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Patterns of Greek Language- Usage Among Greek Children: A preliminary study

Abstract

The Greek language-usage patterns among primary and secondary Greek-Canadian students in Montreal were examined in relation to parental ethnicity, occupation, and work habits. The results indicated that the majority of Greek-Canadian students tended to speak Greek with the parents, but that only half of them speak Greek with their siblings or Greek friends. The variables associated with amount of Greek spoken at home were parental ethnicity, and maternal occupation and work habit. The implications of these findings in terms of ethnic identity development and future Greek-Canadian generations are discussed.

Résumé

L'analyse a été fait de l'usage du grec chez des élèves helléno-canadiens du primaire et du secondaire de Montréal par rapport à l'ethnicité, à la profession, et aux habitudes de travail de leurs parents. Les résultats révèlent que la majorité des élèves helléno-canadiens parlent généralement grec avec leurs parents, mais que seulement la moitié d'entre eux parlent grec avec leurs frères et soeurs et leurs amis grecs. Les variables qui ont un rapport avec l'usage du grec à la maison sont l'ethnicité des parents ainsi que la profession et les habitudes de travail de la mère. L'auteur analyse les conséquences de ces constatations au niveau de l'acquisition d'une identité ethnique et des futures générations d'Helléno-Canadiens.

In a time when ethnic minorities all around the world are attempting to gain recognition and rights, it is not surprising that the ethnic minorities in Canada may also be making new demands for the protection and preservation of their heritage, language, culture, customs, and way of life.

Canada has implemented policies that facilitate the provision of assistance to all the different ethnic groups that make up the population of Canada so as to enable them to conserve their heritage, culture, and ethnic identity. Through a number of institutions coordinated by the Ministry of Multiculturalism and the Secretary of State, the Canadian government is supporting the rights of minorities for their preservation and development.

The renewed interest in the protection of minorities, and the new demands that the Canadian society may be facing, makes the development of efficient and effective means of transmitting ethnic identity from the first (immigrant) to the second (Canadian-born) generation essential not only for the individual, but for the ethnic group and the Canadian society that hosts the ethnic group, as well.

The development of effective means for the transmission of ethnic identity is important for the individual because it facilitates well-being and adjustment. It has been suggested, for example, that positive ethnic identity is related to better adjustment (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990), higher self-esteem (Smith, 1991), positive self-evaluation (Turner & Turner, 1982), and better general identity development (Aries & Moorhead, 1989). The effective transmission of ethnic identity is important for the ethnic group, inasmuch as the future development and preservation of the group's heritage depends upon the successful transmission of ethnic identity from the immigrant parents to their Canadian-born children; the ethnic group will be assimilated if the second and third generation will not identify themselves as members of the ethnic group. While the extent to which ethnic identity can be retained as one is distancing oneself from the ethnic society, or whether the host country should encourage individuals to try to retain their ethnic identity are highly debatable, it has been the position of the Canadian government that ethnic identity is something to be fostered and to be allowed to develop as fully as possible.

Finally, the social benefits of facilitating the successful transmission of ethnic identity to the members of ethnic groups include psychological benefits such as the development of healthy personalities and well adjusted citizens. It has been proposed that individuals of ethnic origin who have not formed a sound ethnic identity tend to do poorly academically and socially (Spencer, Swanson, & Cunningham, 1991; Verkuyten, 1990), have trouble with the law, and remain in the lower end of socioeconomic development (Rodriquez & DeBlasse, 1982; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987).

Thus, it may be advocated that the development of a sound ethnic identity has positive effects on: a) the overall happiness and psychological well-being of individuals of ethnic origin, b) the individuals' performance and participation in their host country, and c) the development and continuance of the ethnic group. By the same token, it can also be advocated that the inefficient development of ethnic identity can impede the individual's socio-psychological development.

Consequently, it becomes important for both the social institutions and the ethnic communities to determine the strategies which should be followed so as to maximize the effective transmission of ethnic identity.

