UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID

FACULTAD DE PSICOLOGÍA



TESIS DOCTORAL

Elección y uso de lenguas en el hogar: Perspectivas y experiencias de familias multilingües en el Estado Español

Choice and Use of Languages at home: Views and experiences of multilingual families in Spain

MEMORIA PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE DOCTORA

PRESENTADA POR

Paula Bellón Vázquez

DIRIGIDA POR

Silvia Nieva Ramos
Melina Aparici Aznar

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PROGRAMA DE DOCTORADO EN PSICOLOGÍA



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DIRECTORAS

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Acknowledgements

Given that the topic of this dissertation is framed under the belief that every person should have the right to use any language they desire in any given context, it feels appropriate to write my acknowledgements switching between languages based on what feels right to reach the people I'm addressing.

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Table of contents

Tabla de contenido

ABSTRACT 5

RESUMEN 8

PREAMBLE AND OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION 11

CHAPTER 1: MULTILINGUALISM IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD 18

1.1. Introducing the notion of multilingualism 18
1.2. The languages of multilingual speakers based on background and language context 20
1.3. Multilingualism and language diversity in a globalized world 22

CHAPTER 2: LANGUAGE VIEWS AND ATTITUDES IN RELATION TO PLACE AND CONTEXT 26

2.1. Language attitudes and use in multilingual and monolingual areas 27
2.2. The case of the regional languages in Spain 29

CHAPTER 3: IDENTITY NEGOTIATION AND LANGUAGE USE IN MULTILINGUAL HOUSEHOLDS 31

3.1. Identity construction through interaction 31
3.2. Identity negotiation in multilingual contexts 32
3.3. The journey of language choice and use with multilingual children 34
3.3.1. Motivations and practices regarding language use 36
3.3.2. Family Language Policies 37

CHAPTER 4. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND PRACTICES WITH MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES 44

4.1. Parental concerns and search for support 44
4.1.1. Concerns when children have language difficulties or disorders 45
4.2. Where do parents' concerns about multilingualism stem from? Myths and misconceptions 46
4.2.1. Unpacking and reframing prevailing assumptions 47
4.3. Professional support in multilingual contexts 50
4.3.1. Professional challenges 50
4.3.2. Professional practices 51
4.3.3. Recommended practices 53

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 55

CHAPTER 5. PERSPECTIVES ABOUT HOME-LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES WITH AND WITHOUT LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DISORDERS: A SCOPING REVIEW 57

CHAPTER 6. AMPLIFYING PARENTAL VIEWS ABOUT LANGUAGE CHOICE WHEN RAISING MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN: TOWARDS A FAMILY-CENTERED APPROACH IN PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS 70

CHAPTER 7. BALANCING INSIDERNESS AND OUTSIDERNESS IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE RESEARCH: A REFLECTION ON RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION 90

7.1. Introduction 90
7.2. The influence of the researcher's worldview on the research 93
7.3. Insider and outsider perspectives in conversation with parents of multilingual children 95
7.3.1. Identity construction: Navigating the in-between 95
7.3.2. Belonging in the research: Insider and outsider positioning 96
7.4. Development of trust and comfort during the interviews 101
7.5. Discussion and conclusion 105
7.5.1. Implications for future research 107

CHAPTER 8. GENERAL DISCUSSION 109

8.1. Language views and practices in linguistically diverse families 110
8.2. Complexities in the construction and negotiation of multilingual identities 112
8.3. The role of the language context in the region where the family lives 114
8.4. Dichotomies in professional support and advice received 116
8.5. Self-awareness and reflexivity in research and professional settings involved in linguistic and culturally diverse contexts 117
8.6. Strengths and limitations 119
8.7. Implications and future directions 121

CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSIONS 123

REFERENCES 126

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES INCLUDED IN THE DISSERTATION 146

ANNEXES 147

APPENDIX 148

Abstract

Choice and use of languages at home: Views and experiences of multilingual families in Spain

Elección y uso de lenguas en el hogar: perspectivas y experiencias de familias multilingües en el Estado Español

Introduction

Over the years, the study of multilingualism and multilingual populations has gained growing attention across a wide range of research fields due to the rising prevalence of linguistic and cultural diversity in both private and public domains worldwide. However, even though being exposed to or speaking several languages is the norm around the globe, there seems to be a general lack of understanding of multilingualism from sociolinguistic, developmental and educational perspectives. This situation may lead families to express concerns about the linguistic development of their multilingual children and to question whether they should maintain or abandon their heritage languages when deciding which languages to use with their children (Hampton et al., 2017). The lack of knowledge about multilingualism and multilingual development may also take a toll in professional contexts, where speech-language therapists, teachers and other practitioners may base their practices on beliefs about multilingualism that can be rooted in misconceptions rather than evidence (Hay et al., 2021). The existing general and professional concerns around language development in multilingual contexts might increase when children have developmental disorders (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, developmental language disorder). This situation underscores the need to carry out research exploring the actual language and cultural views, experiences and needs of families whose children are exposed to more than one language regardless of their typical or atypical language development. This approach lays the foundation for this dissertation.

Furthermore, studies suggest that the location and linguistic context in which a family lives can play a role in their language experiences, including identity construction, language preferences, as well as their experiences with other people's attitudes and advice, which may shape their language choices with their children (Akgül et al., 2019; Surrain & Luk, 2023). For this reason, the present research project is situated in Spain: a country with a rich linguistic landscape, having Spanish as the national language alongside several regional languages tied to specific regions (e.g., Galician).

Aims

The main goal of this dissertation was to explore the views and experiences of linguistically and culturally diverse parents who are raising multilingual children, with special reference to the diverse sociolinguistic context of Spain. The aims were: (1) to dive into the parents' attitudes towards multilingualism and their own languages; (2) to identify the aspects that play a role in the decision-making process of parents regarding the language choice and use with their multilingual children; (3) to explore their experiences regarding the advice multilingual families may receive from professionals, and how that may impact their language choice and dynamics.

The present dissertation follows the structure of thesis by publications. Therefore, the research objectives were divided across the studies developed for this research project. The aim of the first study conducted for this dissertation (scoping review) was to explore the existing evidence in relation to the language views and dynamics of families who raise their children in more than one language. The aim of the second study (qualitative study) was to examine the aspects that play a role in the choice and use of languages in multilingual families who lived in Spain, from the perspective of parents who were raising children in several languages. The third study (autoethnographic reflexive study) aimed to provide depth to the first two studies, offering a reflection on research and professional practices in culturally diverse contexts by presenting a reflexive analysis of the researcher's role and identity in the research process and in interaction with the participants.

Results

Overall, the findings illustrate an intricate and complex reality behind the decision-making process regarding languages in multilingual families. The first two studies revealed that parents need to juggle multiple aspects beyond the languages themselves that may influence their linguistic and cultural choices and dynamics with their children. The results showcase that the parents' decisions regarding language choice and use might be influenced by (a) the parents' own views towards multilingualism as well as their cultural and linguistic background, and (b) external attitudes, advice and expectations from the general population, close acquaintances and professionals. On the one hand, the studies revealed that parents' background and experiences may influence their language views and priorities and therefore, their practices. However, the findings revealed dichotomies between parents' language attitudes and their actual practices with their children, highlighting the intricacy behind the decisions they need to make. On the other hand, other people's opinions and advice can also influence parents' language choice and practices, especially when they come from professionals. The findings

also suggested that families' linguistic experiences and advice received might vary depending on the linguistic region where they lived.

Additionally, the studies reported similar patterns of experiences between families whose children had typical or atypical development regarding their language views, practices, and advice received, although there can be exceptions related to issues that are specific to the disorder.

Lastly, the third study reflected on how the researcher's subjectivity can influence the research process in all its stages, including the process of building trusting relationships with the participants. Through a reflexive autoethnographic lens, the study captured the researcher's negotiation of her linguistic identity contextualized within the research, in order to back up the interpretations made throughout this dissertation.

Discussion

The studies conducted in this dissertation contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted realities and dynamics experienced by culturally and linguistically diverse families. The findings offer insights on language choice, use and identity negotiation in multilingual families that might be useful for professionals and researchers who work with these populations, as well as other families navigating similar situations. This research also highlights the importance of integrating a reflexive perspective in research, clinical and educational settings, ensuring that practices can align with the realities of multilingual and culturally diverse families and be responsive to their linguistic and cultural needs and desires. Finally, this dissertation calls for further research in the field of multilingual family contexts in Spain and other countries or regions, covering different cultural and linguistic profiles through diverse frameworks and methodologies.

Resumen

Introducción

A lo largo de los años, el estudio del multilingüismo y las personas multilingües ha ido ganando atención en diversos campos de investigación debido a la creciente prevalencia de diversidad lingüístico-cultural en entornos públicos y privados alrededor del mundo. Sin embargo, aunque el multilingüismo sea la norma a nivel global, todavía existe una comprensión limitada sobre el tema desde perspectivas sociolingüísticas, educativas o de desarrollo. Esta situación puede dar lugar a la presencia de preocupaciones en la familia sobre el desarrollo lingüístico de sus hijos/as, pudiendo existir dudas relacionadas con el planteamiento educación lingüística de sus hijos, así como el mantenimiento o retirada de la lengua del hogar (Hampton et al., 2017). La falta de conocimiento sobre el multilingüismo y desarrollo multilingüe puede afectar también en entornos profesionales, donde logopedas y profesores/as –entre otros– pueden basar sus prácticas en creencias que no siempre están apoyadas por la evidencia (Hay et al., 2021). Por otra parte, las preocupaciones en torno al desarrollo lingüístico se intensifican cuando los/as niños/as presentan algún trastorno del desarrollo (e.g., trastorno del espectro autista, trastorno del desarrollo del lenguaje). Esta situación enfatiza la necesidad de realizar investigaciones que exploren las perspectivas, experiencias y necesidades lingüístico-culturales de familias multilingües, independientemente del desarrollo lingüístico de los/as hijos/as. Bajo este enfoque se asientan las bases de esta tesis.

Por otra parte, hay estudios que sugieren que el lugar y entorno lingüístico en el que se encuentra la familia podrían jugar un papel en sus experiencias lingüísticas (e.g., la construcción de identidad, preferencias lingüísticas), así como en sus experiencias en relación con la percepción externa y recomendaciones recibidas (Akgül et al., 2019; Surrain & Luk, 2023). Estos aspectos pueden influir en la elección de lenguas con sus hijos/as. Por ello, esta investigación se encuadra en España, un país con un contexto lingüístico diverso que tiene el castellano como lengua nacional, además de varias lenguas regionales en sus respectivas comunidades autónomas (e.g., gallego).

Objetivos

El principal objetivo de esta tesis fue explorar las perspectivas y experiencias de padres de niños/as multilingües, de diferentes orígenes lingüísticos y culturales,

con especial referencia al diverso contexto sociolingüístico de España. Los objetivos se separaron en: (1) identificar los aspectos que influyen en la toma de decisiones de los padres sobre la elección y uso de lenguas con sus hijos/as; (2) profundizar en las actitudes de los padres sobre el multilingüismo y sus propias lenguas; (3) explorar sus experiencias en cuando a recomendaciones profesionales recibidas y cómo pueden influir en sus decisiones y dinámicas lingüísticas.

Los objetivos se encuadran como parte de los estudios desarrollados para esta tesis. El primer estudio de (revisión sistemática exploratoria) tenía por objetivo examinar la evidencia disponible sobre las perspectivas y dinámicas lingüísticas de familias multilingües. El objetivo del segundo estudio (estudio cualitativo) fue explorar los aspectos que influyen en la elección y uso de lenguas en familias multilingües que viven en España desde la perspectiva de los padres. El tercer estudio (estudio reflexivo auto-etnográfico) tenía por objetivo añadir profundidad a los dos primeros estudios, presentando una reflexión sobre prácticas investigadoras y profesionales en entornos culturalmente diversos a través de un análisis reflexivo del papel de la identidad de la investigadora en relación con la investigación y la interacción con los/as participantes.

Resultados

A rasgos generales, los resultados muestran la complejidad que hay detrás del proceso de toma de decisiones lingüísticas en familias multilingües. Los primeros dos estudios revelaron que la elección de lenguas y dinámicas lingüísticas de las familias pueden verse influidas por múltiples aspectos más allá de las lenguas. Los resultados muestran que las decisiones de los padres en relación con el uso y elección de lenguas pueden verse influidas por (a) la propia perspectiva de los padres sobre el multilingüismo, así como sus lenguas y culturas, y (b) los consejos, expectativas y percepción externa, tanto a nivel general como por parte de conocidos o profesionales. Por una parte, los estudios mostraron que el origen y las experiencias lingüísticas de los padres pueden influir tanto en sus perspectivas y prioridades, como en sus prácticas lingüísticas. No obstante, las perspectivas y prácticas no siempre coinciden, lo cual destaca la complejidad de estas decisiones. Por otra parte, las opiniones y consejos recibidos también pueden influir en las decisiones sobre el uso de lenguas, sobre todo cuando se reciben por parte de profesionales. Los resultados también sugieren que las experiencias lingüísticas y consejo recibido podrían variar según la comunidad en la que viven.

Además, los estudios realizados mostraron patrones de experiencias similares entre familias con hijos/as con desarrollo típico y atípico en relación con sus

perspectivas lingüísticas, prácticas y apoyo recibido. Se observaron excepciones relacionadas con las dificultades intrínsecas al trastorno.

Finalmente, el tercer estudio presenta una reflexión sobre cómo la subjetividad de la investigadora puede influir en todas las fases de la investigación, incluyendo el proceso de ganar confianza con los/as participantes. A través de una perspectiva reflexiva auto-etnográfica, se plasmó el proceso de construcción de la identidad lingüística de la investigadora en el contexto de la investigación, de modo que sirve como fundamento para las interpretaciones realizadas a lo largo de la tesis.

Discusión

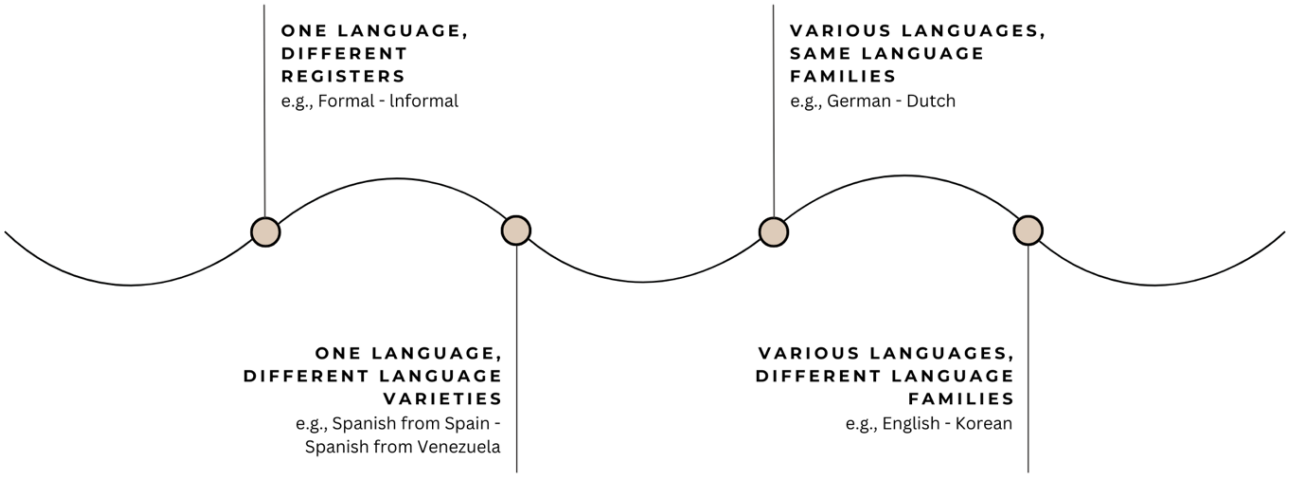
Los estudios realizados para esta tesis doctoral contribuyen a un entendimiento en profundidad de la multidimensionalidad de las realidades y experiencias vividas por familias multilingües. Los resultados ofrecen una visión sobre la gestión de lenguas y formación de la identidad en familias multilingües que puede ser útil tanto para profesionales e investigadores/as, como para familias que puedan encontrarse en situaciones similares. Además, esta investigación destaca la importancia de incorporar una perspectiva reflexiva en la investigación, así como en la práctica clínica y educativa, de modo que se puedan alinear con las realidades de las personas multilingües y multiculturales, respondiendo a sus necesidades específicas. Por último, esta tesis invita a ampliar la investigación en este campo, tanto en España como en otros países y regiones, reflejando la diversidad de perfiles lingüísticos y culturales a través de diferentes perspectivas y metodologías.

Preamble and outline of the dissertation

When thinking about the notion of multilingualism, one may experience a mix of clarity and uncertainty. It might seem clear to define multilingualism as the ability to speak several languages, but confusion may arise when trying to specify what it actually means to speak several languages. Does a person need to speak more than two languages to be considered multilingual? Can someone identify as multilingual if they were not raised in a multilingual household but acquired new languages later in life? Must a person be fully proficient in all their languages to qualify as multilingual? These are just some of the many questions that may come to mind when approaching multilingualism from either a personal or professional perspective.

The process of language development and use is dynamic and everchanging, especially in a multilingual setting, where the speakers need to balance their multiple linguistic identities to find a common way of communication based on their interlocutors and the context of interaction (Baker & Jones, 1998; Jung, 2022). Regardless of an individual's linguistic or cultural background, humans have the capacity to learn different varieties of verbal and non-verbal communication in order to adapt more efficiently to our surroundings. Linguistic diversity can be conceived as a spectrum, where some speakers of a given language may switch between registers to navigate different social contexts, while other people may learn multiple languages to thrive in diverse linguistic settings (Figure 1). Naturally, this process might be different if a person presents developmental disorders with language impairment (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, developmental language disorder), as they might need additional support to perceive and learn linguistic varieties.

Figure 1. *The spectrum of language varieties (Author's own elaboration[1])*



[1] All the figures and tables are elaborated by the author unless specified otherwise

Given the current state of the world, the presence of multilingualism is increasingly evident across countries and communities, as well as in our everyday dynamics and interactions (e.g., through social media). The contradiction comes, however, when despite the frequent exposure of people to different languages on a regular basis, there seems to be varying attitudes towards linguistic diversity, and a general concern in relation to exposing children to several languages from a young age.

Those concerns frequently originate from a lack of knowledge or experience regarding multilingual development, and unfamiliarity with linguistic and cultural diversity. In this sense, there is evidence suggesting that a higher contact with culturally diverse people may have a positive influence on the attitudes towards multilingualism and multilingual speakers (Surrain & Luk, 2023). It can be thus inferred that, when an individual has had limited exposure to diverse realities and experiences, encountering unfamiliar situations may evoke different emotions (e.g., curiosity, fear) and reactions (e.g., acceptance, rejection). This situation can be observed across different domains such as religion or ethnicity; and languages and cultures are no exception.

The issue grows when lack of knowledge gives rise to false beliefs and misconceptions about multilingualism that distance from the reality (De Houwer, 2024b), and might spread among the general population as well as professionals who may work with culturally diverse people (e.g., speech-language therapists, teachers). This scenario could have negative consequences for multilingual children and their families, who may not have the knowledge or experience to back their choices, and may need additional support from professionals, who might base their practices and recommendations on beliefs rather than evidence.

From the perspective of multilingual families, cultural or linguistic diversity within family contexts might not necessarily begin with linguistic mixedness between the parents, but it might also relate to the linguistic context of the country where they live or expect to live (Fuentes, 2020). Other aspects may also play a role, such as the family's social context, ethnic/cultural background, migration history, colonization, language policies and regulations (e.g., school language), as well as personal motivations, among others (Pérez, 2021). In this vein and following the declarations of Akgül et al. (2019), people become multilingual out of necessity or by choice, which can shape their views towards multilingualism and language use. Nonetheless, even though the context may provide a setting of exposure to different languages, it is primary the role of parents to foster a multilingual rearing for their children (Gomashie, 2022), and what sets the premise of this dissertation.

The present research discusses the complexities around language choice and use in multilingual families. In this context, language choice and use are among the

elements that parents of multilingual children need to consider in relation to their children's education. Here, parents may wonder about which decisions to make to provide a linguistic context where their children can thrive, sometimes wondering how their language choices may impact their children's lives (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020). In this sense, the linguistic decisions parents make are not straightforward, as they may be influenced by a diversity of factors such as: the child's school setting, the majority language(s) in the country/region, the parents' language experiences and expectations, or the presence of a developmental disorder[2] (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Fuentes, 2020; Kang, 2015).

The situation may become even more complex when considering that these families live within a broader community context where general attitudes and advice may influence their views and choices. In addition, parents of multilingual children with and without developmental disorders may be in the need of seeking support either within their inner circle (e.g., family, friends, other parents) or through a professional (e.g., speech-language therapist, teacher, psychologist), who may or may not have experience navigating multilingual contexts, and whose views and advice might not align with the needs and preferences of the families. In this sense, the current practice guidelines developed by international expert panels support a multilingual education and intervention, advocating for culturally responsive practices that are based on the evidence (McLeod et al., 2013; Nieva et al., 2020b) and integrate the family as active agents during the entire therapy process (Klatte et al., 2024). However, a gap might still be observed between those guidelines and actual practices due to lack of knowledge, experience or qualification (Nieva et al., 2020a). Therefore, considering that parents may seek support to find answers to their questions, a recommendation that is not adjusted to the family's linguistic and cultural needs may have negative consequences on their quality of life (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018).

For the reasons presented above, the main goal for this doctoral dissertation is to explore the diverse cultural and linguistic contexts and dynamics of multilingual families. The aim of this research is to deepen into the aspects that may influence the language choice and use of multilingual families with their children, and their experiences raising multilingual children regardless of their language development. Additionally, considering that professionals might play an important role in the lives of these families, the findings reported in this dissertation aim to contribute to the understanding of the diverse realities of multilingual and multicultural people, so that professionals can adjust their practices to the circumstances of these individuals and their families.

[2] Throughout this dissertation, the terms "developmental disorder" or "language disorder" will be used to refer to (neuro)developmental disorders involving language difficulties or impairments.

Additionally, given that multilingual children may present different language development trajectories, including developmental disorders, this research also aims to explore the language context, dynamics and experiences of multilingual families whose children may fall into this category.

To give answer to the objectives, two studies were carried out in relation to the views and experiences of multilingual families, and a third study was elaborated to back up previous studies by reflecting on the positioning of the researcher and her influence on the research process. The first study is a scoping review that was conducted to explore the language views, experiences and language practices of parents who are raising multilingual children, aiming to find common patterns between studies carried out in different linguistic contexts. The second study follows a qualitative methodology under Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2019) Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), aiming to explore the negotiation of language choice and identities of multilingual families who lived in different regions of Spain, exploring their language views and experiences in the setting where they live. Lastly, considering that reflexivity was a core component of this dissertation, a third study was conducted to support the interpretations made in the previous studies, positioning the researcher as an active agent whose subjectivity can influence the research process and its outcomes. The findings presented in the studies aimed to be relevant to both family and professional contexts.

The present dissertation was divided into chapters organized according to the main topics to discuss in this dissertation based on the research aims. A summary of the chapters is provided in Table 1 at the end of this section.

Firstly, Chapter 1 presents an introduction to multilingualism in the current global context, and a walkthrough around the concept of multilingualism and the diverse terminology that may be relevant in the study of multilingual family contexts. Chapter 2 introduces the notion of language attitudes in relation to the place where the family lives, presenting the language context of Spain, which is the setting where this research takes place. Chapter 3 provides an overview of cultural and linguistic identity construction and negotiation, connecting it with the concept of *family language policies* (Fogle, 2013; Spolsky, 2004; 2012) and language maintenance in multilingual families. Chapter 4 focuses on the support that multilingual families receive from professionals, introducing the concerns that prompt families to seek such support, outlining the consequences of persistent myths and misconceptions, and concluding with current evidence on professional practices.

Chapter 5 comprises the first of the three studies developed for this dissertation: a scoping review. This study aimed to exploring how the existing literature has addressed the views and experiences of multilingual families regarding their

language use, and the aspects that may influence their linguistic choices. Experts suggest that the motivations to learn a language, or for parents to transmit their languages to their children, may vary based on the value they assign to those languages in relation to future opportunities or social integration (Baker & Jones, 1998). However, the evidence analyzed for this paper illustrate that parents' decision-making process regarding languages is not always straightforward. The findings reveal that, even though parents frequently show positive attitudes towards multilingualism and transmitting their heritage languages, their practices do not always match their views. The study unwraps that the linguistic settings that the family navigates, along with external attitudes, support received and potential advice from professionals, may also play a role in parents' language choice and dynamics. As a final remark, the study included articles where families were raising multilingual children with or without developmental disorders, observing both similarities and differences in relation to their views, concerns and advice received. Nonetheless, the evidence addressing multilingual families where children may have atypical development is considerably scarce.

Chapter 6 draws from the context provided by the first article with the objective to deliver clarity regarding the diversity of linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual families. Here, a second study was conducted following a qualitative methodology using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019; 2021b), in order to report information based on the answers provided by parents of multilingual children with diverse linguistic backgrounds. The study took part in Spain, interviewing families who lived in bilingual or monolingual regions, who were raising multilingual children with typical or atypical language development. The results present two main themes that were identified in relation to the negotiation of linguistic and cultural identities in multilingual families, and how parents balance the advice they may receive from professionals with their own personal preferences and desires.

Chapter 7 presents an additional study focused on the implementation of a reflexive and self-aware approach in research involving people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This study supports the interpretations made in the scoping review and qualitative studies by acknowledging the influence that the researcher's personal reality may have on the research process. Given the cultural and linguistic framework of this dissertation, the study also reflects on how the research may shape the researcher's worldview and identity. The study dives into the researcher's insider and outsider positionings in relation to the participants' cultural backgrounds, and how these dynamics may impact the interview process and researcher-participant relationships. Taken together, this research reinforces the importance of reflexivity and self-awareness in both research and professional practice.

Chapter 8 and 9 wrap up the dissertation with a general discussion and conclusions in relation to the findings contextualizing it within the wider literature on the issue, and presenting future directions for research and practice in clinical and educational settings.

Taking the whole context into consideration, this dissertation would contribute to the understanding of multilingual families regardless of their linguistic background and language development, which can be useful for speech-language therapists and other professionals who work in clinical or educational contexts.

Table 1. *Summary of chapters for the doctoral dissertation*

Chapter	Content
Preamble and outline	Presentation of the research, including an overview of its structure and objectives.
	Theoretical framework
Chapter 1. Multilingualism in a globalized world	Introduction of the notion of multilingualism contextualized within the global context. Terminology used regarding language diversity and multilingualism.
Chapter 2. Language views and attitudes in relation to place and context	Presentation of language views and attitudes of multilingual people based on the country or linguistic region where they live. Introduction of language attitudes comparing monolingual and multilingual regions. Overview of the sociolinguistic context of Spain in relation to its local languages and bilingual/monolingual regions.
Chapter 3. Identity negotiation and language use in multilingual households	Introduction to the notion of identity construction and negotiation, and the relationship between language and identity. Introduction of the concept of *family language policies*, language choice, use and expectations in multilingual families.
Chapter 4. Professional support and practices with multilingual and multicultural families	Overview of parental concerns about a multilingual rearing, myths and misconceptions around multilingualism and developmental disorders. Current evidence regarding the support and advice provided by professionals in culturally diverse settings.
	Aims and objectives
Aims and objectives	Section on the general goal and aims of this doctoral dissertation and introduction of the specific objectives of the studies developed to achieve those goals.

Research and publications	
Chapter 5. Perspectives about home-language maintenance in Multilingual Families with and without Language and Communication Disorders: A Scoping Review	[Study 1] Scoping review collecting recent evidence on the language attitudes, practices and experiences of multilingual families regarding the use and transmission of the home language(s) to their children.
Chapter 6. Amplifying the views about language choice of parents of multilingual children: Towards a family-centered approach in professional contexts	[Study 2] Qualitative study examining the negotiation of language choice and identities of parents of multilingual children with and without developmental disorders, as well as their experiences regarding professional support and advice.
Chapter 7. Balancing insiderness and outsiderness in culturally diverse research: A reflection on researcher positionality and identity	[Study 3] Autoethnographic reflexive study diving into the role of the researcher within the research as well as the influence of the research on the researcher's worldview. Reflection on the development of trusting relationships with the participants.
Discussion and conclusions	
Chapter 8. General discussion	Collection of the main findings of the dissertation in relation to the existing literature on the topics discussed. Description of strengths, limitations, implications and future research.
Chapter 9. Conclusions	Final summary of the dissertation and reflections on the overall implications of this research.

Chapter 1: Multilingualism in a globalized world

This chapter presents a contextualization of the issue of multilingualism and cultural diversity in the global context. However, it is important to first clarify a few key details in relation to the definitions of multilingualism and the author's terminological choices throughout the present dissertation.

The information of this chapter is presented progressively in three sections in order to provide the necessary background to follow the subsequent chapters of this dissertation. The first section begins with foundational concepts in relation to the wide diversity of understandings of multilingualism, presenting an alternative definition upon which this dissertation stands. The second section presents different terms to refer to the languages used by multilingual speakers in relation to the person's identity or background, as well as the social contextualization of the languages themselves. The last section is built on these ideas by presenting a global contextualization of multilingualism and multilingual speakers, establishing the foundation for the framework developed in this dissertation.

1.1. Introducing the notion of multilingualism

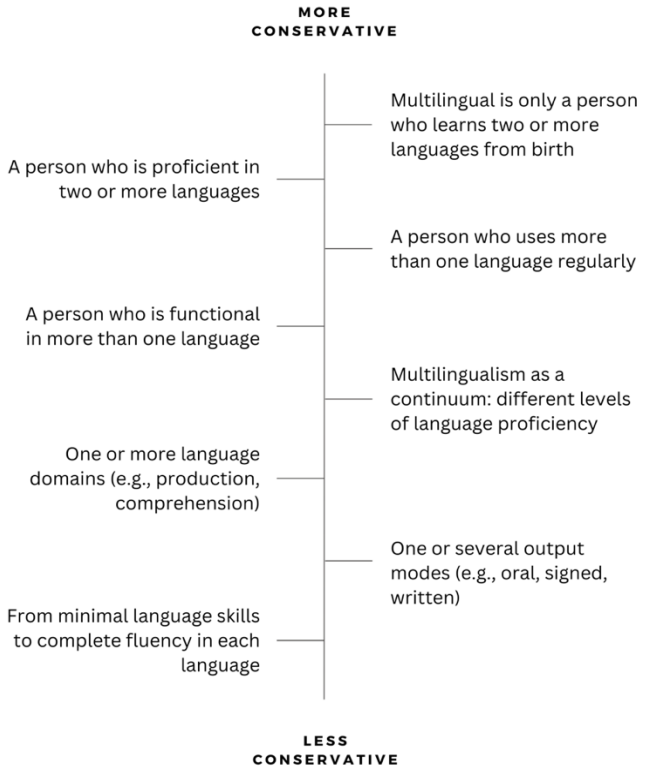
Multilingualism is a concept that may seem straightforward, but in reality, there are numerous subtleties in relation to what makes a person multilingual. A common assumption is that a multilingual person is someone who can speak more than one language. However, to this day, there is no consensus on a definition, which makes it a difficult topic to study rigorously, considering that the same label can represent different ideas (e.g., multilingual), and that the same idea can also be represented by different labels (e.g., multilingual, plurilingual, bilingual).

There are multiple criteria throughout the literature to define the notion of multilingualism. Some of them, according to Grech and McLeod (2012), define a multilingual person based on the number of languages they speak (e.g., bilingual, multilingual), the age and timing of acquisition of languages (e.g., simultaneous, sequential), proficiency in each language (e.g., minimal skill, functional, proficient in different contexts), domains of language knowledge (e.g., comprehension, production), language output mode (e.g., oral, signed, written), or language spoken in their community (e.g., majority, minority languages). Other authors also include classifications related to the manner of acquisition of languages (e.g., formal, informal), context of language use (e.g., home language, school language), frequency of language switching, or attachment to one's language identity and culture (Marian & Hayakawa, 2021; Surrain & Luk, 2019). Beyond that, Surrain and Luk (2019) expand on these classifications by adding new layers of entanglement,

suggesting that proficiency does not only refer to the skills developed in each language but also to how balanced the person's language dominance is, as well as the proportion of use of each language. The authors also reflect on the fact that language proficiency can be objective (e.g., via tests), subjective (e.g., via self-reports) or both.

As illustrated, there is a wide diversity of categories in relation to what defines a multilingual person. Therefore, considering these aspects, Grech and McLeod (2012) present different instances of what classifies as multilingualism ranging from more to less conservative based on how permissive they are to language variations and differences in proficiency, age of acquisition and balance of skills. Some common examples of conservative understandings of multilingualism may be the notion that the term multilingual would only apply to a person who has experienced an exposure to several languages from birth, or a person who demonstrates complete fluency in all their languages. These views have been questioned by researchers and language experts, since language is dynamic, and an even distribution of language skills is highly unlikely (Grosjean, 2010). On the other end of the spectrum, multilingualism is understood as a continuum and may apply to any person who demonstrates any level of proficiency skills in more than one language. Some examples following these criteria and definitions were selected and are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. *Definitions of multilingualism from more to less conservative (Inspired and adapted from Grech and McLeod (2012))*



This variety can pose an intricate framework on its own, but the classifications are usually combined, adding another level of complexity –and sometimes contradiction– to the conceptualization of multilingualism. For example, a person might have acquired two languages simultaneously and be functional in both a majority and a minority language. However, they might have developed oral skills in both languages but written skills only in one of them, and their lived experiences may have resulted in comprehension in both languages but active production in just one and limited expressive ability in the other. In such circumstances, this person might be objectively classified as multilingual based on their language acquisition and assessments yet identify as monolingual due to their current limited expressive skills in one of their languages.

Taken together, the classifications presented in this section might help get an overall idea of what multilingualism is. However, they may not be inclusive for people with language development differences or disorders, such as children with a delayed language acquisition, severe developmental difficulties or children who may be non-verbal but comprehend oral instructions or communicate in alternative ways, for instance.

The fact that a person has a non-normative language development does not mean they cannot thrive in a multilingual environment, as will be further explained in Chapter 4. For that reason, in the present dissertation, the author has opted for a less-conservative definition of multilingualism that could be inclusive for people who present either typical or atypical development:

> *A person can be considered multilingual when they can be functional in two or more languages, regardless of their level of proficiency in each language or the mode of expression, considering –when possible– the person's own perception of their multilingual nature as well as their ability to thrive across different language environments.*
> (Author's own elaboration)

1.2. The languages of multilingual speakers based on background and language context

In addition to the conceptualization of multilingualism, there is a wide range of terms to refer to the languages spoken by multilingual speakers in relation to themselves and their identities as well as their language context or setting. Some of those terms represent the speakers' cultural or ethnic origin/background, the sociopolitical status of the languages spoken, or the linguistic and historical context of the place of residence. Therefore, considering that the present dissertation

addresses the language dynamics of multilingual families of different linguistic backgrounds, it is necessary to define and clarify some frequently used terms to avoid potential confusion.

Based on the origin or ethnicity of a person with a migration history (theirs or their ancestors'), the terms used to refer to their languages usually draw back to the speaker's background, such as home languages, heritage languages or native languages. Each one of those terms also have multiple definitions, but to facilitate their understanding, they are summarized as follows: a broad definition of "heritage language" refers to a language transmitted through family interactions that connects the linguistic and cultural heritage of a person in a different language context (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007). Secondly, "home language" refers to a language that is linked to the home environment and transmitted by at least one of the parents, though not limited to that sole language setting, allowing the speaker to navigate the world through that language (Eisenchlas & Schalley, 2020). The term "home language" is widely used in studies addressing the language practices of multilingual families. Nonetheless, there are experts who suggest that those terms could bear negative connotations as they "point more to the past and less to the future" (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 509). This perspective may unintentionally favor the language of the host country (Schroedler et al., 2023), due to its relevance in the person's current life and future opportunities, thus advocating for the term "community languages" instead (p. 2). However, in the context of the present dissertation, the latter term may lead to confusion, therefore, and for the sake of transparency, the terms home and heritage languages are preferred and will be used interchangeably unless specified otherwise.

