxiliary language for the immigrants. Vocabulary was considered more important than grammar by the participants, indicating that more emphasis should be put on improving this linguistic component, a point that is lacking in the current grammar-based educational EFL system in Iran. Still the other dichotomy was the significance ascribed to speaking vs. writing. Speaking proved more important compared to writing which shows the mainstream attitude about the significance of this skill in interpersonal communication. The implication can be allocating some of the classes time to improve this skill in EFL contexts where, outside of class, little opportunities are available for students.

The other linguistic conclusion evident in the data was the exposure to linguistic input as an important strategy which was ignored by Iranian immigrants on practical or pragmatic grounds. Most Iranian immigrants preferred ignoring exposure to their heritage language through books or explicit instruction in the favor of mastering the Spanish language as the required way for acculturation. Contrary to direct exposure to grammatical rules in their heritage language, Iranian immigrants did prefer to pay attention to pronunciation; a possible reason might be to communicate that sense of belonging to the heritage language when they specifically talked to their kids at home so that they would be exposed to the correct Persian language, or at least they would be familiar with the way it sounded. Again contrary to grammar, almost all of the immigrants taking part in the current study were eager to learn new words in their

heritage language as a strategy for maintaining it, a clear indication of the significance that they attributed to lexicon as an indispensable linguistic component.

A quite relevant factor related to the heritage language maintenance was the investment that Iranian immigrant were willing to make in the form of opting for Farsi schools if available. The results showed that very few of the immigrant participants were willing to make such an investment. Most preferred to invest the energy and time of their children as the second- generation immigrants on learning either English or Spanish on the practical or pragmatic grounds to improve the likelihood of their acculturation which was associated with the ultimate sense of success.

In line with successful acculturation, more than half of the participants did not opt for heritage language in public to protect their privacy; a probable reason could be alienating themselves from the public by doing so. Another clear example of investment in maintaining the heritage language was Iranian immigrants' willingness to have homework assigned to their kids. As expected in the light of the previous variables, most of them disagreed on this. The justification for this was that by doing so, they would deprive their kids of the valuable time and effort they needed to improve much needed proficiency in English or Spanish.

A point to clarify the issue discussed is that when it came to using heritage language with peers who had the same L1, most of the immigrants agreed to do so, but they refrained from doing so to protect their privacy in public. Therefore, it seems the situation plays a crucial role here; being alone with the peers with the same L1 could trigger the use of the L1 but in public it was eschewed on the grounds of being signaled as an immigrant, a point which was resisted by most of the immigrants.

The main sociological index for maintaining or losing the heritage language could be considered using it at home. The data analysis showed that the heritage language was the least frequently language used at home as the medium of communication with Spanish as the most frequent and English as the second most frequent language. This can be a clear indication of the Iranian immigrants' preferences to acculturation even at the expense of losing or ignoring their heritage language.

A contradictory finding was the language spoken or read, according to which Iranian immigrants' heritage language was the most frequently used, followed by English and Spanish being the least spoken or read among the three; a point which seems baffling. An Explanation can be the fact that the heritage language was not the favorite language at home but its use elsewhere made it the most favorite language in general, indicating its popularity outside home. By the same token, Spanish which was the most favorite language at home, was used as the least favorite outside home.

5.5. Future lines of research

Due to the nature of the research questions, for the most part, the current study was cross sectional. To tip the balance for the comprehensive understanding, the future studies can be longitudinal in nature to study the relationship between the identity and the immigrants' heritage language maintenance or loss with the mediation of English as the lingua franca, to investigate the gradual change in the probable relationship and the degree found among the variables of interest in detail. In this regard, the important variables such as age of arrival in the Spain, first-generation immigrants' jobs, social status, marital status, financial status, as well as the effect or the relationship between all of these variables in their home country on their degree of

heritage language maintenance or loss with the mediation of English can be further investigated, longitudinally if possible.

On the other hand, the possible causes of change in the attitudes and consequently on the different strategies taken by the immigrants can be studied in depth and detail. Besides the points mentioned, the relationship between, or if the prospective researchers can opt for the cause and effect research design, the effect of some variables on the other can be studied between the first and the second generation immigrants. Some interesting results were reported in the current study; detailed and further studies can be conducted to fill the gap and enrich the related literature.

English Summary

The wave of immigration to European countries from around the globe because of political, economic, and ecological factors and consequently the various problems associated with millions of diaspora cannot be denied in the current world.

The current study intended to investigate one of the inherent problems related to the effect of English on heritage language maintenance or loss among Iranian immigrants in Spain.

The main area of interest was the role that English language played in shaping Iranian immigrants' sense of identity with different social and attitudinal factors in Spain taken into account. The next main research question was Iranian immigrants' attitudes to the role of English on their heritage language maintenance and also the maintenance of English itself besides their own heritage language in Spain. The last main research question was about the role that English language played in Iranian immigrants' choice of strategies in maintaining their heritage language (Persian).

