Dynamic Multilingual Identities:

A linguistic ethnography exploring identity, multilingualism and language policy in primary school aged, migrant learners and their families in Ireland.

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Declaration

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29th March 2024

Summary

Ireland has experienced significant immigration in the last thirty years, resulting in an increasingly diverse ethnolinguistic landscape (Central Statistics Office, 2016, 2023e; Devine, 2005; O'Connor et al., 2017). Now, Ireland must seriously consider diversity, language and education policy issues (Lin & Martin, 2005; McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). This diversity has presented challenges in supporting multilingual learners in Irish schools (Central Statistics Office, 2022; Faas et al., 2018; Nowlan, 2008).

Piller and Takahashi (2010) draw attention to the connection between inclusion, language and social inequalities by highlighting that language plays a mediating role within key areas of social inclusion, such as education, and that linguistic proficiency may impact on migrants' overall sense of belonging. Consequently, I examined several interlinked social dimensions which may contribute to the linguistic identity development of multilingual migrant learners in Irish schools, and ultimately to their overall sense of integration in the Irish context.

In this thesis I employed linguistic ethnography to investigate linguistic identity development amongst five multilingual migrant learners, and their families, living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools. I explored the language policies and practices of these learners and their caregivers in the home (FLP), and the language-in-education policies and practices informing learners' experiences at school, focusing on how learners' linguistic identities are supported or otherwise. I investigated how multilingual migrant learners employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. Finally, I explored the routine of homework as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with FLP in complex ways which may influence learners' dynamic, multilingual identity development.

Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2022) was utilised to analyse the data. Three themes were generated: 1) *Language Policy Disjunctures*, 2) *Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities* and 3) *Homework as a Transitional Space*. Evidence demonstrated a disjuncture between official language-in-education policy, classroom practice and the experiences of the participating learners (Dillon, 2016; Hornberger, 2006b;

Ricento 2000, 2009). The diverse linguistic backgrounds of learners were not celebrated, or leveraged, in line with what current research and language-in-education policy in Ireland encourages (Little & Kirwan, 2019, 2021; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012; Ó Laoire, 2005; Staring et al., 2017). In contrast to monoglossic ideologies at school, amongst participating families heteroglossic ideologies informing a dynamic approach to multilingualism in which translanguaging between different linguistic resources, were evidenced. Additionally, differences in FLP orientations between families led to different outcomes regarding linguistic identity development for learners. Furthermore, where ideological differences occurred within family units, learners employed their own agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies. Where disjunctures between school policies and FLP occurred, the homework routine was a particular interaction in which such tensions may present, affecting the interaction between learners and caregivers and ultimately how effectively homework tasks were completed, if at all.

This research indicates a need to develop comprehensive migration, integration and language education policies which centre linguistic minorities' linguistic and cultural needs to ensure fair access to the curriculum, whilst simultaneously considering the support of heritage languages (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Fahey, McGinnity, & Quinn, 2019; García & Lin, 2017a; Kloss, 1968; Lambert, 1981; May, 2017; McKinney et al., 2015). The promotion of a whole-school approach to diversity, intercultural awareness and inclusion which centres the development of learners' diverse linguistic repertoires alongside wider support for the development of dynamic, multilingual identities in Irish schools, should be adopted (Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Cummins, 2017b; Wei & García, 2017). Initial teacher education, alongside CPD should include training on diversity, inclusion, intercultural awareness and anti-bias education, with greater attention paid to homework as a pedagogical practice (Gundara & Jacobs, 2019; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; Rampton & Charalambous, 2016; Svensson et al., 2022; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2017; Whitaker, 2013).

This thesis provides relevant examples of how learners' experiences of integration and language learning may impact on their identity development as dynamic, multilingual individuals in Ireland. This research also contributes to both broader social and migration policy research in Ireland considering recent unrest, and multilingualism and language policy research, by providing a sociolinguistic perspective on how migrant, heritage language speakers' linguistic identities are developing in 21st century Ireland.

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List of Abbreviations

WSAfE	White South African English
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
BREXIT	'Britain' and 'Exit': The withdrawal process of the United Kingdom from the European Union.
CSO	Central Statistics Office
SEN	Special Educational Needs
EAL	English as an Additional Language
IRRP	Irish Refugee Resettlement Programme
IRPP	Irish Refugee Protection Programme
ETB's	Education and Training Boards
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
FLP	Family Language Policy
ISL	Irish Sign Language
LPP	Language Policy and Practice
EU	European Union
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
DES	Department of Education and Skills
LST	Language Support Teachers
MIM	Multidimensional Identity Model
MMDI	Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity
R-MMDI	Reconceptualised Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity
I-MMDI	Intersectional Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity
APA	American Psychological Society
RTA	Reflexive Thematic Analysis
TA	Thematic Analysis
BAAL	British Association of Applied Linguistics
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations

TARA   Trinity's Access to Research Archive

L1/L2   First Language/Second or Heritage Language

1   Introduction

One spring afternoon, I arrived at the De Villiers home to begin observations. This afternoon, like the many before it, began with Daisy and her older siblings Zane and Chantelle, returning from school. As the afternoon progressed and I observed the children transition into their home space and expertly translanguage between the Irish English and Irish of their schoolwork and the White South African English (WSAfE) and Afrikaans which governs their home space, I settled into the observations. The rest of the afternoon passed rather uneventfully. As this observation period came to a close in the late afternoon, Zane entered the kitchen and asked his mother, in a distinctly WSAfE accent punctuated by Afrikaans, if he could go outside to play 'soccer' with two of his friends that were waiting for him. As Kimberley replied with, 'Ja, my boy', Zane was already walking towards the front door. In an unexpected rich point in the afternoon, Zane crossed the threshold of his family home, turned towards his friends and seamlessly transitioned from the WSAfE he had been speaking to his mother, to the Irish English he speaks when with his Irish peers. This action seemed to embody both a physical transition from inside to outside, but also a linguistic transition from the identity he inhabits in the home to the identity he inhabits when with his friends.

This vignette describing Zane's seamless linguistic transition represents the ways in which multilingual speakers possess dynamic multilingual identities, expertly inhabiting different aspects of their identity and leveraging different aspects of their linguistic repertoires according to context (Blackledge & Creese, 2016, 2017; Erentaitė et al., 2018; Iyall Smith, 2008). In this thesis I focus on the development of dynamic, multilingual identities within the context of migration. According to Van Hear (2010), migration can be linked in dynamic ways to issues of class, gender, culture, ethnicity and other social stratifications, which are inherently embodied in social and power-related hierarchies within broader society but also within communities, in the home and in interpersonal relationships. In this thesis, I position issues of migration, language and identity development as dynamic and intertwined. By adopting this dynamic approach, we can examine the unique identity and

linguistic development, or dynamic multilingual identities, of migrant, heritage language speakers living in Ireland, within the broader migration context. According to Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022, p. 12),

> Within a wider context, it is now recognised that there is a growing number of young Irish people who have parents and grandparents of different nationalities or who came to Ireland as very young children (0-6 years old) (Roder, 2017). Yet, despite these growing numbers, evidential data and insights into their experiences as members of Irish society are dispersed and under-researched. As a result, there is a risk that second-generation ethnic minority young people in Ireland are, and will continue to be, overlooked and marginalised regarding legislation, policy and practice across several areas of state responsibility.

Recognising this dearth, in this thesis I employ linguistic ethnography to examine the fluid nature of language learning and identity development amongst young multilingual migrant learners, and their families, living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools, with the central aim of highlighting their experiences within contexts of the Irish school system and the larger language-in-education policy frameworks in Ireland and the European Union, and the wider migration crisis in Europe (Maldini & Takahashi, 2017; United Nations, 2017; Zanfrini, 2023). Consequently, findings from my in-depth engagement with two multilingual migrant families, including five multilingual migrant learners and their respective caregivers is presented. In this thesis I examine the interactions of participants' migratory experiences and their integration into Irish society, and the language policies and practices of these multilingual families in the home and the language policies and practices informing learners' language experiences in their school environments. Examining these intersections, I aimed to uncover how learners' experiences of integration and language learning impacted on their linguistic identity development.

This introductory chapter briefly outlines the research context, with specific focus on globalisation process and migration in Ireland, diversity in Irish education and language teaching in Irish schools. This is followed by the introduction of the research aims and questions. To conclude, the focus of the upcoming chapters is outlined.

1.1 Research Context:

1.1.1 Globalisation and a Diverse Ireland:

A dominant ideology over the last number of decades, 'globalisation' has been used with increasing frequency, particularly in economic and political discourses, to define the era in which we now live (Honor Fagan, 2002; Inglis et al., 2019; Zajda & Majhanovich, 2021). Initially used to refer to a 'golden age' of unprecedented expansion, particularly in the West, increased transnational mobility, the technologising of communication and increased cultural and commercial exchanges have all become features characterising globalisation (Coupland, 2010; Held et al., 2003; Zajda & Majhanovich, 2021). This process has given rise to the large-scale migration of peoples across the world, thrusting countries previously able to disregard multilingualism and education issues into an era where they are forced to seriously consider such issues (Canagarajah, 2017; Lin & Martin, 2005). Whilst it is recognised that the migration of peoples across the word and the resultant linguistic contact are not new phenomena, it is acknowledged that current trends in migration are a new incarnation of this (Canagarajah, 2017; Inglis et al., 2019; Lentin & McVeigh, 2006).

Increased free trade, tourism and economic migration (both legal and illegal), all contribute to worldwide migration patterns and increased cultural diversity. Based on these trends, it can be argued that migration has become more complex (Figge & Martens, 2014). Europe has experienced the diversification of its migrant population in the second half of the 20th Century, with migrants arriving from a wide variety of cultural, social, and economic origins (Castles & Miller, 2009; Czaika & de Haas, 2013; Heath et al., 2008). The formation of the European Union (EU) in 1973, the establishment of the single market and the free flow of labour in 1993, have encouraged both internal migration within member states, including migration from the Eastern countries towards the Western countries of the EU, as well as migration from the rest of the world (Heath et al., 2008; Van Mol & de Valk, 2016). Thus, the diversification of migrant populations in Europe not only includes countries of origin/destination, but also refers to the broadening of migrant categories, including refugees

and asylum seekers, economic migrants, students, family reunification, and both temporary and permanent migration (Castles & Miller, 2009). Considering this, migration has become an important topic of debate across Europe, with migration and integration policy development a central concern for many European countries (European Commission, 2023; Gusciute et al., 2022; Van Mol & de Valk, 2016). The European Commission acknowledges that at an official level the European way of life aspires to be an inclusive one, highlighting that integration and inclusion in everyday life are key components for people coming to Europe, their local communities and also for the long-term stability of European economies and the well-being of European societies (European Commission, 2020).

While many countries in Europe have a more sustained history of inward migration, this phenomenon is relatively new in Ireland. Prior to 1996, immigrant populations had a limited presence in Ireland, with less than 6% of the population born abroad (Gilmartin & Dagg, 2022). This pattern of emigration began to change swiftly in the 1990s. Since the 1990s, Ireland has experienced significant inward migration from a variety of origins (Byrne et al., 2010; Devine, 2005; Devine et al., 2008; Dundon et al., 2007; Honohan, 2010; Parker-Jenkins & Masterson, 2013). Research indicates that these migration trends have resulted in growing ethnolinguistic diversity (Bruen, 2021; Devine, 2005; Devine et al., 2008). As such, the demographics of the Irish population which has traditionally been described as 'white, Catholic and Gaelic', have changed (Devine, 2005; Parker-Jenkins & Masterson, 2013).

The number of foreign nationals immigrating to Ireland has continued to rise in recent years. Interestingly, and in contrast to the 'Ireland is full' narrative which is closely associated with rising anti-immigrant sentiment in recent years, Ireland only reached pre-Famine population levels in 2021, thus making Ireland one of very few countries with little overall population growth since 1840 (Central Statistics Office, 2023e; Gusciute et al., 2022). According to the ESRI, 2021 was the first year that the number of migrants arriving from outside of the EU was larger than the number of EU migrants present in Ireland (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023).

Data from the 2022 census indicated that individuals who are "dual Irish", "non-Irish" and "no nationality/or not stated nationality" account for 18% of the population usually

resident in Ireland. Since 2016, Indian, Romanian and Brazilian citizens were the nationalities that increased by the greatest amount, with the number of Polish, UK and Lithuanian nationals decreasing (Central Statistics Office, 2023e). Overall, the top ten nationalities residing in Ireland at the time of the 2022 Census included: India, Brazil, Romania, Ukraine, Moldova, South Africa, Croatia, England and Wales, Spain and the United States of America (Central Statistics Office, 2023e). Of these countries, only Romania, Croatia and Spain were EU member states; the rest of the countries featuring in this top-10 list represent a wide variety of origins, including the United Kingdom, North America, South America, Africa and Asia.

Whilst in the most recent years travel and migration have been affected by unforeseen global events, it is evident that Ireland has become increasingly diverse. These statistics give some indication of the scale of immigration to Ireland over this period, but also provides insight into the level of diversity within the migrant population residing in Ireland; not only are migrants arriving from a wide variety of host countries (both from and outside of the EU), but the languages spoken in Ireland reflect this continuously evolving cultural landscape. Carthy (2018, p. 19) observes that, "The diverse mix of ethnic backgrounds brings with it great opportunities for Irish society to develop tolerance and acceptance of other cultures and, in doing so, become more aware and appreciative of their own unique cultural heritage and language". Whilst the official narrative of the Irish state towards migration has been largely positive, research indicates that attitudes towards increasing immigration have been mixed, with negative attitudes prevailing in some quarters and racism, inequality, social, economic and educational disadvantage often experienced by migrants (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023; O'Connor et al., 2017). In recent years, a host of factors have impacted Ireland's migration landscape, including the COVID-19 pandemic, BREXIT, the Syrian, Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian wars, and the cost-of-living crisis (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). As will be covered in this thesis, there is strong evidence for the impact of such socio-political and economic issues on migrant families (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023).

1.1.2 Additional Social Challenges in Ireland:

Ireland experienced unforeseen challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides the significant socioeconomic impact, data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2021) demonstrates that the pandemic and related travel restrictions imposed across the globe had a significant impact on migratory patterns both into, and out of, Ireland. Overall, net migration decreased from 2020, with more Irish nationals returning home than in previous years (Central Statistics Office, 2021). These migration patterns changed once again, with the ending of the pandemic, with a swift uptake in air travel.

In addition to the migratory impact of the pandemic, school closures formed part of the Irish Government's COVID-19 pandemic response (Doyle, 2020). This move to online learning in the home arguably shifted more schooling responsibility to caregivers, with individual schools creating tailored support structures to support caregivers during this period. Doyle (2020) reflects, however, that there was likely a wide range in both caregivers' and schools' capacities to support online learning under pandemic circumstances. Consequently, a possible consequence of such school closures was the deepening of pre-existing inequalities, particularly regarding education and skills (Darmody et al., 2020; Doyle, 2020).

Examining the impact of the pandemic, Burke and Dempsey (2020) conducted a survey involving 2808 school leaders in Irish primary schools. Data from this research indicated that just over half of the surveyed schools believed that COVID-19 related school closures had had a negative impact on both learners and staff. Whilst moving to an online platform did allow for the exploration of online learning, further opportunities for academic revision and increased family time, many schools reported that negative impacts included limited social access, limited access to the technology required to engage in online learning and concerns regarding access to food, safety and wellbeing amongst some of the most vulnerable learners (Burke & Dempsey, 2020). Examining the impact on minority learners specifically, the research indicated that schools experienced increased worry for SEN (Special Educational Needs) learners; an increased need for individualised support for such learners

(placing further strain on teachers and school systems) and most significantly, many EAL (English as an Additional Language) learners were not receiving additional support (Burke & Dempsey, 2020). Furthermore, many migrant EAL learners in Direct Provision centres were at risk of receiving no tuition during this period.

Reflecting on the lack of support for such learners, schools cited caregivers' limited proficiency in English as a contributing factor, consequently caregivers were unable to assist their children with their schoolwork due to the language in which the curricula was delivered (Burke & Dempsey, 2020; Darmody et al., 2020). Due to the unprecedented duration and scale of school closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is limited evidence regarding the long-term consequences of such closures, both in Ireland and internationally. There is even further limited research on the long-term impact of such closures on EAL/migrant/heritage language speakers. In addition to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and BREXIT on Irish society and education, international conflicts have also impacted upon migration patterns in Ireland and the number of migrant learners in Irish schools.

The census figures cited in the previous section do not account for the number of refugee and asylum seekers which have arrived in Ireland since the census in 2022. Ireland established the Irish Refugee Resettlement Programme (IRRP) in 1998 to assistant with the resettlement of refugees fleeing conflict across the world. This was followed by the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) in 2015, which was established to directly address the humanitarian crisis developing in the south of Europe at the time (International Organisation for Migration, 2021). As a part of this programme Ireland had resettled 2108 Syrian refugees in Ireland by the end of 2021 (International Organisation for Migration, 2021). The majority of this number were family groups, with almost half that number comprising minors (International Organisation for Migration, 2021). Children of school age within this group were settled into Irish schools. Concerns for providing adequate support for learning English as an additional language were identified as a central concern (International Organisation for Migration, 2021).

Russia's invasion of the Ukraine in early 2022 has also influenced the number of multilingual, EAL learners in Irish schools. According to statistics published by the CSO in

2022 and subsequently reported on in the Irish Times in June 2022, since the beginning of the conflict over 38 000 Ukrainian refugees had fled the Ukraine to Ireland, with almost 6000 Ukrainian children enrolling in Irish schools (Central Statistics Office, 2022; Hilliard, 2022). Of this number, it was estimated that approximately three quarters of these children have enrolled in Irish primary schools (Central Statistics Office, 2022). The number of Ukrainian refugees had increased to 96,338 by early October 2023 (Central Statistics Office, 2023a, 2023c). To support such learners in their transition to Irish schools, regional education and language teams were established by the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETB's), to assist families in securing school spaces and supporting schools in providing for these learners (O'Brien, 2022). Preliminary reports documented some concern amongst schools regarding the number of new learners enrolled and the need for adequate supports including furniture, books and electronic devices, and the need for additional teaching staff able to support the language needs of these learners (McQuinn, 2022). Based on information from the CSO, data indicates that as of February 2023, over 10 000 Ukrainian refugees in Ireland had enrolled in further education English language courses; with data indicating that English language proficiency was a barrier in accessing employment in Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2023a). Based on these findings, there is a clear need to provide language supports for this community.

Prior to the publication of this thesis, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in particular over the Gaza strip, had escalated in late 2023, leading to a surge in public outrage in Ireland over the conflict and resulting humanitarian crisis (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2024). The timing of submission for this thesis, and the unfolding situation in Gaza did not allow for detailed coverage of this specific issue, however it is noted that in the near future Ireland may well be receiving victims of this conflict as refugees. Considering this complex research context, I aimed to keep these issues as outlined above, central to the research process with the aim of contributing to knowledge of EAL, migrant and heritage language learners' experiences in Ireland during this period.

1.1.3   Linguistic Diversity in Ireland:

The unprecedented level of migration which has taken place in Ireland over the last three decades has resulted in Ireland becoming increasingly diverse in terms of ethnicity, nationality, religion, and language (Byrne, et al., 2010; McGinnity, et al., 2018). Historically, Latin, Old Norse, Norman French, English, Flemish and Welsh were all used in Ireland at different times (Ó hUiginn, 2008); consequently, recorded history indicates that Ireland has never been linguistically homogeneous (Whitaker, 2013). In addition to this, Travellers have been present in Ireland since the 12th Century, thus Traveller Cant has been present on the island of Ireland since this time (Devine, 2005; Whitaker, 2013). According to Huber (2012, p. 22), "The belief in homogenous societies is due to a failure to recognise existing diversity rather than a total absence of diversity". This appears to be the case in Ireland. Consequently, whilst Modern Ireland does have indigenous ethnic and linguistic minority groupings, including Travellers, on the whole the Irish population has traditionally been described as white and Roman Catholic, with English and Irish the primary languages of communication (Devine, 2005).

According to The Irish Constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, of 1937, Irish is the national and first official language and English is accepted as another official language (Ireland, 1945). Despite the position of Irish as the national language of the country, census data records in 2016 that only 39.8% of the population indicated that they are able to speak Irish (Central Statistics Office, 2017). Of these respondents, 23.8% indicated that they do not speak the language, and only 1.7% indicated that they speak the language on a daily basis (Central Statistics Office, 2017). In 2022, census data indicated that the number of residents who indicated that they could speak Irish had risen by 6%, to a total of 1,873,997 (Central Statistics Office, 2023d), of these individuals 33% indicated that they speak Irish within and outside of the education system; this is a decrease on the 36% evidenced in the 2016 results (Central Statistics Office, 2023d). Thus, despite the official position of Irish as the first language of Ireland, English is the dominant language governing everyday communication (Ó

Laoire, 2012). The Irish language does, however, hold strong ethno-cultural value to many in Ireland, representing a symbol of Irish identity (Ó Laoire, 2012).

In addition to Irish, Ireland is home to other minority languages which have not shared the same political support. This includes Irish Sign Language (ISL) and Irish Traveller Cant (Ó Laoire, 2012). Ultimately, whilst Ireland may appear largely linguistically homogenous, Ireland has an established history of linguistic diversity. Additionally, Ireland's accession into the European Union has also overtly promoted linguistic diversity and today, learners in Irish schools have the opportunity to learn English, Irish and modern foreign languages (Ó Laoire, 2012). This rapidly changing sociolinguistic landscape has, however, resulted in growing concern for minority languages, and the promotion of migrant languages in Ireland (Ó Laoire, 2012).

Little and Kirwan (2019) observe that the 2011 Census in Ireland was the first to include questions relating to linguistic repertoires other than Irish or English, asking participants about foreign languages spoken in the home and how well those with a foreign home language were able to speak English. By 2016, census data records that over 200 different nationalities were present in the State, over 183 languages were spoken in Ireland and 612,018 residents spoke a language other than Irish/English at home, increasing by 19.1% on the 2011 figures (Carthy, 2018; Central Statistics Office, 2016). Language statistics from the CSO, based on the 2022 Census, indicate that linguistic diversity continues to increase over time, with 751,507 residents speaking a language other than English or Irish in the home, an increase of 23% from 2016 (Central Statistics Office, 2023e). Polish featured as the most spoken heritage language, with the fastest growing heritage languages being Ukrainian, Hindi and Croatian. Additionally, in line with the growing number of Brazilians immigrating to Ireland, the number of people speaking Portuguese at home more than doubled since 2016. Considering these statistics, it is evident that ethnic and linguistic diversity are now a reality that present-day Ireland must face (Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Central Statistics Office, 2012, 2016, 2023e).

1.1.4 Changing Attitudes:

Ireland has arguably entered into a new phase in which traditional conceptualisations of Irishness are being challenged (Devine, 2005; Dundon et al., 2007; Parker-Jenkins & Masterson, 2013). In addition to raising debate on a changing sense of Irish national identity, this increase in diversity after an established history of emigration, raises questions about Irish attitudes towards increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity. Evidence indicates that increased inward migration may result in increased anxiety amongst the host society regarding the impact of migration in their country (McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). Thus, examining attitudes towards diversity and increased immigration are important for framing the integration climate and immigrants' sense of belonging in the Irish context (McGinnity & Kingston, 2017). Furthermore, Ireland's experience of swift economic upturn and increased immigration followed by deep economic recession provide a unique context in which to consider attitudes towards diversity and immigration (McGinnity & Kingston, 2017).

Historically, Irish society has taken an assimilationist stance towards migration and cultural diversity, with nationalist ideals ultimately quashing diversity in favour of a certain conceptualisation of Irishness as white, settled, Roman Catholic and Irish (Little & Kirwan, 2019; Nowlan, 2008). Despite official intercultural aims stated in policy documents, research in the Irish context demonstrates that a hegemonic nationalist culture pervades and ideologies relating to 'essentialist constructs of Irishness', persist in Irish society (Nowlan, 2008; O'Keefe & O'Connor, 2001; Waldron & Pike, 2006). Such an assimilationist stance towards diversity includes disguising multicultural tolerance with societal power relations, wherein policies and practices which are supposed to have anti-racist aims, can actually serve to reinforce inequality (Bryan, 2009, 2010, 2012). Consequently, whilst official policies featuring egalitarianism and interculturalism often provide a superficial impression that Irish institutions support the goal of a more inclusive Ireland, realistically such policies possess an underlying assimilationist stance which serves to reinforce inequalities through creating 'us' and 'them' social positionings between minorities and dominant cultural groups (Bryan,

2010). Little and Kirwan (2019) echo this sentiment by noting that many of Ireland's measures to promote linguistic integration are, realistically, assimilationist in nature.

Attitudes towards increased immigration and the changing demographics of Irish society have been mixed, with some research indicating that on the whole Ireland is welcoming of immigrants, and other studies indicating the prevalence of negative attitudes towards migrants and minority groupings (Devine, 2005; Government of Ireland, 2023; McGinnity & Kingston, 2017; Villar-Argaiz & King, 2016). Some studies suggest a negative correlation exists between the rate of immigration in Ireland (and the resultant change in the demographics of Irish society), and attitudes towards migrants and minority groupings (Devine, 2005; McGinnity & Kingston, 2017). Additionally, research indicates that during periods of higher unemployment, negative attitudes towards immigrants tends to increase, conversely, attitudes towards migration tend to improve over time when coinciding with economic improvements (McGinnity & Kingston, 2017; McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023).

Despite the prevalence of negative attitudes towards migrants in Ireland (Devine, 2005; Harmon, 2018; Little, 2010), the ESRI *Monitoring Report on Integration 2022*, highlights the positive contribution that migrants make to Irish society and emphasises the need for the effective integration of migrants (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). It is in this wider socio-political context in which the individuals, and family units, involved in this research were situated. Between 2019 and 2022, increased pressure on infrastructure such as housing, health and educational provision were showing signs of strain due to a host of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, BREXIT, the Russian-Ukrainian war and the cost-of-living crisis, which, alongside a sharp increase in both economic immigration and those seeking international protection in Ireland, have impacted Ireland's migration landscape (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). A report compiled by the expert advisory group on ending Direct Provision in Ireland noted with concern in late 2022 that whilst overall attitudes towards migrants and refugees in Ireland are positive and welcoming, there is potential for greater tension in attitudes towards such groups (particularly refugees and asylum seekers) should Ireland's economic circumstances worsen and the rate of unemployment rises (Day et al.,

2022). Such attitudes would be further impacted by a continuously worsening housing crisis, potentially leading to an increase in racist tensions and confrontations (Day et al., 2022).

Research demonstrates that the attitudes of the host country are an important marker in the context of social integration (McGinnity & Kingston, 2017; McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). In addition to affecting policy decisions, host attitudes also affect migrants' feelings of acceptance and daily life experiences within the host country (McGinnity & Kingston, 2017). Consequently, given the context of the current research, considering attitudes towards migrant communities in Ireland is necessary. In the next section, migrants' perceived sense of belonging within the context of changing attitudes is considered.

1.1.5   Importance of Belonging:

Whilst there are opportunities borne from increasing diversity, there are also challenges that must be overcome (McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). The concept of integration emphasizes adjustments, or mutual accommodations on behalf of the migrant and their new community, and is reflected in the new *EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027)* (European Commission, 2020). This policy recognizes integration as a right and a duty for all (European Commission, 2020). According to McGinnity, Sprong, et al. (2023, p. xiii), "Integration not only allows migrants to contribute to the economic, social, cultural and political life of their host country, but it is also important for social cohesion and inclusive growth". Approaches to integration often include structural aspects of incorporating migrants into society, or settlement services, particularly in the educational and economic spheres (Schneider & Crul, 2010). Integration policies may also aim to address known barriers to social inclusion including language acquisition, unemployment, adequate accommodation and reduced opportunities to interact with host communities (Government of Ireland, 2017). The emphasis on this dual effort on behalf of the migrant but also their new community is emphasised in Ireland's current migration strategy, which argues that communities play a fundamental part in making migrants feel at home (Government of Ireland, 2017).

Integration has important implications for the well-being of migrants and their children, and their ability to contribute positively to their host country (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). In Ireland, integration is defined as, "the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity"(Government of Ireland, 2017, p. 11). A key term featuring within the discourse on integration is that of 'belonging', particularly migrants' feelings regarding their sense of simultaneously belonging to heritage countries and cultures, and their sense of belonging in their country of residence (Klingenberg et al., 2021; Mahon, 2017; McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). Much of the research on belonging in this context draws on Social Identity Theory (McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023), which is discussed in Chapter 3.

Research indicates that young migrants, including those of the second generation, may struggle to fit in or feel a sense of belonging if they experience negative attitudes or discrimination in their country of residence (McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). Discrimination, including the withholding of support to those with limited social, economic and cultural capital, has also proved to be a significant influence on migrant learners' underachievement in schools (Heckmann, 2008). Research conducted by Government of Ireland (2023) indicated that whilst attitudes towards diversity and immigration were largely positive, particularly of immigrants from the Ukraine and outside of the EU, research conducted by Garrat and Mutwarasibo (2012) demonstrates that young migrants in the Irish context often face issues of exclusion, with their identification as 'Irish' contested and undermined by both adults and their peers in the Irish school system. This is supported by research completed by Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022) which indicated that second-generation Irish migrants are often made to feel that they do not belong and that they are not Irish; such instances represent pervasive experiences of 'identity denial' which are closely linked to the fixed notions of Irish identity.

In the case of migrant learners, data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2015, p. 6) indicates that,

> Beyond performance in school, an indication of how well immigrant students are integrating into their new community is whether, and to what extent, they feel they belong to their new surroundings – and, for 15-year-olds, one of the most important social environments is school.

These sentiments are supported throughout the literature on language education in contexts of migration (Darmody et al., 2022; Gilmartin & Dagg, 2022; Groarke et al., 2020; International Organisation for Migration, 2021; McGinnity et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). According to the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) (2022, p. 4),

> Access to home language instruction (including teaching materials), encouragement to speak existing languages on a day-to-day basis and the creation of a welcoming environment for children that values their languages, culture and home backgrounds is crucial. These elements foster children's sense of belonging and bonding, personal identity and bridge the gap between home and the school.

Linguistic proficiency in the language of one's host country impacts on one's sense of belonging and thus is intertwined with the concept of social inclusion (Johansson & Śliwa, 2016). Johansson and Śliwa (2016) reflect that for individuals language plays a mediating role, either facilitating or hindering access to key areas of social inclusion, such as healthcare, employment and education. Thus, examining both attitudes towards inclusion and migrants' sense of belonging in educational contexts is important. In the next section of this chapter the rationale for conducting this research is discussed. This includes explicating the complex relationship between language and identity development, considering the benefits of conducting intersectional research which examines both issues of multilingualism and identity development as intertwined. Existing disjunctures influencing Irish education are also highlighted.

1.2 Rationale for the Research:

As I outlined in the previous sections, increased migration has contributed significantly to changes in the cultural and linguistic composition of Ireland, with ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity reaching unprecedented levels (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023; Vertovec, 2007). This intensified migration challenges traditional conceptualisations of Irish identity, nationality and national policy (Verkuyten et al., 2019). Such increased diversity also raises questions regarding migrants' sense of belonging, their experiences and issues related to multilingualism, migrant integration and identity formation (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). This complex research context indicates a need for research which investigates issues of diversity and migration in Ireland, with a specific focus on how policies and practices informing schooling have adapted to cater for increasing numbers of diverse, multilingual learners. It also raises questions regarding how multilingual, migrant families adapt their language practices in such contexts.

The importance of language in identity formation cannot be under-estimated; it is the primary mechanism through which humans think, express their deepest feelings and helps them to identify with a certain linguistic or ethnic group, the primary means of interpersonal communication and a central organisational tool utilised by cultures and communities (Canagarajah, 2017; Hua, 2017; Little & Kirwan, 2019; Watson, 2007). For migrants families, language learning can be emancipatory; however, it may magnify difficult, and often painful, questions regarding identity, relationships, history, nationality and home (Mahon, 2017). Migrant families must continuously navigate linguistic issues, deciding which languages to use in which contexts, which languages to maintain and which languages to learn. Oftentimes migrant families, particularly caregivers, are faced with a linguistic reality in which minority or heritage languages are spoken in the home and dominant, majority languages are spoken in the wider community (Schwartz, 2010).

Thus, while the emphasis of research within the context of globalisation and increased transnational mobility has often been on acquiring English within new communities, one of the consequences of doing so is the loss of other named languages, and loss of identification

with cultural and linguistic heritage (Hewings, 2012). Consequently, the process of migration often results in the movement of languages and changing linguistic profiles, which can result in fragmented identities, multilingual dynamic identities and new formations of identity emerging (Canagarajah, 2017; Hewings, 2012; Hua, 2017; Rassool, 2012).

The continuously increasing linguistic diversity of school populations is among one of the greatest challenges facing schools today; in line with this, how best to support multilingual learners at school has been a central concern for policymakers and educational researchers alike (Little & Kirwan, 2019). As I detail throughout this thesis, the Irish context presents a unique case in which issues of migration, diversity and integration have come to the fore relatively swiftly; and in many cases language and education policy development has been reactive rather than proactive (Maldini & Takahashi, 2017). A lack of adequate supports for linguistic minorities in Irish schools was evidenced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war (International Organisation for Migration, 2021; Irish National Teachers' Organisation, 2022; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Whittaker, 2019), and as demonstrated in the previous section, are likely to have continued since 2019. Such learners may experience difficulties succeeding academically without support, due to their limited proficiency of the language through which the curriculum is delivered (Nowlan, 2008).

The Council of Europe adopts a human rights perspective regarding linguistic diversity, and consequently, declares that all children in Ireland have the right to an education and the right to use their first language freely (Little & Kirwan, 2019). As a result, this declaration places a responsibility on government, policy makers and school stakeholders to ensure that minority languages are included in educational processes (Little & Kirwan, 2019). Based on the 2016 Census results, Little and Kirwan (2019) determined that approximately 30% of children who speak a foreign language at home would have their first English immersion experience upon entering primary school in Ireland. Comparatively, these learners are expected to use the same textbooks and school resources as their English/Irish speaking peers, who have approximately 4-5 years of full English/Irish immersion experience. Recognizing that schools should be institutions which strive to create an environment where

all learners feel valued and supported, educators in Ireland are faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of these minority learners, often with limited resources (Faas, et al., 2018).

Fostering the development of linguistic diversity and promoting inclusion through educational systems is but one of the ways that integration policies may encourage the integration of migrant populations into their new communities. Ireland does not, however, have a history of comprehensive language-in-education policy which encompasses the learning of English, Irish, and other languages in Ireland, and addressing issues of linguistic diversity in the context of increased migration (Bruen, 2013, 2021; Little & Kirwan, 2019; Ó Laoire, 2005, 2012). As early as 1999, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) acknowledged the inadequacy of the Primary School Curriculum of 1999 in addressing the linguistic needs of migrant learners, suggesting such learners would require specialised provisions to support their language development (Coady & Ó Laoire, 2002). Furthermore, despite evidence suggesting that whilst official policy recognises multilingualism as fundamentally good, in reality school conditions aren't likely to facilitate its cultivation among students (Bruen, 2021; Harmon, 2018; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). Thus, further investigation is needed into how Irish schools interpret official policies, how de facto policies develop at a local level and how these diverge from official policy (O'Connor et al., 2017). Whilst new language strategies such as Languages Connect (Department of Education and Skills, 2017) and a new primary school languages curriculum, the Primary Language Curriculum 2019 (NCCA, 2019) have recently been implemented, there is limited data on the efficacy of such strategies and curriculums, especially in light of the COVID-19 disruptions since early 2020 and the increase of Ukrainian learners since early 2022.

It is acknowledged in research that education acts as a key facilitator in the integration process; playing a vital role in improving both social and economic outcomes (McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). This is supported by the OECD (2015), which argues that an indicator of migrant integration is the level of education of the children of migrants. Kennedy and Smith (2019) observe that formal education may be considered the primary mechanism through which social inclusion, mobility and intergenerational disadvantage may be combatted; however, despite the access to opportunities that formal education may offer, a wide body of

research which has investigated the educational outcomes of migrant learners uncovers educational disadvantage compared to their native peers (Heath et al., 2008; Volante et al., 2018). In support of this argument, Kennedy and Smith (2019) reflect that the promise of equal educational opportunities may overshadow the deep inequalities that exist between social groups, with children from lower socio-economic backgrounds (including migrant and linguistic minorities) exhibiting higher rates of educational disadvantage, including less frequent school attendance and higher early-dropout rates than their native peers. Supporting this evidence, Heckmann (2008, p. 2) states, "Migrant students (or synonymously students or pupils/children of migration background or minority students) are disadvantaged in terms of enrolment in type of school, duration of attending school, indicators of achievement, drop-out rates and types of school diploma reached". Whilst educational settings may provide access to opportunities, they may also act as tools of assimilation, and becoming sites where the reproduction of unequal social relations may be perpetuated (Kennedy & Smith, 2019).

Considering the importance of successful identify formation for young people and their overall sense of belonging and wellbeing, I aimed to investigate issues of integration, multilingualism, language education and identity development in migrant learners attending Irish primary schools, examining how their experiences in the home and at school may impact on their linguistic identity development. Recognising that both schools and the family are important sites for language socialisation (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Schwartz, 2010; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021), I focused on the interactions of language-in-education policies and Family Language Policy (FLP), and considered the implications of this for the development of dynamic multilingual identities. According to Cantone and Wolf-Farré (2022, p. 187), "Heritage language studies have increasingly been focused on either FLP or the role of educational institutions, but rarely combined both perspectives. This leaves out other elements, such as language ideology, which can be decisive in the maintenance or loss of languages". Thus, in this research I recognise this dearth and addresses both language-in-education policy and FLP.

This thesis makes a unique contribution to knowledge in this field. In Ireland, a complex language ideological structure exists – English as dominant language, with Irish as a minority but national and first official language, and Irish Sign Language (ISL) only recently officially recognised. This thesis contributes to language policy and practice, and multilingualism research, by explicating the situation in this context. This provides new insights on how language policy can develop in such a scenario. Furthermore, whilst there has been an increased focus on migration and the importance of successful integration within research, particularly examining the social and academic challenges of migrant learners, there has been relatively little research on the factors influencing migrant leaners' cognitive and socio-emotional development in Ireland (Darmody et al., 2022). Therefore, I provide a sociolinguistic perspective on how migrant learners' identities are developing in 21st century Ireland, and insights into pedagogical policies and practices and how they are facilitating or hindering the development of linguistic multicompetence.

1.3 Research Aims and Questions:

In this thesis I employed linguistic ethnography to investigate linguistic identity development amongst multilingual migrant learners living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools. I explored the language policy and practice (LPP) of these learners and their caregivers in the home, and the LPP informing learners' language experiences in their school environments, focusing on how learners' linguistic identities are supported or otherwise. Considering the complex research context informing this research, a central aim was to investigate how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. Finally, in this thesis I aimed to explore the routine of homework as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with family language policy through space and time in complex ways which may influence learners' dynamic multilingual language development.

Based on these aims, the following questions were developed to guide the ethnographic explorations of this research:

1) How do school and national LPP and FLP interact to support or otherwise, the development of dynamic, multilingual identities amongst migrant learners at primary level?

2) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts?

3) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers navigate homework as a transitional space in which school and national LPP, and family language policy, interact?

Whilst it is recognised that traditional ethnographies are not typically guided by predetermined research questions, the nature of linguistic ethnography adopts a more focused approach to ethnographic research. Considering this, the three guiding questions above were used to focus the research enquiry (Shaw et al., 2016).

1.4 Organisation of the Thesis:

In this chapter I have outlined the aims of this linguistic ethnography. I introduced the broader research context, and the research aims and questions informing the thesis. The remaining chapters are organised as follows:

In Chapters Two through Four I discuss the theoretical concepts and relevant literature informing this research. In Chapter Two I provide an overview of key theory regarding multilingual language development in diverse settings. I continue by examining the existing research on language policy in education and in the home. This discussion continues by examining the field of FLP, which is a central theoretical element of this thesis.

In Chapter Three I focus on relevant research regarding migration, integration and their impact on identity development. I begin by considering identity research, primarily key concepts and theory before highlighting certain models of identity development. I continue by examining the relationship between language and identity development and theoretical developments in this field.

This is followed in Chapter Four by an examination of language education in a diverse Ireland. I provide an examination of both the history and structure of language education in Irish schools, with a particular focus on how multilingualism has been supported or otherwise. I continue by addressing some of the challenges facing migrant learnings in Irish schools before concluding with a discussion of homework as a pedagogical practice.

In Chapter Five I consider the research design informing this thesis. I outline the nature of linguistic ethnography, and the structure of the research is provided. This includes information on participant recruitment, a description of the families involved in the research, the process of the data generation and details regarding the forms of data analysis employed in the research. I also reflect upon ethical considerations impacting the research,

In Chapters Six and Seven, I present the data generated from engagement with the families involved in the research, organised according to emerging themes. These themes include, 1) *Language Policy Disjunctures*, 2*) Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities* and 3) *Homework as a Transitional Space*.

In Chapter Eight, I relate the data and generated themes to the literature, the broader context of language-in-education policy in Ireland and the wider socio-political context. I begin by exploring the linguistic ideologies, practices and language management informing language policy in schools, and the FLP in the homes of each participating family. I continue by considering how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. I conclude by conceptualising homework as a unique transitional space between school and the home, examining how multilingual learners must expertly navigate this routine drawing on a wide range of resources.

Finally, in Chapter Nine, the thesis ends with concluding remarks. This includes a thesis summary, an overview of the key findings, a reflection on the limitations and strengths of the research and recommendations and suggestions for further research.

2   Multilingual Language Development and Globalisation

In Chapter One, I introduced the context and rationale informing this thesis, outlining issues of migration and integration in the EU and Irish contexts. In upcoming Chapters Two through Four, I discuss the relevant theory and concepts regarding issues of multilingualism, language and education policy, migration and identity development. I conclude the literature review in Chapter Four with a detailed overview of the structure of language education in Irish primary schools, with a particular focus on increasing migration and linguistic diversity in the Irish context before outlining some specific challenges faces by migrant and EAL learners in Irish schools, this includes examining the pedagogical practice of homework in multilingual contexts.

I begin this chapter by considering existing theory and research regarding language development in multilingual contexts within a global framework. I discuss the challenge of defining terms such as bilingualism and multilingualism before providing a brief overview of theory regarding the nature of multilingualism and language learning. I then discuss linguistic ideologies and the development of both monoglossic and heteroglossic approaches to language education over time. I continue the chapter by examining dynamic approaches to language education, with a specific focus on the concept of translanguaging. Following this, I shift towards the field of language policy and planning, outlining the history of this field and important issues regarding language-in-education policy. The relationship between language policies governing schools, and the way this interacts with family language policy is of central focus in this thesis. Considering this, I conclude the chapter by providing an overview of FLP as a field and some relevant models of FLP, before examining the role of learner agency in FLP.

2.1   Multilingualism in Global Contexts:

In his foundational text entitled, 'The Sociolinguistics of Globalisation', Blommaert (2010) argues that interconnectedness in the context of globalisation needs to be examined

and understood, with particular focus on how phenomena such as language interact across the different dimensions of the local and global:

> The world has not become a village, but rather a tremendously complex web of villages, towns, neighbourhoods, settlements connected by material and symbolic ties in often unpredictable ways (Blommaert, 2010, p. 1).

This idea is supported by a number of theorists within applied linguistics (Canagarajah, 2017; Carthy, 2018; García, 2009b; Hua, 2017; Marotta, 2011; Tovares & Kamwangamalu, 2017; Zajda & Majhanovich, 2021). The dissolution of spatial barriers and the increased centrality of information and knowledge increases the mobility of peoples across the world and ultimately leads to heightened cultural and linguistic contact (Bielsa, 2005). Consequently, within relevant academic fields attention has been paid to how the phenomenon of globalisation has impacted on language and literacy development across the world. According to Lin and Martin (2005), the start of the 21st century saw a growing awareness amongst language researchers and educators of the serious need to develop new, critical analytical approaches to both LPP and language-in-education issues in increasingly diverse contexts.

A significant concern which has generated much research during this period focuses on the global spread and dominance of English as a *lingua franca* (Canagarajah, 2005; Carthy, 2018). Intertwined with globalisation phenomena, the perception of English as a vital resource, especially in postcolonial settings, is still prevalent (Lin & Martin, 2005). From this perspective, the commodification of English as a resource of value has increased with the development of the global economy under the conditions of capitalism and globalisation (Canagarajah, 2017; Heller, 2010). The motivation to ensure English language proficiency is infused with the belief that achieving proficiency may ultimately assist with economic development, modernisation and successful participation in the new, globalised world (Sung-Yul Park, 2017). Seargeant (2012) reflects that in many contexts, economic development and the overall impact of globalization has resulted in English being associated with success and opportunity; a means to improve socioeconomic prospects. This echoes Bourdieu (1991)

who conceptualised language as a form of social capital which may be utilised as a resource in navigating social mobility. Even in contexts where multilingualism may be prevalent, and where there have been increases in ethnic and cultural diversity (such as in Europe), Carthy (2018) observes that there is a growing trend for most intercultural transactions to be conducted through the medium of English.

In light of this worldwide hegemony of English, or linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2018), countries which had previously busied themselves with the project of decolonisation have now been presented with a new, contradictory project: Globalisation (Canagarajah, 2005; Lin & Martin, 2005). Whilst the project of decolonisation involves the resistance of English and the revival of national/ previously marginalized languages, globalisation entails the erosion of national borders and the promotion of English over local languages (Canagarajah, 2005). It is within this context that Carthy (2018) reflects that second language acquisition of a language besides English has become more challenging. Additionally, the promotion of English as a *lingua franca* may perpetuate socioeconomic inequality. Lin and Martin (2005) argue that monolingual individuals unable to capitalize on the development of new skills and languages become more economically and geographically limited, whereas the socioeconomically advantaged may have more access to language education and technology, thus opening up more economic and migratory opportunities.

An additional challenge which emerges due to increased transnational mobility is what Pérez-Milans (2015b) refers to as a 'destabilisation' of traditional conception of language and culture, ultimately leading to new notions of standard languages, identities and cultures. This is echoed by Bielsa (2005), who argues that globalisation has resulted in increased cultural contact between communities which had previously been limited. Thus, any discussion of globalisation requires an analysis of how such processes impact on increased cultural diversity, identity, and language choices. Consequently, researchers have focused on investigating concepts such as 'fragmented repertoires' or 'hybrid identities' in contexts where language is evolving in dynamic ways (Canagarajah, 2017; Pérez-Milans, 2015b).

McKee and McKee (2020) observe that,

> A sociolinguistics of mobility deconstructs the notion of bounded languages and assumes that in 'super diverse' societies, speakers will utilise a repertoire of "linguistic features" which are in turn associated with 'languages'. Speakers are languagers and what they do is 'languaging'".

This sentiment is reinforced by Blommaert (2010) who argues that we cannot view globalisation as simply another context in which languages are practiced, but rather, should consider that the process of globalisation actually affects traditional conceptions of 'language'. Considering this, a paradigmatic shift towards a sociolinguistics of mobility, which advocates for a focus on language-in-motion and an emphasis on linguistic resources used in context, is needed (Blommaert, 2010; Canagarajah, 2017).

2.2 Theoretical Underpinnings of Multilingualism:

People have spoken multiple languages since ancient times; thus, bi/multilingualism are not new phenomena (Cenoz, 2013). Evidence suggests that the majority of the world's population are, in fact, bi/multilingual, consequently it is argued that multilingualism should be considered the norm rather than the exception (Ortega, 2009; Rassool, 2012; Wei, 2000). In the next sections the theoretical underpinnings of multilingualism theory in diverse contexts is considered.

2.2.1 Defining Bilingualism and Multilingualism:

Due to a lack of consensus amongst academics within the social sciences regarding definitions for the terms bilingualism and multilingualism, numerous descriptions and interpretations of both terms are in use (Landsberry, 2019). Consensus regarding these terms has presented a challenge for researchers due to multiple linguistic dimensions that require consideration (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998; Grosjean, 2015; Wright & Baker, 2017). Such dimensions include aspects such as ability and use (Grosjean, 2015; Wright & Baker, 2017), receptive and

productive skills (Cenoz, 2013), and degree, function, alternation and interference (Mackey, 1962). Furthermore, research suggests that a number of factors, such as age of acquisition, may influence the development of a comprehensive definition (Landsberry, 2019; Wei, 2000). Due to these challenges, Cenoz (2013) reflects that researchers tend to develop their own definitions of bi/multilingualism based on their discipline, research objectives and the nature of their research subjects/participants. Due to such variation, Wright and Baker (2017) reflect that deciding who is or is not bi/multilingual, is an impossible, and inherently ideological, task.

Definitions of bilingualism range from more conservative, maximalist definitions emphasising, "native control over two languages" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 59), to more liberal, minimalist definitions which argue that even individuals who know just a few phrases in an additional language, or who only possess just basic knowledge of this language, are also bilingual (Landsberry, 2019). Whilst some theorists have emphasized that being bilingual means using more than one language in everyday life (Grosjean, 2015), others have argued it means having the ability to use two languages (Wright & Baker, 2017). Offering a flexible definition involving both ability and usage, Wei (2008, p. 4) defines bilingualism as, "anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)". Grosjean (2015) argues that defining bilinguals purely based on their level of language fluency is problematic and that any definition should include a language use dimension. For the purpose of this research, a definition considering both language ability and language use was preferred. Consequently, the following definition of bilingualism, offered by Grosjean (2015, p. 573) was adopted for the purpose of this research:

> Bilinguals are those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives. This view encompasses people who live with two or more languages, ranging from the migrant worker who speaks the host country's language, and who may not read and write it, all the way to the professional interpreter who is totally fluent in two languages.

Bilingualism research has developed over three broad, overlapping periods, which have been informed by contrasting ideologies of language development and bi/multilingualism (Baker, 1988; Baker & Wright, 2017; Wei, 2017; Wright & Baker, 2017). Spanning from the early 19th Century to the 1960s, research investigating bilingualism was dominated by studies investigating the relationship between bilingualism and intelligence (Baker, 1988; Wei, 2017). Such research posited that, based on IQ scores from intelligence testing, monolinguals were intellectually superior to bi/multilinguals (Baker, 1988; Wei, 2017). An example of such research was Saer's (1923) influential investigation of 1,400 Welsh-English bilingual children, which concluded that bilingual children were mentally confused and at a disadvantage in thinking. Such studies were reinforced through the research of psychologists and sociologists, who concluded that language minority students' school failure was due to cognitive deficits, particularly in language ability (Ricento 2017). May (2011) argues that Chomsky's theory of Universal Grammar (which argues for the presence of innate language structures in the human brain), and the idealisation of native speakers, resulted in the linguistic repertoires of bi/multilingual students being either largely ignored or seen in overtly deficit terms. An additional conclusion drawn from research during this period was that bilinguals were considered to be divided between their respective cultural and linguistic groups; not belonging fully to either group (Lambert, 1981). Research from this period was founded on monoglossic, deficit linguistic ideologies which reinforced monolingualism as the norm and emphasised the negative effects of bilingualism. Such studies have since been criticised for numerous methodological flaws, including an insensitivity to the qualitative aspects of language use and attempts to compare emergent bilingual children to idealised adults (May, 2011; Wei, 2017). Despite these critiques, evidence suggests that such deficit ideologies have had great impact on bilingual education programmes, with monoglossic ideologies continuing to inform policy and teaching strategies (De Korne, 2012; McKinney et al., 2015; Wright & Baker, 2017).

A shift in bilingualism research trends towards a more neutral linguistic ideology was fairly short-lived and did not produce numerous studies, however, the importance of this research lies in its critique of previous studies (Baker, 1988). In the late 1970s onwards,

deficit ideologies were challenged significantly due to new findings, particularly within the behavioural sciences (Lambert, 1981). There was a shift in thinking towards emphasising the positive effects of bilingualism, as researchers began challenging some of the wide-spread beliefs at the time (Cummins, 1979). The research of this period was more methodologically advanced, featuring better statistical analysis. It also laid the foundation for further research investigating the positive effects and consequences of bilingualism (Baker, 1988; Lambert, 1981).