Research on Ethnic Identity

An examination of the ethnic identity research literature indicated that the means of fostering the development of ethnic identity have not been examined. Ethnic identity has been studied in conjunction with a number of other variables such as self-esteem (Martinez & Dukes, 1991), ego development (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990), race (Turner & Turner, 1982; Richman, Clark, & Brown, 1985), socioeconomic status (Richman, Clark, & Brown, 1985; Smith, 1991), self-concept (Spencer, Swanson, & Cunningham, 1991), body image (Verkuyten, 1990), gender (Martinez & Dukes, 1987, 1991; Hurstfield, 1978; Jeffries & Ransford, 1980), gender roles (Davenport & Yurich, 1991), counselling (Ruiz, 1990), and relations with other cultures (Verkuyten, 1990), but not in relation to the variables that foster its development.

One reason for the absence of such studies may be that identification of the variables affecting the transmission of ethnic identity has only recently become important; heretofore, researchers have concentrated more on establishing links among a variety of variables that are related to ethnic identity development (such as self-esteem, SES, and race) and not on the strategies that enhance ethnic identity itself.

Ethnic Identity and Usage of Ethnic Language

The only variable that the literature identifies as being related to the development of ethnic identity is language acquisition and usage (cf. Hurstfield, 1978; Martinez & Dukes, 1987; Verkuyten, 1990). It has been proposed that language acquisition is one of the important determinants of identity transmission. One of the major ways to determine the ethnicity and ethnic background of one is to identify the mother tongue of the individual. However, while the importance of mother tongue is being presented as a crucial one, most studies assume rather than examine its importance. When,

for example, a Turkish and a Dutch sample were used in a study examining ethnic-identity development and self-esteem (Verkuyten, 1990), it was assumed that both samples spoke their ethnic language, and that the ethnic languages, Turkish and Dutch respectively, were the primary languages spoken among the samples. Similarly, studies comparing Chicanos and black Americans (Hurstfield, 1978), and Hispanic and white Americans (Martinez & Dukes, 1987), identify the samples not only on the basis of race but also on the basis of the language they speak. These studies assume two things; first, individuals of ethnic origin speak their ethnic language and, second, the acquisition of ethnic language is an integral part of the development of ethnic identity.

The theory behind these assumptions is that the "bridge" between the immigrant parents and their children is their ethnic language, with all its nuances and cultural symbols (Ioannou, 1983). It is through language that the immigrant parents transmit the elements of ethnic identity to their offspring. Language is seen as the link that uniquely relates and connects the two generations (Ioannou, 1983; LeVine & Campbell, 1972). If the language is successfully transmitted, the heritage, culture, and customs are more easily and more successfully transmitted.

Background and Purpose of Study

It was the goal of this study to explore the way language relates to the development of ethnic identity. For that purpose the large, homogeneous and well-organized Greek ethnic group of Montreal was selected as a source of subjects in this study, in order to examine the process of their language transmission.

The Greeks represent one of the biggest and most successful ethnic communities in Québec. With almost 60,000 Greeks residing in Québec (Statistics Canada, 1986), and with more than 120 organizations and community centers to serve their medical, educational, cultural, spiritual, religious, communication, occupational, and social needs, the Greek community in Montreal can be considered institutionally complete (Gavaki, 1983).

The Greek community has been the object of a number of studies which examine a variety of variables related to the development and progress of the Greek community in Québec, and in Canada in general. Research related to the family structure (Gavaki, 1979, 1983), inter- and intra-generational conflict (Gavaki, 1991), socio-personal difficulties and adjustment problems (Messaris, 1985), the role of the church in the Montreal Greek community (Halkias, 1985), the need for social services (Stathopoulos, 1971), and, finally, the manner in which ethnicity has played a role in the

success of Greek immigrants in Canada (Ioannou, 1983) has been conducted.