In the case of the linguistic context and sociopolitical status of the place where a person lives, terms such as majority, minority, minoritized, and societal languages arise. In this case, "majority" and "minority" languages refer to the languages spoken within a given territory, considering both the number of speakers and the status of officiality of the languages in the country or region (European Charter of Minority Languages, 1992). Nonetheless, languages are not free from subjectivity and scrutiny, giving rise to concepts such as "minoritized languages", where a language would be at disadvantage over another due to the value and stigma that may be associated to it (Ferreira et al., 2019). On the more objective side can be found the term "societal language", which refers to the language(s) that are locally used in public life, government and education (De Houwer, 2021), regardless of the number of speakers. For example, in the context of Spain, the Catalan language is the majority language of the region of Catalonia, used both in public and private spheres, but it is also a minority language within the overall linguistic context of Spain; however, due to its historical background, along with the social attitudes and stigma that may be associated to it, it can also be considered a minoritized language

(Flors-Mars et al., 2021). To provide clarity, in this dissertation, the term "societal language" will be generally used to refer to the national language of a country, and the terms "majority/minority languages" will be used in the context of multilingualism in specific regions or countries.

Lastly, with regards to the linguistic context of a place in relation to its historical background, the distinction between indigenous languages and local/regional languages is introduced. In theory, they could be simplified as languages that are bound to a region, but in practice, each label holds certain undertones that provide a nuanced meaning to each concept. The terms "local or regional languages" are frequently used interchangeably with "minority languages" (Brohy et al., 2019). However, in this dissertation, a slight shift is made to define local or regional languages as those associated with a specific territory within a nation-state regardless of the number of speakers, including languages that can fall into either the minority or majority language category in that context. In contrast, "indigenous languages" refer to languages that are not only tied to a region or territory, but have had a history of colonization and/or linguistic erasure that may strengthen the relationship between language and identity of its people (House, 2014). In this dissertation, the term indigenous language will be used as necessary to provide a theoretical contextualization, but the terms "local/regional languages" are more suitable for the context of this specific research and will be used in the pertinent chapters.

1.3. Multilingualism and language diversity in a globalized world

The growing diversity of languages and the increase in multilingual speakers and communities are undeniable. It is estimated that there are between 4.500 and 10.000 languages in the world, although the overall accepted number is around 6.000 (Moreno-Fernández, 2008). Therefore, considering that there are 195 countries recognized by the United Nations, multilingual language dynamics may naturally arise as a common means of communication.

It can be argued that the current interlinguistic contexts, language diversity and multicultural societies emerged from the need of a group to differentiate from and complement other communities, as well as for its members to identify with other individuals (see Chapter 3 for cultural and linguistic identity negotiation). In this context, the combination of inter-ethnic encounters, social interactions along with the exchange of goods, rituals, discourses, ideas and/or people between neighboring communities (Cayón & Chacon, 2022) lead to a cultural hybridization that originated linguistic varieties and multilingual interactions. Subsequently, the emergence of modern states worldwide promoted the establishment of official

languages as instruments of communication within borders, as well as to endorse socioeconomic and political cohesion (Moreno-Fernández, 2008). Nowadays, a small number of those languages are used as languages of wider communication across the globe. However, even though a government may set one or more languages as official, most nation-states have indigenous/regional languages and dialectal variations that go beyond political borders.

Paradoxically, non-majority languages constitute 98% of the world's languages but are only used by less than 10% of the population (Singh et al., 2012). In this context, the highest presence of linguistic diversity occurs in the areas (and therefore countries) located in equatorial and tropical zones, and it mitigates in regions that are closer to the poles (Moreno-Fernández, 2008). Nonetheless, estimations on the distribution of languages around the globe should be taken with caution, as data collection methods may be uneven across world regions.

Since the outbreak of globalization, the presence of migration movements and intercultural exchange has risen to a point where more than half of the world's population speak more than two languages (Paradowski & Bator, 2017). But although the term of globalization gained popularity in the 1980s, the phenomenon has existed for centuries in the form of colonization, slavery, missionary activities and international alliances (Singh et al., 2012). As a consequence, languages that were bounded to a specific geographical context were spread throughout the world, introducing the need to have a common code that can be used as a tool for intra- and international communication. That is the case of languages such as English, Spanish, French or Portuguese, which grew as lingua francas throughout history as they became the official languages of numerous territories and nations. In this context, both the historical past of these nations (e.g., the colonial history of the Spanish and British Empires), along with their current economic and political status worldwide, contributed to the development of their languages into lingua francas (House, 2014).

The global situation nowadays has led to a switch in language policies at educational and private levels, where languages of higher socioeconomical value are incorporated as languages of instruction at schools and prioritized by families for their children to learn (Seo, 2021). These changes are originated by a monolingual reductionism that praises global languages and projects myths regarding ethnic and linguistic diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2019). Consequently, indigenous and heritage languages can be relegated to a position of disadvantage, overshadowed by the power of "bigger" languages that provide the speaker with higher symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) and a wider range of opportunities (Martín-Rojo, 2015). Building on this idea, in the case of languages such as English, the current linguistic context of the language demonstrates its potential as a tool of

international understanding and communication regardless of cultural identities (House, 2014), which may also influence its perceived value and desirability as an international language.

Considering the status gap that may exist between languages, and the disadvantage at which minority languages might be, the process of maintaining and passing on these languages to the following generations may present challenges for caregivers and other parties involved. In relation to that, Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) reflects on the situation of indigenous peoples and minority/minoritized groups who may face a scarcity of public resources to support their languages. Here, the author states that this situation may become an obstacle for migrant and other linguistically diverse families who wish to exert their right to use their heritage languages, as they might have to assimilate the cost of their children's formal education. In such contexts, parents may not be "willing to invest in an endeavor that provides intangible returns at best" (Ferreira et al., 2019, p. 705).

Nonetheless, with the aim to counterbalance these challenges, there is a growing movement directed at promoting and celebrating heritage and indigenous languages to raise awareness about cultural diversity from a decolonial perspective (Bale, 2010). Here, several authors highlight the need to take measures to protect these languages in order to prevent language death and the disappearance of the cultural elements associated with them (Brohy et al., 2019; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2019). In contrast to this idea, authors such as House (2003) introduce a different take on this issue by making a difference between languages for communication with others and languages for identification with a linguistic-cultural group, suggesting that, in this context, languages can also co-exist and supplement each other, generating thus new mixed and enriched language varieties (House, 2014). However, studies conducted in former colonial territories argue that this scenario may still privilege some languages over others and cause minority language loss (Igboanusi & Peter, 2004; Makoni et al., 2006).

To sum up, this chapter presented an introduction to the notion of multilingualism and the languages of multilingual speakers from different perspectives, contextualized in the current global context to provide clarity with regards to the effects of the different historical events throughout the past centuries. The author offered a reconceptualization of multilingualism that aims to integrate underrepresented perspectives and be inclusive of non-normative language trajectories, including those of individuals who may present typical or atypical language development. Additionally, the chapter provided definitions to the different terms used throughout the literature with regards to the languages used by multilingual speakers, considering the person's identity and language context. In the last section, the information presented manifests that multilingual interactions

between speakers of different languages are not a new occurrence. However, the aims and motives behind cross-linguistic exchanges, as well as people's interest in learning and using certain languages, have evolved along with the social, political and economic interests of modern states and their inhabitants. The chapter also provides a brief contextualization on the social and institutional efforts that are put into practice to prevent the disappearance of non-majority languages.

Chapter 2: Language views and attitudes in relation to place and context

Considering the linguistic and cultural situation worldwide (i.e., globalization, migrations, online connections), the geographical location of a person might play a substantial role in their will and actions to learn new languages and/or transmit languages to their children. This is a topic that is gaining attention in the field of multilingualism and multiculturalism, as being exposed to and learning different languages can become the norm for a person for numerous reasons. Here, their beliefs, experiences and desires may shape their priorities with regards to language learning and identity negotiation in the place where they live. For example, people may choose the languages they want to speak at home and transmit to their children based on their current and imagined identities in relation to their desired place of residence (Fuentes, 2020) (see Chapter 3 for more information about identities). That is, some migrant families may intend to go back to their home country in the future, thus reinforcing their heritage language so their children can maintain cultural ties, allowing them to thrive in that environment.

In this context, the socioeconomic background of the family also plays a role in the assessment of their future country of residence and therefore, their language priorities. In other cases, parents may also prioritize the language of their current place of residence by undergoing a "selective acculturation" (Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008, p. 24), to allow their children to integrate and benefit from the advantages that may come from navigating two (or more) linguistic realities, protecting them from "the negative effects of discriminations" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 225).

The place where the family lives may also shape parents' attitudes[3] towards multilingualism and a multilingual rearing. For instance, Akgül et al. (2019) interviewed multilingual parents living in their country of origin and abroad, finding differences in their attitudes based on whether the family became multilingual by choice or out of necessity. The study suggests that families who live in their home country might learn languages under their own terms, prioritizing aspects such as the benefits or opportunities they bring, whereas families who move to a different country usually face the need to learn the host language in order to adjust to the place, which may shape their views regarding a multilingual rearing and their attitudes towards the languages they are in contact with. However, even though there are studies supporting that attitudes towards multilingualism may vary depending on whether the family migrated or not, their views and choices regarding

[3] In this dissertation, language attitudes are understood as the evaluative beliefs (positive/negative) that a person may have towards languages, language diversity or multilingualism.

language use are also influenced by the social status of the families' heritage languages in that region or country (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2022). In this sense, there are authors who describe that attitudes towards languages, as well as language practices, may also be influenced by what is "necessary" in terms of the sociocultural background and sociopolitical context of the environment that each person navigates (Nightingale, 2020; Seo, 2021). Therefore, taking the whole context into account, multilingual families need to balance not only their heritage language(s), the majority language(s) and/or global languages, but also deal with the social perception and status that may be associated with them.

There are different reasons why the current (or imagined) country of residence may influence parents' attitudes towards multilingualism and their choice of languages for their children. However, there are few comparative studies reflecting on how the location where multilingual families live may play a part on their views, language choice and decisions regarding language transmission strategies. Furthermore, the evidence is even more scarce when the search is narrowed down to a comparison between specific types of regions (e.g., culturally diverse areas vs linguistically homogeneous areas) or countries, which leads to the next section of this chapter.

2.1. Language attitudes and use in multilingual and monolingual areas

The available evidence with regards to the relationship between the location and people's views about multilingualism is relatively scarce, however it showcases a variety of situations based on the region where the research takes place, along with its language context and dynamics. In this section, a few examples are provided to illustrate the diversity of language attitudes and practices that may be observed in different linguistically diverse regions around the world.

For instance, in some settings where several languages and cultures cohabitate, the use of different languages daily may be considered the norm, incorporating multilingual practices as an ordinary mode of communication. One example could be the case of Malaysia, as described by Vollmann and Wooi Soon (2018), where there are 4 standard languages, along with several spoken vernaculars and creoles. The linguistic context of the country allows people of different ethnicities to adopt a specific language (e.g., Mandarin, Malay) and culture as identity markers while developing competence in other local and standard languages, adjusting their language practices to the situation by mixing and switching languages frequently.

In other linguistic settings, however, the presence of different languages and cultures may not necessarily influence people's language practices but may have

an impact on their views and attitudes towards those languages. Here, authors such as Surrain and Luk (2023) found in the United States that parental attitudes towards multilingualism differed depending on the higher or lower presence of linguistic and cultural diversity in the area where they lived within the country, regardless of their own language-learning experience and bilingual/monolingual language exposure in their household. This study suggests that the increase of opportunities for contact with speakers of foreign languages may influence individual's attitudes towards those groups, which in turn, would have an effect on the general perception about multilingualism in culturally diverse regions.

In contrast to those findings, Kircher et al. (2022) remarked that the linguistic background and location of multilingual parents in linguistically diverse areas, such as Quebec, might not necessarily predict their language attitudes, but the specific languages at play and the parents' approach to promoting multilingualism at home might have a bigger impact on their attitudes towards multilingualism. Additionally, there are situations where people may show inconsistent language views in relation to the languages of a country or region, expressing positive attitudes towards the local language of a country (e.g., Luxembourgish), identifying it as the language "that belongs the most" to the region and recognizing its official status, while occasionally describing said language as a dialect (Purschke, 2020).

The differences in attitudes and practices in different multilingual environments suggest that the acknowledgement of multilingualism in linguistically diverse areas is not straightforward. On one side, the language views, use and experiences of multilingual speakers may vary for different demographic groups within the same region based on aspects such as their visible ethnic features, age and/or gender (Purschke, 2020; Rodríguez-García et al., 2021; Sagna & Hantgan, 2021; Taqavi & Rezaei, 2021). On the other side, migration movements, intermarriages, as well as the higher or lower contact between colonial and/or indigenous languages may also influence language ecologies in multilingual areas (Cayón & Chacon, 2022; Sagna & Hantgan, 2021).

It is important to bear in mind that language practices and views are also linked to the sociopolitical context of the region. For instance, in Iran, Farsi is the only official language, even though there are other local languages in certain regions. In this context, Mirvahedi and Jafari (2021) describe that speakers of Azerbaijani –the second most spoken language in Iran– often prioritize the use of Farsi over their heritage language with their children, as it holds a higher social status, which brings better opportunities and might prevent their children from experiencing discrimination. For that matter, children can be sensitive to stereotypes and structural differences related to languages, which may also shape their language beliefs and preferences (Bashyam et al., 2023).

2.2. The case of the regional languages in Spain

Spain is a country with a rich language history and a complex language context in the present day. In that country, Spanish is the national language, but there are multiple official and non-official languages that are spoken in certain regions (or *autonomous communities*). There is also presence of foreign languages as a result of migration movements and modifications in the languages of instruction in schools (e.g., introduction of English as the medium of instruction in some public schools). When taking into account the people in Spain who may have a migration background, and therefore potentially speak other languages (or other variants of Spanish), the National Institute of Statistics reported in 2024 that approximately 18.2% of Spain's population was born outside of Spain (Instituto Nacional de Estadística [INE], 2024).

In general, Spanish is the shared language between speakers all over the country, but in the regions where there are local languages, the language dynamics among residents are more diverse. Figure 3 is presented to provide a simplified representation of the geographic location of the languages spoken in the country.

Figure 3. *Bilingual and monolingual regions of Spain*



The language context of the country has gone through different stages throughout the years, with significant changes during the last century that affected (and continue to affect) language regulations as well as language use among speakers. After an era of repression in which the use of the local languages of Spain was banned, some important accomplishments with regards to language regulations and protection of the regional languages came with the introduction of the *Linguistic Normalization Laws* in the 1980s, along with the preamble of the Constitution of

1978, which claims the protection of all peoples, languages and cultures that comprise the Spanish State (Herreras, 2010). At present, the regional governments aim to promote the local languages through measures such as fostering their use in public administration, media, cultural production or education (Monteagudo, 2024). In those regions, the local languages have been introduced either as an obligatory part of the school curriculum or as the language of instruction, aiming to create a balanced bilingualism by helping the younger generations to learn and use them (Huguet et al., 2008). However, this approach is not always successful due to the different school systems in each region, along with the predominant language use patterns in urban areas, the growing presence of English in schools, and the social perceptions of the regional languages, which are often stigmatized for a variety of reasons (e.g., political issues, social status of languages) (Monteagudo, 2024; Nandi et al., 2023; Recalde & Fernández, 2024).

There seems to be an increment of positive attitudes towards the regional languages, although in some cases, their use appears to be linked to academic and school environments, while Spanish tends to be the language used in private and social domains (Bier & Lasagabaster, 2022). In this context, there are groups of families who seek to counterbalance this linguistic mismatch by choosing to speak the regional language as their first language, transmitting it to their children, meeting regularly with other speakers who implement similar language practices, as well as founding minority-language associations and schools in areas where the minority-language-first system is not implemented (Nandi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, the information about language views and choice in multilingual families in bilingual and monolingual regions is rather scarce, finding mainly studies focused on educational settings and institutional/governmental policies.

There are few studies addressing the language attitudes and use of multilingual families balancing regional languages along with a foreign language at home or at school. In general, parents in those studies tend to show positive attitudes towards multilingualism and their children's acquisition of several languages (García-Ruiz et al., 2024). However, the attitudes towards the regional languages might also vary based on the linguistic background of the parents and the perceived usefulness of the languages they are exposed to in that region (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021).

Considering the sociolinguistic context of Spain, the research took place in different settings, collecting data from both monolingual and bilingual autonomous communities. It was expected that this approach would help obtain a wide perspective by gathering information about the language views and dynamics of multilingual families in different language settings.

Chapter 3: Identity negotiation and language use in multilingual households

This chapter presents a walkthrough around the construction and negotiation of identities in multilingual settings, along with the role that identity plays in the overall language dynamics of multilingual families, focusing on the choices and actions that parents may put into practice with their multilingual children. The chapter is structured as follows: first, a theoretical introduction of identity construction, followed by the negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts, linking it with the journey of multilingual families in relation to their choice and use of languages at home. The last section is divided into two subsections related to the motivations behind language choice, and the notion of family language policies.

3.1. Identity construction through interaction

The concept of identity has been extensively studied in a number of disciplines in the social sciences such as psychology, sociology or sociolinguistics, presenting different explanations that have been either disproved or refined throughout the years in adaptation to the fields of study they are part of.

In this dissertation, we adopt Bucholtz and Hall's (2005, 2008) notion of identity, which challenges the traditional idea that understands identity as a pre-assigned structure that inherently belongs to a person's psyche and remains stable throughout time. In their research, Bucholtz and Hall draw from a variety of theories developed in different fields among the social sciences (e.g., linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, social psychology), introducing an interdisciplinary perspective that defines identity as an intersubjective phenomenon that is constituted in interaction with others in a specific context. Their definition offers a sociocultural linguistic perspective on the subject by highlighting the relationship between language and identity. Similarly, other scholars have also questioned the traditional interpretations of identity, introducing definitions that position the individual as an active agent that constructs their identity within their own subjectivity (Monreal Bosch, 2007). However, identity can go beyond the individual self in multiple ways, as it shifts with and within interactions and across discourse contexts. Identity can be constructed in a deliberate and intentional manner or unconsciously, and it can also be influenced by external perceptions as well as by "larger ideological processes" and "material structures" (i.e., the systems and resources that may affect an individual's everyday life) that might play a role in interactions (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 606).

The way in which a person constructs and negotiates their identity(-ies) may go through different routes based on their needs. In some instances, identity may act as a symbol to reclaim the value of differentiation from a collective in terms of ethnicity, culture, nationality or gender, among others (Esteban Guitart, 2007). In other cases, identity serves the purpose of relating to a group through a shared feeling of alliance and belonging, constructed via a shared land, history, culture and/or language (Cayón & Chacon, 2022; Monreal Bosch, 2007). However, the process of identity construction in relation to a group is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon, as it is also possible to create a shared identity despite potential differences. This is the case of some indigenous groups in Latin America, where different linguistic communities unify to increase their political influence and reclaim their shared identity as indigenous peoples over their specific ethnic identifications (Esteban Guitart, 2007), which could be labeled as *'supranational identity'* (Kluge, 2015, p. 181). This situation has become especially prevalent in the current *era* of globalization and multiculturality, where the power of acknowledging certain linguistic identities reinforces a sense of collectiveness as a symbol of social organization to protect smaller cultures and languages (House, 2014; Monreal Bosch, 2007).

In short, the idea of basing one's identity on the desire to differentiate from a group or associate with it intrinsically implies the existence of a collective identity constructed under a common objective, whether that is to belong to or detach from a specific categorization. In that sense, Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) notion of identity goes beyond the concepts of sameness and difference, defining it as *"the social positioning of the self and other"* (p. 586).

3.2. Identity negotiation in multilingual contexts

In the case of multilingual or culturally diverse people, specifically, the idea of identity constructed in interaction becomes especially relevant, as their identities are framed, negotiated and enacted through language choice, use and ideologies in their specific contexts (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018). In this context, the concept of identity negotiation refers to the ongoing process of construction, expression and adjustment of a person's identity in interaction with others in different settings. From this perspective, the process of positioning "the self and the other" may be complex, especially in the case of people with migrant backgrounds or speakers of minority/minoritized languages, who may find themselves in a limbo between their heritage and societal identities (Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021; Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). On this basis, Cheng (2004) introduces the concept of *'hyphenated identity'*

(p. 1), addressing the different stages of *acculturation*[4] of ethnically diverse individuals growing up in the United States. In her research, the author discusses the different experiences regarding identity construction based on the ethnic background of a person and the moment where they or their elders migrated. In relation to that, Bou (2021) suggests that, in the case of migrant families, the reasons behind migration may also play a part in the higher or lower adaptation to the host culture. This scene introduces a multi-layered process of identity negotiation in multilingual families, where parents may have a strong sense of identity in relation to their heritage culture and language, while the children may develop a more fluid sense of identity that allows them to navigate their bicultural nature (Jung, 2022).

The intricacy of this situation lies in finding balance between the host and heritage cultures, ranging from situations of full acculturation to resistance against the societal language and culture, passing through more flexible approaches such as selective or multiple acculturation (Baker & Jones, 1998; Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). In this context, *resistance* is understood as the active efforts to maintain the heritage language and cultural practices of a minority/minoritized group. However, the tendency towards one discourse or another (acculturation versus resistance) can be influenced by the experienced exclusion or acceptance of a person's origin, culture, ethnicity, religion, and/or language (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). In some instances, parents of children who belong to an ethnic minority and have experienced racial discrimination, may adopt discourses of resistance as a reaction to a discriminatory context to guarantee "ethnic loyalty" and prevent the loss of their linguistic identities (Moustaoui, 2021, p. 42). However, in other cases, parents in a similar situation may lean towards the assimilation of the societal culture and language to prevent their children from experiencing discrimination because of their ethnic background (Mirvahedi, 2021). In this regard, Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) takes a critical approach in relation to parents' choices, stating that "if the link between identity and language were strong, the benefits of maintaining a mother tongue would weight more than the benefits of shifting to a dominant language" (p. 92). Nevertheless, there are different contextual factors that may influence the tenacity of somebody's linguistic identity and their language negotiation. For instance, families whose linguistic backgrounds are considered "prestigious" and/or who have a white phenotype may exhibit a firmer identity orientation and eagerness to express and transmit the heritage language (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). The study shows that, in this situation, children may also tend to embrace their mixed identity and take advantage of their full linguistic repertoire as a practical asset.

[4] In this research, *acculturation* refers to the process of assimilating the language and/or culture/cultural practices of the host country.

These are not the only possible paths in relation to the linguistic identities of minorities, as each person may undergo different experiences in relation to their language, culture and ethnicity throughout their lives and contexts. In any case, the relationship with one's heritage language and culture could be linked to the person's self-concept and social identity (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018), which may also vary overtime based on the social environment and its demands. This would relate to Bucholtz and Hall's (2008) outlook with regards to the importance of incorporating an ethnographic perspective in the understanding of identity as a dynamic element, which is particularly relevant in the context of multilingualism and culturally diverse individuals.

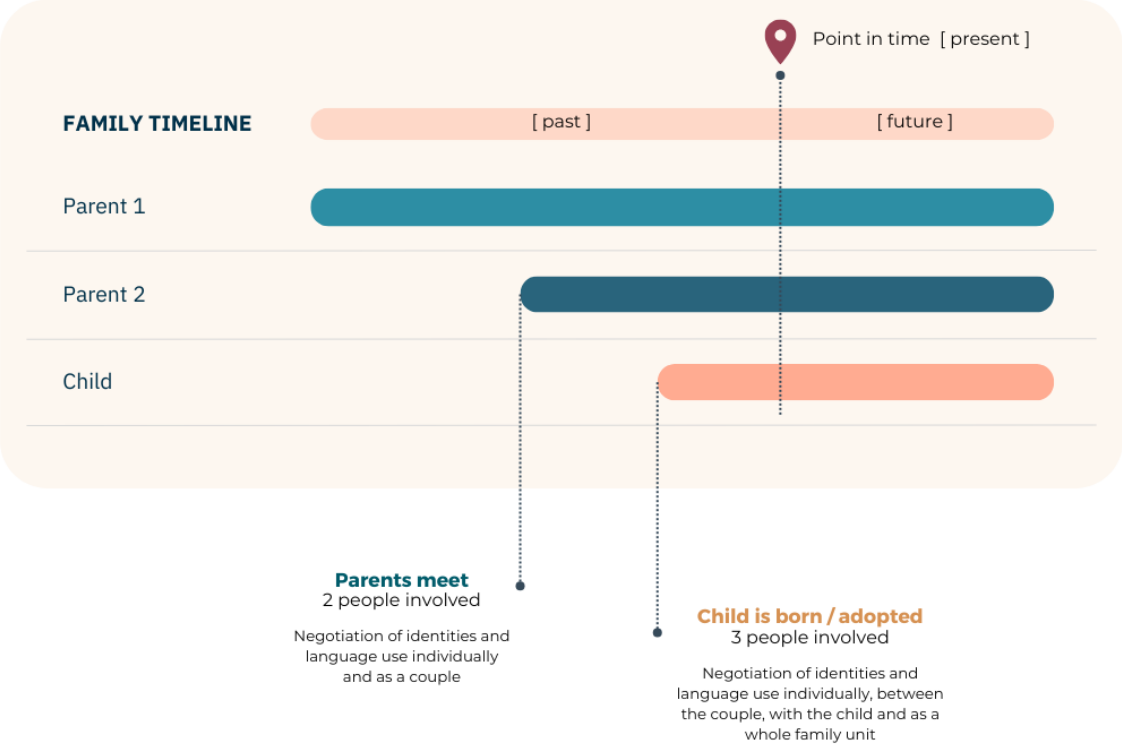
3.3. The journey of language choice and use with multilingual children

The process of choosing which language to use with children involves multiple components –already mentioned in this and the previous chapters– in relation to the parents' culture, linguistic experience, ethnicity, as well as their previous, current and potential (or *imagined*) context, including the place of residence and its sociopolitical environment. And just like one's identity, decisions regarding the choice and use of languages are not permanent, since a person's priorities around languages can be negotiated and modified over time and based on the context (Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023).

Consistent with the famous quote by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset: *"I am I and my circumstance"*, in this framework, too, the linguistic and identitarian changes that a person goes through are contingent on their own inner dialogue in relation to the circumstances they may, or may have, come in contact with. In this regard, personal experiences, backgrounds and environments can impact ideologies and decisions, as well as the self-perceived power of one's actions (Nakamura, 2019; Nogueroles et al., 2021), using the person's own aftermath as evidence to validate their choices (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018). However, it is not only the past experiences and current situation of a person, but also their expectations, goals and desires, what shape their beliefs and imagined identities, influencing their practices in relation to different aspects of their lives and their children's (e.g., language management, identity negotiation, cultural practices) (Fuentes, 2020). Similarly, authors such as Esteban-Guitart (2007) affirm that the "desirable future" (p. 83) bolsters a person's actions in the present along with their personality development. In other words, a person negotiates their identity, choices and actions based on their past, present and future contexts, experiences and interactions. This rationale is important to understand the different choices, levels of investment, and practices followed in families who raise their children multilingually. Figure 4

showcases a graphic representation of the possible timeline of a multilingual family considering the past, present and future circumstances of each family member in a selected point in time.

Figure 4. *Example of timeline in a multilingual family*



As shown, the process of identity and language negotiation is continuous and everchanging throughout the lives of people who navigate different linguistic contexts, with important readjustments when a person embarks on an intercultural relationship, but also when the couple decides to start a family. In these contexts, the decision process begins even before the family is constituted, where usually both people need to compromise and find a common ground in relation to the place of residence, language use and values (Moratalla, 2021). However, this journey may be different depending on the cultural background(s) of the couple and the nature of their relationship status (e.g., power dynamics) (Pérez, 2021). As a result, one common issue among parents goes in relation to the cultural identity that their children may develop, often projecting their own expectations and desires on their children, aiming for a gratifying degree of mixedness (Moratalla, 2021) and/or a *"Harmonious Bilingualism"* (De Houwer, 2020, p. 63). These goals that parents may strive for are reflected on their choices and actions with regards to the linguistic and cultural dynamics in their family.

3.3.1. Motivations and practices regarding language use

The decisions parents make to implement certain practices and transmit their languages are influenced by different aspects in relation to (1) their motivations to raise their children multilingually and to choose certain languages over others; and (2) their *'impact beliefs'*, understood as the parents' conviction of the impact that their actions can have on their children (Nakamura, 2019).

In this regard, the motivations for people to choose a language for themselves and their children are widely diverse. Typically, a person's drive to use a language can be influenced by their priorities and desires in relation to multiple factors, such as academic, professional, and economic opportunities; cognitive and linguistic benefits; as well as social, cultural, identitarian, emotional and/or familial reasons (Nogueroles et al., 2021). Nonetheless, to better understand these motivations, they can be clustered based on common characteristics to frame them under a higher order of categorization. Some authors separate language-learning motivations into *integrative* and *instrumental* (Baker, 1992; 1998; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) based respectively on (a) "a wish to identify with or join another language group" (Baker, 1998, p. 123), or (b) a more utilitarian purpose, where language would be a tool to acquire something or reach a goal (e.g., job offer). Other authors such as Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) categorize language interests in the context of language rights, maintaining the idea of instrumentality, but emphasizing the influence of *expressive* interests in relation to "language as a marker of identity" (p. 94), to secure a linguistic group's chance of cultural preservation. However, there seems to be another component that holds important weight when considering language choice in relation to heritage languages, which are the motivations lead by the *affective value* assigned to a language (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018). All in all, researchers have wondered which language-learning motivation may be more powerful, however, several groups of speakers (e.g., indigenous peoples, minorities groups) are motivated by a combination of language interests in relation to their cultural identities, traditions and/or language rights, as well as to acquire social and economic opportunities contingent to their language(s) (Schroedler et al., 2022; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012).

In the context of multilingual families, the motivations for a person to use or learn several languages themselves may go along the same lines when they negotiate the choice of languages for their children. Here, parents often channel their expectations through their rearing practices, aiming to raise multilingual children to establish meaningful relationships with other family members, as well as "an investment that will yield positive returns" (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018, p. 9). Although as mentioned earlier in this chapter, in some instances, parents' decisions around language choice for their children are inspired by their own personal linguistic experiences (i.e., their past) (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018; Seo, 2021), translated into

expectations on their offspring's language outcomes and potential life opportunities and success (i.e., their future).

In addition to the motivations to learn, use or transmit a language, the actions parents choose to -or not to- take for their children to learn a language are guided by how strong or weak their impact beliefs are. *Impact belief* is a term introduced by De Houwer (1999), defined as parents' beliefs around the amount of control and power they have on their children's language development. In this sense, parents' impact beliefs are tightly linked to the success of their personal and/or professional language experiences (Nakamura, 2019), making decisions and taking actions based on their desires for their children to enjoy similar experiences or redirect their paths in hopes of the child following a different course to their own. Nakamura's research also reveals that parents' beliefs and confidence are not necessarily pre-determined nor permanent, as they could strengthen or weaken as time passes depending on the child's language development, but also on the support received from other people (e.g., peers in their linguistic community or family members). Additionally, it can also be interpreted from the research by Rodríguez-García et al. (2021) –which delves into the language attitudes and practices from immigrant parents and multilingual teenagers in Catalonia– that impact beliefs and actions might also be influenced by the status of the language itself and the social perception of the ethnic background of the family.

Furthermore, Nogueroles et al. (2021) introduce the case of Spanish-speaking parents who address their children in English motivated by their dissatisfaction with foreign-language education and learning at school. In this case, their own perceived confidence in their language skills strengthened their impact beliefs to pursue a multilingual education in a foreign language at home. In other occasions, parents' impact beliefs are dictated by culture-related reasons to strengthen their heritage identity, or to compensate their own experience (or lack thereof) learning the language (Ryan, 2023). In this sense, parents with strong impact beliefs usually take an active role in the management of the home language(s), often making explicit and deliberate efforts for their child to learn and use a language, whereas in families where parents display weaker impact beliefs, their actions in relation to language transmission and maintenance may take a more passive stance (De Houwer, 1999; Nakamura, 2019).

3.3.2. Family Language Policies

When studying the language journey in multilingual families, the field of "Family Language Policy" (FLP) gains importance, as it seeks to provide information and depth in relation to parents' motivations, choices and actions with regards to the

language(s) used in the home environment. The study of FLP draws on different theoretical frameworks, such as anthropology, sociolinguistics as well as traditional approaches of psychology, touching upon language policy, language socialization, literacy studies and child language acquisition (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; King & Fogle, 2013).

From a theoretical point of view, the basis of the study of family language policies lies in the relationship between parental language ideologies or beliefs[5] (what people think about languages), management (language planning and decisions) and practices (what parents actually do) (Spolsky, 2004). However, as it was later reviewed by the same author, that view of FLP might only account for language choices and use within a private domain, driven by internal forces, while in reality, there are multiple influences outside of the private sphere that play a role in the family's language beliefs, management and choices (Spolsky, 2007).

On a similar note, as it was explained by Curdt-Christiansen (2013), other authors such as King and Fogle (2013) have also questioned the classic outlook in the study of family language policy, shifting from traditional views of language acquisition as a private issue, to a perspective of language development as a social practice that can be shaped by different contexts and domains. In their study, King and Fogle also discuss the inclusion of and focus on more diverse family types, languages and social contexts, and emphasize the notion of family as a dynamic system that includes the child as an active agent that contributes to the negotiation of family language policies. In this sense, Fogle (2013) highlights the importance of expanding the *ideological* component of FLP to better understand the relationship between the family's internal and external influences in relation to language choice and practices, as well as the role of children in the process. Here, the author discusses the role of wider parental ideologies and "*ethnotheories"* (p. 84) (i.e., a person's cultural belief systems) as motivations for parenting practices. Therefore, by broadening the scope of family language policy to include different sociolinguistic contexts, belief systems and language agents, its study can shed light on the relationships between the internal and external worlds of multilingual families, revealing the conflicts that family members may have in relation to balancing external sociopolitical influences, education demands, as well as their personal desires to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritage (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013).

From a practical and research-related point of view, there are numerous questions that have been brought up in relation to the practices and strategies carried out in multilingual families that would also explain the attention that the field of FLP has received in the last few decades. Researchers throughout the world have been

[5] Also referred to as *"language attitudes"* in this dissertation.

seeking to understand and illustrate the diversity that can be found across multilingual families in relation to their language dynamics and the children's language development. Nonetheless, even within this diversity, there are certain language transmission practices that are recurrent and shared across language contexts and settings (Table 2). These practices have been observed and separated based on specific scenarios in relation to the use of languages with the child; however, those are not the only possibilities to transmit a language, and neither they are instructions for how parents *should* do it, as language dynamics depend on what parents *want* to do and what fits their family's values (O'Malley, 2022). The success of these practices depends on the quantity and quality of input that the child receives (Hoff, 2018), but there are other elements that can be out of the parents' control and may also contribute to the higher or lower success of their language practices (e.g., school language, child's preferences). More information about language practices can be found in Chapter 5.