Whilst there is ongoing debate regarding definitions of bilingualism, it has become clear that bilinguals seem to use their two languages in different contexts, with different people and for different purposes (Grosjean, 2015; May, 2011; Wright & Baker, 2017). This argument can be extended to the concept of multilingualism. Evidence suggests that multilingual individuals also use their different languages in different contexts and for different purposes (Wei, 2000). In the context of this research, the ways in which multilingual heritage language speakers leverage different aspects of their linguistic repertoires in different contexts, such as in the home and at school, was of central focus. Furthermore, examining how this dynamic nature of their multilingualism influences their identity development was also of importance.

In parts of Asia and Africa, multilingualism is an inherent fact of life; in many communities several languages may co-exists and thus it is considered commonplace for an individual to speak three or more languages (Wei, 2000). Furthermore, in families where caregivers may speak different languages, children may develop multilingual repertoires which include their caregivers' languages and the language/s of their place of residence (Wei, 2000). In this research, focus was places on the interaction between the languages of the school environment, namely English and Irish, and the languages of the home, namely heritage languages.

In a similar vein to definitions of bilingualism, research investigating multilingualism uncovers a multitude of definitions for the concept. On the whole, researchers investigating multilingualism are interested in people and communities which use a number of languages (Kemp, 2009). Whilst in its broadest sense bilingualism may refer to users of two languages,

multilingualism refers to users of three or more languages (Cenoz, 2013; Kemp, 2009). Multilingualism has been defined by the European Commission (2007, p. 6) as "the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives". Providing a more detailed description, McArthur (1992, p. 673) defines multilingualism as, " the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing. Different languages are used for different purposes, competence in each varying according to such factors as register occupation and education". A dynamic view of multilingualism, which embraces learners' full linguistic repertoires, is offered by Schissel et al. (2019) who state that multilingualism, "refers to instances of language knowledge and use that draw on speakers' whole language repertoire; however, it is constituted" (p. 374). This dynamic view of multilingualism, which embraces learners' full linguistic repertoires was adopted for the purpose of this thesis.

2.2.2 *Monoglossic Approaches to Multilingual Education:*

In addition to a wide variety of conceptualisations of what the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism mean and how these concepts should be defined, contrasting ideologies regarding bi/multilingualism have emerged over time (Grosjean, 1985; Wright & Baker, 2017). Two approaches informing conceptualisations of language are monoglossic and heteroglossic ideologies of language.

Monoglossic ideologies informing views on language tend to accept monolingualism as the norm and consider languages as discrete entities that are rule governed (Cummins, 2017b; De Korne, 2012; Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Essentially, a monoglossic ideology evaluates the bilingual as two monolinguals in one person (Makoe & McKinney, 2014; McKinney et al., 2015). From this perspective, it is argued that bilingual education programmes should separate languages throughout the teaching and learning process (Creese & Blackledge, 2011). By accepting monolingualism as the norm, bi/multilinguals are measured against monolingual norms in a manner which positions them as deficient (García, 2009b). Such deficit views are present in society as a whole but also in schools, and among

some linguists, where there is an insistence to learn separate language systems and in so doing, denying the complex multilingual repertoires of learners and indeed, the majority of people around the world (García, 2009b). Flores and Schissel (2014) observe that viewing monolingualism as the norm has resulted in two approaches to bi/multilingual education, namely subtractive and additive bilingualism.

Subtractive bilingualism is defined by Cummins (2017b, p. 406) as, "A situation in which a second language is learnt at the expense of the first language, and gradually replaces the first language". Subtractive approaches support monolingualism by replacing home languages with dominant languages, such as English (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & Schissel, 2014). Assimilation often occurs where subtractive approaches are present, as ethnolinguistic minorities are pressured to embrace the languages and social practices of the dominant culture (Lambert, 1981). By doing so, the implication is that learners are effectively required by schools and official/tacit language policies, to lose their heritage/home language/cultural practices to gain said language proficiency. This negatively affects language diversity through the replication of educational inequalities (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In addition to assimilation and the possibility of language loss, subtractive approaches have been found to contribute to linguistic and cultural identity insecurities, academic failure and struggles with metalinguistic awareness (García & Lin, 2017a; Lambert, 1981; May, 2017).

In contrast, additive bilingualism aims to maintain the home language whilst simultaneously providing for the learning of additional languages (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Put simply, an additional language is separately learnt, or added, to a first (García & Lin, 2017a). In the second half of the 20th Century, additive, bilingual education became a tool with which to address societal inequalities through developing the languages of marginalized and minority groupings (García & Lin, 2017a). Thus, additive approaches have developed as a set of educational practices which aim to challenge power structures and linguistic hierarchies (Cummins, 2017). May (2017) observes that over the last four decades, research demonstrates that additive approaches have been the most successful in achieving both bilingualism and biliteracy in learners. As early as the 1980s, it has been acknowledged that monolingual learners benefit the most from additive approaches through additions to their

linguistic repertoires whilst also increasing appreciation for minority groups and languages (Lambert, 1981).

The literature, however, makes it clear that particularly in postcolonial settings, the struggles surrounding language choices and use in educational settings is complex (Hewings, 2012; Makoe & McKinney, 2014). Hewings (2012) demonstrates how the perception and desire for English language education can conflict with indigenous language practices. This is supported by Plüddemann (1997), whose critique of the confusion of the additive and subtractive terms provides unique insight into how these models and underlying theory can play out in practice. The post-Apartheid educational context in South Africa provides an example of how policy aims may not always be reached in practice; whilst official policy may advocate for additive bilingualism, where learners' home languages are supported in the classroom, in reality what has occurred is a subtractive, 'straight for English' scenario (Cummins, 2017b; Plüddemann, 2015). Plüddemann (1997) cautions against the use of models/theoretical frameworks to inform learning outcomes without acknowledging the context in which these outcomes are implemented.

Whilst subtractive approaches have been well critiqued for limiting linguistic diversity and reproducing educational inequalities, in recent years the underlying assumptions informing additive approaches have also drawn criticism (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Cummins (2017a) observes that there has been growing polarity between existing additional language teaching practices and research regarding the best methods of language instruction. It is argued that whilst additive approaches aim to acknowledge and accommodate minority/heritage/L1 languages, they continue to assume a monoglossic ideology (Flores & Schissel, 2014). Thus, additive strategies are built on a theoretical framework that views languages as separate, isolated systems rather than as an integrated linguistic whole (Flores & Rosa, 2015; García, 2009a). Both subtractive and additive approaches are based on the assumption that languages are discreet units, with speakers of more than one language 'switching codes' between their separate language systems (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). Flores and Rosa (2015, p. 167) state, "Additive approaches to language education inadvertently legitimate and strengthen, rather than challenge, the marginalization of language-

minoritized students". Whilst additive approaches remain useful for highlighting the positive outcomes of bilingualism and bilingual education, it is acknowledged that a dynamic approach to bilingualism is more appropriate for encapsulating the everyday, fluid complexities of bi/multilingualism (May, 2017).

2.2.3   *Heteroglossic Approaches to Multilingual Education:*

Whilst not uncontroversial, a growing body of research indicates that languages are interconnected in the minds of bi/multilingual learners (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). Some theorists have challenged the concept of separate languages and instead argue for an approach that views language as an integrated, dynamic system (Cummins, 2017b; Wei & García, 2017). Thus, in contrast to monoglossic ideologies, a holistic approach towards bilingualism is based on a heteroglossic framing of language which contends that bilinguals are not the sum of two complete/incomplete monolinguals; rather they are integrated wholes with a unique linguistic profile (Grosjean, 1985; Wright & Baker, 2017).

Heteroglossic ideologies position multilingualism as the norm and thus languages are viewed as interacting in complex ways in the social and linguistic practices of bi/multilinguals (Cummins, 2017b; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; McKinney et al., 2015). From this perspective, the language practices of bi/multilinguals are interdependent; thus developing learners' home languages will ultimately result in increased achievement in the new language (García & Lin, 2017a). Researchers such as Flores and Schissel (2014) have argued for the design of programs formulated on heteroglossic language ideologies that, rather than emphasising a form of parallel monolingualism, embrace the dynamic nature of emergent bilinguals. Flores and Bale (2017, p. 27) suggest that, "This conceptualization functions to situate bilingualism socially and focuses on the fluidity of language use across time and space as opposed to the idealized language practices of colonial language ideologies". From this perspective, monolingualism does not exist because people draw on multiple communicative repertoires as they navigate their everyday lives. Heteroglossic language ideologies place importance on students' existing language competencies; thus positioning learners as active, co-

constructors of knowledge (De Korne, 2012). This perspective, which considers language as a socio-political construct, allows for language hierarchies to be directly challenged (De Korne, 2012). Furthermore, a dynamic approach to bi/multilingual education enables teachers and learners to generate power and linguistic capital through instruction which recognises individuals' linguistic repertoires; from this perspective, learners' bi/multilingualism are viewed as resources rather than deficits which require intervention (Cummins, 2019).

2.2.4 Translanguaging: Original Conceptualisations

A translanguaging approach to multilingualism embraces a heteroglossic ideology (Poza, 2017; Wei & Garcia, 2017). Translanguaging rejects monolingualism as the norm and views multilingualism as a dynamic, integrated system (Cummins, 2017b). Translanguaging research has emerged as a reaction to increased globalisation, technological changes and questions regarding the validity of monolingual assumptions in language education (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Wei & García, 2017). It seeks to describe the diversity of multilingual language practices whist also providing a new approach to language teaching that views learners' linguistic repertoires as integrated wholes (Wei & García, 2017). Essentially, translanguaging describes the complex linguistic practices utilized daily by bilinguals to communicate with others and make sense of their bilingual world (May, 2017).

In 1994, Cen Williams first outlined the Welsh concept of trawsieithu to refer to the practices of bilingual learners in English/Welsh classrooms (Williams, 1994). These learners were required to alternate between English and Welsh for the purposes of productive versus receptive use (García & Lin, 2017b; Williams, 1994). According to Williams (2002), translanguaging is a natural skill of bilinguals which involves utilising one language to reinforce another; doing so increases the learner's understanding and ability in both languages. This work was later translated into English by Colin Baker.

According to Williams (2002, p. 40), the process of translanguaging involves the learner:

    1) Internalising the words they hear,

    2) designating their own labels to the message/idea,

    3) converting the message/idea to the other language and

    4) changing the message/idea and supplementing it.

The concept of translanguaging was further developed by Baker (2001) and García (2009a). According to Baker (2011, p. 288), translanguaging is, "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages". Baker (2001) outlined four potential advantages of translanguaging:

    1) The promotion of a more complex and complete understanding of the subject,

    2) Assisting in the development of the weaker language,

    3) Facilitating links and overall cooperation between the home and school,

    4) Assisting the integration of fluent speakers with early learners.

Translanguaging research builds on two important theoretical contributions; Jim Cummins' Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis and a Dynamic Systems view of bi/multilingualism (Cummins, 2017a). The Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis argues in favour of a common underlying linguistic proficiency that enables cross-linguistic transfer (Cummins, 2017a; Lewis et al., 2012). This conceptualisation of translanguaging has been referred to as 'weak translanguaging', where the central premise is that language instruction in one language impacts on the development of other languages (García & Lin, 2017b). A challenge within translanguaging research revolves around different theoretical positions regarding strong and weak forms of translanguaging (García & Lin, 2017b; Lewis et al., 2012).

Similarly, a Dynamic Systems view of bi/multilingualism acknowledges the presence of linguistic multicompetence, which was first formulated by Vivian Cook in the late 1980s as an alternative bilingual theoretical position to that of the deficit, monoglossic ideologies

dominating at the time (Cook, 2016; Cummins, 2017a). First introduced by Grosjean (1989), the Dynamic Systems theory argues that bilinguals possess different mental structures to monolinguals, and as Cummins (2017a, p. 108) observes, "the presence of one or more language systems influences the development not only of the second language but also the development of the overall multilingual system, including the first language". Thus, whilst translanguaging has only emerged as a concept in recent decades, it is based on a strong theoretical foundation.

From a pedagogical perspective, translanguaging can be viewed as a language strategy that encourages varied language and literacy development (Cummins, 2017b; García, 2009a; Hornberger & Link, 2012). Translanguaging was further extended by García (2009a), who argues that translanguaging is more than a pedagogical concept, but rather a strategy employed by bilinguals to create meaning, shape their experiences, gain knowledge and understanding, and make sense of the world around them. García (2009a) views translanguaging as embracing the natural communicative practices of such leaners, which enables the development of their cognitive, language and literacy abilities. Hornberger and Link (2012) have also contributed to the literature on translanguaging by proposing a framework in which the concept is both conceptualised and contextualised whilst simultaneously recognising its importance in education. Similarly, Creese and Blackledge (2010) approach translanguaging from an ethnographic perspective and in so doing, examine how translanguaging may be utilised as a flexible pedagogy in the bilingual classroom which allows learners to make connections between their social, cultural and linguistic domains.

A potential problem with implementing translanguaging approaches in education lies in the resistance of stakeholders in accepting more than nationally determined 'standard language' in the classroom (Wei & García, 2017). Such resistance reinforces language hierarchies and a deficit ideology towards multilingualism as the message communicated to minority learners is that their own language practices are inferior in the school context (Wei & García, 2017). Research demonstrates that monoglossic ideologies still heavily dominate and restrict the development of multilingualism, despite increasing linguistic diversity in classrooms (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Hornberger & Link, 2012). Another challenge lies in the

perception that translanguaging approaches will lead to a weakening of the non-dominant language (Wei & García, 2017). Translanguaging research, whilst growing in popularity, is still emergent; there are areas that future research may address, including a need to determine different teaching strategies and assessments that are appropriate in different contexts (Wei & García, 2017).

Poza (2017) warns that we should not categorise translanguaging as another form of code-switching, but as an empowering paradigm shift that places agency in the minds and mouths of bilinguals and in so doing, rooting out racist, colonial and classist language ideologies. Furthermore, it aims to develop the metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness of multilingual students, so they are empowered to use different features of their linguistic repertoires in different contexts (Wei & García, 2017). To do so, translanguaging requires bilingual education programs to leverage learners' full linguistic repertoires, not just utilising aspects of language that are viewed as legitimate within communities (García & Lin, 2017a). Thus, a challenge for schools is to develop dynamic, flexible language programs where learners' full linguistic repertoires are used as tools to scaffold language learning in the new language (García & Lin, 2017a). Ultimately what has emerged in the 21st Century is a growing consensus of the dynamic nature of language and the need to embrace heteroglossic ideologies, such as translanguaging, that celebrate individuals' linguistic repertoires, whilst simultaneously empowering multilinguals through a changing agency that directly challenges language hierarchies within education and broader society (Flores & Schissel, 2014).

2.3 Language Policy in Education:

Thus far in this thesis I have outlined the impact of globalisation and increased migration to Ireland, and I have highlighted the resultant impact on Irish schools. Within this context, it has been recognised that policy and related practice have failed to keep up with the drastic population changes seen in Ireland over the last thirty years. As Hornberger (2002, p. 6) reflects, in such increasingly diverse contexts there is a need to develop language policies

which, "recognize ethnic and linguistic pluralism as resources" and which centre diversity, multilingualism and the empowerment of minorities and heritage language speakers in the formal curriculum but also in daily classroom practice. This is particularly relevant in the Irish case.

Interest in LPP as a field increased in the late 1990s, due largely to increased migration, the global spread of English and the linked endangerment and loss of minority and indigenous languages (Hornberger, 2006a). Consequently, in an increasingly globalised world, multilingual language policies which recognise pluralism, and language revitalisation initiatives, are becoming more popular and more necessary (Hornberger, 2006a). In this section, a brief overview of language policy research, particularly regarding linguistic ideologies and multilingual education, is presented.

2.3.1   History of Language Policy and Planning Research:

There is a long history of conscious efforts to influence language (Nekvapil, 2011). The acronym 'LPP' is often used in reference to the body of research dedicated to the research of two related concepts, *language policy* and *language planning* (Johnson, 2013; Ricento 2009). Early LPP sociolinguists applied their skills for language planning in newly established countries, with the aim of solving language 'problems' (Ricento 2013). Underlying this approach was a belief in the need for a common, standardised national language (Ricento 2013). While the scope of this thesis does not allow for a full review of language planning research, Johnson and Ricento (2013) and Nekvapil (2011) provide detailed reviews of the history of this field.

A central theoretical focus of this research is that of language policy, specifically that of language-in-education policy and FLP. According to Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), language policy is a component of language planning; the act of language planning either results in, or is the result of, a language policy. Johnson (2013) reflects that language planning and language policy are related but distinct concepts, however the term LPP may be used to refer to the body of research which deals with these two related concepts as a whole.

Historically, the term 'language policy' has been linked to efforts to shape and control linguistic environments, most often for political purposes (Bruen, 2013). As stated by Lo Bianco (2010, p. 37), "While human intervention to direct and influence the form and use of language is probably as old as language itself, conscious and planned policy-making, or deliberate language planning, is much more recent". Research investigating language-in-education policy is often guided by one of three questions, namely, investigating the nature of the language policy governing a particular group, investigating the effect of such language education policies and thirdly, investigating the most appropriate language policy for a certain group (Spolsky, 2017).

Researchers investigating language policy and planning issues have drawn on a diverse range of theories and methods, with roots in disciplines such as linguistics, law, anthropology, sociology, psychology and education (Hult & Johnson, 2015). Language policy research gained impetus in the 1950s/60s, stemming from concern for language planning problems, and changing attitudes towards multilingualism and the effectiveness of education programs in promoting language maintenance in minority groupings (Flores & Chaparro, 2018; Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Ricento 2000). Foundational theorists during this early period included Haugen (1966), who developed the theory of language planning significantly, primarily through the development of a language planning model which included four basic stages: 1) selection, 2) codification, 3) implementation and 4) elaboration, and Kloss (1966, 1968) who developed typologies of multilingualism and distinctions between the areas of status and corpus planning-both concepts which are still employed by language policy and planning researchers today (Nekvapil, 2011). The work of Fishman (1968) was also highly influential during this early period, particularly for highlighting the importance of investigating connections between language and society. Research from this early period was viewed as a largely non-political, technical and problem-solving oriented approach to language policy and planning issues (Ricento 2000).

A second phase of LPP research emerged in the early 1970s/80s which developed earlier research in light of changing socioeconomic and sociopolitical structures around the world- issues such as language hierarchies and the stratification of populations were central

themes during this period of research (Ricento 2000). Notable researchers during this period included R. L. Cooper (1989) and Cobarrubias (1983), who emphasised that language policy and planning efforts were not ideologically neutral endeavours. Other notable contributions during this period included that of Hymes (1972, 1974, 1980) on issues such as language acquisition and linguistic competence.

A third shift in LPP research developed in the late 1980s and arguably continues into current research. Influenced by changing global conditions, such as the influence of globalisation and the development of capitalism, LPP research shifted to consider these trends and the implications of such conditions on language statuses, language shift and language loss (Johnson & Ricento 2013; Ricento 2000) Emphasising that language policy is a social construct, Schiffman (1996) argues that language policy may move beyond explicit texts to include cultural elements such as beliefs and prejudices regarding language. Thus, there has been a change in focus within research towards an understanding of how people engage with language policy issues (Bruen, 2013). During this period Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p. xi) defined language policy as, "a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language in the societies, group or system". Similarly, Seargeant (2012, p. 8) argued that language policy refers to,

> the way a state or an organisation determines how language is to be used in society –
> is often concerned with the way that language relates to other political issues,
> especially those to do with cultural identity, equality, and the ability of citizens to
> communicate both within their own community and with people from other
> communities.

Echoing Schiffman's and Seargeant's notions of official policy and linguistic culture, Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 352) argues, "A language policy is a political decision and a deliberate attempt to change/influence/affect the various aspects of language practices and the status of one or more languages in a given society". Following this, Spolsky (2017) argues that language policy involves three major components, including 1) the linguistic practices of the community, 2) their language ideologies, 3) any attempt to influence the language practices of the community through management or intervention. Spolsky (2004, 2017, 2018,

2019) uses this model as a framework to explicate that the central aim of language policy studies is to account for individuals' linguistic choices and to comprehend how these choices relate to institutional policymaking. In a similar attempt aimed at providing a comprehensive definition for the concept which encompasses the various dimensions detailed in this section, Johnson (2013) argues that language policy is a mechanism through which the structure, function, use and/or the acquisition of languages are decided. Additionally, language policy includes, 1) official guidelines/ recommendations, 2) unofficial language mechanisms/ practices, 3) processes which include policy creation, interpretation, appropriation, and instantiation and 4) policy texts and discourses which span multiple layers of policy activity and multiple contexts.

For researchers such as Spolksy, Seargeant and Johnson, language policy is a sociocultural construct. This position is supported by McCarty (2011), who argues that language policy is a complex sociocultural process including human interaction, negotiation and production. Considering this sociocultural nature of language policy, it is necessary to examine how global trends and national, institutional, community and personal beliefs may impact on language policy development in multilingual contexts (Oakes & Peled, 2018). It is this sociocultural conceptualisation of language policy which was considered central to this research. In line with this position, the comprehensive definition offered by Johnson (2013), and the model developed by Spolsky (2004, 2017, 2018, 2019) were adopted for the purpose of this thesis.

2.3.2   Language Ideology and Policy:

The concept of ideology has a long history within the political sciences, and in its broadest sense can be defined as collectively shared systems of thought by members of a community, which establish the founding values, beliefs and principles by which that community operates (Mannheim, 1936; Seargeant, 2012). According to Seargeant (2012, p. 14) ideologies refer to, "systems of entrenched beliefs that people have about aspects of social life". In the late 20th century, a growing body of research investigating language ideologies

came to the fore, particularly within the field of linguistic anthropology (Spotti & Kroon, 2016; Woolard, 1992). During this period, researchers focused on the sociocultural aspects of language, as consensus grew that, "linguistic variability is socially patterned and related to the distribution of power and resources at both interpersonal and institutional scales" (Woolard, 2020, p. 1).

In the field of linguistics, the terms *language ideologies*, *linguistic ideologies* and *ideologies of language* may be used to refer to thoughts and beliefs, or cultural conceptions, of what constitutes language and its role in social life (Seargeant, 2012). Silverstein (1979, p. 193) defines language ideology as, "any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use", whereas Woolard (2020, p. 1) defines language ideologies as, "morally and politically loaded representations of the nature, structure, and use of languages in a social world". Similarly, Irvine and Gal (2000, p. 35) describe language ideologies as, " the ideas with which participants and observers frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them".

These fluid belief patterns act as a foundation from which we deduce the purpose of language and its value in our communities (Silverstein, 1979). Consequently, Spotti and Kroon (2016) argue that language ideologies represent metapragmatic choices regarding why we use language, how we use it and for which purposes. These ideologies are not exclusively about language, but rather, about connections that communities make between specific language uses and numerous social and moral issues (Tagg, 2012). According to McCarty (2014), language ideologies are not neutral and neither are they exclusively about language; rather, they represent our beliefs regarding power, our identities and our cultural affiliations. This argument is supported by Ricento (2017), who suggests that languages are complex systems which perform a variety of social functions, one of which is signalling to other who we are. Consequently, language ideologies represent both personal and group identities, moralities and epistemologies (Ricento 2017).

McCarty (2014, p. 10) observes that, "Ideologies about language are largely tacit, taken-for-granted assumptions about language statuses, forms, users, and uses that, by virtue

of their 'common sense' naturalisation, contribute to linguistic and social inequality". Similarly, Blommaert (2006, p. 511) argues that, "language embodies and articulates the experience of social struggle, transition, and contest, and consequently the linguistic sign is seen as deeply ideological". Therefore, examining linguistic ideologies, alongside language practices and both official and tacit policies, allows us to analyse culture (Blommaert, 2006). This argument is supported by Seargeant (2012) who suggests that language policies represent beliefs and opinions regarding language use; consequently, examining policy allows us to understand the structures which inform language politics.

Ricento (2009) reflects that language ideologies have a significant impact on LPP by delimiting what and what is not possible in terms of policy and practice. In the context of this thesis, schools are sites where the language ideologies of the broader community, staff, learners, and other stakeholders may present through language policies and practice. In schools, learners may come into contact with others who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and consequently, may develop an understanding of the relevant language identities and hierarchies at play within their community (Ricento 2017; Tagg, 2012). Henderson (2017, p. 21) reflects that to understand the impact of linguistic ideologies on language policy in education, one is required to acknowledge that often multiple and even contradictory linguistic ideologies may be present in educational contexts. Such ideologies represent connections that communities make between specific language uses and several social and moral issues (Tagg, 2012). In such a scenario, Ricento (2017, p. 69) argues that,

> The assumption that the "standard" variety of the dominant (often national or regional) language is "better" than, more "logical" than, and "purer" than the "nonstandard" variety is an example of one of the most ubiquitous and powerful language ideologies around the world.

As outlined above, language policies are multi-layered and act as mechanisms of power, establishing language hierarchies and governing when, how and by whom languages may be used (McCarty, 2011). Furthermore, Alexander (2012) reflects that LPP usually consists of specific strategies designed by governing powers to support the interests of particular social groups and classes within society. This is reinforced by Byrnes (2007) who highlights that

language policies are influenced by sociocultural trends in society and thus represent the complex, and shifting, politics of those in power.

Lo Bianco (2010) observes that whilst the field of linguistics theoretically considers all languages to be equal in their capacity to convey the intentions and needs of their users, it is the influence of socio-political, technological, and economic affairs that results in inequality between languages. Devine (2005, p.51) argues, "Power is exercised through discourses in the capacity to define what is 'normal' and in the subordinate status typically accorded to those who are outside the 'norm'". According to Bourdieu (1991), language practices are considered forms of symbolic power; thus, the language preferences of the dominant social group/s may be considered to hold more symbolic capital than those of minority groupings. Bourdieu (1991) recognised that educational institutions are crucial sites where linguistic hierarchies may be perpetuated and/or challenged. Consequently, the linguistic practices within an institution represent the power relations and linguistic ideologies of that institution (Cenoz, 2013).

It is argued that the global spread of English has primarily been pursued by Western powers as a means of furthering their economic and political interests (Lo Bianco, 2010; Seargeant, 2012). Such linguistic imperialism often results in the establishment of inequalities between English and indigenous languages (Flores & Chaparro, 2018). Inequalities due to the hegemony of English are present in the manner that institutions, such as schools, teach or promote the language (Seargeant, 2012). This is achieved through favouritism in policy and curriculum documents, and through the re/production of linguistic ideologies which support the social and economic advantages of English (Seargeant, 2012). As O'Connor et al. (2017, p. 29) reflect, "The pervasiveness of English as a global language of instruction is rarely cast into doubt". Power dynamics are a central aspect of policy development and it is imperative to acknowledge, "the role of schools in structuring linguistic and educational inequalities" (McCarty, 2014, p. 5). The hegemonic practices of those in power are entrenched further when the readers of such texts acknowledge the meanings enclosed, as this leads to acceptance of these meanings (Dixon & Peake, 2008).

2.3.3   A Disjuncture Between Policy Intentions and Practice:

According to Spolsky (2004), the easiest language policies to identify are those which exist as official documents, such as in a national constitution or administrative regulation. The definition of language policy provided by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) in the preceding section describes official language policy well, however it fails to acknowledge that language policy may develop in other, more organic ways. According to Ricento (2009), language policies may be overtly created, however they may also be tacitly acknowledged and practiced. Thus, linguistic ideologies and the language policies which they inform may be either explicit or implicit, or even a combination of both (Seargeant, 2012).

O'Riordan (2017) reflects that within educational institutions, the culture of the school community permeates every aspect of school life. Consequently, school culture influences both policy and practice. Thus, despite official policies and accompanying legislation, there can be a disconnection between policy and classroom practice. Dillon (2016) observes that whilst policies may exist in official capacities, the recommendations may or may not be implemented at grassroots level. Additionally, it is argued that poor implementation, planning and delivery can counteract the intentions of policy and may result in a gap between theory and practice, ultimately leading to what Alexander (2012, p. 2) refers to as, "mere lip service". Considering the potential for such a gap between theory and practice to occur, Dillon (2016) suggests that it is essential for researchers to consider both official and unofficial language policies at school level, as linguistic social control occurs through both policy and practice, dictating the way language is to be used.

The way in which languages are constructed and implemented in school settings may have a significant impact of the quality of education that some learners may receive (Dixon & Peake, 2008). One such framework which examines ideological orientations towards language policy was developed by Ruíz (1984), who observes three orientations to language planning: 1) language-as-problem, 2) language-as-right, and 3) language-as-resource. A language-as-problem orientation essentially views bilingualism as a challenge which must be overcome; a language-as-right orientation challenges that the right to speak the language of

one's ethnic group is a fundamental right, whereas a language-as-resource orientation views bilingualism as a resource in an increasingly globalised world (Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Ruíz, 1984). Gorter and Cenoz (2017) observe that often, policies imply a 'language-as-problem' orientation, where linguistic diversity and minority languages are viewed as social problems, which may be 'fixed' through policy (Gorter & Cenoz, 2017). Wiley and García (2016) reflect that considering linguistic diversity negatively, rather than as a normal aspect of humanity, has often been a central part of language policy and planning. Whereas right and resource approaches are likely to lead to developmental bilingual programs, a language-as-problem ideology underlying bilingual education is likely to lead to transitional programs supporting a monoglossic ideology and thus favouring a subtractive approach to bilingualism (García & Lin, 2017a).

In Ireland, evidence demonstrates that a gap between theory and practice exists regarding learners who fall outside of the purview of the dominant culture (Ó Loinsigh, 2001; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Devine (2005, p. 49) states,

> State policies, it is argued, are underpinned by a particular conceptualisation of Irish and national identity which positions minority ethnic groups as 'other', with direct implications for both teacher perception and practice with immigrant students in schools.

This is supported by Nowlan (2008) and Whittaker (2019), who evidenced a clear disjuncture between Irish national policy and practice in the education of bilingual students in Irish schools. Due to the absence of a comprehensive policy to deal with migration and language education issues in Ireland, Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2006) observe that the academic and linguistic development of EAL learners in Ireland depends too heavily on school specific factors such as space allocation, teacher interest and commitment, resources and teacher education. Furthermore, Ireland does not have a single, overarching language policy to address language education in Irish educational institutions.

As argued by O'Connor et al. (2017, p. 20),

> Ireland does not currently have a national plan for languages to give coherence and direction to actions to promote multilingualism… there is no overarching strategy for languages in Ireland and no group which monitors the implementation of language policies.

Considering this, Devine (2005) argues that the current position of minimalist intervention in Ireland has resulted in uncertainty and in reality, a monoglossic assimilationist attitude towards bi/multilingual education in Irish schools pervades. Thus, whilst current research advocates for the implementation of policy informed by heteroglossic language ideologies and dynamic approaches to bi/multilingual education, Irish policy appears to have been primarily developed in isolation from this expertise (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006).

It is argued that in Ireland, there is a need for monoglossic ideologies and the 'language-as-problem' orientation to be replaced by a heteroglossic/ plurilingual pedagogy which respects all the languages spoken within school communities (Mahon, 2017). The Council of Europe (2008) acknowledges that language learning in schools must acknowledge children's' home languages whilst simultaneously valuing the language learning that takes place both inside and outside of the classroom. Doing so allows for a language-as-resource orientation towards language teaching that embraces and celebrates the full linguistic repertoires of learners and minimises the potential for linguistic neo-colonialism (Dillon, 2016; Gorter & Cenoz, 2017).

2.4 Family Language Policies

The family unit is a central influence in children's' language socialisation processes, including both the dominant and minority languages the child is exposed to (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Schwartz, 2010; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). It is widely acknowledged that families play a central role in minority or heritage language maintenance (Fishman, 1991; Hollebeke et al., 2022).

When two people who speak different languages choose to grow their family, questions arise regarding language in the home, particularly regarding which language/s this new family will use (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013). A key area of language policy theory which has developed in this area is that of FLP (Spolsky, 2012). Whilst the field of LPP has traditionally focused on public domains such as the nation state, in education and in the workplace, little attention has been paid to the private domain of the home, which is gaining increased recognition as a crucial domain for language development (Bose et al., 2023; Spolsky, 2004). In this section, a brief history of FLP as a field is considered before some key models of FLP are discussed regarding the context of the current research. Finally, the section considers the concept of agency regarding FLP, particularly regarding the agency that children within family units may hold in influencing the FLP of the family unit.

2.4.1   History of FLP Research:

Whilst FLP research has existed for decades, it was a key paper by King et al. (2008), which clearly delineated the concept in a manner not previously done, which resulted in the formation of FLP as a recognised field of research and the rapid increase of research investigating FLP. According to King et al. (2008), the field of family language policy brings together the areas of language policy and child language acquisition. Within the last two decades, this area of language research has continued to gain traction within psycho- and sociolinguistics (Gomes, 2019; Hollebeke et al., 2022; Smith-Christmas, 2016; Wilson, 2020). As a field, FLP, "provides an integrated overview of research on how languages are managed, learned and negotiated within families" (King et al., 2008, p. 907). Furthermore, FLP provides a framework from which one can research familial interactions, language ideologies within the family unit and language development in children (King & Fogle, 2017). FLP is defined by Curdt-Christiansen (2018, p. 420) as, "explicit and overt and implicit and covert language planning by family members regarding language choice and literary practices within home domains and among family members". In the case of explicit FLP, Lan Curdt-Christiansen's (2018, p. 420) definition refers to observable, intentional efforts made by adults within a

family structure, including conscious investment and/or involvement in providing linguistic conditions and context for language and literacy development. In contrast, implicit FLP refers to the 'default' linguistic policies, informed by ideological beliefs, which exist and influence language within the family structure (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). In the context of migration, FLP can be defined as, "a process in which individual family members, especially parents, try to regulate the use of specific language(s) that may help or hinder the maintenance of their cultural ties or cultural heritage" (Bose et al., 2023, p. 344).

According to Gomes (2019), the field has developed in a cohesive manner during this time, with some key trends emerging. These trends include the centrality of Spolsky (2004)'s language policy framework in defining approaches to FLP, a renewed recognition of ethnography as a research method and the growing trends of globalisation, diversity and migration leading to new, dynamic and multilingual family configurations. In reviewing FLP research, Schwartz (2010) identifies six areas which are generating interest within the field, including 1) the role of the family in heritage/minority language maintenance, 2) intra-family factors, 3) family ideologies and language practices, 4) language practices and management, 5) challenges in FLP, and 6) research methodologies within FLP research.

Family language ideologies and planning are complex and dynamic. Within this field of research, many studies have focused on describing the FLP of a given family unit; however Palviainen (2020) argues that there is a need to move away from research that makes 'snapshot' descriptions of family units but rather views such units as fluid and dynamic; comprising of a complex amalgamation of individual beliefs and policies. This is supported by Ballweg (2022) pg. 252 who defines FLP as, " a constantly evolving, contradictory, flexible combination of overt and covert activities, planned and spontaneous, conscious and unconscious, which take place in interdependence of other domains and with society in general".

In researching the dynamic linguistic practices of multilingual families, Smith-Christmas (2016) highlights three typical situations which have dominated approaches to the research of FLP in multilingual contexts. These are 1) OPOL (one person, one language), 2) FLP in immigrant communities and 3) autochthonous communities. Certainly, as will be discussed

further along in this chapter, Smith-Christmas (2016, 2020a, 2021b) has made significant contributions to the field in recent years, particularly regarding better understanding the language practices of multilingual families in different contexts (such as social class or in contexts of migration) (Gomes, 2019). Particularly regarding multilingual families, interest has focused on how multilingual children may develop competence in their respective languages despite differences between their FLP and their wider sociolinguistic context (Smith-Christmas, 2016). According to Smith-Christmas (2016), several factors may influence a child's ability to gain fairly equal fluency in heritage and dominant languages. Such factors include the overall amount of the child's exposure to the minority language, with children who receive greater exposure tending to possess greater productive fluency than those with limited exposure (Smith-Christmas, 2016). This level of exposure is influenced by a number of factors, such as the amount of time the child may spend with the minority speaker. Likewise, evidence demonstrates that if the primary caregiver is the minority language speaker, then there is greater opportunity of minority language maintenance (Smith-Christmas, 2016). The influence of extended family members and child minders may also influence exposure to the minority language. Sibling input has also been shown to influence minority language fluency in younger siblings, highlighting the complex and dynamic nature of FLP (Smith-Christmas, 2016). In contexts of migration and integration, migrant parents/partners within a family unit who share a common L1 and cultural background are already tasked with managing their own fluency in their minority or heritage languages, whilst also faced with the additional challenge of raising children within this context and attempting to develop or maintain their children's fluency in their heritage language (Wilson, 2020). In interlingual families where parents/partners may have differing L1's or cultural backgrounds, family language planning becomes much more complex (Wilson, 2020). Consensus over the approach of a FLP may be easier for linguistically endogamous couples, whereas for interlingual partnerships where languages may compete in the home sphere, decisions regarding FLP may be more intricate (Wilson, 2020).

In this research areas of interest included the ways that caregivers cultivated and managed their children's' multilingual development, including family language ideologies, and explicit

and implicit language policy, whilst simultaneously investigating the children's perspectives regarding language learning and their multilingual development. Furthermore, in line with more recent research in the FLP field, the research aimed to examine the agency of the learners themselves regarding their language learning and identity development.

Within Ireland, research on FLP is an emerging area of scholarship. Ó hIfearnáin (2013) investigated the complex and sometimes ambiguous attitudes of Gaeltacht Irish speakers towards the intergenerational transmission of Irish, whilst Smith-Christmas (2021a) has also conducted research in the Irish context, examining issues of agency and the polysemy of a third language in maintaining the power/solidarity equilibrium in family interactions. Thus, this research also makes a unique contribution to this emerging field in the Irish context.

2.4.2   *Family Language Policy Models:*

Within the field of language policy and planning, Spolsky's tripartite model of language policy is considered highly influential. This model describes language policy as a complex construct encompassing three independent but nevertheless interrelated components (Hollebeke et al., 2022), which includes 1) the linguistic practices of the community, 2) their language ideologies, 3) any attempt to influence the language practices of the community through management or intervention (Spolsky, 2004, 2017, 2019). This framework can be applied to the field of FLP too, and Spolsky (2012) argues that FLP is a critical domain which requires attention within the broader field of language policy studies. From an FLP perspective, language beliefs comprise the attitudes and beliefs that family members hold towards language, multilingualism and language usage (Hollebeke et al., 2022). Language practices refer to the family unit's linguistic behaviour on a daily basis, and language management refers to any efforts to shape the family's language use or language learning outcomes (Hollebeke et al., 2022). A significant number of studies generated since 2008 within the field of FLP draw on Spolsky's seminal texts and theory regarding wider language policy and FLP. This includes Oriyama (2016), Schwartz (2010), Kang (2015) and Curdt-Christiansen (2013). There has been some criticism of Spolsky's model for being

insufficient in addressing some of the key issues emerging in FLP research, particularly regarding migration and transnational families (Gomes, 2019). According to Gomes (2019), the centrality of Spolsky's model in the field is problematic as many studies within FLP research continue to employ the model without engaging critically, sufficiently enough, with the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the model itself, although Spolsky (2019) himself has suggested some extensions and/or changes to his original model. Some studies have attempted to address some limitations of Spolsky's framework, such as Fogle (2013) who argued for the expansion of the ideological aspect of the framework to include parental beliefs regarding caregiving and the nature of childhood. Others, such as Smith-Christmas (2016), have attempted to reconceptualise FLP from new perspectives. Her model is discussed in the next section.

For Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018), language policies are explicitly made, and often implicitly practiced in all domains of society, including within the family. From her perspective, FLP's tend to be grounded in a family's perception of social structures and social changes; ultimately the FLP is influenced by what the family believes will strengthen their social standing within their community and what would best support family members' life goals (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Furthermore, FLP draws on a number of interrelated aspects of *linguistic culture*, which Schiffman (1996, p. 112) defined as, "the sum total of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, myths, religious strictures, and all the other cultural "baggage" that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their culture". Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018) developed a model of FLP which builds on Spolsky's tripartite language policy framework and includes the three interrelated components of language ideology, language practices and language management, which form the inner core of the model (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). From her perspective, language ideologies encompasses what families believe about language, language practices represent what people do with language and language management concerns the efforts people make to manage or maintain language (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Gomes, 2019). These three interrelated concepts are viewed within the broader context of additional influencing factors at both micro and macro levels. Internal factors comprise the language related variables which can serve to maintain

or damage close family bonds and the relationships between members of a family, such factors include emotional factors, issues of identity, cultural factors, parental impact beliefs and child agency (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). The outer sections of the model represent external, macro level factors influencing language socialisation and includes sociocultural, socio-political, socioeconomic and sociolinguistic influences. A figure depicting Curdt-Christiansen's model can be seen in Figure 1. From this perspective, the family is not viewed in isolation but rather, is considered within the context of various social, economic and institutional pressures (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).
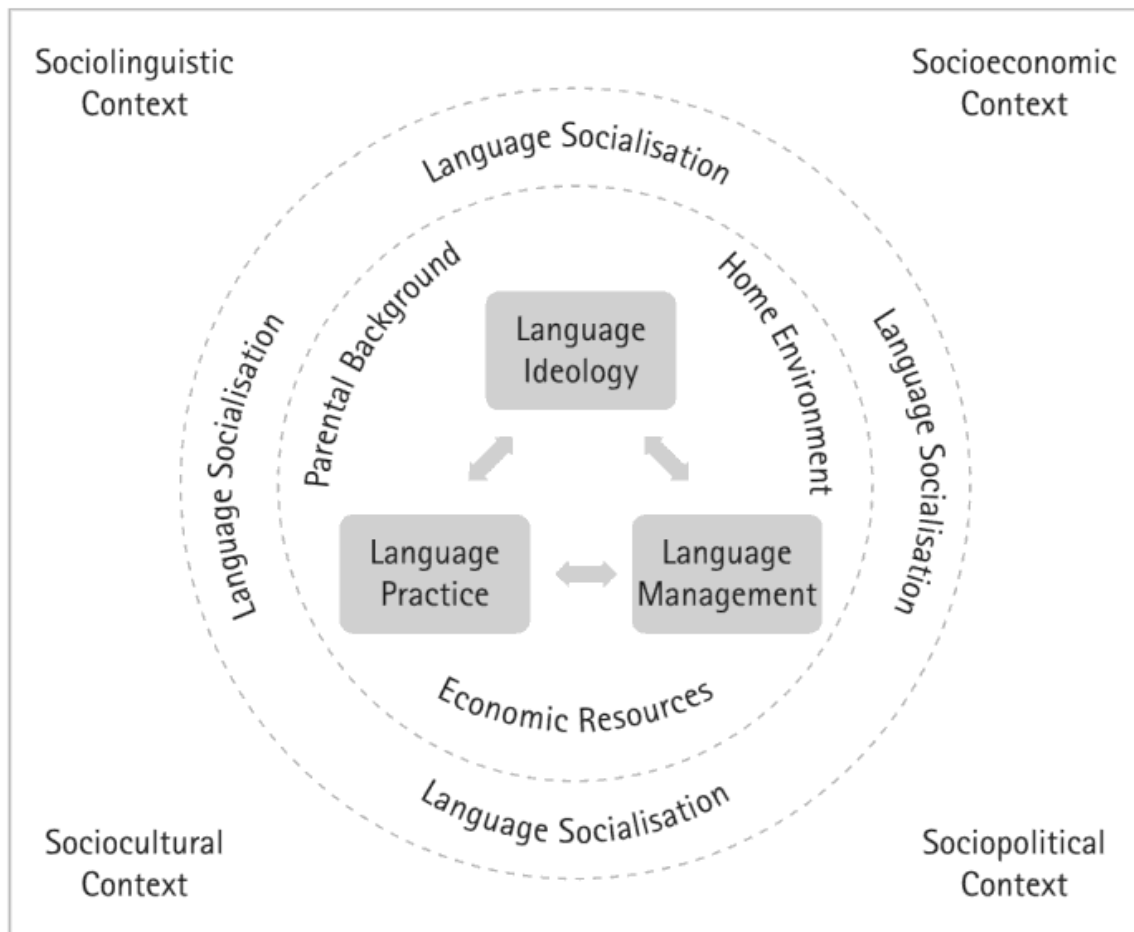
Figure 1: Family Language Policy as conceptualised by Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2018)

According to Curdt-Christiansen (2009), in the context of immigration, the field of FLP aims to address issues of language shift and language loss; and questions why some migrants maintain strong connections with heritage languages and others do not. Why do some children become bilingual, and others do not? How do institutional and governmental level policies either promote or hinder FLP? Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 354) argues, "contextualized, socio-cultural research into how immigrant families construct their FLP is scant. There is a lack of attention on the multiple forces and conditions that shape the formation of FLP." Considering this, this research contributes to research on FLP in the Irish context, particularly regarding migrant families speaking heritage languages in the home. In this research each participating family's language policy is identified and critiqued using Curdt-Christiansen (2009)'s model.

2.4.3 Agency in Family Language Policy

Child agency is recognised as an internal factor within the inner circle of Curdt-Christiansen's (2009) model of FLP. In recent years, researchers have argued for a dynamic approach which recognises FLP as a fluid, co-constructed, multi-actor phenomenon (Palviainen, 2020; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013; Wilson, 2020). Within this context, attention has been paid to the role of children in FLP, particularly under the term 'child agency' (Fogle & King, 2013).

The concept of 'agency' has been well researched in the social sciences (see Bourdieu (1977), Giddens (1979)). Kuczynski (2002, p. 9) defines agency as, "'individuals as actors with the ability to make sense of the environment, initiate change and make choices". More recently, research has focused on the agency of children in different settings and contexts. It is now widely accepted within the social sciences that, "children are actors and agents who contribute positively to family and other social processes" (Sorbring & Kuczynski, 2018, p. 1). Acknowledging that children have the capacity to effect change for their own benefit, and the benefit of others, in a broad range of settings (Sorbring & Kuczynski, 2018, p. 1), it is important to examine this agency within the context of FLP.

Cassie Smith-Christmas has made substantial contributions to research in this area. She defines child-agency in the context of FLP as, "children's active role in making decisions about patterns of family language use" (Smith-Christmas, 2020a, p. 178). From this perspective, children are 'agents' and not merely 'objects' within FLP, *participating* in language education efforts rather than *passively receiving* input from their caregivers (Smith-Christmas, 2020a, 2021b). For instance, evidence demonstrates that in some minority language maintenance settings, children may employ their own agency to resist the FLP through a preference for the majority language or disrupting the power dynamics of the family system by having greater proficiency in majority languages than their caregivers (Smith-Christmas, 2021b). They are also able to employ their own agency in skilfully and creatively using their diverse linguistic repertoires, drawing on their heritage languages and mainstream language knowledge, to their own advantage (Smith-Christmas, 2020a).

As I discussed in the previous section 2.3.3, in language policy contexts there may be a disjuncture between officially stated policy and what actually occurs in practice, with declared FLP not fully aligned with the conscious or unconscious language practices involved in raising children (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013). Considering this, there is a need for research which moves away from simple descriptions of official policy to research which considers the fluid and dynamic nature of FLP, and the agency of all the actors within the family unit and their individual beliefs and policies (Palviainen, 2020).

When considering children's agency regarding FLP, Smith-Christmas (2020a, 2021b) developed an intersectional, multidimensional, and multi-layered model of child agency in FLP, which considers the interaction between the family within the broader context of the sociocultural, political and linguistic environment around them. The model includes four intersecting dimensions, namely compliance regimes, linguistic norms, linguistic competence and generational positioning. These four components interact with each other and ultimately converge in the centre as 'Child Agency'. This model is represented in Figure 2.

As Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 221) argues,

> …these diverse acts of agency in turn are both the product of negotiation within the family and also contribute to the process of change within the family (the inner layer); similarly, interactions within the family are also circumscribed by, and also play a role in shaping, the existent structures (e.g. linguistic and cultural norms; institutions such as schools and government bodies) that constitute the fabric of the family's wider social milieu (the outer layer).

From this perspective the family is viewed as a reflection of the wider sociocultural context in which they are positioned (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). When examining the data generated in this thesis, this model was utilised as a framework from which to consider the agency of child participants in their family units, and how this has impacted on their identities.

In addition to examining child agency in the context of FLP, another central component of FLP is that of the underlying linguistic ideologies informing policy. In the context of this research, examining the linguistic ideologies of the family, the school and those informing national and EU policy is an essential component. As discussed in section 2.3.2, linguistic ideologies are dynamic belief patterns from which we deduce the purpose of language and its value in our communities (Silverstein, 1979). Furthermore, such ideologies represent connections that communities make between specific language uses and numerous social and moral issues (Tagg, 2012). Within societies, and indeed within families, there can be multiple ideologies which may align or be in conflict with one another, ultimately leading to consensus or disagreeing views regarding language (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; King et al., 2008; Spolsky, 2004). As Hirsch and Lee (2018, p. 2) observe, "Through language, relationships are built, upheld or lost; likewise, within families languages are learned, retained, or forgotten". According to Curdt-Christiansen (2016), ideological conflicts within the family domain may include conflicting ideologies, contradictions between ideologies and practice, and contradictions between practices and expectations. Considering this, the field of FLP has aimed to understand the dynamic linguistic decision-making processes which occur within the family unit. In this research I aimed to take this examination a step further by not only considering participating families' policies in the context of the broader policy environment, but also to examine how such linguistic choices may impact on learners' educational

experiences and overall linguistic identity. Furthermore, as I will outline in the next chapter, language ideologies and language practices are fundamental components of social identity construction (Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). As demonstrated in this thesis, where ideological differences occurred within family units, young family members employed their own unique agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies, and in doing so establish unique aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities within the context of their migration and integration in Ireland.
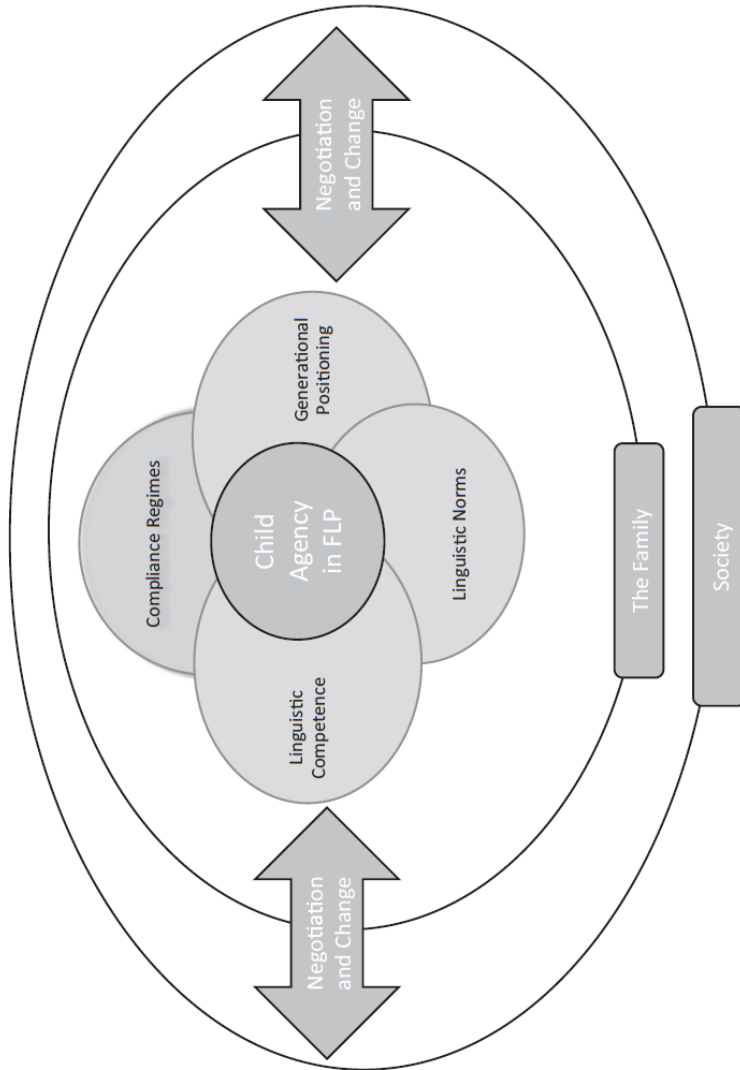
Figure 2: Smith-Christmas' 'Child Agency in FLP' Model(Smith-Christmas, 2021b)

2.5 Conclusion:

In this chapter I have discussed language policy research as it relates to linguistic ideologies and bilingual education in formal educational settings and in the home. This included an examination of multilingualism in global contexts and a consideration of different theoretical approaches to the study of multilingualism. I continued the chapter by discussing the development of language policy research as it relates to education before considering developments in the field of FLP, particularly that of child agency. In the next chapter, the identity development of migrant families is examined within the context of migration and multilingualism.

