8 Conclusion

Throughout this book, narratives have been drawn upon that originally came from interviews with 38 Ukrainians. At times, their experiences crossed over in commonality, and at other times differences came to the forefront, both of which are equally important to acknowledge when working in the language and identity space. Due to the large scale of the data collected (over 50 hours/over 600,000 words), it was not possible to represent everything important that every participant said. However, I have made every attempt to provide a fair representation of key findings from across the data. An overview of the key findings from this book is presented again below, followed by themes that have emerged from across the book.

Chapter 1 began the book with an introduction to the context of language in the participants' home country, Ukraine. An abbreviated recent linguistic history was presented, along with recent events of note, such as the brawl in the Ukrainian Rada over the Russian Language Bill. Historical patterns of sociopolitical alignment and language dominance were also presented in an effort to show the connections that exist between the two. The theoretical concepts of dialogism and discursive positioning were then presented within this context.

Chapter 2 began by presenting the overall framework of the book through a discussion of post-structuralism and social constructionism, including their treatment of identity in sociolinguistic and applied linguistic research. Furthermore, the theoretical constructs of imagined communities, imagined identities and investment were also introduced into the identity research context. To begin exploring these ideas, the pilot research conducted in 2009 with Olesya, Yana and Alyona was introduced. Findings from this chapter included the prevalence of ideological Discourses within the narratives that are intertextually referenced, as well as the importance of a defined national identity for some Ukrainians since the Orange Revolution, which has led to investment in an imagined community at the national level. Finally, it was found that participants' reflexive positioning and alignment or disalignment with Discourses are influenced by their individual social networks and individual lived experiences.

The next chapter (Chapter 3) began with an introduction to the current study, in which 38 interviews were conducted with Ukrainians during 2014 and 2015. The war-related events that took place near and during the interviews were presented, as well as a discussion of the criteria for participant selection and the research methods used. The use of interactional sociolinguistics with a critical lens for the method of analysis was also discussed. The first findings from the present study were then presented, including the discursive implications of choosing how to name a particular event (war, conflict, etc.). Namely, it was argued that participants' reflexive positioning and stance regarding the war could be uncovered through the examination of underlying semantic meaning in the terminology they used in the narratives. Additionally, it was found that participants connected discursively through the chronotope of the Ukrainian War to access an imagined collective experience. Part of this experience also included what it means to be Ukrainian, which was found to focus on the investment in and upholding of shared ideals. Finally, participants were found to discursively achieve commonality by in part highlighting the differences of the 'others'.

Chapter 4 continued looking at Discourses of the war, this time focusing on how participants discursively construct who is responsible for the war. The findings for this chapter focused on the types of linguistic strategies that participants drew upon in making their arguments, including metonymy, repetition, personification, intertextual references, dialogic echoing and discursive positioning. Metonymy in particular was found to be a way that participants constructed responsibility without (for the most part) pointing to individuals. Finally, the juxtaposition of stories of valor and villainy (Marples, 2009) served as a way to accentuate positions of offense and defense in the war.

Stories of 'changing your mother tongue' were the focus of Chapter 5. These unexpected stories from the narratives were introduced and explored, particularly through ideas of embodiment. Participants' constructions of this ideology as historically embedded or as a result of recent events were also investigated. It was found that institutional symbolic capital was, in particular, associated with the former, while embodied symbolic capital was particularly drawn upon in the latter. Finally, diaspora Discourses were discussed, especially focusing on how they echo home country Discourses, but each (home country and diaspora Discourses) still maintain a focus of their own.

Continuing to focus on diaspora communities, Chapter 6 introduced the Model of Immigrant Identity, Investment & Integration. This model was used to explore how participants living in the diaspora recursively negotiate and renegotiate their identities in relation to both the home and host societies. Furthermore, the trajectories of home discourses were discussed. It was argued that the real trajectories were in fact different from the imagined trajectories found within the diaspora communities,

therefore resulting in a mismatch between participants' expectations and experiences when returning to the home country.