These studies have examined the profile of the Greeks in Canada, concentrating on the needs and adaptation process of the immigrant population. No known studies have been conducted to examine the continuance and transmission of ethnic identity from the first to the second generation Greek-Canadians, with the exception of a study conducted by Bombas (1983). He examined the relationship between a number of personality variables, ethnic identity, and Greek-language acquisition in two types of schooling. Half of his sample was attending a trilingual day-school system where 40% of the school subjects were taught in Greek, 40% in French, and 20% in English, while the other half of the sample was attending a regular French or English day-school with a supplemental Greek-language program taught on Saturdays for five hours per week. The comparison of the two groups indicated that the students attending the trilingual day-school tended to have a better developed ethnic identity, higher self-esteem, and a more positive outlook towards "Greekness".

While the study by Bombas (1983) sheds light on the importance of language acquisition in the development of ethnic identity, it concentrated primarily on the types of schooling facilitating language acquisition, rather than on the process through which language acquisition relates to identity development.

There are two possible explanations for the lack of research on examining the relationship between frequency of Greek spoken and ethnic identity. First, the Greek migration is a relatively recent phenomenon that occurred mostly after the second world war (Ioannou, 1983). Consequently, the earlier studies conducted dealt with the problems that immigrants faced in their new country (Chimbos, 1980). Researchers concentrated on the problems which were more pressing for the immigrant Greeks trying to survive in their host country rather than on the transmission of ethnic identity to the second generation (Ioannou, 1983). Second, it is only during the last years that the first generation started to be concerned with the future of their offspring. The immigrant generation faces the possibility of ethnic extinction and acculturation. The need to protect their ethnic identity and to transmit it to the next generation becomes pressing (Hatjinikolaou, 1988).

The purpose of the present study is to: a) investigate the language-usage patterns among second generation Greek-Canadian students in the metropolitan area of Montreal, and b) identify variables associated with the propensity to learn and use the Greek language in everyday communication. A number of socioeconomic and demographic variables, such as type of

school the children were attending (French only, or French-Greek), paternal and maternal ethnic background, SES, paternal and maternal occupation, work shift and hours of work of parents are examined in relation to degree of Greek spoken with parents, siblings, and friends.

The findings of this study will provide information regarding the linguistic profile of the Greek community in Montreal, and with those variables that seem to facilitate the utilization of the Greek language. These findings have implications for the preservation of ethnic identity, ethnic and linguistic continuance, and educational planning of the Greek community in Québec. The findings will also provide the background information needed for examining closely the relationship between language usage and ethnic identity, and for developing effective means to transmit ethnic identity.

Method of study

Sample

Children attending three different educational systems in the metropolitan Montreal area participated in the study. The children were attending one of three different types of schools: *Socrates*, *Platon-Omeros*, or *Aristotelis*.

Socrates is a daily semi-private elementary school which provides teaching in three languages (40% Greek, 40% French, and 20% English). *Socrates* has grades 1 to 6, and operates in four different campuses in the metropolitan Montreal area.

Platon-Omeros is a community-supported Saturday heritage-language school where children attend five hours per week instruction of the Greek language, history, geography, and religion. The *Platon-Omeros* school has grades 1 to 11 and it also has four campuses located in the metropolitan Montreal area.

Aristotelis is a community-supported Saturday high school where children receive instruction of the Greek language, history, religion, geography, philosophy, and social sciences for six hours per week. The *Aristotelis* has grades 7 to 11 and its campus is located in the downtown area. The school is reserved for the graduates of the elementary school *Socrates*. The rationale behind the exclusive rights of the *Socrates* school graduates to register in the *Aristotelis* high school is that these students have been exposed to six years of daily instruction of the Greek language, and thus they have a more advanced knowledge of Greek when compared with the children who attend the *Platon-Omeros* schools.

Procedure

A questionnaire prepared by the cultural attaché of the Greek consulate of Montreal was administered to all subjects during one of their classes. This questionnaire was prepared for statistical purposes for the Ministry of Education of Greece. The subjects, assisted by their teachers, were requested to fill out the questionnaire and their teachers were responsible for helping the students. The questionnaire had both dichotomous (yes/no) and qualitative questions where the subjects were to provide more than a "yes" or "no" answer. The questions focused on two general areas: a) on the demographic and ethnic background of the subjects, including their parents' ethnicity, place of birth, occupation, and work habits, and b) on the Greek language-usage with parents, siblings, and friends. After the completion of the questionnaires, one copy was given to the consulate for their purposes and another copy was retained for the present study.