3   Identity Development in Global Contexts :

Thus far in this thesis, I have thoroughly outlined the impact that globalisation processes have had on migratory flows and diversity; such intensified levels of migration have contributed significantly to changes in the cultural and linguistic composition of many countries within the EU, with ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity reaching unprecedented levels in some parts (Verkuyten et al., 2019; Vertovec, 2007). This raises questions regarding changing conceptualisations of Irish identity, migrants' sense of belonging and their experiences in their new countries, and issues related to migrant integration and identity formation (Verkuyten et al., 2019).

In this research I aimed to explore the migratory experiences of multilingual migrant learners, and their families in Ireland and how their experiences of language in the Irish context may influence their identity development. In this chapter I examine the nature of identity as a construct, and the relationship between language and identity formation in diverse contexts. I begin by outlining research on identity within the social sciences, and within psychology and sociolinguistics in particular, before examining existing research on identity in diverse contexts. I continue by examining the relationship between language and identity and how this relates to the experiences of minority learners at school level. Finally, I close the chapter by considering how issues of migration, language and identity converge through the concept of dynamic multilingual identities.

3.1   Identity Research: Key Concepts and Theory

The concept of identity has been explored across a variety of fields within the social sciences, particularly in psychology, anthropology, sociology, education and politics (Rezaei, 2017). What is clear from the literature is that identity is a complex and problematic concept to define (Omoniyi & White, 2006). The etymology of identity refers to sameness (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008), however this in itself may imply both similarity and difference (Buckingham, 2008). Identity may refer to our unique characteristics as individuals, which stay more or less

the same over the course of our lifespan and which distinguishes ourselves from others (Buckingham, 2008), however it may also refer to the level of sameness, or our common belonging to a broader social group (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008). Adding to the complex matter of defining identity, the term may be used to refer to 1) a social category requiring membership and which is governed by certain rules/ characteristics/behaviours, 2) a social feature that an individual may orient towards and take pride in, which is viewed as having social importance, 3) the combination of 1) and 2) (Fearon, 1999). In reality, identifying these points of sameness is a complex task, particularly for an outside observer (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008). Much of the debate within research has focused on issues surrounding individual vs. group identity, and this is addressed in this chapter. At the most basic level, Rezaei (2017) argues that identity answers to the question, "Who am I?", whilst Norton (2010, 2016) indicates that the concept refers to a sense of who we are and how we relate to the world around us. Referring to the concept broadly, five main meanings may be attributed to the term: 1) an understanding of self, 2) sameness among members of a group, 3) fundamental, core aspects of 'selfhood', 4) a sense of belonging and 'groupness' which develops through repeating cycles, and 5) a dynamic, multiple, co-constructed selfhood (Brubaker, 2004; Choi, 2017). It is argued that within the social sciences the term 'identity' is most often used to refer to the first and fifth meanings presented above, essentially, how people understand themselves and how identity is co-constructed and negotiated through an individual's interaction with others (Brubaker, 2004).

Within the social sciences, a poststructuralist/ constructivist perspective is commonly adopted when investigating identity. From this perspective, identity is considered a dynamic, fluid concept which is continuously changing over the course of the lifespan (Block, 2006; Omoniyi & White, 2006). Ricento and Wiley (2002, p. 3) state, "Identity, like culture, is not a static concept; it is complex, contingent, and sensitive to social context". This is supported by Omoniyi and White (2006, p. 1), who argue that identity is, "non-fixed, non-rigid, and always being (co-) constructed by individuals of themselves (or ascribed by others), or by people who share certain core values or perceive another group as having such values". Block (2013, p. 6) reflects that from this position, identity is, "about the multiple ways in which people

position themselves and are positioned, that is, the different subjectivities and subject positions they inhabit or have ascribed to them, within particular social, historical and cultural contexts". This position is supported by Preece (2016), who highlights the multidimensional nature of identity, with the construct including aspects such as sexuality, gender, race, class, ethnicity, culture and age.

In the next sections, some key developmental and social psychology theories of identity are outlined and related back to the context of this thesis. This includes an examination of identity from a psychological perspective, particularly the work of Piaget and Erikson, on psychosocial development, followed by a discussion of two key theories: Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory. This section closes by considering personal, social and multiple identities as they relates to the current research.

3.1.1 *Identity within Developmental Psychology:*

Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson and James Marcia highlighted the importance of identity development in their respective models of psychosexual/ psychosocial development (Erikson, 1968; Orenstein & Lewis, 2020). Freud's theory of *The Ego and the ID*, developed in 1923, is considered seminal in the field of psychology and introduced the foundational elements of psychoanalysis. The *ego*, *superego* and *id* are considered to be three different but interconnected elements of the mind, or our personality. Freud's theory emphasized the important role of subconscious motives and experiences (Maree, 2021). Consequently, this work is closely linked to the concept of identity. According to Freud, our personality, or identity, develops over time. Piaget shared this same interest in development over the lifespan, personality and identity. Piaget conceptualised a theory of cognitive development which focuses on the way children develop a mental model of the world around them (McLeod, 2018). For Piaget, cognitive development was not fixed but rather a process of biological development and interaction with the environment (McLeod, 2018). Piaget proposed a four stage model of development which included, 1) the sensorimotor stage, 2) the preoperational stage, 3) the concrete operational stage and 4) the formal operational

stage (McLeod, 2018). These discreet stages are marked by qualitative differences rather than continuous development. Erik Erikson's work on identity extends the work of Jean Piaget which consisted of different 'ages and stages' (Buckingham, 2008). Erikson's theory, which describes eight stages of childhood development, included the influence of the social context. This model is represented in Table 1.

Table 1: Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development (Erikson, 1968, 1994)

Stage	Basic Conflict	Virtue	Description
Infancy (0-1 year)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Hope	Trust (or mistrust) that basic needs will be met.
Early childhood (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame/ doubt	Will	The development of independence in many tasks
Preschool age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Purpose	Ability to take initiative on some activities-guilt may develop when one is unsuccessful, or boundaries are overstepped
School age (7-11 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence	Development of self-confidence in abilities when successful, or inferiority when one is not.
Adolescence (12-18 years)	Identity vs. Confusion	Fidelity	Experiment with and develop one's identity and roles
Early adulthood (19-29 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	Develop intimacy and relationships with others
Middle age (30-64 years)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Care	Contribute to society and be a part of a family
Old age (65- onwards)	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Make sense of life and meaning of one's contributions

For Erikson, identity formation is considered the most important developmental task for young people (Maree, 2021). Stages 4 (Industry vs. Inferiority) and 5 (Identity vs. Identity Confusion) of Erikson's model concern school aged children from the primary years into adolescence (Erikson, 1968; Orenstein & Lewis, 2020). During these two stages competence, praise for accomplishments and the internal reflection of previous experiences, societal expectations, and one's own aspirations for the future to develop a sense of self, are considered of central importance. For Erikson, this period of identity development was particularly important; with the navigation of this period either leading to the successful progression to early adulthood or potentially leading to a negatively described 'maladaptation' (Buckingham, 2008). Erikson's work made a significant contribution to our understanding of individual identity development, particularly amongst young people. His contributions to theory on identity and development helps us to understand how children and young people negotiate their early years through an inclusive and humanistic lens (Maree, 2021).

Marcia builds on Erikson's work by further developing the hypothesis of adolescence as a period of 'identity crisis' (Buckingham, 2008). *Identity Status Theory* is Marcia's primary contribution in this area. This theory remains a significant influence in the field of identity research today (Schwartz et al., 2012). This theory proposes four different identity statuses, namely 1) Identity Diffusion, 2) Identity Foreclosure, 3) Identity Moratorium and 4) Identity Achievement (Marcia, 1966, 1980). His theory extends on Erikson's work by arguing that the adolescent stage of identity development doesn't purely consist of identity confusion or resolution but rather represents the extent of one's exploration and commitment to a certain identity across a number of different domains (such as religion and gender) (Buckingham, 2008; Marcia, 1966, 1980). For Marcia, identity crisis consists of a time of change where one's existing values are challenges and re-examined, with the result being a commitment to re-evaluated roles or values in that area. This theory argues for more agency on behalf of individuals who possess the power to make certain choices, and commitments regarding their personal and social growth, deciding who they want to become (Buckingham, 2008).

Such stage-based theories are often criticised for presenting a generalised model of development that don't consider variations across different cultures or genders (for example) and for arguing that human development occurs in distinct stages rather than a fluid, gradual progression (Buckingham, 2008; Maree, 2021). They do, however, provide a useful framework from which to consider the development of identity, particularly amongst young people.

This period of 'identity crisis' described in the abovementioned models includes a questioning of one's values and ideals and, in the context of potentially vulnerable minority learners, may be a challenging task. Identity development is a key aspect of psychosocial development for minority youths (Erentaitė et al., 2018). It is argued that whilst identity development has important implications for all individuals, including self-regulation and future psychological functioning, this is of even greater importance for minority and migrant youths, who must face both normative developmental tasks and acculturative and/or integration related tasks required for successful integration (Erentaitė et al., 2018). The process of identity formation is strongly linked to social context and interactions with others; meaning that identity is formed through continuous interactions within one's cultural and social settings. Erentaitė et al. (2018, p. 325) state,

> For youth, building a sense of who one is also means developing a personal feeling of wellbeing and self-confidence, a sense of direction in life, and a possibility for the integration into a larger society (Erikson, 1968), which is a key concern for ethnic minorities in Europe.

Considering the above, it appears that the process of identity development may present unique challenges for minority learners. Thus, an aim of this research was to investigate the experiences of multilingual heritage language speakers regarding multilingualism and identity formation. Erentaitė et al. (2018) reflect that more research is needed on the identity development of minority youths in Europe; as a deeper understanding of this complex issue may assist in identifying the developmental needs of these learners, and appropriate strategies and policies to assist with effective integration. Considering this, this

thesis makes a unique contribution to the research on migrant identities in 21st Century Ireland.

3.1.2   Identity within Social Psychology:

Within the fields of sociology and social psychology, research on identity has been a central focus over the last four decades (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Within this research, a sustained area of interest is the way in which people conceptualise a sense of self and are situated within social interactions and wider society. From a social psychology perspective, an identity can be conceptualised as,

> a shared set of meanings that define individuals in particular roles in society (for example, parent, worker, spouse, or teacher role identity), as members of specific groups in society (for example, a church, book club, or softball group identity), and as persons having specific characteristics that make them unique from others (for example, an athletic or artistic person identity) (Stets & Serpe, 2013, p. 31)

In this section, identity is discussed in terms of two key identity theories, namely Identity Theory and Social Identity theory, and the differences between researching personal versus social identity are discussed. While there are differences in how these theories conceptualise identities, Stets and Burke (2000) argue that there are central themes linking these theories.

3.1.2.1 Identity Theory:

Identity Theory was developed in large part in the late 1980s by theorists such as Sheldon Stryker, Davide Heise, Jan Stets and Peter Burke (Stets & Burke, 2000; Stets & Burke, 2014). From this perspective, "the self is reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways regarding social categories or classifications" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 224). This is referred to as *identification*. The purpose of identity theory is to understand how various meanings are attached to different identities,

and how these are managed and negotiated through interaction with others (Stets & Serpe, 2013). In other words, how do identities relate to the role-relationships and related behaviours of people (Desrochers et al., 2004)? How do such identities relate to one another? How do identities relate to behaviour, feelings, health, self-concept and social structures? For Stets and Serpe (2013), identity is rooted in *structured symbolic interactionism*, which ultimately views society as the outcome of social action and interaction; thus individuals and society are mutually constituted. From an Identity Theory perspective, a person is comprised of a number of different identities which exist in a hierarchy; these identities usually align with certain *roles* (e.g.: 'mother', 'teacher', etc.) (Desrochers et al., 2004). These identity roles usually have associated meanings and expectations attached to them which influence the person's sense of self (Desrochers et al., 2004) An important element of Identity Theory is that of identity verification, which is when people perceive that others view them in the same way they view themselves (Stets & Burke, 2014). Ideally one's perception of self should align with how others view them; in cases where there is less alignment, individuals tend to modify their identity or roles to find greater alignment (Stets & Burke, 2014; Stets & Serpe, 2013).

3.1.2.2 Social Identity Theory and Self-categorisation:

Identity Theory should not be confused with Social Identity Theory, although the theories do overlap in many ways (Stets & Burke, 2000). Social Identity Theory suggests that a person's understanding of who they are is based on their group membership (Stets & Serpe, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). From this perspective a group is defined as, "a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225). This theory was developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979 and argues that in addition to a person having a personal sense of self, they also hold multiple identities and roles as a result of their membership or affiliation to certain groups (Tajfel, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As mentioned above, belonging to a group provides us with a sense of belonging and a social identity (McLeod, 2023). Considering this, people may behave differently across different social contexts according to the groups to

which they belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Akin to the concept of identification within Identity Theory, through the process of social categorisation, we separate different groups in society into us (in-group) and them (out-group) *categorisations*. Some more common social identities include gender, race, social class, sexuality, ability and age (Allen, 2023). By creating these social groups, we may learn more about ourselves and identify which groups we belong to. Through belonging to these certain groups, we adopt the identity of said group and behave in ways that we feel are appropriate and represent this group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As Stets and Burke (2000, p. 226) highlight, "Having a particular social identity means being at one with a certain group, being like others in the group, and seeing things from the group's perspective". Furthermore, through the process of *stereotyping*, we ascribe certain characteristics to these groups, exaggerating the differences between groups and the similarities within groups (McLeod, 2023; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The central premise of Social Identity Theory is that individuals (or in-groups) aim to increase their own self-image by identifying negative aspects of others (or out-groups). This theory helps us to understand issues such as prejudice and discrimination (McLeod, 2023). Self-categorisation theory emerged from Social Identity theory in the late 1970s. This theory posits that through the process of categorisation and the subsequent identification with certain social groups, certain behaviours (which are associated with this group) are produced (Levine & Hogg, 2010). This theory is discussed further in the next section.

3.1.2.3 Personal, Social and Multiple Identities:

Much research on identity has focused on the fluid, ever changing nature of identity and how identity formation may occur in modern times (Buckingham, 2008). Such issues have been examined at both the personal and social levels. *Personal identity* usually refers to the self and how one sees oneself in comparison to others and wider society. This may include our interests, personal values, personality traits, lifestyle choices, our education and hobbies (Buckingham, 2008). Many of these models of personal identity focus on the construct of self-concept (Onorato & Turner, 2004). This includes philosophical style questions about

ourselves as conscious and moral beings (Olson, 2003). There is no one answer to this question regarding the nature of self, however a number of questions arise in this regard and may include issues of characterisation, personhood, persistence, evidence, population and personal ontology (Olson, 2003). This includes approaches such as the Self-Schema Theory (Markus, 1977) and models of psychosocial or cognitive development such as Erikson's Psychosocial Development theory and Marcia's Identity Status Theory, which highlight the process of individual identity development in which people, particularly adolescents, must consider potential life choices, their values and beliefs, engage with the world around them and develop a sense of personal identity (Schwartz et al., 2012). Overall, these models conceptualise personal identity as the unique characteristics of an individual which make that person different from others.

On the other hand, much focus within the field has been placed on researching group, or *social identity*. From this perspective one examines the self in context and looks for similarities and differences between themselves and others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008). This would include examining identity in terms of roles or categorisations such as gender, religious, political and national affiliations. According to Buckingham (2008, p. 6),

> Researchers have studied how people categorize or label themselves and others, how they identify as members of particular groups; how a sense of group belonging, or "community" is developed and maintained, and how groups discriminate against outsiders; how the boundaries between groups operate, and how groups relate to each other; and how institutions define and organize identities.

Whilst Identity Theory conceptualises the core of an identity as the adoption of certain roles and such roles' meaning, expectations and behaviours, Social Identity Theory conceptualises a person's understanding of who they as based on their group membership (Stets & Serpe, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Despite a number of theories which focus on social identities, there are several key themes which characterise this area of research. The first area of consensus is that identities are socially constructed (McLeod, 2023; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). A second theme relates to oppression and privilege, which are two mutually reinforcing forces (Jones & Abes, 2013). Through the creation of 'in-groups' and 'out-groups'

we inherently create groups of privilege and simultaneously groups suffering oppression (Jones & Abes, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). That is, our social identities are influenced by our group membership, which in turn emerge from structures of privilege and oppression (Jones & Abes, 2013).

Regardless of if one takes a personal or social approach to the research of identity, identity as a whole implies the research of sameness. Self-categorisation theory (Turner & Onorato, 1999), makes a connection between personal and social levels of identity by conceptualising them as different levels of the self within the self-categorisation model (Turner & Onorato, 1999). According to Turner et al. (1992, p. 2), "It suggested that the basic capacity of people to engage in collective behaviour (group formation, social influence, social stereotyping etc.) is related to the essential character of the self-process". In the context of the current research, examining the personal identities of the participating individuals was considered of importance in terms of identifying and understanding the roles in which the multilingual migrant learners identified and chose to inhabit. From a social identity perspective, the self-categorisation of the participants in the Irish context, and the research of respective in-groups and out-groups relevant to the topic of investigation, was also considered of importance. Whilst the scope of this thesis does not allow for a full examination of identity theory across the social sciences, Jones and Abes (2013) provide a good overview of some key identity theory research across different fields, some of which are discussed in this chapter.

According to Jones and McEwan (2000), most developmental models tend to focus on one dimension of identity, such as gender. What these models fail to do is to examine intersecting social identities, or multiple identities. Therefore, in addition to the research of both personal and social identity development, a more recent stream of research within the fields of developmental and social psychology has developed in response to increased migration around the world is that of *multiple identities*. Within the literature attention has been paid to investigating the identity development of bi- and multicultural individuals and how they navigate their sense of belonging to their respective cultural groups (Yampolsky et al., 2013).

From the perspective of Identity Theory, which has traditionally focused on the concept of identities which are acted out as particular roles, one may hold multiple identities which are hierarchically structured (Stets & Burke, 2000). Considering the construct of identity theoretically, we may understand the construction of multiple identities from two different perspectives. Firstly, we may consider an *internal perspective*, which draws on the idea of multiple interrelated identities within the self which are structured according to a specific hierarchy (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Secondly, we may consider an *external perspective* which examines how the multiple identities of an individual are interrelated to one another but also to the broader context to which they belong, specifically their position within the social groups to which they identify membership (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Extending this theory to include behaviour within social groups, one may play out various roles in different ways, given their unique identity composition which they bring to their roles (Stets & Burke, 2000). Whilst Social Identity Theory places less emphasis on the internal personal identities of the individual, arguing that people identify with groups and match their behaviour appropriately, the theory does argue that personal identities do guide behaviour in different situations (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Irrespective of the theoretical approach, Buckingham (2008) reflects that regardless of the paradox of sameness and differences created through researching identity, one seeks to understand themselves and determine their personal identity whilst simultaneously seeking out multiple identifications with others on the basis of certain characteristics (for example biological, cultural and social) and shared values, interests and personal histories. According to Buckingham (2008, p. 1),

> On one level, I am the product of my unique personal biography. Yet who I am (or who I think I am) varies according to who I am with, the social situations in which I find myself, and the motivations I may have at the time, although I am by no means entirely free to choose how I am defined.

Acknowledging the gap in the literature at the time, Reynolds and Pope (1991) highlighted that existing research at the time failed to adequately acknowledge the complexities of multiple identities and multiple forms of oppression. In researching the

identity development of college students, Reynolds and Pope (1991) developed a Multidimensional Identity Model (MIM) which aimed to provide a more sophisticated model of identity development which expanded on existing options for identity resolution in multicultural contexts. According to Reynolds and Pope (2017, p. 16), "All individuals possess a diverse set of social identities that shape how they view themselves, others, and the world around them, whether they are conscious of those identities or not". Considering this, the MIM views identity as a fluid, ever changing construct where there are multiple opportunities for self-actualisation and acceptance (Reynolds & Pope, 2017) The MIM can be viewed in Figure 3.

Identify with one aspect of self (society assigned-passive acceptance)	Identify with one aspect of self (conscious identification)
Identify with multiple aspects of self in a segmented fashion	Identify with combined aspects of self (identity intersection)
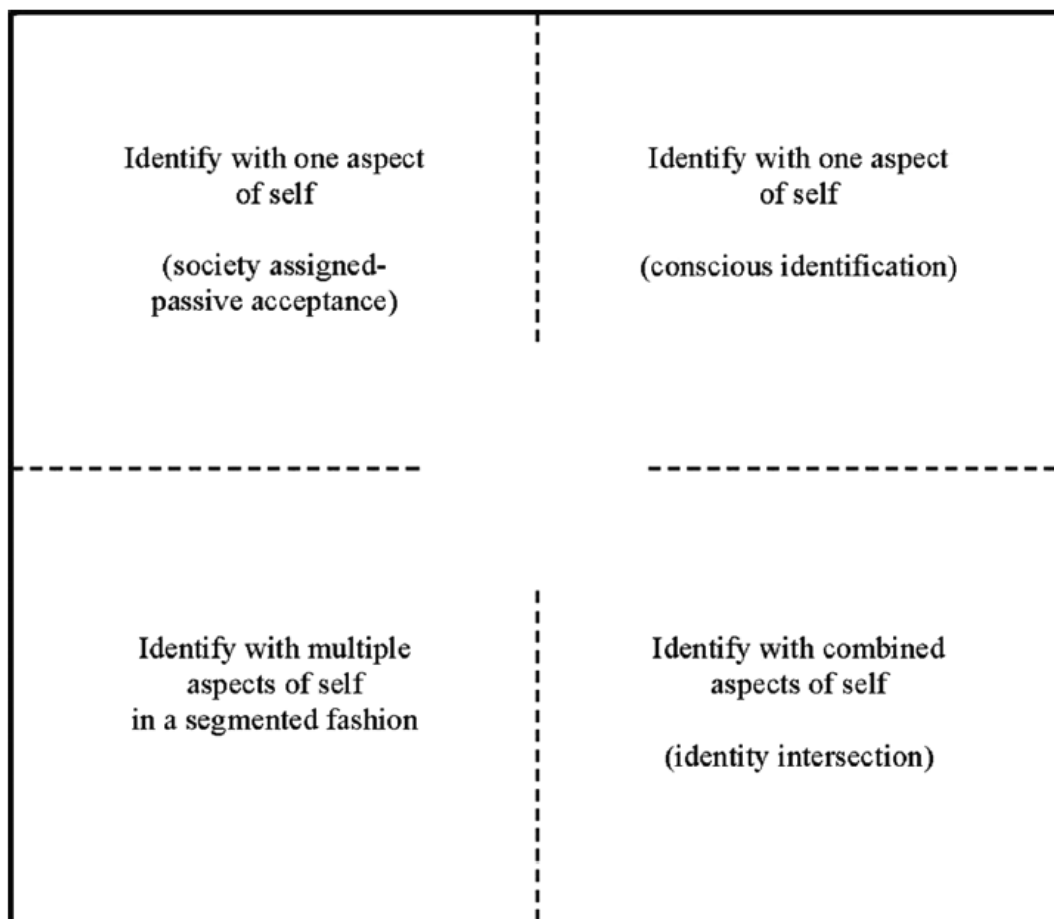
Figure 3: Multidimensional Identity Model (Reynolds & Pope, 1991)

In 2017, Reynolds and Pope (2017) re-examined their existing model with consideration for the critique their model has received, and intersectionality theory. Within this re-examination, they aimed to provide a holistic, intersectional perspective of their identity theory which addresses changes in research over the last 20 years, and the increasing diversity and multiculturalism within the wider social context due to factors such as globalisation. Another prominent model of acculturation is John W. Barry's bidimensional model (Barry, 2005). From Barry's (2005, p. 699) perspective, acculturation is defined as,

...the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. At the group level, it involves changes in social structures and institutions and in cultural practices. At the individual level, it involves changes in a person's behavioural repertoire.

Within this model, people experiencing acculturation behave in one of four ways: 1) Assimilation, 2) Separation, 3) Integration and 4) Marginalisation (Yampolsky et al., 2013). Ultimately, this model proposes that one orients themselves as belonging either exclusively to their heritage culture or new culture, belonging to both groups simultaneously or belonging to neither group. Whilst this model was originally developed to examine the group membership and involvement of biculturals in their respective groups, more recent research has applied this model to examine how bi- or multicultural individuals reconcile different aspects of their cultural identities (Barry, 2005). An interesting and relevant component of this model is the concept of a 'frame switch', a process in which a bicultural individual is able to manage aspects of their cultural identities by artfully shifting from one set of behaviours to another depending on context (Noels et al., 1996). This is supported by research by Kawakami et al. (2012) and Downie et al. (2006) respectively, who both examine the personal identity shifts of multicultural individuals across contexts and social categories.

A third impactful model within this area is that of the cognitive-developmental model (Amiot et al., 2007), which aims to incorporate some of the different theories of identity integration mentioned here into a one coherent model (Yampolsky et al., 2013). Primarily, this model builds on developmental theories of identity development (Piaget, Erikson) and

social theories of identity (such as social identity theory and self-categorisation theory) by explicating, 'the intraindividual processes underlying developmental changes in social identities and their integration within the self' (Amiot et al., 2007, p. 364). The model proposes four stages to explain the process that individuals follow in developing their multiple social identities. These four different configurations include: 1) anticipatory categorisation, 2) categorisation, 3) compartmentalisation and 4) integration (Amiot et al., 2007). Anticipatory categorisation takes place prior to one becoming a member of the new group and involves envisioning oneself as a part of that group, particularly through finding similarities between oneself and the new cultural group. Categorisation involves the identification with a single cultural group and therefore the exclusion of others, which results in the domination over any other cultural identity. Compartmentalisation involves the identification with multiple cultural groups, however these are distinct and remain separate. Finally, integration involves the identification with multiple cultural groups and the connection of these diverse cultural identities. Differences between identities are recognised but viewed as positive resources which complement each other (Amiot et al., 2007; Yampolsky et al., 2013). According to Yampolsky et al. (2013), a strength of this model is the detailed description of the process that multicultural individuals follow in cognitively combining their multiple cultural identities within themselves. Furthermore, the model accounts for how such configurations may change over time and as a result of various life events (Amiot et al., 2007).

Another highly relevant group of models conceptualising multiple identities is that of the original Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MMDI) (Jones & McEwan, 2000), the Reconceptualised Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity (R-MMDI) (Abes et al., 2007), and the Intersectional Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity (I-MMDI) (Jones & Abes, 2013). These interrelated models build on foundational developmental psychology work by the likes of Erik Erikson, and previous work on multiple identity development such as Reynolds and Pope (1991) to formulate a contemporary perspective on identity development through the intersections of social identities, personal characteristics and the broader context.

The original MMDI consists of a core which represents a sense of self, or personal identity. Surrounding this core self are intersecting rings which represent different identity dimensions and contextual influences (Abes et al., 2007; Jones & McEwan, 2000). This includes sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, class and culture (Jones & McEwan, 2000). According to Jones and McEwan (2000, p. 408), "The model is a fluid and dynamic one, representing the ongoing construction of identities and the influence of changing contexts on the experience of identity development". Ultimately, from this perspective identity is defined as having multiple intersecting dimensions, with no single identity dimension understood alone; these dimensions may only be understood regarding each other. This original model is demonstrated in Figure 4.
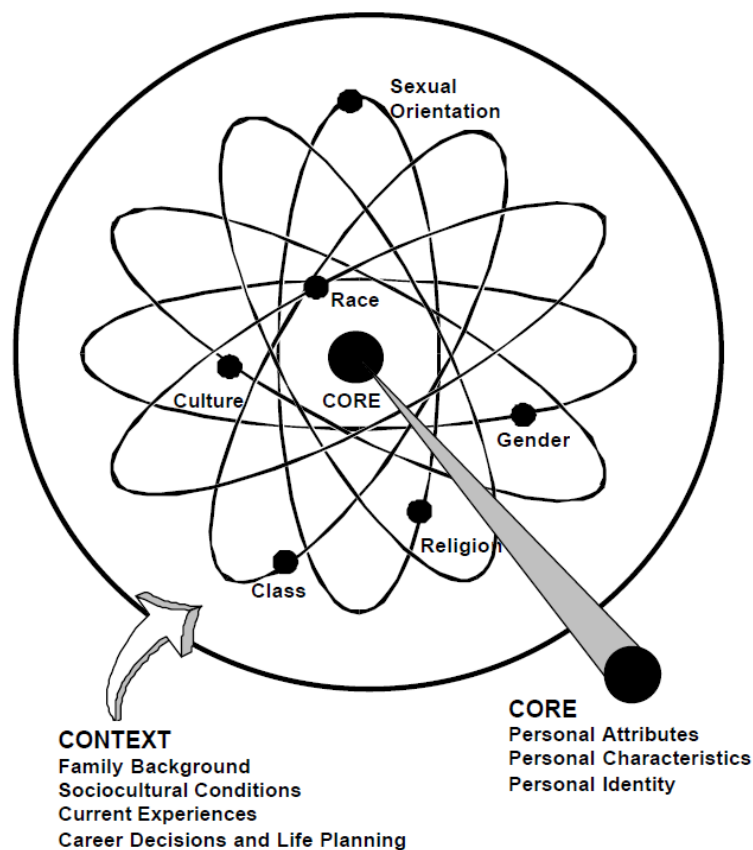
Figure 4: The original MMDI model by Jones & McEwan (2000)

Abes et al. (2007) extended this theory to include a meaning making filter between context and identity, as can be seen in Figure 5. According to them, our meaning making ability interacts with context on our perceptions and salience of our multiple identities (Abes et al., 2007). By adding a meaning-making filter, Abes et al. (2007, p. 6) argue that, "incorporating meaning-making capacity into the model would more thoroughly depict the relationship between context and salience (and self-perceptions) of identity dimensions, and the relationship between social identities and the core of identity". The depth and permeability of this meaning making filter is different for each person and depends on their capacity of meaning-making ability (Abes et al., 2007). Overall, this revised model accounts for both multiple social identities and multiple domains of development, which include the intrapersonal, cognitive and interpersonal domains (Abes et al., 2007; Jones & Abes, 2013). What the MMDI and RMMDI represent are a fluid and dynamic representation of identity, which incorporates both personal identity and social interaction.
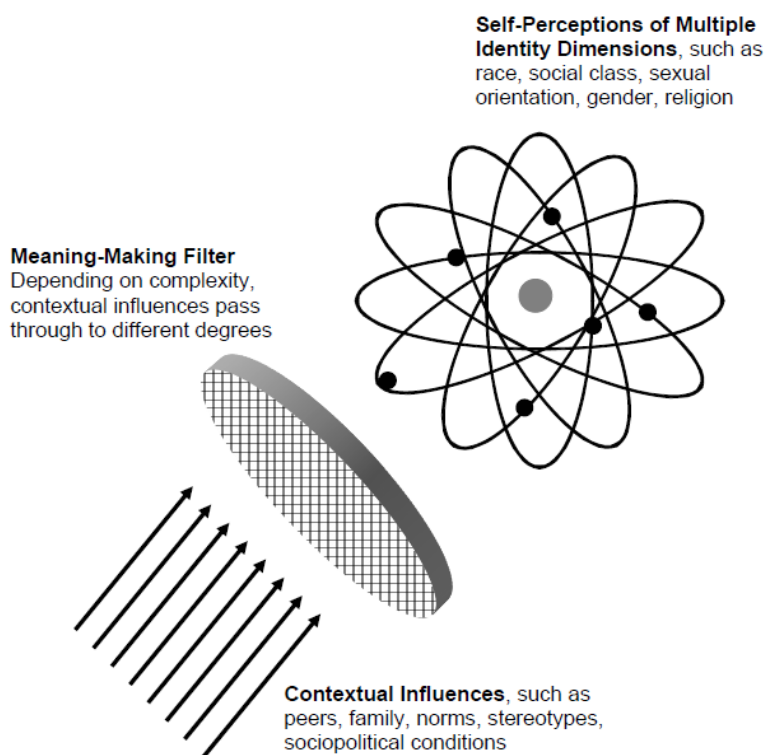
Figure 5: Revised MMDI model by Abes et al. (2007)

The I-MMDI employs intersectionality as the lens through which to examine multiple identities (Jones & Abes, 2013). This integrative approach to the research of identity treats identity as a socially constructed concept located within structures of privilege and oppression (Jones & Abes, 2013). The I-MMDI model makes the assumption that individuals possess multiple social identities (e.g.: gender, race, social class) which are integrally related to, and a reflection of, the wider social context (Jones & Abes, 2013). The model includes both the individual (micro) levels and structural (macro) levels of analysis. The micro level of individual analysis consists of the original MMDI model and the macro level consists of large intersecting rings which represent intersecting structures of power which influence identity development (Jones & Abes, 2013).

Whilst there are a number of models conceptualising multiple identities, in this thesis the revised I-MMDI proposed by Jones and Abes (2013) is preferred, in particular the conceptualisation of identity as having multiple intersecting dimensions, which supports key elements of this thesis. Within this area of research, examining how individuals with diverse cultural identities organise the different aspects of self has demonstrated that this process has important implications for personal well-being, which was considered of central importance in this research (Kulich et al., 2017). Certainly, evidence indicates that if the successful integration of one's multiple identities is not achieved, internal conflict arises which, in multicultural contexts may lead to a disassociation with the new society, ultimately impacting on successful integration (Kulich et al., 2017).

3.1.3   *Identity Research in Diverse Contexts:*

Thus far in this chapter, I have discussed key theory regarding identity development, with particular reference to the identity development of young people. In the context of identity research and development, Stets and Burke (2000) argue that most of the research conducted on identity concerns normative or positive identities, whilst very little research examines identity development in the case of stigmatised, negative or counternormative identities. In the next sections, I consider identity development in diverse contexts,

particularly that of migrants during the process of integration. This is followed by a closer look at the relationship between language and identity development in diverse contexts.

Within today's globalised world, many of the beliefs and practices which previously defined identities within traditional societies are becoming less influential (Giddens, 1991). In modern times, people are faced with a far wider range of choices regarding aspects of their life, from choices in appearance, education and lifestyle to more broad decisions such as relationships and life direction (Buckingham, 2008). Consequently, Giddens (1991) argues that people today are required to be constantly self-reflexive, making a host of decisions regarding who they should be and what they should do with their lives. From this perspective, the self is a constant work in progress in which individuals create narratives representing who they are and representing a coherent and consistent identity (Buckingham, 2008).

Schwartz et al. (2012) highlight two challenges for identity research in modern times; namely the issue of 1) cross-ethnic diversity and, 2) cross-cultural comparisons. Historically, the vast majority of identity research, including that of Marcia's, used predominantly white samples (Schwartz et al., 2012; Sneed et al., 2006). Resultantly, much of the literature centres descriptions of white individuals and their development over other ethnic identities (Schwartz et al., 2012). Considering this, less is known about the process of identity development for migrants and other minorities, who face additional challenges related to successful integration, such as inadequate educational resources, lower socioeconomic status and higher levels of discrimination (Erentaitė et al., 2018; Schwartz et al., 2012). According to Schwartz et al. (2012, p. 6), "individuals from outside the cultural majority group in a given country or region generally must make sense of their membership in an ethnic minority group and in the larger society where they live". From this perspective, the sense of belonging to a minority group, or ethnic identity, is another identity domain which individuals are required to navigate (Yampolsky et al., 2013). By examining only the 'normative' development of white individuals, such identity challenges may be overlooked (Schwartz et al., 2012). Furthermore, not all migrants and/or minority groups are treated equally; in the case of the current research, evidence in the Irish context demonstrates that migrants from different ethnic backgrounds or origins are treated differently in Irish schools and in wider Irish

society (Devine, 2005; Schwartz et al., 2012). Furthermore, considering the increasing globalisation and related diversity outlined in Chapter 2, issues related to diversity, migration and ethnic identities are likely to become more important in Ireland in the coming years.

The second issue outlined by Schwartz et al. (2012) relates to cross-cultural comparisons. As much of the literature on identity, and indeed many of the identity development models, stem from work in North America, a lot less is known about identity development around the world. This is what Arnett (2008) refers to as, "The Neglected 95%". Arnett argues that the American Psychological Society (APA) focuses too narrowly on the American experience in the literature and therefore presents an incomplete representation of the human experience, effectively disregarding the other 95% of the world's population. It should be noted, however, that there has been an uptake in interest and identity research in recent times, with European research exploring identity development in European contexts. There has also been increasing focus on multicultural identities in the context of globalisation (Yampolsky et al., 2013). This includes increased collaboration between the US and European colleagues, particularly in developing cross-cultural comparisons, and investigating issues of identity across European samples (Erentaitė et al., 2018; Onorato & Turner, 2004; Schwartz et al., 2012). According to Schwartz et al. (2012), identity processes can differ depending on the social contexts across countries, including factors such as societal expectations of young people and different timings taking on adult roles.

Research tells us that particularly for young migrants, the need for belonging and social acceptance are fundamental for successful integration and their identity development (Martin et al., 2023). A key aspect of successful integration for young migrants is a sense of belonging and the formation of stable friendships (Martin et al., 2023). Echoing this sentiment, Fathi (2022, p. 1097) states, "Despite the fluidity of the concept of home and mobile element of migrants' lives which are coupled with uncertainties with migration experiences, there is an innate need to find a stable sense of self". Research exploring the experiences of second-generation migrants in Ireland demonstrates that 'hybridised', dual identities are a real and authentic aspect of their identity, something viewed as a positive resource (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). Despite this, studies indicate that young

people belonging to ethnic minorities in Ireland are often 'othered' and made to feel that they do not belong, and that they are not Irish (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). Such microaggression has been shown to be linked to fixed notions of Irish identity. Despite this negativity, young migrants in Ireland have been shown to express a desire to be accepted for who they are, without the need for them to assimilate into such fixed notions of Irishness (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). For the reasons stated in this section, Schwartz et al. (2012) recommends a shift towards a global understanding of identity which considers how people establish a sense of personal identity within their specific historical, national, political and cultural contexts. In the upcoming chapters the dynamic multilingual identities of the participants are discussed with consideration for these perspectives, participant well-being and their overall integration into Irish society. How are their internal identity structures influenced by their experiences as migrant living in Ireland (particularly their linguistic experiences)? Secondly, how is their identity and linguistic development influenced by their social groups? This includes their experiences as learners in Irish school and also as members of multilingual, migrant families. Particularly in the context of the current research, cultural and linguistic choices as they relate to identity development are of importance; consequently, in the next section, the specific relationship between language and identity is considered further in the context of migration and language education.

3.2 Language and Identity Research:

Within the field of applied linguistics, research investigating identity as a key social construct only emerged in the mid-1990s, although earlier research on affect and motivation may have indirectly touched on the concept (Block, 2013; Preece, 2016). Since the mid-1990s, there has been a rapid increase in the number of studies within the field of applied linguistics which centre identity, particularly in the areas of multilingualism, language education and second language acquisition (Block, 2010; Hua, 2017; Norton & Toohey, 2011). In this section, I outline the historical foundations of research investigating language and identity, with a

focus on key theories of linguistic identity and investment. I close the section by reflecting upon some linguistic and identity challenges faced by migrants in multilingual contexts.

3.2.1   Theoretical Foundations of Language and Identity Research:

Within the last two decades there has been a shift from viewing identity as set construct consisting of fixed characteristics which are either 1) learned, or 2) biologically based (which has been the enduring view within the social sciences), to viewing identity as a social construct (Hua, 2017; Preece, 2016). This has occurred in part due to progress in the field, such as the development of a poststructuralist approach to language (or discourse), which argues that language is not a neutral form of communication, but rather must be understood regarding social meaning, which is inextricably tied to sites of struggle, truth and power (Block, 2013; Norton, 2010). Poststructuralist work in this area includes the contributions of key theorists such as Bourdieu (1977, 1991), Bakhtin (1981), (Hall, 1997) and Weedon (1997). This turn in the field also coincided with intensified global migration, increasing diversity and transnational mobility (Preece, 2016). A hallmark publication from this early period was Norton Pierce's (1995) research which highlighted the identity agenda within the field more explicitly than had previously been acknowledged. Now, linguistic research on identity has become a central focus not only in applied linguistics, but also in social psychology. There is now a robust history of research investigating language and identity formation, particularly in contexts of language education (Norton, 2013).

The existing literature in social psychology, sociolinguistics and applied linguistics suggests that language is fundamental in shaping one's identity (Blommaert, 2006; Dixon & Peake, 2008; Hua, 2017; Norton, 2010; Seargeant, 2012). For Bucholtz and Hall (2010), identity is constituted *in* linguistic interaction. Language is not purely for communication; it is a means of identity construction, a tool with which individuals make meaning in the world (O'Connor et al., 2017). This is supported by Watson (2007), who argues that the importance of language in identity formation cannot be under-estimated; it is the means through which humans think, express their deepest feelings and helps them to identify with a certain

linguistic or ethnic group. For many key theorists, language is not just a system of words, but also a social practice in which identities are teased out in the context of (often unequal) social relationships (Norton, 2016). The importance of the relationship between language and identity formation is emphasised by Norton (2010, p. 350), who states,

> Every time we speak, we are negotiating and renegotiating our sense of self regarding the larger social world and reorganizing that relationship across time and space. Our gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, among other characteristics, are all implicated in this negotiation of identity.

Interestingly, this description provided by Norton indirectly refers to the intersectionality between key dimensions of identity such as ethnicity and gender, which is a key aspect of many of the multiple identity theories described in section 3.1.2.3, furthermore, it aligns with the key premise of this thesis, which argues that through the interaction between the different and interlinked variables influencing identity development, such as language and ethnicity, a unique agency may be present in which individuals navigate these different elements and in so doing, develop dynamic multilingual identities. Norton's arguments are supported by Blackledge and Creese (2016) who argue that our sense of self may only emerge as a result of interaction with others; thus, identity is a socially constructed concept. They state,

> From this view, identities should be understood as shifting rather than stable and subject to contingencies of time and space. Additionally, they should be understood as responses to complex, dynamic societies in which subject positions orient to the old and the new, the permanent and the ephemeral, the local and the global, and the collective and the individual. That is, identities are neither fixed nor unitary but are bound up with overlapping histories… (Blackledge & Creese, 2016, p. 273).

As outlined previously in this chapter, identity is a fluid, ever changing concept which is not fixed and continuously changing as people position themselves and others within social, historical and cultural contexts (Block, 2006, 2013; Omoniyi & White, 2006; Reynolds & Pope, 2017; Ricento & Wiley, 2002). Norton views language as a building block of both personal and social identity, similarly, Blackledge and Creese (2016) observe that it is through

linguistic discourse that identities are constructed and negotiated, furthermore, identities emerge as a result of interaction with others. From this perspective, language is a tool employed by individuals to construct or exhibit their personal identity, but also to build the social categories that they associate themselves with. Thus, language allows people to make connections with others through a shared communication and the ability to construct who they are through the words that they use (Evans & Liu, 2018; O'Connor et al., 2017).

Bucholtz and Hall (2005, 2008, 2010) developed a framework for the analysis of identity as constituted in linguistic interaction. Their approach brings together various theories and perspectives from different fields which allows for the discussion of identity in terms of theoretical assumptions made in research, and avoiding some of the common critiques which have arisen regarding the concept (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Considering this, from their perspective, "Identity is the social positioning of self and other" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 586) . The principles underlying this framework include, 1) The emergence principle, 2) The positionality principle, 3), The indexicality principle, 4) The relationality principle, and 5) The partialness principle. The emergence principle considers identity as emerging in interaction with others, or with texts. The principle of positionality considers that people inhabit different roles within these interactions, in different contexts. The principle of indexicality involves the process of people indexing different identity roles during interactions, regarding themselves and others, through both overt and covert suggestions. The relationality principle considers that identities are always constructed regarding others and involve intersecting binaries such as 'self-others'. The final principle of partialness considers that identities are fluid and always changing, consequently, identities can only ever be partial descriptions (Bucholtz & Hall, 2010). These principles represent the different ways that identity researchers have approached the research of the concept (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). This model continues to be an influential framework in conceptualising the relationship between language and identity.

Another highly relevant, seminal theory centring language, identity, investment and 'imagined communities' was initially developed by Bonnie Norton (then Norton Pierce) in 1995, and has since been developed further (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton (Pierce), 1995).

Norton (2016, p. 476) argues that identity is, "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future". Considering the importance of language in identity development, for the purpose of this thesis, this definition of identity is adopted. Norton shares the poststructuralist views previously stated in this section, that identity is constituted in linguistic interaction, and that identity as a construct is fluid and ever changing. Furthermore, identity represents a site of struggle. For Norton, the term 'investment' aligns with the psychological construct of motivation (Norton (Pierce), 1995) and aims to centre identity and learner agency, and their commitment to learning (Darvin & Norton, 2015). From this perspective, "if learners invest in a language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37). Consequently, this theory draws on the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1991), particularly regarding relations of power and how increased cultural knowledge, or capital, can increase social power. From this perspective, if learners to do not view a certain language or linguistic practice as having some potential for increasing their social power, they are unlikely to be invested in learning this language. In recent years, and in response to increased worldwide migration due to the forces of globalisation, coupled with changes in communication technology, Darvin and Norton (2015) have reformulated the original investment model to account for these influences. This revised model can be seen in Figure 6. This revised models aims to, "go beyond the microstructures of power in specific communicative events and to investigate the systemic patterns of control that communicative events are indexical of" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 42).

Figure 6: Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment

One way that the relationship between language and identity has been described is through the term of *linguistic identity*. One's linguistic identity can be understood as, "the sense of belonging to a community as mediated through the symbolic resource of language, or to the varying ways in which we come to understand the relationship between our language and ourselves" (Sung-Yul Park, 2012). According to Leung et al. (1997), one's linguistic identity can be expressed in terms of 1) linguistic competence or expertise, 2) linguistic affiliation, both formal and informal, and 3) inheritance or familial connection. Social Identity Theory has been important in the research of linguistic identity, with Preece (2016) arguing that it is the singular most influential identity model used for analysing the concept. In the context of the current research, multilingual speakers can be conceptualised

as having dynamic, complex or even multiple linguistic identities which are socially constructed (Andrews, 2010; Block, 2014; Dressler, 2014; Leung et al., 1997), which we can articulate as being expressed through their linguistic competence, linguistic affiliations and their heritage or familial connections. Furthermore, from this perspective, learning a new language is not simply about learning new words, it is about developing a new identity (Andrews, 2010). Consequently, multiple identities represent the same individual taking on different roles, and linguistic roles, in the same or in different contexts, often as an adaptive strategy to their changing environment (Andrews, 2010). This perspective is adopted in this thesis.

For migrants in particular, developing their linguistic knowledge and constructing new identities in often unfamiliar contexts can be challenging (Andrews, 2010). In the next section, some of the challenges experienced by migrants in terms of this linguistic identity development are discussed in greater detail.

3.2.2   *Migration and Challenges for Language and Identity Development:*

Globalisation and the spread of capitalism have created new spaces for unique forms of identity to emerge (Ricento & Wiley, 2002). Choi (2017) defines individuals who have migrated across geographical and national boundaries as *transnationals*, grouping together several categories of migrants, including highly skilled workers, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, missionaries, and international students. According to Choi (2017), the process of becoming transnational involves navigating a fluidity of identity which emerges as one integrates into a new community (Choi, 2017). The reflexive nature of the interaction between the global and local allows for elements of various cultures to be combined to create new, dynamic cultures, which in turn allows for the creation of unique identities which are ultimately novel and distinct in each respective cultural context (Iyall Smith, 2008; Ricento & Wiley, 2002). The process of migration often impacts on one's sense of self, demanding internal reflection and reassessment of linguistic and identity choices (O'Connor et al., 2017; Rassool, 2012). For the majority of migrants, migration is not a process that involves straight

linguistic choices or decisions regarding two different ways of life; it is a process of assuming a flexible and dynamic bilingual identity (Rassool, 2012). This process involves adopting the dominant language of the new country (such as English), whilst simultaneously maintaining the important cultural and linguistic aspects of their lives in previous countries (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Ó Laoire, 2005; Rassool, 2012). Ó Laoire (2005, p. 307) highlights the challenges that limited access to linguistic resources may have in the integration process, stating,

> New immigrants and refugees whose mother tongue is not English may experience language problems when their lack of English seriously limits their access to the institutions of Irish society and being separated from their own language community to which they owe their sense of ethnicity and personal identity.

While the emphasis of research within the context of globalisation and increased transnational mobility has often been on acquiring English within new communities, one of the consequences of doing so is the loss of other named languages, and loss of identification with cultural and linguistic heritage (Hewings, 2012). Within the fields of social psychology and sociolinguistics, research has highlighted the changes in identity and language behaviour that occurs when different cultural groups meet, as a result of acculturation and integration processes (Noels et al., 1996). Consequently, we know that the process of migration often results in the movement of languages and changing linguistic profiles, which can result in bicultural identities, fragmented identities, multilingual dynamic identities and new formations of identity emerging (Barry, 2005; Erentaitė et al., 2018; Hewings, 2012; Noels et al., 1996; Rassool, 2012). Thus, within the context of migration, language learning can be an emancipatory process; however, this same process also brings to the fore difficult, and often painful, questions regarding identity, relationships, history, nationality and home, such as, "Who am I?", "Where do I belong?" and "Where is home?" (Mahon, 2017). This argument is echoed by Blackledge and Creese (2016) who highlight that the process of identity construction in diverse contexts involves language choices and negotiations at every interaction with others; consequently, access to linguistic resources may either aide or prevent access to the necessary social capital needed for successful integration. This

argument supports Bourdieu (1991) concept of linguistic knowledge as a form of social capital, in which linguistic knowledge can be used as resource to increase social status. According to García and Lin (2017a, p. 7), "In contact with majority groups, and with greater access to majority languages, some minoritized students develop attitudes of linguistic insecurity and stigmatize their own language practices, preferring those of dominant groups". Consequently, students may develop more negative attitudes towards their own linguistic repertoires and may begin to prefer the language practices of the more dominant group (García & Lin, 2017a). This issue is important in the context of the current research, which seeks to understand how experiences within the Irish school system may impact on linguistic choices and therefore overall identity development in young people. An awareness of the important role that language proficiencies and choices may have in the process of integration and the construction of new identities amongst multilingual migrant learners, is therefore central to the research.

Evidence demonstrates that successful integration is an essential part of encouraging acceptance of migrants in their host countries (Erentaitė et al., 2018; McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). Successful integration allows migrants to contribute to the political, cultural, social and economic domains in their host countries (Ricento 2017). Furthermore, data indicates that the consequences of failed integration may include early school leaving, community segregation and inter-ethnic violence (McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). In the Irish context, successful integration is defined as, " the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity" (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017). This definition centres cultural identity as a key component of successful integration, emphasising that whilst the individual may successfully integrate into their new community, this should not come at the cost of their heritage and cultural identity. According to Preece (2016), the identities that people choose for themselves are bound by certain constraints, such as their access to certain social spaces in which identities may be negotiated/constructed, the 'ascribed' identities assigned to them by others, access to material resources such as employment, and their social positioning within their community. Thus, whilst acknowledging the fluid nature of identity,

Preece (2016) highlights that individuals are not always in a position to select, at liberty, the elements of identity which they may favour. Within the context of this research, it is necessary to examine how access or restrictions to linguistic resources may enable or inhibit new identities from emerging. Furthermore, Joseph (2016) argues that whilst identity may be a dynamic concept, it is grounded in historical beliefs regarding culture, ancestry and heritage, and a sense of belonging to certain ways of life, places, people and sets of beliefs. Consequently, it is anticipated that these factors may be of importance when exploring the experiences of multilingual migrant learners attending Irish primary schools, as evidence suggests that increased transnational mobility has resulted in students' identities becoming more fluid and complex (Choi, 2017; García & Lin, 2017a).

3.2.3 Dynamic Multilingual Identities:

Whilst it is acknowledged that the concept of identity is multidimensional, researchers have usually approached the research of identity by focusing primarily on one dimension of the construct (Block & Corona, 2016). It is, however, almost impossible to do so without also addressing other dimensions to some extent. Certainly, in their work on multiple identities Reynolds and Pope (1991, 2017) and Jones and Abes (2013) caution against considering identity development too narrowly by only considering one dimension of identity development. Despite this, connections between different concepts involving language and identity research are often indirectly addressed. In instances where researchers do overtly investigate the different dimensions comprising identity, they necessarily need to address how these different dimensions are connected and interact. Block and Corona (2016) describe the difficulty facing applied linguists who wish to investigate issues of identity and language. Considering this theoretical challenge, how does one go about researching such complex concepts which inherently involve so many different factors? Their response to this dilemma is that, "applied linguists can show sensitivity, awareness and, ultimately, attentiveness to the necessarily intersectional nature of identity" (Block & Corona, 2016, p. 507).