Finally, Chapter 7 began by looking at counter-discourses to the dominant ideological Discourses discussed in the chapters thus far. In particular, it was found that some of the participants, especially the younger participants, aligned with the counter-discourse that it does not in fact matter what language you speak, nor should it. This was found to be part of these participants' alignment with an ideal multilingual, multicultural Ukraine. Furthermore, returning to translingual practices (as opposed to friendly non-accommodation) was found to be a way that these participants highlighted the acceptance of diversity. The implications for research and theory are further discussed below.

Discursive Themes

The current study has been grounded in a post-structuralist approach to language and identity research, which allowed for the recognition of the moment-to-moment shifting and ever-changing nature of identity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 2013; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). The wide-ranging narratives found across this study confirm the validity of this approach. No matter who the participants were, what they were discussing, or the position they were taking, a discourse analysis of their narratives provided evidence of each and every participant's negotiation and renegotiation of identities throughout their interviews. Positioning Theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; van Langenhove & Harré, 1991) and dialogism (Bakhtin, 1992 [1981]) further provided tools with which to track the identity work that participants were doing (Butler, 1999) throughout the interviews.

Throughout the chapters, the participants showed time and again how they discursively used linguistic devices to position and reposition themselves and others in their narratives. In particular, when having difficult discussions, such as those to do with responsibility and/or critiquing other people and nations, participants found metonymy, repetition, personification and voicing of absent others particularly useful. For example, Lev found useful the discursive force in personifying Ukraine as a helpless country being literally beaten by a larger, more powerful Russia. Likewise, Raisa, Lev and Anatoliy found repetition to be a way to indirectly critique other countries' lack of sincere assistance in Ukrainian war relief efforts.

Furthermore, double-voicing through dialogism (Bakhtin, 1991 [1982]) and intertextual references to past events and texts were also linguistic devices of which all of the participants made use. However, to be able to both notice and interpret these references and echoes, the researcher must look beyond just the discourse itself and instead analyze the discourse in light of their background knowledge of the context and of the participants. Interactional sociolinguistics therefore brings an

advantage not found within more traditional conversation analysis because IS looks *beyond* the discourse to also include any relevant information from both within and outside of the discourse itself. This need for background information points to the necessity of the researchers themselves investing in the communities and contexts of which the participants are a part. While researchers do not need to have originally come from within the communities with whom they are researching, they do need to invest significantly in them and spend time getting to know them. Without researchers' own familiarity with the communities and contexts, they will undoubtedly miss intertextual references and dialogic voicing that are crucial to the messages being conveyed.

Reconsidering the Local and the Global

As the participants in this book showed (especially in Chapter 6), both the local and global contexts *must* be considered (cf. Heller, 2001) when analyzing discursive events. For example, for participants within the diaspora communities, their identity negotiation and renegotiation were further complexified by the war in Ukraine, which made them revisit to whom and to where they are loyal, and how they show this. Therefore, when doing research with diaspora communities, it is crucial to consider current events in the home country alongside current events in the host country (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2013). Both home and host country events affect participants' daily lived experiences; therefore, a full analysis is not complete without considering both. Furthermore, the changing events that take place in home and host countries must also be tracked, as they affect participants' imagined identities and the imagined communities of which they see themselves a part.

Additionally, throughout the interviews, there were a multitude of dialogic echoes of previous discourses. These discourses came from across time and space; while some were recent, others were historical; while some were from the host country, others were from the home country. When specifically looking at dialogism in the diaspora communities, it is crucial to also consider dialogic echoes with the home country and what the other trajectories have been of these original source discourses. This is because while diaspora Discourses reflected home country Discourses, each still had a trajectory and focus of its own. Additionally, this different focus within the diaspora communities reflected different investments and the motivation for those investments. For example, Chapter 5 explored how the 'change your mother tongue' Discourse existed in both the home and host countries. The members of the diaspora host countries also had to consider which heritage language(s) they would pass on to their children and the practicalities involved in their decisions. Therefore, when analyzing dialogism in discourse, researchers also need to pay heed to individuals' differing motivations and

investments in order to truly understand what is happening in those communities and for those individuals.