Table 2. *Types of language practices in multilingual households*

Language practice	**Description**
One Person – One Language (OPOL)	Each parent speaks one language with the child. The child listens to several languages but each parent address the child monolingually. - Option a. Monolingual parents with different heritage languages in a setting with a third societal language. Parents use the societal or another language between them. The child is exposed to three or more languages. - Option b. One parent speaks a foreign language, and the other parent speaks the societal language. The child is exposed to two languages, with higher exposure to the societal language.
Home Language at home (or Minority Language at home)	Both parents speak the home language that is not the societal language to provide more input and generate more opportunities to use it. The child receives the societal language outside of the home setting.
One Person – Several Languages (Ad hoc use of languages / language mixing)	Each parent uses the languages that come naturally to them when speaking between each other and with the child. The child listens to several languages while the parents follow a multilingual approach. Contrary to common assumptions, the child *quickly* learns to separate the languages as well as the social rules of when it is appropriate to mix or not.
Time, place and people*	Parents use each language in specific contexts. - Time: language use depends on the moment or the day (e.g., weekdays and weekends) - Place: Language use depends on the place where the family is (e.g., one language at home, another language outside) - People: Language use depends on the people who participate in the conversation (e.g., one language with the parents, another language with friends or teachers)

Consecutive introduction of languages	The child is exposed to one language first and a second language (or more) is introduced after that one is acquired. - Option a. Parents use the minority language at home and the societal language is learned later in time. - Option b. Parents use the societal language at home and the child is introduced to a new language later (e.g., English).
Translanguaging	Practical theory of language that goes beyond language mixing and code-switching by thinking past the boundaries of languages (geographical, social or class-based varieties) and language structures. Language practices evolve and are combined in interaction beyond pre-established directions. There are two essential concepts in the context of translanguaging practices in family and other settings: - Translanguaging instinct: natural drive of humans to achieve effective communication beyond pre-defined linguistic cues and culturally defined language boundaries. - Translanguaging space: space created by and for translanguaging practices. It brings together the speakers' personal histories, experiences, environments, attitudes, beliefs, ideologies and abilities.
Going It Alone	Adaptation of the previous practices to single-parent families. The parent is the sole person in charge of providing an input of quality of the heritage (and other) language(s) at home. Focus on the parent-child's language and communication needs, attachment and creation of opportunities to use the languages.

Note. References used: Arnaus-Gil & Jiménez Gaspar (2022); Cruz-Ferreira (2018); Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020); Nogueroles et al. (2021); O'Malley (2022); Piller (2001); Wei (2018).
*Adapted from O'Malley's (2022) *"Time and Place"* (p. 58)

In addition to the language practices (or policies) that parents may follow, they also integrate a variety of strategies aimed at helping them reach the goals set on their children's language development. Those strategies usually go in relation to the actions that parents take to transmit a certain language and the use of resources that are available to them in their contexts (Gharibi & Seals, 2019). Here, parents may lean towards a more active or passive stance with regards to the strategies followed to help their children learn and use the target language(s) (Wilson, 2021) (Table 3 and 4). For instance, a passive language strategy could be choosing a school based on the proximity to the family's home for conveniency regardless of the language(s) of instruction, while an active stance may be searching for a school in the family's country or abroad that meets the parents' language aspirations for their children. The language strategies that parents use can be focused on the activity itself (e.g., reading a book, facetiming the family), but also implemented as a reaction to the child's use of language(s) (e.g., correcting the child's language) or to adjust to the natural course of the interaction or language setting. More information about language strategies can be found in Chapter 5.

Table 3. *Active language transmission strategies*

	Strategy	Description
Strategies focused on the child's language use	Minimal Grasp Strategy	The parent pretends not to understand the child unless the target language is used.
	Ignoring the child*	Similar to the previous strategy. The parent does not reply to the child when a different language is used (e.g., societal language instead of the heritage language).
	Immediate or delayed language correction	The parent corrects the child when they make a mistake in the target language or have interferences with the other language. Those corrections can be immediate or used as delayed feedback.
	Expressed Guess Strategy	Similar to the previous strategy. The parent requests for confirmation of the meaning by posing a yes/no question in the target language.
	Repetition Strategy	When the child uses a different language, the parent repeats the child's utterance in the target language.
	Self-translation*	Similar to the previous strategy. The parent presents a word followed by its translation, so the child can learn both labels simultaneously.
	Active Code Switch*	The parent switches from one language to the target language expecting the child to follow along.
	Penalty system*	Some parents resort to the rule of paying a fine if a different language is used or when there are interferences with other languages. Others resort to punishments or threats if the "wrong" language is used.
Strategies focused on the activity itself	Change of language setting*	e.g., visiting the home country, searching for a community of speakers, enrolling the child in a school in the target language, etc.
	Use of materials and other resources*	e.g., reading books, watching movies in the target language, introducing the child to music in the heritage language, etc.

Note. References used: Gharibi & Seals (2019); Kostoulas & Motsiou (2019); Kwon (2017); Lanza & Lomeu Gomes (2020); Wilson (2021)

*Names created ad hoc for this dissertation based on the description and types of strategies included.

Table 4. *Passive language transmission strategies*

Strategies focused on the child's language use	Move On Strategy	The parent continues using the language they were using without interrupting the conversation when the child uses a different language.
	Child leads the way*	The parent switches to the language that the child used first.

Strategies based on the language setting or the interaction	Passive Code Switch*	The parent switches from one language to the other or introduce words from other languages in the discourse. The parent does not expect a specific response from the child. - Option a. The parent switches languages in conversation without a specific structure or plan. - Option b. The parent switches languages influenced by the context (e.g., helping the child with their homework).

Note. References used: Lanza & Lomeu Gomes (2020); Mattheoudakis et al. (2020); Wilson (2021)
*Names created ad hoc for this dissertation based on the description and types of strategies included.

In this context, even though there are several paths that families can follow based on their language dynamics and tendencies, the use of a certain language practice or the implementation of a specific strategy may not guarantee a successful language development and use (Wang, 2023). For example, one common issue that has been brought up many times in the fields of research, education, practice, as well as everyday domains, is the dilemma of families who follow the same language transmission practices and strategies with their children but obtain different outcomes (De Houwer, 2007). Here, the level of satisfaction with the child's language development may be linked to the goals that parents had previously set, but it is also important to remember that other factors such as the child's language preferences, a consistent language input, possible changes when the child starts school or having contact with the extended family also play a role on language development in a multilingual context (O'Malley, 2022). In relation to the parents' experiences and satisfaction raising multilingual children, De Houwer (2020) highlights the concept of "Harmonious Bilingualism", referring to the neutral or positive experience that family members have in relation to their multilingual situation, which is related to the family's subjective well-being. The author defends that parents and children may experience less frustration and a higher Harmonious Bilingualism when the heritage language is maintained.

Therefore, as explained in this chapter, language choice, practices and outcomes may be related, on the one hand, to the interaction of parents' language ideologies, impact beliefs and expectations, which may evolve over time; and on the other hand, to the child's preferences and agency, which can influence the family's language choices, practices and language-development outcomes. It is during those plans, actions and adjustments that multilingual families negotiate their identities. However, all of those aspects can also be influenced by internal factors, such as personal circumstances, individual and collective identity negotiation, ethnicity, as well as the language itself, but also external factors such as the

sociopolitical and sociolinguistic context of the place of residence (see Chapter 2), school language(s), other people's views and the family's support system. Lastly, even though there are different agents who participate and play a part in the language dynamics of multilingual families, this dissertation primarily focuses on language choice and experiences from the perspective of parents.

Chapter 4. Professional support and practices with multilingual and multicultural families

Just as it happens in the field of family language policies with regards to finding and negotiating the *best* language transmission practices (Chapter 3), there are similar challenges in educational and healthcare contexts when it comes to professional practices. In these settings, the goal is to offer services to children and their families that contribute to ameliorating potential difficulties and improving their independence and quality of life. However, the scenario of professional practices with multilingual children presents particularities that may challenge practitioners (i.e., speech-language therapists, teachers, etc.). Therefore, this chapter presents, first, an introduction of the process that leads to multilingual families to seek professional support, including the concerns that may arise when raising multilingual children; followed by a few widespread myths that may worry parents and professionals, along with evidence to reframe those misconceptions; and lastly, a section on current and recommended professional practices in multilingual contexts.

4.1. Parental concerns and search for support

When a family is raising a child in more than one language, it is not uncommon for parents to experience doubts and concerns about their child's language development and general wellbeing in a multilingual environment. These concerns can arise regardless of the language development of the child (Hampton et al., 2017), and they may come from a place of higher or lower confidence based on the parents' own experiences and *impact beliefs* (Nakamura, 2019, see Chapter 3) or may be influenced by external opinions and advice (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Ryan, 2023).

Parents' concerns and doubts are frequently associated to a number of factors related to their language practices, their child's development and wellbeing, multilingualism itself and its potential consequences, as well as the maintenance of their heritage language(s) and culture in an environment where the majority language may be a different one (Grasso, 2024; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Kwon, 2017; Quirk et al., 2024; Wang, 2023). Therefore, parents may see themselves in the need to ask for advice to navigate their sociolinguistic reality while enabling their child to thrive in their social and academic settings (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018). However, all of that is often framed in a context where parents may also face challenges in relation to their economic situation, immigration status and support received from schools and other public institutions (Grasso, 2024; Kwon, 2017; Mirvahedi, 2021; Ragnarsdóttir, 2020), often experiencing language and cultural

barriers that might limit their access to services and attention received (Forray et al., 2024).

Here, professionals such as teachers and other educational experts play an important role "as they are perceived to be well informed and are easily accessible to parents" (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018, p. 2). However, the level of parental involvement in these situations varies depending on the cultural background of the family, the power they entrust on the professional and the role they are expected to fulfill (De Gioia, 2013; Verdon et al., 2015). Therefore, without a proper knowledge of the possible cultural differences among multilingual and multicultural families, there is a risk of agency imbalances between professionals and parents, since the first may be perceived as "holding power" due to their occupation and/or the status of their language (McLeod et al., 2018, p. 700). Accordingly, the stance professionals take with regards to raising children in more than one language may have an impact on families' views and decisions about language transmission practices, which can also impact the presence or absence of concerns related to a multilingual rearing (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020). Therefore, it can be presumed that a support system that validates and encourages the use of home languages may help reduce the challenges faced by multilingual families (Gharibi & Seals, 2020; Nakamura, 2019), and thus, foster a sense of trust that enables these families to rely on the assistance they may seek.

4.1.1. Concerns when children have language difficulties or disorders

In the case of families where children may have a developmental disorder with a language impairment (e.g., developmental language disorder, autism spectrum disorder, speech-sound disorder), the difficulties surrounding the disorder can present a challenge on their own, regardless of the number of languages the child is exposed to. Parents of children who present developmental difficulties may show concerns in relation to their child's development, mental health and general wellbeing (DesChamps et al., 2019; Wilmot et al., 2023), sometimes disregarding their own self-care to prioritize the child's needs (Iadarola et al., 2019). In this context, Iadarola and collaborators explain that caregivers may experience confusion and overwhelm related to the access to available services to support their child (and themselves), often being in the need for guidance and assistance during a process that may be unknown for them. However, obtaining the pertaining care may cause further stress to parents regarding the quality of the services received or the divergence between their and the professional's expectations (Davis et al., 2023). This may lead to feelings of isolation that can be mitigated through

creating connections with other people in similar situations and finding their own community (Iadarola et al., 2019; Wilmot et al., 2023).

When addressing the experiences of multilingual and multicultural families where children also have a developmental disorder, specifically, their ethnic or cultural background can play a role in the prevalence of parental concerns about the child's development (Donohue et al., 2019) as well as the acceptance of a diagnosis (Iadarola et al., 2019). In the first scenario, parents may show concerns related to (a) the child's language development and difficulties, (b) multilingualism itself, or (c) a combination of both (i.e., having a disorder as a multilingual child) (Hampton et al., 2017). From this perspective, some parents might perceive multilingualism as an added burden that may confuse the child, impair language acquisition or interfere with their difficulties (Dai et al., 2019; Drysdale et al., 2015; Hampton et al., 2017; Howard et al., 2021; Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2012). Therefore, they might feel reluctant to expose the child to several languages, switching sometimes to a monolingual rearing that they may later regret (Howard et al., 2021; Ijalba, 2016), since it might impact communication and interactional dynamics in the family (Cox et al., 2021; Kremer-Sadlik, 2005; Yu, 2013). Additionally, despite the potential presence of parental concerns, they may also be unaccepting of a diagnosis due different factors, such as a lack of understanding of the disorder, family expectations or cultural values that view disabilities as stigmatizing (Ijalba, 2016; Iadarola et al., 2019; Westby et al., 2024).

In addition to these experiences, culturally diverse families frequently struggle to find professional help to support their child's condition in a multilingual setting (Kay-Raining Bird, 2012; Mohamed & Shaaban 2024). There are instances where the ethnicity and language of the family may affect their access to services, finding discrepancies regarding the level of support received in relation to the child's condition compared to their local counterparts (Iadarola et al., 2019). In this situation, parents sometimes end up having to advocate for themselves and their children or persist to get help and access services (Stahmer et al., 2019).

4.2. Where do parents' concerns about multilingualism stem from? Myths and misconceptions

As shown, raising multilingual children may raise a number of questions and concerns among parents, who may worry about what is best for their children's development and wellbeing (Hampton et al., 2017). Such concerns frequently come from a lack of knowledge about multilingualism and are often a result of myths and misconceptions that are not backed by evidence (De Houwer, 2024b; Guiberson, 2013).

Many of the assumptions about multilingualism stem from a concern about children's development and a wish to prevent them from struggling. In this sense, a few common misconceptions are related to multilingualism being detrimental for a child's language development. For instance, one popular belief revolves around the idea that exposing children to more than one language can be confusing for them, which goes hand-in-hand with the idea that a multilingual child may experience a delayed language development or may not learn to separate each language, and thus, perpetually mix their languages (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Grosjean, 2010; Guiberson, 2013). In this vein, there is an additional concern regarding multilingualism not only causing language delays but also leading to a disorder (Paradowski & Bator, 2018). However, those beliefs might be a projection of the struggles an adult may experience during their own language learning (Nieva, 2015). Furthermore, when there is a confirmed difficulty or a language development disorder, it is frequently assumed that, on the one side, said disorder might be caused by an exposure to multiple languages, and on the other side, being multilingual may worsen the difficulties related to the disorder (Kohnert et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the evidence demonstrates that language impairments are independent of being exposed to more than one language (Paradis, 2010).

In addition to that, it is often believed that growing up multilingually may interfere with learning the school language and hamper the child's academic performance (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018; Grosjean, 2010; Jordaan, 2008). However, a multilingual exposure at home does not impede the acquisition of the school language and can in fact facilitate its development when the home language has a strong foundation (De Houwer, 2024b; Mattheoudakis et al., 2020).

4.2.1. Unpacking and reframing prevailing assumptions

To shed light around these issues, different authors have published several articles collecting evidence that aim to debunk those myths (De Houwer, 2024a; 2024b; Grosjean, 2010). Based on what the literature shows, there is no basis to support the idea that being multilingual entails additional difficulties for children with developmental disorders (Garrido et al., 2024; Grosjean, 2010). However, even though this is a topic that has been discussed over the last three decades (Baker & Jones, 1998; McLaughlin, 1992; Moore & Pérez-Méndez, 2006), these misconceptions around multilingualism are still quite prevalent. Those beliefs frequently stem from a lack of knowledge and experience related to a multilingual exposure and development (Rodríguez-García et al., 2018) and are rooted in a monolingual mindset that may misrepresent how a multilingual person develops their languages (Kidd & García, 2022; Muszyńska et al., 2025).

This monolingual bias sets an unrealistic frame of comparison between monolinguals and multilinguals, presenting a perspective that establishes monolingualism as the norm and places multilingualism as an exception, expecting the multilingual person to perform equally in each of their languages (Grosjean, 2010). This assumption is especially prevalent in linguistically homogeneous territories with a single official language (Paradowski, 2011) (see Chapter 1), and it may fail to account for the diversity that can be found within the sociolinguistic reality of each person, ignoring that multilingualism is a "natural potential" of every human rather than an "unusual exception" (Paradowski, 2011, p. 332).

Additionally, language has a dynamic nature, and its use and proficiency may change at different stages in life (De Bruin, 2019; Montrul, 2023), as languages are frequently bounded to contexts, places and people (Grosjean, 2010). Therefore, it is unlikely to find a person whose linguistic repertoire is perfectly balanced across all their languages and throughout time. This idea is tightly linked to the notion of *Dominant Language Constellations* (Aronin, 2019; Nightingale, 2020), understood as a subset set of the most crucial languages that a person uses at a specific point in time, rather than the full range of languages known to a person. In this sense, a person's dominant language constellation is "the active part of his or her language repertoire" (Aronin & Moccozet, 2021), and may be subject to modifications based on one's contextual and communicative needs in their current environments.

Furthermore, Aronin & Moccozet (2021) criticized the tendency to look at languages separately "rather than in their tight interrelation" (p. 2). Similarly, Grosjean (1989) had previously questioned this fractional view of multilingualism by disclosing that a multilingual person is not several "complete or incomplete" monolinguals in one, but they have a "unique and specific linguistic configuration" (p. 3), where their linguistic skills encompass their entire language range. Consequently, there may be instances where children produce mixed utterances, however, the presence of language mixing and codeswitching does not mean that the child is struggling with their language development (Kohnert et al., 2021), since they quickly learn to make the difference based on what their interactions demand (De Houwer, 2024b), which can also be used to their advantage as a way of seeking acceptance and balance *otherness* while navigating different social environments (Wright et al., 2022).

When addressing the concerns in relation to the language development of multilingual children in comparison to their monolingual peers, the evidence demonstrates that there are no differences between the two in terms of reaching important milestones and their timing (De Houwer, 2024a; Grosjean, 2010; Muszyńska et al., 2025). This is significant because it debunks the popular belief that affirms that multilinguals experience a delayed language development, which

is often expected among healthcare and educational professionals and may lead to misdiagnoses.

To inform language development, authors have described important language-development milestones, some of which are important for all children (including monolingual and multilingual), such as babbling, understanding words, first words and word-like utterances, reaching a 50-word lexicon (considering all the languages) and word combination (Core et al., 2013; De Houwer, 2024a), along with other interactive signs such as pointing, joint attention or communicative intent (Morgenstern, 2022). In addition, there are also milestones that are specific for multilingual children, including the ability to understand words in two (or more) languages and showing evidence of separate grammatical systems (De Houwer, 2024a). Therefore, even though each multilingual child has a unique language development, they go through the same stages regardless of the number of languages spoken. This information is relevant in a context of performing screenings and language assessments (Muszyńska et al., 2025), although it is also important to consider potential variations from child to child depending on their language experience and exposure (Hoff, 2018; Hoff & Core, 2013), as well as cultural differences that may be perceived as warning signs by the external eye (Wei et al., 2005; McLeod et al., 2018).

To that end, the beliefs and misconceptions around multilingualism may have consequences that can overshadow the possible benefits that a multilingual rearing may bring to the child (Piller & Gerber, 2021). Here, various studies report qualitative benefits in relation to cognitive abilities, socio-communicative skills and emotional wellbeing (Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer, 2020; Hampton et al., 2017; Kremer-Sadlik, 2005), along with other benefits in relation to academic achievements or opportunities for the future (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018; Kwon, 2017). Similarly, a multilingual education has also been proven to be beneficial in those same areas for children with developmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder (Mohamed & Shaaban, 2024; Peristeri et al., 2021).

Another possible outcome from the perpetuation of these misconceptions can be related to the actions taken regarding the child's language exposure and use, finding multilingual families who switch to a monolingual education at home (usually in the societal language) (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018; Yu, 2015). Such a decision can have consequences related to the child's development in terms of losing language skills, beliefs and values associated to their cultural heritage (Moustaoui, 2021). This may influence their identity construction (see Chapter 3), have an impact on family cohesion and the establishment of a parent-child bond via a shared language and culture (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018; Cox et al., 2021).

The limited knowledge that exists regarding growing up multilingually does not only influence beliefs and potential actions within families, but they can slither into professional practices that play a key role in the safeguarding the wellbeing of these families (Ijalba, 2016). This issue will be discussed in the next section.

4.3. Professional support in multilingual contexts

Growing up in more than one language has been known to present a challenge for professionals who may come across children from all kinds of backgrounds. Here, the way in which practitioners handle this situation has been changing throughout time as research and clinical evidence advanced (Thordardottir & Topbaş, 2019). However, there are certain outdated tendencies among professional practices, many of which are rooted in myths and misconceptions, that might still be seen nowadays in clinical and educational settings (Hay et al., 2021; Sharpe & Perovic, 2024).

4.3.1. Professional challenges

To facilitate some background, professionals such as speech-language therapists (henceforth, SLTs) and teachers frequently experience challenges when they need to make decisions about how to work with multilingual children to provide them with the best learning environment. These challenges may go in relation to which language(s) to use during assessment or in intervention with multilingual children, where the choices are to opt either for a monolingual or a multilingual approach (Jordaan, 2008; Moore & Pérez-Méndez, 2006). Here, SLTs may wonder which language(s) to prioritize and/or in which order, as well as the potential consequences of each option. Authors such as Gutiérrez-Clellen explained back in the 90s that the answers to those questions may vary based on the practitioner's language attitudes and language-learning assumptions, along with their belief systems and personal linguistic experiences (Gutiérrez-Clellen, 1999).

This narrative is not very different from the challenges currently faced by speech-language therapists around the world, who have been experiencing an increment of multilingual patients in their caseloads in the past years (Law et al., 2019). For instance, in a survey study carried out in Spain where 208 SLTs participated, the results showcased that nearly 80% of them came across multilingual people in need of speech-language therapy services (i.e., assessment or interventions) at some point in time, though very few practitioners received specific training on the matter, and many did not target the home language of the family in intervention (Nieva et al., 2020a). The study also disclosed certain challenges experienced by professionals that influenced their reticence to work in the home language, namely: little to no

competence in the language(s) of the family, a dearth of available resources in different languages, or a divergence between the school and home language, among others. Paradoxically, even though these professionals expressed minimal specific training and knowledge, all of them offered advice to families in relation to the use of languages and language-transmission strategies. Other studies have also discussed similar limitations encountered by professionals in terms of receiving cultural diversity training and up-to-date information, accessing and understanding the assessment tools that are currently offered, as well as being familiar with developmental and interactional patterns in different languages and cultures (Davis et al., 2021; Maul, 2015; Oxley & De Cat, 2019).

In this sense, it can be inferred that the existing gap between professional's specific knowledge and the diversity of their caseload demands may leave the door open for practitioners such as SLTs to base their decisions and recommendations on beliefs rather than evidence, and thus, potentially be influenced by myths (De Houwer, 2024b; Moore & Pérez-Méndez, 2006). Additionally, the social and cultural contexts and settings of professionals play a role in shaping their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and interaction with patients (Hay et al., 2021; Sharpe & Perovic, 2024). Based on this, if a professional is not aware of their own biases and attitudes, their practices may not be of enough quality to adjust to the specific needs of multilingual and multicultural children and their families (Gréaux et al., 2023; Harris et al., 2021; Nieva, 2016; Softas-Nall et al., 2015).

4.3.2. Professional practices

Considering the challenges faced by SLTs and other professionals, the support that multilingual families receive may not always cater for their specific needs and desires in relation to the use and maintenance of their home languages. On that account, practitioners might share advice about language practices from a monolingual mindset that may not align with the family's actual interests and needs (Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023). From this standpoint, it is frequently observed a recommendation to reduce or drop one or more languages at home (usually the heritage language(s)) and prioritize the societal or school language with the aim of mitigating potential delays (Hay et al., 2021; Howard et al., 2021; Ijalba, 2016; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023) or because of the practitioner's uncertainty towards working with multilingual children (Davis et al., 2021). However, changing the language input or switching to a monolingual exposure might not necessarily improve or eliminate the child's underlying difficulties related to the disorder (Kohnert et al., 2021). Moreover, and as hinted earlier in this same chapter, such a recommendation can also put the child and their family's linguistic, cultural and emotional wellbeing at risk, since their relationships with family and other members

of their community could be impacted (Alasmari, 2022; Cioè-Peña, 2021; Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2016), and therefore, hamper their general learning opportunities. Still, even in those instances, parents might follow the practitioner's advice, regardless of whether they agree with it or not, often moved by the trust they placed in the professional's expertise (Cioè-Peña, 2021) or their own doubts about a multilingual rearing (Hu et al., 2014). There are also cases where parents stand against the idea of reducing or dropping their heritage language, usually to maintain and pass on their heritage identities, but also because of the different benefits that a multilingual exposure can bring (Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022).

On the other side of professional practices, practitioners may incorporate a multilingual perspective and be supportive of an exposure to several languages (Sher et al., 2021), although even in those cases, they are not always confident about whether they are providing the right advice (Davis et al., 2023; Hay et al., 2021) or may not accompany the advice with more nuanced recommendations that parents can put into practice (Grasso, 2024). That said, when professionals provide explicit advice, they frequently recommend implementing language separation strategies at home, such as the *One Parent One Language* (OPOL) approach (see OPOL in Chapter 3), with the aim of easing the language learning process for children and ensure a consistent exposure to each language (Grosjean, 2010; MacLeod et al., 2013). Interestingly, scholars have pointed out that even though OPOL promotes a multilingual exposure and development, it does so under a *"double monolingualist"* paradigm, where not only languages are separated, but also parental and social roles (Danjo, 2021, p. 2). For that reason, this practice may not always be the best choice to support the child's development of each language. Besides, contrary to what it is usually believed, OPOL does not guarantee a balanced exposure to both languages (especially when one of the languages is also the societal language) and thus, one of the languages may be at disadvantage (MacLeod et al., 2013). Even so, this is a language practice that may work in cases where parents feel that they can better convey affection in their own separate languages and cultivate cultural and emotional connectedness that way (Burck, 2011; Softas-Nall et al., 2015).

In short, working in multilingual contexts presents certain challenges that can be reflected on the professional's decisions, practices and recommendations, not always being backed up by evidence. Those practices and recommendations might also have an impact on multilingual families' language and cultural dynamics and the trust they place in the professional (Hay et al., 2021), which calls for practitioners' awareness of their influence, highlighting the importance of an evidence-based and reflective practice (Nieva et al., 2020b; Harris et al., 2021).

4.3.3. Recommended practices

Based on the premise that being exposed to several languages does not impede language development and can even be beneficial for children with and without language difficulties or disorders (Dai et al., 2019; Garrido et al., 2024), experts have developed a series of recommendations that professionals should implement to provide culturally competent and safe services to children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

International experts and expert panels of speech and language therapy agree that, whenever possible, services such as assessments and interventions should be provided in the child's languages, using culturally and linguistically appropriate tools, following evidence-based procedures (De Cat et al., 2023; International Expert Panel on Multilingual Children's Speech, 2012; McLeod et al., 2018). However, considering the logistical difficulty of this approach, it is also recommended to be up to date with upcoming research and build relevant partnerships with families, community groups or professionals such as SLTs, interpreters or translators, who may speak the language or provide additional support (International Expert Panel on Multilingual Children's Speech, 2012; McLeod et al., 2018; Mohamed & Shaaban, 2024; Nieva et al., 2020b). Additionally, experts address the importance of receiving specific training regarding multilingual language acquisition, and emphasize the importance of providing "culturally safe practices" that appreciate and value different cultural viewpoints on top of "culturally competent practices" that are usually oriented to the choice of activities during assessment and intervention (McLeod et al., 2013).

Additionally, experts advocate for a family-centered approach that validates the person and their family's specific circumstances, and places them as active agents that can participate in the decision-making process with regards to intervention (Klatte et al., 2024; Rodríguez, 2016). In this vein, Espe-Sherwindt (2008) identified three key principles to a family-centered practice: (1) implementing a strengths-based approach (instead of focusing on deficits); (2) amplifying the voices of families by giving them space to make choices and be in control over their decisions; and (3) promoting a collaborative relationship between parents and professionals. This facilitates the foundations of a trusting environment where professionals and families can build respectful and reciprocal partnerships to aim towards common goals, keeping in mind the families' different cultural expectations and approaches to their involvement in therapy (McLeod et al., 2018; Mohamed & Shaaban, 2024; Verdon et al., 2016). Furthermore, this approach can be a positive enhancement to clinical practice, as professionals can rely on parents' knowledge and personal experience, thus adding a component of familiarity in relation to their home environment, language practices and culture that may be a useful resource to

establish a clinical setting where practices are tailored to the multilingual reality of each person (Kummerer, 2012).

Nonetheless, even though professionals have been collaborating with parents for decades in speech and language therapy settings, the notion of a family-centered approach is a relatively novel practice that is gaining increasing popularity through the years, although only a few countries count with specific regulations that uphold this practice (Rodríguez, 2016). In this context, cultural factors may also play a role in the extent to which a family-centered approach is implemented in practice, as in some cultures it is expected that practitioners take primary responsibility for providing assistance to children (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020). Therefore, a question that professionals are invited to keep in mind when setting therapy or educational goals for multilingual children is *"what support does this child (and family) need?"* (McLeod et al., 2018, p. 703).

As a final point, this chapter remarks the notion that, in order to provide appropriate services to multilingual families, it is important to have a deep knowledge of their sociolinguistic profiles beyond the child's language exposure, development and potential difficulties, followed by an exercise of cultural- and self-awareness by the professional (Hay et al., 2021). That approach would involve the child as an individual, along with their *microsystem* (i.e., school, family), *exosystem* (i.e., local community – e.g., regional languages, culture, laws, policies) and *macrosystem* (i.e., society – e.g., wider cultural context, official language(s)) (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2016). In light of this, to obtain detailed information about the child and their family, it might be relevant to establish a collaborative setting between professionals and clients, facilitating a space of trust and comfort for culturally diverse families to open up and share personal information (Couture et al., 2012; Selleck & Barakos, 2023). That way the professional can have a better understanding of the family's sociolinguistic, cultural, educational and/or socioeconomic background, gaining a comprehensive insight on their experiences, priorities and expectations in relation to the child's development and family interests in their current and future settings. Therefore, considering that the evidence on professional practices in multilingual settings manifests a dearth of information and knowledge on the matter, the present dissertation aims to offer an approximation to that goal by conducting an in-depth study focused on the diversity of realities among multilingual families.

Aims and objectives

The chapters presented in the theoretical framework provided contextual information that hinted the goals and direction of this doctoral dissertation. However, for clarity purposes, an additional section stating the aims and objectives of the present dissertation will be hereby included.

The previous chapters presented a walkthrough backed by the literature in relation to: the historical background and wider context of multilingualism around the globe (Chapter 1), with its nuances regarding the language context and general attitudes towards multilingualism and cultural diversity depending on the geographical location or linguistic region (Chapter 2), along with the complexities of identity construction and language practices by linguistically diverse people and their families (Chapter 3), which may lead to concerns about the language development of multilingual children and a need to receive professional support (Chapter 4). However, the evidence manifests certain dichotomies and gaps in relation to the general attitudes towards multilingualism and heritage languages, and the support that multilingual families receive with regards to their language management at home (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2022).

Therefore, the goal of this dissertation is to explore the cultural and linguistic contexts and dynamics of multilingual families, diving into language views and experiences of linguistically and culturally diverse parents who are raising multilingual children. The focus of this goal lies in offering an approximation to the understanding of the diverse sociolinguistic contexts and individual experiences of multilingual and multicultural families regardless of their children's typical or atypical language development. Beyond that, given that professionals may play an important role in the lives of these families, this dissertation aims to provide information on multilingual family dynamics and experiences that can be relevant for clinical and educational practitioners that may need to cater for linguistically diverse children and their families.

The research was conducted through an inductive framework and aimed to explore the choices and practices that parents of multilingual children make in relation to their children's linguistic and cultural rearing. Specifically, the research focuses on the different aspects that can play a role in the family's language choice and use in the home setting, as well as their views regarding their linguistic and cultural dynamics. That includes diving into the parents' attitudes towards multilingualism and their own languages. Furthermore, the dissertation aims to explore the advice that parents of multilingual children may receive from professionals regarding the use of languages at home, and how that may impact their language choice and practices.

Additionally, given that multilingual children may present different language development trajectories, some of which may be atypical or categorized as a disorder, this research also aims to explore the language context, dynamics and experiences of multilingual families whose children may fall into this category.

The following chapters present the three studies that were carried out to achieve the goals of this dissertation. The specific aims of each study are detailed below:

1st study – Scoping review aimed at exploring the evidence in relation to the language views and experiences of parents who are raising multilingual children, along with their attitudes, motives and challenges in relation to the choice and use of languages with their children, who may or may not have a developmental disorder.

2nd study – Qualitative study with a reflexive approach aimed at exploring the aspects that play a role in the transmission of languages in multilingual families who live in Spain, deepening into the views and experiences of parents regarding language choice, along with the external factors (e.g., advice received, place of residence) that may influence their decisions and practices when raising multilingual children.

3rd study – Autoethnographic reflexive study aimed at providing depth to the previous studies by analyzing the positioning of the researcher within the research process and highlighting the relevance of practicing reflexivity and self-awareness in culturally diverse contexts. The study dives into: The role of the researcher within the research framework in multicultural contexts, the process of identity negotiation in conversation with the participating families, and the development of a trusting relationship with the interviewees.

It is intended that, by contributing to this gap in the literature, professionals such as speech and language therapists or teachers can count with evidence that contributes to the understanding of the nuanced realities of multilingual children and their families, promoting the implementation of an approach into practice that validates the cultural and linguistic needs of this significant part of the population.

Chapter 5. Perspectives about home-language maintenance in multilingual families with and without language and communication disorders: A scoping review

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The information presented in the previous chapters introduces an overview of aspects that may be relevant in the sociolinguistic realities of culturally diverse individuals in different language contexts. However, the evidence in relation to language dynamics within multilingual family contexts, including the aspects that might influence their language choice and use at home, seems to be scarce and not always easily accessible for families and professionals who may work with these populations. This situation may lead to lack of knowledge about the family's language views and practices, and such lack of knowledge could limit the general understanding of multilingual family dynamics and contribute to the extension of widespread myths and misconceptions around multilingualism, potentially impacting the quality of professional practices in educational and clinical contexts that may need to cater for children of any linguistic background. Therefore, in this study we aimed to explore recent evidence on the topic of language views and practices in multilingual families, collecting information about which aspects may shape their language attitudes and practices in relation to their children's multilingual rearing. However, since the goal of this study is to collect information that can be useful for both families and professionals, the article includes studies of multilingual families whose children may or may not have a language and communication disorder.

Information on the articles included and topics identified can be found in Appendixes A and B.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Perspectives about home-language maintenance in multilingual families with and without language and communication disorders: A scoping review

Paula Bellón*, **Silvia Nieva**

Departamento de Psicología Experimental, Procesos Cognitivos y Logopedia, Facultad de Psicología, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Campus de Somosaguas, 28223 Pozuelo de Alarcón, Madrid, Spain

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Abstract Parents of multilingual children often need to make choices about the transmission of languages in the next generations. The aim of this scoping review is to examine recent evidence addressing the language views and practices of multilingual families, to identify key patterns regarding the use of language(s) at home. Four databases were searched systematically in June 2023 including a total of 45 articles. Studies where children had language and/or communication disorders were included. The findings show that parents make their linguistic choices based on their own attitudes and experiences. They also consider professional advice, which does not always align with their views. The evidence reveals similarities between families with and without language and/or communication disorders, despite showing particularities related to the child's condition. Few studies were found where children had disorders, highlighting the need of further research on the matter to provide knowledge that could be useful in clinical settings.
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* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: pabellon@ucm.es (P. Bellón).

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PALABRAS CLAVE
Multilingüismo;
Actitudes lingüísticas;
Mantenimiento de lenguas;
Políticas lingüísticas familiares;
Trastornos del lenguaje;
Logopedia

Perspectivas sobre el mantenimiento de la lengua del hogar en familias multilingües con o sin trastornos del lenguaje y la comunicación: Una revisión sistemática exploratoria

Resumen Las familias multilingües a menudo tienen que tomar decisiones sobre la transmisión de lenguas en las siguientes generaciones. El objetivo de esta revisión es examinar evidencia reciente sobre las perspectivas y prácticas lingüísticas en familias multilingües, identificando patrones en relación con la elección de lenguas en el hogar. Se realizó una búsqueda sistemática en cuatro bases de datos en junio de 2023 incluyendo un total de 45 estudios. Se incluyeron familias con niños/as con y sin trastornos del lenguaje y/o comunicación. Los resultados revelan que los padres toman decisiones según sus propias perspectivas y experiencias lingüísticas. También consideran recomendaciones profesionales, aunque no siempre coinciden con sus preferencias. La evidencia muestra similitudes entre familias con y sin trastornos del lenguaje/comunicación, aunque existen particularidades según el trastorno. Se encontraron escasos estudios que incluyeran casos con trastornos, destacando la necesidad de continuar investigando esta área para expandir el conocimiento aplicable en entornos clínicos.
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Introduction

The growth of intercultural couples and multilingual[1] families is a phenomenon that is now part of our societal structure. This cultural diversity has been a topic of interest for several years now (Pérez, 2022), leading to a growing number of studies addressing the linguistic and cultural dynamics of multilinguals.