Demographics

One thousand four hundred and sixty four (1464) children completed the questionnaire. Eight hundred and fifty three (58.3%) attended the *Socrates* school, 398 (27.2%) the *Platon-Omeros* school, and 213 (14.5%) the *Aristotelis* school (see Table 1). Of those, 1026 (73%) were in the elementary school and 379 (27%) in the secondary school (see Table 1).

Table 1

Description of participants in the study in terms of school attended and school level (in percentage)

<i>Level</i>	TYPE OF SCHOOL		
	<i>Socrates</i>	<i>Platon-Omeros</i>	<i>Aristotelis</i>
<i>Primary</i>	58.3	14.7	0.0
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0	12.5	14.5

Ninety-six percent of the sample reported as having a Greek father, 87.6% as having a Greek mother, and 81.7% as having both a Greek father and mother.

In terms of occupation and work habits, 45.4% of the employed fathers were working full-time, 46.9% worked overtime, and 7.6% worked part-time. Thirty-five percent of the fathers were blue collar workers, 42.1% restaurant workers, and 22.8% white collar workers and professionals (see Table 2). In addition, 46.1% of the fathers worked during the day shift and 10.3% during the night shift, while 43.6% had an irregular shift or worked both during the day and night shifts (see Table 3).

Table 2

Paternal employment in terms of status and type (in percentage)

	Blue Collar (35%)	Restaurant (42.7%)	White Collar (22.8%)	% of Total Sample
<i>Part-time</i>	5.0	10.8	5.9	7.6
<i>Full-time</i>	50.6	41.1	45.3	45.4
<i>Overtime</i>	44.4	45.3	48.8	46.9

Table 3

Paternal employment in terms of status and shift (in percentage)

	Blue Collar (35%)	Restaurant (42.7%)	White Collar (22.8%)	% of Total Sample
<i>Day</i>	62.5	30.9	49.0	46.1
<i>Night</i>	4.1	19.9	2.0	10.3
<i>Irregular</i>	33.4	49.2	49.0	43.6

As far as the work habits of the mothers are concerned, 50.3% of the mothers were housewives, and 49.7% were working. Of those working, 70.2% were blue collar or restaurant workers and 29.8% white collar workers (see Figure 1a and Figure 1b).

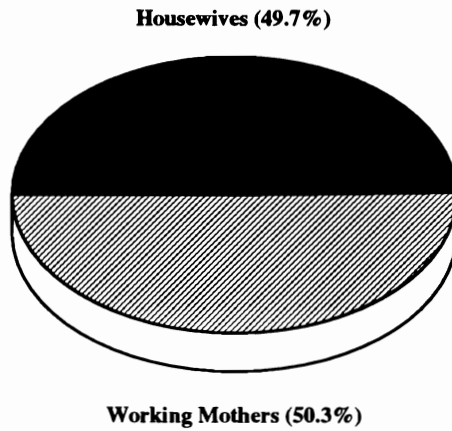


Figure 1a: Distribution of Working and Not-working Mothers

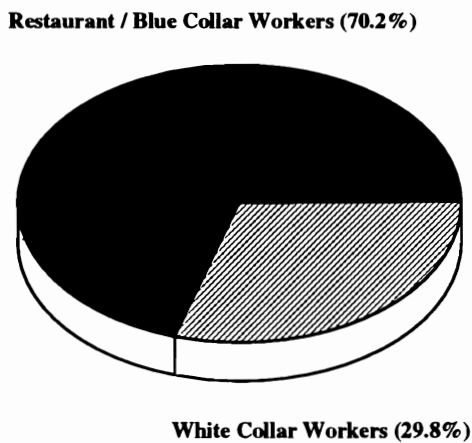


Figure 1b: Type of Employment of Working Mothers

Results

Language-spoken patterns

A large percentage of the subjects reported using Greek outside the home (85.3%). When they were asked to specify where they speak Greek, 53.9% of the subjects reported at school, 20% on the playgrounds, 14.1% in the neighborhood, and 12% at church and other social/cultural/recreational activities (see Figure 2).