Finally, as explained in Chapter 1, it has long been thought that a sociopolitical and ideological regional divide in Ukraine is the key to understanding connections between language and identity. However, while this may still be true in some cases, Chapter 7 also shows the growing importance of generational experiences. A new focus on a multilingual, multicultural Ukraine, including an expressed non-importance of specific language spoken, seems to have arisen among many of the younger participants. These participants, regardless of the region from which they originally come or where they currently live, positioned themselves as aligning with a counter-discourse to 'real Ukrainians speak Ukrainian' – that of 'it does not matter what language you speak'. This apparent generational move, regardless of region or current location, thus shows the importance of a widely varying sample of participant backgrounds.

Changing Your Mother Tongue

Finally, this entire book, but especially Chapter 5, has major implications for research on embodiment and for mother tongue research. First, much research on the embodiment of language has talked about languages as being a fixed part of the individual, such that languages with which a person feels an identity connection are therein always connected to that person's identity, becoming a part of that person (e.g. Krumm, 2001, 2004, 2010; Prescher, 2007). However, as shown by the participants taking part in the 'change your mother tongue' efforts, not all people feel that language is a fixed part of themselves. Therefore, it is more appropriate to think of embodied language as something that can be negotiated and renegotiated, such as how we think of identity. This then ties ideas of embodiment closer to ideas of indexicality, such that both are manifested discursively and can be drawn upon as needed and desired in various sociocultural interactions (Blommaert, 2005; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, 2016; Mendoza-Denton & Hall, 2010).

A similar challenge is thus posed to mother tongue research. In general, a 'mother tongue' is discussed as something fixed and dependent upon the language (or languages) used by a person as they grow up. However, the participants in this study directly challenge that, as they conceptualize what they are doing as changing their mother tongue. This then brings up the question – then what *is* a mother tongue? If we continue to ascribe to the former definition, then we are affectively invalidating the views of the participants in this study and many more like them. So, who is best served by the definitions being used? Who do these definitions focus on? Hopefully those reading this book will find themselves aligned with the critical turn in social science research and answer that the participants and associated individuals should be the ones to benefit from the

definitions we use. Therefore, we must reconceptualize what a mother tongue is and perhaps look to a more fluid conceptualization of a mother tongue that better captures the lived experiences and complex identities of those to whom this term applies.

Concluding Thoughts

In concluding this book, I would like to present a final excerpt. This excerpt comes from Ruslana who is from the Eastern Ukrainian war zone but was studying abroad on an internship at the time of the interview. Ruslana's excerpt reflects the ideas presented in this book, such as post-structuralist views of negotiated and renegotiated identity, self- and other-positioning, intertextual connections to prior and future texts, investment and imagined identities, among others. At the time of the interview, Ruslana had also just lost all of her PhD research, as it had been at her university when her university was attacked by rebel forces. She explains:

> I was working at the International Department, for s- so… s- so long time, and I always… er… I was always dreaming of winning a scholarship and going abroad. ((sighs)) And… ((laughing)) when I did that, when… now I'm in [city], I'm… here for three months, but I'm… I- I can't say that I'm… er, completely happy. Because I'm thinking about my future… I know that I don't have job, I don't have a place where I could return back home, and I can be…um… safe, so… I- I need just to change all my dreams, I… need just to change all my perspectives, for my future career, because… er… if earlier, if… several months ago I thought that I should… defense my PhD the- thes- thesis, and… I could be… er… ((laughing)) the vice-rector, or the rector, and everything will be ok in my… life. So, now I- I understand that it is impossible, because our university… it is closed. Er… and… it is under the control of Lugansk rebels, er… pro-Russian… rebels, and… it… i- ((short sigh)) i- it is impossible to continue working at the International Department in such… circumstances. So I need just to- to think about my new… career, about my new job, I'm looking for another opportunities.

Ruslana's story is heartbreaking, but it is also an excellent example of Ukrainian perseverance and a willingness to invest in a new future, whatever that may be. Identity is thus something that shifts and changes with the context and circumstances. Just like Ukrainians themselves, what these ideas and associated practices of 'being Ukrainian' look like take on many different characteristics. However, it is this diversity which makes Ukraine such a complex, beautiful place, connecting at individual levels with people from all walks of life and from all different beliefs. Is not this also simply the nature of identity?