According to the United Nations, in the year 2020 there were around 281 million international migrants around the globe (3.6% of the world population), which is an addition of 128 million people when comparing it to an estimation made 30 years earlier (World Migration Report, 2022). Globalization is a reality that cannot be ignored, so it is no longer a surprise to see a heterogeneity in the languages or cultures among friends and between couples, often leading to multilingualism in the following generations.

The multilingual family and language policies

Growing up in a multilingual environment, moving to a different country, going through international adoption, or being raised in a setting where at least one of the parents speak a minority language are just a few of the many situations a child might experience to become a multilingual person (Braun & Cline, 2014; Grech & McLeod, 2012; Nieva, 2019).

The linguistic skills of those children will vary depending on different factors such as their socioeconomic status, amount and quality of language exposure (Schwartz, Moin, & Leikin, 2011), the decisions their parents make about language use, or the setting they grow up in Bayley, Schecter, and Torres-Ayala (1996), so when couples of different cultural backgrounds start a family, they need to make (conscious or unconscious) choices about the place they are going to raise their children in, the language they are going to use, as well as how they are going to educate – and transfer values to – their offspring (Moratalla, 2022).

With regards to language choice and use, Spolsky (2004) introduces the concept of *Family Language Policies*. These policies are the result of an interaction between language practices (use), language management (planning), and the beliefs and values assigned to the languages they or their children are exposed to Spolsky (2007). Family language policies are subject to change across families and can also vary with time, as families have their own priorities, views, expectations and experiences regarding the language(s) they speak within a variety of contexts and environments. In addition to family language policies, the individual practices that parents do to transmit the different languages will be referred to in this paper as *language transmission strategies* (or language strategies) (Juan-Garau & Pérez-Vidal, 2001).

Beliefs and language value

The beliefs about a language and the value assigned to it are inherently related. De Luca (2018) affirms that giving proper value to one's mother tongue promotes a sense of pride that would have a positive effect on how a person perceives their own and other languages.

Nonetheless, it is not only the individual perception of a language what would play a role in adding value to it, but also the societal attitudes and institutional actions. From a linguistic point of view, all languages – spoken, signed, or written – are equal, as they meet all the needs required for a person to communicate with other people in their community (Moreno-Fernández, 2015). However, from a socio-economic perspective, languages are given different value and sometimes even used as an indicator of class (De Luca, 2018), and although the number of heterogeneous communities is growing, some world leaders still

[1] In this review, the word *multilingual* and its morphological variations will be used regardless of the number of languages used by the speakers.

promote cultural assimilation and nationalism rather than cross-cultural interactions (Simon-Cereijido, 2018), leading to a language uniformity over diversity (Braun & Cline, 2014) that would support the differences in attitudes and values assigned to languages across the globe.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the views about languages will vary from person to person. Baker (1988) indicates that there are occasions where people demonstrate an inconsistency on their opinions in the case of minority/indigenous languages, showing positive public attitudes but a private skepticism. These circumstances cannot be dissociated from the motivations a person has to learn and/or teach a language to their offspring, which are strongly tied to their beliefs – as stated by Spolsky (2007). These motivations can be classified as integrative, where the motive is to become part of a community by learning a certain language; and instrumental, where the motives are mainly utilitarian (e.g., opportunities of employment) (Baker, 1988; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). However, those definitions are linked to contextual and socioeconomic factors, leaving personal aspects such as emotional motivations out of the main frame. Therefore, in this review, the concept of language value will be addressed considering both contextual and personal perspectives.

Language transmission, culture and identity

During the process of rearing children in a multilingual environment, it is primarily the role of the parents to transmit the heritage language (HL) and culture to their children (Gomashie, 2022) while also trying to integrate into the new community (Ferreira, Miglio, & Schwieter, 2019), but they might find difficulties due to the inevitably high exposure to the majority language or the language of instruction, the ability to contact with the extended family or the choice of language between siblings (Moratalla, 2022).

The external attitudes that the youth perceive about their language(s) while growing up may also play a role on the assimilation of their own linguistic and cultural identity from a young age, which in turn could have an effect on the home language use and maintenance (Gomashie, 2022; Gutiérrez-Clellen, 1999). If that is the case, negative attitudes and their consequences would limit the basic human right of any person to use and communicate in the language(s) they prefer (De Luca, 2018; Simon-Cereijido, 2018), and those limitations would tip the scale toward a situation of linguicism and ethnicism that could eventually lead to a language erasure that Skutnabb-Kangas (2019) would label as *linguistic genocide*.

For that reason, multilingual families could benefit from counting on a support system that advocates for the use of the home language in and out of their home setting. In this respect, professionals such as speech and language therapists or teachers would play an important role in the language development of the child (Dickinson, 2011) as well as their education, as the views and advice of practitioners could impact language choices and practices at home (Spolsky, 2012). However, despite the part that professionals can take on the language dynamics of multilinguals, they sometimes struggle to provide adequate support to families who speak minority languages or whose children present a language and/or communication disorder (e.g., developmental language disorder) (Moore & Pérez-Méndez, 2006; Nieva, Aguilar-Mediavilla, Rodríguez, & Conboy, 2020). There is evidence that supports a multilingual education and intervention regardless of the languages spoken or potential language difficulties or disorders (Gutiérrez-Clellen, 1999; Simon-Cereijido & Gutiérrez-Clellen, 2014). Various international expert panels have developed position papers on recommended practices for speech and language therapists who work with multilingual children in different linguistic contexts, defending a culturally responsive framework (McLeod, Verdon, & Bowen, 2013; Nieva, Conboy, Aguilar-Mediavilla, & Rodríguez, 2020; Stow & Pert, 2015). However, professionals may not be familiarized with the current practice guidelines or possess limited knowledge about the language development and skills of multilinguals. Therefore, speech-language therapists and other professionals would benefit from an evidence-based approach that is up to date with the current research.

Aims and research questions

Given the context provided, the present study was developed to present up-to-date information that might be useful for professionals and other stakeholders, aiming to answer the following research questions:

1. What aspects play a role in parents' decisions regarding language choice and use in multilingual settings?
2. How do parents transmit languages to their multilingual children?
3. Is there evidence available about language attitudes and priorities of multilingual families with children with language and/or communication disorders?

Therefore, the aim of this review is to examine the available evidence addressing the language priorities of families who raise children in a multilingual environment, collecting information about parents' views and use of their heritage/home language(s), and the factors that might influence their choice to transmit (or drop) their language(s) in the following generations. Furthermore, this review included studies where children could have language and/or communication disorders.

Methods

A scoping review was conducted to identify and analyze recent articles that addressed parental views and priorities regarding language maintenance and use in multilingual settings.

Inclusion criteria

The studies included in this review were articles published between 2017 and 2023, excluding dissertations. It was required that the studies addressed any aspect related to family language policies, preferences and priorities regarding language choice and maintenance of families with multilingual children, as well as their views and attitudes

Table 1 Database keywords.

Language use	Target sample	Management	Views	Language
Multilingual	Family	Language use	Perspectives	Mother tongue
Bilingual	Parents	Family language policies	Views	Home language
Dual language learners	Children		Opinions	
	Child*		Priorities	
			Ideology	

toward their own and other languages. It was a requirement that the studies included information about parents' language perspectives, even though the authors did not exclude those where the children expressed their views in addition to the parents. In addition, articles where there were children with speech, language and/or communication disorders (such as *Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)* – previously known as *Specific Language Disorder (SLD)* or *Primary Language Impairment (PLI)* – (Bishop, Snowling, Thompson, & Greenhalgh, 2017) or *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)* were not excluded to provide information about different language development settings in multilingual families. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed, and they could be written in English, Spanish, Galician, Catalan and/or Portuguese. The studies had to address oral language development, excluding those that were focused on sign language, written language as well as augmentative or alternative communication systems.

Search methods

The language used for the article search was English, however the authors also reviewed studies written in other languages. An initial search of articles was undertaken between June and September 2022 with first a broad search to examine the state of art, followed by an in-depth search in PubMed, ProQuest and PsycINFO databases, with an additional search via CISNE database as it would provide access to articles archived in different university libraries. The search of articles was updated in July 2023, using the same databases. Table 1 shows the search words included in the databases. The first selection of articles was made according to their title and keywords, followed by an abstract revision to make the final choice of studies to review. In addition to that, a manual search was also performed examining articles cited in different studies as well as publications of authors of reference on the field. After a thorough reading of the articles, one last final screening was made to remove those that were not fully related to the aims of this study.

Data organization

An Excel database was created to provide easy access to the search methods and procedure, showing a structured summary of the databases, keywords, and selected studies. The authors followed the PRISMA guidelines for scoping reviews to develop this study (Tricco et al., 2018).

To organize the information extracted, each article was synthesized in a table that included the title and author(s) of the study, date of publication, geographical location of the study, sample information (number of participants, nationality(-ies), place of residence, languages spoken and potential language disorders), study design and methods, as well as the main findings of the study, quotes, possible limitations, and references that might be interesting for the review.

Results

During the article search, a total of 312 entries were found with the introduction of the keywords in the selected databases. Of this search, 75 articles were potentially relevant for this review by reading the title. When considering the abstract of the studies, 47 were included, but 5 of them were duplicated and others presented information that deviated from the objective of this review, thus, at this stage, the final number of articles to analyze was 39. An addition of 6 articles from the personal collection of the authors was included, leaving a total of 45 articles to review. Fig. 1 shows the article selection process.

The articles included are empirical studies except for two that were reviewed because their content was considered of interest for this paper. The studies follow mainly a qualitative methodology and are located in several countries of Europe, America, Asia and Oceania, so this review includes the experiences of families who speak a variety of languages in different linguistic and cultural contexts. The families in the studies were of mixed origins and families who lived outside their home country, but there were also monolingual parents who opted for a multilingual education in their country of origin.

This section collects the information available in recent studies about language attitudes and practices of multilingual families regarding a multilingual education and the use of the heritage language(s). The articles were reviewed through an inductive approach with its focus on the research questions. Common topics were found across the different studies that were then organized in various categories discussing: (1) parental language attitudes and home-language maintenance, (2) the influence of external attitudes in the use of the home language, and (3) the choice of different language-transmission strategies and its challenges (see Table A1 in appendix A). Additionally, since there were also articles that discussed similar issues in families whose children might have language and/or communication disorders, those studies are clustered in their own separate section: (4) families where children have communication disorders or disabilities (see Table A2 in appendix A).

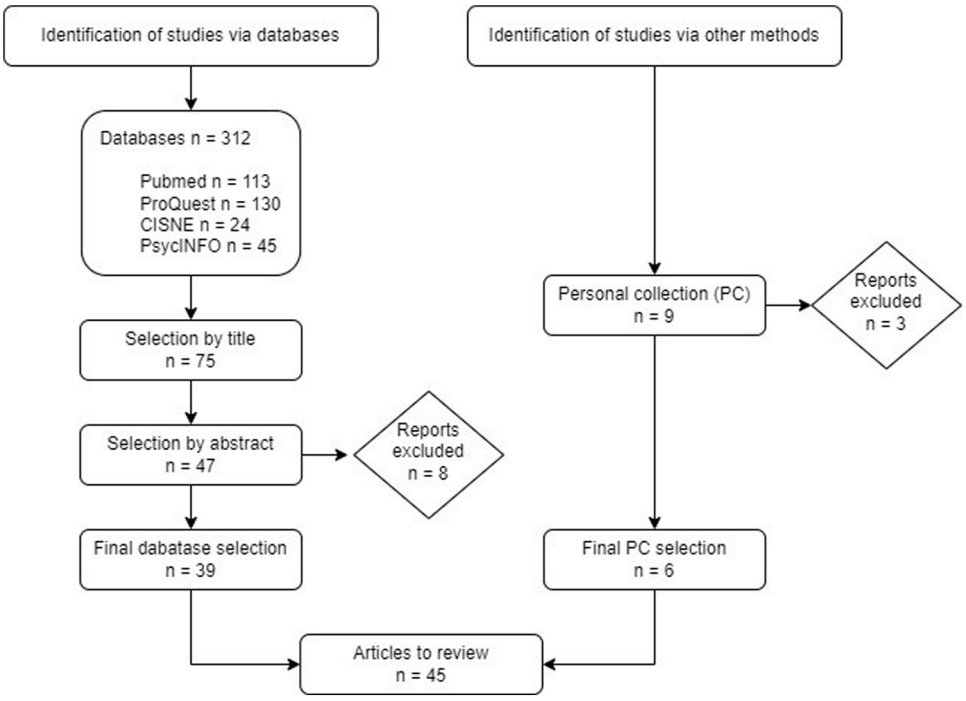


Figure 1 Flow diagram of the article search.

Parental language attitudes and home-language maintenance

The studies included in this section addressed the personal attitudes and ideologies of parents toward their and other languages when it comes to managing the use of languages at home. These aspects did not necessarily have to be the main aims of the studies but had to be referenced as part of the elements considered when making linguistic decisions.

One common finding among the studies was the positive attitude parents have toward multilingualism and learning more than one language (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020), usually holding the idea of 'the more languages, the better' and the advantages that a multilingual education could bring to their children (Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Montanari, Fischer, & Aceves, 2022; Nakamura, 2019; Nogueroles López, Pérez Serrano, & Duñabeitia, 2021; Rodríguez-García, Solana-Solana, Ortiz-Guitart, & Freedman, 2018; Ryan, 2023; Wan & Gao, 2021). In general, parents are interested in preserving non-majority languages, however, their opinions on the maintenance and use of certain languages differed according to several factors, such as the sociocultural background of the family (Seo, 2021), the current or imagined place of residence (Akgül, Yazıcı, & Akman, 2019; Fuentes, 2020; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Surrain & Luk, 2023) along with its sociopolitical context (Seo, 2021), or the parents' will to actively reinforce the home language (Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020), where several aspects play an important role: the parents' personal language-learning experiences and weaknesses (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Nakamura, 2019; Nogueroles et al., 2021; Ryan, 2023; Seo, 2021; Surrain & Luk, 2023), their attachment to their culture and identity (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018; Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer, 2020; Fuentes, 2020; Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Kwon, 2017; Moustaoui, 2021; Ryan, 2023; Soler & Zabrodskaja, 2017; Vollmann & Soon, 2018), and the usefulness and perceived value of the language (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018; Kwon, 2017; Nandi, 2019; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022; Taqavi & Rezaei, 2021; Wang, 2023).

The relation between language and identity is commonly mentioned by parents throughout studies, considering the home language a defining element of their ethnicity and culture (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Lomeu Gomes, 2022; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022), sometimes using spontaneous religious expressions to socialize the child into their identity and therefore, constructing a shared family identity through language (Alasmari, 2023). However, Wang (2023) considers this association to be 'taken for granted' (p. 10), since it is often believed that learning the heritage language automatically results in identifying with the culture.

Even though parents usually seek to maintain the heritage language and preserve their cultural legacy, sometimes they struggle to perceive it as valuable (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Mirvahedi, 2021; Taqavi & Rezaei, 2021). This event is observed across languages; however it appears to occur more frequently in the case of local and minority languages, especially when they consider the presence of languages of higher perceived status (Nandi, 2019; Seo, 2021). In this context, families might prioritize the development and proficiency of the majority language, so that their children can integrate in the environment, perform better at school or have a better future (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021; Taqavi & Rezaei, 2021), thus, opening doors to building good career opportunities and having economic advantages (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018).

Therefore, when it comes to better adapting to different linguistic environments, having a wider range of opportuni-

ties and/or belonging to a higher social class, parents are often ready to spend more time, money and effort into helping their children learn mainstream languages such as English or Spanish (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Seo, 2021; Wan & Gao, 2021) even when they are not among the linguistic repertoire of the family or the country. Parents might sometimes make this choice at the cost of losing the home language (Lee, 2021), which is tightly linked to the idea of a language hierarchy (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018). But in contrast to this idea, some parents choose to preserve and transmit their cultural and linguistic heritage to confront the accommodation to the culture of the host country and prevent the loss of their linguistic identity (Moustaoui, 2021).

Occasionally, parents are very strict with their use of the HL at home to avoid losing it to the dominant language (Wilson, 2021), however, depending on the chosen language transmission strategies, this strictness might be fruitful or lead to an alienation against the language (Nandi, 2019; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022; Wang, 2023; Wilson, 2021), as children also have linguistic preferences and desires that do not always need to be aligned with the parents'.

Apart from the potential opportunities that multilingualism or teaching a certain language might bring, several studies mentioned how parents assign an affective value to their languages (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018; Danjo, 2021; Kwon, 2017; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018), and prioritize transmitting their home language to build better relationships with their children (Lomeu Gomes, 2022; Wang, 2023), providing emotional support and sharing their worldviews and values, so they can later discuss life events and prevent situations that could have negative consequences (Cox et al., 2021; Cycyk & Hammer, 2020). This emotional closeness brought by maintaining the HL would act as a symbol of '*shared identity as heritage language speakers*', which is essential in family cohesion (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017) and would help the child acknowledge their own multilingual identity (Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer, 2020; Jung, 2022; Little, 2023; Montanari et al., 2022; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018; Soler & Zabrodskaja, 2017).

There are different ways families add value to a language, shaping their beliefs, goals, and expectations (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017), however, it is common to find families whose views and ideologies toward home-language maintenance and their actual practices do not match. On this note, several authors explain that while some parents express a will to maintain their heritage language, their practices are sometimes inclined toward supporting the societal language or a language that offers better life opportunities (Mirvahedi, 2021; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021), allowing them to thrive in their local context and be *global citizens* (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018). Another reason that could explain this mismatch between language beliefs and practices could be the challenges faced by parents when trying to maintain the minority language in a context where they might not have enough language support (Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Nakamura, 2019).

The influence of external attitudes in the use of the home language

In some cases, the attitudes parents hold toward multilingualism and home-language maintenance, and therefore their linguistic practices, are influenced by external opinions and recommendations, which usually come from professionals that parents put their trust on, such as teachers, school headmasters or speech-language therapists (SLTs).

In other cases, those views and opinions come from friends, family members or people outside their inner circle who are not language or education professionals. Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) describe certain situations where the experiences of stigmatization that parents have received influence their decisions of not transmitting the HL to their children. Nakamura (2019) highlights 'the power of community', and how a supportive group reinforces parents' practices, but that is not always the case, so implementing a multilingual approach at home might become challenging in those situations. Nonetheless, there are occasions where parents' perspectives and language decisions are strong enough to ignore or actively disagree with people who do not share their standards or show negative attitudes toward their language ideals (Seo, 2021).

The type of advice parents receive can range from a more minority-language-friendly approach to a stronger tendency to encourage monolingualism in the majority language. Frequently, the combination of doubts parents might already have, along with the social praise of monolingualism (Fuentes, 2020) and/or the negative views of teachers and other professionals, exacerbates their concerns (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020) and creates a confusion that may impact parent-child interaction by reducing their home-language use in favor of the majority language (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018). There is often a mismatch between parents' and teachers' attitudes and expectations toward languages (Ragnarsdóttir, 2020), which can lead to conflicts between the home and school (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018) that might affect children's social and academic wellbeing (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020).

Language rules, regulations and laws, with the aid of the media, have the power of turning ideologies into practices, shaping the parents' linguistic behavior at home (Mirvahedi, 2021; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021; Taqavi & Rezaei, 2021; Vollmann & Soon, 2018), but this is not a one-way phenomenon, since parental motivation and public opinion can also influence legislative policies and education (Montanari et al., 2022), so the family would act as a bridge between the environment and their children (Nandi, 2019). On this note, Gharibi and Seals (2019) highlight the importance of an institution that values and validates minority languages and cultures, explaining how a supportive input from the society plays an important role in building a better linguistic environment for families and their children.

The choice of different language-transmission strategies and its challenges

Considering the external and internal factors that can play a role in family language dynamics, parents make conscious or not-so-conscious decisions about the management and

use of the different languages in and out of the home setting. Therefore, with the objective of preserving or reinforcing the heritage language, prioritizing the majority language, or trying to find a balance between all of them (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020), parents make implicit or explicit efforts to implement different language and culture-transmission policies and strategies (Fuentes, 2020; Jung, 2022; Wan & Gao, 2021) according to their priorities, which can either be planned before birth (Nakamura, 2019; Seo, 2021; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022) or discussed as the child grows (Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023).

As mentioned before, family language policies can range from more structured and strict approaches, where the tendency is to avoid switching codes as much as possible, to more flexible methods where there is room to mix languages. In the stricter spectrum of practices, we can find policies such as *One-Parent-One-Language (OPOL)* (Arnaus Gil & Jiménez-Gaspar, 2022; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020) as well as its variant *One-Language-One-Community*, where one language would be spoken at home and another one in the community (Akgül et al., 2019), or the *minority-language-only* method (Mattheoudakis, Chatzidaki, & Maligkoudi, 2020; Nakamura, 2019; Seo, 2021). As for the flexible approaches, the concept of *translanguaging* arises as commonly used by families (Danjo, 2021; Jung, 2022; Little, 2023; Soler & Zabrodskaja, 2017; Wilson, 2021), conceptualized as an ad-hoc use of multiple languages instead of adhering to planned actions (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020), which would follow a similar line as the *laissez-faire* language policy, where parents allow their children to use any language when communicating with them (Gharibi & Seals, 2019). Parents also follow a *situational selection of languages* (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020) that could be placed in the middle ground, as it allows using different languages, but the use is linked to the topic, location, or situation where the interaction takes place.

In some cases, children use the target language naturally (Gharibi & Seals, 2019), but in other cases, parents need to consciously implement different strategies to prompt language acquisition and use, usually introduced through *Environmental Approaches*, such as spending time with the extended family (Kwon, 2017) or HL-speaking peers (Montanari et al., 2022; Nandi, 2019), maintaining contact with the home country (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Kwon, 2017; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018), participating in playgroups (Nakamura, 2019), or engaging in language management activities such as sports teams or after-school programs (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018; Ryan, 2023); *Educational Approaches* that would include enrolling their children in formal and/or non-formal HL education programs or schools (Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer, 2020; Lee, 2021; Mattheoudakis et al., 2020; Nakamura, 2019; Nandi, 2019; Ryan, 2023; Wan & Gao, 2021; Wang, 2023), hiring private tutors or speech-language therapists (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur, 2018; Wan & Gao, 2021); as well as other more *Recreational Approaches*, such as reading books, watching movies/TV or listening to music (Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Kwon, 2017; Mattheoudakis et al., 2020; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021; Montanari et al., 2022; Nakamura, 2019; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022; Wan & Gao, 2021).

Other strategies to maintain the home language would be related to *Language Awareness*, including reinforcing the HL at home or everywhere, explicit translation, correcting language when requested, pretending not to understand, ignoring the child unless they use the target language, reminding their children to use the HL, not replying in the majority language, punishing or paying a fine each time the majority language is used, correcting the children's mistakes in the HL, negotiating language use with the children or insisting on the use of a certain language between siblings (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Fuentes, 2020; Gharibi & Seals, 2019; Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021; Nakamura, 2019; Nandi, 2019; Wang, 2023; Wilson, 2021).

Nonetheless, these types of practices are not always supported, as some parents believe that forcing children to speak a certain language could be a source of anxiety and damage the bond between parent and child (Danjo, 2021; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023), leading to a potential rejection of the home language (Moustaoui, 2021; Seppik & Zabrodskaja, 2022; Wilson, 2021). This perspective differs according to the person's priorities, as some parents put more emphasis on language proficiency, while others prioritize communication apart from development (Wilson, 2021). Parents believe sticking to one language and avoiding code-mixing to be the best strategy, but paradoxically, families who report following policies like OPOL often admit translanguaging, since the efforts made to separate the languages enable the presence of more than one at the same time, facilitating language mixing (Ryan, 2023).

Parents often face challenges when trying to pass on the HL while trying to find balance between languages (Fuentes, 2020; Wang, 2023), especially when the child begins their formal education (Kwon, 2017; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023; Moustaoui, 2021), which is usually in the majority language, but also due to the difficulties to find a peer community nearby (Rodríguez-García et al., 2018) where they can seek for support or share similar experiences. In some cases, minority languages are not forbidden nor encouraged, but the use is reduced due to parents and/or children being aware of the social perception of the language (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018; Lomeu Gomes, 2022).

Families where children have communication disorders or disabilities

When addressing the views and experiences of parents whose children have communication disorders or are labeled as disabled, it is worth noting that they share similar views with parents of children with typical development, however, there are some experiences and beliefs that are unique to families where children have communication difficulties.

One of the common perspectives shared by both types of families relate to the positive views toward multilingualism (Cioè-Peña, 2021), where parents consider the different linguistic, cognitive, social or cultural advantages that a multilingual education could bring (Howard, Gibson, & Katsos, 2021), especially in the case of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), where the flexibility associated with multilingualism is considered beneficial (Hampton, Rabagliati, Sorace, & Fletcher-Watson, 2017). It is worth noting that in this case too, parents' attitudes are also a reflection of their personal language experiences and hopes (Howard et al., 2021).

Parents of children with communication disorders also link their language to cultural heritage and identity, aiming to transmit their customs or religious practices (Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023; Sher, Gibson, & Browne, 2022), having an emotional impact that allows them to maintain or reinforce parent–child bonds (Howard et al., 2021) and express affection in the home language (Hampton et al., 2017).

It is common for parents to be concerned about a multiple-language exposure delaying language development or stressing the child (Howard et al., 2021), however, in the case of families with communication difficulties, they also show concerns about multilingualism amplifying the limitations children might already have (Hampton et al., 2017), so they sometimes choose to prioritize the amelioration of the difficulties over a multilingual education by reducing the exposure to the home language and enrolling the children in monolingual schools (Cioè-Peña, 2021). Parental decisions are often based on the language abilities and the severity of symptoms of the child, however, practices may fluctuate with time (Howard et al., 2021). In this context, some families show frustration over dropping the home language, even though they often see the shift to monolingualism as the only option (Hampton et al., 2017), while others consider it a step back (Sher et al., 2022).

When it comes to perceiving children's difficulties as barriers, this view often comes from the teachers' attitudes and the influence of other professionals (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Hampton et al., 2017; Howard et al., 2021; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023; Sher et al., 2022), who often hold the narrative of multilingualism being detrimental or confusing. When parents face this situation, they sometimes take this narrative as their own and follow the advice (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Hampton et al., 2017; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023), but some other times they 'listen to their inner voice' and continue with a multilingual upbringing (Howard et al., 2021; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023). Nevertheless, as stated by Sher et al. (2022) this is not always the case, since in other occasions, practitioners agree with parents and describe the monolingual advice as 'old-fashioned' and 'offensive', considering that children with communication disorders and typically developing children should be treated equally, and encouraging parents to continue with a home-language education at home.

Discussion

The aim of this review was to explore the available evidence addressing the perspectives and dynamics surrounding multilingualism and use of languages in families from different linguistic or cultural settings. The main focus was to study how parents perceive and value their heritage languages with the aim of showing a glimpse of how their perspectives and lived experiences may influence their linguistic dynamics and choices with their children.

The results were built around the concept of home-language maintenance and transmission, showing a clear diversity in the perspectives and experiences reported by the families from the studies, but there were also certain patterns that were recurrent across families from different nationalities.

Regarding home-language maintenance, Mattheoudakis et al. (2020) explain that a language is better preserved when parents actively get involved in its development and pay attention to its instruction. On a similar note, Arnaus Gil and Jiménez-Gaspar (2022) reported in their study that the family language policies themselves do not necessarily result on the child showing balanced language competence, however, the authors hypothesized that the combination of those language policies with the choice of the minority language as the family language might bring better outcomes. Those statements would go on the same line as what has been previously studied by other researchers such as Nieva (2015) who affirms that a multilingual environment does not necessarily guarantee a successful multilingualism on children, adding other authors (Jalil, 2011; Thordardottir, 2017) that the time of exposition, as well as the quantity, quality and type of linguistic input play a crucial role in language acquisition.

In most cases, parents showed positive attitudes toward the idea of speaking more than one language and raising multilingual children, however, as revealed in several studies, their attitudes did not always match their language choice and practices at home (Schwartz, 2008). This could be justified by the priorities of parents with regards to each aspect of their lives, where a multilingual education in the home language, albeit important, might not always be the on the top of the list, thus giving priority to the majority language or languages of higher prestige that could bring better life opportunities for their children (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Another possible explanation could be related to the socio-economic situation of the family and the availability of resources aimed at promoting cultural diversity in their area, creating an environment where language-learning opportunities would vary depending on the ability of parents to invest time and money on their child's education (Park & Abelmann, 2004).

No matter the parental ideologies, the results show a general agreement on the practices that would bring better results. The studies report a particular tendency to aim for the highest amount of exposure through the OPOL approach, although revealing certain controversy around the different levels of flexibility in their methods (Piller, 2001). The idea of *translanguaging* (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015) was often rejected by parents while described as inevitable by others, suggesting that the child's personality and language preferences would play a role, along with the additional challenge of separating languages or maintaining the HL once formal education begins.

But it is not only the families' own perspectives what affect language practices and transmission. Various studies have shown how external views and attitudes – especially from professionals such as teachers or SLTs – can influence parent's decisions regarding a multilingual education and the use of the home language, where the advice received does not always go according to the preferences of the families. The studies report that professionals often discourage an education in the heritage language while supporting a switch to the majority language; a recommendation that usually comes from professional's lack of information or expertise in multilingualism (Nieva et al., 2020) and would go against the recommended practice guidelines developed by experts in the field of speech and language therapy in

multilingual contexts (McLeod et al., 2013; Nieva, Aguilar-Mediavilla, et al., 2020; Stow & Pert, 2015). In addition, Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) suggested how parents' and children's experiences regarding language use vary depending on the external perception of the home language, the person's visible ethnic features and their cultural origin. The evidence shows that when families face these situations, they often stop using their own language and switch to an education in the majority language even though they do not always master nor have the competence to provide a quality input for their children, resulting in a *shared language erosion* (Cox et al., 2021) that can weaken the parent-child relationship and could also impact the child's language development. The authors emphasize how maintaining the home language and having a shared identity could prevent declines in physical, mental and behavioral health, having Müller, Howard, Wilson, Gibson, and Katsos (2020) previously highlighted how a multilingual education brings not only linguistic, but social and emotional benefits for the child.

On the bright side, the results also show professionals who encourage families to maintain the home language and transmit their cultural practices to the following generations. This would align with previous research where practitioners support the use of the home language (Thordardottir & Topbaş, 2019), which suggests that professional practices in multilingual contexts may be changing. This approach would better meet parent's requirements by reducing language bias (Steinberg, Valenzuela-Araujo, Zickafoose, Kieffer, & DeCamp, 2016) and would help create a trustworthy environment, as parents often expressed an emotional attachment to their language and identity that they seek to pass on.

Additionally, this review did not exclude studies where children could have language or communication disorders as we aimed to picture the evidenced experiences of different types of multilingual families, where the management of languages in the presence of language development difficulties is another reality that we did not want to omit. It was interesting to find a similar pattern of experiences and priorities when comparing studies of families with typical development and communication disorders, such as the positive views toward multilingualism or the emotional connection to their linguistic and cultural roots (Bakić et al., 2017).

However, there were both similarities and differences in parents' concerns and the advice received from professionals, finding recommendations of both language maintenance and withdrawal, sometimes wondering whether multilingualism would worsen the child's difficulties, which has already been proved otherwise (McLeod, Harrison, Whiteford, & Walker, 2016). These findings highlight the need for professionals to base their practices on the evidence to make informed decisions when working with multilingual children and their families, as stated by authors such as Thordardottir (2010).

Limitations and future research

It is important to note that this study has certain limitations, such as the absence of studies with families located in Africa, even though some included people from African countries who live in Europe. Apart from that, only 5 studies addressed language perspectives and experiences in families where children had language or communication disorders, being three of them focused on autism spectrum disorder and lacking information about other conditions such as developmental language disorder or speech-sound disorders. This highlights the need to continue doing research on this matter, so there can be more information about the linguistic and cultural environments in families where children have a diverse language development.

There are some facts related to the design of the reviewed studies that the authors consider important to point out, as most of them are qualitative studies, which is not necessarily a limitation per se, but there is a scarcity of quantitative or mixed-methods studies addressing the issue. Additionally, most studies are either case studies or have a small sample size, and some of them did not specify the number of participants or focused on the authors' own experience raising multilingual children.

The present study also presents methodological limitations related to the search process. On the one hand, using English as the language of choice for the database search might have limited the findings to articles published mostly in that language. However, even though the language bias might have compromised the access to articles, the authors reviewed papers in English, Spanish, Galician, Catalan and Portuguese, contributing to the inclusion of studies that might have had been overlooked otherwise. The authors are also aware that the search terms included in the databases might not cover all the nuances necessary to reach more relevant articles, as the term ''heritage language'' is missing in the database keywords but was found in several articles and later used throughout this study. In addition, the articles included were published in a specific time range to provide recent evidence addressing the research questions, however, the study would have also benefited from a wider search to provide a comparison over time.

Lastly, this review focuses on parental perspectives, but the results evidence that the chosen family language policies and strategies are not always successful as children might have other linguistic preferences, bringing up the need to study not only the views of multilingual parents, but also those of their children, allowing them to amplify their voice and counting them as independent people who have their own views and opinions. For that reason, we invite researchers to study multilingual environments considering all the members in the household.

Conclusion

To conclude, this review analyzed recent articles published between 2017 and 2023 that studied language attitudes, values and practices of multilingual families across the globe. The study reflects on the relationship between language views and actual practices in the household, considering parental and other actors' perspectives about multilingualism. The authors included articles where there could be either presence or absence of language and/or communication disorders, finding out that there is a dearth of studies addressing this topic in the latter group, there-

fore calling for further studies on the matter to have a better understanding of their linguistic environments. This research would be useful for speech-language therapists and other stakeholders who work with multilinguals. The review provides an overview of the current issues surrounding language and cultural dynamics of multilingual families and encourages researchers to continue doing research from a multi-variable perspective to encompass the singularities of culturally diverse families.

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Conflict of interest

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

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Chapter 6. Amplifying Parental Views about Language Choice When Raising Multilingual Children: Towards a Family-Centered Approach in Professional Contexts

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The previous study showcased the many intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can influence how multilingual families make decisions about which languages to use with their children, introducing the specific practices that parents may adopt to support the transmission of those languages (Chapter 5). The study revealed a dearth of studies addressing language attitudes and experiences of multilingual families whose children have a developmental disorder. Subsequently, with the information gathered from the first study, we decided to conduct a second study, deep diving into the experiences of linguistically diverse families who live in Spain. The research aims to explore the linguistic and cultural views and experiences of parents who are raising multilingual children in different linguistic regions of Spain, including bilingual regions (or autonomous communities) such as Galicia, and monolingual regions such as Segovia. We gathered the stories of multilingual families whose children could have either typical or atypical language development.

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Amplifying Parental Views about Language Choice When Raising Multilingual Children: Towards a Family-Centered Approach in Professional Contexts

Paula Bellón [1,*], Silvia Nieva [1] and Rena Lyons [2]

[1] Department of Experimental Psychology, Cognitive Processes and Speech-Language Therapy, Faculty of Psychology, Complutense University of Madrid, 28223 Madrid, Spain; silnieva@ucm.es
[2] School of Health Sciences, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, University of Galway, H91 TK33 Galway, Ireland; rena.lyons@universityofgalway.ie
* Correspondence: pabellon@ucm.es

Abstract: Multilingualism has become the norm in families all over the world. These families need to juggle their children's linguistic identity and integration in their contexts. They may also need professional advice about which language(s) they should use at home, especially when children present with developmental disorders. There is a dearth of studies addressing the role parental views play in home-language maintenance with children with developmental disorders. This study is conducted in Spain, where Spanish is the national language, along with local languages in certain regions, as well as foreign languages. This qualitative study aimed to deepen our understanding of the views about language choice of multilingual families whose children have either typical language development or a developmental disorder in Spain. We recruited 26 parents of multilingual children aged between 5 and 10 years, from different linguistic backgrounds. Semi-structured online interviews were conducted. The data were analyzed through reflexive thematic analysis. The findings illustrate the complexity and nuance of parents' views and decisions regarding language choice in their contexts. The themes included identity and belonging, as well as the influences of external advice on parental decisions. It is important that professionals such as speech–language therapists understand these views to enable them to deliver family-centered care.