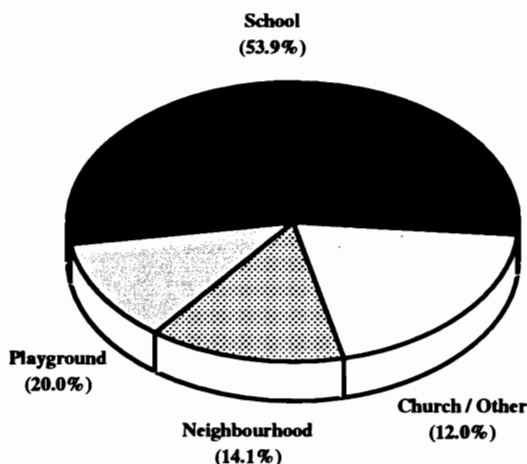


Figure 2: Usage of Greek Outside Home

A large percentage of the subjects reported having Greek friends (93.7%) but only 65.3% of them reported speaking Greek with them. Similarly, 89.7% responded as speaking Greek with their father, 80.9% with their mother, and 52.5% with their siblings (see Figure 3).

Analyses of Greek language-usage

A number of cross-tabulations and chi-squares were performed between the demographic and the language variables in order to determine if there were any significant differences in the Greek language-usage patterns. More specifically, the type of school, school grade, paternal and maternal ethnicity, paternal and maternal employment, and paternal and maternal

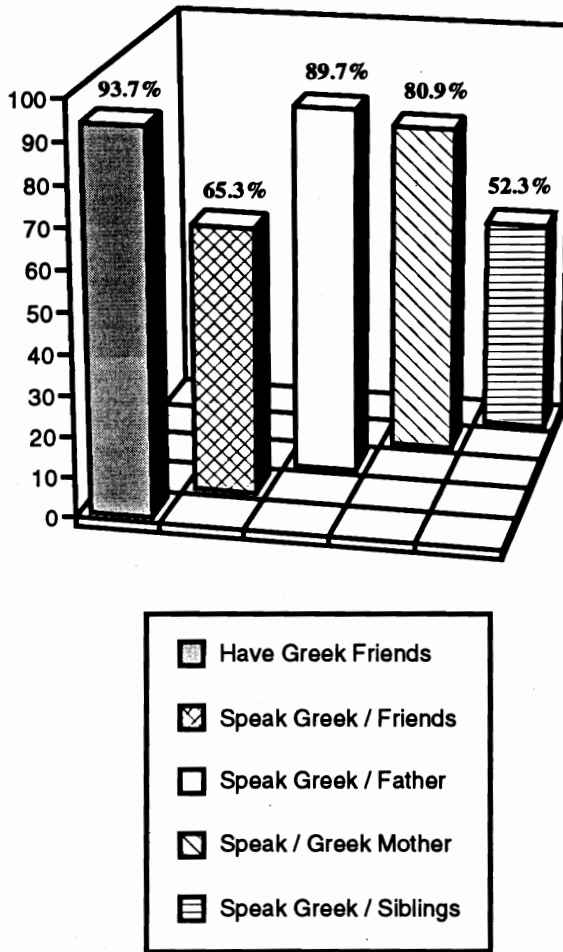


Figure 3: Pattern of Greek Language Usage

work shifts were examined in relationship to speaking Greek with father, mother, siblings, and friends.

Type of school. When the language-usage patterns of subjects were compared in the three types of schools (*Socrates, Platon-Omeros, Aristotelis*), it was found that the students of *Aristotelis* use the Greek language at a significantly higher level in communicating with their fathers ($p < .001$) and mothers ($p < .001$) than the students of *Socrates* and *Platon-Omeros*. Similarly, it was found that the students of *Aristotelis* speak significantly more

Greek with their Greek friends ($p < .001$) than the students of *Socrates* and *Platon-Omeros*. No significant differences were found among the three types of schools and the amount of Greek spoken with siblings (see Table 4).