As I outlined in Chapter One, this research is situated within the context of an increasingly globalised world featuring increasing international migration. This has led to increases in cross-cultural interaction (Marotta, 2020). According to Iyall Smith (2008), the forces of globalisation, and this increased cultural interaction, ultimately leads to three cultural outcomes, namely 1) differentiation, 2) assimilation/integration and 3) hybridisation. Taking this view that in many contexts different aspects of migrants' identities combine in unique ways, Iyall Smith (2008, p. 3) states, "A reflexive, relationship between the local and global produces the hybrid. The identities are not assimilated or altered independently, but instead elements of cultures are incorporated to create a new hybrid culture".

Verkuyten (2005) supports this stance, arguing that due to globalisation, terms such as 'creolization' and 'dual identities' have emerged as descriptors for new ways of being which challenge traditional descriptions of identity. The conceptualisation of identity as 'hybrid' emerged mainly as a part of postcolonial studies from the 1980s, initially as an 'in-between space' within postcolonial contexts (Boland, 2020). This terms does, however, have a contested history, with some arguing that it represents essentialist and racist aspects (Boland, 2020). In support of the conceptualisation of multiple identities, Reynolds and Pope (1991) warn that traditional, westernised conceptualisations of identity have often viewed 'fragmented identities' negatively, even harmfully, whilst conceptualisations of multiple identities provide more holistic and less polar viewpoints. Iyall Smith (2008) reflects that whilst the term 'hybrid' has in the past has held a derogatory meaning, this is swiftly changing in the face of the impact of globalisation and modernisation; being a 'hybrid' is now considered an advantage. The term has been used more recently within the literature to refer to the fluid, dynamic identities of migrants. For instance, in research funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission which examines the experiences of second generation migrant youths in Ireland, migrant youths describe their own identities as 'hybrid', where individuals belong to multiple cultures simultaneously (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022).

Iyall Smith (2008, p. 4) states,

The ability to negotiate across barriers- language, cultural, spiritual, racial, and physical- is an asset. Although the hybrid contains elements of the local and the global, the intermixture makes it unique. Those who occupy hybrid spaces benefit from understanding both local knowledge and global cosmopolitanism. Those who can easily cross barriers in a world of amorphous borders have an advantage.

While there has been some progress made in the usage of the term 'hybrid', for the purpose of this thesis, and to avoid any negative connotations associated with the term, the preferred term of 'dynamic multilingual identities' is used. The concept of dynamic multilingual identities attempts to acknowledge new identity constructions, and the unique challenges faced by those developing such identity formations (Erentaitė et al., 2018).

In the context of the current research, such dynamic multilingual identities represent participants' specific sociocultural responses to their environment (Erentaitė et al., 2018). Whilst a term such as 'hybrid identities' or 'dual identities' may indicate two, partially connected/ separate identities, this is not the same as dynamic multilingual identities. As heteroglossic ideologies inform dynamic views of language, dynamic multilingual identities stem from a heteroglossic view of identity which embraces a fluid view of identity and promotes diversity (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Verkuyten, 2005). Reflecting on such identities, Blackledge and Creese (2016, p. 276) postulate that children are able to develop 'heteroglossic identity repertoires'; they state,

…it is likely that in picking our way through the complex and dynamic processes of identity negotiation, we develop a heteroglossic 'identity repertoire' (Blommaert and Varis 2013: 157) which enables us to adapt to the contingencies of social life. In this conception of identity, emblematic features are empirically observable and can be investigated ethnographically. Emblems of identity are not merely psychological but are corporeal and performed as practice. This is true of the clothes we wear, the music we listen to, the sport we play, and so on. It is also true of the way in which we deploy heteroglossic linguistic resources. Our accents, vocabulary and grammar are material resources that index our individual histories and trajectories.

Such identities are created by mixing different aspects/ characteristics from different cultures and nations; they represent an agency, and a fluidity, a blending of meanings which

results in the creation of entirely new identity formations (Erentaitė et al., 2018; Iyall Smith, 2008). Dynamic multilingual identities represent, "a distinct way of building an identity embedded in the context and characterized by flexibility and continual dynamics" (Erentaitė et al., 2018, p. 330). Constructing such identities indicates that, "one is able to claim desired images, positions, and self-understandings in a variety of contexts" (Verkuyten, 2005, p. 174). Individuals who are characterised by dynamic multilingual identities are able to employ a unique agency to mediate and navigate difference spaces and ways of belonging (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022).

3.3 Conclusion:

In this chapter I have reviewed the existing literature in relation to the nature of identity as a construct, and the relationship between language and identity formation in diverse contexts. I outlined key theories on identity within the social sciences, and within psychology and sociolinguistics in particular, before examining existing research on identity in diverse contexts. I continued by examining the relationship between language and identity and how this relates to the experiences of minority learners at school level. Finally, I close the chapter by considering how issues of migration, language and identity converge through the concept of dynamic multilingual identities. In the next chapter, the literature review shifts to a detailed overview of the structure of language education in the Irish context.

4   Language Education in a Diverse Ireland

Thus far in this thesis, I have discussed both contextual and theoretical research relevant to this thesis. In Chapters Two and Three specifically I provided detailed overviews of research on multilingualism, language policy and identity development within diverse contexts. In this final chapter of the literature review, I discuss the structure of language education in Irish primary schools. This includes outlining how languages are taught at the primary level, and examining challenges facing multilingual migrant learners, including issues related to language learning, social inclusion, racism and discrimination. I conclude the chapter by examining the pedagogical practice of assigning homework and consider existing research on homework completion in multilingual contexts.

4.1   Language Education in Irish Schools:

Migratory changes and Ireland's policy response to migrant integration, have been extensively outlined in the previous chapters. In response to such increased diversity across cultural, religious and linguistic fronts, Irish institutions have been faced with the challenge of appropriately accommodating and providing for a continuously increasing number of migrants, many of whom have varying cultural and religious backgrounds, but are also multilingual, speaking languages other than English or Irish in the home (Central Statistics Office, 2023e). Such migrant families may have limited proficiency in English, and are unlikely to have any proficiency in Irish, the official languages of Ireland and thus the languages through which business, governance and schooling are conducted (Devine et al., 2008; Faas et al., 2018; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023; Nowlan, 2008).

Despite the prevalence of negative attitudes towards migrants in Ireland, and the higher levels of discrimination, racism and bullying faced by migrant learners in Irish schools (Devine, 2005; Harmon, 2018; Little, 2010; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022), the ESRI Monitoring Report on Integration 2022 highlights the positive contribution that migrants make to Irish society and emphasises the need for the effective integration of migrants

(McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). Data gathered by O'Toole and Skinner (2018), indicates that the 'under achievement' of migrant learners has been a long-lasting concern in Europe. Consequently, it is necessary to further investigate such minority groupings in Irish schools, with the aim of uncovering the challenges such learners may face throughout their educational experiences and implementing appropriate supports. Below, a closer examination of the structure of language education, regarding migrant learners, is presented. This section concludes by examining challenges faced by migrant learners in Irish schools.

4.1.1 *Migrant and Heritage Language Learners in Irish Schools:*

An increasing number of migrant children are passing through the Irish school system (McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). Reflecting the wider context in Ireland, migrant learners in Irish schools are diverse in terms of their country of origin, culture, language and religion (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023; Smyth et al., 2009). While data on the demographics of migrant learners in Irish primary schools is limited, and more recent research regarding the demographics of this population is needed, some data from research gives us an indication of the number of migrant learners attending Irish primary schools. In 2007, the number of migrant learners in Irish primary schools was approximately 10% of the primary school population, at 45,700 learners (Smyth et al., 2009). Nearly three quarters of these learners did not speak English when arriving at school. By 2016, the number of migrant children present in Ireland aged 5 and over was 96,497, with approximately 47,476 migrant children between the ages of 5 and 12 (Central Statistics Office, 2016). According to the primary school database of 2016-17, a total of almost 50,000 learners spoke a language other than English or Irish as their first language (Ćatibušić, 2019).

Russia's invasion of the Ukraine in early 2022 has further influenced Irish migration patterns and the number of multilingual migrant learners in Irish schools. According to statistics, since the beginning of the conflict approximately 84,613 Ukrainian refugees had fled the Ukraine to Ireland by June 2023, with 15,573 Ukrainian children enrolling in Irish schools (Central Statistics Office, 2022, 2023b; Hilliard, 2022). Of this number, it is estimated

that approximately 10 000 of these children have enrolled in Irish primary schools for the 2022/23 school year (Central Statistics Office, 2022). Examining the distribution of migrant leaners across the country, Smyth et al. (2009) investigated the distribution of migrant learners across primary schools in Ireland, determining that urban schools were more likely to have migrant learners than rural schools; potentially due to the availability of jobs in urban areas versus availability in rural Ireland. Additionally, as far back as 2009, they observed that disadvantaged schools were up to two times more likely to have migrant learners than non-disadvantaged schools. Furthermore, English-medium schools were more likely to have migrant students than Irish-medium schools, and non-Catholic schools were also more likely to have higher levels of migrant learners than Catholic schools (Smyth et al., 2009). Looking at school size, the evidence collected by Smyth et al. (2009) suggested that larger schools were more likely to have migrant learners than their smaller counterparts. In summation, larger, urban, English-medium, non-Catholic, disadvantaged schools were more likely, at the time of their research, to have migrant learners in their student bodies. This is supported by more recent research by Fahey, Russell, et al. (2019), who similarly conclude that migrants tend to be concentrated in the urban areas of Dublin, Cork and Limerick, however migrants with the lowest English proficiency tend to be concentrated in smaller towns across the country.

What these statistics demonstrate is that Irish schools are increasingly diverse and simultaneously, Irish schools are under pressure to support these diverse learners (Bruen, 2013, 2021; Central Statistics Office, 2022; Faas et al., 2018; Little & Kirwan, 2019; McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021; Nowlan, 2008). By examining the diversity of nationalities and cultures of migrant learners attending Irish schools, we may grasp an understanding of the level of cultural difference between their home and/or heritage cultures and the wider culture they are exposed to within their local communities and at school; thus, we may also gain a deeper understanding of the challenges such learners may face during their integration and educational processes (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; Smyth et al., 2009).

Increasing diversity in Irish schools can be evidenced in the physical, socio-relational, pedagogical and curricula aspects of schooling (McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021). Within the literature there has been some concern that educational institutions have been unable to adapt effectively, and are not in a position to deal with the changes that increasing globalisation and 'super-diversity' brings (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). For schools in Ireland, the demographic changes over the last few decades coincide with significant, system-wide changes in curriculum, legislation, and management structures. The events surrounding the economic crash of 2007/8, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and housing crisis have also significantly impacted on Irish schools through avenues such as funding, special educational supports for at risk learners, teacher procurement and even school closures, placing additional stress on an already significantly strained system. As a result, meeting the needs of increasing numbers of minority ethnic and linguistic identities has become a significant challenge for schools (Devine et al., 2008; Faas et al., 2018; Nowlan, 2008).

In increasingly diverse contexts such as Ireland, educational settings are essential for facilitating integration, promoting harmony, intercultural awareness, and respect, irrespective of cultural, linguistic, and religious differences (Faas et al., 2018). Schools are important settings where qualities such as tolerance and inclusion may be fostered. Moreover, cultivating a sense of belonging for migrant learners in Irish schools is essential in developing positive relationships, increasing academic achievement, minimising early school leaving and fostering the positive development of dynamic identities (Harmon, 2018). In the next section, the structure of Irish education, and in particular language education, is outlined regarding key policies in this area.

4.1.2   Structure of Language Teaching in Irish Schools: Policy and Provision

In Ireland, educational developments regarding language teaching reflect the wider societal discourses surrounding issues related to nationalism and identity, and increased ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity (Faas et al., 2015). Consequently, challenges remain in developing best practice models that acknowledge the swiftly changing socio-cultural

landscape in Irish schools. Currently, a notable challenge in the Irish context is the absence of a comprehensive strategy or contemporary policy to support school practices (McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021).

Ireland provides state-funded education at primary and secondary level to both Irish and non-Irish nationals resident in the state (Darmody et al., 2022). In Irish primary schools, official policies advocate for bilingualism in two languages, namely Irish and English (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Whilst curriculum documents do outline support for home languages, presently, language education predominantly involves the teaching of English and Irish in three different school contexts: English-medium schools, Gaeltacht schools and all-Irish schools. Consequently, there is a single curriculum for English and two curricula for Irish (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). Whilst the language education landscape in Ireland has undergone significant change over the last thirty years, there is still much area for improvement. Markey (2022, p. 3) reflects that, "While Irish educational policies have indeed shifted to support multiple language acquisition at school, obstacles remain regarding students' ability to harness experiences with different languages". This is supported by Batardière et al. (2023) who argues that whilst there is a common consensus regarding the nature of language and multilingualism amongst Irish stakeholders, policy and practice in regards to this are still lacking. For example, the latest *Primary Language Curriculum 2019* does acknowledge the diverse linguistic resources of learners and positions Irish more centrally than previous curricula, however, the language practices of migrant/heritage languages speakers is still largely misunderstood in the Irish context (Batardière et al., 2023).

Successful foreign language education in Ireland has been beset with difficulties, in part due to the lack of an all-inclusive language-in-education policy (Gasiorowska, 2020). Instead, there are a number of policies that deal with language and bilingual/EAL/migrant learners' linguistic needs (Dillon, 2016). Such policies include *The Official Languages Act*, *The EU Commission's 2005 New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism*, the NCCA *Intercultural Education Strategy 2010-2015*, *The Primary School Curriculum of 1999*, *The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020*, The Council of Europe's *Language-in-education policy Profile of Ireland*, *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*, *Integrate Ireland Language and*

Training benchmarks, *The Languages Connect Policy 2017-2026*, *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, *The European Language Portfolio*, the *Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages* policy, and the NCCA *Primary Language Curriculum 2019*. Within this section, attention is paid to the direct policies influencing migrant learners and the structure of language education in Irish schools.

Whilst equal access to education is a right of all children in Ireland, the level of supports provided for minorities within Irish schools vary, which ultimately impacts on their educational outcomes (Darmody et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; McGinnity et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). In some educational systems in Europe, migrants are introduced to their new school system through an initial phase of integration which includes both linguistic and learning supports through separate classes and lessons (sometimes called preparatory classes) (European Commission, 2019). In Ireland, which follows a mainstreaming approach, migrants are placed directly into mainstream classes from the beginning and provided with additional support from there, usually in the form of removal for language support during specific lessons. Whilst preparatory classes may provide more time and space for migrant learners to adjust to the language of instruction, such classes may hinder successful integration by separating migrants from their native peers (European Commission, 2019).

In addressing educational attainment as an outcome of integration, *The Intercultural Education Strategy 2010-2015* was developed to ensure that educational institutions in Ireland centre inclusion and integration within intercultural learning environments, and allocating resources to support EAL teaching and learning at both primary and post-primary level (Darmody et al., 2022; Department of Education and Skills & Office of the Minister for Intergration, 2010). This policy was designed to support intercultural learning, capacity building for staff and schools, linguistic supports, the development of parental and community engagement, and data gathering for monitoring purposes (Martin et al., 2023). Although the goals of this policy were clearly made, monitoring of these outcomes was inconsistent or absent, with some suggesting that the responsibility for achieving these

outcomes was left largely to schools and educators (Martin et al., 2023). Due to the impact of the 2007/8 recession on funding, budget cuts resulted in reduced support in this area.

Whilst there has been no direct successor of the *Intercultural Education Strategy*, the *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020* was designed with 12 targeted initiatives aimed to support educational integration (Government of Ireland, 2017). This policy sets out actions for important issues such as curriculum reform, enrolment/admission policies, linguistic supports, teacher training, racism and discrimination, the promotion of intercultural attitudes and parental participation (Martin et al., 2023). Currently, linguistic supports are merged with SEN supports and it is difficult to determine how much funding and attention is allocated specifically for supporting EAL learners in Irish schools (Darmody et al., 2022). Smyth (2016) identifies that within the Irish education system, institutions possess a considerable level of discretion as to how they are run and how resources are managed; this includes approaches to supporting migrant learners through English language supports, language assessment, tuition and special educational needs.

Examining the official curriculum governing primary school education in Ireland, the discussion below considers *The Primary School Curriculum of 1999* and the more recently adopted *Primary Language Curriculum 2019* and *The Primary Curriculum Framework of 2023*. *The Primary School Curriculum of 1999*, has until recently, been the primary curriculum document informing teaching and learning in Irish primary schools. Language is one of the seven areas outlined in this policy (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). This policy advocated for a mainstream or dual-language approach to language education (Wright & Baker, 2017). Furthermore, this policy outlined an additive bilingual framework for the teaching of Irish and English in primary schools. It should be noted, however, that since the publication of this policy, the language landscape of Ireland has changed drastically (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). Consequently, it was argued by Ó Duibhir and Cummins (2012) that the *Primary School Curriculum* was not suitable to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population in Ireland, which in 2016, included 47,476 non-Irish children between the ages of 5 and 12, a number steadily increasing (Central Statistics Office, 2016; O'Toole & Skinner, 2018).

Whilst this curriculum does emphasise that learners should reach their full potential as diverse individuals (NCCA, 1999), it also assumes a stable, connected relationship exists between homes and schools and does little to emphasise the importance of including home language development in schools. By emphasising the importance of the home in the child's development, the policy inadvertently places the responsibility for the maintenance of the home language on caregivers (NCCA, 1999). Furthermore, whilst the policy acknowledges children's' existing experience and knowledge, in the case of migrant learners, this may be in languages other than English or Irish (NCCA, 1999). Additionally, despite the status of Irish as the country's first language, and its importance within the *Primary School Curriculum of 1999*, research demonstrates that English is preferentially taught, over Irish, to migrant learners (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Simultaneously many learners, such as those who arrive in Ireland after a certain age, do not speak English or have special needs, are able to apply for Irish exemptions, thus leading to a lack of proficiency in the first constitutionally recognised language of Ireland (Demie & Lewis, 2018; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006).

Whilst the issue of EAL teaching and learning attracts much interest among researchers and policy makers, there is limited consensus regarding what works in increasing EAL learner achievement in schools; this lack of consensus ultimately influences curriculum policies (Demie & Lewis, 2018). In response to the need for an updated curriculum which acknowledges the changing linguistic landscape of Irish education, a new curriculum has recently been introduced, in conjunction with teacher input: *The Primary Language Curriculum (2019)*.

The Primary Language Curriculum is now the primary policy informing language teaching for all learners and in all Irish primary schools. This includes English-medium schools, Gaeltacht schools, Irish-medium schools and special schools (NCCA, 2019). Whilst the focus of this curriculum is on the teaching of Irish and English, the policy highlights the importance of valuing and promoting all children's' home languages and acknowledges the changing demographics of Irish schools (NCCA, 2019). More specifically, the policy aims to integrate English and Irish in the classroom whilst simultaneously valuing the linguistic resources that learners bring with them into the classroom, encourage positive attitudes

towards language and literacy, and supporting teachers in helping their learners to develop their linguistic abilities (NCCA, 2019). The policy states,

> It is an integrated curriculum that makes connections across and within languages and that seeks to support the transfer of skills between languages. Integration between the two languages supports teachers to plan for and progress children's learning in Language 1 and Language 2 of the school, whether English or Irish. This builds on the approaches to integration described in the 1999 curriculum, while supporting multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches to language learning (NCCA, 2019, p. 4).

The policy does acknowledge the swiftly changing linguistic composition of Irish primary school learners and make some reference to the needs of EAL learners. In such cases where learners speak a language other than Irish or English in the home, the policy highlights the importance of a strong partnership between the school and the home with the aim of developing learners' first school language whilst simultaneously maintaining their home language. Whilst this acknowledgement is made, it is evident that the focus of this policy document is the development of English and Irish. This clearly evidenced by the statement on page 4 of the curriculum document: "The Primary Language Curriculum supports teaching and learning in English and Irish" (NCCA, 2019). Following this statement, the document continues by emphasising a focus on the integration of language teaching focusing on these two languages.

In addition to the implementation of the *Primary Language Curriculum of 2019*, the NCCA has most recently introduced the *Primary Curriculum Framework of 2023* (NCCA, 2023b). This curriculum acknowledges that,

> Education plays a pivotal role in contributing to a democratic, equitable, and just, Irish society. It supports the sense of identity and belonging of all children as members of their community while also contributing to matters of international and global priority. It enables children to see themselves as individuals, with rights and responsibilities, and as part of social groups, including in the classroom and school, the local community, and national and global contexts. The framework recognises children's experiences in primary and special schools as a time of 'being' and 'becoming' – both celebrating children's current childhood experiences, and looking to their futures and what might be (NCCA, 2023b, p. 3).

Essentially this policy aims to act as a framework, or blueprint, for guiding teaching and learning in Irish schools for the coming years, building on the strengths of the previous curriculum documents whilst identifying emerging priorities (NCCA, 2023b). At the time of this thesis this policy had only recently been introduced and therefore it remains to be seen what effect this policy will have on language teaching and linguistic identity development in Irish schools.

In the context of the current research, how children and their families experience belonging at the micro-level in their school environment, particularly regarding their cultural, identity and linguistic development, and the extent to which the curriculum itself supports the development of their dynamic multilingual identities, is of importance (Martin et al., 2023). In the next section, challenges facing migrant learners in Irish primary schools are outlined, with a specific focus on issues which may impact on their linguist development and overall identity formation.

4.1.3   *Challenges facing Migrant Learners in Irish Schools*

Access to education interacts in complex ways with migrant integration (Staring et al., 2017). Education acts as a stabilising influence which may increase socioeconomic mobility through academic achievement, access to social services and can also increase confidence, particularly in young migrant learners (Martin et al., 2023). However, migrants may also have negative educational experiences due to educators' poor knowledge of teaching in diverse contexts, rigid school norms, a lack of adequate supports, failed integration and exposure to racism and discrimination (Martin et al., 2023; Smyth et al., 2004). Furthermore, the extent to which migrant children feel a sense of belonging within school communities is impacted by their relationships with their teachers, their friendships with their peers and their wider interactions within the school community (Martin et al., 2023). In the next sections, documented challenges facing migrant learners in the Irish school system are considered, particularly regarding linguistic and academic supports and their social interactions within their school settings, including experiences of racism, bullying and discrimination.

4.1.3.1 Linguistic Supports for Migrant Learners

In the previous sections the increased diversity within Irish society is demonstrated and the diversity within this migrant group itself was discussed (Byrne et al., 2010; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). Considering this heterogeneity of migrant learners described in the previous section, one aspect which evidence tells us does vary, is their level of English language proficiency (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019). Data indicates that there is significant variation amongst migrant learners in terms of English language proficiency and the possession of a home language besides English/ Irish (Smyth et al., 2009). Statistics tell us that the top 10 most frequently spoken languages by migrants in Ireland include Polish, French, Romanian, Lithuanian, Spanish, German, Russian, Portuguese, Chinese and Arabic (Central Statistics Office, 2016). Whilst in Ireland every learner has *equal access* to an education, not all learners have the same *opportunities* and *outcomes*; this includes children from migrant backgrounds (Darmody et al., 2022). Language proficiency in the language of teaching and learning has been found to have a significant impact on the academic achievement of migrant learners (Darmody & Smyth, 2018; Siarova & Essomba, 2014; Staring et al., 2017). Research in the Irish context shows that migrant learners, in comparison to their native peers, consistently underperform academically (Darmody et al., 2022). Furthermore, there is evidence showing that differences in academic achievement are evident between Irish and migrant groups themselves, including reading achievement and verbal skills (Darmody et al., 2022). In the context of this research, the relationship between language skills and academic performance amongst migrant learners in Irish schools, is of relevance. Existing research highlights that for migrant learners for whom English is a foreign language, language barriers are one of the greatest issues hindering successful integration (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023; Siarova & Essomba, 2014; Smyth et al., 2009; Staring et al., 2017). The ESRI argues that, given the importance of English proficiency in the Irish context, a lack of English proficiency may influence academic performance in a variety of school subjects and consequently, may further perpetuate cycles of disadvantage (McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). Research demonstrates that the ways in which schools may marginalise ethnic and linguistic

minorities may further entrench social inequalities and linguistic hierarchies (Dillon, 2016; Toolan, 2003).

As outlined in the previous section, research demonstrates that educational institutions in Ireland have struggled to adapt effectively in meeting the needs of a growing number of minority ethnic and linguistic learners (Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Devine et al., 2008). One such area where learners from migrant backgrounds in particular, require targeted supports includes linguistic supports, which are needed to ensure that they have similar opportunities and outcomes within the education system as their native peers (Darmody et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). This support, however, requires specialist EAL teachers and resources.

Evidence shows that prior to 1999, schools were left with little to no resources or support from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in teaching migrant children (Devine, 2005; Nowlan, 2008). With the implementation of the Language Support Service during the 1999-2000 academic year, migrant learners were able to access two years of EAL support in primary schools through Language Support Teachers (LST) (Little & Kirwan, 2019; Lodge & Lynch, 2004; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). In Irish primary schools, for each set of fourteen EAL learners, one LST could be appointed on a year-to-year basis (Lodge & Lynch, 2004). The primary task of LST's was to support learners in developing both conversational and academic proficiency in English (Murtagh & Francis, 2012). It should be noted, however, that research shows that it is unlikely that academic proficiency in an additional language may be achieved in this time period (O'Toole & Skinner, 2018; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). This form of support continued throughout the Celtic Tiger period, with the number of migrant learners increasing and as a result, the number of LST's allocated to schools also increasing (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Due to the economic crisis of 2008, a number of financial cutbacks were implemented by the DES, which resulted in the number of LST's assigned to schools being decreased significantly, despite the fact that the number of migrant learners requiring this service increased during this period (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Consequently, schools were once again in the position of providing support to rapidly increasing numbers of migrant learners with limited numbers

of LST's and greatly reduced support from the DES (Murtagh & Francis, 2012). A similar system of support to the Language Support Service has not been implemented since. Furthermore, after the 2008 recession, language supports were combined with special needs education through the Special Education Teaching model (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). As a result, monitoring of expenditure on specific EAL tuition and support in Irish schools is not possible. According to this model, language supports are assigned to schools based on the number of learners requiring support; with additional support granted to schools with higher concentrations of EAL learners. Further supports include the provision of language support guidelines for all teachers, in-service provision for support teachers and the distribution of language assessment kits to schools (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023).

Cummins (2019) observes that in Ireland, many schools serving socially disadvantaged migrant learners fail to provide language instruction which generates both cognitive and affective engagement from learners. Linguistic minority learners are often defined as being 'non-English speaking,' and are thus thrust into an assimilationist model which focuses on English language learning and fails to promote the learning of other languages (Bryan, 2010). Despite international consensus that learning additional languages may assist with the improvement of literacy and communication skills, and overall metacognitive awareness (Bruen, 2013), on the whole, dynamic approaches to language education are not being employed in Irish schools. Instead, monoglossic ideologies which encourage assimilationist approaches to language, reinforce language hierarchies, support the hegemony of English and emphasise developing proficiency in English at all costs, pervades (Dillon, 2016; Dixon & Peake, 2008). Specifically, research conducted by Nowlan (2008), Bryan (2010), Ó Laoire (2012), Little and Kirwan (2019) and Whittaker (2019) demonstrate evidence that a deficit ideology regarding minority languages and the learning of English as an additional language, persists in Irish schools.

This approach reinforces deficit assumptions regarding the learning capacities of bilingual students (Devine, 2005; Nowlan, 2008). Furthermore, the languages of bi/multilingual learners in Irish schools are often unheard, or even silenced, in the classroom, as their languages are interpreted as hindering learning (Ó Laoire & Hélot, 2011). Reflecting

on the problematising of these learners' linguistic repertoires, Mahon (2017, p. 265) states that,

> Irish students from linguistically diverse backgrounds are not encouraged to speak and write their home language as an aid to further language learning or as an expression of developing self-identity and developing self-esteem. Rather, these students have their home language considered more typically in terms of a difficulty or a burden.

Consequently, the diverse linguistic backgrounds of learners are not being celebrated, or leveraged, in line with what current research and language-in-education policy in Ireland encourages (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). Ó Laoire (2005) reflects that without access to their home languages in the classroom, migrant learners and other linguistic minorities in Irish schools are being assimilated into a homogenous, English language culture. This process of English assimilation is once again reinforced by the limited role of Irish in mainstream schools. For example, the process of exemptions for young people arriving in Ireland after their 12th birthday or those with SEN, and the lack of a differentiated curriculum for Irish (Nic Aindriú et al., 2020).

Consequently, the process of integration for these learners is inherently affected, with the estrangement from the language of their parents and grandparents, and their ethnic and cultural origins, being the price (Ó Laoire, 2005). Furthermore, evidence suggests that for these minority learners, this assimilation process may lead to a linguistic insecurity towards their home/heritage languages, in addition to the stigmatisation of their own language practices, which may result in the preferment of the language of the dominant group and a loss of identification with their home/heritage languages and culture (Fishman, 1991; García & Lin, 2017a). From a linguistic human rights framework, evidence suggests that the rights of linguistic minorities in Irish schools are not being met (Dillon, 2016; Toolan, 2003). At the level of the individual, such policy supports the recognition and respect of all learners' home languages; in the classroom, this may be done through teachers' active challenging of linguistic hierarchies and inequality through recognising the value of each student's linguistic repertoire and acting upon this (Dillon, 2016; Toolan, 2003). However, Dillon (2016) observes that in Ireland, many teachers have not paid adequate attention to such intercultural concerns,

possibly due to overloaded school agendas and a lack of teacher training. Consequently, these teachers remain unaware of their learners' full linguistic repertoires (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). Echoing this argument, Wallen and Kelly-Holmes (2017) highlight that teachers' awareness of the linguistic diversity within their classrooms is an essential aspect of supporting EAL learners' success. Consequently, what is clear is a need for linguistic and cultural diversity to be centred in language education in Irish schools.

Due to a lack of a comprehensive policy dealing with migration and language issues in Ireland, the academic and linguistic development of migrant learners appears to depend too heavily on school-specific factors, such as space allocation, teacher support, teacher training and qualifications and overall resources (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). As a result, migrant learners with little or no linguistic proficiency in the language through which the curriculum is delivered, may experience difficulties succeeding academically with limited support (Nowlan, 2008). These learners may find it difficult to access the curriculum as they simultaneously tackle a lack of institutional support for their home languages, alongside developing their English language proficiency (Nowlan, 2008). Demie and Lewis (2018) argue that in order for migrant learners to have full access to the curriculum, they need to be fluent in English. Consequently, an important part of supporting migrant learners involves the effective assessment of their language proficiency and the implementation of appropriate support measures to develop their proficiency in the languages of the curriculum.

According to Smyth et al. (2009), the majority of migrant learners to Irish schools require some form of linguistic support on first arrival. Whatever the age of the learner, O'Toole and Skinner (2018) reflect that these learners are faced with the significant task of 'catching-up' to their English speaking peers in a very short space of time. This includes developing the required English language skills to successfully navigate informal school spaces and accessing the academic curriculum. On arrival in an Irish school, the language proficiency of the learner is assessed via the Primary School Assessment Kit (Murtagh & Francis, 2012). Following this, a support strategy is implemented, which, evidence suggests takes the form of withdrawal from mainstream classes for EAL language support (Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Smyth et al., 2009; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Logistical limitations and a

lack of adequate resources are often cited as the reason for the utilisation of this method, despite the evidence suggesting that this may not be the most effective method of EAL support (Smyth et al., 2009; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Bryan (2010) highlights the exclusionary and marginalising impact that such withdrawal may have on EAL learners. Since these learners spend the bulk of their day in their mainstream classroom, it should be noted that the primary form of support provided for these learners is provided by classroom and subject teachers, often whom have not been provided with specific training to deal with migrant learners and EAL support (Faas et al., 2018; Smyth et al., 2009). Evidence in research ranging from the early 2000s to more recently (including both the ESRI and the OECD) indicates that pre-service and in-service training in Ireland does not adequately prepare teachers for the challenges of a multilingual classroom (Batardière et al., 2023; Markey, 2022; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Smyth et al., 2009; Taguma et al., 2009).

The literature indicates that some schools have faced difficulty in distinguishing between migrant learners and other linguistic minorities which require EAL support and those who require support for a defined learning difficulty (Bryan, 2010; Devine, 2005; Whittaker, 2019). The lack of appropriate linguistic assessment and support for EAL learners, which is separately defined from learning support, has also been a source of contention (Bryan, 2010; Devine, 2005; Whittaker, 2019). Nowlan (2008, p. 257) states,

> Any specific language support provided to students should be based on a thorough initial assessment of individual oral, aural and written language skills and should consider educational background and literacy skills in the student's first language (Martin Irish Educational Studies 257 and Miller 1999; Ward 2004). Language ability should not be equated with academic ability and the placing of bilingual students in inappropriate age or ability groupings should be avoided. A clear distinction should be made between special educational needs (SEN) provision and language support provision for bilingual students.

Reflecting on the issues presented above, Nowlan (2008) and Little and Kirwan (2019) highlight the need for effective long-term supports which provide language support beyond initial fluency, and which are based on integrated support rather than withdrawal from the classroom. Furthermore, teaching should be based on best practice in additional language/

bilingual education. Consequently, it is argued that a comprehensive language-in-education policy that deals specifically with the assessment, language teaching and integration of newcomer/EAL/linguistic minorities into Irish schools, is developed and implemented.

Within the broader context of increased diversity due to globalising forces, Nowlan (2008) reflects that Irish schools must adapt to ensure that the quality of education being provided adequately prepares all learners for life both in Ireland and in an increasingly diverse and globalised world. In support of this argument, O'Toole and Skinner (2018, p. 4) state, "teachers must provide differentiated instruction for pupils whose first language is not English, to ensure that these students are fully included in teaching and learning, and that their achievement is on a par with their English-speaking peers". Consequently, the needs of all learners must be monitored to ensure that they are met; this includes minority groupings such as Traveller children, migrants, ethnic and linguistic minorities and chronically-ill and disabled learners (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2016). Research demonstrates that there is growing consensus regarding children in culturally diverse populations; these learners tend to be better prepared to understand the variety of perspectives of their peers from different cultural and religious backgrounds (Faas et al., 2018). Additionally, increased diversity in educational settings benefits not only the school, but the broader community through the enhancement of intercultural awareness and increased tolerance towards minority groups (McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). Schools are in a unique and powerful position to promote diversity and inclusion within communities (McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). Consequently, the cultural and linguistic diversity of learners within Irish schools must be acknowledged so that these learners' full linguistic repertoires can be employed as positive assets in the classroom.

4.1.3.2 Social Inclusion, Racism and Discrimination in Irish Schools:

Social inclusion, or feeling a sense of belonging to a group, is particularly important to young people (Darmody et al., 2022). Schools are important community spaces in which the linguistic development, overall academic achievement and wider social inclusion of migrant

learners can be fostered (Darmody et al., 2022; Martin et al., 2023). They are also sites where experiences of racism, discrimination and bullying may negatively impact on their social inclusion and academic performance (Priest et al., 2019). According to the European Commission (2019), children of primary school age who speak the language of teaching and learning in their homes were less likely to experience bullying at school and felt a greater sense of belonging. Conversely, children who speak other languages in the home are more likely to experience bullying at school and feel less social inclusion (Darmody et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). Considering this, alongside the evidence presented in the previous section, it is evident that supporting language acquisition of the language of teaching and learning is important for overall academic achievement, linguistic development, participation and social inclusion (Martin et al., 2023).

Relationships with teachers play a crucial role in developing a sense of belonging and social inclusion for migrant learners (Martin et al., 2023). Certainly, the expectations, and assumptions, that teachers make about their learners impacts not only on their sense of belonging but also on their identity formation. Some research in the Irish context indicates that Irish teachers show a lack of understanding regarding the experiences, and challenges, of migrant learners under their charge (Darmody et al., 2022). Certainly, research by Garrat and Mutwarasibo (2012) indicates that adults tend to underestimate the extent of racial discrimination, and its long-term effects, on children. In so doing, teachers may both unintentionally or intentionally promote negative social stereotypes (Darmody et al., 2022). This may be due to a lack of training and institutional support, as research shows that teachers do not feel equipped to or capable of addressing issues of racism and bullying in schools, or their adoption of racialised, colonial logics of language (Garrat & Mutwarasibo, 2012; Whittaker, 2019). Research conducted by Devine (2005) indicates that Irish teachers tend to hold more positive opinions regarding children from Eastern Europe, whilst children from Asia and Africa, and Muslim and Roma learners, are viewed less favourably. Martin et al. (2023) identify that the expectations, and related assumptions that Irish teachers hold regarding their migrant students influences students' level of participation and academic achievement. In their research, participants indicated that feeling loved and encouraged by

their teachers made them happy and motivated to learn (Martin et al., 2023). In research conducted by Martin et al. (2023) participants indicated that friendships were also an essential component of their happiness and sense of belonging in their school communities; certainly, the opportunity to make friendships with peers may not just impact upon migrant children's sense of happiness and belonging, but may also impact their self-esteem, identity development and linguistic competence.

Issues of racism and bullying have been identified by migrant parents as one of the central issues negatively affecting their children's performance at school (Martin et al., 2023). In the Irish context, evidence demonstrates that migrant learners face higher levels of bullying, racism, discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping than their Irish peers (European Commission, 2019; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). Additionally, migrants in Ireland are failed by a lack of positive representation in public spheres, restricted social mobility and assimilationist pressures regarding limited ideations of Irish identity (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). Furthermore, evidence suggests that there are marked differences between the levels of racism and discrimination experienced by different minority groups in Ireland (McGinnity, Grotti, et al., 2018; McGinnity & Kingston, 2017; Smyth et al., 2009). Nationality and ethnicity have also been shown to correlate with different levels of bullying and racist behaviour in Irish schools (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2016; Devine et al., 2008). For instance, in 2016, data indicated that Traveller children, immigrants and children with chronic illness/ disability were less likely to report having three or more friends of the same gender, were more likely to be bullied, had significantly lower levels of literacy and numeracy skills and lower self-esteem that their Irish counterparts (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2016). Additionally, visible minority groupings such as those of darker ethnicities are also known to experience greater levels of bullying in Irish schools (Garrat & Mutwarasibo, 2012). At school level, the use of racial slurs to create an 'othering' of migrant learners has been evidenced, with the majority of bullying incidents taking place out of view from teachers and other authorities (Garrat & Mutwarasibo, 2012).

Experiences of discrimination and bullying are associated with a host of negative outcomes, including anxiety, low self-esteem, depression and other health issues (Darmody

et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022). Findings by Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022) are of particular concern, as evidence shows that young people of migrant origin tend to diminish the effects of discrimination and are largely unaware of their rights and reporting structures in this regard.

According to Garrat and Mutwarasibo (2012), one of the greatest challenges in combatting racism and bullying in schools is the reluctance of adults and other stakeholders within school communities to recognise the prevalence and seriousness of such incidents and, furthermore, the belief that all children experience issues of bullying; consequently, this is not a unique phenomenon facing migrant learners. Regarding integration and minority language education in Ireland, a pedagogical paradigm shift is needed to transform classrooms into spaces where teachers are able to support migrant learners culturally, socially, and linguistically. Supporting this argument, Harmon (2018) suggests that a holistic approach to diversity, involving the whole-school (including school management, teachers, parents and the wider community) is needed to fully embrace interculturalism and diverse teaching practices in schools. It is widely acknowledged within the literature that a holistic approach to diversity and intercultural education is the most successful method of encouraging inclusion and belonging amongst migrants and other minority learners (Harmon, 2018; Ó Laoire, 2012). Harmon (2018) suggests that this may be achieved through greater emphasis on creating spaces where the cultural and historical backgrounds of all learners may be shared, providing bi/multilingual education where possible, emphasising teaching methodologies which centre the strengths and contributions of all students in the class, and finally, encouraging inter-cultural and inter-ethnic co-operation between classmates. These suggestions are supported by Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022), who argue for the following policy recommendations: 1) education based anti-racism public awareness campaigns, 2) ensure awareness of reporting structures for such incidents, 3) inclusion of young people in the design and implementation of awareness campaigns, 4) increase the visibility, and positive representation of, migrants and other minorities in public discourse. By implementing these recommendations, prejudice and discrimination may be reduced and a positive self-identity and sense of belonging amongst migrant and other

minority learners may be nurtured. If migrant children are to be provided with the same life-chances as their Irish peers, targeted measures of support are required at both state and school level (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019).

4.2 Homework completion for EAL, Migrant and Heritage language learners in Irish primary schools:

In the previous section I outlined challenges facing migrant learners attending Irish schools, including linguistic supports and migrants' experiences of racism and discrimination. In these previous sections the focus on a holistic, whole-school approach to diversity, as suggested by Harmon (2018), was emphasised. One aspect of support which has not received as much focus in the literature is the act of completing homework, particularly regarding EAL, migrant and heritage language learners. Some areas related to homework completion in this context which have been widely researched includes the relationship between homework completion and academic achievement (H. Cooper, 1989; Cooper, 1994; Cooper et al., 2006) and levels of parental engagement in migrant contexts (Bräu et al., 2017; Kim, 2022; Patall et al., 2008).

Homework can be defined as, "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (H. Cooper, 1989, p. 86). The act of completing homework is an everyday routine, or daily ritual, for many learners that attend school worldwide (Fox, 2009). For those who support homework practices is considered as having the potential to extend the learning that takes place in the classroom (Tam & Chan, 2016). Homework may foster self-discipline and a sense of responsibility and provide opportunities to practice skills such as problem-solving and increase learning-task involvement, and therefore the potential to contribute towards improved academic achievement (H. Cooper, 1989; Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; North & Pillay, 2002; Tam & Chan, 2016). However, there is also evidence which indicates that ineffective homework tasks can have negative consequences loss of interest in school work, fatigue, decreased access to free time, tensions with caregivers and increased academic gaps between high and low achievers

(North & Pillay, 2002). According to Wallinger (2000), determining the effectiveness of homework is a challenge due to the many different variables influencing effectiveness. Such variables may include 1) amount, 2) purpose, 3) skills area used, 4) degree of individualisation, 5) degree of student choice, 6) completion, and 7) social context (Cooper, 1994; Wallinger, 2000).

As I will demonstrate in this thesis, homework can be conceptualised as a prominent daily routine which forms a symbolic bridge between what happens in the school and what happens in the home (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). In this thesis homework is conceptualised as a unique transitional space in which official and unofficial language policies and informal language policies informing social/peer environments at school, interact with FLP through space and time, and the activities involved in the act of completing homework, an activity which itself is governed by a set of actions and routines. This supports the position of researchers such as Schwartz and Verschik (2013) and Curdt-Christiansen (2020) that identified homework as a period of time in which FLP may be defined and enacted, perhaps in tension with the wider language policies of schooling.

Access to adequate resources and caregivers' ability to assist with tasks is an important factor influencing successful homework completion, particularly in contexts of migration (Darmody et al., 2022). Parental involvement in homework completion may impact on integration and academic achievement (Darmody et al., 2022; Kim, 2022; North & Pillay, 2002; Patall et al., 2008). Resultantly, parental involvement in their children's homework has received increased focus from researchers and policymakers alike (Kim, 2022; Patall et al., 2008). In the US, the *2001 No Child Left Behind* policy emphasised the importance of parental involvement in education as a goal for schools, whilst in the UK parental involvement in education has been emphasised as a mechanism through which social inequalities may be reduced (Kim, 2022).

Despite the depth of research focusing on the positive benefits of parental involvement on successful homework completion and related academic success, there is also research identifying negative outcomes for caregivers and learners (Levin et al., 1997; Patall et al., 2008). Patall et al. (2008) identify that providing such supports may take a toll on caregivers,

with fatigue, emotional costs and increased tensions between caregivers and children consequences when caregivers do not possess adequate skills to support homework tasks successfully. Darmody et al. (2022, p. 59) state, "if parents lack the requisite language skills, home–school liaison may be negatively affected. In addition, parents with poor English language skills may not be able to support their children with their learning or homework". This argument is supported by Roberts (2022, p. 2) who argues that,

> Even if these parents are sufficiently knowledgeable about the subject of the homework in question, this does not confer the linguistic knowledge required to understand written instructions in homework tasks. This may then lead to a lack of understanding on the part of the parent due to an inability to connect linguistic forms to known entities, concepts, or notions.

North and Pillay (2002) identify a number of different tasks which may be included in homework activities, this is represented in Table 2.

Table 2: Types of Homework Tasks (North & Pillay, 2002)

Types of homework task
Doing grammar exercises
Doing guided writing exercises
Doing corrections
Doing reading comprehension questions
Writing compositions (free writing)
Using the dictionary to find the meaning of words
Reading the comprehension passage in advance
Writing new vocabulary in sentences
Making an outline for a composition
Practising reading aloud
Extended reading (e.g. short stories, novels)
Writing summaries
Writing dialogues (free writing)

Types of homework task
Checking/finding out rules in a grammar book
Editing and revising compositions
Memorizing vocabulary
Doing research on a topic
Practising oral dialogues
Reading for fun (e.g. comics, jokes, magazines)
Doing puzzles, quizzes, crosswords, etc.
Preparing for a role play
Listening to TV/radio programmes
Keeping a diary
Practising choral speaking
Carrying out interviews
Memorizing poems, songs, etc.

Considering the diverse range of tasks included in this list, it is evident that both learners and their caregivers may require more advanced levels of linguistic proficiency, including academic language, in the language of the school curriculum to complete such tasks. Furthermore, they require the ability to code-switch or translanguage effectively between different names languages during task completion (Svensson et al., 2022). In the case of the current research, this not only includes English but is also extended to parental knowledge of Irish and their ability to assist with Irish language homework tasks. Research by Devine (2009) in the Irish context indicates that in cases where one caregiver was fluent in English, learners were able to draw on this resource to assist with homework completion. Furthermore, the role of older siblings and school peers in aiding with English and Irish homework was evidenced as a resource drawn on by EAL/migrant learners in completing tasks. This evidence is supported by Whittaker (2019) who, in investigating the experiences of migrant learners in Irish primary schools, evidenced that migrant learners experienced challenges in completing homework tasks, specifically when English language proficiency of caregivers was low. In such instances learners were required to be resourceful, drawing on

peers, extended family, technology and school supports to complete homework tasks successfully. Such examples demonstrate the hurdles that often go unseen, which migrant and other minority learners must confront on a daily basis whilst completing these 'routine daily tasks'.

Whilst there may be benefits to the completion of homework, particularly when parental involvement is evidenced, it must be recognised that schools and teachers play a central role in the design and implementation of homework tasks (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Fitzmaurice et al., 2020; Tam & Chan, 2016). Fitzmaurice et al. (2020) conceptualise homework as, "being a three-phase process which is initiated and evaluated at school but performed at home without direct teacher supervision or support". According to Fitzmaurice et al. (2020), whilst teachers are responsible for setting homework tasks and assessing the completion and accuracy of the completed task and providing feedback, the teacher's role in homework does not receive the same level of attention as other pedagogical practices. Furthermore, homework is an element of schooling not regulated by the national curriculum in Ireland, and is inadequately addressed in most teacher training programs (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020).

Thus far in this thesis it is evident that whilst some action has been taken and national and school levels to support migrant learners in Irish schools, inequalities in the school experience remain (Devine, 2005, 2009; Devine et al., 2008; Ó Laoire, 2012). Given this reality, it is important to examine how homework is experienced by migrant learners in the Irish context, and how learners and their caregivers navigate this complex process. As evidenced in the previous section, many teachers have not paid adequate attention to such intercultural concerns, possibly due to overloaded school agendas and a lack of teacher training. As Clarke (2022, p. 790) states, "Some educators take it for granted that children go home to households where a variety of resources to complete homework tasks are readily available". Consequently, these teachers may remain unaware of the challenges experienced by such learners or feel limited in their ability to provide adequate supports (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). Given that research shows that teachers design and implement homework based on their own beliefs and perceptions regarding the assigned tasks (Tam & Chan, 2016), it may be possible that

teachers are not fully aware of the challenges faced by migrant learners in adequately completing homework tasks. This includes the complex set of linguistic skills required of both the learner and caregiver which they require to navigate the task at hand or the complex transitions between school language policies and family language policies. This issue is explored in depth regarding data from the currents research in section 8.3. It is argued in this thesis that if schools are to provide adequate and holistic supports for migrant learners attending Irish schools, the process and routine of homework needs to be included in these conversations.

4.3 Summary of Theoretical Concepts:

In Chapters Two through Four, I have presented the relevant contextual and theoretical research informing this thesis. In Chapter Two I focused on the wider literature on multilingualism, particularly in global contexts. This discussion included ideologies informing approaches to languages education, in particular that of translanguaging, which will be discussed further in light of the data as the thesis progresses. In this chapter I also provide a review of language policy research (both language-in-education policy and FLP) and how disjunctures between officially stated policies and what occurs in practice may be evident. Such disjunctures are particularly relevant in relation to the data informing this thesis, and are discussed further in section 8.1.

In Chapter Three, I highlighted the importance of successful identity development for migrant learners in Irish schools. We know that children need to develop a positive sense of self, group identity and a positive feeling of belonging within their communities (Kerrins & La Morgia, 2023). Supporting the positive linguistic development, or identities, of migrant students forms part of this overall identity development. Furthermore, linguistic identities connect migrant learners to their new communities but also to their families and heritage cultures (Kerrins & La Morgia, 2023). In this chapter, I discussed the theory of identity development in global contexts, exploring key concepts and theory. I demonstrated the connection between language and identity research before exploring the concept of dynamic multilingual

identities. This evidence is particularly relevant to the data generated in this study and is discussed further in section 8.2.

In Chapter Four I examined the structure of language education in Irish schools, with a particular focus on increasing migration and linguistic diversity in the Irish context before outlining some specific challenges faces by migrant and EAL learners in Irish schools. I concluded the chapter by considering homework completion in migrant and multilingual contexts. The research in relation to homework completion is of particular importance considering the data generated in this thesis and is discussed in section 8.3.

In the next chapter, I progress the thesis by considering the research design informing my approach to this research.

5 Research Design

Thus far, I have presented the research context, theoretical framework and relevant literature informing this research. In this chapter, I reintroduce the research objectives and related questions, and provide an extensive consideration of my research design choices. This includes reviewing different approaches used to investigate the questions addressed in this thesis. I then discuss the nature of linguistic ethnography in great detail, includes a review of ethnographic data generation instruments and how I went about generating and analysing the data involved in this research. This research included two families, encompassing five children. I continue the chapter by discussing participant recruitment and discuss the details regarding the participating families and the related research settings. I then discuss the typical methods of data analysis employed in qualitative research before discussing the primary form of analysis utilised in this research, Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2022) and how this method was applied in this research. I conclude by reflecting upon the ethical implications involved in ethnographic research.

5.1 Review of Research Questions:

In this thesis I employed linguistic ethnography to investigate linguistic identity development amongst multilingual migrant learners living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools. I explored the language policies and practices of these learners and their caregivers in the home, and the language policies and practices informing learners' language experiences in their school environments, focusing on how learners' linguistic identities are supported or otherwise. Considering the complex research context informing this research, a central aim was to investigate how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. Finally, in this thesis I aimed to explore the routine of homework as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with

family language policy through space and time in complex ways which may influence learners' dynamic multilingual language development.

Based on these aims, the following questions were developed to guide the ethnographic explorations of this research:

1) How do school and national language policies and practices and FLP interact to support or otherwise, the development of dynamic, multilingual identities amongst migrant learners at primary level?

2) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts?

3) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers navigate homework as a transitional space in which school and national LPP, and family language policy, interact?

5.2 Research Design:

Language and identity have been investigated from a number of different paradigmatic perspectives, using a variety of different methodologies and methods. In this section, I provide an overview of different paradigms informing linguistic and educational research and discuss the research design informing this research.