Keywords: multilingualism; heritage languages; language maintenance; cultural identity; professional advice; developmental disorders

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1. Introduction

The current state of multilingualism around the globe is that there are more individuals who speak two or more languages than there are monolinguals. More than 7000 languages are spoken in the world, so it is natural to find countries with more than one official language. Some countries recognize nearly 40 languages (e.g., Bolivia); however, only a handful of them would be considered lingua francas (Singh et al. 2012). In recent years, there has been a growth in migration, which has led to cultural intermixing, contributing to the multilingual world we now live in (Paradowski and Bator 2018). In Spain, specifically, the *National Institute of Statistics* (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2023) reports that 11.4% of its population originates from a different country, making it the country in the European Union with the second highest migration rate. As a result, more children are now born into multicultural and multilingual households, and people learn additional languages out of necessity, as well as for pleasure.

In this context, defining multilingualism can be somewhat complex. Researchers share multiple definitions, depending on the number of languages known, the age and manner of acquisition, proficiency, functional or contextual use of languages, linguistic identity, language switching, etc. (Grech and McLeod 2012; Marian and Hayakawa 2021; Surrain

and Luk 2019). Grech and McLeod (2012) explain that each definition of multilingualism can be organized from the most to the least conservative. In the current study, we opt for a less conservative approach, where we understand multilingualism as a continuum that would include any person who can be functional in two or more languages, with different levels of objective or subjective proficiency.

1.1. Linguistic Context in Spain

To facilitate a better understanding of the setting where this research is carried out, we provide a summary of its linguistic context. Spain is a multilingual country where there are several official and non-official local languages, as well as speakers of foreign languages. In this context, Spanish (referring to the Iberian variant of the language) is the national language, along with a few recognized languages that are co-official in their respective regions or autonomous communities: Galician (*galego*), which is official in the community of Galicia; Basque (*euskara*), spoken in the Basque Country and Navarra; and Catalan (*català*), official in the community of Catalonia, along with its variations in the Valencian Community (Valencian language) and the Balearic Islands (Balearic Catalan). The multicultural nature of the country adds another layer to decisions parents make about the potential use of languages in multilingual family settings.

The language policies concerning the use and status of the regional languages in Spain have changed over the last century. At present, even though some of the regional languages are co-official and their instruction is obligatory in schools in their respective regions, the social perception and the value assigned to these languages are often subjects of debate. This situation leaves the regional languages in a state of vulnerability, calling for measures to prevent their disappearance (Ramallo 2022). One of the challenges faced by institutions when developing language policies is the lack of intergenerational use of the languages. Nevertheless, there is now a generation of *neohablantes* or *new speakers* (Ramallo 2012; Soler and Zabrodskaja 2017), who learned Spanish as their first language but also make active efforts to learn and use the regional languages and cultural traditions to pass them on to the following generations (Nandi 2019). The use of regional languages represents a symbol for transmitting the identity of the community (Lasagabaster 2007).

Considering that languages can be linked to politics, the authors aim to provide the reader with a general overview of the situation without taking sides, except to declare that all languages serve a purpose and are "equally important from a linguistic and anthropological point of view" (Moreno-Fernández 2015, p. 2). Therefore, in this study we explore parental choices in relation to which language(s) they chose when raising their children, as these choices may be influenced by the experiences and attitudes of families, depending on the sociolinguistic context where they live.

1.2. Language Maintenance and Identity

In a context where there is a growth in intercultural families, the concept of language maintenance arises in relation to the decisions parents make in relation to language use and transmission to the following generations (Schalley and Eisenchlas 2020). Those decisions can be influenced by different factors, such as the family's attachment to their cultural identity (Gharibi and Seals 2020) and/or the perceived usefulness and value of their language(s) (Curdt-Christiansen and Wang 2018), as well as external factors (e.g., language regulations, institutional support, societal ideologies) (Mirvahedi 2021). On this basis, the family's background, current environment, and their future plans and expectations would play a role in shaping their views and priorities regarding language choice (Akgül et al. 2019; Fuentes 2020; Seo 2021).

The relationship between language and identity is somewhat complex. In the current study, identity is encompassed within Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) interpretation, where a person constructs and modifies their identities in interaction with others to distance themselves from or associate with a group. In some cases, parents may pass on their languages to their children to create familial bonds (Jung 2022) and transmit a sense of

belonging (Berardi-Wiltshire 2017), thereby building a shared linguistic identity that would create a bridge, connecting their present to their roots. For example, Lee (2013) found that Korean American parents may choose to expose their children to their heritage language to transmit a "positive ethnic identity". However, Mirvahedi and Jafari (2021) found that the historical stigmatization of the Azerbaijani language and culture in Iran might lead parents to feel conflicted about their ethnic language and identity, and they may choose to expose their children to Farsi over Azerbaijani.

Some researchers have reported that parents may worry about losing their linguistic and cultural identity to the majority language and culture (Kwon 2017; Wang and Gao 2021), and as a result, they make efforts to transmit their heritage to their children through passing on their home language. However, even though children can learn the customs and language from their parents, they might also develop a bicultural identity by undergoing a "selective acculturation" that allows them to adapt to the environment while preserving elements of the culture of origin (Rodríguez-García et al. 2021).

1.3. Parental Concerns and Professional Advice

With globalization and the increase of multilingual populations, there has been a proliferation of multilingual children who present with developmental disorders (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, developmental language disorder), who require services such as speech and language therapy. Some researchers have found that parents may be concerned about the language development of multilingual children (Kostoulas and Motsiou 2022), and whether a multilingual education could be stressful for their child when they present developmental disorders (Howard et al. 2021). However, there is evidence that multilingualism does not cause developmental disorders (Moore and Pérez-Méndez 2006; Peña et al. 2023). Multilingualism may be linked with cognitive and social benefits in children with communication difficulties (Peristeri et al. 2021).

To date, there have been few studies exploring the decisions parents make in relation to which language(s) to use when raising multilingual children with developmental disorders. Those studies usually include small sample sizes [$n \leq 35$] or are case studies, including mainly families of children with autism spectrum disorder (Hampton et al. 2017; Howard et al. 2021; Ijalba 2016; Sher et al. 2022), families of children with language delays (Mirvahedi and Hosseini 2023) and children 'labeled as disabled' (Cioè-Peña 2021, p. 1). These studies show that parents often share similar views, priorities and concerns as families of typically developing children in terms of transmitting their home language and identity. However, there is an additional concern of multilingualism amplifying the limitations inherent to the disorder (Hampton et al. 2017), which may influence parents' choices about language transmission (Cioè-Peña 2021).

One of the current paradigms in healthcare and education is family-centered practice, where the professional (e.g., speech–language therapist, teacher, etc.) would include the family members as active agents in education and healthcare practice. This includes consideration of their background and current environment, as well as their personal needs, desires and concerns (Klatte et al. 2023). Therefore, it is important to understand parental views and concerns about the language(s) that they choose when raising their children (typically developing and those with developmental disorders), so that practitioners can tailor their approach to the needs of the families.

There is evidence to suggest that adjusting professional practices to the cultural and linguistic needs of multilingual families is one of the challenges faced by practitioners (Peña 2016). In a survey study conducted by Nieva et al. (2020), professionals reported feeling overwhelmed by the lack of available resources to provide tailored services to multilingual families. These professionals reported that they had limited knowledge about the acquisition and development of more than one language. Further evidence indicates that multilingual families may be encouraged to drop one or more languages, which might differ from the parents' preferences (Bezcioglu-Göktolga and Yagmur 2018; Mirvahedi and Hosseini 2023). In addition, researchers suggest that restricting the home language might

have lasting effects on family dynamics, the child's identity construction and their social–emotional development and well-being (Cox et al. 2021; Kohnert et al. 2021). Researchers have found that these recommendations have been provided to parents of both typically developing children (Bezcioglu-Göktolga and Yagmur 2018) and those with a developmental disorder (Hampton et al. 2017). Practitioners may make these recommendations based on the assumption that learning more than one language might be confusing for the child and hinder their language development. However, these recommendations might be rooted in a monolingual ideology that bolsters the further "marginalization" of multilinguals (Peña et al. 2023, p. 2).

Professionals hold implicit or explicit attitudes towards multilingualism that can influence their practices and recommendations (Ijalba 2016), which in turn might impact parents' choice of language(s) in the home setting (Bezcioglu-Göktolga and Yagmur 2018; Cioè-Peña 2021). Therefore, it is important that practitioners such as speech–language therapists, teachers or doctors recognize that they hold positions of power, and with this power comes responsibility. Therefore, given that more than half of the world's population is multilingual (Akgül et al. 2019), providing professional advice from a monolingual lens could potentially be more harmful than helpful for the child, considering that family ties and identities can be constructed through a shared language (Tseng 2020).

1.4. Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this study was to examine parental views about language choice and home language maintenance when raising their children who were typically developing or presenting with developmental disorders. There were two objectives: to explore the views of parents about their preferences and priorities in relation to language choice and to explore the views of parents about what external factors influenced their decisions about language choice when raising their children. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What influences language choice in multilingual families?
2. What priorities in relation to choices about language do parents have with regards to their children's language acquisition?
3. How do parents juggle languages in the contexts where they live?
4. How are parents' views influenced by external advice?

2. Materials and Methods

Given that the aims and objectives of this study are oriented towards exploring *what*, *why* and *where* questions (Sandelowski 2000), we opted for a qualitative approach because it would enable us to explore the phenomena in depth and capture the heterogeneity in the participants' data. The research follows an experiential framework, with a relativist approach (Braun and Clarke 2022), where the aim is to explore the participants' views and perspectives about a topic.

To ensure integrity (Holmlund et al. 2020), this study was approved by the ethics committee from the Faculty of Psychology of the Complutense University of Madrid. The participants were informed about the research and their rights regarding the participation and were requested to provide consent. After they agreed to participate, they were requested to complete a survey that included demographic information about themselves and their children, as well as the languages spoken by all the family members. All the data were stored securely to protect their privacy and were pseudonymized in accordance with the Spanish Data Protection Act 3/2018. To enhance rigor in this study, we used the COREQ checklist (Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research) (Tong et al. 2007).

2.1. Participants

The inclusion criteria were parents who were raising their children in a multilingual environment, who were living in Spain, either in a bilingual or a monolingual autonomous community. The children were aged between 5 and 10 years and could present either

typical development or a developmental disorder. We wanted to explore the parental views of both of these groups to help us to contextualize the perspectives of parents who seek professional help for their children. The families could be from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including parents who spoke one or more of the regional languages of Spain, foreign languages, or parents who spoke Spanish but chose to expose their children to an additional language.

Since we aimed for maximum variation in the sample to capture a range of perspectives, we recruited participants who met the following inclusion criteria: the place of residence of the families (bilingual vs. monolingual autonomous communities in Spain[1]), the main language the child was exposed to besides Spanish (foreign vs. regional languages) and the presence or absence of developmental disorders. Figure 1 presents a distribution of the participants of this study according to the previous criteria.

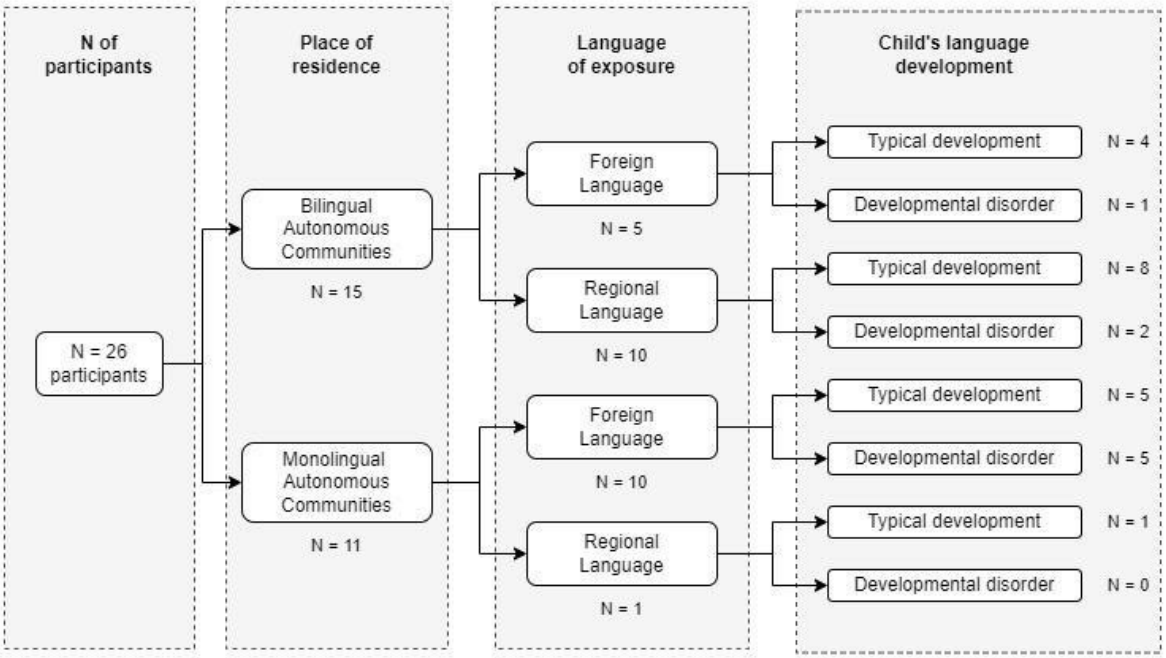


Figure 1. Distribution of participants according to inclusion criteria.

In relation to Figure 1, we made the assumption that the families who lived in bilingual communities were considered to have a natural exposure to the regional languages (even though they might not always use it actively), so the parents whose children were regularly exposed to a foreign language and lived in a bilingual community were placed in the 'Bilingual Autonomous Community --> Foreign Languages' branch. Apart from that, parents who reported that their children presented a language delay that eventually stabilized were placed in the 'Typical development' section.

The families were recruited using snowball sampling through the researchers' personal contacts (acquaintances who might fit the inclusion criteria), academics and/or clinicians specialized in linguistics and speech–language therapy, as well as by asking the families who enrolled in this study to contact other families similar to them. Schools, associations and speech–language therapy practitioners in different regions of Spain were also asked to distribute information leaflets. Additionally, a website with information about this study and how to participate was created and distributed among the stakeholders listed, and it was also shared on social media platforms (i.e., LinkedIn and Facebook groups about multilingual families in Spain). Information about this study and its website were also emailed to the administrators of blogs, forums and Instagram accounts that shared information about raising multilingual children in Spain.

We recruited 26 parents (Table 1). Only one parent in each family participated in this study. The number of participants was initially determined based on the guidance of Terry et al. (2017) for a project of this size. With regards to the language development of the children, as reported by the participating families, 35% of them had at least one child with a developmental disorder. Among those families, 4 parents declared that their child was formally diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), 3 with developmental language disorder and 2 with dyslexia (one of them comorbid with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder). The rest of the families (65%) did not declare any diagnosis in relation to the development of their children.

Table 1. Profiles of families according to the place of residence, languages spoken and the children's language development.

Family	Family Languages		Developmental Disorder [1,3]	Place of Residence	Type of Autonomous Community
	L1 Parents (M: Mother; F: Father)	Children's Languages [2]			
F1	M: Spanish F: Spanish	Spanish, Valencian	No	Valencian Community	Bilingual
F2	M: Bulgarian F: Bulgarian	Spanish, English, Bulgarian	No	Madrid	Monolingual
F3	M: Spanish = Galician F: Spanish = Galician	Spanish, Galician	No	Galicia	Bilingual
F4	M: German F: Spanish	Spanish, German	No	Aragon	Monolingual
F5	M: Spanish F: Spanish	Catalan, Spanish	No	Catalonia	Bilingual
F6	M: Valencian F: Valencian	Valencian, Spanish	Dyslexia	Valencian Community	Bilingual
F7	M: French F: Spanish	Spanish, French	No	Castille and Leon	Monolingual
F8	F: Basque M: Basque = Spanish	Basque, Spanish	No	Basque Country	Bilingual
F9	M: Spanish F: Catalan	Catalan = Spanish	No	Catalonia	Bilingual
F10	M: Spanish F: Dutch	Spanish, English, Dutch	ASD	Madrid	Monolingual
F11	M: Galician = Spanish F: Spanish	Spanish, Galician	No	Madrid	Monolingual
F12	M: Dutch F: Galician	Galician, Spanish, Dutch	No	Galicia	Bilingual
F13	F: Spanish M: Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin Chinese, Spanish	DLD	Madrid	Monolingual
F14	F: Spanish M: Danish	Spanish, Danish	No	Madrid	Monolingual
F15	M: Romanian F: Romanian	Spanish, English, Romanian	ASD	Madrid	Monolingual
F16	M: Spanish F: Italian	Spanish, Italian	DLD	Madrid	Monolingual
F17	M: Galician = Spanish F: Spanish	Galician, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese	ASD	Galicia	Bilingual

Table 1. *Cont.*

Family	Family Languages		Developmental Disorder [1,3]	Place of Residence	Type of Autonomous Community
	L1 Parents (M: Mother; F: Father)	Children's Languages [2]			
F18	M: Serbian F: Spanish	Spanish, English	No	Madrid	Monolingual
F19	M: Galician F: Galician	Spanish, Galician	ASD	Galicia	Bilingual
F20	M: Icelandic F: Spanish	Spanish, Catalan, English, Icelandic	Dyslexia, ADHD	Catalonia	Bilingual
F21	M: Catalan F: Balearic Catalan = Spanish	Catalan, Spanish	No	Balearic Islands	Bilingual
F22	M: Balearic Catalan F: Spanish	Balearic Catalan, Spanish	No	Balearic Islands	Bilingual
F23	F: German M: Basque	Basque, Spanish, German	No	Basque Country	Bilingual
F24	M: Spanish F: Spanish	Spanish, English	DLD	Madrid	Monolingual
F25	M: Italian F: Spanish	Spanish, Italian, Catalan	No	Catalonia	Bilingual
F26	M: Brazilian Portuguese F: English	English, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, Galician	No	Galicia	Bilingual

[1] The presence or absence of a disorder was determined by a professional and reported by parents during the interviews. [2] Children's languages are displayed from higher to lower proficiency, according to parents' views. [3] DLD (developmental language disorder); ASD (autism spectrum disorder); ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder).

2.2. Data Collection

The data were collected using semi-structured online interviews. These were conducted by the first author via video-call to facilitate the participation of parents based in geographically dispersed areas (Archibald et al. 2019). The interviews were conducted in Spanish, as it was the common language between the families and the researcher. The interviewer asked the participants to self-assess their language skills through screening questions (e.g., "Do you feel comfortable in all the languages you speak?") (Premji et al. 2020). To address any potential linguistic barriers, the participants were encouraged to code-switch and take time to answer.

A topic guide was designed, which included open-ended questions to obtain in-depth information about each one of the families. First, there were questions exploring the parents' own sociolinguistic background and linguistic dynamics in their community context, followed by questions about the children's language exposure and development as multilinguals. The section about the children was divided into four parts: the parent's views, experiences and priorities when raising multilingual children, and the languages that children were exposed to in their setting; possible concerns about the children's language development; advice received from professionals (e.g., speech–language therapists, teachers, school counselors, psychologists, etc.); and views about and experiences in the children's past and current school settings. The interview ended with a summary of the topics discussed. The interviewer followed an iterative approach by taking notes during the interview about issues brought up by parents that were not in the original topic guide. These issues were included in the topic guide for subsequent interviews. The mean length of the interviews was 1 h 32 min [55′–2h13′]. The interviews were recorded in audio and video (Archibald et al. 2019), and were transcribed in two steps: first, we used *Sonix.ai* to

go through the audio and convert it into text, and then we edited the text generated by the program in collaboration with speech–language therapy students who volunteered. The analysis of the interviews was carried out during and after the transcription process.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2022). The aim of the analysis was to identify patterns across the dataset, leading to the generation of themes that would represent the data in an interpretative manner. The interviews were analyzed in the original language to prevent misrepresenting the participants' experiences during the analysis (Al-Amer et al. 2015). Excerpts were translated into English for this paper.

The analysis was conducted by the first author by working through the six-phase process for reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2022). During phase 1 (*familiarization with the data*), the researcher revised the notes taken during the interviews and read the transcriptions several times. In phase 2 (*coding the data*), the researcher inductively coded segments related to the research questions. In phase 3 (*generating initial themes*), the researcher identified shared patterns across the dataset, adding a descriptive name. The first and third authors worked collaboratively from the 4th phase (*developing and reviewing themes*) to assess whether the themes were grounded in the dataset and making modifications. In phase 5 (*refining, defining and naming themes*), the themes were re-evaluated to provide an interpretation that told a story about the data. The researchers went back and forth between the 4th and 5th phases several times. The last phase (*writing up*) began in parallel with phase 4, when the three authors collaborated to find consensus about the analytic narrative.

Reflexivity in the Context of This Research

Reflexive thematic analysis inherently calls for self-reflection, placing the researcher as an active agent during the analysis by interacting with the data and being aware of their own subjectivity and influence on the research. For that reason, we opted to use the first person in this section.

In this study, the authors' perspectives are framed as insider/outsider (Lyons et al. 2022, p. 282). All of the authors are speech and language therapists who share an interest in multilingualism. In this case, the first author was an insider, as she is originally from Galicia (one of the bilingual regions of Spain) and identifies as a multilingual. This may have helped in bonding with some participants during the interviews but might have also biased some responses because participants may have assumed that the researcher was already familiar with the issues discussed. The second author was also from Spain but was born and raised in Madrid, which is a monolingual yet culturally diverse region. The third author would be considered an outsider, as she is from Galway (Ireland). To address our potential biases, when designing the topic guide, we formulated open questions. In the interviews, the first author assured the participants that there were no right or wrong answers and encouraged them to share views that might align or deviate from those of the interviewer. In the analysis, we checked our interpretations with each other and ensured that the themes were grounded in the data.

3. Results

We identified two themes: complexities regarding identity and belonging and balancing the power of advice and parental agency. These themes illustrated that each family presented with a unique set of circumstances and experiences that shaped their preferences and language choices for their specific family context.

3.1. Theme 1: Complexities Regarding Identity and Belonging

The data highlighted the complexity of what being multilingual meant, living in Spain; for example, some parents were born in a different country and were now living in

Spain, where they had to juggle their heritage language along with the dominant language (Spanish) and/or a regional language (e.g., Catalan), depending on where they lived. There were other families where the parents were from Spain and had to make decisions about their children learning the dominant language in addition to another language, which could be a foreign and/or regional language. The complexity was also illustrated by the range of choices that families made in relation to language choice in the context of having children with typical development or developmental disorders.

This theme represented the parents' views about language choice in relation to their children's identity and sense of belonging in their multicultural context. This theme was separated into two subthemes to represent the complexity of family contexts and the range of experiences: finding balance between the local and heritage language(s) and culture(s) and awareness of stigma and opportunities.

3.1.1. Subtheme 1: Finding Balance between the Local and Heritage Language(s) and Culture(s)

This subtheme included the range of preferences reported by parents of children with and without developmental disorders in terms of identity construction, considering the maintenance of their heritage language and culture in the place where they lived.

We identified different patterns in their choices. In some cases, parents prioritized the dominant language over their heritage language to achieve a sense of belonging in their community. For example, a Serbian mother had made the decision for her child to learn the dominant language (Spanish) over her heritage language, so that the child (and herself) would fit better into their local community. For this parent, transmitting her language was challenging in a context where, in her view, there was not enough support of the Serbian language.

> *'I need to make an effort [in Serbian], I have to think beforehand what I want to say. [. . .] [in Serbia] I would be in contact with people who also speak the language. But here, in an environment where everyone speaks Spanish, I couldn't do it. [. . .] Sure, in a hypothetical situation where they could only speak one language for the rest of their lives, [I would choose] the one of the country where they are born. Because they would not be able to communicate otherwise'. (F18)*

In other cases, some parents chose to use the regional language(s) with their children to preserve the local identity. This included families who were living both in bilingual and monolingual autonomous communities, and it was especially seen in families from Galicia. For example, a mother had learned Dutch as her childhood language but switched to Galician as her dominant language. She made the decision for her child to learn the language of the region because she had lived in numerous places throughout her life and wanted her children to have a connection to Galicia. She also tried to transmit part of her Dutch identity to her children through cultural traditions and foods, with less emphasis on the language, as she did not feel comfortable enough to do so.

> *'We celebrate Dutch traditions, we also cook what my mother used to make [. . .] to maintain as much contact with the Dutch culture and language as possible considering. . . my limitations for not speaking it 100%. [. . .] [the Galician language] was important for me, maybe because I've never had "my childhood place" and I was a bit jealous of. . . people who belonged to one place. [. . .] I like that my kids have. . . the feeling of belonging to a place, and I believe that the language is essential there'. (F12)*

A Galician mother, who was raising her child in Madrid, decided to speak to her child in Galician, as she had a strong sense of identity with her roots and wanted to transmit this sense of belonging to her child.

> *'It was obvious to me that no matter where I lived, I would speak to my daughter in Galician. [. . .] So she can understand, well, the language and culture of. . . where she comes from, where I come from. . . and share an emotional bond with each other. . . through that language'. (F11)*

Additionally, some parents made efforts to transmit both the dominant and the heritage languages to their children. They were aware of the importance of their children fitting in their local context while also maintaining a sense of belonging to their roots. For example, there was a mother, also from Galicia, who had adopted a child from China who was subsequently diagnosed with ASD. The mother subconsciously started to speak Galician to him because it is the language she felt most attached to. However, she also chose to enroll her child in Mandarin Chinese lessons to provide continuity for him in terms of exposure to his heritage language and culture.

> *'Let's see, I went to China to pick up my child—he was adopted in China. When I arrived there, it was something unconscious, I mean, I wasn't thinking about it, but I started to speak to him in Galician because it's... it's my emotional language. [...] We, well, when he left China, in order to not make it too abrupt for him, we continued to play Chinese music, we took him to Mandarin lessons... Everything was like "there's no breakage", well there would be anyway, right? But kinder. We wanted to make it as easy as possible'. (F17)*

Some parents reported that they did not feel comfortable about their identity and heritage language due to negative experiences in their country of origin. In this case, a mother of a child with ASD decided not to use her heritage language (Romanian) with her child and speak in English to him, as she developed a stronger attachment to that language over the years.

> *'English has become like my mother tongue. [...] I feel it closer to my heart than Romanian. [...] So when my child was born I started to speak to him in Romanian and I was not comfortable, [...] so after three months I dropped it and started to speak in English'. (F15)*

In contrast, a father from Germany explained he was not comfortable with his German identity because of generational traumas but chose to maintain that language with his children.

> *'Now we continue speaking in German, and they even speak in German between them. I like that. I like it so much when they speak in German between them, because it's like a complicity that nobody but them can share. [...] Actually, I wanted to "de-Germanize" myself, like other compatriots. [...] There are family constellations and generational traumas about Nazism and so on. [...] Yes, and everyone processes it their own way'. (F23)*

These data illustrate the complexities regarding language choice, identity and belonging, and the unique circumstances and experiences that shaped the parents' preferences and language choices.

3.1.2. Subtheme 2: Awareness of Stigma and Opportunities

This subtheme included data about how parents, consciously or unconsciously, wanted their children and themselves to be perceived, depending on the language that they used. They were aware of the prestige and stigma associated with language choice, which shaped their views towards which languages they considered would provide better opportunities for their children's future in terms of thriving in social, academic or occupational domains.

For example, a mother from Bulgaria, whose child was exposed to Bulgarian, Spanish and English, said she would choose English over Bulgarian because it would bring more advantages to her child, even though that decision would hurt her because Bulgarian was part of her identity.

> *'I give way more value to English because it opens you many doors nowadays. Wherever you go you'll need English. Spanish too, because nowadays, if you speak English or Spanish, the world is yours. [...] So I don't give much value to Bulgarian. It hurts me that my son doesn't speak Bulgarian because it's my mother tongue. I'm Bulgarian, but I don't give much value to it. Why? Because workwise and at personal levels, it won't help him much'. (F2)*

In contrast, a mother from Germany had an experience related to the social praise of some languages over others, where she received compliments for speaking German with her child. She disagreed with the stigma associated with languages of perceived lower prestige.

> *'I used to feel like people looked at me with disapproval. That was my perception. [. . .] I had an odd experience once: I was talking to my child in German, [. . .] and someone told me "Where are you from?" "Germany" "Oh Germany, that's great" they'd say, "I thought you were Romanian". So for me that was. . . [. . .] maybe they were thinking "How bad they're speaking Romanian". Do you know what I mean? [. . .] They don't give value to it. But when it's a German. . . [they do] and I think that's a bit sad'. (F4)*

This same mother was hopeful that her child might not have to experience discrimination for his language (German), which may have been the case if she spoke a language that was perceived as less valued.

> *'But I am grateful that I'm not Romanian in terms of. . . well, I haven't suffered. . . you know? It would be more difficult, and I put myself in the shoes of parents from other nationalities that may not be as valued, and implementing bilingualism must be very difficult'. (F4)*

Some parents considered that multilingualism would be useful and allow their children to travel and integrate in different milieus regardless of the languages spoken. For example, a mother from Mallorca (Balearic Islands) discussed the advantages and disadvantages of speaking several languages.

> *'The disadvantages would be its great limitations, and the advantages would be that there are no limits. [. . .] The more languages you have, the more doors will open for you to the world, both in work and leisure contexts. But if you have less languages, you will be limited. If you only speak Balearic Catalan, you won't move from here'. (F22)*

In summary, this subtheme illustrated how parents' decisions about language choice were shaped by their perceptions about the status of languages and their wish for their children to have opportunities now and in the future.

3.2. Theme 2: Balancing the Power of Advice and Parental Agency

This theme included data related to how advice received influenced parents' decisions about language choice. In some instances, parents accepted this advice, and in other cases, they exercised agency by not adhering to the advice. Not all the families received explicit advice.

This theme included the different recommendations that parents received from professionals, and how that advice influenced language choices in their household. In this context, the term professionals referred to teachers, headmasters, healthcare professionals, psychologists and speech–language therapists. In some cases, professionals recommended dropping one language to prevent children from experiencing language delays or worsening their developmental disorders. In some instances, they followed the advice, and although the parents perceived these professionals as holding power, in other cases they exercised agency by not adhering to it.

For example, a Bulgarian parent who lived in Madrid followed a professional's advice. She had been advised by the child's nursery teacher and headmaster to drop Bulgarian to enable the child to catch up with Spanish, and she was also advised to enroll her child in the bilingual English–Spanish group. She had some concerns about the child's language development and followed the advice to drop Bulgarian and start the English classes. She later regretted this decision because she had subsequently studied speech-language therapy and was now aware that being multilingual does not hinder children's development.

> *'The thing is that our son was very young when he started kindergarten. He was 3 months old. So when he was one. . . he wouldn't respond to what he was said, right? He wouldn't obey. So I was worried and asked the kindergarten teacher. [. . .] She commented that*

> *the child "does always obey" and said we should try to speak in Spanish and hold our language back. [. . .] So we as a family decided to speak to him in Spanish only so he could catch up with his peers. [. . .] Then the teacher suggested we enroll him in a bilingual English-Spanish class, and we did. [. . .] I think our mistake was that, instead of enrolling him in that English class, we should have started to introduce Bulgarian again'. (F2)*

On other occasions, parents exercised agency by not following the advice of dropping a language. For instance, one mother of a child with developmental language disorder, who lived in Madrid, reported that she was advised by healthcare professionals to only use the dominant language to avoid confusing her child; she was not convinced about this advice.

> *'I think that in most of the places we visited we were told "no, no, of course. You have to speak only in Spanish, because otherwise your son will be even more confused". Um. . . I don't know. . . I have my doubts about that. [. . .] We consider that he can receive both languages without a problem'. (F16)*

Nonetheless, some professionals encouraged parents to use the heritage language at home. For example, a Galician parent, who lived in Madrid, reported that she always received positive comments from professionals about raising her child as a multilingual.

> *'The teacher was supportive about the book in Galician [. . .] that I should speak in Galician to him. [. . .] In our case, full support. [. . .] I mean, I never had a negative experience like "no, don't talk to him [in Galician] because you will interfere". Not at all. [. . .] It is an environment that cares a lot'. (F11)*

There were nuances regarding professional advice, depending on where the family lived. Some parents considered that attitudes towards a multilingual upbringing might be more positive in the bilingual communities, as speaking several languages is the norm in those regions. For example, a Catalan mother of a typically developing child talked about the normalization of multilingualism in those communities.

> *'Here it's super normal that children have one parent who speaks Catalan and the other speaks Spanish. It is the most. . . it's very common. So I think that it's not, like it's not a weird thing or something that would make a difference. It's not something like "oh, you speak two languages, so I recommend you do this and that", no, because it's very common'. (F5)*

This theme captured the influence that advice might have on parental choices about which language(s) to use when rearing their children, and the ways in which the parents responded to this advice.

4. Discussion

This study explored the language views and priorities of parents of multilingual children, including those whose language was typically developing and those with a developmental disorder, in terms of language choice and use in their household. In this qualitative study, we used online semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2019). We identified two themes: complexities regarding identity and belonging and balancing the power of advice and parental agency. We also identified two subthemes within the first theme: finding balance between the local and heritage language(s) and culture(s) and awareness of stigma and opportunities.

The findings will be discussed in relation to the themes, this study's limitations, future research and implications.

The overall findings in this study accentuate the complexities of a multilingual rearing, illustrating possible challenges parents might face regarding decisions about language choice in their households. Our findings suggest that choices regarding language use and maintenance might be influenced by parents' own views and external influences. Our findings align with previous studies discussing the complexities of language ideologies

in Greek-speaking families in relation to the preservation of their linguistic and ethnic identities (Kostoulas and Motsiou 2022), especially when there is a clash between parents' views and the ideologies of the locals in the country of residence (Kirsch 2012).

Regarding the first theme, 'complexities regarding identity and belonging', our findings illustrate the relationship between language and identity, in relation to the choice of languages in multilingual households. Identity is negotiated through the language, culture and values parents want to associate with, as well as through their actions in terms of how they want to present themselves and their children to meet their goals (Fuentes 2020). The results suggest that parents have an overall appreciation for their home languages, cultural practices, and multilingualism in general, reporting positive views regarding the role of languages in their children's identity construction and sense of belonging, regardless of the presence or absence of a developmental disorder. This relates to the findings of Hampton et al. (2017), who discussed the parental attachment to their heritage language(s) and culture(s) in multilingual families of children with and without autism spectrum disorder. Similarly, Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) reported that Spanish-speaking parents in New Zealand highlighted the affective value assigned to the Spanish language, which resonates with our findings in relation to the home language providing a sense of self, meaningful family ties and overall well-being. However, our findings present a range of language choices at home when parents needed to balance the home and dominant languages in their respective locations. Previous research has shown similar findings, where parents with different linguistic backgrounds reported having an attachment to their languages, but their practices may not always align with those views (Gharibi and Seals 2020; Kwon 2017). In our study, parents sometimes prioritized the development of the dominant language over the heritage language(s). This finding aligns with the results of Akgül et al. (2019), suggesting that parents consider that a "native-like" competence in the dominant language is necessary to better adapt to the country. Our findings also suggest that the choice of languages might also be linked to the status and prestige associated with them. This resonates with the findings of Berardi-Wiltshire (2017), who described how Chinese-born and Spanish-speaking parents might choose the languages spoken at home according to their value as international languages. The parents in our study were aware of the stigma and opportunities associated with some languages over others, which might have influenced their determination to transmit their languages and identities to their children. Researchers have also documented the relationship between stigma and language maintenance in different linguistic contexts; for example, through the clashes between the Persian and Azerbaijani languages in Iran (Mirvahedi 2021), the status of the English language in Korea (Seo 2021) or the influence that language hierarchy may have in the choice of languages in China (Curdt-Christiansen and Wang 2018).