Table 4

Language-usage patterns by different types of school (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Socrates	Platon-Omeros	Aristotelis	All Schools
<i>Father</i>	88.3	88.1	98.5*	89.7
<i>Mother</i>	76.7	82.2	95.2*	80.9
<i>Siblings</i>	51.5	52.8	56.4	52.5
<i>Friends</i>	60.8	69.9	75.4*	65.3

* $p < .001$

School levels. When the language usage patterns of primary and secondary school students were compared, it was found that secondary students use Greek significantly more when communicating with their father and mother ($p < .001$) than primary school students. Also, significantly more secondary students were found to speak Greek with their Greek friends ($p < .001$), than primary school students. No significant differences were found between school grade and frequency of Greek spoken with siblings (see Table 5).

Table 5

Language-usage patterns by different school levels (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Primary	Secondary	Both levels
<i>Father</i>	87.5	96.4*	89.7
<i>Mother</i>	76.9	91.9*	80.9
<i>Siblings</i>	51.7	55.8	52.5
<i>Friends</i>	62.0	73.7*	65.3

* $p < .001$

Father's ethnicity. Whether the father is Greek was found to be significantly related to the child speaking Greek with the mother ($p<.01$) and the siblings ($p<.01$). However, the father's ethnicity was not found to be significantly related to frequency of speaking Greek with their Greek friends (see Table 6).

Table 6

Language-usage patterns by paternal ethnicity (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	FATHER IS		BOTH PARENTS are Greek
	Greek	not Greek	
<i>Father</i>	92.0	27.1*	94.0
<i>Mother</i>	81.5	64.6*	90.1
<i>Siblings</i>	53.2	30.0*	55.1
<i>Friends</i>	65.7	53.3	66.9

* $p<.001$

Mother's ethnicity. Similar to the findings concerning the father's ethnicity, when the mother is Greek, children tended to speak Greek significantly more with their father ($p<.001$) and with their siblings ($p<.001$) (see Table 7).

Table 7

Language-usage patterns by maternal ethnicity (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	MOTHER IS		BOTH PARENTS are Greek
	Greek	not Greek	
<i>Father</i>	91.4	78.9*	94.0
<i>Mother</i>	89.3	20.7*	90.1
<i>Siblings</i>	54.3	36.5*	55.1
<i>Friends</i>	66.5	57.5**	66.9

* $p<.001$, ** $p<.01$

Father's occupation. The examination of the relationship between the occupation of the father and the language-usage patterns indicated that children of restaurant workers speak Greek significantly more with their mothers than the children of blue and white collar workers ($p < .01$). The father's occupation was not significantly related to speaking Greek with Greek friends or to speaking Greek with siblings (see Table 8).

Table 8

Language-usage patterns by paternal employment (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Blue Collar	Restaurant	White Collar
<i>Father</i>	89.7	92.5	87.6
<i>Mother</i>	77.7	84.3**	79.2
<i>Siblings</i>	51.5	51.3	53.6
<i>Friends</i>	64.3	67.3	62.0

** $p < .01$

Mother's occupation. The mother's occupation was found to be significantly related to the degree of speaking Greek with the father and with the siblings. Children tend to speak Greek to their father significantly more when the mother is a housewife or a blue collar worker, than when the mother is a restaurant or a white collar worker. Similarly, children tend to speak Greek to their siblings significantly more when the mother is a housewife or a blue collar worker, than when she is a white collar or a restaurant worker. Finally, the mother's occupation was not found to be significantly related to speaking Greek with Greek friends (see Table 9).

Table 9

Language-usage patterns by maternal employment (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Blue Collar	Restaurant	White Collar	Housewife
<i>Father</i>	93.5*	89.1*	78.4	93.2*
<i>Mother</i>	87.4	66.7*	65.5*	82.3
<i>Siblings</i>	50.6*	40.0	40.5	55.8*
<i>Friends</i>	65.2	65.0	59.6	65.5

* $p < .001$

Father's work shift. When the work shift of the father was examined in relation to the children's pattern of Greek speaking, no significant relations were found (see Table 10).