5.2.1 Paradigms, Ontology and Epistemology:

All researchers have their own view of what constitutes knowledge and truth; these views inform our thinking about ourselves, society and the world around us (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). These views can be referred to as paradigms. Paradigms are overarching values or belief systems that form the foundation of research theories (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Paradigms inform the research problem, the accompanying research questions, the research

design and how one organises and interprets data (Durdella, 2017). Examples of such paradigms include positivism, post-positivism and constructivist approaches to research. Paradigms consist of four elements, namely ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). For a detailed overview of these concepts see Chilisa and Kawulich (2012). As paradigms inform our philosophical orientation, our paradigmatic choices have significant implications for decisions made throughout the research process (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Thus, paradigms inform our research; including how we tackle problems, how we organise the research design, how we approach data generation, and how we analyse data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Durdella, 2017; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Particular paradigms have come to be associated with certain research methodologies, and within applied linguistics research has been undertaken from a number of different paradigmatical stances. Positivist approaches are informed by realism and critical realism and take the ontological stance that reality is a knowable, objective truth (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). Research conducted from a positivistic or post-positivistic paradigm typically takes a quantitative, experimental stance which generally produces numerical data. This includes questionnaires, observations, controlled testing and experiments. Quantitative approaches also feature large sample sizes and often, randomly selected participants (Abbuhl & Mackey, 2017). From this approach researchers may seek to find answers to their research questions which are generalizable and govern the world we live in, i.e., 'the truth' (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). Within applied linguistics examples of quantitative research focused on language and identity includes census and large-scale language surveys, which are useful for obtaining rich data from large groups, demographic data and for the generalizability of the results (Leeman, 2018; Rezaei, 2017). Other quantitative studies within the wider field of SLA might, for example, attempt to measure language proficiency, performance in an L2 or make comparisons between accents using specialised software (Abbuhl & Mackey, 2017). Some poststructuralist researchers, however, argue that such quantitative methods, while useful, are unable to understand and explore the nuances of language and identity fully.

In contrast to positivist approaches, constructivist and interpretivist paradigms tend to favour a qualitative stance. Research conducted from such paradigms seeks to understand

society and the world around us from a context-specific viewpoint (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). Ontologically, multiple, socially co-constructed realities exist and epistemologically, knowledge is subjective (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Phakiti & Paltridge, 2015). The interpretivist/ constructivist paradigm acknowledges that social enquiry is value-laden and value-bound, and consequently, challenges the scientific-realist assumptions of positivist research (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Phakiti & Paltridge, 2015). According to Rezaei (2017), the majority of significant contributions to identity and language research have taken advantage of qualitative approaches informed by poststructuralist views which consider the constructs of identity and language as fluid and subjective. According to Abbuhl and Mackey (2017, p. 187), "While quantitative research can shed light on many aspects of learning and development, qualitative research can offer a different perspective, one that is often grounded in teachers' and learners' experiences and involves taking a more holistic and contextualized perspective". As the nature of the research questions formulated in this research are explorational in nature and are concerned with the multiple, subjective language and identity experiences of the participants, an interpretivist/ constructivist paradigm was deemed the most appropriate approach to answering the research questions in this research.

This research takes the form of a linguistic ethnography, an emerging research approach within both applied and sociolinguistics, which combines both methodological and theoretical features of ethnography and linguistics (Tusting, 2019). Linguistic ethnography draws on traditional ethnographic methods whilst simultaneously featuring a similar theoretical foundation to the field of linguistic anthropology. Considering this complex theoretical foundation, in the next sections I describe the foundations informing linguistic ethnography in greater detail. I begin by discussing the shared foundation of linguistic anthropology, a form of ethnographic enquiry which has greatly informed linguistic research before outlining what ethnography is, and how ethnographic observation has developed over time.

5.2.2   Theoretical Foundations: Ethnography and Linguistic Anthropology:

Thus far in this chapter I have discussed the theoretical positioning of this research and briefly introduced linguistic ethnography as the methodology adopted in this research. This relatively new research approach is informed by the field of linguistic anthropology and traditional ethnographic fieldwork. In this section I elaborate on this shared theoretical foundation. Examining trends in educational and linguistic research, evidence suggests that quantitative research designs still dominate; however there does appear to be a steady increase in the number of qualitative and mixed designs employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Abbuhl & Mackey, 2017; Lado & Sanz, 2017). Qualitative approaches centre meaning and experience, focusing on how participants think and feel (Braun & Clarke, 2022). From this perspective language is considered a tool for communicating one's experience of reality; consequently, language reflects our thoughts, beliefs and feelings. For this reason, both linguistic anthropology and ethnography have been favoured when seeking to gain in-depth insights into both language and education issues (Delamont & Atkinson, 2021; Kramsch, 2024).

Linguistic anthropology is an approach to research within applied linguistics with a focus on observations drawn from extensive fieldwork. Whilst linguistic ethnography may be described as an emerging field of research, it has been greatly influenced by the field of linguistic anthropology in the US and thus possesses a shared historical foundation to this area of research (Copland & Creese, 2015). The field of anthropology can be described as the research of human biological and cultural development (Stanlaw et al., 2018). Linguistic anthropology, which focuses on issues involving culture, language and race is considered one of the four traditional fields of anthropological research (Ahearn, 2011). Linguistic anthropologists consider language use as social action, arguing that the majority of social and cultural actions are mediated in large part by language (Wortham, 2008a).

Historically, Stanlaw et al. (2018) argue that the foundation of the field as it is known today lies in the experiences of European immigrants encountering Native Americans in North America. The research of Native American culture and language attracted the interest

of numerous American and European scholars (Stanlaw et al., 2018). Prominent figures from this early period of anthropological research include Franz Boas and Edward Sapir (Stanlaw et al., 2018). Such researchers employed anthropological methods to provide focused, in-depth cultural descriptions of indigenous communities (McCarty & Liu, 2017). Sapir, in particular, is considered one of the most important founders of linguistic anthropology for his seminal publications regarding language and culture, particularly of Native American communities (Stanlaw et al., 2018). In addition to the abovementioned researchers, other prominent researchers investigating a wide range of linguistic issues from an anthropological stance include Dell Hymes (1974), John Gumperz (1971), Kira Hall (2008; 1995), Benjamin Lee (1997), Stanton Wortham (2008a), Mary Bucholtz (2008), Michael Silverstein (1979), Katheryn A. Woolard (1992, 2020), Paul Kroskrity (1993) and Alessandro Duranti (1992).

Within educational research, linguistic anthropologists focus on how education is mediated through language (Wortham, 2008b). Examples of such research include Blommaert (1999) who investigated language planning and education issues in multilingual Tanzania. Street (2005) who investigated issues of language and power in literacy education, describing how diverse literacy practices used by different cultures may be used as educational resources. According to Ahearn (2011), linguistic anthropologists employ a set of concepts, tools and procedures to investigate how language is used in real life social contexts, as demonstrated by the educational examples I describe here. Whilst today there is wide variation in the topics of research within this field, linguistic anthropologists emphasise a holistic approach to research which comprises primarily of a fieldwork component (Stanlaw et al., 2018).

Ethnography developed as a form of fieldwork from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as scholars concluded that to understand the true dynamics of the lived, human experience, it was necessary to enter the field (Angrosino, 2007; Hammersley, 2018). Ethnography is most commonly described as a 'way of seeing' or a 'concern for cultural interpretation', where the observer looks for the meanings people make of everyday social practice (Blommaert & Dong, 2010; Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012; Figueroa, 2017; McCarty & Liu, 2017). It is important to note that

ethnography can be described as both a research philosophy and a research method. As a research philosophy McCarty (2014, p. 3) describes ethnography as, " a 'way of seeing' that is situated and systemic, and a 'way of looking' that is grounded in long-term, in-depth, first-hand accounts". Similarly, Rezaei (2017, p. 176) describes ethnography as, "the researcher's prolonged engagement and participation in a particular research site registering the events from an emic perspective". McCarty (2014, p. 10) observes that ethnography, "is a tradition that seeks to understand the connections between micro, meso and macro processes by critically inspecting the web of social meanings at their interface". Ethnography allows us to centre dynamic, situated, meaning-making practices whilst linking these to the broader historical, political and socio-economic processes that give shape to these practices (Pérez-Milans, 2015b). Similarly, Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012) reflect that ethnography entails the research of culture; its purpose is to describe and interpret cultural behaviour. Such 'cultural behaviours' of interest to ethnographic researchers include the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices carried out within a community (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012).

The writing up and presentation of ethnographic research is an essential aspect of the ethnographic process (Lüders, 2004). Traditional ethnographies may be presented in a number of forms, including the ethnographically informed report and book form (Fetterman, 2010). Despite the diversity of theoretical foundations from which ethnography may be employed, including feminism, critical theory and postmodernism, two underlying features which remain consistent across these different foundations includes, 1) a search for patterns based on the meticulous observation of human behaviour, and 2) careful attention towards the process of field research (Angrosino, 2007). This is echoed by Figueroa (2017), who argues that ethnography requires the integration of a rich theoretical understanding of culture, alongside the systematic documentation and analysis of social practices. According to Rampton et al. (2014), ethnographic research is an invaluable resource; allowing researchers to describe patterns of communication in detail. This is supported by Pérez-Milans (2015b) who argues that ethnographic methods provide suitable theoretical and methodological approaches to researching shifts in social life and institutional policies.

Ethnography traditionally involves the use of participant observation, in-depth interviews, recordings and document/artefact collection (Levon, 2014; Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). Consequently, data generated from these instruments may include both numerical and narrative data (Angrosino, 2007). In this research, I employed these traditional ethnographic data generation tools to generate data from engagement with the two participating families. I discuss the details regarding my data generation choices and processes in upcoming section 5.3. There are also multiple methods of data analysis available to ethnographic researchers. This may include, but is not limited to, document analysis, narrative analysis, thematic analysis, phenomenological analysis and/or discourse analysis (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Techniques employed depend heavily on the type of methodology employed and the nature of the data generated. The process of formal ethnographic data analysis usually involves synthesising the collected data in some way before identifying key themes and patterns which re used to provide a holistic description of the system under research (Fetterman, 2010). Baxter and Jack (2008) observe that in qualitative studies, the data generation and analysis happen almost concurrently, as the process of analysis involves the various ways that one makes sense of the data. I discuss the methods of data analysis employed in this research in section 5.5.

Considering the ethnographic concern for cultural interpretation and interpreting the meanings people make of their everyday social practices (McCarty & Liu, 2017), ethnographic methodologies have been used to inform language and education research from a number of different perspectives. This includes literacy development (see Hornberger (2017)), language planning and policy research (LPP) (see McCarty and Liu (2017)), the research of bi/multilingual education programmes (see May (2017)) and investigating language and identity in educational contexts (see Dong (2018)). As a result of this, a number of ethnographic 'subfields' or more specific areas of ethnographic research have developed into fields in their own right. This includes ethnography of communication and ethnography of language policy.

The ethnography of communication as a specific field of ethnographic research was highly influenced by linguistic anthropologists such as Dell Hymes, John Gumperz, Erving

Goffman and Frederick Erikson (Creese & Copland, 2017; Hymes, 1972). This area of research is primarily focused with investigating the different means of communication used between people in everyday life, and exploring what meanings these forms of communication hold for them (Carbaugh & Boromisza-Habashi, 2007; Chaim, 2017). In addition to this specific area of focus, the ethnography of communication follows a particular methodology, namely the, "the systematic analysis of the selected practice as it has been observed in its normal social contexts, and as it is discussed by participants" (Carbaugh & Boromisza-Habashi, 2007, p. 3). An example of linguistic research employing ethnography of communication is King (2001)'s exploration of language loss and revitalisation amongst two Quichua communities. Another seminal linguistic example in this area is McCarty (2002)'s exploration of language-in-education policy amongst Navajo American Indian communities in the US.

A related area of linguistic research includes the field of ethnography of language policy. From this standpoint ethnographers are traditionally concerned with, "a view of policy as a situated sociocultural process: the practices, ideologies, attitudes, and mechanisms that influence people's language choices in pervasive everyday ways" (McCarty & Liu, 2017, p. 53). These are typically socially and historically contextualised across time and space. Typically, ethnographers of language policy are concerned with describing and analysing the processes and power relations through which language policies are formulated and enacted (Johnson, 2009, 2013; McCarty & Liu, 2017). Traditional examples of this may include research such as Hornberger (1988)'s investigation into bilingual education and language maintenance in Peru, or Heath (1983)'s seminal work on language policies and practices across different communities in the US. Despite variances in the subtype of ethnographic investigation, what is clear is that ethnographic research is considered a credible and acceptable method of investigating a multitude of concepts in the fields of linguistics and education.

Embracing the traditional Chinese proverb which states, "There are many paths to the top of the mountain, but the view is always the same", in this research I acknowledge that each of these respected approaches described above would be appropriate methods to the investigation of language and education issues and would have most likely enabled me to address the research questions informing this thesis. The focus of this thesis was on

uncovering the experiences of individuals within the Irish school system, with a focus on issues related to language policy, linguistic diversity, and identity, through a detailed examination of both home and school spaces. Consequently, it was necessary to employ an approach which centres in-depth, interpretive analysis of individuals within context. Linguistic ethnography has developed in recent decades as a valuable, qualitative research approach within both applied and sociolinguistics (Tusting, 2019). Linguistic ethnography is an interdisciplinary approach which combines the structured tools of traditional linguistic research, with the in-depth perspective afforded by ethnography (Shaw et al., 2016). In the next sections I discuss this methodology in detail.

5.2.3   Research Methodology: Linguistic Ethnography

Whilst the field of linguistic anthropology has flourished in North America, the same has not occurred in Europe (Creese & Copland, 2017). Consequently, the Linguistic Ethnography Forum (a special interest group of the British Association of Applied Linguistics) was established to provide support for European researchers interested in this area of scholarship (Shaw et al., 2016). The emergence of linguistic ethnography in Europe has occurred in part due to its ability to create networks of similarly minded researchers who would usually be fairly isolated in their areas of interest (Creese & Copland, 2017) In this section, linguistic ethnography is defined and its value as an emerging methodology within linguistics is discussed.

5.2.3.1 What is Linguistic Ethnography?

Within the last 20 years, the term 'linguistic ethnography' has been used with increasing frequency to describe a research approach which combines both methodological and theoretical features of ethnography and linguistics, and which focuses on social issues which involve language in some way (Tusting, 2019). According to Copland and Creese (2015, p. 13), linguistic ethnography can be defined as, "an interpretive approach which studies the

local and immediate actions of actors from their point of view and considers how these interactions are embedded in wider social contexts and structures". From this perspective, focus is placed on the structure or organisation of a community's communicative practices; this means that linguistic forms are considered symbolic resources through which individuals may constitute their social organisations (Hymes, 1974; Pérez-Milans, 2015a). According to Creese (2008, p. 229) linguistic ethnography represents,

> A particular configuration of interests within the broader field of socio- and applied linguistics [which constitute] a theoretical and methodological development orientating towards particular, established traditions but defining itself in the new intellectual climate of post/structuralism and late modernity.

The historical foundation of linguistic ethnography stems largely from the fields of ethnographic and anthropological research, as outlined in the previous sections. Other influences also include the philosophy of language, sociolinguistics, microsociology, social theory and communication studies (Pérez-Milans, 2015a). Prominent linguistic ethnographers include Ben Rampton, Karin Tusting, Janet Maybin, Richard Barwell, Angela Creese, Vally Lytra, Sara Shaw, Julia Snell, Fiona Copland and Adrian Blackledge (Creese & Copland, 2017; Rampton et al., 2014; Rampton et al., 2004). Whilst linguistic ethnography is still emergent, in recent years a growing body of research from a range of disciplines has been published under this 'umbrella' term (Shaw et al., 2016). Despite the wide range in the variation of setting, focus and approach, Shaw et al. (2016) argue that common features of linguistic ethnography include,

1) an interdisciplinary approach to research,

2) topic-oriented ethnography,

3) the combination of ethnography and linguistics,

4) a variety of data sources, and

5) the desire to improve social life through research.

Whilst linguistic ethnography shares a theoretical foundation with linguistic anthropology, linguistic ethnography researchers emphasise distinct areas of departure from linguistic anthropology. Traditional anthropological approaches often seek to, 'make the strange familiar', whereas linguistic ethnography focuses on, 'making the familiar strange' (Copland & Creese, 2015; Delamont & Atkinson, 2021; Shaw et al., 2016). In doing so, the aim is to consider the 'familiar' more objectively (Spiro, 1990). In other words, whilst traditional anthropological approaches attempt to describe the unfamiliar, unknown 'other' to explicate the lives of people in distant communities, linguistic ethnography emphasises the examination of the social practices and institutions in our daily lives (Copland & Creese, 2015). According to Shaw et al. (2016), linguistic ethnographers are concerned with, "honing in on the institutions and practices that surround us in contemporary life and understanding how they are embedded in wider social contexts and structures". Furthermore, research in linguistic anthropology and linguistic ethnography have taken different approaches to the research of the linguistic 'sign' (Copland & Creese, 2015). This area of difference is heavily influenced by the scholarship of Charles Sanders Peirce (1958), who formulated the Triadic Model of Semiotics, arguing that the Saussure's dyadic theory of linguistic signification (the signifier and the signified) could be extended to include a third dimension: the interpretant (Pierce, 1958). According to Pierce, the interpretant is the linguistic element which allows for social and historical knowledge and experience to be considered in the interpretation of linguistic signs (Copland & Creese, 2015). Linguistic ethnographers are primarily concerned with this interpretation, consequently interpretation is considered fundamental to the understanding of individuals in their social contexts (Copland & Creese, 2015). Thus, linguistic ethnographers aim to understand and describe the relevance of signs in situated, social communication (Copland & Creese, 2015).

Combining linguistic and ethnographic approaches enables the researcher to understand how both social and communicative processes may operate in a variety of different settings (Shaw et al., 2016).

Tusting (2019) reflects on this unique approach stating,

> Linguistics affords sensitive attention to language, and a large and historically well-developed toolbox of specific analytic approaches which can provide precise accounts of meaning-making processes as they happen. Ethnography adds reflexivity about the role of the researcher; attention to people's emic perspectives; sensitivity to in-depth understandings of particular settings; and openness to complexity, contradiction and re-interpretation over time.

This approach, therefore, utilises the holistic, reflexive nature of ethnography to enrich linguistic research (Rampton et al., 2014). In other words, the ethnographic influence allows researchers to open up linguistic research, whilst the linguistic influence allows ethnographers to focus in on specific insights (Rampton et al., 2004) As a result of the combination of traditional linguistic and ethnographic approaches, an epistemological strengthening of ethnographic research may be achieved whilst simultaneously improving the relevance of linguistics (Pérez-Milans, 2015a). Pérez-Milans (2015b, p. 99) argues that the combination of linguistic and ethnographic approaches allows us to investigate, "the ways in which communicative practices, institutional policies and wider socio-economic transformations are interwoven in the production of daily life, in different educational communities". Traditional ethnographic methods, particularly participant observation, have come under fire for being inadequate for providing a comprehensive account of such communicative practices and have been accused of representing communities as fixed, bound entities (Pérez-Milans, 2015a). Consequently, the linguistic influence enables the researcher to introduce a focus on routines and patterns of language use. This allows the researcher to draw on more structured tools for data generation and analysis (Pérez-Milans, 2015a). Furthermore, this combination allows for a deeper description of social or institutional processes to emerge (Shaw et al., 2016). Consequently, linguistic ethnographies can be described as focused (honing in on certain institutions/practices and attempting to understand how they may be embedded in broader social structures/context), topic-oriented, and involving an ethnographic 'perspective' (which requires one to adopt a more focused approach to the research of the cultural practices and everyday life of a community) (Shaw et al., 2016).

According to Rampton et al. (2004), "language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity". Extending this statement to the topic of the current thesis, which includes a focus on identity development, language and identity are mutually shaping. This is identified and discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. Linguistic ethnography is therefore a research approach which inherently adopts this position and is therefore a well-suited methodology to tackle the research questions informing this research.

5.2.3.2 Linguistic Ethnography in Language and Literacy Education:

Linguistic ethnography has been successfully applied to research a wide range of language and literacy issues. This includes the areas of linguistic interaction, cross-cultural perspectives on literacy, community-based literacy research, multilingual literacy, classroom discourse, language teaching, and literacy, ethnicity and identity and (Creese, 2008). Examples featuring this wide range of language and literacy issues across different areas can be found in The Routledge Handbook of Linguistic Ethnography (Tusting, 2019) and the official website for The Linguistic Ethnography Forum: https://www.lingethnog.org/.

Specific examples of linguistic ethnography include Tusting (2013), who provides a comprehensive overview of literacy studies conducted from a linguistic ethnography framework, reiterating the need for further development of literacy studies under the umbrella of linguistic ethnography. Arguing that existing research investigating language and literacy in education have failed to adequately account for the cultural and social aspects of children's language use, Maybin (2009) presents a comprehensive review of linguistic ethnography research which examines learners' and teachers' language use whilst concurrently examining context and social practice. Employing a linguistic ethnography approach, Rampton and Charalambous (2016) examine episodes of 'breaking the classroom silence', where a member of the class speaks up regarding potentially sensitive language issues. Additionally, Copland and Creese (2015) provide four examples of in-depth case-

research narratives conducted by seasoned linguistic ethnographers working across the fields of law, health and education.

In the Irish context, research in applied linguistics is well established, with multiple Irish universities featuring their own Language Education or Linguistics Departments (such as Trinity College Dublin's schools of Education and Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences). Despite this rich research history, few explicit linguistic ethnographies focusing on language education have been undertaken in the Irish context. Whilst not explicitly a linguistic ethnography, Rieder (2018) conducted extensive ethnographic explorations of Irish Traveller language through a folk-linguistic lens. Additionally, Flynn (2005) conducted a linguistic ethnography of literary translation focusing on the translation of Irish poetry by Dutch-speaking translators. After a comprehensive search of the literature, the author was unable to find any examples of explicit linguistic ethnographies undertaken in the field of education in Ireland. Thus, there is the potential for this research to make a unique contribution to language and education research in Ireland.

5.2.4   *Advantages and Limitations of Linguistic Ethnography:*

Thus far in this chapter the advantages of linguistic ethnography as a research approach have been extensively outlined. Linguistic ethnography is a flexible, interdisciplinary approach which draws on the diverse toolbox of linguistics whilst simultaneously drawing on the in-depth, detailed nature of ethnography to produce research which is methodologically robust, providing insight into emic perspectives whilst also connecting individual experiences to wider context (Copland & Creese, 2015; Tusting, 2019). Although it is argued in this thesis that linguistic ethnography is a methodologically robust approach to the research of identity and linguistics, this area of scholarship is not without its limitations. The first limitation, or criticism of linguistic ethnography is that, given the extensive shared history with traditional ethnography and linguistic anthropology, is there a need for a new approach called linguistic anthropology? This question has been addressed in detail in Rampton et al. (2004), Creese and Copland (2017) and Maybin and Tusting (2011).

In summary, due to the lack of an established field of linguistic anthropology in Europe, the linguistic ethnography forum was established as a special interest group of the British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL) to draw like-minded researchers in Europe together (Creese & Copland, 2017). According to Creese and Copland (2017), "Within these clusters of scholarship, different conversations between academics have seen some traditions of discourse analysis become established, and robust and new kinds of conversation around language and ethnography develop".

Examining traditional ethnography more generally, an often-significant drawback is the time and funds needed for prolonged engagement in the field, specifically if one desires to generate rich data (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). Consequently, a more focused approach to ethnographic research, featuring topic-focused approaches and shorter periods of fieldwork have become more common (Coffey, 2018). A feature of linguistic ethnography is this more focused, concentrated approach to ethnographic data generation. Ethnographic studies, in line with many other qualitative research approaches, tend to favour small, purposively selected research samples. Consequently, ethnographic approaches are often criticised for their lack of generalisability (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). Whilst ethnographers may not be able to strive for the generalizability of their results, LeCompte and Goetz (1982) highlight that ethnographers may strive for the comparability and translatability of findings. This is supported by O'Connor (2011) who argues that an explicit approach to conducting ethnography is essential for ensuring methodological robustness. Considering this, linguistic ethnography provides a theoretically and methodologically sound approach, which situates meaning making practices and flexibility at the centre of the analysis, and in so doing avoiding bounded representations (Pérez-Milans, 2015b).

5.2.4.1 Generalisability, Credibility and Methodological Triangulation:

Qualitative researchers strive to achieve credibility, trustworthiness and robustness in their research (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). Traditional ethnographic research has historically been criticised for a lack of credibility, generalisability and for representing the

community/phenomena under research as fixed, bound entities (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Pérez-Milans, 2015a). Thus, a central concern for linguistic ethnographers is ensuring credibility through a focused analysis of data, whilst simultaneously emphasising the reflexive role of the researcher (Shaw et al., 2016). In terms of data generation, there is a wide range of data generation tools available to the linguistic ethnographer. Resultantly, ethnographers must have a sound understanding of each data generation method selected, weighing up the strengths and weaknesses for using each method and understanding how the use of each method contributes to the fulfilment of the research objectives. The application of linguistic methods of data generation to complement the traditional observational methods of ethnographic research, may also contribute to epistemologically strengthened data (Pérez-Milans, 2015b). A strength of linguistic ethnography lies in the combination of different data generation methods and processes of analysis. Through this robust support of the combination of methods, detailed and credible findings may emerge (Copland & Creese, 2015).

To achieve strong and credible research, O'Connor (2011) suggests a full account of the research context be provided; this is of particular importance in instances where complex social phenomena are being studied in naturalistic settings, as is the case with ethnographic research (O'Connor, 2011). Pool (2017) highlights that providing transparency regarding data generation and analysis allows others to corroborate findings, or undertake further analysis, without having to collect new data. Furthermore, whilst researcher subjectivity in qualitative research must be acknowledged, Jonsen and Jehn (2009) argue that a rigorous, explicit methodology is an important aspect in ensuring credible research. By allowing for subjectivity alongside a detailed and systematic description of the data generation tools and processes, one is able to decrease the likelihood of researcher bias and incorrect conclusions (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

In striving for credible and robust research, Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012) suggest seeking triangulation in research. Triangulation has traditionally been employed by quantitative researchers to strengthen the reliability and validity of their studies (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). Similarly, qualitative research often employ triangulation

within their studies, but have been criticised for failing to make this explicit (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). Whilst triangulation may occur at any point throughout the research process, the most commonly discussed form of triangulation refers to the use of multiple sources to strengthen research credibility (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009; Rezaei, 2017).

Methodological triangulation can be defined as, "the combination of methodologies in the research of the same phenomenon" (Denzin, 1978, p. 291). According to Jonsen and Jehn (2009, p. 125), such triangulation refers to the, "convergence of methods producing more objective and valid results". According to Flick (2004), methodological triangulation is of particular interest to ethnographic researchers, as the ethnographic approach embraces the implementation of multiple sources and methods of data generation. Consequently, whilst it may not always be explicitly mentioned, ethnographers employ methodological triangulation to widen the possibilities to uncover all aspects of the phenomena under research (Flick, 2004).

Employing multiple strategies to collect data ensures that what is presented as research is authentic and credible (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). According to Jonsen and Jehn (2009) the process of methodological triangulation entails the clarification, reinforcement and corroboration of findings through the process of utilising two or more data generation tools (which have offsetting biases) to assess a phenomenon. It includes the continuous process of cross-checking theories, methods, data, explanations, participants and the researcher's role in the research (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). Researchers are expected to seek corroboration and credibility through the application of two or more sources of evidence, which may include participant observation, interviews, documents and artefacts (Bowen, 2009; Kawulich, 2005). Bowen (2009, p. 28) argues that triangulation assists in reducing the potential for researcher bias and assisting the researcher in protecting her research from accusations of poor execution due to the use of only a single method or source (Bowen, 2009).

According to Shaw et al. (2016, p. 14), "The empirical nature of linguistic ethnography orients researchers to data and in particular to worked linguistic and ethnographic analyses that enable them to evidence analytic claims". In other words, through the combination of linguistic and ethnographic methods and forms of data generation and analysis, studies are

triangulated, it is possible for researchers to make stronger analytical claims and the overall credibility of research is strengthened. Therefore, in the current research, methodological triangulation has been applied to strive for robust and credible data.

5.2.4.2 Subjectivity in Linguistic Ethnography:

Research conducted from an interpretivist, qualitative paradigm accepts the inevitability of interaction between the researcher and the research participants (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Thus, researchers utilising a qualitative approach are required to employ continuous reflexivity and evaluation skills throughout the research process, as judgements are made concerning the trajectory of the investigation. Qualitative researchers bring their own experiences, perspectives, values and beliefs to the research they conduct (Fusch et al., 2018). Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012) argue that no research can be entirely value-free. Referring to the 'ethnographic gaze', Wolcott (2008) reflects that ethnographers have a way of seeing which is perspectival and deeply rooted in their own specialisation history and politics. According to Fusch et al. (2018, p. 19), "qualitative researchers bring their bias to the research, share their bias with the reader, and strive to mitigate their personal bias to ensure that they are correctly interpreting the other/participant". Consequently, researchers are required to continually assess their own subjectivity and biases, considering how these may influence the nature of the research and the conclusions drawn.

According to Braun and Clarke (2022), reflexivity is the exercise of critical reflection on one's role as a researcher and one's research practices and processes. Reeves et al. (2008, p. 513) define reflexivity as, "The relationship a researcher shares with the world he or she is investigating". Reflexivity is a central element of ethnographic research, as the nature of participant observation requires the ethnographer to enter the field and develop relationships with participants (Reeves et al., 2008). Hymes (1980, p. 99) states, "since partiality cannot be avoided, the only solution is to face up to it, to compensate for it as much as possible, to allow for it in interpretation". Thus, reflexivity relates to the relationship between the researcher and the field, demanding the researcher's reflection regarding the

nature of the realities under research and the methods of knowledge generation and theory creation employed (Eriksson et al., 2012). In many ethnographic fieldwork contexts, ethical issues regarding the researcher's involvement in the field and their interaction with participants must be considered. For instance, the researcher's presence in the field may impact upon participants' normal behaviour (the Hawthorne Effect), which in turn raises questions regarding the reliability of the research findings (Rezaei, 2017). Furthermore, the subjectivity of ethnographic research relies on the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations of participants' behaviour-should misinterpretations occur this too affects the reliability of the research (the Halo Effect) (Rezaei, 2017). Consequently, ethnographic researchers must have adequate understanding of reflexivity and reciprocity when conducting research. A commitment to reflexivity is an essential tool in ensuring the credibility of ethnographic research. According to Madden (2019), observing people is not a passive action; the way we observe and interpret others tells us as much about our observations as it does about ourselves as ethnographers. Wolcott (2008) argues that the process of ethnography generates interesting philosophical, methodological and ethical dilemmas which encourage debate.

> Ethnography is essentially a process of stepping outside of your own perspective and coming to understand the perspective of others, it is a highly reflexive practice. In other words, ethnography requires you to be thinking constantly about your own awareness of events and activities in the field as you progress from confusion to understanding (Levon, 2014, p. 206).

According to Madden (2019), ethnographers must acknowledge how their own 'way of seeing' may recognise or ignore certain aspects of behaviour or setting in the field; considering this, the ethnographer must adopt a critical and reflexive understanding of themselves. The importance of positioning oneself within one's research is further explained by Pool (2017), who argues that the intense experience of immersion that ethnographers undertake during the extensive collection of data from ethnographic observation, ultimately influences any interpretations made of the more formal data generated. The nature of fieldwork is transformative in the sense that the ethnographer who emerges from the field

may not necessarily be the same person who entered it; the data becomes embodied within the researcher (Pool, 2017).

5.3 Data Generation:

Thus far in this chapter I have reviewed the research questions informing this thesis, as well as outlining in detail the theoretical foundations informing linguistic ethnography as an approach. I also considered the advantages and limitations of linguistic ethnography as an approach, examining issues of generalisability and credibility, and examining the subjectivity of the approach. In this section I progress the chapter by turning to the process of data generation that was followed in this research and the data generation tools that I employed. This includes ethnographic observations, field recordings, interviews and document/artefact collection.

5.3.1   Process of Data Generation:

In line with linguistic ethnography, the primary means of data generation I employed in this research was ethnographic fieldwork, consisting primarily of observations. The data generation process of this research was significantly impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially conceptualised as a classroom-based ethnography, it soon became apparent that this would not be possible considering the restrictions and school closures arising from the pandemic. As a result, I shifted the research to investigate the same issues but from the perspective of the family. Access to families during this time was also challenging; I used all resources at my disposal to recruit families to this study.

 I generated data from intensive engagement over a four-month period with two families, which consisted of five learners and their primary caregivers. This engagement consisted of multiple afternoon visits each week as learners returned home from school. Given the restrictions and the limitations I experienced, I chose this specific time of day as learners returned home from school in order to gain as much insight as possible into learners

experiences at school, and to investigate how their behaviour may change moving from one context to another. As will be discussed in the upcoming sections, this proved to be an insightful time of day for interaction between family members. The completion of homework emerged as a particular rich point for data generation. Given this particular linguistic focus, the choice of linguistic ethnography as the methodology informing this research was particularly appropriate. Further details regarding the research context and descriptions of each family unit appear in section 5.4.

5.3.2 Data Generation Tools:

Anthropologists and ethnographers primarily collect data by observing, and participating, in the environment under research; during this process the researcher will draw on a range of systematic data generation tools to record what is observed (Rampton et al., 2004). Unlike other approaches, linguistic ethnography does not prescribe specific data generation tools or forms of analysis due to the range of research interests studied under this umbrella (Copland & Creese, 2015). Nevertheless, due to the unique combination of linguistics and ethnography, certain data generation and analysis techniques are particularly relevant (Copland & Creese, 2015). Field work (including participant observation), in-depth interviews and other interactions and document/artefact analysis are considered primary data generation instruments within an ethnographic framework (Copland & Creese, 2015; Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). Thus, from a linguistic ethnography framework, the traditional methods employed by ethnographic researchers may be complemented by methods employed in linguistic research, such as collecting policy documents, letters and photographs, group meetings, drawings, written reflections and recorded interactions (McCarty & Liu, 2017; Shaw et al., 2016). Linguistic ethnographers stress the importance of collecting data from a wide variety of sources in order to focus, in great depth, on the phenomena under research, and to access areas of social life that may be more difficult to understand through direct observation alone, and finally, where 'ideal' data may not be possible (Shaw et al., 2016). Below, I discuss each of the data generation tools used in this research in greater depth.

5.3.2.1 Ethnographic Observation:

From an ethnographic standpoint, observation has been described as a 'way of seeing' (Wolcott, 2008). This form of visual observation may also be referred to as the 'ethnographic gaze' (Madden, 2019). Ethnographic observation usually includes some level of researcher participation, and a shadowing of participants in such a manner as to adapt to changes in setting and open up opportunities for informal interviews to take place (Copland & Creese, 2015; Priessle & Grant, 2004). Li (2008) reflects that as ethnographic observation allows researchers to observe participants in real life contexts, in so doing this method of data generation provides the researcher with detailed, authentic data. Successful observation relies heavily on the acceptance of the researcher by the participants. How well a researcher is accepted by the community under research is based largely on participants' feelings of trust and attitudes towards the intentions of the research project (Coffey, 2018; Kawulich, 2012). Thus, a key feature of ethnographic observation is the establishment of trust and relationship building between the researcher and participants, leading the way for additional forms of data generation such as audio and video recordings (Copland & Creese, 2015).

Observations may be undertaken during both quantitative and qualitative research. The process of ethnographic observation is open-ended and inductive in nature (Howell, 2018). When engaging in ethnographic observation, Levon (2014) highlights that the researcher should focus on, 1) the physical setting, 2) the procedures and systems governing events, 3) the participants taking part in the event, and 4) the language and other practices observed. Throughout the observations which I undertook for this research, these key areas of focus were kept in mind and guided the observation process.

In the current research, the primary form of data generation was observation within the homes of participating families. My observations included spontaneous casual conversations with the participating learners and their caregivers, revolving around the observations and the families' experiences learning language in Irish schools and in the home. As per Levon (2014)'s suggestions, I placed focus on the physical setting of each family's home; this included observing in particular the area in the home in which homework was

completed and where the majority of familial interaction took place. Beyond this space, other areas in the home upon which I focused were the entrance of the home through which learners entered after their school day, and the kitchen, a central area of each home in which family often gathered and meals were prepared and eaten. In addition to the physical spaces of the home, I paid attention to the procedures and systems governing the family home. In particular, I placed focus on the time during the day as learners entered the home and transitioned from school to home spaces, and the routines governing the completion of homework. Considering FLP, I also focused on the linguistic interactions between family members, being mindful of any routines which may emerge during such interactions. This extends to Levon (2014)'s third point, observing the participants taking part in the event. This included learners and their primary caregivers. In both families it was the mother in each family which appeared to take on the responsibility for homework completion and consequently there were many hours of observation between mothers and children in particular. From a language perspective, focus was placed on observing each family's FLP in action, and the languages of the school and homework completion. In particular, I paid attention to the interactions between languages in multilingual contexts, particularly transitions and interactions between school and home languages.

According to Schensul et al. (1999), observations allow the researcher to, 1) identify and hone in on relationships with participants, 2) assists the researcher in 'getting a feel for' cultural parameters and relationships between participants, 3) to understand what is culturally valued in terms of leadership, etiquette, manners, social interaction and politics, 4) facilitating the research process by familiarising the researcher and participants and 5) providing the researcher with avenues of enquiry which may be addressed with participants. Following Schensul et al. (1999)'s reflections, the observations undertaken for this research began from a place of unfamiliarity, to a place of friendliness and familiarity between myself as the researcher and the participants, both the children and their parents. As the observations progressed over time, this allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the relationships between participants and what was culturally valued in each home. Primarily, observing the everyday actions governing the completion of homework and the interaction

between participants provided opportunities to consider different areas of inquiry which could then be followed up upon through the other data generation techniques.

Ethnographic observation emphasizes the culture of the participants and their perspectives about the world, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the experiences and influence of the researcher (Priessle & Grant, 2004). Whilst it does allow for the collection of rich, holistic data, ethnographic observation may also demand a lengthy time commitment (Coffey, 2018). Howell (2018) reflects that the combination of decreases in funding and heightened pressure to publish within academia has resulted in researchers changing their research practice; consequently, a more focused approach to ethnographic research, featuring topic-focused approaches and shorter periods of fieldwork have become more common. This was the approach adopted in the current research. Conducting ethnographic observations requires significant researcher commitment; the process involves sustained attention to detail and accurate description if the data produced is to be of a high standard and significance (Kawulich, 2012). Due to these factors, and the contextual factors influencing the research which were discussed in Chapter 1, a focused approach to the observations was employed over a 4-month period.

5.3.2.2 Field Recordings (Photographs and the Researcher's Diary):

Ethnographic data generation also includes the creation of recordings derived from observations, which are used to support and enhance data generation (Coffey, 2018). According to Coffey (2018), field notes are textual representations of the researcher's observations in the field. Field notes may differ in length, structure, writing style, level of description and emotional voice (Copland & Creese, 2015). This may include written records of observations, researcher reflections, photographs and videos (Lüders, 2004).

Field recordings are considered an essential tool in ensuring reflexivity in ethnographic research (Levon, 2014). Due to the highly reflexive nature of ethnographic research, field notes represent the primary means that ethnographers use to keep track of their inner thinking and reflections regarding the research process (Levon, 2014). Kawulich

(2012) observes that field notes allow the researcher to record notes regarding what the researcher may see, including social relations (activities, interactions and conversations), participants' behaviour (verbal and non-verbal) and any interesting or unexpected 'data rich' points. In addition to field notes, ethnographers may collect photographs (e.g.: of physical spaces, artefacts and activities) or audio and/or visual recordings to supplement their observation and interview data. Such data generally consists of the participants' daily activities.

In this research, field recordings consisted of a researcher diary and photographs. A researcher's diary can be considered part personal diary, a place to record rich points in the data, and researcher reflections on the ethnographic process (Levon, 2014). Field notes should not be considered as objective records of events but rather as researcher interpretations of what has occurred. Field recording based on observations should be considered, "texts written by authors, using their available linguistic resources, to give a meaningful summary of their observations and recollections after the event, to put them in contexts and mould intelligible protocols in the form of texts" (Lüders, 2004, p. 228). Coffey (2018) highlights that field notes should be carefully and thoughtfully written to provide rich, descriptive accounts of events in the field; field notes are designed to be read and re-read by the ethnographer as they reflect on their experiences. Field notes may progress through a number of drafts as the researcher makes sense of their field observations; during this process thematic analysis may be applied to generate themes and patterns from the data (Copland & Creese, 2015).

In the current research, this was the process which was followed. During the ethnographic observations, I kept a researcher's diary which included field notes and remarks, as well my reflections throughout the data generation process. Before each observation period, I recorded researcher reflections consisting of my thoughts on progress up until that point, areas of interest or concern, any personal frustrations regarding the data generation process or any other relevant information. During observation periods, notes were kept to record events, any conversations of interest or to make additional reflections during interviews. These notes also included behaviour by participants, such as notes

regarding body language, which would not be picked up through photographs or audio-recordings. Likewise, directly after each day of engaging in fieldwork, I reflected on any field recordings made and noted any reflections in the researcher's diary. During this time, I ensured that what had been recorded was as detailed as possible and also as accurate a reflection of events as possible. I also made observations about any rich points in the data or any areas of interest that required further examination.

In addition to written field notes, relevant photographs were taken of the broader environment, homework space and learners' work, without any individuals in the frame. Any identifiable information was digitally removed. Photographs have been widely used in anthropological research, playing a useful role as both objects of research and as sources of information (Perera, 2019). Perera (2019) reflects that in order for photographs to serve as more than decorative accompaniments to written text, they should be centrally positioned in the research process. Thus, in the current research it was the aim to draw on the evidence gathered from photographs as a central part of the data generation process. Photographs gathered during data observations were not considered supplementary in any way, but rather as a unique form of data generation which may yield valuable information in their own right. Each photograph taken was thus analysed during the thematic analysis process, in-depth.

5.3.2.3 Ethnographic Interviews:

Interviews are an essential tool in the ethnographer's toolkit, providing insight into the emic perspectives of participants (Copland & Creese, 2015). Ethnographic, informal interviews, according to Coffey (2018), are dynamic and flexible whilst simultaneously being focused and purposive. According to Hammersley (2006), the standard uses of ethnographic interviews are 1) to act as evidence representing participants' perspectives and attitudes, these being based on what is said and done in the interview, and 2) as a source of accounts about events in the social world (which the researcher may or may not have observed themselves). Usually, ethnographic interviews are not conducted soon after entering the field; it is considered common practice for ethnographers to develop an understanding of the

community and to develop trust and rapport with participants before engaging in interviews (Levon, 2014). Whilst the informal interview may be used more frequently in ethnographic research, more formal, structured interviews may also be employed. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the semi-structured interview can provide rich and detailed data regarding individual experiences, are flexible, ideal for addressing sensitive issues and can be used to collect information from vulnerable groups such as children. Whilst unstructured interviews align more classically with traditional ethnographic approaches, the semi-structured interview is a prevalent feature of linguistic ethnography, employed by a number of researchers (Copland & Creese, 2015).

Interviews conducted during ethnographic data generation are similar to sociolinguistic interviews and are usually semi-structured, or informal in nature (Levon, 2014). Interviews enable the ethnographer to collect both verbal and non-verbal data. Whilst participants may verbalise their opinions and responses, the non-verbal communication of the participant may also represent rich data which should be recorded in some way (Coffey, 2018). Coffey (2018) reinforces the importance of interviews as data generating tools, emphasizing the need for interview data to be recorded in some format. Data from interviews may be recorded through written notes and audio or visual recordings (Coffey, 2018). Once interviews are completed and successfully recorded, the researcher usually transcribes the interview data. From these transcriptions, thematic analysis may be applied, where codes are generated and recurring patterns and themes are identified (Coffey, 2018; Copland & Creese, 2015).

Keeping the abovementioned factors in mind, in the current research ethnographic interviews included participating learners and their caregivers. These interviews consisted of a combination of spontaneous and short casual conversations which took place with participants throughout the observation period, and more formal pre-planned, semi-structured interviews. The more formal interviews attempted to delve deeper into each participants' experience of language learning and multilingualism in their school environment. The informal interviews were mostly reserved for the younger participants and were employed purposefully to ensure a friendly and calm atmosphere in which the children

were able to relax and enjoy the conversational style of the interview. More formal, semi-structured interviews were usually planned ahead of time to work around caregivers' schedules and would be based on specific lines of enquire, most often based on areas of interest which emerged during the observations. These interviews were audio-recorded, and notes were recorded in the researcher diary as required. After each interview or recorded session, the interview audio-recording was processed through HappyScribe software and, together with the auto generated transcript uploaded to the MaxQDA platform for further processing and analysis.

5.3.2.4 Document/ Artefact Collection and Analysis:

The collection of documents and cultural artifacts has been a central feature of ethnographic and anthropological fieldwork (Levon, 2014). Analysing such documents may provide insight into how societies operate and are organised (Coffey, 2018). Bowen (2009) suggests the following five specific functions of documents: 1) Documents provide us with details regarding context, 2) Information contained within documents may provide suggestions for interview questions or avenues of observation, 3) they provide supplementary research data, 4) they provide evidence through which the researcher is able to track change and development within a context, and 5) they may be analysed to support the evidence collected from other sources, thus strengthening the credibility of the data. According to Silva (2012), within the social sciences, researchers are less concerned with the nature and uses of the document and more interested in the content and meaning of such documents. In the current research, the focus of document collection was to gain deeper understanding into the lives and experiences of the multilingual subjects; thus, a focus on content and meaning was preferred. Additionally, any relevant artefacts and documents that the researcher encounters during fieldwork may be collected or photographed for analysis. This could include anonymised student writing and/or drawings, or school policy documents.

In the current research, the focus of document and artifact collection was twofold; in addition to collecting any necessary documents that emerged throughout the course of the

fieldwork, I requested written diary reflections and illustrations from the children involved in the research. Documents collected during this time included copies of homework tasks, policy documents and any other relevant artefacts. Additionally, I provided a small journal to participating learners upon commencing the research and they were encouraged to make contributions to their books throughout the data generation period regarding their experiences of language learning and school. At the end of the fieldwork period, I collected these journals and examined them as data sources. Any relevant information was scanned into electronic copies before the original journals were destroyed in line with ethical guidelines. All documents and other artefacts collected during the fieldwork period were thematically analysed, alongside other data, for any key themes or patterns.

5.4 Participant Recruitment:

Data generation for this thesis comprised intensive engagement with two families consisting of five learners and their primary caregivers. In this section, details regarding the method of participant recruitment and overall descriptions of the participants is provided. The process of participant recruitment and data generation occurred during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland. Initially, it was hoped that data generation could take place within school classrooms; however, it soon became clear that due to limited access to schools and a continuing of the pandemic beyond what had been anticipated, this would not be possible. At this juncture the research design was pivoted to the generation of data with the family home. Observing the homework period as children returned home from their school day was deemed an appropriate avenue to seek data to address the research questions. Following this change to the research design, participants were recruited through word of mouth and social media. Upon initial contact, families were presented with a research outline and consent forms and asked to consider their involvement in the research. Once families had agreed to their participation and the relevant consent forms collected, times were arranged for observations that suited each family's respective schedule. As data generation was taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland, it was important to discuss safety protocols

and find an agreement with each family in terms of risk and exposure for both the research and the participants. Considering the above, data generation was limited to the family home whilst observing strict COVID-19 protocols. This included weekly antigen testing, mask wearing and maintenance of a 2-meter distance between the researcher and family as much as was possible within participants' homes. Consequently, the research was limited in terms of access and the openness of families in allowing a researcher into their home. Despite this, this data generation process still followed a focused, ethnographic methodology. In line with the characteristics of an ethnographic approach, this research consisted of a lengthy period of data generation, a small and purposefully selected sample size, included traditional ethnographic data generation techniques in a naturally occurring setting, involving a variety of data sources and types and an overall holistic focus (Hammersley, 2018).

Below, a brief outline of the two participating families are presented. Family names and the individual names of participants have been pseudonymised to protect their identities. Both families had children attending English-medium primary schools in Ireland. At the time of the data generation the children had recently returned to in person education after restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.4.1 The De Villiers Family

The De Villiers Family, originally from South Africa, moved to Ireland in 2017. The family consisted of Danie, Kimberley and their three children Chantelle (12), Zane (10) and Daisy. (6) All three children were born in South Africa. This family had migrated to Ireland several years ago, when Daisy was only a few months old. The family spoke English and Afrikaans in the home, to differing degrees. As a part of the Irish school curriculum, the children were also learning Irish as a third language at school. Further details regarding the De Villiers family are presented in the results chapters which follow.

5.4.2   The Amato Family

The Amato family were the second family who participated in this research. The family includes Angelo, Francesca and their two children, Sofia (8) and Luca (5). The Amato family are Italian-Irish. Angelo and Francesca had both moved to Ireland prior to meeting each other and having children. Sofia and Luca were both born in Ireland. The family spoke Italian and English in the home, whilst there was some knowledge of the Irish language as Sofia and Luca were learning Irish as a third language at school.

In the following chapters the details of this ethnographic process are presented, and data generated from this experience, analysed. This data was analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA), which is outlined further in the next section.

5.5   Data Analysis:

Accurate, in-depth data analysis is central to ensuring credible, robust qualitative research (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Data analysis can be described as the process of investigation that researchers undergo as they attempt to make sense of their data (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Data analysis involves three key steps, namely the reduction of the data (transforming and simplifying), organising and displaying the data and finally, establishing evaluations and conclusions based on the data (Berg, 2001). Four of the most commonly employed methods of qualitative analysis are thematic analysis, narrative analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis and discourse analysis (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Baxter and Jack (2008) reflect that within qualitative studies, data generation and analysis occur almost simultaneously, as the process of analysis involves the various ways that one makes sense of the data. Techniques used in the analysis of data tend to depend heavily on the type of methodology employed and the nature of the data generated (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Within ethnographic research, data analysis tends to take an inductive, thematic style (Reeves et al., 2008). Inductive research involves moving from the specific to the general; the analysis involves looking closely and the data and moving outwards to look at the same data more

broadly (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). In other words, the data is examined, emerging concepts or themes are categorised and recorded and theoretical explanations are derived from this process (Reeves et al., 2008).

Linguistic ethnographers are usually not satisfied with a single form of data and/or a single form of analysis; thus, a wide range of linguistic and discourse analytic traditions may be drawn upon (Shaw et al., 2015). Snell and Lefstein (2012) observe that whilst specific methods may vary; a common feature amongst linguistic ethnographers is the close examination of data whilst considering situated language in use. Thus, in addition to the traditional ethnographic methods of data generation and analysis, linguistic ethnographers may also employ textual analysis, conversational analysis, corpus analysis, quantitative variation analysis, social semiotics, narrative analysis, discourse analysis and portraiture within their studies (McCarty & Liu, 2017; Shaw et al., 2016). Data from this research included observations and related field notes, interview recordings and related transcripts and documents (including policy documents).

Thematic analysis, whilst one of the most commonly employed forms of qualitative analysis, is plagued by a lack of transparency and clear terminology (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Kiger and Varpio (2020, p. 1) state, "Many researchers who use thematic analysis fail to provide sufficient descriptions of the analysis process followed and of the theories or epistemological assumptions undergirding the analyses". Furthermore, numerous studies employing thematic analysis have not explicitly identified it adequately, stating simply that data was 'examined for themes' . Despite this lack of clarity, TA is an established form of data analysis within linguistics and ethnography (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Many qualitative studies fail to explicitly outline the methods of data analysis employed (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Ethnographic research has historically been criticised for a lack of credibility and generalisability in part due to poor descriptions of the data analysis process (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Pérez-Milans, 2015a; Pool, 2017). Nowell et al. (2017) reflect that this lack of transparency makes it difficult for the reader to follow the data analysis process and thus how the findings are interpreted. Unfortunately, this has contributed to the perception that qualitative research is less reliable and robust than quantitative approaches (Braun & Clarke,

2013). As a result, it is evident that explicit guidance is needed when outlining qualitative data analysis methods (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

In this thesis, I selected Reflexive Thematic Analysis, a specific form of TA developed by Braun and Clarke (2022). In the next sections I discuss in further detail what TA is and how RTA developed from this original conceptualisation.

5.5.1 What is Thematic Analysis?

TA can be described as a process of identifying emerging themes and patterns within qualitative data (Kawulich & Holland, 2012; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Bowen (2009, p. 32) describes TA as, "a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis". Similarly, Nowell et al. (2017, p. 2) define TA as, "a method for identifying, analysing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set".