In relation to the second theme, 'balancing the power of advice and parental agency', the results highlighted the power that explicit advice from a professional could have on families' choice of languages, leading to parents reflecting about their priorities. Our findings are consistent with previous research, which showed that advice from professionals such as teachers and speech–language therapists can influence parents' beliefs and decisions regarding multilingualism and home language maintenance (Bezcioglu-Göktolga and Yagmur 2018; Mirvahedi and Hosseini 2023). Other researchers have also discussed the impact of advice from others (non-professionals). For example, some argue that attitudes from friends, family and the local community may play a role in home language maintenance (Gharibi and Seals 2020). Nakamura (2019) argued that parents' confidence in their decisions is strengthened or weakened, based on their support system. The manner in which parents adhered to or opposed the advice reflects their empowerment regarding decision-making in educational/clinical contexts. Parents' empowerment and confidence could be enhanced through family-centered practices (Nachshen 2005). The views of our participants in relation to the advice received suggest that the place of residence might play a role in the attitudes people hold towards languages and multilingualism. These views could be related to the language education and policies in bilingual autonomous commu-

nities in Spain. Researchers such as Lasagabaster (2005) discussed relationships between attitudes towards the languages of exposure and education, depending on the sociolinguistic context and the speakers' language competence. However, even though the residents of those communities might be used to multilingualism, there is still a linguistic prejudice associated with members of visible minority groups (Rodríguez-García et al. 2021).

Our findings indicate that even though there is a diversity in parental choices and the advice received, there seems to be remaining traces of the misconceptions around multilingualism, especially when children present with developmental disorders (Cioè-Peña 2021; Moore and Pérez-Méndez 2006), and the stigma associated with languages perceived as having lower status (Schroedler et al. 2022).

4.1. Strengths and Limitations

It is important that the findings of this study be interpreted in the context of its strengths and limitations.

One of the strengths of this research is that it included participants from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This helped understand the different views and experiences of families who were raising children, with and without developmental disorders, in a multilingual context in Spain. However, there was a lack of representation of families from non-European countries. In addition, there was a lack of heterogeneity in the socioeconomic profiles of the participants due to the recruitment method used, which limited the access to families of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Secondly, we used semi-structured online interviews to gather in-depth data. The duration of the recordings totaled 39 h 52 min across the 26 interviews, providing rich data. Nonetheless, the length of the interviews might have influenced the willingness of parents to participate, as some of them reported having a busy schedule. Having three authors involved in the analysis enhanced the rigor of this study.

Additionally, we interviewed only one parent per family. However, it would be of interest to reflect the views of both parents to have a deeper understanding of their perspectives and decisions regarding language choice in the household.

A limitation of this study was that the interviews were conducted only in Spanish, which may have influenced the quality of the answers provided by the parents whose first language was not Spanish (Squires et al. 2020). These language constraints also restricted which parents could participate in this study. However, it was not possible to interview all parents in their first language with the resources available at the time of the interviews. In addition, translating the interviews might have compromised the richness of the data (Lopez et al. 2008). Therefore, the authors kept the interviews in Spanish until the analysis was finished and only translated them to provide excerpts for this paper.

On a final note, we consider the range of insider/outsider perspectives of the authors (Lyons et al. 2022) as a strength, as it enabled us to challenge assumptions and ensure that the analysis was grounded in the data.

4.2. Future Research and Implications

Further research is needed that includes families from a wider range of linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds to facilitate a deeper understanding of their perspectives. It would also be of interest to include the views of all the family members that may play a role in the language dynamics and choices within the household.

Finally, this study has clinical implications. The themes identified illustrate the complex situations parents face when rearing multilingual children. First, this qualitative study illustrates the variability in parents' views regarding the transmission of their linguistic and cultural identities to their children. We believe that speech–language therapists and other stakeholders would benefit from understanding these complex and nuanced perspectives. These findings highlight the importance of listening to parents and tailoring practices to the needs of each unique family. For example, for some families, the use of certain languages might not be among the priorities of parents, for different reasons. It is

important that professionals listen to parents and respect their wishes. This research also highlights the importance of culturally responsive practices that prioritize inclusion and embrace diversity.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study illustrate the complexities involving decisions about language choice in multilingual families in the linguistic context of Spain. The parents in our study seem to prioritize the languages to use with their children depending on their own views, along with the influence of external attitudes. This is consistent with Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) inter-relational concept of identity, where a person builds and negotiates their identity through interaction in different contexts.

This research highlights the importance of a person-centered approach that is culturally responsive, where the professional takes into consideration the cultural and linguistic context, needs and priorities of multilingual families.

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Note

[1] In this study we considered the status of co-officiality of languages to determine the classification of autonomous communities into bilingual or monolingual.

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Chapter 7. Balancing insiderness and outsiderness in culturally diverse research: A reflection on researcher positionality and identity construction

In this chapter, the researcher presents a walkthrough on the notion of reflexivity and awareness within a research context, as well as researcher positionings as insiders or outsiders in relation to the research participants. The purpose of this study is to add depth to the main research conducted for this dissertation, and to back up the interpretations made in the published studies, acknowledging the subjective factor that may be present in qualitative research. Here, considering that the qualitative study published for this dissertation (Chapter 6) is encompassed under Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2019; 2021b) Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), the researcher takes a first-person stance of *active reflexivity* (Soerdigo & Glas, 2020) by reflecting on her own experiences, assumptions and positionality within research interactions. The study presented in this chapter provides context about the researcher's linguistic background and includes a reflection on (1) the researcher's influence on the research, followed by (2) the insider/outsider positionings of the researcher and influence of the research on the researcher's views and identity. It also includes a final remark on (3) the development of trusting relationships between the researcher and the participants.

7.1. Introduction

In the literature addressing research involving people from linguistically or culturally diverse contexts, it is frequently mentioned that researchers' language and culture should match the culture and the language of the research participants to ensure rigor and capture the linguistic and cultural nuances of a particular community (Rangiwai et al., 2021). In this sense, a person whose research involves participants with whom they share background, characteristics and experiences is known as an *insider*, while an *outsider* would be a researcher who does not share these aspects with the research participants (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Lyons et al., 2022). However, though ideal, being an insider in research about culture and language is not always possible, especially in research studies that involve speakers of different languages (Irvine et al., 2008). Therefore, based on O'Hagan's (2001) declarations about language being tightly linked to culture, it is highly unlikely that a researcher who works with multilingual people will match the linguistic and cultural profiles of every individual in their research. Here, people may identify with more than one culture, but there may also be people who belong to the same culture, ethnicity or community who might hold different worldviews (Lyons et al., 2022). In view of this, familiarization with the research setting and language awareness (e.g., attention to

the language profiles of the group of interest) are considered essential aspects of culturally competent research (Irvine et al., 2008) in order to meet each person as an individual with their own set of circumstances.

With this in mind, in this chapter, the author takes and autoethnographic stance by reflecting on her own identity and positioning as a researcher in multilingual and multicultural contexts with migrant and non-migrant families living in different parts of Spain, who spoke local or/and foreign languages. The researcher identifies as Galician, as it is the region where she was born and raised. Her background traces back to different locations in the Iberian Peninsula, starting out with her parents, who were born in Madrid but moved to A Coruña (Galicia) at a young age for work purposes. Thus, the researcher grew up in a Spanish-speaking household but was naturally exposed to Galician outside of her home setting as well as through media (e.g., the local TV channel and cartoons). She also learned Galician at school, alongside Spanish, as they are the two official languages of the region. Due to her background, family language, and social settings growing up, the Galician she learned had some influences from the Spanish language. As a young adult, she moved to Madrid to study, where she lost her regular contact with Galicia but maintained her attachment to the place and increased her interest in the language and culture. She has also lived abroad for some years, which allowed her to broaden her understanding of different linguistic and cultural landscapes. Professionally, she pursued a career as a speech and language therapist and researcher specialized in linguistic and cultural diversity, driven by a combination of her linguistic background (in Spanish, Galician and other languages) and academic interest in the topic, as well as by her activist spirit and desire to contribute to science while upholding multilingual people's right to communication in their heritage languages.

The active positioning of the researcher within the research aligns with Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2019; 2021b) reflexive approach to thematic analysis (*Reflexive Thematic Analysis,* or RTA). In this analysis method, the researcher is placed as an agent who takes an active role in the research, exercising awareness about their own subjectivity and influence on the entire research process: from data collection and analysis to writing up. Therefore, since qualitative research follows an interpretative approach, it is important that researchers in cross-cultural settings have an understanding of their own cultural background and are aware of the potential influence of their background, assumptions and motives on the research process (Gerlach, 2018; Soerdigo & Glas, 2020). By taking this stance, the research shifts away from western frames of reference where the researcher would be the *knower* and move towards a perspective where the researcher is positioned as a *learner* (Gerlach, 2018; Lyons et al., 2022), who aims to involve the participants in the research to understand their experiences and amplify their voices.

Extending this line of reasoning with regards to the positioning of the researcher, there are theorizations about insider and outsider perspectives as fluid identities that are susceptible to change in interaction, rather than static and fixed positionings (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Merton, 1972). There are authors who suggest that the understanding of insider and outsider identities as opposites can be problematic because "it does not take into account the ways in which identities interconnect" (Wray & Bartholomew, 2019, p. 20). This goes in line with Bucholtz and Hall's (2008) notion of identity as an intersubjective process that is constituted and modified in interaction with others (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, Wray and Bartholomew (2019) stated in their chapter that "the process of identity disruption and reformation is an integral part of the research" (p. 21). On that account, the perspective taken in this research context highlights the fluidity of the interpreter's position, who may fluctuate between being an insider and outsider to the research (Lyons et al., 2022) or hold a third space of ambivalence (*the space between*) (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), identifying with parts of both at the same time. Similarly, scholars such as Dhillon & Thomas (2019) reflect on the realities of the multiple positionalities of a researcher, describing the notion of insider and outsider as a spectrum.

The rest of the study is organized into three main sections analyzing the positioning and identity of the researcher in relation to the research itself and the participants' backgrounds and experiences. In the first section titled *"The influence of the researcher's worldview on the research"*, the researcher reflects on how her views and background shaped the different stages of research process. In the second section titled *"Insider and outsider perspectives in conversation with parents of multilingual children"*, the researcher delves into her own background and identity to set the basis to position herself as an insider/outsider in the research based on the linguistic backgrounds and experiences of the participants. In the third section titled *"Development of trust and comfort during the interviews"*, the researcher describes different instances that contributed to the development of trusting relationships with the people who took part in the research in order to provide a comfortable environment for them to share their personal stories in relation to their own language learning as well as raising multilingual children. In that section the researcher also reflects about the acknowledgement of potential ethical implications during the interviews.

With regards to referencing the positioning of the researcher within the study, the wording choice is based on Drake's (2010) study on insider research, where the author's experiences are reported by using the third person singular in the introduction and discussion, and the first person 'I' in the sections that present the material extracted during the research.

7.2. The influence of the researcher's worldview on the research

Research with culturally diverse populations should incorporate methodologies that are culturally appropriate and represent the range of cultural experiences of these groups (Enari, 2021). In this dissertation that was achieved through incorporating a reflexive approach into the research process –Reflexive Thematic Analysis– (Braun & Clarke, 2019) (see Chapter 6). Reflexivity is relevant in this research context because it highlights the researcher's active role in producing knowledge, prompting an exercise of reflection and self-awareness, and acknowledging that the personal reality and positioning of the researcher may shape the research in all its stages: planning, defining research questions, recruitment, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and writing up (Byrne, 2021). This exercise of reflexivity and awareness also acknowledges each person's unique circumstances, which may contribute to ensuring that individual truths and realities are taken into account and represented in the research (Enari, 2021), which is essential in research with culturally diverse populations.

Under this research framework, it is assumed –and expected– that the interpretations made by a researcher are linked to their individual worldviews and may not necessarily be predicted or replicated by another researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Byrne, 2021). Therefore, in this section, I will provide a reflection on the aspects of the research where my personal reality, motives and expectations may have guided the research process.

Firstly, my background and personal interest in the topic of linguistic and cultural diversity influenced my approach to the research, as my personal and professional views go in favor of multilingualism, heritage language maintenance and supporting minority languages. It is likely that my interest in the topic of language transmission and maintenance in multilingual families also influenced the reasoning and purpose behind the research, as well as the topic guide elaborated to give answer to the research questions (see Chapter 6 for more information on the topic guide).

The interview that was carried out with the participants of the research was elaborated after the topic guide, however, there were some questions that evolved or were added as I dived into the experiences of the participating families, and some were reframed as my knowledge and experience on the research topic grew. One way this change became evident was in my choice of terminology when referring to the languages of the family: for instance, I frequently switched between "home language", "child's language(s)" or "mother tongue" depending on what appeared to resonate more with the interviewee. Additionally, I tried to *balance out* some questions when I identified a uniform pattern of answers that, in my interpretation, seemed to raise negative emotions on the participant. For example, one of the questions reflected on the family's past decisions regarding language management

with their children, and what advice they would give to other parents in a similar situation. Here, one parent spiraled into their regrets and the mistakes they made in relation to their child's language development. I intentionally asked about positive experiences and decisions they might be content with, and even though the answer of this parent did not change, the approach to the initial question shifted to the inclusion of 'which decisions they would change and which ones they would maintain, should they go back in time'.

Accordingly, the interview and dialogue varied based on what I interpreted to be meaningful both for the research and the participants (Byrne, 2021). Here, I needed to reframe questions to obtain information related to my research aims while considering the aspects the participants added value to. By doing that, the parents provided information about their life experiences that added depth and meaning to how their linguistic and cultural realities were represented in the research.

In addition to that, my background and identity also played its part in shaping the research process. Here, I drew on my own experience as a Galician person and speech therapist to design the research including families of different linguistic backgrounds who were living in bilingual or monolingual regions within Spain, whose children could either present with typical development or a disorder. On the one side, I was aware of potential challenges regarding recruitment and data collection due to my professional background, as my experience as a speech therapist could elicit participants' anticipatory feelings of being judged (Couture et al., 2012). On the other side, I also anticipated that linguistically diverse parents might be more inclined to participate if they knew the interviewer was also multilingual and originally from Galicia. Therefore, I made my identity and background explicit early in the research process in an attempt to gain trust and access to participants more easily. This aimed to create an environment of shared understanding, which is related to insider and outsider perspectives (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Couture et al., 2012).

Furthermore, even though I actively tried to find commonalities with the participants, I was open to responses and interpretations during the analysis process that could conflict with my views and values. I was aware that my worldview could influence the data gathered and development of themes, hence why I needed to be reflexive when interpreting the participants' stories, in order to identify information that was relevant to the research (Byrne, 2021), while representing and honoring the participants' realities (Enari, 2021).

7.3. Insider and outsider perspectives in conversation with parents of multilingual children

In qualitative research, the researcher is not an independent individual detached from the study; therefore, it is important to engage in an exercise of awareness during the entire research process. As stated by Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) "We carry these individuals with us as we work with the transcripts. The words, representing experiences, are clear and lasting. We cannot retreat to a distant *researcher* role" (p. 61). Thus, in this case, the same way I reflected on my influence on the research (Drake, 2010), I also learned that the research itself, the people I conversed with, and the analysis of their life experiences as families navigating different languages and cultures while raising their children, had an impact on my own identity and worldview.

To explain what aspects led to me being positioned both an insider and outsider simultaneously in this research, first I will share an overview of my own identity journey as a person who grew up exposed to several languages in different contexts without a multilingual family background. After that, there will be a section addressing my positioning in the research in interaction with the people who participated in the interviews, with focus on the similarities and differences between our cultural backgrounds and linguistic experiences.

7.3.1. Identity construction: Navigating the in-between

In this section I reflect on the fluidity of identity from my own perspective and experience, showcasing that a person's understanding and expression of identity is not something static that remains immutable through time, but can change based on the person's experiences, interactions and learnings (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008).

A few years into the research, I realized that the in-depth qualitative nature of the research provided insights beyond the participating families' language practices with their multilingual children. During the interview and analysis process, I also began to dive into my own learning and healing journey in relation to my identity via interacting with people who, not only had to manage different languages at home with their children but also had to navigate and deal with their own cultural and linguistic identities in multiple ways. The stories I gathered about the participants prompted a reflection about my own experiences and identity construction in relation to my own background and languages.

From my side, as a person who was born in Galicia, but has always been told that *my blood is from Madrid*, I grew up with the internal confusion it takes to feel that I belonged to two places and none at the same time. To begin with, I've always had a

soft Galician accent, since my mother maintained a bit of her accent from Madrid and I partially adopted it, so it was a recurring experience to be asked where I was from. To that can be added that when I was a child, my parents were once told "since you are not from Galicia, your daughters will never be true Galicians unless they marry a Galician person, and only then will their children be Galician", and I remember we laughed and downplayed it. However, being Galician felt like something I needed to earn, and even though I learned the language, ate the food, celebrated the festivities, sang the songs and danced the dances, I somehow still felt like an outsider. On the other hand, I could not identify as a person from Madrid because I had never lived there – that belonged to my parents, not to me.

All of that began to change after I moved to Madrid to pursue my bachelor's degree, leading to an unexpected culture shock and a slow process of adapting to the rhythm of a big city. In that context, I lost most of my contact with the Galician language, except for the times I went back to visit my family and friends. The feeling of being "in between" remained but it began to transition towards acceptance, and the puzzle pieces of my identity started to come together: Even though my blood was from Madrid, my spirit was from Galicia. The yearning I experienced encouraged me to get back in touch with the history of Galicia, its folklore and its language. That approach led to a sense of pride that allowed me to embrace my identity but also to safeguard my homeland from derogatory comments that I had been hearing since I was a child in relation to Galician people being illiterate and uneducated, our *small-town lifestyle*, and the uselessness of our language. However, I also came across numerous people who praised Galicia and appreciated our bilingualism. I took all those experiences as a chance to wear my identity as a badge of honor and highlight all the things that I valued about Galicia, while embracing my new life in the birthplace of my parents.

Lastly, in addition to my personal experiences, the research I conducted for the present doctorate also played its role on my identity negotiation process. I had the chance to meet people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and learn from their experiences, including people from Galicia who were living in the region and outside of it. It was affirming to feel welcomed and cherished by the participants from the bilingual regions in Spain, who showed excitement when they learned that I grew up in A Coruña. It could be said that this research also helped me understand and embrace my complex identities while finding my place on the research itself.

7.3.2. Belonging in the research: Insider and outsider positioning

The people who participated in the research were from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but they shared some common characteristics: All of them

were living in Spain by the time of their participation in the research, and they were raising children who were exposed to more than one language. Regarding my position in relation to the participants, some parents shared a similar background to mine (e.g., grown up in Galicia), but others had experiences that diverged in different ways from my own.

Being an insider or outsider in the research is not always a straightforward process. Insiderness is described as a position where the researcher's work is involved "with populations where they are members" (Lyons et al., 2022, p. 282). However, the evidence reveals that either positioning presents its advantages and disadvantages. For instance, being an insider of a given community may facilitate access to participants within that cultural group and establish rapport (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), but also raise issues and concerns about anonymity and confidentiality, and therefore hamper the recruitment process or the information provided (Couture et al., 2012; Dhillon & Thomas, 2019; Wray & Bartholomew, 2019), especially in ethnic and migrant contexts with reduced communities or regions with a small-sized population. Additionally, being an insider may lead to the participant making assumptions about the researcher's knowledge on the discussed topic or cloud the researcher's perspective by their personal experience as a member of the group (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). On the other hand, however, being an outsider may be an obstacle in relation to the limited knowledge or understanding about the community of interest, but may also prompt the participant to share more in-depth information about themselves and their experiences than they would if the researcher shared a similar background with them (Wray & Bartholomew, 2019). However, being an outsider does not guarantee immunity to the influence the researcher's personal perspective (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Nonetheless, as already outlined in this chapter, each individual has multiple dimensions in relation to their identities, experiences, contexts and beliefs (among other aspects) that do not stay perpetually immutable. Therefore, even though it is frequently recommended that cross-cultural research should be carried out by insiders, especially in research involving indigenous peoples and endangered languages (Rangiwai et al., 2021), the separation between outsiderness and insiderness does not always reflect a clear-cut distinction, and the positioning of the researcher can evolve during the different phases of a research project (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019). In Chapter 6 I positioned myself as an insider based on the general approach of the study, however, in this section I dive deeper to discuss and reflect on the fluidity of my positioning in conversation with the parents who took part in the interviews.

Aside from the fluid and unstable nature of insider/outsider stances, Wray and Bartholomew (2019) highlight the unlikelihood of predicting a match between the researcher and participant's identities solely based on their shared backgrounds. In the context of the present research, I had anticipated my positioning as an insider or outsider, and the ease with which I could gather information during the interviews based on potential shared experiences regarding the person's language(s) and background. However, it became quickly apparent that, although it played a role, the language and place of origin of each person did not necessarily determine their identity, experiences and opinions, which continuously reshaped my position as an insider or outsider with each participant. Here, my expectation was to find more things in common and build trust more easily with the families from the bilingual regions of Spain. In that case, I considered myself an insider, especially with the families from Galicia. However, I was also an outsider in terms of language use, since most of the parents from Galicia regularly spoke Galician at home regardless of whether that was their own first language or not (see *neohablantes* in Chapter 6), which brought up language-related situations that I had not experienced myself.

For instance, during an interview with a mother from Galicia who was living in a town in Ourense, the conversation led to the topic of switching codes between Galician and Spanish depending on the social positioning of the language in different areas (e.g., town vs village). In this context, our experiences differed in terms of our family background and the change of language use across generations due to contextual circumstances related to the historical past of Galicia, where the social status of Spanish influenced its predominance in certain contexts and areas.

> "I was born in [name of town], [...] it is like a town [...] it can be said it's pretty big – it's not a village. [...] A lot of people used to come to [name of town] from the villages nearby, as it was the case of my grandparents and my mother. There was a huge language switch because the people from the villages used to speak Galician in the village but would speak Spanish when coming to [name of town]. So that's what happened, for example, to my mother. In her case, during Francoism, she studied with the nuns and there it was forbidden to speak Galician. So yeah, even though her mother tongue was Galician, with her sisters she would speak in Spanish. So all those issues with the language were transmitted [to us], [...] I was raised in Spanish, but with my grandparents I would speak Galician. [...] That pattern still remains, and in [name of town] people speak very, very little Galician. [...] Because the Spanish language, unfortunately, is still tied to social progress." (F11, Galician mother in Madrid)

By contrast, even though I had seen that phenomenon in households where Galician underwent a generational decrease for similar reasons, that was not something I had experienced firsthand, since my language-learning experience was mainly in Spanish in a region where that was also the predominant language. Nonetheless, despite being an outsider to those experiences, I was fortunate to be entrusted with such detailed information about her background. This situation prompted me to think about my own background and experiences as a Galician and allowed me to take a closer positioning to her despite our differences in certain aspects.

At the same time, I was also an insider with that same mother because she was originally from Galicia but moved to Madrid, where she was raising her child. There we had similar experiences in relation to our internal conflict and our eagerness to maintain our cultural ties to our homeland even though we did not live there anymore, which in her case was through cultural activities and transmitting the language to her daughter.

> "Mother: I have that love-hate relationship with… well, for example, writing poetry. I started writing always in Galician, and when I moved to Madrid I began to write in Spanish. And I would feel bad, I felt like a traitor because… I come to Madrid and suddenly I have to erase [it]- right? […] So yeah, in that moment I sort of saw it from the outside, you know? I was like damn, but then I say: 'well, I live in Madrid, and I don't want that communication to be lost', right? So yeah, then I released poetry books in Galician, and later another bilingual poetry collection. […] I am very torn with the languages. In fact, now I am organizing this theatre play based in a poetry book in Galician. The poems are in Galician but there is a chance that part of the text may be in Spanish, well, for that reason: because I am in Madrid, and otherwise it's like…
>
> Interviewer: so that it is more accessible?
>
> Mother: Right! I want it to reach people. So, yes, in many cases I divide myself and many times I think I'm betraying my language and my culture. But each day I am more at peace with myself, because at the end of the day, even though my texts are not 100% in Galician, there is always a part of the culture and the language that remains there, you know?
>
> Mother: And also, it was very interesting how, in Galicia, some people in my hometown were surprised that I spoke Galician to my daughter […] Even some relatives, not my close family, but some relatives didn't understand: 'why do you speak Galician to the girl if you live in Madrid?' and I'd say: 'Well that is exactly why, isn't it? So it (the language) doesn't disappear. At the same time, I also had family members who used to say

> it proudly: 'Check that out, she lives in Madrid and speaks in Galician to the girl. How great, right?' [...] so, in the end, you experience it all, you get comments from both sides." (F11, Galician mother in Madrid)

Conversely, there were two experiences with two different mothers who participated in the research where my actual positioning during the interview differed from the expectations I had anticipated. First, I interviewed a mother born in France to a Dutch mother and Catalan father, who lived in different regions of central Spain and later settled in Galicia, where she adopted Galician as her main language. Here, I was an outsider based on our linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but the course of the interview unearthed similarities in terms of our attachment with Galicia. In addition, I also interviewed a mother from the Valencian Community, with whom I was an insider in terms of both of us having grown up in a bilingual region in Spain, however, her views in relation to her linguistic and cultural identity challenged my positioning.

In the following extract, the first mother emphasizes her attachment to Galicia and its language, disclosing her confusing identity due to her complex background, which sparked her desire for her children to adopt the Galician language and culture so that they can develop a solid identity and a sense of belonging to one place.

> "Starting off with Galician, as it is the one we use (at home): it is important to me, probably because I'd always been sort of from nowhere in particular, and I did feel a bit of envy of the people who truly belonged to just one place. It can seem absurd, but as a child I felt that way, like the people around me had their grandparents, their aunts and uncles... pretty much all of them together in one place [...]. At school everyone used to say: 'I'm from Madrid' 'I'm from wherever', and I didn't really know where I was from. So that's why I like that my children have that sense of belonging to a place, and I believe the language is fundamental to that. [...] So yeah... that's what connects me with Galician, apart from it being a land I really like and I'm very fond of, where I've always felt welcome, the language itself is truly beautiful." (F12, Culturally diverse mother in Galicia)

In this case, even though I was an outsider in relation to linguistic and cultural background and life experiences, my experience as a researcher leaned towards insiderness as both of us lived in Galicia and we shared an attachment to the Galician culture and language.

Furthermore, the experiences and views from the second mother were substantially different, even though she was originally from the Valencian Community, one of the bilingual regions of Spain. She explained that she grew up in a household where

Spanish was the family language and she learned Valencian at school, which placed me as an insider, but was raised under the belief that the regional languages of Spain were useless, which was a perspective she identified with and diverged from my own experience.

> "My father was very much against us studying Valencian, and he let us know from early on, because it was also like a highly political issue for him. [...] The only school subject I failed in my life was Valencian. And the truth is I really couldn't stand it. Because my father was constantly telling us that it was completely useless. [...] It was a language I never used, and besides, from my point of view, it's completely useless. I considered it a waste of time. [...] I still think so. [...] I'm thankful that I live in Madrid and not in Alicante or the Basque Country, which is even worse, because there they mix *Euskera*, Spanish and... Well, anyway, I just think that's also something that comes down to personal opinions." (F24, Mother from Alicante in Madrid)

This mother's statement challenged my position as an insider/outsider because, even though we shared a similar background, our cultural and linguistic identities and values diverged, which distanced me from identifying as an insider during this interview. I was aware that the mother's views conflicted with my core beliefs and challenged my role as an interviewer but also allowed me to reflect on how interesting it was that we could have such different experiences and perspectives on the same topic despite our commonalities.

To sum up, this subsection showcases the fluid nature of identity and the researcher's positioning as an insider/outsider in conversation with the people who took part in the interviews, who displayed different linguistic and cultural identities that could not necessarily be predicted by their backgrounds.

7.4. Development of trust and comfort during the interviews

In research involving linguistic and cultural identities it is frequently discussed the position of the researcher as an insider to match the participant's backgrounds to earn trust and gain access to information (Irvine et al., 2008; Rangiwai et al., 2021). However, based on Wray and Bartholomew's (2019) study addressing identity positioning in ethnic and migrant research, the development of a trusting interaction based on the researcher's insider or outsider status is not fixed and pre-determined. To some extent, sharing an ethnic background with the participants might allow the researcher to understand and empathize with them in ways an outsider may not, thus increasing the likelihood of developing trust and gaining information.

Nevertheless, as can be inferred in the previous section, that may not always be the case. Here, sharing similar cultural backgrounds might result in participants not elaborating on particular issues due to assuming that the researcher already possesses that knowledge (Couture et al., 2012). However, in the earlier discussion it was evident that sharing backgrounds does not guarantee shared values, beliefs and experiences between the researcher and the participant.

In the context of the present research, it is not possible to assess differences in comfort or discomfort due to the nature of the interviews, since they were conducted qualitatively and open to spontaneous interaction. Therefore, drawing on the approach taken in Couture et al. (2012), I use reflexive accounts to describe my interpretation of the participants' comfort and development of trust during the interviews.

In this case, earning trust with the participants was not exclusively linked to the insiderness of the researcher in terms of having a shared membership in a particular community (Lyons et al., 2022), but also involved finding shared experiences and aspects of our identities that extended beyond our linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

For instance, during the interviews, I was able to establish a connection by disclosing that I was Galician and/or relating to the participants' different experiences growing up or being exposed to two different languages. Some parents showed explicit signs of comfort and frequently laughed after easing into the conversation by sharing anecdotes in common.

> "Mother: When they start getting older, it's true that it (language learning) is different, [...] they need to study them (languages) in a different way. It is different because they don't acquire it in a way that's more... I don't know... natural, let's say.
>
> Interviewer: Yeah, more structured.
>
> Mother: Yes! I perceive it a little more... like that, in class.
>
> Interviewer: Yeah. Yes, yes, yes. I remember... I had experienced it like that when I was little.
>
> Mother: Yeah! Totally, right?
>
> Interviewer: Yeah, I remember... In the lower grades, everything feels much more natural and fluid, and then you start actually studying it.
>
> Mother: Exactly!" (F3)

In addition, I was able to build rapport by encouraging all the parents to share as much or as little as they wanted, emphasizing that there were no right or wrong answers, and invited them to tell stories that were not directly linked to the research if they naturally came up.

> "Mother: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I go on a lot! Just cut me off, Paula.
>
> Interviewer: No, no. It's… it's perfect. I really like what you're saying – I mean, I like that you can open up and elaborate." (F11)

The participants also exhibited increasing levels of comfort after I expressed explicit reactions to their stories and engaged in natural conversational dynamics to demonstrate active attention, instead of just adhering to the interview questions, such as: repeating what they just said, proposing an approximate interpretation to assess whether they agreed or wished to offer corrections, bringing back examples that were mentioned earlier, or empathizing with their experiences.

> "Mother: The thing is, over the past two years we haven't had any visitors from Germany. Of course, with the pandemic and all…
>
> Interviewer: Yeah, that part hasn't been easy either." (F4)

In those situations, the parents tended to open up and share additional information to their stories and offered examples.

> "Interviewer: And that's- and that's what you would've liked to have been told, right?
>
> Mother: Exactly. For example, [elaborates on receiving advice about the child's language development]" (F2)

During the interviews I observed that, with some participants, the information flowed naturally, and it was easy to delve into their personal experiences. In other instances, I needed to assist the participant with additional questions to prompt a detailed answer. In those situations, I sought to gain a higher level of trust to get in-depth information but, similarly to one of the authors' experience in Couture et al. (2012), I was occasionally met with short answers.

Additionally, the literature involving trust in research relationships suggests that the development of trust is a dynamic concept that is co-constructed in interaction, and characterized by reciprocity and negotiation (McDonald et al., 2008). From this perspective, trust and comfort are not pre-determined and cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, there were instances where the roles were briefly reversed and the interviewer followed the lead of the interviewee, who occasionally brought up

new topics to the conversation and asked questions about my own experiences. I observed that those situations helped the natural flow of the conversation and made the person feel more comfortable because it balanced the power dynamic that might exist between the interviewer and interviewee. Similarly, there were also situations where my status as a speech and language therapist prompted parents to ask me direct or indirect questions seeking advice related to their language practices with their children or whether they were doing things right. In those situations, I reminded them that I couldn't share advice during the interview to avoid biasing their answers, but I offered to answer their queries after the interview.

In relation to that, there are some ethical implications that needed to be considered in relation to building trust and developing a connection with the participants. Here, the researcher should be aware of their positioning during the research, being attentive to possible power dynamics between them and the participants (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019). For instance, during the interviews there were occasions where some participants would get emotional or feel doubtful while sharing their personal stories growing up or raising multilingual children, some of which had a developmental disorder, such as autism spectrum disorder or developmental language disorder. In those situations, I needed to find a balance between my role as an interviewer while providing a safe and trusting environment for the person to feel at ease. Here, some parents felt comfortable enough to be vulnerable and voluntarily share emotional stories, but in other occasions I decided to prioritize their comfort over data. For instance, I noticed how a parent felt uneasy when the conversation unearthed family issues and trauma, and I reminded them that "there's no need to get into more detail on that topic".

Lastly, to support the information collected about the participants' comfort during the interviews, I sent them a brief exploratory survey with open-ended questions in relation to their participation in the research, to which they could answer voluntarily. The survey contained questions about (1) their participation in the interviews, (2) what made them want to participate and (3) how they felt about sharing their personal stories (see Annex 1 for full survey). The people who completed the questionnaire reported that they felt "(very) comfortable", "listened to" and "happy to know that I can share my experiences so that others can do the same". Some parents also reflected on how their participation in the research influenced them: some reporting reassurance and inspiration by expressing that they felt "proud" about their decisions and "motivated" to make improvements in relation to their language management, others reported awareness and understanding by sharing that they were able to "put into words something that we end up normalizing and taking for granted" or "I reflected so much I became aware of things that I had never thought about before". Based on their answers and what was explicitly stated by one

parent, it is likely that their comfort levels and trust development were enhanced by the open and dynamic nature of the interview.

This subsection explored the development of a trusting relationship between the researcher and participants through different instances that were observed during the interviews conducted for this research, followed by a quick survey to support the researcher's interpretation. I also reflected on ethical implications to be considered during qualitative interviews in relation to the position of each party.

7.5. Discussion and conclusion

The present study captures the complexity of negotiating the researcher's positioning in individual interviews due to the subjective and fluid nature of a person's linguistic and cultural identity. Here, the extracts and reflexive instances showcase the active role of the researcher in the entire research process, showing how the individual's worldview may shape the research, but also how the research may shape the individual's worldview. The chapter dives into the intricacy of identity construction in relation to the researcher's and the participants' personal experiences, setting a basis of flexibility regarding a researcher's positioning as an insider/outsider with linguistically diverse people, along with the different aspects that play a role in developing trust between the researcher and research participants.

As discussed in the first section of this study (*The influence of the researcher's worldview on the research*), the researcher's subjectivity has the potential to shape the research process throughout its different stages (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Byrne, 2021). This is relevant in culturally diverse research contexts since the linguistic background and experiences of an individual may shape their views on cultural diversity, and influence their attitudes, decisions and interpretations (Softas-Nall et al., 2015). In this sense, the researcher exercised reflexivity and self-awareness to make her active role in the research explicit, particularly in relation to how the study was framed, and the data was represented. This reflective stance aimed to ensure that individual realities were acknowledged and represented in the research (Enari, 2021), by amplifying the voices of culturally diverse families living in Spain. Additionally, the researcher reflected on the decision of disclosing her linguistic background and identity as a way of fostering a common ground of understanding with the participating families. This aligns with the concept of insider and outsider positionings of the researcher in relation to the presence of cultural and linguistic similarities –or differences– with the individuals involved (Couture et al., 2012).

Subsequently, the second section of this study (*Insider and outsider perspectives in conversation with parents of multilingual children*) dives into the notion that the same person can move between different degrees of insiderness and outsiderness during the different stages of the research (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019), presenting a scene that goes beyond the insider/outsider dichotomy (Couture et al., 2012). In the present research, the author reflected about her own background and positioning in relation to the participants' backgrounds, views and lived experiences, finding out a space of *in-betweenness* that fluctuates throughout the research, which was especially remarkable in conversation with the participants. Other authors also explored the idea of "inbetweener", offering a third position that occupies the space between and navigates the continuum between insider and outsider identities (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Milligan, 2016; Purkarthofer, 2023). In view of this, even though there are certain aspects that can be objectively determined and allow for a broad illustration of a general positioning as an insider/outsider, there are nuances and intersecting identities that arise at a deeper level, demonstrating the unlikelihood of being a complete insider or outsider (Wray & Bartholomew, 2019).