Table 10

Language-usage patterns by paternal shift of employment (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Day Shift	Night Shift	Irregular Shift
<i>Father</i>	90.8	91.3	91.1
<i>Mother</i>	83.0	86.8	79.8
<i>Siblings</i>	52.9	48.9	48.5
<i>Friends</i>	62.1	67.5	62.8

Mother's work shift. When the work shift of the mother was examined in relation to the children's Greek speaking, it was found that children tend to speak Greek significantly more with their father when the mother is a housewife or works during the night ($p < .05$). Also children tend to speak Greek significantly more with their siblings when the mother is a housewife or holds an irregular shift of employment ($p < .05$) (see Table 11).

Table 11

Language-usage patterns by maternal shift of employment (in percentage)

<i>Speak Greek with</i>	Day Shift	Night Shift	Irregular Shift	Unemployed Outside of Home
<i>Father</i>	87.9	100.0***	86.4	93.2***
<i>Mother</i>	79.0	93.8	81.0	82.3
<i>Siblings</i>	45.0	43.8	54.4***	55.8***
<i>Friends</i>	62.1	71.4	54.4	65.5

*** $p < .05$

Discussion

There are a number of observations that these results allow us to make regarding the Greek students and the pattern of language-usage within the Greek community.

The demographic results indicated that the Greek community is quite a cohesive group in which a large number of intra-ethnic marriages take place. Both of the parents of the vast majority of children are Greek (81.7%). To that end, it seems that the sample used in this study is representative of the next generation of Greek-Canadians in Montreal. This new generation of Greek-Canadians has a solid ethnic upbringing and all the ethnic support needed for the development of ethnic identity. The immediate implication of this is that this generation will be able to learn the Greek language and to identify with its Greek ethnic origin quite well. Similarly, this generation may be representing the last cohesive ethnic group of Greek-Canadians. Given the fact that the immigration from Greece has stopped, it should be expected that with mixed marriages and gradual acculturation, the cohesiveness of the group will soon decrease. This decrease in cohesiveness will have a direct negative impact on the acquisition and usage of Greek and on the development of ethnic identity.

When we examine the extent to which children speak Greek, we find that a large majority reports using Greek outside the home (85.35%). However, most of the Greek speaking involves communicating with the parents. Children speak Greek with their siblings or with their Greek friends (50-60%). Even though the parents are both Greek, and even though they follow a Greek-language acquisition program, only a little more than half of the children use Greek to communicate with persons other than their parents. These findings, in conjunction with the fact that the parents represent the last Greek-born generation, indicates that Greek speaking will drastically drop as the number of Greek-born parents decreases. It becomes tantamount then to increase the degree of communicating with siblings and friends, so that the process of Greek language acquisition and usage is fostered. It seems that while this generation may learn to communicate adequately in Greek, the next generation will have a much lesser degree of exposure to the Greek language and, thus, will speak Greek at a significantly decreased level.

There are a number of observations we can make based on the examination of the variables that are significantly and positively associated to speaking Greek. First, the results on the different types of schooling indicated that the students of *Aristotelis* speak significantly more Greek with their parents, and with their friends, than the students of *Socrates* or *Platon-Omeros*. These findings may be seen as indicating that *Aristotelis* is

a school that facilitates Greek speaking significantly more than the other two types of schools. Alternatively, if we consider that *Aristotelis* is a high school while *Socrates* is an elementary school and that half of the *Platon-Omeros* students are also in the elementary school, the results could be seen as reflecting more a developmental change than a school difference; the older the children grow the more they speak Greek.

This conclusion is consistent with the significant difference observed between primary and secondary school; secondary school children speak significantly more Greek than elementary school students. Once more, it seems that the older the children grow the more they feel comfortable speaking Greek. This is consistent with the argument that the more years of schooling they have, the better they speak Greek.