TA aims to generate analysis from the bottom up; it is a form of analysis that is theoretically flexible, accessible to researchers and relatively easy and quick to learn (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The flexible nature of TA allows it to be a suitable form of analysis for different methodologies, as it allows for a complex, rich and detailed representation of the data to emerge (Nowell et al., 2017). Additionally, Kiger and Varpio (2020) identify TA as an appropriate form of analysis when aiming to understand the thoughts, behaviours and experiences of participants across a data set. Furthermore, TA is a useful strategy to employ when assessing interview data in particular, as Nowell et al. (2017) acknowledges TA's ability to allow for different participants' perspectives to be represented in the data. An additional advantage of applying TA in ethnographic studies is its usefulness in organising large sets of data, which is often the case in ethnographic studies (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In contrast, poorly executed TA which allows for too much flexibility, may result in incoherent and inconsistent themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The process of TA involves the researcher making careful, focused readings, re-readings and review of the data; throughout this process the researcher pays attention to

emerging themes and performs coding and thematic construction based on the characteristics of the data (Bowen, 2009). These codes and themes assist with the integration of the collected data from various sources, and thus assists the researcher in making interpretations and conclusions based on the evidence (Bowen, 2009). A 6-step framework, suggested by Braun and Clarke (2013), became a highly influential model of TA within social science research. These steps included 1) Familiarising oneself with the data, 2) generating initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining themes and 6) writing up the analysis. This approach has been credited as being the most influential approach of TA, due to its clear and usable framework (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). In 2021, Braun and Clarke further refined this model and proposed a revised model, *Reflexive Thematic Analysis*.

5.5.2   *What is Reflexive Thematic Analysis?*

When Braun and Clarke (2006) first described TA, the method was not as established as it has now become- the original conceptualisation of TA has developed into a wider range of theoretical orientations, concepts and practices. Consequently they felt that revision of their initial description of TA required further differentiation and refining (Braun & Clarke, 2022). When considering their theoretical positioning, Braun and Clarke (2022) decided upon the adjective *reflexive* in their approach to TA as, "we came to recognise that valuing a subjective, situated, aware and questioning researcher, a reflexive researcher, is a fundamental characteristic of TA for us, and a differentiating factor across versions of TA" (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 5). From this perspective, reflexivity is key to good quality data analysis. The practical, 6-step framework suggested by Braun and Clarke (2022) includes, 1) Dataset familiarisation, 2) data coding, 3) initial theme generation, 4) theme development and review, 5) theme refining, defining and naming, and 6) writing up.

According to Braun and Clarke (2022), there are certain underlying principles which inform RTA. Firstly, RTA considers researcher subjectivity as an inherent part of the research process, insomuch as this subjectivity is considered a resource for the data generation and analysis. This assumption therefore mitigates the assumptions underlying researcher bias.

Secondly, from a RTA approach, the analysis and conclusions drawn can be either weaker or stronger, but never entirely objective or accurate (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Thirdly, generating codes of quality requires the researcher to immerse themselves in an in-depth manner in the data generation process, furthermore, the analysis developed from this in-depth engagement requires distance. Although this may take some time, it is necessary for the researcher to step back from the data and take a break before revisiting. The fourth key assumption is that 'themes' represent patterns which share a common idea, meaning or concept. They should not represent a summary of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Furthermore, these themes are considered analytic output, that is, they are built from codes generated from the data; consequently, they cannot be identified ahead of time. These themes are actively generated by the researcher through their systematic engagement with the data.

I adopted these underlying assumptions in this research. In the next section, I discuss how I applied RTA (following the six-step framework outlined above) to analyse the data generated.

5.5.3 How was Reflexive Thematic Analysis Applied in this Research?

Through intensive engagement with two families (which consisted of five learners and their primary caregivers) in their homes, I generated a wealth of ethnographic data. The data generation process entailed in this thesis was an all-encompassing learning experience for me. Upon entering participants' homes, it was clear to me that this process would be like no other I had experienced before; far different from collecting online surveys or being in a classroom setting (a space much more familiar to me based on previous work and research experiences). Ethnographers, like other qualitative researchers, bring their own experiences, perspectives, values and beliefs to the research they conduct (Fusch et al., 2018). In being conscious of this, I made a particular effort throughout this process to adopt the 'ethnographic gaze' as described by Wolcott (2008). In attempting to adopt this gaze, I began the fieldwork an anxious and formal approach. Upon reflecting on this initial anxiety, the following quote by Katz (2019, p. 16) seems appropriate to me, "Ethnographers shape a

research self as they work through a series of existential choices". This ethnographic experience helped mould my 'research self' as I worked through the process of becoming familiar with myself in the researcher role, getting to know the research participants and becoming used to extended periods in the family home. Pool (2017) reflects on the important role of positioning oneself within one's ethnographic research, arguing that this intense immersion is transformative in nature, becoming embodied within the researcher themselves. This idea rang true for me during the data generation process of this research. What this demonstrates is that the researcher is not removed from the data generation process; it is in fact an essential element of the ethnographic method (Pool, 2017). Ultimately, the ethnographic process is complicated, fluid and untidy, with the data generated from such participatory processes often described as 'messy' (Khan, 2020; Nimmo, 2011). This sense of 'messiness' is described by Braun and Clarke (2022) who imagine qualitative analysis as, "an adventure, and one that is typically messy and organic, complex and contested" (p. xxvi). Consequently, the process demands creativity, confidence, reflexivity and engagement from the researcher, which may be difficult for the novice ethnographer who may feel uncertainty about where to start (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Khan (2020, p. 142) echoes this sentiment arguing that this emotional and uncertain process can be productive, stating that, "When combined with robust methodological rigour, this chaotic character of ethnography can become constructive and beneficial, reflecting the unique strengths of the ethnographic method over other empirical approaches". For the purpose of this thesis, I accepted and embraced this chaotic and messy nature fully during the thematic analysis process. I rigorously adhered to the six-step framework suggested by whist also embracing the reflexive, recursive nature of TA, a process which demands a spirit of open enquiry.

I generated data through intensive engagement with the De Villiers and Amato families over a four-month period in early 2022, soon after Irish learners had returned to in person teaching after long periods of online learning due to COVID-19 school closures. Data generated included a wide range of data types, as outlined in the previous sections. Data included observations, field recordings (audio recordings of interviews and observations, and

photographs), a researcher diary (including field notes and researcher reflections) and documents (including student drawings, homework tasks and policy documents).

In line with current thinking regarding ethnographic data generation and analysis, I acknowledged that the generation and analysis of data are intertwined actions; as ideas are generated in the field, the process of data analysis begins as the researcher makes sense of what they are observing and draws initial conclusions based on their observations (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Delamont & Atkinson, 2021). Thus, as I observed the interactions between family members and took note of their language usage during their daily tasks, in particular that of completing homework, I was simultaneously generating ideas and analysing what I was observing. This was reflected in the notes I recorded in my fieldwork diary.

Data were collected in the field using a recording device, a camera and a small notebook. Before and after each observation session I recorded a researcher reflection based on my experiences during that observation period. After each observation session, I transferred relevant data from that session to online secure storage on the TCD Microsoft Teams platform and then uploaded to the MAXQDA software platform. I used HappyScribe translation software to create initial transcripts of each interview or observation session.

Once the fieldwork element of the data generation process had ended, I analysed each data source using the six step reflective TA process as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2022). The first step in this process is to become familiar with the dataset. At this point I was confronted with the sheer volume of the data I had collected. The process of becoming familiar with the data I had collected took some time. I had audio-recordings and auto-generated transcripts, hand-drawn pictures, field notes and photographs. Through the process of organising the data and uploading this to the MAXQDA platform, I organised the data into a coherent fashion based on data type and family of origin (either the Amato or De Villiers family). An initial examination of each piece of data was conducted at this stage.

The interview data was the largest data source and given this, I prioritised the processing of this data first. Following the grouping and uploading of the original audio-recordings and the auto-generated transcripts to the MaxQDA platform, I listened in-depth to each recording and made edits to the corresponding transcription so as to reflect the audio

recordings most accurately. Considering the hand drawn pictures produced by the participants, these required scanning and uploading the scanned images to MaxQDA. As with the interview data, the scanned images were grouped into specific folders within each family group. This process was the same for photographs taken at each family home. With both the drawings and photographs, these uploaded images were edited and/or cropped to remove any identifying information. A third, separate folder for general data applying to both families, such as policy documents was also created on the MaxQDA platform. Data uploaded to this folder included the Primary School Curriculum of 1999 and the new Primary Language Curriculum. Additional data uploaded to this general folder also included researcher reflections written by me throughout the observations.

The second and third steps of the RTA process is to code each form of data and generate initial themes. This process involved a more intensive analysis of each data type using the MAXQDA coding function. Initial codes were created on the software platform. Initially, themes were broad and included 1) migration experiences, 2) multilingualism issues, 3) identity and 4) language policy. As the initial coding process unfolded, relevant sub-themes were added to each of these sections. The interview audio-recordings and transcripts were analysed first. Each audio-recording was listened to in full and coded using these initial codes. Following the initial coding of the transcripts, the images generated (drawings and photographs) were coded using the same initial themes. This process continued with the researcher reflections and the policy documents, each of which was read in full and coded according to the initial themes. From this process, the MaxQDA software allows one to open up each coded theme respectively; this allows one to view all the data coded, across data sources, to that specific theme. This is a helpful tool in the analysis of the data.

After the generation of each of these codes and themes, the process of theme development and review was undertaken, examining each data point and reflecting on their relevance regarding the research questions and their inclusion in certain themes. During this process it was clear to me that further refinement of the initial themes was needed. In some instances themes overlapped and in other instances it was clear that certain themes were less

important than others. Considering this, this phase of the data analysis included revisiting the research question, reviewing the coded data and reorganising themes as required.

The fifth stage of data analysis involves refining, defining and naming themes. I identified three key themes, namely 1) Language Policy Disjunctures, 2) Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities and 3) Homework as a Transitional Space. These key themes are presented in Table 3 alongside a description of the data included in each theme.

Table 3: Generated Themes

Theme	Characteristics
Language Policy Disjunctures	Explores the linguistic ideologies, practices and language management informing language policy in the school, and FLP in the homes of each participating family, in context. This theme explores disjunctures between these two policy contexts which learners must navigate, and how this may influence their linguistic identity development.
Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities	Examines how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts.
Homework as a Transitional Space	Considers homework as a unique transitory space between school and the home, particularly from a linguistic viewpoint. This section examines how multilingual learners must expertly navigate this space drawing on a wide range of resources.

Braun and Clarke (2022, p. 118) reflect that, " Writing *is* a key component of the analytic process for RTA, because the analysis is *in* the writing around your data...With TA, you will still be *producing* your analysis *as* you write it, not simply describing the analysis you

finished before writing started." Keeping this understanding of writing as part of the RTA process in mind, Chapters 6 and 7 present detailed accounts of the themes generated as a part of the six-step RTA process. Each of the themes listed above was further refined and divided into subthemes where required; the name of each theme was re-examined and changed if deemed necessary. Finally, the key findings from these themes were organised into a coherent fashion and developed further into the findings and discussion chapters which follow.

5.6 Ethics:

Although the field of linguistic ethnography is described as an umbrella term encompassing may different areas of interest within applied linguistics, a central feature of linguistic ethnography is a focus on the social aspects of human interaction. Considering this, ethics is a central consideration for linguistic ethnographers (Copland & Creese, 2015). It is critical for ethnographic researchers to possess an excellent knowledge of ethical issues and procedures such as confidentiality and data protection, and to hold oneself to a 'moral code' throughout the ethnographic process, furthermore, the well-being of participants throughout each stage of research is paramount (Copland, 2019). In this section, general ethical procedures required of students and staff of Trinity College Dublin are outlined, including ethical clearance, anonymity of participants, gender dynamics and the processing of data. Ethical issues regarding working with vulnerable populations such as children and migrant communities are also discussed.

5.6.1 General Ethical Issues:

Ethical clearance for the research was obtained from the Research Committee in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. The research adhered to Trinity's Policy on Good Research Practice. Throughout the research process I aimed to adhere to the principles of a) respect for the participants, b) beneficence & the absence of maleficence, and c) justice. Data

were stored and destroyed in line with the College's Policy on Good Research Practice, Irish Data Protection Legislation and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

As ethnography is conducted on the basis of a subjective reality, it is not value free and an inherent bias is present because that observations lie on the assumptions of the observer (Figueroa, 2017). Within the ethnographic framework of the research, a commitment to conducting research in a reflexive manner, considering my role in the research and being aware of any personal bias, was observed. I engaged in reciprocity with all participants to gain their insights into the research process and committed, from the outset of the research, to behaving in an open and honest manner with all stakeholders for the duration of the research. In terms of recruitment, I did not approach participants or engage in any data generation before ethical clearance was obtained from Trinity College Dublin. No incentives were offered. All participants participated on an informed and voluntary basis. They were free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without prejudice. Participation was arranged, as best as possible, in a manner and time suitable to the participants so as to cause minimum disruption to their home life and work/formal studies. There were no known conflicts of interest associated with this research. Upon commencing the research, I was aware that participants may be critical of current practices relating to policies/ ideologies/ teaching and findings may highlight how current practices diverge from recognised best practice. Consequently, I made a commitment to report in a professional, constructive manner. The potential for the disclosure of illegal activity was rated as low and it was not anticipated. Should this have occurred, I was prepared to exclude the affected data and contact the relevant authorities. Participants were informed at the point of data generation at the latest regarding disclosing illicit activity. This research involved the participation of vulnerable groups, namely children and migrants. Garda Vetting was thus required. All efforts were made to ensure anonymity of participants and throughout the research process. Neither the participants, their families nor the schools they attend have been named in the research. Participants' identities were anonymised through assigning pseudonyms in the transcripts and removing any identifying information from photographs, documents and transcripts if relevant. Lastly, I committed to deal with any issues of an ethical

nature by communicating such concerns to my supervisors promptly and implementing any necessary action.

In addition to the practical aspects of ethical clearance prior to the commencement of research, within language and education research there are a number of gender related issues which require consideration. Consequently, I was committed to being aware of these issues and integrated this understanding into this research. My previous experiences investigating a gender-based achievement gap in South African primary schools, demonstrates my ability to be mindful of gendered differences in educational research; I brought this experience with me into the current research. From the outset it was acknowledged that the consideration and integration of gender/sex analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the research was an important factor to ensure better, more balanced results. As an aim of this research was to gain insight into how multilingual migrant learners experience multilingualism and whether their experiences foster the development of multilingual dynamic identities, it was important to acknowledge the relationship between gender, language learning, migration and identity.

On commencing this research, I committed to ensuring access to the data and results of this research. This thesis will be available through the TCD Library for other students and academics to access; the TCD Library is connected to the TARA (Trinity's Access to Research Archive) Institutional Repository, which is designed to allow researchers to archive their own work. The Open Access initiative is another avenue that can be pursued to ensure availability of the research data. Data were stored and destroyed in line with TCD's Policy on Good Research Practice and policy for retention, and with Irish Data Protection Legislation and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All electronic data were stored securely on encrypted USB in compliance with GDPR. All hard copies of consent forms were securely stored. Access to raw data were limited to me, my supervisors and, potentially, examiners. Data were retained for 13 months after completion of the examination process. Following this, all electronic copies of the data were deleted from storage sites and all paper copies were shredded.

As outlined extensively by Copland (2019), within research communities much focus is placed on the process of ethical clearance or approval from relevant research boards prior to interaction with participants or data generation processes. However, the nature of linguistic ethnography, like other fieldwork-based disciplines, ultimately means that not all ethical issues can be identified prior to engagement in the field. Considering this, linguistic ethnographers must adopt a reflexive and flexible approach to their fieldwork which is grounded in a sound understanding of ethical issues in research (Copland, 2019). In the next sections some of these issues are considered.

5.6.2 *Linguistic Ethnography, Ethics and Vulnerable Populations:*

There is a history within both medical research and the social sciences of research which was either physically harmful for participants or ultimately disenfranchised minority communities through the use of discriminatory or coercive research practice (examples include the infamous Tuskegee syphilis experiment or the Stanford prison experiment) (Copland, 2019; Jannesari, 2022). Considering this history, there has been a concerted effort to shift towards more ethical approaches to research.

It is important for linguistic ethnographers to be mindful of both their ethnographic gaze and focus on the research at hand, but also on the participants and the effect of the research on their well-being, thus balancing the needs of the research with the needs of the participants (Copland, 2019). Particularly regarding qualitative data generation, fieldwork, face-to-face interactions and participating in people's lives presents unique ethical considerations (van Liempt & Bilger, 2012). Additionally, in situations where researchers are working in diverse contexts, or in communities or cultures different to their own, cross-cultural ethics require consideration (Copland, 2019). In such cases, the central ethical principles of human dignity, justice and beneficence should be of central focus (van Liempt & Bilger, 2012). In this research, the focus of the research involved two different sets of vulnerable groups: namely migrants and migrant children. Working with migrants entails, "a set of ethical implications related to aspects such as cultural sensitivities, different

worldviews, diverse social and moral values and intense public discourses" (Romocea, 2014, p. 1).

In the case of vulnerable populations, it is important for researchers to carefully consider participants' ability to provide informed consent. In situations where vulnerable populations such as migrants or children are being asked to participate in research, an unequal relationship between the researcher and participants may result in participants participating against their will (van Liempt & Bilger, 2012). Reflecting on this issue, Jannesari (2022) notes that research involving migrants and in particular those seeking international protection are at risk of exploitation due to differences in power held between researchers and participants. In the case of the current research, family observations only began once the purpose of the research had been thoroughly outlined to participants and a question-and-answer session held with each family prior to commencement. It was vital to me to ensure that all participants possessed sufficient English language proficiency to understand the nature of the research to provide their informed consent. I also ensured that all consent forms had been read and signed by the family members prior to commencement. In the case of children, I sought both their consent and their parents' consent for their participation in the research. Regular check ins with participants were held throughout the data generation process and they were assured that if they felt uncomfortable at any stage, they could communicate this to me, and we would find solutions to any issues emerging.

Particularly when conducting research with vulnerable populations such as migrants and children, researchers must be acutely aware of the influence of their role and the power related to this, and how this may impact upon the participants, their behaviour and the ethical implications of this for the research. For instance, according to van Liempt and Bilger (2012), "Migrants' lives in general but particularly those shaped by irregular migration, exploitation or other aspects of 'illegality' are very much influenced by a specific political or institutional framework that poses very concrete methodological and ethical challenges" (van Liempt & Bilger, 2012, p. 454). Thus for some migrants, particularly refugees and asylum seekers or those residing illegally, they may feel acutely aware and vulnerable of allowing a researcher into their lives and private spaces; thus researchers must be aware of the intrusive impact of

their research on participants lives, in addition to understanding why participants may be hesitant to allow researchers into different aspects of their lives (van Liempt & Bilger, 2012). In this research, I was acutely aware of my role as a researcher and the power attached to this role; to account for this, every attempt to follow ethical protocol as outlined by TCD's ethical guidelines was made. Additionally, whilst both families fit the criteria for participation in the research, namely being first- and second-generation migrants living in Ireland, to the best of my knowledge all participants were legally residing in Ireland. Data was only collected in the 'common spaces' of each home and children were never observed or interviewed alone-caregivers were requested to be present for all observation periods. In my demeanour I consciously selected casual, bright clothing which I hoped would feel non-threatening to participants (particularly the children) and, drawing on my training as a primary school teacher and experience as a mother, I behaved in a way that I hoped would be perceived as friendly and non-threatening. At the time of the observations, I was also heavily pregnant-this was a factor that drew the natural curiosity of the children and served as an 'icebreaker' of sorts as they asked questions about my baby. Throughout the observation period I would regularly check in with participants and ensure that they were feeling as comfortable as possible about my presence in the home. Additionally, to respect the privacy of families, any private topics or information that was not deemed relevant to the research or of a sensitive nature were not recorded or noted where possible.

Another aspect that requires consideration when dealing with vulnerable groups within research, is a sensitivity to the lines of enquiry that one may pursue and an acknowledgement that particularly for migrants, there may be areas related to their experiences which they may find traumatic to revisit (Copland, 2019; Hugman et al., 2011). A central focus of ethical research is a concern for 'doing no harm' to participants; consequently, raising topics for discussion which participants may find sensitive or distressing must be carefully considered (Hugman et al., 2011). In this research there were occasions where it was clear that migration experiences raises some distress for participants, particularly Kimberley. At these times I made a concerted effort to remain as neutral and calm as possible

and to redirect conversation to the present moment to ensure minimal distress, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the difficulties she had experienced.

Finally, I identify as a migrant, South African researcher living in Ireland. As a migrant living in Ireland myself, it was necessary to engage in the process of reflexivity and acknowledge how my own migrant status might influence the research and my relationships with participants (Romocea, 2014). Having arrived in Ireland in 2018, I share a similar economic, political and social background of migration with other South Africans in Ireland (specifically, the De Villiers family). I also have Irish born children, who are second generation migrants themselves-another shared similarity with the participants in this research. My own experience of migration shares many similar features to those of the participants and considering this, I have a good understanding of the challenges, and a level of sympathy, for the difficulties they have at times experienced. In some ways, I reflected throughout my researcher's diary that by being open about my own status as a migrant living in Ireland, participants may have identified with me to a greater extent, and potentially felt more comfortable in having me in their home. Certainly, as will be seen in the upcoming chapters, both families were considerably generous in sharing their thoughts and experiences of migration in the Irish context with me. Sharing the same nationality as the De Villiers family (being South African) and thus speaking in the same way and understanding where they originated from most likely made my presence in their home more comfortable. Overall, it was important to recognise this connection and that I was not entering the field as a 'detached researcher' but rather as a researcher with her own emotional baggage and migration experiences which ultimately influenced the research process at all stages of the data generation and analysis processes (Romocea, 2014).

5.7 Conclusion:

Thus far in this thesis, I have outlined the research context and relevant theory. In this chapter I introduced the methodology informing this research and presented an in-depth discussion of linguistic ethnography as a robust and suitable methodology within language,

education and (family) language policy research. In this methodology chapter I also introduced the various forms of data generation associated with ethnographic research and outlined which of these trusted methods I employed in this research, considering the important issue of reflexivity and the role of the ethnographic researcher in the data generation and analysis stages of the research process. As I outlined in this chapter, the ethnographic data generation process usually encompasses the generation of various data types. In this research, data generation followed trusted linguistic ethnographic methods (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012; Rampton et al., 2004). I then introduced the two participating families involved in this research, namely the Amato family and the De Villiers family. The primary form of data analysis I employed in this research was that of RTA, as developed by Braun and Clarke (2022). I closely followed the six-step framework suggested by Braun and Clarke (2022) to make sense of the generated data. I concluded the chapter by discussing the ethical implications involved in ethnographic research.

6 "My friends know I come from somewhere hot"-Observations from the De Villiers Family

6.1 Introduction:

Thus far, I have discussed the research context, relevant literature and methodology informing this research. In this chapter, and Chapter Seven which follows, I progress the research by introducing the findings which were generated from the application of RTA to the data generated from intensive engagement with both families involved in this research. I have chosen to present the data generated from each family separately in preserve the narrative style often associated with ethnographic research (Coffey, 2018; Hammersley, 2006; Lüders, 2004; Priessle & Grant, 2004). In so doing my aim was to present a rich and holistic description of each family and the data which was generated. For this reason, interview extracts are included in the text rather than as appendices. Chapter Six focuses on the data I generated with the De Villiers family, whereas Chapter Seven focuses on the data generated with the Amato family. Within each chapter, the findings are presented in order of the three key themes identified in Table 3, namely 1) *Language Policy Disjunctures*, 2) *Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities* and 3) *Homework as a Transitional Space*. Following these descriptions, an analysis and interpretation of the findings is considered in relation to the implications for policy and practice in Chapter Eight.

In this chapter I focus on the findings generated from the De Villiers family. This includes presenting a family profile and presenting the findings regarding the experiences of the family, particularly Chantelle, Zane and Daisy through their migration to Ireland and their engagement with the school system. This section reflects upon the children's experiences of attending both Irish-medium and English-medium primary schools. Based on the observations of the De Villiers family and interacting with the members of the family in their home, an interpretation of their FLP is presented. This discussion includes descriptions of their linguistic ideologies, language practices and language management strategies. I then

progress the chapter by considering the findings centring on the development of each family member's linguistic identity, with a particular focus on the three children in the family, upon which this research focuses. An additional key finding from the data analysis was the emergence of homework as a unique space in school language policies and FLP interact in complex ways. Considering this, I conclude this chapter by detailing the findings regarding this theme.

6.2   Family Profile: The De Villiers Family

The De Villiers family, originally from South Africa, moved to Ireland in 2017. The family consists of Danie, Kimberley and their three children Chantelle (12), Zane (9) and Daisy (5). All three children were born in South Africa. This family originally migrated to Ireland via the Work Permit system, with Danie obtaining work and Kimberley and their children joining him in Ireland as his dependants. Danie is a first-language Afrikaans speaker. Afrikaans is one of South Africa's 11 official languages and is spoken as a first language by approximately 13% of the South African population (Government of South Africa, 2021). Kimberley's first language is White South African English (WSAfE) (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014), followed by Afrikaans as her second language. In 2001, WSAfE was spoken by approximately 1.7 million white South Africans primarily of British heritage. Whilst English is considered to be one of the 11 official languages of South Africa, it is in essence the de facto official language of the country, used mainly in education, commerce, government and the media (Bowerman, 2013). The children spoke both WSAfE, with Afrikaans spoken as their heritage language. At the time of the research all three children were learning Irish as an additional language at school.

In South Africa, Danie and Kimberley described their standard of living as 'good'. Chantelle and Zane attended Afrikaans medium creches and pre-primary schools. They spoke a combination of Afrikaans and WSAfE in their home and within their extended family and community. Daisy, whilst born in South Africa, was less than a year old when her family moved to Ireland. In South Africa, both Danie and Kimberley were employed full-time. Danie

described their socioeconomic status in South Africa as follows, "We had a good life there, we had a decent home and fairly good jobs and, while we couldn't afford a ton of luxuries, we were able to give the kids everything they needed". When asked about the reason for their move to Ireland, Danie and Kimberley cited high levels of violent crime, growing socio-political unrest and other social and economic factors for their decisions to seek a better future for themselves and their families in Ireland. Examining their immigration process through the Phases of Migration (International Organisation for Migration, 2023), it is evident that during the pre-departure phase, Danie and Kimberley put extensive effort into planning their travel. As the family were moving with small children, Kimberley reflected that there was a lot to do to prepare for their move, and securing passports for the family was one of the most stressful aspects. Considering their transit, the family travelled by air and arrived in Ireland via the standard immigration channels and border controls. Reflecting on this experience, Danie admitted that although they had all the correct paperwork to enter the country legally, engaging with border control was stressful.

When they first arrived in Ireland the family spent some time living in Galway, where Chantelle and Zane attended an Irish-medium schools for their ECCE and junior/senior infants' years. When asked about this, Kimberley reflected that this was not an active choice for their family but rather one borne out of circumstance; due to their budget and work situation they had little choice about where they could rent and as a result ended up in a community that had a high concentration of Irish speakers. At the time the Irish-medium schools were the only viable school option. Despite this being a matter of circumstance, Kimberley did not mind her children learning Irish and was intrigued by how her South African children appeared to pick up the language so quickly. At the time of the research the family were living in the Midlands. Since their move to the Midlands, all three children were attending their local English-medium national school. Danie was working full-time and was out for most of the day; the bulk of the observations took place in the family home as Kimberley returned home from her part-time morning job and Chantelle, Zane and Daisy returned home from school. During this after school period, Kimberley would welcome her children home, enquire about their day and prepare an after-school snack for them. Then,

afternoon homework tasks would commence. Usually, Danie would arrive home in the late afternoon. The focus of the observations centred around this moment of transition from school to the home, where the family was reunited after their experiences out of the home for that day. Particular attention was paid to the process of homework completion and the language use throughout this time.
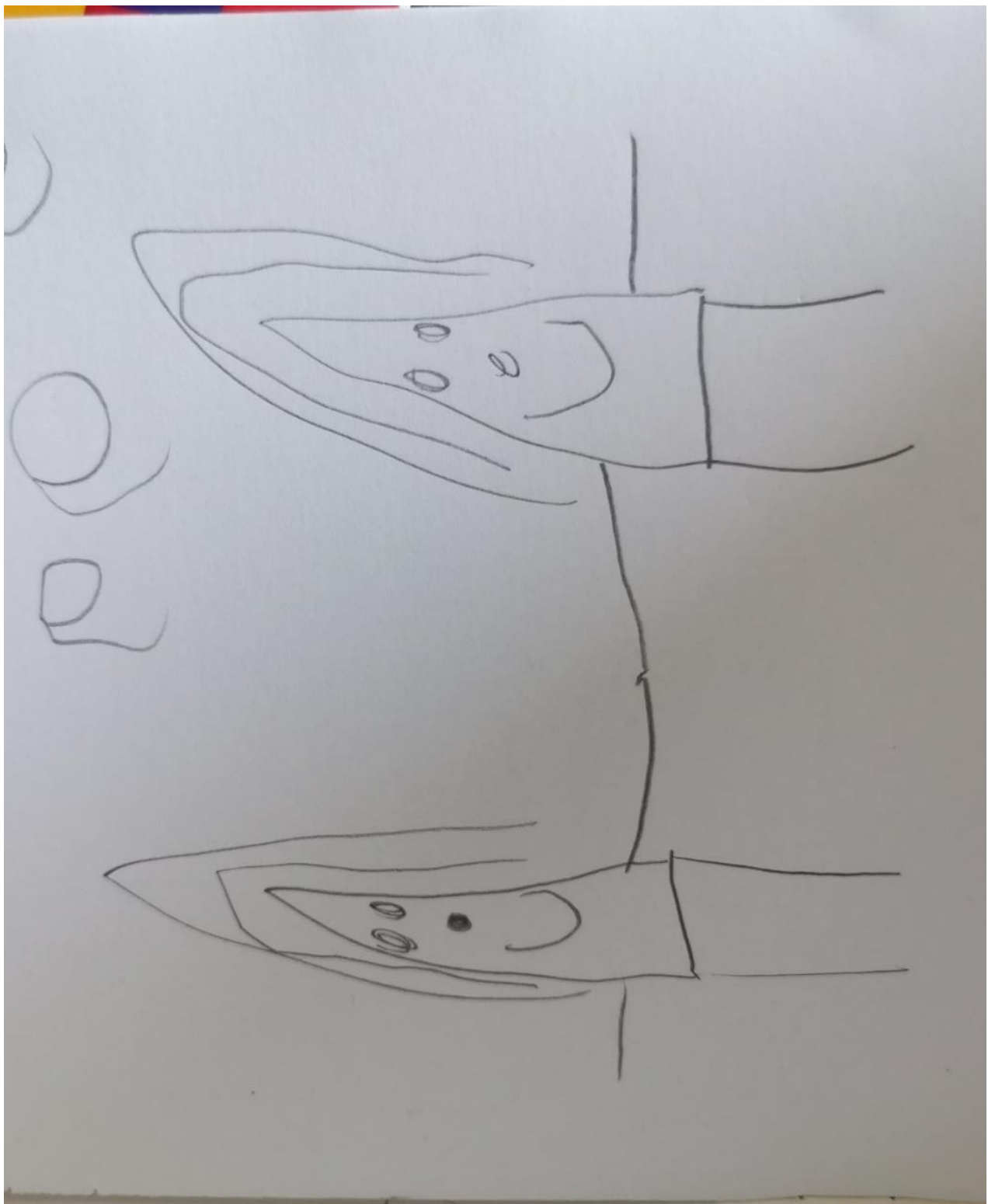
Figure 7: Daisy Self Portrait ('Look we are holding hands')
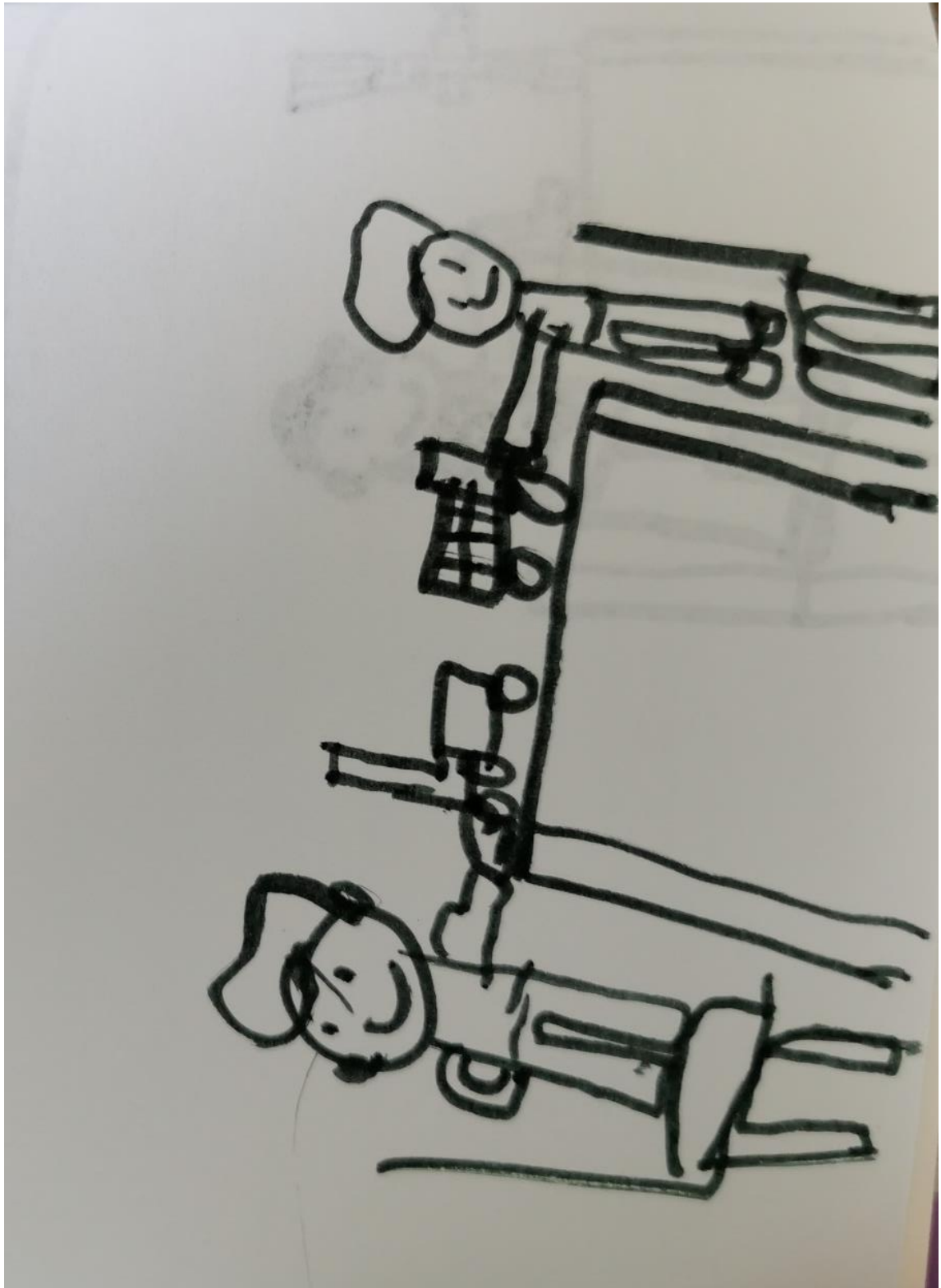
Figure 8: Zane Self-Portrait ('Me playing with a friend')

Figure 9: Chantelle self-portrait

Homework was completed at a small table in the kitchen area. With three children across a range of ages, this time was often chaotic and loud; Daisy would make her presence known and she was eager to engage with me as the researcher, usually in a rather playful manner. I attempted to strategically position myself in the corner of the small room to not impose, however this was difficult. The family also had a small dog named Gypsy. Gypsy would not take kindly to strangers, thus at the beginning of the observation process there would often be a barking dog in the room. As my presence became a more familiar part of the afternoon in the De Villiers household, I was pleased to note that Gypsy had stopped barking every time I entered the room. While Kimberley would assist Zane and Chantelle with their homework tasks, Daisy would often interrupt these sessions by bouncing a ball through the room or singing loudly. Overall, the impression I received was that homework was a 'necessary evil' that needed to be completed but not taken too seriously. Oftentimes this chaotic process would result in eruptions of laughter over a shared difficulty with Irish homework or a difficulty in understanding a mathematics problem. At other times, this period had a more stressful undertone when the children appeared overtired, where there were conflicts regarding the homework or when Kimberley was distracted with parental multi-tasking such as taking phone calls or scheduling doctor's appointments, which impacted on the homework sessions.

An undertone that seemed to run through the observations was Kimberley and Danie's stress in dealing with immigration related issues, and financial strain. Under the Work Permit system, economic migrants from outside the EU are required to apply for a work permit to reside and work in Ireland, registering their permission stamp yearly with their local immigration officer at a fee of 300 euro. This was a financial strain for the De Villiers family. For many migrant families in the same situation as the De Villiers, the ultimate goal of enduring through this system is to reach a point where applying for naturalisation is possible. This was very clearly at the forefront of Kimberley and Danie's minds. Kimberley often discussed that she was working specifically to save for the naturalisation fee. This immigration related stress was a frequent presence during my time with them.

Overall, the De Villiers family were friendly and welcoming. Whilst at first the children were shy having a stranger in their home, they soon became used to my presence and would offer up information regarding school life or their activities. Kimberley and Danie were extremely accommodating in inviting a researcher into their home, considering their busy work schedules and life pressures. In the next section, descriptions of the family's early migration and school experiences as they relate to integration and language learning are outlined.

6.3 Migration to Ireland:

In the previous section I introduced the De Villiers family and provided details regarding the observations in their home. In this section, their early migration and school experiences, as they relate to the topic of this thesis, are described.

6.3.1 Family Experiences:

The stage of immigration and relatedly, the extent of their integration into Irish society emerged as a key difference between the two participating families in this research. According to Fahey, Russell, et al. (2019, p. foreword), "The daily lived experience of migrants and their children in communities across the country is an important factor in building a sense of belonging". The De Villiers' lives were impacted by the struggles related to the immigration system in Ireland and the hardship of earning an income within the restrictions of the work permit system. Reflecting on their experience of immigration to Ireland, Danie states, "Moving here is the hardest thing we have ever done...there are so many hoops we have to jump through and just so many restrictions on what we can do. It's hard, trying to earn a living, especially if you have kids". At the time of this research Danie had only recently reached his 5-year employment mark and the family were looking ahead after a recent change of immigration stamps and the potential to apply for naturalisation. On one occasion, Kimberly became emotional as she reflected upon their experience of living in Ireland so far.

She recalls a specific time when they had experienced the death of her father, and to return to South Africa for the funeral, she was forced to set up a GoFundMe online fundraising page to raise funds for her flight home. Besides that short trip home for Kimberly alone, the family have not been able to afford returning to South Africa for a holiday. At the time of this research, Kimberly was working two jobs; one part-time job in a local factory while her children were at school, and another online customer services position which started at 4pm in the afternoon. Consequently, the homework period each afternoon was impacted by time pressures to complete tasks before 4pm when Kimberly started work. Upon observing that she was working very hard, I commented that she seems to be like superwoman accomplishing so many things in a day, to which she responded, 'It's not forever, it's not forever'. When asked about her job in the factory, Kimberley shared that she doesn't particularly like this position but took it on anyway to save for her family's Irish naturalisation application, the fees of which are quite significant for the family of five. The conversation continues:

CW:	*How was your day at school?*
Daisy:	*Mama works at the factory.*
CW:	*Your mom works at the factory?*
Daisy:	*Yeah.*
(Kimberley overhears this exchange and joins the conversation)	
Kimberley:	*So I saw it advertised Wednesday. So, Thursday my husband and I were chatting and we were like, look, we don't have the money.*
CW:	*Okay.*
Kimberley:	*I knew it was going to be hard, but I was thinking that we could save what we can. And I was like, no, I'm gonna do this (apply for the job), I want to get a passport.*
CW:	*Well, yeah, I understand that.*
Kimberley:	*Absolutely. So, I'm like, I want to get it done because I work so hard to get all my family here. I want this for me. And I honestly thought that it was factory work, like on the floor production line, and I was prepared to do that. That's not for everybody.*
CW:	*Yeah. It's amazing how quickly it all adds up with all the permits and everything.*

Kimberley:	*Yeah, Our Irish friends, they just have to pay for their passport. I think it's like 40 or 50 Euro or something and then renew it every ten years.*

When she shared this with me, I reflected that this seems like a lot of pressure. To this, Kimberly responded,

Kimberley:	*I have to say, I do think it's a quality of South Africans that we're wired to be hard workers in maybe, I think perhaps, a different way to other people. And we do learn rather quickly. Generally, I think we learn quickly on our feet.*

During these conversations Kimberley displayed a spirit of perseverance although it was clear that the stress of recent immigration was impacting all family members. When asked about this stress, Danie reflects by stating,

Danie:	*Ja, dis nie lekker nie, (yes, it's not very nice). It's so up and down; we've had to move (house) so many times and set up new homes and find new schools for the kids, set up new lives…with no help…but we do it because it's for a better future, especially for the kids*

From these interactions, it was clear that the De Villiers family were, 'in the thick of it all'. When asked what it is like living in Ireland, the children struggled to respond to such an abstract question; for Daisy, this is the only home she has ever known. While she knows her family come from South Africa and that she still has extended family there, she has never returned since her family left. She identifies as Irish and views Ireland as her home. For Chantelle and Zane, the situation is slightly different. They are old enough to have some early memories of their life in South Africa, such as what their old house looked like. They remember flying to Ireland and starting 'again' in a new place. The comments made regarding immigration highlight that the stage of immigration may impact upon daily lives and therefore impact other spheres of their lives, such as the time available for parents to spend assisting their children with their homework tasks. Despite these immigration and financial

challenges, the family appeared positive about their decision to move to Ireland. Danie and Kimberley felt that, whilst slow, they were making progress towards their personal goals and could see the benefits of the migration for their children. The children had settled in their school and partook in activities with their peers and school community; they had the freedom to walk to and from school with a group of children from their street. At the time of the observations, Danie and Kimberley were both employed; they had rented a home and created a warm family environment where laughter was a daily occurrence. In the next section, Chantelle, Zane and Daisy's experience of Irish schooling is discussed.

6.3.2   School Experiences:

Research demonstrates that peoples' early migration experiences in their new country influence their overall integration experience (Feldman et al., 2008). Participants in the current research comprise first generation migrants and their children. Whilst the Primary Language Curriculum recognises that Ireland is linguistically and culturally diverse country, the data demonstrates that the cultural and linguistic diversity of the participants involved in this research were not overtly encouraged or celebrated in their school spaces, and if at best, only recognised at a tokenistic level.

The children in the De Villiers family moved to the West of Ireland when Zane, Chantelle and Daisy were small children. At the time, Chantelle and Zane were of preschool/ early school age and Daisy was just under 1 years old. When they lived in the West of the country, Zane and Chantelle attended a small, Irish-medium school for their junior and senior infant's years. Daisy remained at home, in the care of her mother. When asked about these early school experiences, both Zane and Chantelle had negative reactions-this reaction seemed to stem from their linguistic experiences from that time. According to Zane and Chantelle they were only allowed to use Irish in their school spaces, with attempts to use English frowned upon and at times resulting in a reprimand from the educators:

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Zane:	It was so hard cause we couldn't even use English to help us …we used to get into trouble with the teachers.
Chantelle:	Yeah, it was hard because we couldn't use English at all, we would get in trouble if we did, so we have to do it (speak English) secretly sometimes.

Zane and Chantelle's persistent negative outlook on their early experiences, alongside their descriptions of this period seemed to indicate that they had found this first experience of Irish challenging. This is echoed in the usage of the words, 'hard', 'trouble', and 'secretly'. Whilst they did acknowledge that they learnt some Irish during this time, these early, negative exposures to Irish appeared to have coloured their view of the language long-term. This negative attitude towards Irish was a notable observation considering the fluency in Irish they had previously held. According to Kimberley, their early Irish experiences, while perhaps emotionally difficult, had a positive impact insomuch as the children were relatively fluent in the language. Kimberley reflects on Chantelle's early language experiences in Irish, stating,

Kimberley:	And they (the school) would only speak Irish to her, so when she came home, if it was lunchtime, so she would say, okay, it's lunchtime, or it's nap time, or let's go play, or whatever. And she would actually, like, there was questions and stuff you could ask in Irish, and she could respond, like, 'Where's your shoes?' And she would show you your shoes. You would ask an Irish question like, 'Does she want chocolate?' She would say tá instead of saying yes, in Irish, We're not even Irish. Obviously, that stopped because she doesn't go there anymore. But at that age, she had vocabulary.

Having watched videos of Zane and Chantelle engaging with their parents and younger sister through the medium of Irish, it was interesting to note that Chantelle was not concerned with rewatching the videos or sharing any knowledge of Irish with me. In these videos we see Zane and Chantelle being asked to say certain sentences in Irish, and to interact with their baby sister. In comparison, at the time of the observations Chantelle tended to reply with, "I don't know" or "I can't say it" when questioned about her Irish homework. Having been shown these videos of Zane and Chantelle, it seems plausible that she was perhaps more capable in Irish than she was admitting.

At the time of the observations all three of the De Villiers children attended the same country school in the Midlands. This school was an English-medium school, although in line with national language policy, the children learnt Irish as an additional language. Danie described this school as a small community school, and it was evident from discussions with Zane and Chantelle, that they shared the same teachers across the various years. When asked if they had experienced opportunities to speak Afrikaans at school, all three children indicated that they had not. When exploring this issue further, the conversation turned to culture more generally. Chantelle reflected that her teacher the previous year did not know she was from South Africa for the entire school year. This was an issue with Daisy's teacher too, as she only discovered this about Daisy when having a parent-teacher meeting with Danie and Kimberley. Apparently, the teacher responded that she never would have thought they come from somewhere else as Daisy's Irish accent 'is so strong'. Daisy seemed to find this funny and redirected the conversation to a painting she had made for me with the colours of the South African flag:

Figure 10: Daisy's South African Flag

When asked about his cultural experiences at school, Zane echoed the sentiments of his sisters and reinforced that he had not experienced many opportunities to share his South African culture with his classmates. When asked about different cultures in their school, Zane said, "We don't really have culture". On one occasion pre-COVID, Kimberley and Zane had tried to share some authentic South African food with Zane's classmates, with Zane reflecting that this experience had fallen somewhat flat and had not gone and he had hoped it would. Zane admits, "My friends know I come from somewhere hot, and that we had a beach nearby but I think that's it". During a similar conversation regarding cultural experiences at school, Daisy furrowed her brow in reflective thought and commented that she didn't think her classmates knew much about where she was from. Thinking about her own classmates, she knew that some learners in her class had different cultural heritage, but she was unsure, saying that another girl in her class came from 'Orlando' and spoke Spanish:

CW:	*Do you have kids in your class that come from other places?*
Daisy:	*Some kids come from Dublin.*
CW:	*I see. Do you know if there is anyone that comes from far away, like other countries?*
Daisy:	*Ja. Like Andrea.*
CW:	*Ja? Where does she come from?*
Daisy:	*She comes from Orlando, I think, but I think her family also speaks Spanish. She doesn't speak Spanish at school much though.*
CW:	*That sounds interesting.*

Of note in this interaction, Daisy reflects that her classmate also did not experience opportunities to speak their heritage language in the classroom. When asked the same question, Chantelle responded similarly; reflecting that she believed they were the only South African family in their school, and that she was unsure of the cultural heritage of her classmates, with only one learner with foreign heritage:

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CW:	*That's cool, though. That's nice. Tell me, do you think in your school at the moment, are there lots of kids who speak or come from different places?*
Chantelle:	*Hmm. I'm not sure, I don't think so.*
CW:	*Any other South Africans? Are you the only ones?*
Chantelle:	*Ja, I think so. I'm not sure if there are any other South Africans, I don't know any.*
CW:	*What other places do the people come from in your school?*
Chantelle:	*Well, one of them is from Germany.*
CW:	*Oh, that's interesting. And the person who's from Germany, do they speak a lot of German, or mostly English?*
Chantelle:	*Their English is very good.*

Overall, the impression received from my interactions with the De Villiers family indicated that within this school environment, discussions of culture were not a central focus. Daisy struggled to understand the complex concept of 'culture' and when asked if people came from far away, innocently replied that she thought some friends were from Dublin. Similarly, it appeared that some school staff members were not aware of the children's cultural heritage, even after teaching and interacting with them over extended periods. The children did not feel like they had opportunities to discuss or celebrate their South African heritage at school and did not appear to have many opportunities to use their full linguistic repertoires in the classroom. Consequently, despite the intentions of official language and integration policies informing schooling in Ireland, the evidence indicates a disjuncture between official policy and the experiences of the De Villiers children in practice. Consequently, Zane, Chantelle and Daisy had linguistic knowledge of English, Afrikaans and Irish, however appeared to adopt a straight-for-English approach in selecting English as their primary means of communication, with each other and with their peers.

6.4 The De Villiers' Family Language Policy:

From the observations of the De Villiers family, it was evident that each family member has their own unique linguistic ideologies and repertoires which informed their language choices. Despite these individual differences, over time there were certain patterns which emerged which indicated a certain FLP within the family home. In this section, the overall family language policy of the family unit is discussed.

The De Villiers family language policy, at face value, appeared to position WSAfE (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014) as the primary language of communication between family members, with Afrikaans positioned as a heritage language spoken to differing extents by each respective family member. The family language diagram displayed in Figure 11 outlines the language communication preferences of each individual family member in the De Villiers family and displays the languages of interaction between each respective family members during the period of observations. In this household, three languages were used on a daily basis, although to differing extents. These were WSAfE, Afrikaans and Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013). Irish was used in the De Villiers household when completing homework tasks, but at no other time.

The three key components comprising language policy according to Spolsky (2004); (Spolsky, 2012, 2018, 2019) include linguistic ideologies, language practices and language management. This model was further developed by Curdt-Christiansen (2009); (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Considering the family language policy framework proposed by Curdt-Christiansen (2018), we can examine the both the internal (micro) and external, broader (macro) factors in which the family is positioned and influenced, and the socialisation processes acting on the family system. This model also focuses on the way parental ideologies interrelate and influence familial interactions. This framework also considers parents' language management measures which serve to influence their children's language practices (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018).

In the De Villiers family home, attitudes towards languages differed from person to person. It was evident that Danie held Afrikaans in high regard as a cultural link to his

Afrikaans heritage, and this was something that he wished to pass along to his South African born children, although he seemed to have accepted the process of language shift that the evidence indicated his family was experiencing at the time of the observations. Danie acknowledges that whilst he is still a proud Afrikaans speaker, he feels that since moving to Ireland in particular, that he has experienced a language shift, with English becoming a more prominent language in his repertoire:

Danie:	*Ja, ek is trots om Afrikaans te praat, en ek praat dit wanneer ek het my familie in Suid Afrika gebel het, maar hier in Ireland daar is nie baie kanse om dit te praat nie. (Yes, I am proud to speak Afrikaans, and I speak it when I call my family in South Africa, but here in Ireland there are not many chances to speak it).*
CW:	*I am sure that is difficult for you.*
Danie:	*Ja dit is (Yes, it is). But I understand why, I mean here in Ireland no-one speaks Afrikaans, it's all English. And with my wife also being English it just means we speak more English now than Afrikaans.*
CW:	*I understand. Do you try to speak Afrikaans with the kids at all?*
Danie:	*Ja, I do try sometimes but because we moved here when they were so little, they do know some of it but they don't use it because everyone here speaks English.*
CW:	*Yeah*
Danie:	*But you know, I still love Afrikaans. Dit is 'n baie beskrywende taal (It is a very descriptive language). The best is when you are out and about and you suddenly hear the South African accent or someone speaking Afrikaans and you just suddenly get a taste of home.*
CW:	*Do you feel like it's important to speak Afrikaans with the kids, or like is it important to keep up with the Afrikaans?*
Danie:	*Ja dit is belangrik (Yes, it is important). I think it's important to know where you come from. For me Afrikaans is still my language, I'm proud of it, but for the kids I don't think so. I mean they don't get much opportunity to speak it so you know I think it's not so important to them. I try to speak Afrikaans around the house but mostly it's a losing battle. (He laughs).*
CW:	*I know what you mean.*
Danie:	*But also back home there is so much nonsense about Afrikaans…taking it out of schools and everything, I mean look at Stellenbosch, it's sad that Afrikaans has now got such a bad rap because it's really such a beautiful language.*

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In the extracts above we also see Danie's skilful use of Afrikaans and WSAfE fluidly connected in his speech, for instance, when he translanguages fluently between English and Afrikaans saying: "When I started school. But also my Pa was in die Vloot". In the extract above Danie communicates his love and pride for Afrikaans as his first language, whilst also indicating that within his own personal repertoire and that of his family, language shift has occurred and English has become the more dominant influence, especially since moving to Ireland. In this extract Danie recognises the link between language and cultural heritage and identity; stating that he feels it is important to know where one comes from. Furthermore, he communicates his pride in his Afrikaner heritage. He hints at the post-Apartheid tensions towards Afrikaans in South Africa, saying that Afrikaans, "has now got such a bad rap". Due to the Apartheid government's use of Afrikaans as a tool to enforce white Afrikaner nationalism and Apartheid policy, Afrikaans occupies a political space within the South African linguistic landscape, most often described as the colonial language of the oppressor (South African History Online, 2023). Linked closely to this is the 'Afrikaner' identity, namely that of white, male, Afrikaans speaking persons. This 'Afrikaner' identity has been described as being, "understood as an identity flavouring race, gender, class, and sexual elements with a particularism drawn from an ever-pliable and politically potent category of ethnicity" (van der Westhuizen, 2016, p. 2). In the post-Apartheid era, this identity and Afrikaans as an extension of this identity, has been the focus of heavy scrutiny. Danie's comment referencing the challenge of Afrikaans language policy at the University of Stellenbosch, in which protests and public opinion have pressured the University to re-examine its traditionally Afrikaans language policy demonstrates his concern for a language under the political microscope (Grzadkowska, 2021). Overall, however, his passion and love for his first language is clear.