The author acknowledges the relevance of defining the researcher's positioning based on cultural background and heritage in research contexts that involve indigenous peoples, endangered cultures or minoritized populations (Lyons et al., 2022; Rangiwai et al., 2021). However, in the context of this research, given the complex linguistic and cultural identities of both the researcher and participants, the notion of insiderness and outsiderness as a continuum that accentuates positional multiplicities and changeability may accurately reflect the realities pictured in this study (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019).

Additionally, based on the responses of the participants during the interview and in the survey that were discussed in the third section (*Development of trust and comfort during the interviews*), the construction of a trusting relationship can be influenced by a variety of factors that go beyond the insiderness and outsiderness of the researcher with the participants. In this respect, and as stated by Couture et al. (2012), "it is the unique combinations of our identities and how those identities are perceived and brought to the forefront by participants, which influence not only the collection of sensitive data, but also the quality of data received from each participant" (p. 102). In the context of this study, there was a near-immediate connection with the families that were from or who lived in Galicia based on having a shared background with the researcher, despite potential differences. However, trust was also gained through identifying points of commonality with the participants with whom the researcher did not have a shared background. Beyond that, it is likely that trust was also gained through making the interviewer's position as a speech-language therapist and researcher explicit from the beginning. However, this may give rise to possible challenges, as some responses could be

altered or withheld to avoid potential judgement (Couture et al., 2012), or as observed during the interviews, the interviewer's professional background may lead to the expectation that the researcher will provide assistance (Wray & Bartholomew, 2019). Therefore, since there is a difference in power between interviewer and interviewee that can influence their comfort and responses during the interview, the semi-structured approach of the interview and light-hearted conversational style might have helped increase the participants' comfort levels, in addition to the explicit disclosure that there are no right or wrong answers.

Furthermore, conducting research from an inductive reflexive approach may alter the researcher and participants' expectations during the interview. In this case, even though the interviews were supported by a topic guide to cover the questions, the lead role during the interview occasionally switched between interviewer and interviewee, changing the course of the conversation and situating the interviewer as a *listener* (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019), but also as a *respondent* by swapping stories about life experiences (Wray & Bartholomew, 2019). This approach brought up new topics to discuss and unexpected findings, challenging the researcher's assumptions about the participants' experiences and influencing the direction and tone of the interview. This experience goes in line with the idea of the researcher being positioned as a *learner* over *knower* (Gerlach, 2018), who explores the wide diversity of experiences in cross- and multicultural settings.

Apart from that, based on the answers to the interview and survey, the in-depth and reflexive nature of this research appeared to have an influence on the views, motivations and identities of the participants as well as the researcher. For the participants, the interview process was a means of evoking reflection and making sense of their own experiences and decisions regarding their identity and language use with their children, which is an occurrence observed in other studies on similar topics (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019). In the case of the researcher, the interviews and interactions with the participants sparked a process of reflection about her own identity and sense of belonging as a Galician as well as about her positioning in the research, finding peace as an *in-betweener* (Milligan, 2016) both within the research and with regards to her own *hyphenated identity* (Cheng, 2004).

7.5.1. Implications for future research

Based on the insights offered in this study, there are certain ethical implications that need to be addressed by researchers that go beyond anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent, presenting complexities and nuances that may fluctuate throughout the research process, such as trust, reciprocity and emotional reactions (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019; Drake, 2010). Those aspects are less frequently addressed

in research, but as observed in this study, they can play an essential role in shaping qualitative research frameworks that involve the exploration of people's views and experiences in relation to different aspects of their lives that can arouse a variety of emotions and reactions, such as their cultural background and identity. In such contexts, the researcher must continuously assess the situation and identify the person's will to share personal information, finding a space where they can report data while honoring the person's boundaries.

This study contributes to the line of research that supports the implementation of a reflexive approach in cross-cultural research and other settings that may involve people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Several authors defend the implementation of a qualitative approach in cross-cultural research to have a better understanding of the worldview of communities and improve outcomes for individuals in said communities (Lyons et al., 2022). Additionally, authors such as Drake (2010) reflect on the subjective nature of qualitative interpretations and the relevance of practicing *reflexivity-in-action* and self-awareness, taking an introspective stance during the research process. This approach might be useful for researchers and other professionals such as speech-language therapists and educators who may have recurrent contact with culturally and linguistically diverse people and their families. Here, practicing self-awareness and reflexivity is important to minimize potential biases and misconceptions among practitioners and researchers (Softas-Nall et al., 2015). This, in turn, fosters the development of partnerships between professionals and culturally diverse populations, enabling the creation of a safe environment for multilingual and multicultural individuals to share their views and experiences, and therefore, adjust professional practices to their specific needs.

As a concluding remark, this study presents an illustration of the flexibility of insider and outsider identities of researchers in relation to the cultural and linguistic profiles of the research participants, evidencing that having similar backgrounds does not guarantee similar identities, views and experiences. The evidence also suggests that the development of trusting relationships to gain information of quality are dependent on the position of the researcher as an insider (Irvine et al., 2008; Rangiwai et al., 2021). However, the researcher's reflections suggest that the establishment of a trusting and comfortable setting for participants is possible regardless of sharing cultural backgrounds. The study also highlights the importance of taking a reflexive stance to be aware of potential biases and facilitate a comfortable environment with culturally diverse people in research and other settings.

Chapter 8. General Discussion

The present dissertation offers insights into the diverse linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual families. Its main goal was to explore the linguistic contexts and dynamics of those families from the perspective of parents who are raising children in more than one language.

The information presented in this dissertation reveals the existing diversity in the sociolinguistic contexts of families from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, diving into their language views, choices, experiences and negotiation of identities when they are rearing multilingual children.

The ultimate purpose of this research is to provide in-depth information that can be useful for professionals in different fields such as speech-language therapy and other educational and healthcare disciplines so that they can adjust their practices to the current growth of cultural diversity. This dissertation explores a wide range of aspects that may be significant in the lives of multilingual and multicultural families and should be considered in practice settings. This is particularly relevant for practitioners who may come across children and families from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds and may seek ways to better cater to their needs.

Additionally, since multilingual children may present diverse language development trajectories, including typical or atypical development, this research also aims to explore the language context, dynamics and experiences of multilingual families whose children may fall into the latter category.

Furthermore, considering that the research follows a qualitative methodology based on Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2019; 2021b) reflexive approach to thematic analysis, a reflexive study was conducted from the perspective and personal experience of the researcher (Chapter 7), in order to provide further context and rigor to the interpretations made in the qualitative study (Chapter 6).

In relation to the studies developed for this doctoral thesis, specifically, their overall aims were, firstly, to provide an understanding of the nuances and complexities that involve the multiple and fluid language views, practices and experiences that can be found within multilingual family contexts, identifying the aspects that play a role in language choice and use in families of diverse linguistic backgrounds; and secondly, to outline the relevance of practicing reflexivity and self-awareness when doing research and working with people in multilingual and multicultural settings. The following sections contextualize and discuss the main findings of this research as follows: Language views and practices in linguistically diverse families; Complexities in the construction and negotiation of multilingual identities; The role of the language context in the region where the family lives; Dichotomies in

professional support and advice received; Self-awareness and reflexivity in research and professional settings involved in linguistic and culturally diverse contexts. The results will also be discussed in the context of the research's strengths and limitations, along with its implications and future directions.

8.1. Language views and practices in linguistically diverse families

When working with multilingual families, one of the first necessary steps is to have an understanding of the language context of the family, including the languages they use within the home setting and outside among the family members, as well as with other people. However, there may be considerable variation between families in the answers provided, especially when addressing the reasons behind their language choice and practices. In Chapters 5 and 6, this issue is examined through different research frameworks to explore the variability and complexity involved in the process of raising multilingual children.

In Chapter 5, a scoping review was conducted to address the aspects that may play a role in the ongoing process of making decisions regarding language use in families where children are exposed to more than one language. In Chapter 6, a semi-structured interview was developed and carried out with parents of multilingual children from different linguistic backgrounds, to gather in-depth information about the language context and dynamics of their families.

Within the framework of Family Language Policies (Fogle, 2013; King & Fogle, 2013; Spolsky, 2004; 2007), the general linguistic context and dynamics in multilingual families are structured around the interaction between parents' language beliefs, planning, and practices. In our scoping review, the findings revealed numerous elements that may play a role in the choice and use of languages with multilingual children, including the maintenance or suppression of the heritage language. The evidence suggests that practices and strategies used in the process of transmitting a language or culture may be consciously or unconsciously implemented (Curdt-Christiansen & La Morgia, 2018; Kheirkhah, 2016), influenced by aspects such as the parents' attitudes and motivations to transmit a language. In the literature, the motivations to learn and use a language are frequently categorized as *instrumental* or *integrative* based on the person's interest to use it for utilitarian purposes or to integrate in a community, respectively (Baker & Jones, 1998). However, the research conducted in this dissertation also highlights the motivations led by the *affective* and *ethnic* value assigned to a given language and culture (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2018; Yang, 2008). It is important to remark that this is not an either/or situation, as the same language can evoke multiple forms of interest in a person, depending on the motivations for using and transmitting it to their children.

Our findings suggest that, on occasions, there might be a discordance between the motivations to prioritize a certain language. In Chapters 5 and 6, it is revealed that the reasons behind the choice and use of certain languages may be a result of the parents' own views and attitudes towards those languages or be influenced by external factors such as other people's opinions and advice. This occurrence has been discussed in previous studies, where the views and attitudes of parents towards their own languages may not coincide with the ideologies of other people in their country of residence (Kirsch, 2012). In this sense, when there is a clash in attitudes towards multilingualism or a certain language, parents may experience a dichotomy between their views and desires in relation to raising their children in more than one language and their actual language transmission practices (Pułaczewska, 2019).

One example that has been identified, both in the present research and in the literature, reveals that parents may have a strong attachment to their heritage language and culture but can switch to the societal language after being advised to do so, or to prevent their children from experiencing discrimination (Pułaczewska, 2019). Interestingly, in this dissertation the opposite has also been observed: some parents may associate negative emotions to their own languages, cultures or background, but still expose their children to that part of their heritage. This situation demonstrates that language choice and use is not a straightforward process, but a collage of complex factors and circumstances that parents need to navigate in order to make decisions suited to their specific contexts.

Our observations in relation to families whose children had developmental disorders with language impairment –Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), dyslexia– revealed similar findings in relation to parental views and experiences regarding multilingualism and language use. In general, parents of multilingual children with atypical language development showed positive attitudes towards their languages and advocated for a multilingual upbringing (Howard et al., 2021). However, our studies report that families where children present developmental disorders may show additional concerns that are intrinsically related to the child's language development difficulties (Hampton et al., 2017), although this is an observation that should be further studied.

Our studies reflect that decisions with regards to language choice and use are framed within a multidimensional framework, "with intersecting planes of time, space and identity" (He, 2006, p. 18). This approach highlights the idea of family language policies as a flexible concept that is susceptible to change across the different life stages and contexts of the people involved (King & Fogle, 2013; Smith-Christmas, 2020). Furthermore, the findings presented in this dissertation unveil

that language practices in multilingual families may also vary depending on the parents' *autonomizing attitudes* (Pułaczewska, 2019, p. 9), understood as the value parents give to the child's autonomy in relation to their own language attitudes and preferences. However, it is relevant to note that said attitudes may vary depending on the child's age. That perspective goes in line with Kheirkhah's (2016) work on children's agency in the negotiation of family language policies, emphasizing their active role in shaping language choice and practices. This aspect is key to maintaining the family's heritage language(s) (Said & Zhu, 2019).

In relation to that, it might be interesting to reframe the traditional approach of family language policy research, where the parents are generally positioned as figures of authority who hold the entire responsibility of "modifying their children's language development" (Spolsky, 2012, p. 7, as cited in Kheirkhah, 2016), and shift towards a *whole family* approach, where all the members of the family play a role in shaping language dynamics in the household.

8.2. Complexities in the construction and negotiation of multilingual identities

In the course of this dissertation, the concept of identity is repeatedly mentioned as a relevant aspect that takes part in the language and cultural views and dynamics of multilingual families. In this specific research framework, identity is encompassed as a fluid and mutable element that is subject to change in interaction with others and across different contexts (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; 2008). However, the idea of identity being fluid and negotiated throughout time and contexts, but also under a person's own subjectivity (Monreal Bosch, 2007), may also leave the door open to the possibility of showing attachment to certain aspects of one's identity and a tendency or desire to preserve them. This was observed in our findings, especially in the case of families with a migration background who speak minority or minoritized languages, who emphasized their intention to maintain their heritage identities under the wider pressure of assimilating the culture(s) and language(s) of their current environment. These approaches are represented in diverse forms throughout the different studies developed for this dissertation and have also been identified in the literature (Moustaoui, 2021).

With regards to the studies conducted for this dissertation, specifically, Chapter 5 introduces the notion of cultural and linguistic identity as part of the reasons behind parents' language choice for their children and their interest in maintaining their heritage language. The chapter touches upon the emotional connection to one's culture and the affective value that can be assigned to a given language. On this basis, there are studies that highlight the relationship between language, culture

and identity, categorizing language as a marker of identity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012), but also as a medium through which culture is transmitted and maintained (Kashima et al., 2014).

In light of this, Chapter 6 poses the setting to understand the reasoning behind language and cultural maintenance –or withdrawal– across generations, through the perspective of parents who are navigating the experience of raising multilingual children. Here, the cultural and linguistic identities of parents, and their attachment to their heritage background, are framed as major factors that influence their decisions regarding language choice and use with their children. That is threaded, however, along with the parents' desire to facilitate a setting where their children could thrive and integrate in the place where they lived while negotiating their own identities and developing a sense of belonging (Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008). The study demonstrates that the process of choosing a language for one's children and putting those decisions into practice is not a straightforward process. Instead, it involves a complex entanglement of factors in relation to the parents' language views, experiences and cultural identities as well as the wider social context; all of which influence their language decisions and contribute to the negotiation of their and their children's identities (Gharibi & Seals, 2019).

Following a different approach, Chapter 7 discusses the construction and negotiation of linguistic and cultural identity from the lens of the researcher. The chapter delves into the fluidity of identity throughout time and across different contexts and language settings, as well as in interaction with the participants of this research, who opened up about their own language experiences and identities. The study supports Bucholtz and Hall's (2008) claims stating that identity is co-constructed and modified in interaction, highlighting how the research process changed the perspective of the researcher about her own *in-betweenness* (Milligan, 2016) or *hyphenated identity* (Cheng, 2004). Furthermore, the fluid negotiation of the researcher's linguistic identity and practices across different environments and life stages may also relate to Aronin's (2019) notion of *Dominant Language Constellations*, where language use may evolve based on the linguistic demands of a given context in a point in time, and potentially impact a person's identity negotiation.

Additionally, the study developed in Chapter 7 also evidences an impact of the research on the views of the participating parents through the conversations that originated in the interviews. Based on the findings of previous studies addressing personality traits in interaction, people may adjust their behavior and patterns of interaction based on the language and ethnicity of their interaction partner (Chen & Bond, 2010). This suggests that, in the context of this research, there may be an

influence of the interviewer's identity on the participants expression of identity as well as the answers provided in conversation with the researcher.

Based on the observations made regarding the identity negotiation of both the researcher and the parents, it can be inferred that identity is shaped not only by the role of interaction in specific contexts, but also by the individual's position as an active agent who constructs their identity through their own subjectivity (Monreal Bosch, 2007).

8.3. The role of the language context in the region where the family lives

Another relevant aspect of this research is the role that the linguistic context of a region plays on the views and linguistic experiences of multilingual families. As shown in Chapter 5, the country where the family lives –or expects to live– and the language(s) spoken there may influence attitudes towards both the heritage and societal languages (Akgül et al., 2019; Fuentes, 2020; Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). Consequently, this could potentially shape their interest and efforts to prioritize one language over another (Aronin, 2019; Fuentes, 2020; Nightingale, 2020).

Nonetheless, considering the wider context of this research –which takes place in Spain–, it was relevant to explore the role that the language context of a specific location within a country may play in the language experiences and decisions of multilingual families. Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of information in the literature in relation to that specific issue. However, there are studies that suggest that the presence of language diversity in a region might influence the general attitudes towards those languages and ethnicities (Surrain & Luk, 2023). Therefore, based on what was observed in previous literature, along with the diverse language context of Spain in terms of its bilingual and monolingual regions (or Autonomous Communities), in our study it was contemplated that the language context of the region where the family lived might play a role in the parents' language views and management, and their experiences in relation to external attitudes and advice received.

Under that framework, our findings in Chapter 6 revealed that parents who were from or lived in the bilingual regions –regardless of their background– generally exhibited positive views towards the regional languages and expressed interest in passing on those languages to their children. The excerpts presented in Chapter 7 follow a similar trend except for a parent from a bilingual region who held negative views and exhibited explicit stigma towards the regional languages. These observations are consistent with previous studies conducted in other countries,

where local ethnic languages –such as *fangyans* in China– may be considered languages of emotion, culture and identity of their speakers, yet are still subject to stigmatization and perceived as "less useful" compared to socially dominant languages –such as Mandarin (*Putonghua*) or English– (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018).

Based on the parents' answers in Chapter 7, the appreciation or stigmatization of the local languages of Spain may be linked to the sociopolitical history of the country, as well as the personal linguistic experiences and opinions of the individuals involved. Other authors such as Mirvahedi (2021) have also observed similar occurrences in countries such as Iran, affirming that language rules, regulations and laws are some of the most powerful ways of turning ideologies into practices. In that linguistic context, the only official language of the country is Persian (*Farsi*) but there are local minority languages such as Azerbaijani which have historically faced stigmatization and are slowly reduced across generations (Mirvahedi, 2021; Mirvahedi & Jafari, 2021). On a similar note, authors such as Aronin (2019) report that an individual's dominant language constellation may be strongly influenced by the wider linguistic context and demands of their current environment.

Following the notion of language regulations turning ideologies into practices, the research also revealed that parents' perceived general attitudes towards multilingualism, as well as the advice received regarding language use, might vary depending on the linguistic context of the place where they lived. In regions of Spain where there is a co-official language alongside Spanish (e.g., Galician, Catalan, Basque/Euskera), parents perceived that regular exposure to more than one language may lead people to adopt more favorable attitudes towards multilingualism. Some parents also made the observation that the normalization of linguistic diversity in those regions may result in professionals giving less explicit advice to parents about language choice and management. These findings follow a similar path to the findings made by Surrain & Luk (2023) regarding general language attitudes in regions of the United States with higher or lower presence of linguistic diversity. However, even though there appears to be a promising pattern of perceived language acceptance in linguistically diverse regions, a study conducted in Catalonia revealed that there are other factors such as the person's visible ethnicity, cultural background and language status, that may still influence external attitudes and assumptions (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021).

8.4. Dichotomies in professional support and advice received

Adding to what has been discussed in the previous sections in relation to professional practices and parents' language attitudes and experiences regarding the process of choosing and using certain languages with their children, the present research showcases that the support and advice that parents received from professionals (e.g., speech-language therapists) may also play a role in their language dynamics at home and outside. In our research, the findings reveal that advice regarding language management was given to parents of both children with developmental disorders as well as those with typical development.

Here, Chapter 5 exhibits evidence in relation to professionals' language attitudes and practices regarding multilingualism, and how that may influence parents' own language views and practices regardless of whether their child had typical or atypical language development. Subsequently, Chapter 6 follows that line and introduces the notion of power dynamics and imbalances between professionals and parents, illustrating that parents' agency and the strength of their convictions may contribute to them following or rejecting the advice received. These findings are in line with previous studies suggesting that the strength of parents' impact beliefs (i.e., their higher or lower confidence in the effectiveness of their language practices) may influence their language dynamics at home and the firmness of their decisions, regardless of external opinions or advice (Howard et al., 2021; Nakamura, 2019). This situation highlights the importance of professionals being mindful of the impact of their words and actions, as they occupy positions of power in which their practices can significantly influence the lives of the people they work with (Cioè-Peña, 2021), while considering the family's agency, priorities and impact beliefs.

Our studies discuss the existing dichotomies in professionals' attitudes towards multilingualism and the recommendations they give to parents regarding language use. On the one hand, there are professionals who show concerns about exposing children to more than one language, providing advice from a standpoint that reflects outdated views and go against recommended practices (McLeod et al., 2018; Nieva et al., 2020b). Those views are often influenced by persistent myths and misconceptions regarding multilingual language development (De Houwer, 2024b; Guiberson 2013) and a lack of specific knowledge about working with multilingual children (Nieva et al., 2020a; Yu, 2013). On the other hand, our studies also reflect the experiences of parents who reported receiving explicit advice in favor of a multilingual upbringing, feeling encouraged to maintain their heritage languages with their children. In this vein, there are studies that report similar results in relation to professionals supporting the languages and cultural practices of multilingual families (Sher et al., 2022). This situation reflects that, even though there are still

professionals who discourage exposing children to several languages, there seems to be an evolution in the attitudes and practices of practitioners regarding multilingualism (Thordardottir & Topbaş, 2019).

Additionally, this research delves into the development of trusting relationships between professionals and multilingual families to provide adequate support. In Chapter 5 it is suggested that a trusting environment in clinical and educational practice may be enabled by adjusting to the person's needs in relation to language. In this sense, the current practice guidelines developed by experts in the field of speech and language therapy support the implementation of a person-centered or family-centered practice, to better adjust to the specific needs of every multilingual person and their families (Klatte et al., 2024). Furthermore, based on the answers provided by the participating parents in Chapter 6, such adjustment may involve offering support and guidance to families in their decision of transmitting their heritage languages and cultural practices, or alternatively, prioritize another language depending on their specific circumstances and desires. Here, the evidence generally recommends the promotion of the heritage language(s) at home and in intervention in clinical and educational settings (Gutiérrez-Clellen, 1999). However, from a person-centered standpoint, adjusting to the person's linguistic needs may involve context-specific nuances that may shape their linguistic priorities (as evinced in Chapter 6). Our study highlights that providing professional support in relation to parents' language choices and practices entails complexities that need to be acknowledged and validated. Such approach aligns with the view that using and communicating in one's chosen language is a fundamental human right (De Luca, 2018; Simon-Cereijido et al., 2020).

Therefore, to foster a clinical or educational environment that validates and amplifies parents' voices and needs, enabling a trusting parent-professional relationship and a safe environment should be a priority. The data and interpretations presented in Chapter 7 suggest that trust can be enhanced by creating a setting that seeks to balance power relations, prioritizes parents' comfort and affirms their perspectives and experiences. That approach challenges the traditional notion of the practitioner positioned as "the knower of knowledge" (Beecham, 2004, p. 132), and instead shifts the focus towards more collaborative and equitable dynamics between professionals and multilingual families.

8.5. Self-awareness and reflexivity in research and professional settings involved in linguistic and culturally diverse contexts

As shown throughout this research, professionals such as teachers or speech therapists play a central role in the lives of the individuals and families they work

with. This responsibility inherently calls for an exercise of reflection and awareness of one's own views, assumptions and experiences, given that professional actions can have an impact on the wellbeing of their patients or clients. Likewise, in research contexts, exercising reflexivity and self-awareness is equally essential, as it is in the mind of the researcher where the ideas, analyses and interpretations are constructed. This becomes especially relevant in multilingual and multicultural settings, since the practitioner or researcher may or may not be familiar with the sociolinguistic and cultural profiles of the people they interact with, but they still ought to provide adequate support to these individuals.

In that sense, based on what it is reported in Chapter 7, the literature frequently indicates that researchers in cross-cultural settings should have the same cultural and linguistic background as the people involved in the research (Rangiwai et al., 2021). However, there are studies that illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of *insider* and *outsider* positionings in relation to the quality and quantity of information provided by the participants, their comfort during the interaction, and the level of trust they place on the researcher to disclose personal information (Chen & Bond, 2010; Couture et al., 2012). Additionally, the data provided in the chapter also illustrated that it is not always possible to match the linguistic and cultural profiles and identities of the research participants, which is an observation that aligns with O'Hagan's (2001) reflections on the issue. This is relevant both in research and professional settings since it calls for awareness of potential assumptions and biases in order to provide an environment suited for culturally diverse populations.

On the one side, authors such as Irvine et al. (2008) uphold the idea that culturally competent research must involve familiarization and awareness of the cultural context and linguistic profiles of the populations with whom the research is conducted. For that reason, the scoping review conducted in Chapter 5 aimed to explore and provide context on the existing data surrounding the language views and experiences of parents of multilingual children, in order to become aware of the diverse factors that may be involved in the linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual families.

On the other side, considering that qualitative research is intrinsically subjective (Braun & Clarke, 2021a; Heigham & Croker, 2009), it is also a responsibility of the researchers in culturally diverse settings to be aware of their own cultural and linguistic experiences, views and potential assumptions. For that reason, the research conducted in this dissertation was encompassed under a reflexive framework to make explicit the positioning and views of the researcher, who identifies as multilingual herself and has had her own personal experience on the issue. In this sense, by making an introspective exercise, the author aimed to explain

and back up the interpretations and choices made along the entire research process. Therefore, the qualitative study carried out in Chapter 6 was conducted using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2021b) in order to perform this exercise of awareness to enhance the rigor of the study (McAllister & Lyons, 2022), while reporting data collected from multilingual and multicultural families. Furthermore, in the study presented in Chapter 7, the author incorporated an autoethnographic and reflexive approach to add further context to the positioning of the researcher, and analyze the interactions between the researcher and participants, with focus on the fluidity of identity negotiation throughout the research for both the participants and the researcher (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; 2008), and the process of developing trusting relationships in a research setting.

8.6. Strengths and limitations

To promote transparency, it is important to disclose the strengths and limitations that have been observed throughout this research project.

One of the strengths of this research is that it explored the views and experiences of families from a variety of linguistic backgrounds and contexts, including families whose children had either typical development or a developmental disorder with language impairment. The reason behind this choice was that this research aimed to provide results that could be useful in clinical and educational settings where the professional may come across children and families from multiple cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, since language may present different trajectories of development, some of which are considered atypical or pathological, this research project aimed to offer insight into that diversity. Nonetheless, even though this research managed to showcase the variety of views and experiences that may exist in multilingual families, there are multiple linguistic and cultural groups that have not been represented in the research, and whose views may have added further layers of nuance to the data.

Many families were contacted via different sources (e.g., speech-language therapy practices, public and private schools, associations, acquaintances, via snowball sampling through the participating families) to request their participation in the research, including posting on social media groups with several thousands of members. However, there were multiple rejections or dropouts. To explore the possible reasons for non-participation, a short survey (see Annex 1) was distributed to the families who did take part in the research. They were asked about their own motivations for participating as well as potential reasons for declining. Based on the parents' answers, time constraints might be one of the main explanations, although some also suggested that certain parents might choose not to participate to prevent

feeling judged about their choices. There are studies in culturally diverse settings that support this claim, reporting that families may reject participation requests to avoid exposing themselves to external judgement and critical evaluation by a researcher (Pułaczewska, 2019).

Additionally, the language chosen for the interview and surveys was Spanish as it was the language that all participants had in common with the interviewer. However, since the language chosen was not the first language of some participants, it might have influenced their answers as well as the relationship with the researcher and the way the parents chose to present themselves in the interaction (Chen & Bond, 2010). Nonetheless, the participants were asked to self-assess their language skills and confidence in the languages they spoke and were encouraged to code-switch if they needed to (see Chapter 6).

In relation to the content of the interviews and data gathered, a strength of this research is that its inductive approach allowed for the identification and discussion of subjects outside of the initial topic guide elaborated for this project. This added dynamism to the research by facilitating the consideration of new aspects regarding the language views and use of multilingual families, making the research evolve as it progressed.

Nevertheless, there are also limitations regarding the interviews and data collection. For instance, in the published article included in Chapter 6, only one parent from each family was interviewed. This decision was part of the initial research design, aimed at facilitating access to families where the parents may be separated or in single-parent households. It also made the process of scheduling interviews more manageable. However, given that the data collected from each family included information about personal views and experiences, interviewing both parents –when possible– could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of their linguistic and cultural realities.

Aside from that, there are certain limitations in relation to the terminology used in this dissertation. First, the concept of "language transmission" is frequently used throughout this research to refer to the efforts made by parents to help their children learn and use certain languages, however it has also been criticized. There are authors who advocate for an approach to family language policy that amplifies children's agency and their role in shaping language dynamics, rather than relegating them to a passive position (Kheirkhah, 2016). Furthermore, in the published article included in Chapter 5, the concepts of family language policies and language practices were used interchangeably, which may overlook other significant aspects within the field of family language policies such as language beliefs and management (Spoksly, 2007).

Lastly, another possible limitation of this research was that it was conducted without funding or a research team to back up the project, which may have influenced the progression of the research in terms of time constraints, accessing participants, data collection, budget for specialized services (e.g., software programs, subscriptions) or potentially hiring a research assistant. There were, however, students of Psychology and Speech-Language Therapy who volunteered to assist with the transcriptions.

As a final reflection on the researcher's development, this doctorate was also a journey of finding her own academic voice, which can be evidenced in the progression made in each of the articles developed during this research project.

8.7. Implications and future directions

This research reveals that the language views and experiences of multilingual people can be shaped to different extents by linguistic, cultural, social, personal, racial, historical, economic, political, developmental and affective aspects, among others. The present dissertation emphasizes the importance to bring together those aspects to understand the complex linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual families.

Therefore, as professionals, we need to be aware of the role that these different aspects play in the lives of every multilingual person, and how they may influence the overall dynamic and relationship with our patients, as well as the outcomes achieved in therapeutic or educational settings. In this sense, authors such as Rodríguez (2024) introduce a social approach to speech and language therapy as an alternative to purely linguistic and developmental frameworks, allowing professional practices to be better aligned with the lives of the patients and their families, in accordance with the notion of person- and family-centered approaches to practice (Klatte et al., 2024; Rodríguez, 2016). Additionally, given that our own views and experiences can influence our work in both research and professional contexts, integrating reflexivity and cultural awareness in our daily practice may lead to improved outcomes.

Therefore, even though the information presented in this dissertation is situated within a research framework, it can be extrapolated to clinical and educational settings, where professionals may need to gather sociolinguistic information about the families they work with through interviews and questionnaires.

From a research perspective, the aspects discussed throughout this dissertation emphasize the need to contribute to the existing evidence through a reflexive, self-aware and culturally sensitive research approach, with an intersectional

perspective that considers the whole context of multilingual families. This includes taking into account the wide range of cultural, sociolinguistic, economic, ethnic/racial or developmental factors, among others, that may shape the views and practices of parents who are raising children in more than one language.

Nonetheless, given the role of child's agency in the higher or lower success of parents' language choices and practices (Kherikhah, 2016), it would be pertinent to do further research including the perspectives of children who are growing up in multilingual settings, as they are at the center of family language policies regarding their language learning process. By incorporating the views of children as well as their parents, the field of family language policies can be studied from a perspective that frames multilingual families as whole units where their members interact, influence each other and evolve with time and throughout contexts.

Furthermore, considering the scarcity of evidence in relation to the language dynamics, views and experiences of multilingual families whose children have atypical language development, the author encourages scholars to conduct further research on this underexplored area and develop a set of guidelines for parents and practitioners that can be adjustable to the diverse contexts of these families.

Lastly, this dissertation revealed that the linguistic and sociopolitical context of a region in terms of language diversity and regulations (e.g., bilingual vs monolingual regions; culturally diverse vs culturally homogeneous regions) may influence language attitudes, practices and experiences in multilingual families, as well as the advice they might receive from professionals and other acquaintances. Therefore, it would be relevant to carry out further research diving into the geopolitical and sociolinguistic distribution of languages and its influence on general attitudes and practices in family, professional and other language settings.

Chapter 9. Conclusions

The goal of this dissertation was to conduct an in-depth exploration of the sociolinguistic contexts of multilingual families who lived in Spain (in bilingual or monolingual regions of the country). The aim was to identify the aspects that played a role in the language views and management of parents whose children are exposed to more than one language at home and in other settings. The results were presented from the perspective of the parents who participated in the research, but also from the perspective of the researcher in an exercise to incorporate reflexivity and awareness into the research process.

The findings presented across the three studies contribute to the existing literature in the field of family language policies and professional practices in multilingual contexts by addressing aspects that, to this day, present limited evidence. There are several conclusions that can be extracted from these studies, separated into (a) the linguistic and cultural dynamics of multilingual families, and (b) professional advice and practices with multilingual families.

In relation to the linguistic and cultural dynamics of families where children are exposed to several languages, the studies reveal the existing diversity and intricacy in relation to these families' sociolinguistic and cultural contexts. The findings show a complex thread of aspects that play a role in the management of languages at home and other settings, finding a diversity of perspectives regarding the parent's language views, experiences and identity negotiation in relation to themselves and their children. The studies report that the construction and negotiation of cultural and linguistic identities is not straightforward and can evolve with time, in interaction with others and across contexts. Additionally, the findings disclose that the broad linguistic context of the region where the family lives (bilingual or monolingual), along with the general perception and attitudes towards multilingualism and cultural diversity, also play a role in their language experiences and priorities.

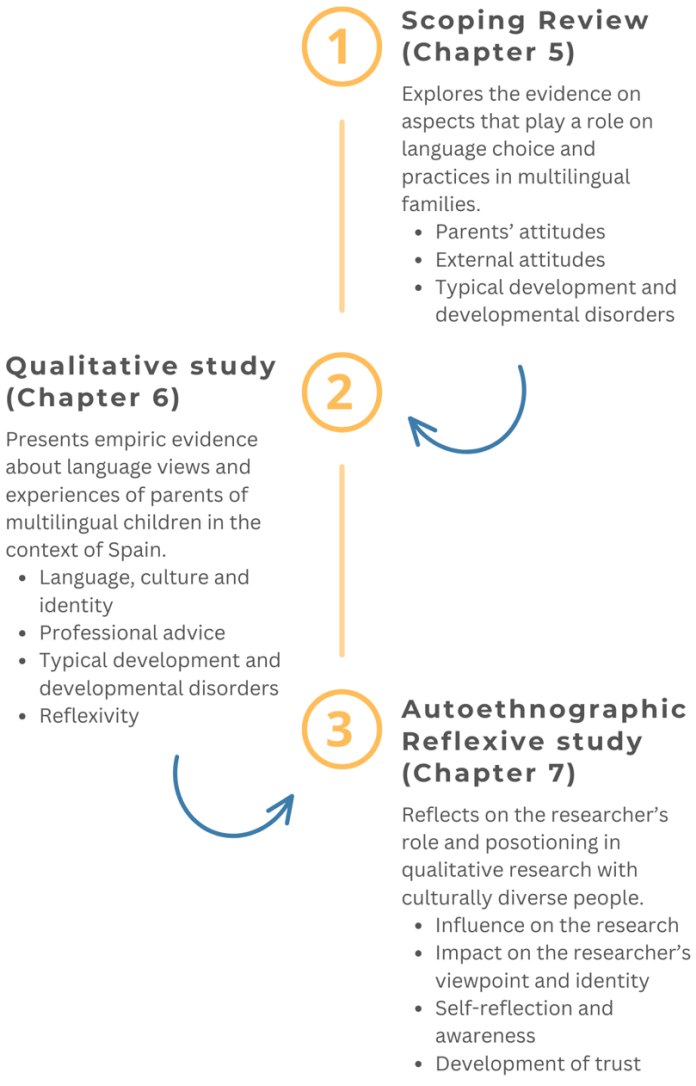
With regards to the experiences of multilingual families who received advice from professionals (e.g., speech-language therapists, teachers, school counselors) regarding language choice and use, their responses illustrate that professionals provide dichotomic advice regarding language maintenance, which may or may not adjust to the parent's language views and preferences. Furthermore, the linguistic context of the region (bilingual or monolingual) also seems to play a role in the experiences of families regarding the advice they received from professionals, who may or may not be supportive of a multilingual upbringing, depending on the higher or lower presence of language diversity in the region. The findings also revealed that the attitudes and explicit advice of professionals may influence parents' language

views and practices with their children, revealing the need for professionals practicing self-reflection and awareness about power relations and their own attitudes towards multilingualism.