A complementary way of approaching this primary-secondary school difference is in terms of the gradual development of a cultural and ethnic identity, as it is reflected in their knowledge of and about Greece. While not directly examined, it has been suggested (Ioannou, 1983; Gavaki, 1983) that as children grow older, they tend to learn more of and about Greece. It seems plausible to conclude that the interaction of: a) cognitive developmental changes, b) higher competence in Greek, and c) gradual development of ethnic identity may explain the differences observed between primary and secondary level students. It may be that children acquire a better sense of "Greekness" as they grow older and as their proficiency in Greek improves significantly.

Second, the results indicated that ethnicity of the father and the mother were the only variables found to be consistently associated with most forms of Greek language-usage. Regardless of the type of employment, work shift, or hours of work, the ethnicity of the parents significantly facilitates Greek language-usage. The short-term implication of this finding is that as long as the parents are present to support their children in their quest for Greek identity, children will tend to speak and feel Greek. The long term implication is that future generations, which will be homogeneous and in which one of the two parents will be of a different ethnic and linguistic background, will be seriously disadvantaged inasmuch as linguistic and ethnic identity development is concerned. Furthermore, while the present homogeneity of the group facilitates the immediate transmission of language and ethnic identity in the short term, new and different resources should be found to replace the parental ethnicity in facilitating the acquisition of the Greek language and Greek identity in the future.

The only other variable that was found to be related to the degree of Greek spoken at home, particularly among siblings, was the mother's presence at home. It may be that because fathers often work overtime (45%), it

is the mothers who fulfill the role of the "transmitter" of Greek to the children, being the major "caretaker". This finding may then represent more of the fact that mothers have the parenting role in the Greek family and thus the responsibility of facilitating communication among siblings.

In terms of speaking Greek to friends, the two variables that were found to be significantly related were the type of school and school level. Here again it seems that secondary school students feel more comfortable to speak Greek with their Greek friends than do primary school students. It may be that the development of ethnic identity becomes more solid as one grows older, and that adolescents feel more comfortable in their "Greekness" than primary school students do. It may also be that at adolescence, Greek becomes a foreign language to be used by the adolescents as a code of communicating secrets, comments, and messages to one another without being understood by their allophone friends.

Of interest also is the relationship between parental occupation and language acquisition and usage, as we find that children of lower SES (that is, restaurant and blue collar workers) tend to speak significantly more Greek with their parents than children coming from a higher SES. This finding is consistent with the fact that most restaurant and blue collar workers speak only Greek because they do not speak (except for a few words), write, or understand another language. White collar workers can communicate with their children in a language other than Greek. From the child's point of view, the knowledge that the parent can understand him/her in another language than Greek, facilitates communication in another language. Therefore, the children know that they have the option to speak in another language, and that they will be understood by their parents.

All in all, this study has provided us with a number of socio-demographic variables associated with Greek language-usage patterns within the Greek community, and for children who attend a Greek-language school. Parental ethnicity and maternal occupation were found to play a significant role in facilitating the usage of the Greek language. Language usage was found to increase significantly as children grow older and tend to speak Greek more often, and to more people, including their Greek friends and parents. In terms of ethnic identity and culture, the study indicated that most Greek children of all ages tend to have a strong sense of "Greekness", which can be explained through the solid "ethnic identity development" network, based on parental ethnicity which is in place.

The results of this study also indicate that while this generation may have a solid ethnic support from the highly ethnic homogeneous group, the development of ethnic identity of future generations will be jeopardized if the parental ethnicity variable that so highly facilitates language usage and

ethnic identity will not be replaced by some other variables capable of facilitating the development of a solid Greek-Canadian ethnicity, in which the Greek language will be systematically used.

Further research examining the relationship between: a) psychological and socio-psychological variables such as personality characteristics, academic achievement, self-concept, and self-esteem, b) language-usage patterns and frequency, and c) ethnic identity is needed to better understand the manner in which each of the three aforementioned variables relates to each the other, and in order to identify the best combination that will promote a healthy self-concept and a solid ethnic identity.

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