There appeared to be a more ambivalent attitude towards language use in the De Villiers household, with language used primarily as a means to an end. Kimberley and Danie appeared to hold differing levels of attachment to specific language usage in the family home and did not appear to actively manage language usage or learning within the home environment. The linguistic ideologies of the children in the De Villiers household, particularly those of Chantelle and Zane were much more overt. They clearly held a

preference for English language use both within the home and with their peers-whether this be WSAfE (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014) or Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013). They did, however, employ language creatively to their advantage, depending on context. This is discussed in greater detail in the upcoming sections. They appeared to hold an active dislike for Irish and made overt comments and displayed behaviour to reinforce their beliefs. They actively resisted the addition of Irish to their linguistic repertoires and therefore their FLP.

In terms of context, The De Villiers family appeared to be influenced by the sociolinguistic contexts of modern-day Ireland, in which tensions between English, Irish, Irish Sign Language, Irish Traveller Cant, Modern Foreign Languages and other migrant languages interact. Considering that the CSO indicates that there are over 200 different languages spoken in Ireland today (Central Statistics Office, 2016, 2023d, 2023e), this makes for a complex linguistic landscape in which to be exploring linguistic identity. These tensions were discussed in detail in Chapter One. In particular, the complex socio-political and sociocultural tensions between Irish English and Irish (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013), and what this means for Irish identity, appeared to be influencing the De Villiers family's ideologies towards languages and also their language practices. From a socioeconomic perspective, the family was operating from a strained financial position due in part to their migration and restricted mobility within the immigration system in Ireland. As the family maintained ties with their extended family in South Africa, we cannot discount the influence of South African socio-political and sociocultural issues on the family system. This includes changing attitudes towards Afrikaans in the post-Apartheid South African landscape (South African History Online, 2023). From a language socialisation perspective, the family was influenced by three primary means of socialisation. These were the children's school; the parents work environments and their local community. In the context of this research, the influence of the school in language socialisation practices was of particular interest. It was evident that school language policies had, over time, influenced the children's beliefs towards language, in particular that of Irish. Due to their perceived negatives experiences of language, the children claimed to find Irish 'boring', with nothing that they enjoy about the language. Taking a closer

examination at linguistic ideologies at play within the family system, Danie and Kimberley are two individuals who were born and attended school at the tail end of the Apartheid regime in South Africa. Danie (who grew up in rural, Afrikaans speaking South Africa) to a greater extent than Kimberley, appeared to feel a sense of pride towards Afrikaans as his L1 and his culture; he also believed in maintaining this language as it, 'is where you come from'. Kimberley, who speaks WSAfE as her L1, did not appear to share this same level of investment in Afrikaans. Kimberley was born and raised speaking WSAfE and raised in urban Johannesburg. She attended an English-medium school in which Afrikaans was taught as a second language. Slightly younger than Danie, Kimberley managed to avoid education under the Apartheid policy, although she still experienced the effects of the regime. Reflecting on her language learning experiences at school, Kimberley states:

Kimberley: *Ja it was, like, interesting learning language at school. I don't really think school was for me… I didn't really pay much attention in my English classes, and at the time Afrikaans was considered a bit of a hassle. So I did it but probably not very well.*

CW: *Do you feel like you remember much of what you were taught, in terms of Afrikaans?*

Kimberley: *Um, ja, some. I mean, when Danie speaks to me I generally understand and can say a few words back and that's useful when we want to talk about something we don't want the kids to hear (laughing). But ja I'm probably not fluent like Danie is. I wish he had more people to speak Afrikaans with.*

CW: *So you think it's important for him to maintain his Afrikaans?*

Kimberley: *Ja, I think so…I mean it's who he is and where he comes from and that's important.*

CW: *And what about the kids? Would you like for them to know Afrikaans?*

Kimberley: *Ideally, yes. But I'm not sure it's realistic. They speak some Afrikaans, and it gets a bit mixed up with their English, but I don't see them becoming fluent. There just isn't anyone for them to really practice with. Danie tries to talk to them but ja, that's about all the exposure they get.*

This extract demonstrates to us that Kimberley does have enough knowledge of Afrikaans to understand and interact with her Afrikaans speaking husband. They appear to

use this 'exclusive' linguistic knowledge to their advantage, communicating in Afrikaans when they do not want their children, or even others, to understand. During my time observing the De Villiers family, Danie and Kimberley also use Afrikaans as a form of personal connection, referring to each other as, "My lief" (My love), "Liefie" (Another more casual version of 'my love') and using the phrase, "Ek is lief vir jou" (I love you), interspersed throughout their English communication.

While she does recognise the importance of Danie maintaining his first language, her tone during this interview was more ambivalent. As Kimberley converses with her children in WSAfE, she does not seem to personally experience any communication barriers in her daily life and thus, while acknowledging Afrikaans as a part of Danie's heritage, she does not believe that their children have enough need, or exposure, to learn the language successfully.

Consequently, parental believes in maintaining, or at a minimum preserving some knowledge of Afrikaans for their children was considered important. Regarding Irish, the children appeared to have adopted a negative attitude towards the language which evidence indicates may be a common feature amongst primary and post-primary students in Ireland (Darmody & Daly, 2015). In terms of language management, Danie and Kimberley appeared to have a more laid-back approach to their children's language use. Besides Danie's attempts to maintain knowledge of Afrikaans as a heritage language for himself and for his children, and Kimberley's attempts to encourage Irish homework, the children appeared free to utilise any aspect of their linguistic repertoires that they so choose.
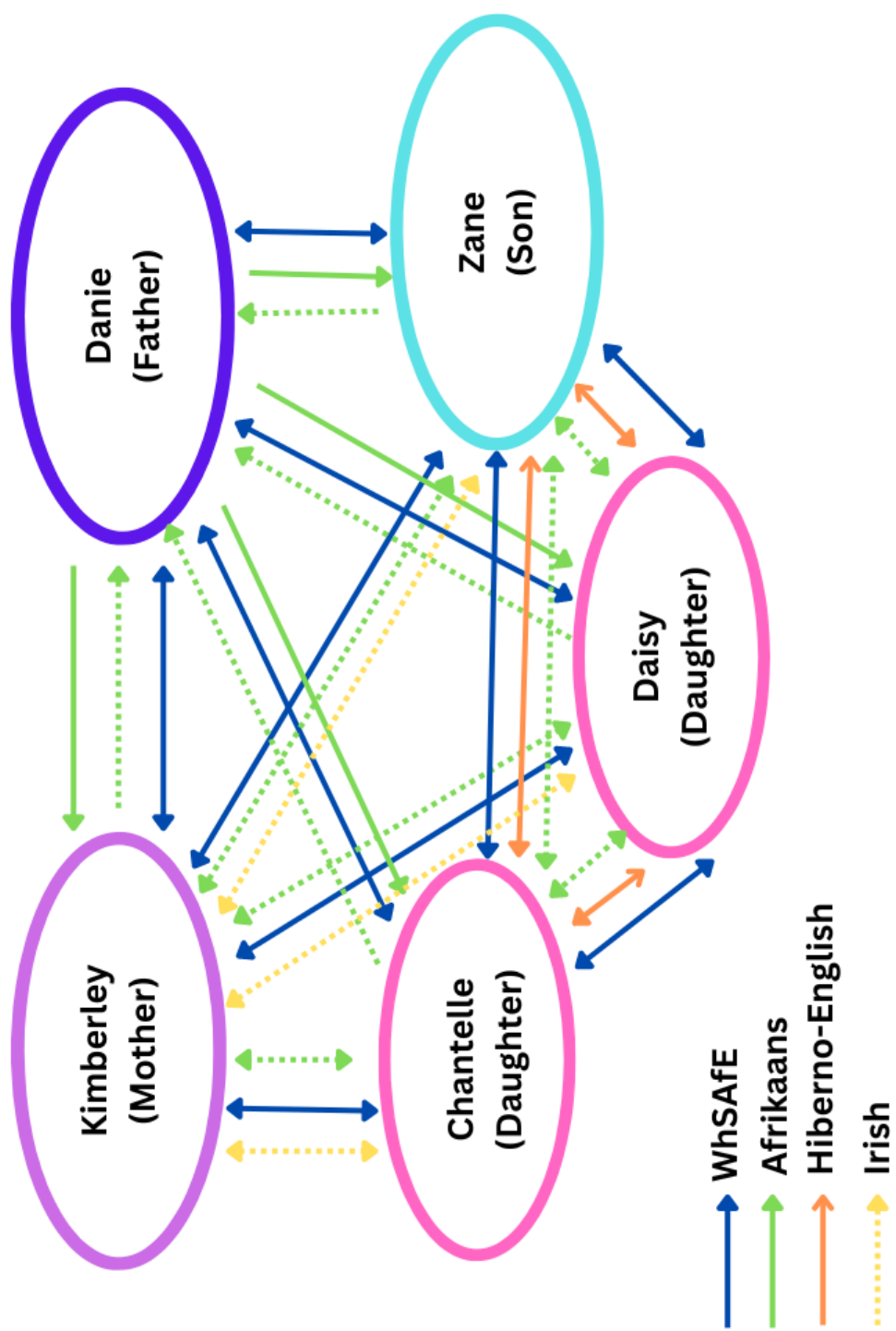
Figure 11: De Villiers Family Language Diagram

Within the inner core of Curdt-Christiansen's model, internal, or micro, factors influence language socialisation processes in the home (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Internal factors are defined as language-related factors which can serve to maintain or damage close family bonds and the relationships between members of a family (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). These may include emotional factors, issues of identity, cultural factors, parental impact beliefs and child agency (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Smith-Christmas, 2020a). As Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 175) states, "Within a family, there are rules and norms for speaking, acting and believing. Making rules and decisions on what language(s) to practice and encourage, or to discourage and abandon, depends largely on the beliefs and values that family members ascribe to certain languages".

Emotional factors are concerned with the role that a home or heritage language plays in the relationship between generations in a family (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). From this perspective, language choices in the home may serve to maintain home/heritage languages but also may be used to strengthen the emotional bonds between family members, particularly between generations (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; De Houwer, 1999). In the De Villiers family, whilst it appeared that the family was experiencing language shift, Afrikaans was still employed by both Danie and Kimberley when expressing affection or love to their children. Thus, whilst Afrikaans usage within the home was declining, the language was still used for emotive expression. Similarly, different levels of emotional investment in certain languages was evidenced. In the De Villiers household was the only L1 Afrikaans speaker, and whilst he was evidently passionate about his language, heritage and culture, this same level of passion was not shared by his fellow family members and consequently, there was little investment in maintaining Afrikaans proficiency in his home.

Identity factors include how one perceives themselves as a member of their family unit, and is largely informed by the ethnolinguistic heritage of the family (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). In this instance, heritage languages can serve as ethnolinguistic identity markers (Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021), which can serve as symbolic representations of, and connections to, a family's origins and heritage. For Danie, Afrikaans served as an ethnolinguistic identity marker representing his Afrikaner heritage. Based on the extracts presented in this chapter,

it was clear that his heritage was important to him and that he wished to pass this down to his children through continued Afrikaans language use ("*Ja, ek is trots om Afrikaans te praat*" – *Yes, I am proud to speak Afrikaans)*, however it was also evident that despite this desire he does not see continued Afrikaans usage within his family because, "*Everyone here speaks English*". Whilst in some instances heritage identity may cause differences in opinion within families which may result in conflict (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), this did not seem to be the case within the De Villiers household as Danie appeared to have accepted the changing dynamics of his family's fluid language practices:

> **Danie:** *Ja dit is belangrik (Yes, it is important). I think it's important to know where you come from. For me Afrikaans is still my language, I'm proud of it, but for the kids I don't think so. I mean they don't get much opportunity to speak it so you know I think it's not so important to them. I try to speak Afrikaans around the house but mostly it's a losing battle. (He laughs).*

Cultural factors include the cultural practices and norms to which a family unit abides (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Smith-Christmas, 2020a), and may be experienced differently by different family members or by different generations (Little, 2020). A common example of this is older generations insistence that younger generations within a family learn or maintain heritage languages, or practice other cultural practices as a link to their heritage culture, which evidence indicates is one of the most significant factors in minimising intergenerational language shift (Fishman, 1991). In the context of the current research, this was observed to different extents within the two participating families. We see through the data that Danie held a desire to share his language with his children and that it was a source of emotional attachment to his South African heritage, although this had not come to fruition in the way that they would like. The data also revealed small, everyday aspects of South African culture present through the speech, interactions and behaviour of the De Villiers family members. For instance, the constant drinking (and offering) of rooibos (redbush) tea, a South African household staple, or the usage of Afrikaans intertwined with English language usage throughout the day, '*Joh, dis warm!'* (Wow, it's hot!), the presence of a sign stating, '*Bly kalm, ons gaan nou braai'* (Stay calm, we are going to barbeque now) on the wall in the back

garden indicating an appreciation for the much-loved South African cultural practice of the 'braai' (barbeque), or the cooking of a South African meal of Malay heritage called 'bobotie'. Whilst such small everyday cultural acts were not as overtly celebrated in the De Villiers household, upon closer examination the signs of proud South African heritage were there. These attempts by Danie and Kimberley to maintain connections to their heritage by sharing these aspects of culture with their children in everyday life indicate that such connections were important to them.

Parental impact beliefs encompass parental beliefs regarding their own capacity and sense of responsibility for raising children in a heritage language or bilingual environment (De Houwer, 1999; Smith-Christmas, 2020a), and is considered to be one of the most essential factors in heritage language maintenance as it is linked to levels of parental involvement / parental investment in their children's language learning development (Darvin & Norton, 2021; Fishman, 1991; Norton (Pierce), 1995). This was a clear area of difference between the two participating families, particularly regarding the role of the primary caregivers. In the De Villiers family, Danie and Kimberley did not appear to share the same level of investment in Afrikaans language learning, with Kimberley (the primary caregiver) not seeming to share the same level of responsibility or interest as Danie did in ensuring Afrikaans was successfully transmitted to their children:

> ***Kimberley:*** *I'm not sure it's realistic. They speak some Afrikaans, and it gets a bit mixed up with their English, but I don't see them becoming fluent. There just isn't anyone for them to really practice with. Danie tries to talk to them but ja, that's about all the exposure they get.*

From this perspective we get the sense that Kimberly did not take an active responsibility for promoting Afrikaans language with her children and seems resigned to the fact that her children would not be fluent in the language. She appeared to hold a weak parental impact belief (De Houwer, 1999). She did not seem overly affected by this fact. As is supported by research on this topic, the views and impact of the primary caregiver on home language maintenance is considered crucial (De Houwer, 1999; Fishman, 1991). Furthermore,

the ideologies of the primary caregiver in supporting heritage language development have a significant impact on successful international language transfer (Smith-Christmas, 2020b). Evidence indicates that in this research parental beliefs have influenced the effectiveness of intergenerational language transmission. Kimberley speaks Afrikaans as an L2 and whilst largely fluent and understands the language completely, her usage of the language has decreased in Ireland. She does not share the same cultural attachment to Afrikaans as her husband does and consequently does not seem to place as much importance on transmitting the language down to the next generation. Perhaps due to the stressful pressures of her daily life this may not feel like a priority or a realistic venture on her behalf, as the children appear to get by with a combination of WSAfE and Irish English. This aligns with evidence from Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 181) who states, "Parents' impact beliefs about their children's ability to learn the home language can be a decisive factor, informing their FLP decision and thus affecting the linguistic environment they provide for their children". The findings in this thesis thus echo the conclusions of Pérez-Báez (2013) who found that parents who hold weak parental impact beliefs, particularly regarding supporting their children's multilingual language development, ultimately result in weak FLP's which had the consequence of language shift.

Drawing on the findings presented here and applying Darvin and Norton (2015); Norton (Pierce) (1995)'s model of investment is particularly relevant at this juncture. This theory posits that learners may be highly motivated, but if they are not invested in the language and literacy practices in the school and in the home, this may lead to varying learning outcomes. Adopting Norton (2016)'s Model of Investment to analyse the De Villiers' linguistic choices and adaptations, it is evident that whilst Danie had a vested interest in maintaining links to his Afrikaans heritage of which he was proud, this same investment was not shared by the rest of his family. As Afrikaans may be viewed as having limited potential to increase social capital in the Irish context, there was ultimately a lack of investment in Afrikaans and the language was used with less frequently in the home. Thus, within the De Villiers household there was emerging tension between the various family members and their language goals (as will be detailed in Chapter Eight) and consequently, differing

language learning outcomes were evidenced. Furthermore, due to their early negative experiences of the Irish language, Chantelle and Zane in particular did not appear to be invested in the language and literacy practices of their school, particularly regarding Irish language learning. At the point of the observations, they actively rejected the learning of Irish. Thus, whilst they may be motivated and capable learners, without their 'buy-in', they are resistant to the learning of Irish and this was evidenced in their daily attitudes towards speaking the language and resistance at homework time. Furthermore, it was apparent that within the family unit itself there were different linguistic goals and a misalignment of family language policy in that Danie's goals of Afrikaans language use and the maintenance of this heritage language were not shared by his family members, something which he describes as a, 'losing battle'. This once again raises the issue of investment. Based on the evidence it did not appear that they were heavily invested in the maintenance of this language. Whilst further investigation into this particular aspect is needed to be definitive, it is suggested that potential reasons for this may be due to different underlying linguistic ideologies regarding minority language and also due to limited access to a speech community with which to use the language. Applying Norton's Model of Investment, the De Villiers children may not view Afrikaans, or likely Irish in the school context, as sources of acquiring greater symbolic or material resources and therefore this will not assist them in increasing their cultural capital or social power (Bourdieu, 1991; Clark, 2006; Darvin & Norton, 2015).

For the De Villiers children in particular, who were at a formative age regarding their overall identity development, this experienced assimilation, language shift and potential language loss raises important questions regarding their potential loss of connection to their heritage, but also for their dynamic multilingual identity development.

Overall, what was evidenced through interactions with the family members and through observations was conflict and resistant in the home in the face of a weak FLP in flux. The family's immigration to Ireland had potentially altered the trajectory of the FLP, and consequently, as the family unit had developed so language shift had occurred. What has occurred is an 'opt for English' approach in which English has taken priority as a *lingua franca* in the context of their move. This has ultimately led to shifting language patters and, if

continued long term, has the potential to result in language shift/loss and a loss of bilingualism for the De Villiers children. Furthermore, the linguistic experiences of the De Villiers children have ultimately led to different linguistic ideologies within the family unit and therefore there is less linguistic cohesion and greater conflict surrounding language choices, investment and what the FLP of the family unit going forward should be.

6.5 Linguistic Identities of the De Villiers Children:

Thus far in this findings chapter, I have outlined the family profile of the De Villiers family and the family's experiences of migration and language education in the Irish context have been described. Following this, I presented a description of the De Villiers family FLP. In this section, I consider the respective linguistic identities of each child within the De Villiers family, upon which this research centres.

6.5.1 Chantelle:

Chantelle, the oldest of the children, spoke with a strong WSAfE accent in her home. Upon hearing this for the first time, I recalled a feeling of surprise at how strong her South African accent was in light of the age she was at the time of her family's move and the length of her stay in Ireland thus far. When interacting with her parents in particular, Chantelle's WSAfE accent was particularly established. When interacting with her father, it was evident that Chantelle had some knowledge of Afrikaans and was able to understand some of what her father communicated to her. She was also able to formulate some reply. It was evident, however that Afrikaans took a heritage language position in Chantelle's linguistic repertoire.

Chantelle was first exposed to Irish and Irish English upon her arrival in Ireland and while attending an Irish-medium school in the West of the country. Chantelle did not describe this experience positively. According to her, they did not enjoy their experiences in the Irish-medium school they attended, which appeared to take an immersion approach Irish language education. Having recently moved and having no knowledge of either Irish or Irish English,

the children found the Irish immersion experience difficult. According to Chantelle, she was not allowed to speak English in any way during her time at school. She recalls that if she did use English, this was frowned upon and at times even reprimanded. Over time, Kimberley reflected that both Chantelle and Zane became fairly fluent in Irish. They were able to produce full sentences in the language with ease. Kimberley shows me videos recorded on her mobile phone in which Chantelle and Zane were speaking Irish well. At the time Kimberley was so impressed that she recorded the videos to send to family in South Africa. After moving to the Midlands where the family resided at the time of the observations, Chantelle and Zane had left the Irish-medium school and began attending their local National school in their new location. This school was an English-medium school (teaching Irish English) which also taught Irish as an additional language. Since the transition to this school, Chantelle and her siblings had been exposed more significantly to Irish English, with their Irish language education having less focus. Intrigued by the strength of her South African accent, the following interaction occurred:

CW:	*When I hear you speak now, I feel like you still have a bit of a South African accent. But you sound different when you are with your friends. So do you feel like you change the way you speak when you are with them?*
Kimberley:	*Her friends. And when she's at home on the phone with her friends? Like, I'll be sitting here talking to Danie or my gran or whoever, and they can actually hear her upstairs on the phone with her friends and they're like, who's that speaking?*
CW:	*Oh, okay. That's interesting.*
Kimberley:	*Because it doesn't even sound like her.*
Chantelle:	*Yeah (She giggles).*
CW:	*It really sounds like a different person?*
Kimberley:	*Yip. Then I have to tell them, yes, it's her.*

In this extract above we see an example of how Chantelle navigates the construction of a dynamic multilingual identity. Whilst her mother responds with, 'It doesn't even sound like her', we can understand that the way Chantelle speaks to her friends is of a difference great enough that it surprises her mother. In this way we see an example of how Chantelle uses her diverse linguistic repertoires to establish different identities in different contexts.

With her friends, she inhabits one identity, drawing on her Irish English language knowledge (and accent), and her knowledge of Irish. This occurs when she is with her friends in person but also includes more virtual spaces, such as interacting with her peers over the phone. If we consider Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, Stages four (Industry vs. Inferiority) and five (Identity vs. Identity Confusion) of Erikson's model concern school aged children from the primary years into adolescence (Erikson, 1968; Orenstein & Lewis, 2020). During these two stages competence, praise for accomplishments and the internal reflection of previous experiences, societal expectations, and one's own aspirations for the future to develop a sense of self, are considered of central importance. Within these stages, Chantelle is establishing her sense of self within the different environments that she navigates; thus we see her establishing unique aspects of her dynamic identity in different contexts, drawing on her wide range of linguistic skills to do so.

In addition to her knowledge and use of Irish English at school and when with her peers, Chantelle had some knowledge of Irish which continued to be developed as an additional language as a part of her schooling. Chantelle was clear in her dislike for the language and presented with an ambivalence, even an open impatience for her Irish homework tasks. She seemed to complete these tasks with the bare minimum effort required. Oftentimes, she refused to do her Irish homework, causing tension with Kimberley who insisted that she at least attempt the task at hand.

6.5.2 Zane:

Like his older sister, Zane was a preschool aged child when his family immigrated to Ireland. Being born and spending his first few years in South Africa, Zane spoke WSAfE fluently as his L1. WSAfE was his primary language of communication in the home with his siblings and parents. Zane also spoke Afrikaans as an additional, heritage language. Like Chantelle, Zane spoke WSAfE with a deep South African accent, which was surprising in its strength. Observing his interactions with Danie, it was clear that Zane understood Afrikaans fairly well and was able to respond with simple phrases and sentences. During the

observations he did use some Afrikaans phrases in his daily language, translanguaging fluently between WSAfE and Afrikaans, as many English or bilingual English-Afrikaans South Africans do (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014). Words and phrases such as '*Ja'* for 'yes' or '*nee'* for 'no', or '*dankie'* for 'thank-you' were used interchangeably. On one occasion as he entered the house after walking home from school, he exclaimed, '*Joh, dis warm*!', which translates to, 'Wow, it's hot!'. When this occurred, Kimberley replied with a familiar, *'Ag, shame boytjie'*, which translates to, 'Oh, shame my boy' (This being a phrase indicting sympathy for Zane that he had endured a hot walk home).

Upon moving to Ireland, Zane was exposed to Irish and Irish English. Zane's first exposures to formal language education in Ireland were those of his early experiences of learning Irish in an Irish-medium school in the West of the country. According to Zane's recollections, this was not a pleasant experience. Referring to his experience of learning Irish at school, the following interaction with Zane took place:

CW:	*How do you find doing the Irish at school then?*
Zane:	*Boring.*
CW:	*Boring?*
Zane:	*Don't like it.*
CW:	*You don't like it? But your mom tells me you're actually quite good. You went to school in Irish school for a while. And how was that?*
Zane:	*Boring. Boring.*
CW:	*Was there anything you liked about it?*
Zane:	*No.*
CW:	*Do you remember like, anything about it, I know you were quite young?*
Zane:	*Well, I remember that it was boring. Very boring.*
CW:	*Was it tough to do your schoolwork in Irish?*
Zane:	*Yeah.*

According to Kimberley, both Zane and his sister Chantelle were developing a high level of fluency in Irish as a result of their immersion experience at their Irish school. Based on the extract above, we see that Zane had a strong, negative association with the language. He describes his Irish language lessons at his current, English-medium school as 'boring', with nothing that he liked about it. Overall, Zane was reluctant to complete his Irish homework.

During each homework session, the motivation to complete the language tasks appeared to stem from Kimberley rather than Zane, representing a tension between learner and caregiver during homework tasks.

Zane had also become fluent in the Irish English of his current school and his peers. In a similar fashion to his sister Chantelle, Zane was able to translanguage fluently between WSAfE and Irish English, depending on context and other speakers present. Within the walls of his home, Zane spoke WSAfE, however, when stepping out of the home, Zane transitioned smoothly to Irish English when talking to his peers. On one such occasion, as described in the vignette which opens Chapter One, I physically observed Zane transition from inside his home, changing his manner of speech as he crossed the threshold of his front door to speak with friends who live in his street. When asked about this transition, Zane comments:

CW:	*Do you think, is that something that you like, this is a hard question, but do you make a choice to speak that way or does it just happen automatically that you change the way you speak? Like you make a choice in your head to do it like that?*
Zane:	*I make a choice to do it when I'm talking to my friends on my cell phone.*

Considering this, it was clear that Zane was making active choices in determining his linguistic identity in different contexts. This was something he did consciously, deciding which languages from his repertoire to use depending on context and the individuals around him. This feature was something he held in common with his sister. These fascinating, conscious linguistic choices were so evident to others around them, that Kimberley commented:

Kimberley:	*Same thing with Zane as with Chantelle. And my family and friends have seen it time and time again. They will sit here and they will hear them playing outside with their friends. They won't understand what they're saying because they're accent is heavy like most of the people from here. And then the minute they walk to the front door it changes, which is really interesting.*

Through such transitions, Zane employs his own agency to establish his sense of self within the different environments that he navigates; thus we see him establishing unique aspects of his dynamic identity in different contexts, drawing on his wide range of linguistic skills to do so. This level of metalinguistic awareness, and agency in choosing which aspects of his linguistic repertoire to centre at different times was also evidenced regarding Daisy.

6.5.3   Daisy:

Daisy, the youngest of the three children, was a small baby less than a year old when her family immigrated to the West of Ireland. Upon starting the afternoon observations for this research, it was Daisy's strong South African accent which first drew my attention. For someone raised almost entirely in Ireland, her South African accent was surprisingly robust. Daisy spoke WSAfE at home with her family. This included her siblings and her parents. Whilst she had some knowledge of Afrikaans through her interactions with her father, it was evident that her knowledge of the language was more limited than that of Chantelle or Zane. Consequently, Afrikaans appeared to hold a heritage language position in Daisy's linguistic repertoire. Daisy did make use of small Afrikaans phrases interspersed in her daily language; such as, "*Kan ek 'n koppie tee hê, asseblief*?" in which she asks her mother if she can have a cup of tea. When asked a question about a homework task, she responded with, "*oh, ja*".

Unlike her older siblings, Daisy did not have the same exposure to the Irish language when they first lived in the West of Ireland, as she was too young to attend the Irish-medium school at the time. Instead, Daisy's exposure to language in Ireland consisted of primarily Irish English through interactions with her older siblings and through starting school. She was also exposed to some Irish through hearing her older siblings speak when she was very young. Additionally, at the time of the research she was learning Irish at school as an additional language. Of interest, Daisy was able to change the way she spoke English, translanguaging between WSAfE with a strong South African accent interspersed with Afrikaans phrases when she spoke to her family or to me, then swiftly and seamlessly changing to Irish English with an Irish accent when talking to her peers. Kimberley reflected

on her daughter's language use, stating, "Daisy has an Irish accent that not even us actually understand". In contrast to the level of metalinguistic awareness displayed by her older siblings, Daisy did not seem to be as consciously aware of her linguistic choices. One such occasion was recorded in my researcher reflections as follows:

> When they interact with their peers they automatically change their accent to sound significantly more Irish, preferring Irish English. Daisy sits beside me at the homework table in the kitchen. We have been doing homework and chatting away, with Daisy using WSAfE with a strong SA accent. We have been talking about accents today. After being prompted by a video which Kimberley had previously recorded, in which Daisy seamlessly makes the linguistic transition between her family and her peers at the park, Daisy automatically switches her accent when speaking to me, looking up from the screen and using Irish English to say, "Yeah, that's me in the video", with a strong Irish accent. This continues for a few moments before she switches back to WSAfE. I am unsure if she is aware that she has done this. Both Chantelle and Zane acknowledged that they do this but couldn't pinpoint the reason why.

From the extract Daisy demonstrates a heightened awareness and sensitivity, or metalinguistic awareness, to context and language use within different contexts. Perhaps due to her age, Daisy appeared to make these linguistic transitions more unconsciously, and only noticed it when it was pointed out to her. When asked about it, she was unable to give a reason for why she does this. Overall, it was intriguing to see how competent Daisy was translanguaging between two quite different versions of English, and Afrikaans, with such a heightened sensitivity to context and the listeners around her, at such a young age.

In the same way we can apply Norton (2016)'s theory to language choices, we can apply this same theory to the active changes in accent employed by the De Villiers children. In this section data was presented which details how Chantelle, Zane and Daisy, all of whom had robust South African accents when spealing WSAfE, adapted their language usage and accent according to context and the listeners present. These adaptations are examples of how multilingual migrant learners may employ their own agency by expertly drawing on their diverse linguistic repertoires to establish different identities in different contexts, establishing their sense of self within the different environments that they navigate. These changes may be conscious choices as evidenced with the older children Chantelle and Zane,

however these changes may also happen 'naturally' or 'unconsciously' as with the youngest child, Daisy. These fluid adaptations are also examples of the level of metalinguistic awareness displayed by the children and their inherent knowledge that language may be used as a tool to navigate social situations. From Norton's model, this indicates that Chantelle, Zane and Daisy are invested in learning Hiberno-English and an Irish sounding accent but also recognise its value in increasing their cultural capital or social power (Bourdieu, 1991; Clark, 2006; Darvin & Norton, 2015).

6.6 Homework Observations:

Thus far in this chapter I have presented the data and key findings regarding the linguistic experiences, FLP and linguistic profiles of participants. To conclude this chapter, I consider how homework may be a transitional space in which school language policies and the FLP of the family converge during homework completion. This complex interaction, as will be demonstrated in the evidence presented, may result in different linguistic outcomes.

In the De Villiers household homework was completed in stages as the children returned home from school. Homework was completed at a small, rectangular wooden table in the corner of the kitchen. It was a tight space. One side of the table was piled high with books, toys and other items from family life. One end of the table is pushed up against the washing machine. The afternoon routine began with Daisy completing her homework first as she was the first to return home in the afternoons. Francesca collected her from school on her way home from work. At the time of the research Francesca was working on the floor at a local factory. Considering this, Daisy's transition between school and the home began on her walk home with her mother. When asked what she observes about Daisy when she collected her from school, Kimberley reflected that Daisy's behaviour and manner of speech was different when she was surrounded by her peers. As Daisy and Kimberley reached their home, they were conversing in WSAfE (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014). This variation of English is a departure from the Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013) both Kimberley and Daisy encountered in their respective work

and school environments. As they entered the home, this variation of English became punctuated by Afrikaans influences, likely as a result of Danie's presence in the home and that Afrikaans is his first language. As Daisy settled to begin her homework tasks, Kimberley and Daisy fell into a familiar homework routine. Daisy would sit at the kitchen table while Kimberley started preparing lunch. Daisy would read her homework diary, in which she had a copy of her homework instructions written by her schoolteacher. Any forms or notices which need to be read or handed over were given to Kimberley. The writing in these texts was governed by the Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013), or Irish, of her school environment, and as Daisy engaged with these texts there were slight changes in the way that she spoke and pronounced words. There were subtle changes in her accent, which transitioned from sounding more South African, to more Irish, and back again. Particularly when completing her language tasks, Daisy was required to transition between the Irish English of her school resources (workbooks and worksheets in her copybook) and the WSAfE spoken in her home. The skill required to make such transitions became more evident as Kimberley began assisting Daisy with one of her homework tasks, to revise her 'tricky words' assigned by her teacher, the purpose of the task being that Daisy becomes familiar with these 'sight words' in both spelling and pronunciation. Daisy repeatedly found this task difficult. She struggled to correctly identify and pronounce these words. This task was made more challenging for Daisy due to her bilingualism, in the sense that some words in Irish English, WSAfE and Afrikaans are spelt the same and have the same meaning yet have different pronunciations. An example of this is the word 'my'. When presented with this word, Daisy would have difficulty determining which of these pronunciations she should use and therefore struggling to spell the word out. When practicing these tricky words between school and home, her teacher and parents likely used different Englishes and therefore pronounce these words differently; thus this task was made more difficult. When she practiced this word with Kimberley, the WSAfE pronunciation was reinforced, however when she returns to school, the Irish English pronunciation is what she hears.

During one such occasion I reflected in my fieldnotes:

> K helps D with her 'tricky words' which I would equate to learning some sight words. D struggles with this activity as it revolves around reading and pronouncing new words. She appears to get confused in the moment with how to 'correctly' pronounce the words. I can hear distinctly Irish pronunciation sneaking through, however it almost feels like her progress is hampered slightly as mom pronounces the words with a South African accent. This is very evident with 'my'.

This difficulty was also evident when Daisy revised the phonics set by her schoolteacher each day. When there were differences between the Irish English pronunciation of the word and the WSAfE, Daisy appeared to struggle. At times her knowledge of Afrikaans dominated in her response to the task at hand. An example of this is with the sound of 'g' in English versus Afrikaans. In Afrikaans the 'g' sounds like a hard guttural Bach whereas the sound is much softer in English (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014). At times Daisy was confused between these sounds and was unsure which one was correct for the word she was looking at. During my time observing Daisy, she was given very little Irish homework, perhaps as she was at the very beginning of her Irish language learning journey in Junior Infants. What she did get consisted of small word tasks in a workbook, designed to develop her phonetic knowledge and vocabulary in the language. She would often have to draw on the assistance of her older siblings to complete these tasks.

Around the time that Daisy completed her homework tasks, her older brother and sister would arrive home from their respective days at school. On most days Zane and Chantelle walk home from their school. Sometimes, they would walk home with friends who live in their street. In a similar fashion to Daisy, both Zane and Chantelle adapt their manner of speech depending on their environment and company. Whilst Daisy's translanguaging between Englishes is more unconscious, Zane in particular, is aware that he changes the way he speaks depending on context. On one occasion I can hear Zane speaking with a friend as they walked up their street. As his friend shows him something on his phone, Zane replies, "that's class", with a distinctly Irish accent. As Zane and Chantelle enter their home, they also begin using WSAfE in conversation with Daisy and Kimberley. They are welcomed home and

offered something to eat. As they settled in, Daisy would complete her homework session and relocate to the living room to eat lunch. Simultaneously, Zane and Chantelle would both enter the kitchen and position themselves around the table to complete their work. On occasion Kimberley would have to ask them to come to the table to begin their homework. During this period Daisy (and the family dog) would often interrupt or unintentionally create distractions. Kimberley would attempt to manage housework, assist with homework and make lunch in a hurry before her 4pm shift work began. Once they had settled, their own individual homework routines begin. This homework period, while chaotic, was always filled with laughter and never taken too seriously.

Chantelle and Zane would each find their seat at the kitchen table, take out their homework diaries and stationery, and discuss with Kimberley what tasks they needed to complete that day. Just like Daisy, their homework sessions were conducted in WSAfE, with a few Afrikaans words and phrases interspersed in their speech. One such interaction went as follows:

Kimberley:	*Come on Zane, lets get your homework done.*
Zane:	*Mom I'm so moeg (tired). Can I play for a bit first (he says while bouncing his soccer ball in the hall)*
Kimberley:	*Zane, moenie dit doen nie, asseblief (please don't do that), I've told you not to bounce the ball inside.*
Zane:	*(Sighing) fine, I'm coming now now.*
Kimberley:	*Thank you.*

In a similar way to Daisy, Zane struggled with the oral aspects of his homework tasks. Zane refused to do his assigned English homework reading aloud, instead insisting that he would read the words quietly to himself. Furthermore, he seemed to struggle with the oral aspects of his spelling and dictation homework; I observed that Zane repeatedly struggled with this task and would ask Kimberley to repeat herself frequently when she was saying each word. When asked by Kimberley to sound out the words, he was having difficulty with correctly hearing each word and writing it down with the correct spelling, particularly with 'sounding out' each word before attempting to spell it. It became apparent that issues of accent and pronunciation may be affecting his ability to complete the task at hand. As

evidenced in section 6.5.2, Zane appeared to have a negative relationship with Irish, perhaps based on his previous experiences of learning the language. As a result, he was often reluctant to complete it or at times, refused to do it. This was something that Kimberley did not press. When he did complete his Irish tasks, he did not seem to care much if he was completing it correctly. Overall, Zane was quiet when completing his homework tasks and liked to retire to his own space to play online games once finished. If the weather was good enough, he would go outside to kick a ball around with friends from his street. As he did so, his change in the use of Englishes from WSAfE to Irish English was clear, with Zane's accent transforming almost simultaneously as he stepped outside, greeting his friends with, "Howya?".
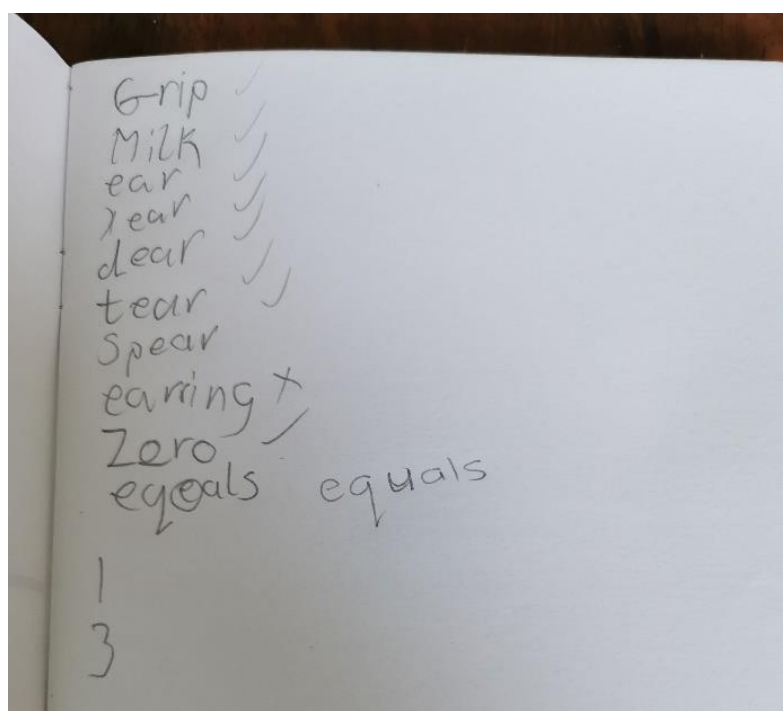
Figure 12: An example of Zane's spelling homework

Zane and Chantelle would complete their homework simultaneously, although it would usually take Chantelle longer to complete hers each day. Whereas Zane seemed to take a pragmatic attitude towards his homework tasks by trying to complete the process as quickly as possible, Chantelle appeared reluctant to engage with any aspect of her homework and

would procrastinate where possible. For Chantelle, the greatest areas of difficulty appeared to be her Irish and mathematics homework. In terms of her Irish, Chantelle admits that this was not one of the subject areas that she enjoyed. Rather, she enjoyed reading and art, particularly painting. Despite this, she did her homework with some prompting from Kimberley. After looking in her homework book to determine which tasks required completing, she would generally begin by completing her English homework tasks, followed by her Irish and finally, her mathematics.

From her early experiences in the West of the country, Chantelle had a good foundational knowledge of Irish. She was familiar with the phonics and her pronunciation of the words was more fluid than that of her siblings. Despite this, she seemed not to enjoy this aspect of her homework. Her body language indicated a negative attitude towards it, including sighing, rolling of eyes and a general reluctance to engage. What was clear, however, was that she had far more knowledge of the language than her mother did. Considering this, as they began her Irish homework Chantelle seemed to feign a level of ignorance in her attempts not to engage, despite the fact that she seemingly knew the work. Kimberley had to drive the interaction with intent to get Chantelle to respond. Such examples demonstrate the conflict which may arise during homework tasks when linguistic ideologies informing school language policies and the FLP of the home are not aligned; furthermore, where there are intergenerational differences in attitude towards a language, homework may be a site in which tensions or conflict may arise.

Kimberley:	*Okay what do we have next?*
Chantelle:	*This is my other Irish page.*
Kimberley:	*Okay, what is golf?*
Chantelle:	*Golf.*
Kimberley:	*Rugby?*
Chantelle:	*Rugby.*
Kimberley:	*I don't think that's how you say it. Rugbaaai (Kimberley attempts an Irish pronunciation of rugbaí)*
(They both laugh. Daisy joins in. Chantelle thinks this is very funny)	
Kimberley:	*Alright, soccer?*
Chantelle:	*Sucker. Sucka (Sacar)*
Kimberley:	*Tennis?*

Chantelle:	*I forgot that one.*
Kimberley:	*It looks like Leah dog (Leadóg)*
Daisy:	*It does look like Leah dog!*
Kimberley:	*Exactly.So how do you say it?*
Chantelle:	*Laydough, I think.*
Kimberley:	*Oh, snooker? (sicéir)*
Chantelle:	*I don't know. (Everyone is laughing)*
Kimberley:	*Snookar*
Chantelle:	*I don't know.*
Kimberley:	*Circus?*
Chantelle:	*Sorcas*
Kimberley:	*Weather is amsha.*
Chantelle:	*Aimsigh!*
Kimberley:	*What the hell is that? Mesa. Mesa?*
Chantelle:	*I don't think I wrote that one down correctly.*
Kimberley:	*Okay what's the next one?*
Chantelle:	*Basketball*
Kimberley:	*Backet. Seriously?*
Chantelle:	*(Laughing)*
Kimberley:	*Seriously? Your handwriting is shocking. Absolutely shocking.*
Chantelle:	*I didn't have enough space.*
Kimberley:	*Even when you do have enough space, your handwriting is shocking.*

From this extract. it appeared that homework in the De Villiers household was not taken too seriously. There was much laughter and a bit of chaos as Daisy joined in on the 'fun' of Chantelle's Irish spelling and dictation practice. Whilst Chantelle was required to know the Irish and English spellings, and write down the Irish spelling of each word, this did not occur in practice. From the extract we see Kimberley attempting to help Chantelle with the task at hand by calling out the English word and asking Chantelle to repeat the word in Irish. The interaction is limited in this sense, as Kimberley does not know the pronunciation of each of the Irish words. Chantelle finds this funny and overall, this appears to draw away from the seriousness of the task at hand. Chantelle's behaviour during this interaction comes across as light-hearted and silly, however as previously mentioned, she appears to be holding back and not revealing how much she knows.

Chantelle also struggled with her mathematics homework. Whilst the completion of mathematical homework itself was not the focus of the current research, it is useful to

consider this data if we relate to mathematics as a language in itself and consider mathematics homework as a different transitional space where mathematical language and techniques learnt at school need to be applied at home. In this instance, however, the adult at home helping the child with this work may not have the knowledge to do so; Kimberley did not have the mathematical knowledge to help Chantelle with her mathematics homework, and this resulted in difficulty. Chantelle and Kimberley spent a significant portion of the homework time on these tasks, with frustration arising on both sides at their combined inability to complete these tasks in a time efficient manner. On one occasion Kimberley needed to draw on the use of technology and online videos to try to assist. In a moment of frustration, Kimberley communicated that the teacher did not provide enough examples to assist both the learners and parents with the homework, whilst Chantelle replied that the teacher often gave them homework examples that they hadn't done before in class. One such interaction went as follows:

Chantelle: *There are fifteen races. There are seventy-three runners in each race. How many runners would there be altogether? In the races?*
Kimberley: *Fifteen times seventy-three*
Chantelle: *Okay*
(Chantelle attempts to set up long multiplication in her copybook)
Kimberley: *Seventy-three times fifteen. So seventy-three times five. Seventy-three times ten. Or is it Fifteen times seventy. Fifteen times three?*
Chantelle: *How do I do that.*
(Kimberley attempts to do the sum following the method Chantelle has learnt at school.)
Kimberley: *I may as well just do your homework for you at this rate. Three hundred and sixty-five. Do you understand how I got that? Do you understand?*
Chantelle: *No.*
Kimberley: *Okay. I was born to be a teacher. Hey, Chantelle?*
Chantelle: *No, you're terrible too!*
(Everyone starts laughing)

Such interactions hint at a power imbalance, where the learner knows just as much, or even more than their parents about the topic at hand. In the extract above this is the case with the mathematical task. Rather than being guided by a more expert individual through

the task, Chantelle and Kimberley appeared to be on an even footing with regard to long multiplication. In both families this power dynamic was particularly poignant with Irish homework. Parents often did not have the correct pronunciation or even word knowledge to assist the children effectively with their homework; this changed the power dynamic. In both families the mother (primary parent doing homework) was only able to do the English pronunciation of the word, and this was limiting. Chantelle had very good Irish pronunciation; so much so that she was able to correct her mother's pronunciation. We also see that struggles with Irish could lead to frustration but also humour as children and parents share a laugh trying to figure out the correct pronunciation.

For Kimberley, assisting her children with their homework was experienced as challenging. Despite these difficulties, Kimberley appeared to accept this as a part of the migration process and tried her best to support her children as best as she could. She admitted that she found Irish particularly difficult:

> ***Kimberley***: *I don't even know how to sound out the words, it's so hard! I mean, I literally can't even say the words, so doing Irish homework is hard for everyone, honestly the kids know more than me".*

Overall, whilst both Danie and Kimberley spoke English and Afrikaans to differing degrees, they had little knowledge of the school system in Ireland and little knowledge of Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013) and Irish that their children were required to learn at school. This, accompanied by varying linguistic identities and attitudes towards language usage at school and in the home, often resulted in conflict between learners and caregivers or incomplete tasks. Furthermore, as evidenced in the data above, the complexity of language tasks for multilingual children (and their caregivers) with limited knowledge of the language in which the homework must be completed, came to the fore. The evidence above indicates that even very young learners are required to possess a metalinguistic awareness of different languages and their own linguistic repertoires to draw on the linguistic tools required to successfully complete the task at hand.

6.7 Conclusion:

In this chapter, key findings from my observations and interactions with members of the De Villiers family were presented; this included describing the overall family profile in greater detail before examining the family's experiences of migration to Ireland. Following this, a description of the De Villiers' family language policy and each participant's linguistic identity were discussed. To conclude the chapter, the data generated regarding homework as a transitional space in which different language policies and likewise, different linguistic identities, interact, was presented. In the upcoming chapter, the data generated regarding the second family involved in the research, the Amato family, is discussed.

7 "They need to know their backgrounds and where we're coming from" – Observations from the Amato family

7.1 Introduction:

In the previous chapter, I presented findings related to the De Villiers family in line with the key themes identified as a result of the application of RTA. In this chapter, I present the findings developed as a result of the intensive engagement with the Amato family. I begin the chapter by presenting an overview of their family profile before I continue the chapter by exploring the findings regarding the experiences of the family, particularly Sofia and Luca, through their migration to Ireland and their engagement with the school system in Ireland. I then present my interpretation of their FLP based on the lengthy observations and interactions held in their home. This discussion includes descriptions of their linguistic ideologies, language practices and language management strategies. Following this, I then progress the chapter by considering the development of linguistic identities in the Amato family, particularly the two children, upon which this research focuses. I conclude this chapter by considering the third key theme identified in Table 3, that of homework as a transitional space. As will unfold in this chapter, the Amato family differs from the De Villiers family in many ways; the implications of such difference may not seem overly significant upon first consideration, however, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, may have implications for the development of dynamic multilingual identities in contexts of migration.

7.2 Family Profile: The Amato Family

The Amato family were the second family who participated in this research. The family included Angelo, Francesca and their two children, Sofia (8) and Luca (5). The Amato family were Italian-Irish. Francesca was a first-generation migrant who moved to Ireland with her Italian parents when she was a child. Angelo migrated to Ireland as an adult. Their two

children spoke Italian, English, and also learnt Irish as an additional language at school. When asked what their first language was, both Angelo and Francesca insisted that it was Italian. At the time of this research the family were living in the Midlands. Angelo owned his own business and Francesca was a Montessori teacher in the early years sector. Being from a European country, the family did not have any restrictions on their right to live and work in Ireland. As was the case with the De Villiers family, observations focused on the transition period as Sofia and Luca returned home from their day at school. During this time Angelo would come home for a short break from work to greet his children. Francesca was home at this time. She would prepare an after-school snack for Sofia and Luca. Once this snack had been eaten, Francesca would sit at the large dining room table and assist the children with their homework tasks. The homework environment was quiet and focused; these tasks were taken with an air of seriousness and Sofia and Luca were encouraged to complete them to the best of their ability. Francesca was generally calm, patient and encouraging during homework completion. On observation days I was invited into the home with a warm welcome and offers of food. Comically, I would often find myself with the difficulty of trying to be gracious and eat the delicious food presented to me, whilst simultaneously trying to set up a recording device and be present in my role as ethnographer. While both Antonio and Francesca were busy individuals, the home remained a quiet and focused space conducive to completing homework.

Sofia and Luca were naturally curious of my presence and eager to find out more about me. Sofia, being the older of the two children, often had more homework than Luca. She was studious in her approach to her work and was surprisingly quite comfortable, from the start, with me being in the room when she completed her work. Luca, who was attending the Junior Infants year of primary school, was, understandably, more easily distracted by my presence. Like the De Villiers children, as Sofia and Luca became more familiar with my presence, the process settled, and they would return from school ready to share a story or two or tell me about work they were doing at school. On occasion Sofia would play the piano for me or show me her Irish dancing and Luca would invite me outside to hit a ball with him.

Francesca and Angelo appeared to fully embrace their dual identities as both Irish and Italian citizens. Whilst they were both invested in their Irish communities, they were firm in their belief that upholding Italian traditions in the home was essential. The family spoke Italian as their language of choice when in the home and communicating with their extended Italian family. This Italian heritage was positioned in the forefront of the family home.