In this dissertation it is implied that implementing a reflexive approach to research can help reduce biases by making implicit views and the researcher's positioning explicit. This idea is framed under the notion that the researcher's subjectivity may influence the research, but also that the research can have an influence on the researcher. This dissertation also suggests that the quality of the research may also be improved by developing trusting relationships between the researcher and participants.

The author is aware of the limitations of the research; however, the studies conducted are situated within different frameworks that complement each other both methodologically and in terms of content (Figure 5).

Figure 5. *Connection between the studies developed*



The findings presented in the studies are encompassed within a research context, discussing the views and experiences of multilingual families and incorporates a reflexive perspective into research. However, the information provided may be extrapolated to other settings and applied in clinical and educational contexts where professionals are involved with multilingual children and their families.

In this sense, the present research has implications regarding the contemplation of the overall sociolinguistic and cultural context of multilingual families in professional and research settings. The studies reveal the complexities that multilingual and multicultural families may experience regarding their linguistic and cultural dynamics, experiences and wishes. Therefore, it is the role of the researcher or professional to show awareness and responsiveness to the cultural and linguistic realities of the individuals they engage with, in order to provide a setting where multilinguals can thrive. In this sense, a person-centered or family-centered approach may contribute to the adjustment of professional practices to the cultural and linguistic needs and priorities of multilingual families in a collaborative way. However, to reach that goal, it is important that professionals and researchers implement an exercise of reflexivity and self-awareness to understand one's positioning, attitudes and biases in relation to linguistic and cultural diversity, so that professional practices can be tailored to the specific context of each family.

Additionally, the findings of this research underline the difficulty to make generalizations about multilingual families, based on the diversity of sociolinguistic profiles and experiences reported by the parents who participated in the study. However, it is important to continue doing research in the field of multilingual family contexts from a perspective that dives into their stories so that their views and experiences are represented in the evidence and can be incorporated into practice in clinical and educational contexts.

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Scientific articles included in the dissertation

This dissertation follows the approach “PhD by publications”. A scoping review and a qualitative article were published in 2024. The references of the scientific articles carried out for this dissertation are as follows:

Bellón, P., & Nieva, S. (2024). Perspectives about home-language maintenance in multilingual families with and without language and communication disorders: A scoping review. *Revista de logopedia, foniatría y audiología*, *44*(3), 100496.

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Annexes

Annex 1. *Survey used to review parental participation in the research*

Demographic information – For identification purposes
Name (optional)
Age
First / Heritage language
Place of residence
Number of children and age of each child

Participants' own experiences
1. How would you describe your participation in the research project?
2. What made you want to participate in the study?
3. How have you felt sharing your experiences in relation to your personal life and your child(ren)'s multilingual rearing?

Participants' thoughts on other people's experiences
4. What do you think could discourage someone from participating in the study? (share as many reasons as may come to your mind)
5. What do you think could encourage somebody to participate in the study?

Other
6. Is there anything else you want to add?

Appendix

Appendix A. Table of content of the studies reviewed for the scoping review

Table A1. *Details and content of the studies of families of typically developing children*

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Akgül et al. (2019)	Content analysis Face-to-face interviews (at home and workplace) and an online form Maximum variation sampling	Case study 15 parents raising their children bilingually: - 7 parents live out of the country of origin (2 Turkish families in Croatia; 5 Pakistani and Iranian in Turkey) - 8 Turkish parents in Turkey	Various home languages, Turkish, Other (e.g., English)	Croatia, Turkey	Similarities and differences in the experiences and priorities of parents raising multilingual children in their own country and abroad. Also similarities regarding views about multilingualism in both contexts (in the home country and abroad). Both groups of families consider advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism. The context and setting of the families can play a role in parents' motivations to raise multilingual children and the value assigned to multilingualism. Families living in their own country perceive a multilingual education as a choice, while it is a necessity in families living abroad.
Alasmari (2022)	Auto-ethnography research Longitudinal participant observation method Data Fieldnotes, author observations, reflexive journals, recorded natural conversations	Case study 1 bilingual family (father, mother, child)	Arabic, English	United States and Saudi Arabia	Construction and negotiation of a shared family identity through religious practices and expressions. Efforts to socialize and engage the child in the parents' cultural and societal norms. Discussion of parents' language ideology, planning and identity construction. Negotiation of the child's sense of bilingualism and biculturalism.
Arnaus Gil & Jiménez-Gaspar (2022)	Quantitative analysis Children data: Video-taped recordings in a game situation with, semi-guided interviews. Conversations with a German-speaking adult and a Catalan-speaking adult. Data collected at the children's home (parents' not present). Questionnaire to parents	16 bi-/trilingual children and their parents (speakers of German-Catalan or Catalan only; one family spoke Catalan-Thai)	Catalan, German. Additional use of English in 2 families and English, Thai in 1 family	Germany	Parents report different language-transmission strategies and uses of the home/minority language (Catalan) and the majority/local language (German). There seems to be a correlation between: (1) language policies/practices and (2) the choice of the home language as the family language* on the child's language outcomes. The consideration of only the language practices to support the home language does not directly influence the child's language competence. Children tend to opt for the home language when talking to the Catalan-speaking parent. Choosing German as the family language hinders the child's language dominance in Catalan. *Family language: language used in the family when several people are present/involved.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Berardi-Wiltshire (2017)	Thematic analysis Semi-structured face-to-face interviews (at home, workplace, other)	20 parents of multilingual children. Born outside of New Zealand (different backgrounds)	Various home languages and English	New Zealand	Parents' have positive beliefs about multilingualism and language acquisition, and value highly their home languages. Parents discuss the benefits and motivations to transmit their home language to their children (identity, culture, communication with extended family, opportunities, family cohesion, etc.). Parents make efforts to transmit the home-language to their children by consistently using the language. Positive attitudes towards the home language and culture help pass on the language to their children. Language use and practices are based on parents' beliefs but also related to their own language learning experiences. Importance of having a support system to maintain the language and culture.
Costa Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer (2020)	Content analysis Semi-structured interviews	16 Portuguese-Speaking families (20 participating parents) Brazilian and Portuguese parents, mixed families where at least one parent was Portuguese or Brazilian, German parents.	Portuguese, German	Germany	Parents' perceptions of the educational project "Mala de Herança" (*Heritage suitcase*) as a tool to support the home language. In general, home language use opportunities are reduced when children begin formal school, but the Mala de Herança project is viewed as a way to create opportunities to use the language. The program advantages Portuguese and allows children understand and navigate their bilingual identity. Parents aim to bring together both languages as part of their children's linguistic repertoire.
Cox et al. (2021)	Position paper	Immigrant families in the United States	Various heritage languages and English	Unites States	The presence of a shared language erosion* affects second- and third-generation immigrants on their physical, mental and behavioral health. Shared language erosion impacts parent-child relationships and might leaf to conflicts. Generational changes in cultural values and beliefs (misunderstandings). Reduced parental competence and ability to assist their children. Children in families where there is shared language erosion might be more vulnerable to environmental/social risks. *Shared language erosion: gap between parents' and children's language skills in the heritage and majority languages.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Curdt-Christiansen & Wang (2018)	Thematic Analysis. Interviews, family talk recordings, home visits and observational field notes, collection of material artefacts (documents, photos, etc.)	8 families. Including 3 generations: grandparents, parents and children. Speakers of *fangyans* (Chinese language varieties; dialects/regionalects) and *Putonghua* (Mandarin)	Fangyan, Putonghua, English	China	Differences in parents' attitudes towards the different languages their children are exposed to. Limited use and transmission of Fangyans by parents with their children (grandparents use it with their grandchildren). Putonghua is prioritized by parents due to its recognized prestige and the advantages it can bring to their children. Fangyans hold cultural and emotional value to families while Putonghua holds a functional value. There is a detachment to the minority language. External attitudes and social perception of languages influences parents' decisions and involvement in their children's language development. Presence of a language hierarchy and stigmatization of Fangyans. Languages are valued for their practicality. Generational change of language use in China.
Curdt-Christiansen (2020)	Situational analysis and mapping. Interviews, observations, roundtable discussion, focus group interviews, email communications	8 Chinese families (10 parents), 8 British teachers	Chinese home languages, English	United Kingdom	Agreements and disagreements between parents' and teachers' attitudes about language learning practices. Teachers show positive views about multilingualism but hold negative views of the home language. Belief of multilingualism hindering children's progress. Different expectations and conflicts between parents and teachers regarding language use and its role in academic development. Intercultural miscommunication. Perception of discriminatory attitudes towards migrant children.
Cycyk & Hammer (2020)	Directed content analysis Semi-structured interviews	35 Mexican mothers of multilingual children	Spanish, English	United States	Parents' support and assign value to their children's language development. Parents assign value to building relationships with their children and providing support. Parents and caregivers support the children's languages. There are differences in the amount of children's exposure to and use of the home language. Parents' aim to transmit their cultural values and beliefs to their children. Parent-child communication could prevent hardship on the children's lives.
Danjo (2018)	Ethnographic fieldwork (16-month long) Microanalysis School and home visits. Observation notes, audio-recorded interactions, interviews with children, parents and teachers, email exchanges, diary entries from parents.	Case study 2 Japanese-English multilingual families. This paper focuses on 1 family: Japanese mother, British father	Japanese, English	United Kingdom	Positive value assigned to home language maintenance. The mother makes efforts to teach Japanese. Parent-child bond is reinforced through the use of the home language. Discussion of the limitations that the one-parent-one-language (OPOL) approach can bring (restriction of children's creative language use). Gap between the theoretical idea of OPOL and the actual language transmission practices at home. Discussion of the presence of a monolingual ideology with flexible language practices (*translanguaging*).

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur (2018)	Grounded theory Semi-structured interviews with parents and teachers	20 second-generation Turkish families (35 parents), 5 teachers	Turkish, Dutch	The Netherlands	Conflicting beliefs and opinions between parents and teachers regarding multilingualism and language use. Parents view their home language as a symbol of their identity and culture and seek to transmit their language to their children. Influence of teachers' attitudes and suggestion on parents' language beliefs and language-transmission practices with their children. Diverging attitudes between parents and teachers towards the value of the heritage language (and minority languages), school-related activities and parental participation. Teachers provide advice to parents based on socially extended monolingual ideas.
Kwon (2017)	Coding and thematic analysis Formal and informal in-depth interviews, observations, documents and artifacts	Case study 6 mothers (3 from Japan and 3 from Korea)	Japanese, Korean, English	United States	Positive attitudes and value towards heritage-language maintenance. Challenges related to finding balance between the heritage and majority languages with their children. Parental beliefs about heritage language maintenance as a tool to connect intergenerational families across countries and to access academic and career opportunities. Parental report of transnational strategies to support heritage-language maintenance.
Lee (2021)	Inductive content analysis followed by an analytic/theoretical coding. Narrative interviewing One semi-structured interview and two open-ended interviews in Korean	9 Korean mothers (children enrolled in international schools "Elite bilingual programs")	English, Korean	South Korea	Interconnectedness of social class and language ideologies. Parents' language beliefs and attitudes associated to the social status of languages. Parents prioritize English over Korean. English as a representation of power, a necessary requirement to belong to middle class, and a medium to establish social boundaries. Discussion of language hierarchy and language diversity in a globalized context.
Little (2023)	Autoethnographic approach Joint research diary used by mother and son Thematic analysis	Case study 1 family: mother and son	Heritage language (German), English	United Kingdom	Reintroduction of the heritage language with the child after a hiatus. Analysis of the emotional experiences of mother and son during the reintroduction of the heritage language. Positive impact of parent-child collaboration on the child's attitudes towards the heritage language. Reflection on parent and child's concerns and solutions to adjust their language practices.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Fuentes (2020)	Grounded theory Audio-recorded formal and informal interviews, email exchanges, participant observations, data-clarification sessions (transcripts, observations, field notes and research memos)	Case study 2 Sri-Lankan families	Sinhalese, English	United States (US)	Parents discuss the factors that might influence their language planning and practices with their children. Similar language ideologies and attitudes but differences in the families' language practices. Families' future plans as transnational families (potential return to home country) influence their language choices and practices. Decisions targeted at navigating their present and imagined future in the US or Sri-Lanka. Discussion of motivations and challenges faced by transnational families.
Gharibi & Seals (2019)	Grounded theory Semi-structured interviews in the families' homes or places of their choosing	25 Iranian parents of Persian-English bilingual children	Persian/Farsi, English	New Zealand	Differences between language attitudes and practices: positive beliefs and attitudes towards the home language, but parents' language practices do not always go accordingly. Parents show interest in transmission of cultural identity, contact with extended family and discuss the advantages of multilingualism. A successful bilingualism associated with positive language attitudes and language transmission practices. Influence of teachers and friends on parents' heritage language management.
Jung (2022)	Grounded theory Online semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, field notes	6 English-speaking fathers in South Korea (mixed English-Korean families)	English, Korean	South Korea	Parents want their children to develop a high proficiency in both languages (employment reasons, connection with identity, familiar bonds). Parents' language practices at home are flexible to facilitate communication between family members (*translanguaging*). Translanguaging plays a role in bilingual children's fluid identity construction and expression of emotions.
Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020)	Thematic analysis of online discourses (extracted from two online parent communities) Analysis of 230 comments in the online post; total of 242,178 words	Parents/caregivers of mixed-language families where Modern Greek was one of the family languages.	Modern Greek	Greece (Modern Greek → majority language) and Cyprus (Greek → minority language)	The study reports on parental language ideologies/beliefs, and language transmission and management. Parents show positive attitudes about raising their children multilingually. They also show concerns about the children's balanced language development in a multilingual setting. The study reports an adjustment of language management practices to adapt to different language contexts and dynamics.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Lomeu Gomes (2022)	3-year ethnographic project Discursive analysis Audio-recordings	2 Brazilian-Norwegian families	Brazilian, Norwegian	Norway	Home language maintenance to forge family ties and strengthen parent-child bonds. Interconnections between language and national identity. Parents show an emotional connection to their language. Children's emotions are relevant in language negotiations. School environment plays a role in children's use of language.
Mattheoudakis et al. (2020)	Quantitative analysis (to establish correlations) Questionnaire survey (choice of Greek or Albanian)	2 groups of Albanian immigrant parents in Greece Group A: N = 167 parents who do not send their children to Albanian classes Group B: N = 35 parents whose children receive instruction in Albanian	Albanian, Greek	Greece	Children have high language competence in Greek (majority language). Formal exposure and active parental support of Albanian influences its development without hindering the development of Greek. Parents in both groups support the heritage language, but parents in Group A tend to put more effort into the development of Greek compared to parents in Group B, who take more action to support the Albanian language. Also differences in the language outcomes and preferences of children in each group. Group A prefers Greek over Albanian, while Group B uses both languages.
Mirvahedi (2021)	Theoretical thematic analysis Semi-structured interviews	13 mothers of multilingual children in Iran	Azerbaijani, Persian/Farsi	Iran	Lack of institutional policies and support of minority languages in Iran. Persian is the official language, Azerbaijan use is reduced. Language rules, regulations and laws influence language ideologies and practices. Increasing desire to raise children in Persian over the heritage language. Historical stigmatization of the Azerbaijani language influences parents' ideologies towards their ethnicity.
Mirvahedi & Jafari (2021)	Qualitative inquiry Semi-structured interviews in Azerbaijani ("mother tongue")	13 parents (6 fathers; 7 mothers) of bilingual children in Iran	Azerbaijani, Persian (Farsi)	Iran	Parents show a strong attachment to the ethnic language and identity. Gap between parents' values and actual practices. Conflicting ideologies when language hierarchy and prestige are considered. Persian language is often prioritized over Azerbaijani when raising their children. Intergenerational discontinuity of the Azerbaijani language. Parents speak more Farsi to their children to perform better at school and have better opportunities.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Montanari et al. (2022)	Quantitative analysis (percentages) with additional thematic analytic procedure Online survey (Likert scale and open-ended questions)	44 Italian-English families in California (United States)	Italian, English	United States	Assessment of parents' views about a language immersion program where they enrolled their multilingual children. Parents' reasons to choose the program were related to academic/career advantages, cultural identity and communication with the extended family. Parents were involved in the program, however language opportunities outside of school were not provided often. The program was successful in promoting the Italian language. Discussion of parental language views and practices having an influence on education and legislative policies.
Moustaoui (2021)	Discourse analysis Interviews, discussion groups	40 transnational Moroccan mothers and fathers	Standard Arabic, Darija (Moroccan Arabic), Amazigh/Berber, Spanish	Spain	Parents shared their language views and strategies related to the transmission and maintenance of their cultural and linguistic heritage. Parents discussed about accommodation to the host culture. Language practices and children's language dominance change when school begins. Differences in parental perspectives about language management and transmission.
Nakamura (2019)	Constructive grounded approach Interviews with parents	8 English-speaking parents raising bilingual children	English, Japanese	Japan	Parents' impact beliefs (parents' conviction of their impact on the child's language acquisition) influence their language transmission efforts with their children. Interviewed parents aim to support the English language. Parents' personal experiences influenced their attitudes and decisions. Spousal support, peer influence and community support play a role in parents' impact beliefs.
Nandi (2019)	Thematic analysis Observations, field notes, semi-structured interviews (with each parent), focus groups Also: directed autoethnography via questionnaires, recordings	10 participants: 2 interviewed families (4 parents) 8 families in focus groups (15 parents)	Galician, Spanish	Galicia, Spain	In Galicia, Spanish is often preferred over the Galician language. Parents who support the minority language play a role in the revitalization process of the language. Parents implement new language maintenance strategies to transmit the language to their children. Parents make efforts to transmit a sense of pride in the language. Also: a language shift is observed when school begins.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Nogueroles et al. (2021)	Quantitative analysis (descriptive study) Survey	470 Spanish-speaking parents - 327 speak in Spanish with their children - 143 address their children in English (not the parents' first language)	English, Spanish	Spain	Parents choose to address their children in English because of the benefits and opportunities it can bring. The aspects related to the identity and emotion of the language were not prioritized. No relationship between the socioeconomic status of the families and the use of English at home. Potential effects in parent-child relationships.
Ragnarsdóttir (2020)	Content analysis Semi-structured interviews in Arabic and/or English in the participants' homes	11 refugee families from Syria (20 adults and 35 children) Also: interviews to the teachers and head teachers in the children's schools	Arabic, Icelandic	Iceland	Teachers received training to work with refugees. Fluctuation of parents' feelings and trust regarding support received. Schools offered extra support for children. Preschool children showed better progress than children in compulsory schools. Parents show concerns about their children's wellbeing. Differences between parents' and teachers' experiences, views and expectations.
Rodríguez-García et al. (2018)	Qualitative analysis In-depth interviews in Catalan and/or Spanish in the respondents' homes.	Mixed families in Catalonia (Spain) - 29 descendants of mixed couples (from different backgrounds) - 94 couples (58 mixed couples; 36 couples from the same country) Different countries of origin	Various heritage languages, Spanish, Catalan	Catalonia, Spain	Positive attitudes towards multilingualism. Children were proficient in Spanish-Catalan; some parents also taught them the heritage language. Differences in the language attitudes, expectations and language management practices depending on the origin of the families and the prestige associated to the heritage languages. Language and visible ethnic features act as a marker of foreignness, which can limit a person's sense of identity and language choice and use.
Ryan (2023)	Quantitative analysis (percentages) and thematic analysis Survey with open-ended questions	46 parents who enrolled their children in French-English immersion programs - 18 parents from French-speaking households - 26 parents from non-French-speaking households	French, English	United States	Exploration of motivations and expectations of parents regarding the language immersion program. Motivations included language-, culture-related and practical reasons. Motivations and experiences differed when the family had a French- vs non-French-speaking background. Parents perceive the program as successful when the children's attitudes and outcomes align with their expectations. Challenges regarding the multilingual development are also reported. Differences between French- and non-French-speaking families related to their imagined identities and expectations.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Seo (2021)	Thematic analysis Semi-structured interviews, on-site recordings and participant observations Data collected over a 31-month period	Case study 1 Korean family from Seoul (South Korea) (4 family members) Both parents speak English with their children	English, Korean	South Korea	Interconnectedness of the status of the English language in Korea and the choice and use of languages at home. Parents discuss the benefits and opportunities that English can bring to their children. Parents show strong beliefs about their language decisions. Language attitudes are influenced by socio-cultural background and socio-political context. Discussion of language hierarchy, language practices and the consistency of parental language choices.
Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022)	Phenomenological approach to data analysis Online semi-structured interviews	6 mixed families raising multilingual children	French, Italian, Spanish, Estonian	Estonia	Conscious choice of raising multilingual children before child was born. Language considered as part of the culture. Parents also consider the usefulness of the languages and the advantages they can bring to their children. Preference of a one-parent-one-language approach to transmit languages to their children. Different strategies to implement their language practices.
Soler & Zabrodskaja (2017)	Thematic analysis Sociolinguistic interviews in the families' homes (both parents present but each one interviewed separately)	3 Spanish-Estonian families (6 parents)	Spanish, Estonian	Estonia	Parents of multilingual children create new dynamic language practices to transmit languages. Parents tend to follow a one-parent-one-language (OPOL) approach but also admitted *translanguaging*. Parents implement strict language use strategies, introducing the OPOL paradox (the increase of exposure to both languages can enable language mixing). Children's own language preferences also guide language use.
Surrain & Luk (2023)	Quantitative analysis Survey	136 parents of children aged <3 319 parents of children aged <18	Various heritage languages, English	United States	Attitudes towards multilingualism vary depending on the parents' own language background, and the place where they reside (monolingual vs multilingual areas). Parents' perceived value of multilingualism can predict their engagement in home-language maintenance activities. Local multilingualism in their area influences parents' value of multilingualism for their child.
Taqavi & Rezaei (2021)	Thematic analysis Qualitative interviews	19 Azerbaijani bilinguals	Azerbaijani, Farsi	Iran	Family context, age and gender influence language choice at home. Newer generations tend to speak more Farsi. There is also a gender difference in language preferences. Duality in language attitudes towards each language: Farsi is considered high-class and prestigious; Azerbaijani represents low-class and "uneducated people". Parents show positive attitudes towards Azerbaijani but use Farsi with their children to guarantee a better future.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Vollmann & Soon (2018)	Discussion paper	Ethnic Chinese Malaysians	Family language, other Chinese languages, Mandarin, Malay, English, Malaysian English, Bahasa Pasar	Malaysia	Malaysian people frequently communicate in several languages. The identities of migrant ethnic minority groups align with the country of origin and/or the country of residence. The popularization of Mandarin and the promotion of the language in schools reduces the choice of other languages at home. Parents tend to use Mandarin or English to provide proper linguistic education. Family languages are not always the first language of children in Malaysian families.
Wan & Gao (2021)	Longitudinal study Thematic followed by a cross-case analysis Enquiry (18 months): interviews, journal entries from parents, on-site observations, field notes	7 multilingual Chinese families (13 parents) (children enrolled in international schools)	Mandarin, English, Spanish	China	Parents show different ideological beliefs about English, Mandarin and Spanish. Parents use Mandarin at home. They assign cultural and identity value to Mandarin. Parents value English because of the opportunities for their children. More time, effort and resources addressed to English than the other languages. Spanish (one of the languages of instruction) is not as valued by parents. Desire for children to maintain their Chinese cultural identities.
Wang (2023)	Inductive thematic analysis Open-ended interviews, informal conversations, observations, evidence of literacy practices, chat posts	12 Chinese families (13 parents; 13 children)	Mandarin, English	Australia	Parents show positive and negative emotions associated to a multilingual education in as immigrants. Emotions shaped by parents' language attitudes, expectations and outcomes. Parents value the transmission of their Chinese identity, maintenance of family relations and opportunities for the future. Gap between parents' expectations and children's language outcomes.
Wilson (2021)	Mixed methods Quantitative: online survey (percentages and descriptions) Qualitative: interviews and observations (thematic analysis)	French-speaking families Qualitative: 2 families Quantitative: 164 families	French, English	United Kingdom	Surveys: Parents usually consider *translanguaging* as a natural practice (65%), but some parents have a monoglossic understanding on multilingualism. Preference for the use of the minority language at home to transmit the language. Case studies: Contradictory beliefs about *translanguaging*. Parents show different approaches to language maintenance, ranging from more to less strict according to parents' priorities.

Table A2. *Details and content of the studies of families of children with developmental disorders*

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Language Disorder	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Cioè-Peña (2021)	Narrative analysis Family inventory, semi-structured interviews, narrative interviews, observations, field notes At church or the participants' homes	10 Latin American mothers of multilingual children	Children "labeled as disabled"	Spanish, English	United States	Parents/mothers show an interest on multilingualism but consider a monolingual schooling in English. The presence of a disability influences parents' decisions regarding multilingualism (not a priority). Parents view the disability as a barrier (influenced by teachers' views). Teachers' advice oriented towards a monolingual education. Parents follow the advice. Parents face discrimination and racism at school. Lack of support hinders mothers' ability to help their children with schoolwork.
Hampton et al. (2017)	Thematic analysis Semi-structured interviews in English	17 bilingual parents of children with ASD 18 bilingual parents of typically developing (TD) children (Parents of different origins)	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Various home languages, English	United Kingdom	Parents of both groups shared certain views and experiences related to a multilingual education. E.g., advantages, concerns about language development, value of cultural heritage and identity, influence of professionals on their decisions. Certain experiences are more present in parents of children with ASD: concerns about bilingualism being an issue for their children, pressure to shift to a monolingual education, limitations in parent-child relationships. Differences between groups also related to external influences: TD (society, family, friends); ASD (professionals). Advice received both in support of a multilingual education and against it.
Howard et al. (2021)	Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) Semi-structured phenomenological interviews at the children's school, participants' home, conference center	16 multilingual families - 12 parents in England (UK) - 3 parents & 1 grandmother in Whales (UK) (Parents of different origins)	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Various home languages, English	United Kingdom	Positive attitudes towards multilingualism but parents' practices do not always align with their views. Parents add value to a multilingual education (communication, culture, cognitive effects, etc.). Parents' multilingual or monolingual practices fluctuate over time. Language practices influences by the severity of the disorder, advice received, and language value as a practical asset. Some professionals encourage a multilingual upbringing and other professionals discourage it. Multilingualism reinforces family ties.

Author(s)	Methodology	Participants	Language Disorder	Languages considered	Setting	Key findings
Mirvahedi & Hosseini (2023)	Collaborative autoethnography (CAE) Narrative voice, sample interactions: observation notes, texts, recordings of interactions over the period of 9 years	Case study 1 family (mother)	Language delay	Persian, Hindi, English	Europe, Iran, Malaysia	The family's language planning and practices varied depending on their place of residence, plans for the future and expectations. Desire to transmit the parents' heritage languages and cultures. Desire for the child to learn English for future opportunities. Parents implemented different language strategies. Mother's language views not always reflected in her practices. Child allowed to mix languages (*translanguaging*). 2 speech-language therapists recommended speaking one language (belief: language delay caused by multilingualism). Parents initially followed the advice, then switched back to multilingualism. School also showed a monolingual mindset. School attitudes influenced child's relationship with the heritage languages and cultures.
Sher et al. (2022)	Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) Semi-structured interviews and written responses.	22 parents of multilingual children (Jewish diaspora) 31 educational practitioners	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Hebrew, English	United Kingdom	Parents value a multilingual rearing to maintain connections with their community. Practitioners tend to recommend a monolingual approach (English first), but parents disagree. Other practitioners disagree with the monolingual approach ("offensive"). Parents consider Hebrew essential for spiritual purposes (religious practices/events). Monolingualism perceived as discriminatory. Clash of perspectives between parents and practitioners.

Appendix B. Table of distribution of studies according to the topics and patterns identified in the scoping review

Table B1. *Distribution of studies of families with typically developing children*

Section	Patterns identified	Articles	N of articles
Parental attitudes and home-language maintenance	Positive attitudes towards multilingualism	Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer (2020) Curdt-Christiansen (2020) Fuentes (2020) Gharibi & Seals (2019) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Kwon (2017) Montanari et al. (2022) Nakamura (2019) Nogueroles López et al. (2021) Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) Solana et al. (2018) Ryan (2023) Seo (2021) Surrain & Luk (2023) Wan & Gao (2021)	16
	Advantages of a multilingual rearing	Gharibi & Seals (2019) Montanari et al. (2022) Nakamura (2019) Nogueroles et al. (2021) Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) Solana et al. (2018) Ryan (2023) Wan & Gao (2021)	8
	Aspects that may lead to divergence of opinions regarding language maintenance and use: - Sociocultural background of the family - Current or *imagined* location - Sociopolitical context of the location - Parents' desire to actively reinforce the language	Akgül et al. (2019) Fuentes (2020) Gharibi & Seals (2019) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Seo (2021) Surrain & Luk (2023)	6
	Aspects that play a role in language use and maintenance: - Parents' language learning experiences - Attachment to the heritage culture and identity - Perceived value and usefulness of the language(s)	Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur (2018) Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer (2020) Curdt-Christiansen & Wang (2018) Fuentes (2020)	20

		Gharibi & Seals (2019) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Kwon (2017) Moustaoui (2021) Nakamura (2019) Nandi (2019) Nogueroles et al. (2021) Ryan (2023) Seo (2021) Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022) Soler & Zabrodskaja (2017) Surrain & Luk (2023) Taqavi & Rezaei (2021) Vollmann & Wooi Soon (2018) Wang (2023)	
	Link between language and identity: - Heritage language as a defining element of their ethnicity and culture - Religious practices to transmit heritage identity - Development of a shared family identity through language - Shared identity as heritage language speakers - Link language-identity questioned: “taken for granted”	Alasmari (2023) Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) Lomeu-Gomes (2022) Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022) Wang (2023)	5
	Struggles to value heritage languages: - More frequent in local/minority languages - Strong presence of languages of higher status	Curdt-Christiansen (2020) Mirvahedi (2021) Nandi (2019) Seo (2021) Taqavi & Rezaei (2021)	5
	Prioritization of languages of societal/majority language with their children: - To integrate in the environment - To promote a better academic performance - To have more opportunities in the future	Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) Curdt-Christiansen & Wang (2018) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Lee (2021) Mirvahedi & Jafari (2021) Seo (2021) Taqavi & Rezaei (2021) Wan & Gao (2021)	8
	Prioritization of heritage language: - To confront accommodation and loss heritage identity - To build better relationships with their children & family cohesion - Affective value given to heritage languages - To help the child acknowledge their multilingual identity	Berardi-Wiltshire (2019) Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer (2020) Cox et al. (2021) Curdt-Christiansen & Wang (2018) Cycyk & Hammer (2020) Danjo (2021)	18

		Jung (2022) Kwon (2017) Little (2023) Lomeu Gomes (2022) Montanari et al. (2022) Moustaoui (2021) Nandi (2019) Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022) Solet & Zabrodskaja (2017) Wang (2023) Wilson (2021)	
	Mismatch between views and practices	Curdt-Christiansen & Wang (2018) Mirvahedi (2021) Mirvahedi & Jafari (2021)	3
	Experienced challenges regarding language maintenance	Gharibi & Seals (2019) Nakamura (2019)	2
The influence of external attitudes in the use of the home language	Views and opinions from friends, family, acquaintances or people outside of their circle: - Stigmatization may lead to dropping the heritage language - Importance of counting with a supportive community to reinforce decisions and practices - Disagreement with external negative attitudes and promotion of heritage language	Nakamura (2019) Rodríguez-García (2018) Seo (2021)	3
	Professional advice: - Supportive or against a multilingual rearing - Professional advice may increase parents' concerns - Professional advice may impact language practices and parent-child interaction - Sometimes mismatch between parents and professionals' views towards languages - Conflicts between teachers and parents may influence children's social and academic wellbeing	Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur (2018) Curdt-Christiansen (2020) Fuentes (2020) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Ragnasdóttir (2020)	5
	Language rules, regulations and laws influence language practices	Gharibi & Seals (2019) Mirvahedi (2021) Mirvahedi & Jafari (2021) Taqavi & Rezaei (2021) Vollmann & Wooi Soon (2018)	5
	Language practices may influence policies and education	Montanari et al. (2022) Nandi (2019)	2

The choice of different language-transmission strategies and its challenges	Language practices can be planned or discussed as child grows	Mirvahedi & Hosseini (2023) Nakamura (2019) Seo (2021) Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022)	4
	Language-transmission practices: - Strict side of the spectrum (e.g., OPOL; one-language-one-community; minority language only) - Flexible approaches (e.g., translanguaging, *laissez-faire*) - Middle point (e.g., situational selection of languages)	Akgül et al. (2019) Arnaus Gil & Jiménez-Gaspar (2022) Gharibi & Seals (2019) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Mattheoudakis et al. (2020) Nakamura (2019) Seo (2021) Danjo (2021) Jung (2022) Little (2023) Solet & Zabrodskaja (2017) Wilson (2021)	12
	Language transmission strategies: - Environmental approaches*: extended family, peers, visiting the home country, playgroups, etc. - Educational approaches*: formal/non-formal education programs, private tutors, speech-language therapists, etc. - Recreational approaches*: books, TV, music, etc. - Language awareness (linguistic approaches)*: explicit translation, correcting language, pretending not to understand, not answering if majority language is used, etc.	Berardi-Wiltshire (2017) Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yagmur (2018) Costa-Waetzold & Melo-Pfeifer (2020) Fuentes (2020) Gharibi & Seals (2019) Kostoulas & Motsiou (2020) Kwon (2017) Lee (2021) Mattheoudakis et al. (2020) Mirvahedi & Jafari (2021) Montanari et al. (2022) Nakamura (2019) Nandi (2019) Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) Ryan (2023) Seppik & Zabrodskaja (2022) Wan & Gao (2021) Wang (2023) Wilson (2021)	19
	Emphasis on language proficiency/development vs communication/connection	Wilson (2021)	1
	Experienced challenges balancing home and societal languages: - Beginning of formal education (usually in the societal language)	Curdt Christiansen & Wang (2018) Fuentes (2020) Kwon (2017) Lomeu Gomes (2022)	8

- Finding a peer community nearby	Mirvahedi & Hosseini (2023)	
- Awareness of (negative) social perception of the language	Moustaoui (2021) Rodríguez-García et al. (2018) Wang (2023)	

Note. The topics were identified inductively and classified based on common patterns related to the aims and research questions.
* The names given to the different approaches to language transmission strategies were created by the author for clarity purposes.

Table B2. *Distribution of studies of families with children with developmental disorders*

Section	Patterns identified	Articles	N of Articles
Families where children have communication disorders or disabilities	Positive attitudes towards multilingualism	Cioè-Peña (2021) Howard et al. (2021)	2
	Advantages of a multilingual rearing: - Beneficial in autism spectrum disorder	Hampton et al. (2017) Howard et al. (2021)	2
	Attitudes reflect parents' own language experiences	Howard et al. (2021)	1
	Link between language and identity: - Religious practices to transmit heritage culture	Mirvahedi & Hosseini (2023) Sher et al. (2022)	2
	Emotional aspects of maintaining the heritage language: - Reinforcement of parent-child bonds - Expression of affection in the home language	Hampton et al. (2017) Howard et al. (2021)	2
	Concerns about a multilingual exposure: - Language development - Language delays - Stress on the child - Multilingualism amplifying difficulties related to the disorder	Hampton et al. (2017) Howard et al. (2021)	2
	Prioritization of amelioration of difficulties over languages: - Reduction of home language exposure - Enrollment of child in monolingual schools	Cioè-Peña (2021) Howard et al. (2021)	2
	Decisions based on the child's language abilities/symptoms	Howard et al. (2021)	1
	Professional advice: - Against a multilingual rearing - Supportive of a multilingual rearing - Parents' views and concerns may be influenced by professionals	Cioé-Peña (2021) Hampton et al. (2017) Howard et al. (2021) Mirvahedi & Hossseini (2023) Sher et al. (2022)	5
	Parents' reactions to professional advice: - Follow advice - Reject advice	Cioè-Peña (2021) Hampton et al. (2017) Howard et al. (2021) Mirvahedi & Hosseini (2023)	4