It is worth mentioning that each of the main questions had minor questions that fathomed the complex process of heritage language maintenance or loss and the role that English language played in this regard.

Due to challenges involved in social studies, convenient sampling was used to collect the required data. The data collection procedure was through the questionnaire that had been used in various studies and their validity and reliability had been confirmed. The second procedure was interviewing with the participants. The collected data was

analyzed via chi-square goodness of fit, and correlation to answer the research questions. The analysis of the data showed that Iranian immigrants had positive attitudes on variables of admiration, hatred, rejection, disdain, superiority, acceptance, and hostility. The analysis of the interview revealed that English did play varying roles in Iranian immigrants' feeling but its effect was mediated through myriads of social, cultural, and affective factors and the relation was far from being straightforward and simple.

Concerning the role of English on the maintenance of their heritage language and their attitude about maintaining English language itself in the process of acculturation, the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data showed that while they tried to learn Spanish as the main language, they did use English in many different occasions as the auxiliary language on which they had better mastery. Their resorting to English was affected by many social, cultural and cognitive variables. Their attitudes about maintaining English language showed that different aspects of English attracted their attention, and depended on the situation in which they were.

Data analysis also revealed that English had a role to play in their choice of strategy in maintaining their heritage language such as resorting to either their heritage language or English to preserve their privacy occasionally or in finding a suitable job in which mastery of English was required. The study has implication on sociolinguistic and socio-cultural aspects of second and foreign language learning.

Resumen en Castellano

La ola de inmigración a los países europeos de todo el mundo debido a factores políticos, económicos y ecológicos, y en consecuencia los diversos problemas asociados con millones de diásporas, no se puede negar en el mundo actual.

El presente estudio pretendía investigar uno de los problemas inherentes relacionados con el efecto del inglés en el mantenimiento o pérdida de la lengua natal entre los inmigrantes iraníes en España.

El área de interés principal fue el papel que desempeñó el idioma inglés en la configuración del sentido de identidad de los inmigrantes iraníes, teniendo en cuenta diferentes factores sociales y actitudinales en España. La siguiente pregunta principal de la investigación fue la actitud de los inmigrantes iraníes hacia el papel del inglés en el mantenimiento de su lengua natal, así como el mantenimiento del inglés en sí mismo además de su propia lengua natal en España. La última pregunta principal de la investigación fue sobre el papel que desempeñó el idioma inglés en la elección de estrategias de los inmigrantes iraníes para mantener su idioma (persa).

Vale la pena mencionar que cada una de las preguntas principales tenía a su vez preguntas menores, que explicaban el complejo proceso de mantenimiento o pérdida de la lengua natal y el papel que jugó el inglés en este sentido.

Debido a los desafíos que implican los estudios sociales, se utilizó un muestreo adecuado para recopilar los datos requeridos. El procedimiento de recogida de datos fue a través del cuestionario que se había utilizado en diversos estudios y su validez y fiabilidad habían sido comprobadas. El segundo procedimiento fue entrevistar a los participantes. Los datos recopilados se analizaron a través de la bondad de ajuste de chi-cuadrado y la correlación para responder a las preguntas de investigación.

El análisis de los datos mostró que los inmigrantes iraníes tenían actitudes positivas en las variables de admiración, odio, rechazo, desdén, superioridad, aceptación y hostilidad. El análisis de la entrevista reveló que el inglés desempeñó diversos papeles en el sentimiento de los inmigrantes iraníes, pero su efecto estuvo mediado por innumerables factores sociales, culturales y afectivos, y la relación estuvo lejos de ser directa y simple.

En cuanto al papel del inglés en el mantenimiento de su lengua natal, así como su actitud sobre el mantenimiento del inglés en sí mismo en el proceso de aculturación, los análisis de datos cuantitativos y cualitativos mostraron que mientras intentaban aprender español como idioma principal, usaban el inglés en diferentes ocasiones como idioma auxiliar, ya que en él tenían un mejor dominio. Su recurrencia al inglés se vio afectada por muchas variables sociales, culturales, afectivas y cognitivas. Sus actitudes sobre el mantenimiento de este idioma mostraron que diferentes aspectos del mismo atraían su atención, dependiendo de la situación en la que se encontraban.

El análisis de los datos también reveló que el inglés tenía un papel que desempeñar en la elección de su estrategia para mantener su lengua natal, como recurrir a su lengua o al inglés para preservar su privacidad ocasionalmente, o para encontrar un trabajo adecuado en el que se requería el dominio del inglés. El estudio tiene implicaciones en los aspectos sociolingüísticos y socioculturales del aprendizaje de una segunda lengua y una lengua extranjera.

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