Figure 13: Luca self-portrait, with his grandfather.

Figure 14: Sofia self-portrait

Figure 15: 'Made in Italy' welcome mat.

During the observation period Francesca and Angelo would share details of their hometowns in Italy, how they met when Francesca was visiting, and share their plans of taking their children back to Italy for a holiday once COVID restrictions would allow them to. Their home was decorated with signs of their Italian culture and upon entering the home any guest was immediately offered food, drink, and good conversation as has become synonymous with Italian culture. I was always made to feel at ease in their presence.

7.3   Migration Experiences:

In the previous section I introduced the Amato family and provided details regarding the observations in their home. In this section, their early migration and school experiences, as they relate to the topic of this thesis, are described.

7.3.1   Family Experiences:

The Amato family, having lived in Ireland for over ten years, were much further along in their immigration journey and arguably, their process of integration into Irish society. Both Angelo and Francesca moved to Ireland when they were younger, before marriage and having children. Francesca moved to Ireland in 1995, when she was 13 years old. Consequently, Francesca attended secondary school in Ireland and thus, out of all participants, was arguably the most integrated into Irish society. Angelo moved to Ireland in 2009 after meeting Francesca. At this stage, Francesca was fluent in English and had some knowledge of Irish from her time attending school in Ireland. Angelo had some knowledge of English from his schooling in Italy but acknowledged that at the time of moving to Ireland his proficiency in English was low. When asked about this relocation and language learning experience, he reflects:

> **Angelo:**   *Yeah, at the beginning, just a little bit, but I was not scared about the language because it's just a language, you know what I mean? Just speak and then practical. You do practice with the other people and then learn.*

Angelo speaks Italian almost exclusively in the home and within the broader Italian community that he is a part of. At work, Angelo is able to speak Italian to many of his colleagues but does require some knowledge of English to interact with the wider Irish community. Throughout the observation period, Angelo maintained a calm, reflexive air about him as he discussed his language experiences. He was open to the idea of language as

a tool and something that one can learn. While he does converse with me in English, it is evident that he is far more comfortable conversing in Italian, and I feel humbled that he has the patience to engage with me in English. Angelo grew up in a small town in Italy and speaks fondly of his time growing up and of the Italian culture which he comes from. It is evident that this is an important aspect for him and something he is interested in passing down to his children. Both Angelo and Francesca emphasise the importance of maintaining one's cultural heritage and feel it is important for them as a family to travel back to Italy as much as possible, particularly to see family. At the time of the research this travel had been significantly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since then, both Angelo and Francesca have worked in a number of occupations and at the time of the research, were both settled in successful jobs where they interacted with the public daily. Thus, the Amato children were born in Ireland to parents that had already settled and established a home and support system. As second-generation migrants living in Ireland, Sofia and Luca had not experienced international immigration themselves, and have always called Ireland their home. Considering the Phases of Migration (International Organisation for Migration, 2023), they were firmly situated in the final stage of the migration process which focuses primarily on the process of integration. The Amato family had made regular trips to Italy to visit family. At the time of the research, Francesca's mother, who lived in Ireland and was a central support to the family unit, was in Italy visiting family. Francesca recognised that she kept in regular contact with family back in Italy and on occasion would even take her children to Italy for medical treatment if waiting lists in Ireland were too long.

Angelo also maintained regular contact with his family in Italy and felt that this was important, not only for himself, but also for his children:

> **Angelo**: Yeah, I mean, it's a small little thing. The importance of being part of a close family, like the relationship of being united all the time, even when we do celebrations. It's never alone. It's sort of like the whole family. I mean the whole family is like relatives, uncles and aunties and whereas maybe it's not very much here, I don't think. Like Sofia is making her communion this year, for example. So we're going to go for a big meal and we're inviting all our aunties and uncles like my aunties and uncles as well. That's what I mean. Sorry. So we kind of reunite with each other.

In conversation with Francesca and Angelo, the importance of maintaining strong connections with their family in Italy was evident. Reflecting on the ease of travel for her family, Francesca states:

> **Francesca**: Yeah it was hard during COVID because we couldn't go anywhere, but usually we would be flying to our families regularly you know? We are taking Sofia and Luca there in the summer and we are so excited for the trip, you know to get back to normal, because we are so close with our family there.

In addition to benefitting from close familial support, the Amato family lived in a welcoming home which they owned and which they took obvious pride in. At the time of the observations, they had recently completed renovations to their home that Francesca was particularly pleased with. Part of these renovations include the installation of large glass screen doors which gave the home a warm and bright atmosphere. From this data the Amato family can be described as a seemingly well integrated, close-knit family of Italian heritage living in Ireland.

7.3.2 School Experiences:

When exploring issues of culture and language use at school with the Amato family, Francesca reflected on both her experience of schooling in Ireland, and that of her children. Referring to her own linguistic experiences, Francesca reflects that when her family first arrived in Ireland, she began attending school (in 6th class), support for her first language of Italian was limited. Instead, she recalls that much focus was placed on her developing her skills in English. At the time that Francesca began her schooling in Ireland, she was given an exemption for Irish, meaning that she was not required to learn the language. Whilst at the time she recalls feeling ambivalent about this, she now observes that she regrets this. She communicated that as someone who has chosen to remain in Ireland and make it her home, she would have benefitted from learning the language and it would have been useful for her in her adult life, both in her role as a mother but also in her role as an early years childcare professional. Reflecting on her experience, Francesca believes she had the capacity to learn Irish:

> **Francesca:** *I started in 6th class, so school here and I didn't take it because I had Italian as my other language to make up for my Leaving Cert and everything. So I didn't really take it. I attended classes, but I just picked up it. But they never kind of imposed me to do it. And because they were well advanced, they were like, you know what? Don't bother, it's fine. But I kind of regret now I didn't do it. Even if you could have a little base, like even if I did like a bit, I think it wouldn't have been bad. I could have done English, Irish and Italian together, but they never really suggested it to me to, so, yeah.*

In addition to her knowledge of English, Italian and Irish, Francesca was also fluent in French. After finishing school Francesca left Ireland to experience living in France for a few years, where she picked up the language. She spoke about the similarities between Italian and French and did so with a sense of metalinguistic awareness about how languages may share base words and how one language can be used to understand another. As another example,

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Francesca laughs as she recalled interacting in Spanish with a friend of hers, highlighting that when her friend spoke Spanish, she could understand some of the words her friend used as, 'some of the words are similar, you know?'.

In comparison to Francesca, Angelo attended school in Italy and only migrated to Ireland as a young adult, after meeting Francesca. Considering this, his exposure to language was different. He learnt Italian as a first language throughout his school career and was taught English as an additional language, although he acknowledges that this was from a mostly academic perspective. He reflected that when first moving to Ireland, his conversational English was very poor. Over time, through his interactions with his wife, community and the social aspects of his job, he believed his English had improved. He admitted that he knew very little Irish-perhaps only a few common phrases, and he felt unable to assist his children with their homework.

Angelo and Francesca's two children were born in Ireland. Whilst frequent travel to Italy has been a part of their lives, they have only lived and attended school in Ireland. Both Luca and Sofia attended English-medium early childcare centres as a part of the ECCE scheme prior to entering the formal primary school setting. As their home language was almost exclusively Italian, Francesca reflected that this early exposure to English was beneficial for both children. Luca, who was in Junior Infants at the time of the research, had only just begun his formal schooling career. He spoke both English and Italian fluently. When talking to his friends or to me, or when completing his schoolwork, Luca tended to speak English. When his parents spoke to him in English or Italian, he often replied in English, although at times his parents encouraged him to speak Italian and when they did, he could do so fluently. When speaking with other members of his Italian family, whether in person or over the phone, he spoke Italian comfortably. Whilst Luca was fluent in Italian, there seemed to be a more defined awareness of when to use certain languages, when. He indicated that he did not speak Italian in the school space very often, if at all. Luca had also been introduced to Irish at school, however he was at the beginning stages of his Irish language journey. His older sister Sofia was often a great help to Luca when it came to his Irish language learning.

Sofia was fluent in Italian and English and had a good grasp of the Irish language as she learnt this as an additional language at school. Sofia had a positive outlook on language learning; she felt that learning languages was fun and acknowledged the social advantages of knowing more languages:

> **CW:** *What do you think about Irish?*
>
> **Sofia:** *Yeah, actually learning a new language is actually really fun because you get to learn more things about more places, actually.*

And again, a few minutes later:

> **CW:** *Why do you think it's, like, important to know another language?*
>
> **Sofia:** *Well, then you can have some knowledge then when you go to new places, you won't be stuck with other languages, and then you can just meet new people.*
>
> **CW:** *Yeah?*
>
> **Sofia:** *And then maybe you can just meet new friends in other countries, maybe.*
> **CW:** *Yeah, you're probably right.*

Based on this interaction, Sofia sees the value of knowing, and learning additional languages, seeming to view language as a form of social capital, in line with Bourdieu (1991) conceptualises. It is with this positive attitude that Sofia approached her homework, particularly the language tasks. At home, Sofia spoke Italian with her parents as a first language. When interacting with her brother she tended to use English. When completing her homework tasks, Sofia translanguaged between the English and Irish, and Italian. Observing this translanguaging, I enquired if she spoke Italian at school. Sofia replied with, "Sometimes, I just speak to myself sometimes, in my head". Investigating this further, it appeared that Sofia used her Italian skills at school to some extent, for instance she often counted in Italian (this was evidenced when she was doing homework at home) but this was done privately in her head or when she was on her own. From this interaction it seems that Sofia felt that her usage of Italian in school spaces was purely personal and was not employed overtly in school spaces.

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Upon questioning both Angelo and Francesca on their impression of their children's school and the level of language support the children received, the following interaction took place:

CW:	*Tell me, do you think, I'm just talking about the kids at school here, do you think the schools are supportive of like their Italian or that they speak Italian as their own language?*
Francesca:	*I'm not sure because they don't do Italian in her school. But I remember when I was in secondary school and I was going to do my Leaving Cert in Italian, they didn't have a specific teacher for me. So like if I wanted to kind of revise on the grammar, I have to go privately. So there wasn't a person, a teacher within the school that could go through the things with me because it was probably a separate thing. But I didn't think it was a separate thing because I was substituting Irish for Italian. So I feel that maybe they should have provided that for me. So I have to go privately.*
CW:	*I hear you. And for Sofia or Luca?*
Angelo:	*For Sofia, I don't think so. Unless it's a multilingual day that they having.*
Francesca:	*Yeah I don't think much. Kind of yeah, maybe Spanish, something that's regarded.*
Angelo:	*Not in primary but yes maybe she will do more in secondary.*
Francesca:	*They do Spanish and German and French. They are the language that they actually do in school. I don't think Spanish actually, but definitely French and German.*
CW:	*Are there times where maybe she might come home and say I got to tell my class what this was in Italian? Do you think she has opportunities to talk about where she comes from? Like at school?*
Francesca:	*I think so, yeah, she will. There is at the back of our book, at the end of the book, this last page is about Italy and she's always saying I can't wait that we do this page so I can talk about my story, about my life and where I'm coming from. So she's really looking forward to that.*
Angelo:	*Actually. Sometimes she tells me that with the principal over at the school. She speaks with her in Italian a bit, like bonjourno, like good morning. A few words here and there in Italian as well.*
CW:	*That's great.*

From this interaction we see that Francesca and Angelo seemed to feel that there may be some small supports or encouragement for Sofia at her current school, but nothing of

significance. This raises questions surrounding the extent to which language skills beyond English are being leveraged in the school. This is something that is officially recognised in the curriculum policy, but perhaps in reality doesn't actually makes its way into classroom practice. This disjuncture is discussed in-depth in Chapter Eight. We also see that Francesca remembers not feeling supported in her Italian language learning during her experience in an Irish secondary school, and that whilst she thinks Sofia did have some opportunities to discuss her culture, this was not a central focus at school. What this data indicates is a history spanning two generations within a family where children who had alternative language competences did not experience their heritage languages as explicitly valued or leveraged in school. When asked about the specific page in her book, Sofia reinforced to me how excited she was to reach this page in her class. As this page was towards the back of her workbook, she was expecting to reach it towards the end of the school year. For her, the excitement lay in having the opportunity to share more about who she is, her identity, with her classmates. Noting this, we reflected more on culture at school. Sofia acknowledged that there weren't many opportunities for the learners to share their culture with their classmates, hence her excitement at the potential opportunity. When asked if there are any other learners in her class that came from other places, conversation with Sofia uncovers that while she definitely thinks so, she feels unsure of her classmates' heritage because this has never been directly addressed in class. The only knowledge she has of other learners comes from what she has picked up socially. Sofia mentions that there is a girl in her class who she thinks speaks Polish, however she is unsure:

> **CW:** You said someone speaks Polish?
> **Sofia:** Vivian.
> **CW:** So is Vivian a boy or a girl?
> **Sofia:** No, she's a girl.
> **CW:** A girl. Does she speak Polish at school?
> **Sofia:** Well, no, I think I heard that she speaking Polish in her house. It looks really difficult to understand, kind of, but it looks actually similar to, I think, Italian or French. I'm not really sure.
> **CW:** Yeah, that's cool. So she doesn't speak Polish much at school?
> **Sofia:** No not really, at school it's mostly English.

This evidence indicates that a potentially assimilationist attitude (i.e. treating everyone the same and not acknowledging or celebrating difference) was present in her school. In the above conversation Sofia's natural curiosity about languages was documented, as was her metalinguistic awareness of the nature of language and the potential for languages to share similar base words or sounds. She also reinforced the idea that another learner in her class may be fluent in more than one language but despite this, they did not speak this language at school. Instead, it seemed that English dominates in the classroom space. During this conversation, Luca had been sitting at the table beside us, quietly drawing, listening in on our conversation and chatting to Francesca, who was also nearby. At this point I turned to him and asked the same questions regarding culture at school. In a similar way to Daisy, Luca seemed slightly confused by the terminology of culture, but when we unpacked this, he too acknowledged that he didn't know much about his classmates' heritage. Our discussion continued as follows:

CW:	*And are there lots of kids in your class who speak different languages or perhaps come from another country?*
Luca:	*Well, I don't know. Well, Toby, my friend, is kind of different than us. His skin is a bit browny, but I think his mom is from Africa, so I think he speaks a bit African. I'm not really sure. I mean, he looks like he can speak African, but I'm not really sure.*
CW:	*Yeah, you should ask him where he's from. Then you can learn a bit about him.*
Luca:	*He's from our [town], but his mom is from Africa here.*

During the response given above, Luca was hesitant to describe Toby by his skin colour, sheepishly saying his skin is 'browny', telling us that he does observe that there are children in his class who are different to him or may have different ethnic or cultural heritage, but once again, as this was not openly discussed in the classroom, he does not know how to go about discussing this. This once again raises questions regarding how children in Irish schools are being equipped to acknowledge, and celebrate, difference. Interestingly, Luca ended the extract above by mentioning that Toby comes from 'our town'. When he used the word 'our',

he could have been referring to himself and his family, or he could be referring to himself and Toby. Either way, it was clear that for Luca, his home was his town here in Ireland.

Overall, despite their schooling in an assimilationist, subtractive system, both Sofia and Luca appear to have inherited their parents' positive attitude towards language, seemingly taking a language-as-resource approach and inherently recognising that knowing different languages may provide access and opportunity. Furthermore, they appear to view language learning as an enjoyable and fun pursuit and a way to connect socially with others and learn more about different cultures.

7.4 The Amato Family's Language Policy:

In the previous section, the linguistic experiences of migration and school for each respective member of the Amato family was discussed. Within this previous section it is evident to see that whilst each individual family member is unique, there is a strong identification with their Italian heritage which draws them together through a shared value and culture. In this section, the overall family language policy of the family unit is discussed.

The Amato family language policy positioned Italian as the primary language of communication between family members, with Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013) positioned as an additional language spoken to differing extents by each respective family member. The family language diagram displayed in Figure 16 outlines the language communication preferences of each individual family member in the Amato family and displays the languages of interaction between each respective family member. In this household, three languages are used on a daily basis, although to differing extents. Italian and Irish English are both well-established languages in use within the family household. Irish is used in the Amato household when completing homework tasks, but at no other time. In addition to these languages, Francesca was also fluent in French. As a 'hobby' or shared interest, at the time of the observations Francesca would share this knowledge with Sofia.
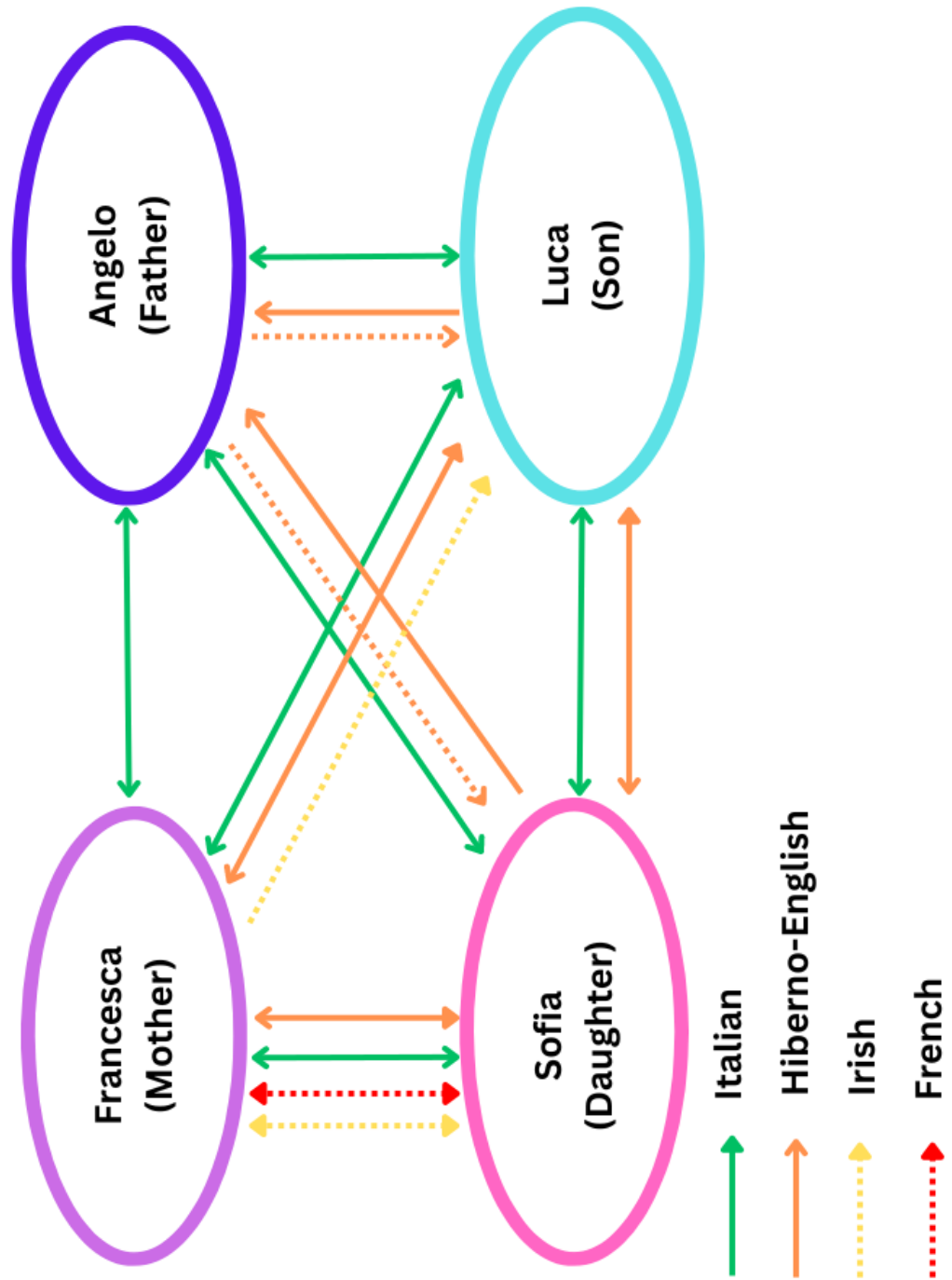
Figure 16: The Amato Family language diagram

What was clear from my interactions with the Amato family was their sense of pride in their Italian heritage and their strong desire to maintain this heritage in addition to living in Ireland and developing new identities and ways of speaking in their new home. For the family, it was evident that Italian served as an ethnocultural identity marker (Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021), with Francesca and Angelo feeling strongly that Italian should be their L1. Francesca states,

> ***Francesca:*** *For many reasons. First of all, his parents are Italian and they don't speak English, and then for the reason of like we don't want them to feel excluded, maybe, or uncomfortable when we do go back home to be in Italy. So they can communicate with other children. They communicate with their families. And I think it's part of a culture and root where we are born. But even though I moved here, in my family, we always spoke Italian anyway, so I thought, I think the same thing for my children. They need to know their backgrounds and where we're coming from, and we're just very much family and traditionally orientated.*

In addition to being firm in their selection of Italian as their L1, each member of the family was fluent (to different degrees) in Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013). This language was used primarily outside the home and when communicating with peers, work colleagues and the wider Irish community. If we consider the Amato family using the family language policy framework proposed by Curdt-Christiansen (2018); Spolsky (2004, 2007, 2018, 2019), we can consider the different factors influencing this FLP. In contrast to the members of the De Villiers household, there appears to be greater consensus or cohesion in the family's FLP. Based on the interactions had with the respective family members, and through the observations it was evident that languages were viewed as resources that provide access to opportunities but also social connection. Language learning was viewed positively, even when it may be hard. This attitude was particularly relevant in the Irish interactions between Francesca and Sofia. There was laughter and fun associated with homework and language learning. In terms of linguistic practices, the family used different languages in different contexts, reserving English for interaction with their wider community and peers, or perhaps with a visitor in their home. Italian was clearly positioned as the L1

and was accepted consequently by all respective family members. Unlike in the De Villiers household, there was little to no resistance on behalf of any of the family members in maintaining the FLP.

From a broader context perspective, the Amato family were operating within the sociolinguistic context of Ireland, in which tensions between English, Irish, Irish Sign Language, Irish Traveller Cant, Modern Foreign Languages and other migrant languages interact. In particular, the complex socio-political and sociocultural tensions between Irish English and Irish, and what this means for Irish identity, appeared to be influencing the Amato family's ideologies towards languages and also their language practices. For instance, whilst Sofia herself stated that she enjoyed learning Irish, she was also aware of her classmates' attitudes towards the language, which appeared to be largely negative. In addition to the sociolinguistic context of Ireland, the family had also maintained close ties with their respective families in Italy. Consequently, the influence of their Italian family and the broader Italian sociolinguistic landscape in which Francesca, and to a greater extent Angelo were exposed to growing up, requires consideration. Clearly, there was a sense of national and linguistic pride associated with their culture and linguistic heritage. Whilst South Africa has 11 official languages (of which Afrikaans is but one), in Italy, Italian is clearly positioned as the national language. Thus, such differences in language status may influence familial ideologies surrounding the maintenance of heritage languages in contexts of migration. Socioeconomically, the Amato family were, at the time of the observations, more financially settled and established in Ireland than the De Villiers family. In part, this was likely due to their status as EU citizens who were able to travel freely within Europe and exercise their EU Treaty Rights. In addition to the freedom to work, they were also entitled to access state benefits in a way the De Villiers family were not. From a language socialisation perspective, the family was likely influenced by four primary means of socialisation. These are the children's school, the parents' work environments, local community and their Italian family. In terms of the children's school, the family had been exposed to the formal aspects of English language learning and the use of Irish English had been reinforced for both Sofia and Luca. As Francesca attended secondary school in Ireland, she had also been socialised through the

Irish school system to some degree. In addition to English, the Amato family had been exposed to the Irish language through the school system. Angelo and Francesca's respective work environments also exposed them to the use of Irish English. Additionally, as Angelo works with some Italian colleagues, he had the opportunity to use Italian during his workday. As established members of their local community, the family members were also socialised into Irish society through this local membership. Finally, as the family maintained strong relationships with their Italian family, they were also influenced by this interaction and were able to develop their Italian language skills through this connection. For instance, during holidays to Italy, Sofia and Luca had the opportunity to speak Italian in an immersion style setting. This was an opportunity not available to the De Villiers children. Examining linguistic ideologies more closely, we see that Angelo and Francesca were aligned in their beliefs regarding the importance of language and knowing where they come from. Furthermore, their positive attitude towards language learning which views language as a resource to learn more about the world around you, had clearly filtered down to Sofia, and potentially also to Luca. In terms of language management, it was evident that Francesca and Angelo had maintained the use of Italian in the home as a conscious choice; a decision which heavily influenced the family's linguistic interactions.

Considering the internal factors of Curdt-Christiansen (2018)'s model, we can consider the emotional factors, issues of identity, cultural factors, parental impact beliefs and child agency which may influence a family's FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Smith-Christmas, 2020a). Considering the emotional factors influencing a family's FLP, within the Amato family Angelo and Francesca were emotively invested in Italian as their L1 and actively fostered this love of Italian culture and language within their home and within their children. It was evident that this difference in approach to language had an impactful effect within the home. Francesca and Angelo employed the language to give praise or encouragement to their children throughout the day. This was particularly evident during interactions between Francesca and the children when completing homework tasks. Within the Amato household in particular, the cohesiveness of the family unit drawn together by a joined investment in Italian was evident.

In the Amato household, there was strong evidence supporting the use of Italian as an ethnolinguistic identity marker. Used in conjunction with more overt symbols of Italian culture (see the 'Welcome' sign in Figure 15), it was clear that for Angelo and Francesca, Italian culture was a central feature of their familial identity. As discussed previously in this thesis, at the time of the observations Angelo and Francesca appeared successful in their attempts to create a cohesive approach to family cultural identity and had created an environment in which their children had invested in their Italian heritage. If one were to revisit this family at a later stage it would be interesting to examine if this investment continues as the children grow older and seek to establish different aspects of their identity; would this ultimately lead to conflicting ideologies or approaches to language in the family home developing, or would this same level of investment be maintained as the children grow older? Nevertheless, it was clear that within the Amato household heritage language maintenance, alongside other Italian cultural practices positively contributed to a harmonious and cohesive family unit. This connects to the third internal factor considered, that of culture.

As has been extensively outlined, the Amato family had made a conscious decision to centre Italian culture in their home. They actively promoted the usage of Italian as their L1 and reinforced this with interactions with extended Italian family (such as calls to their *Nonna* on the phone), trips to Italy and the display of Italian cultural symbols around the home. It was thus evident that these actions influence language socialisation processes in their home.

Both Angelo and Francesca (the primary caregiver) shared the same Italian heritage and a significant sense of responsibility for ensuring that their culture and language was successfully transferred down to their children, in other words, strong impact beliefs (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; De Houwer, 1999). Based on the extracts presented in this chapter, Angelo and Francesca had made more conscious choices regarding their FLP and the desire to share Italian language and culture with their children. In the Amato household Francesca spoke Italian fluently and actively promotes this in her children, even during English and Irish homework tasks. In addition, Francesca was a trained early years educator and through this may have had some exposure to the importance of early language learning and the benefits

of raising children bilingually. This highlights the importance of including language education awareness and training in all levels of teacher education in Ireland, as her children may have indirectly benefitted from her knowledge in this area. These findings align with the strong parental impact beliefs found by Curdt-Christiansen (2009), who found that parents who considered language learning as a means of success and opportunity, and as a way to understand more about cultures round the world, provided rich linguistic resources for heritage language development and multilingual proficiency. Furthermore, this approach was linked to parents' own experiences of migration and language education (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Smith-Christmas, 2020a). This evidence aligns with research conducted by Smith-Christmas (2016), who highlights several factors which may influence a child's ability to gain fairly equal fluency in heritage and dominant languages. Such factors include the overall amount of the child's exposure to the minority language, with children who receive greater exposure tending to possess greater productive fluency than those with limited exposure (Smith-Christmas, 2016). This level of exposure is influenced by a number of factors, such as the amount of time the child may spend with the heritage language speaker. Likewise, evidence demonstrates that if the primary caregiver is the heritage language speaker, then there is greater opportunity of minority language maintenance (Smith-Christmas, 2016).

Examining linguistic identities within the Amato family from Norton's model of investment (Norton, 2016), the data indicates that the Amato family were more aligned in their linguistic goals and beliefs regarding language and consequently, the data indicates that both Sofia and Luca were invested in the language and literacy practices in which they were involved at school and in their home. Ultimately, this has led to positive interactions with their schoolwork, particularly their Irish language learning. What is abundantly clear is that the Amato family view languages as a resource and language learning as a positive experience. Furthermore, as will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, their family is aligned in their family language policy goals and together have established Italian as the language of the home, with Sofia and Luca's 'buy-in'. From Norton (2016)'s perspective, Sofia and Luca were invested in maintaining Italian as their L1 and heritage language. Francesca, Sofia and Luca appear to have a sense of investment in learning Irish, and Sofia and Luca appear to have

invested in their school language policies and practices. According to Darvin and Norton (2015), "How learners are able to invest in a target language is contingent on the dynamic negotiation of power in different fields". Considering this, it is understandable that Sofia and Luca would be willing to invest in Italian language maintenance and the learning of Irish. In comparison to the De Villiers children and the learning of Afrikaans, Sofia and Luca may view Italian as a language which holds symbolic power and thus may provide access to opportunities long term. Sofia in particular is aware of the power held within linguistic knowledge, stating "Well, then you can have some knowledge then when you go to new places, you won't be stuck with other languages, and then you can just meet new people". The language is spoken by a speech community in Ireland, by their family in Italy (which is a part of the EU and therefore may represent access to opportunities in other EU states) and the language is also offered as a Leaving Certificate subject through to the end of secondary school in Ireland.

As evidenced throughout this chapter, there was a greater sense of linguistic cohesion in the Amato household, with language viewed as a resource which linked to both pleasure and opportunity. The family were able to translanguage between Italian, English and at times even Irish. Francesca and Angelo were invested in the maintenance of Italian not only as a heritage language but as an L1, and this level of investment appeared to have been accepted by Sofia and Luca (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton (Pierce), 1995). Considering this level of investment and familial linguistic cohesion, Angelo and Francesca appeared to have been successful in their language planning goals, the maintenance of their heritage language and the promotion of bi/multilingualism as a positive resource in their home. Furthermore, they appear to have fostered positive linguistic ideologies within their children, who appeared interested, curious about language learning and the opportunities that this may open up for them as they grow.

7.5 Linguistic Identities within the Amato Family:

Thus far in this findings chapter, I have outlined the family profile of the Amato family and the family's experiences of migration and language education in the Irish context have been described. Following this, I presented a description of the Amato family FLP. In this section, I consider the respective linguistic identities of the children, Sofia and Luca, upon which this research centres.

7.5.1 Sofia:

Sofia and her younger brother Luca were the only participants who were born in Ireland, unlike the rest of the participants involved in the research. Although this was the case, they both spoke Italian as their L1, with Irish English and Irish as additional languages. Sofia and Luca attended English speaking pre-primary schools and at the time of the observations were attending an English-medium primary school in their area.

Sofia in particular, seemed to have inherited her parents' positive outlook on language learning. She spoke Italian as her L1 almost exclusively in the family home and when interacting with her family (even when outside the home). Like many multilingual individuals, Sofia seemed to have a heightened sense of awareness reading the room and adapting her language use according to her audience. For instance, speaking English in circumstances in which she determined her audience did not understand Italian. Graciously, even at 10 years old, she was able to adapt her language use in my presence, choosing to use Irish English more frequently for my benefit.

Sofia speaks Irish English as her L2. She does so with a strong Italian accent. For Sofia, English was used primarily at school and with her peers. She would also use English to communicate with the wider Irish community around her. In this way, Italian appeared to be reserved for familial interaction and took on a personal, more intimate form of communication and expression. In addition to speaking Irish English fluently as an L2, Sofia was learning Irish as an additional language at school. Overall, she appeared to have a positive

attitude towards language learning, and this was extended to Irish. When asked about learning Irish, the following communication took place:

CW: *What do you think about Irish?*
Sofia: *Yeah, actually learning a new language is actually really fun because you get to learn more things about more places, actually.*
CW: *Yeah? How are the other kids in your class when it comes to Irish? Do they like it or do they struggle with it or what do you think?*
Sofia: *I think they hate it, they think it's for babies. Because of the language sounds.*
CW: *But you love it?*
Sofia: *Yeah, I love It because you can learn more things about places and that's it. I'm actually really good at Irish, so a few people hate it. A few people like it. But I'm just like, no, that it's fun, actually. The Irish.*

Based on the above interaction, we see that Sofia has a sense of metalinguistic awareness of language learning as a fun, pleasurable activity and also as a resource which allows her to learn more about the world around her. Particularly regarding the Irish language, Sofia was perceptive not only about her own feelings regarding the language, but that her position was in contrast to that of the majority of her peers. According to Sofia, whilst she believed learning Irish was fun and that she was good at it, her peers tended to have negative views of the language learning, perhaps due to the difficulty in understanding the phonics of the Irish language. In Sofia's case, she was the most competent Irish language speaker in her household.

In addition to knowing Italian, Irish English and Irish, Sofia had an interest in all things French. When her mother Francesca was younger, she lived in France for a few years and learnt French. This was something that Sofia found particularly fascinating. As a personal interest and as a shared connection with her mother, Sofia and Francesca seemed to enjoy talking about France and learning more about French language and culture together. Sofia hoped she would be able to visit France in the future. At the time of the research the family were anticipating a summer holiday in Spain. Consequently, Sofia was also interested in Spanish culture at the time of my observations. Figure 18 is an image drawn by Sofia which she described as showing her culture and the languages she knows. In the image we see Italy,

France and Spain represented with the correct country colours and symbols, such as the leaning tower of Pisa and the Colosseum in Rome and the Eiffel Tower for France. From these interactions, it is evident that Sofia is interested in travel and learning about other cultures. For her, language learning was an inherent part of this.

7.5.2 Luca:

At the time of the research Luca was halfway through his Junior Infants year at school. Luca spoke Italian as his L1 and Irish English as his L2. Having recently made the transition to primary school, Luca was at the beginning of his formal English language education. His daily homework often included reading and phonics. Consequently, it was my impression that Luca was undergoing some linguistic transition within this first year of formal schooling. Whilst Luca spoke Italian as an L1 within the family home, he spoke Irish English in all other spheres of his life. During the time of my observations, particularly in the early parts of the afternoon when Luca returned home from school, he would speak English more frequently than the rest of his family, taking time to adjust between his school and home environments. As the afternoon continued, he would slowly adjust to the transition and begin speaking Italian more frequently. Picking up on the increase in English being spoken in the home due to my presence, Luca spoke English more frequently. Often, when his parents spoke Italian to him, it was clear that he understood but he often chose to respond in English. On one occasion early on in the data generation process, Luca switched fluently to Italian when speaking to his *'Nonna'* on the phone. This interaction was recorded as a researcher reflection as follows:

> While Sofia is drawing, Luca is outside with Francesca enjoying the good weather. For the first time I hear him speaking fluently in Italian for an extended period. Up until this point he has spoken only English to me and short bursts of Italian to his parents in response to a question. I asked Sofia what Luca was doing and she told me that Luca was speaking to his granny, or 'Nonna'. She lives here in Ireland but had travelled back to Italy for a short holiday. At this point Luca has returned inside and they take me through the Italian names for granny and grandpa, namely 'Nonna' and 'Nonno'.

Luca enjoyed this novel interaction where he had the opportunity teach an adult something that he already knew. He also took pride in his Italian heritage and enjoyed sharing with me about his family in Ireland and in Italy. On one such occasion he drew me a picture of himself and Sofia with their grandfather in Italy. This is evidenced in Figure 18 below.

In addition to Italian and Irish English, Luca had also begun learning Irish as an additional language at school. Luca had the advantage of hearing Sofia and Francesca complete Sofia's Irish homework. Consequently, he was familiar with some Irish words and phrases, and also had homework assistance from both knowledgeable Sofia and their mother, who had picked up some Irish in supporting his older sister. Being in Junior Infants, Luca was at the beginning of his Irish learning experience and had a positive attitude towards this language learning. He seemed to enjoy learning what he had watched his older sister learn over the years, and it had become a shared interest for the siblings. Overall, Luca was a bright and bubbly young boy who was friendly, easily distracted, and curious. He was very intrigued by my presence in his home and was eager to speak with me, although often not regarding language content.

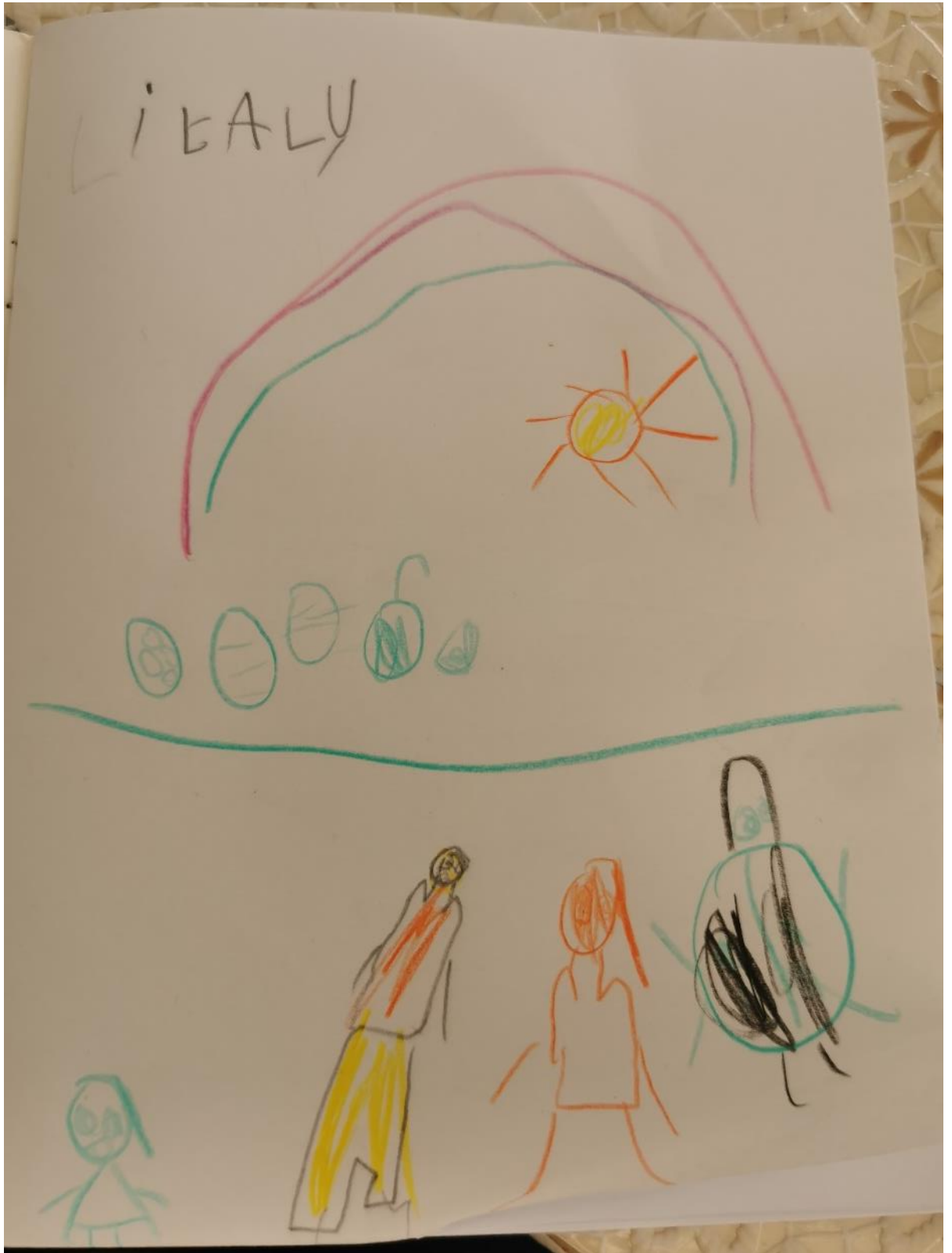*Figure 17: Insight into Sofia's ideas of language and identity*

Figure 18: Luca with his grandfather in Italy

7.6 Homework Observations:

Thus far in this chapter I have presented the data and key findings regarding the linguistic experiences, FLP and linguistic profiles of members of the Amato family. To conclude this chapter, I consider the third theme emerging from the data generation and application of RTA, that of homework as a transitional space in which school language policies and the FLP of the family converge during homework completion.

Homework in the Amato household was completed at a large dining room table in a quiet environment. Francesca often had some calming music on in the background and a candle lit in the centre of the table. Also, in the centre of the table would be freshly laid out snacks for the children and for myself. In the Amato household, Luca would be the first child to arrive home in the afternoons. Angelo would collect Luca on a break from work. For Luca, his linguistic transition began from the moment he was collected from school. Angelo, recognising Italian as his L1, would speak almost completely in Italian to Luca. When asked about their journey home in the car, Angelo reflects that Luca alternates between Italian and English when responding to him on the journey. Positioned inside the home, I was often able to observe the moment that Luca arrived home with his father. At this point they would typically be greeted by Francesca with, 'high guys!', before Luca was smothered in affection by her. Once coats were off, Luca was usually asked how his day was with some version of, "Come stai?" or "tutto bene?". During this informal interaction there was a fluid combination of Italian and English in use, with Luca using English more frequently than his parents. It was likely that due to my presence the family used English more frequently than they usually do, out of consideration for me. With assistance from Francesca, Luca would set himself up at the large dining room table where he and Sofia usually completed their homework. He would take out his stationery and books and show Francesca what his homework tasks for that day were. As he was in Junior Infants, his workload was considerably less than his older sister's. With guidance from Francesca, they would begin completing these tasks. His homework usually consisted of some English phonics, tricky words, a page of mathematics and some reading. Oftentimes his attention span would be limited and there would be lots of physical

movement and interaction during this time. Francesca would talk to Luca in Italian but most often he replied to her in English.

Luca usually completed his homework with some Italian but mostly English. When Francesca spoke to him in Italian, he would mix his responses-sometimes English and sometimes Italian. It was clear he understood and could speak the language fluently, however in terms of language balance English was perhaps more dominant in comparison to his sister. Interestingly, Luca did not seem to struggle as much with his phonics and English language activities in the same manner that Daisy did. One example of this phonics interaction went as follows:

> ***Francesca:*** *Okay today we are doing 'f'.*
> ***Luca:*** *Yeah, 'f'*
> *(Luca starts tracing over the letter with his finger)*
> ***Francesca:*** *Si, okay do you remember the song?*
> ***Luca:*** *Si mamma but I don't want to sing it.*
> *(Luca laughs but is also sheepish. He glances over to me. He does not want to sing the song.)*
> ***Francesca:*** *(singing) My friends and I went to the beach with my floating fish, it got a hole, the air came out?*
>
> ***Luca:*** *'fffffff' (makes the 'f' sound quietly, he is laughing and his cheeks are red, he is embarrassed)*
> ***Francesca:*** *Si, bravissimo!*

In the above interaction we see Francesca and Luca using both Italian and English, translanguaging fluidly. Often, Francesca would ask him questions about his work or offer affectionate encouragement in Italian. For Luca, we see his ability to translanguage between English and Italian seamlessly. Although he acknowledges that he speaks English at school entirely, his understanding and use of Italian is flawless. At this early stage of his Irish language learning journey, Luca was open minded and curious about the language:

> ***CW:*** *Do you enjoy doing your Irish homework?*
> ***Luca:*** *But you know I like Irish. Because you know, I know how to speak Irish. I love it. When I have a baby, I'm going to send them to school. My school. To learn Irish.*

He was not assigned much Irish homework during the time that I was observing with his family. Having been exposed to the language somewhat through his older sister, he did not seem to struggle at this early stage. Francesca herself had some knowledge of the language too, and at this basic level was able to assist Luca quite well. She seemed to enjoy learning Irish alongside her children. Luca was bubbly and curious however and would often sit nearby when Sofia completed her homework and listen in to the Irish language parts, picking up sounds and vocabulary as they went. Together, they would diligently work through Luca's mathematics homework, which often consisted of basic operations and number knowledge. Throughout his time completing his homework, he maintained a positive attitude, with movement and laughter a key feature of the process. Once his homework was complete, he would pack away his things and would be offered tea by his mother. Luca did not hide his excitement at finishing his homework and being given free time to enjoy his afternoon. Adjoining the dining room was a play area, in which he would quietly watch some of his favourite tv shows or play quietly with his toys. If the weather was good, he could be found outside kicking a soccer ball around.

Once his homework was complete, Francesca would leave to collect Sofia from school. On their return, Sofia would most often be chatting away to her mother, talking about her day. These exchanges oscillated fluidly between Italian and English. After a short break for lunch, Sofia would begin her work at the large table. By this stage Luca was most often playing outside or in their playroom. Sofia would studiously complete her homework with Francesca's assistance. Once she had completed her tasks for the day she would come and chat to me or go off to play. Overall, it was a calm and positive environment, also filled with much laughter.

As Francesca and Sofia arrived home, they would be conversing fluently and quickly in Italian. It was often difficult for me to hear and understand what they were saying, but what was evident was that Sofia was highly skilled in Italian and able to converse with her mother with ease. Upon seeing me, Sofia seamlessly translanguaged between Italian and English, speaking to me in English and to her mother in Italian. In the same routine as Luca, Sofia would set herself up at the large dining table, taking out her books and stationery. She would

get herself a drink and a snack from the table. Francesca ensured Luca had something to do during this time and then she would settle next to Sofia to begin the homework routine. Sofia would show Francesca her homework book and they would take note of what she needed to complete that day. Sofia did her homework completely bilingually; translanguaging between Italian and English when completing tasks. When engaging in personal discussion with Francesca she spoke entirely in Italian; this changed when she turned to the English textbook and reads the instructions/ directions for the task-she smoothly changes to English again.

Sofia often chose to begin her homework with her English language tasks. As with Chantelle and Zane, Sofia was usually given some form of English spelling homework, and some activities in her English workbook. Sometimes this included comprehension style activities or activities aimed at developing a certain aspect of her English language knowledge. Having been born in Ireland, Sofia was at ease speaking the Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013) spoken in Ireland and by many of her peers. She was comfortable engaging with her homework tasks, and it was clear to see that Francesca and she had developed a smooth working relationship. They easily slipped into their respective roles during the homework routine and, with guidance from Francesca, they worked together employing Italian as a tool to further develop Sofia's English language skills. Having attended secondary school here in Ireland, Francesca was well placed to assist her children with their homework tasks, particularly with mathematics and English. It should be noted, however, that Francesca had a strong Italian accent which could be heard when she spoke English and/or Irish. Consequently, when she pronounced the English spelling words, she did so with Italian-accented speech. Sofia, however, did not appear to struggle in hearing her mother speak and this did not appear consequently a significant barrier like it was in the De Villiers household. In Figure 19 we can see an example of Sofia's spelling homework. During this activity, Francesca would call out the word and Sofia would write it down, attempting to use the correct spelling of each word. As evidenced in the picture, Francesca would then mark each word correct or incorrect, and then together they would revise each word, focusing on sounding out the word and focusing on the phonics behind each sound. In this particular instance we see the focus of the list of spelling words is focused on teaching the 'ou' and 'ow'

sounds. In some of the words Sofia has used 'ow' incorrectly, rather than 'ou', for instance 'clowd' instead of 'cloud'. On the lefthand side of the image we can see that Francesca has initially marked Sofia's version as incorrect. Following this, Francesca would draw Sofia's attention to her spelling list (right of the image), and they would discuss the 'ou' sound, with Francesca making marks on the page with a pencil to support her instruction.
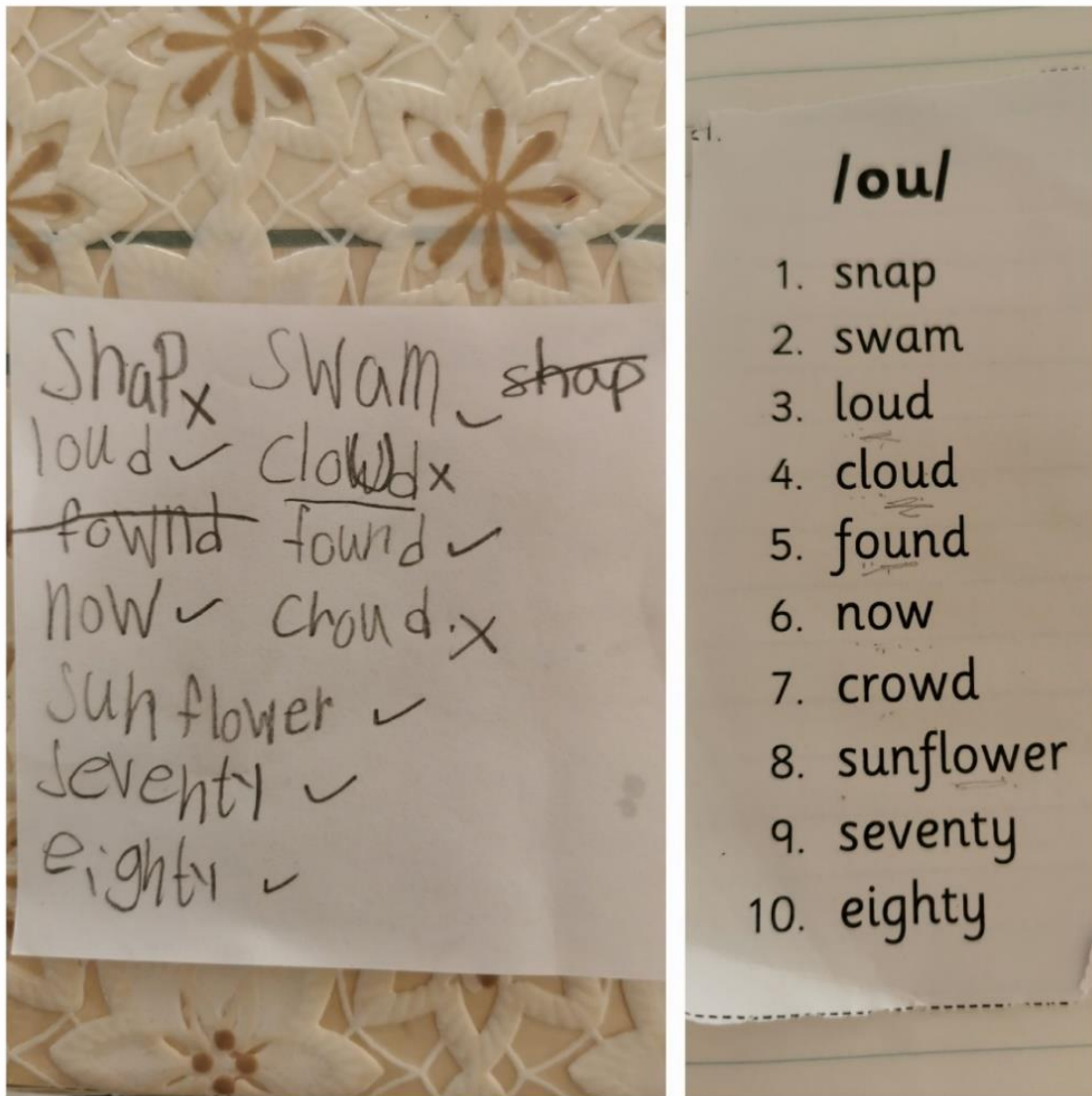

Figure 19: An example of Sofia's spelling homework.

Even during such language tasks, Francesca and Sofia would translanguage between Italian and English. When looking at the spelling list, what Sofia had written or discussing the phonics behind each word, they would use mostly English as the language of communication. This is interspersed with Italian:

Sofia:	*Ready Mama?*
Francesca:	*Si, lets go. Snap.*
	(Francesca begins calling out the spelling words and as she calls each one, Sofia writes it down, attempting to correctly spell each word)
Francesca:	*Swam*
Francesca:	*Luca are you okay?*
Luca:	*Si, Mama.*
Francesca:	*Va bene. Now quiet okay? I'm working with Sofia.*
Sofia:	*What else?*
Francesca:	*Loud. Cloud.*
Sofia:	*I remember.*
Luca:	*Clouds in the sky, there's no clouds out there (looking out the window and singing)*
Francesca:	*Luca, ho detto basta. (She turns to Sofia) Did you write found?*
Sofia:	*Si.*
Francesca:	*Now. Crowd. Sunflower. Did you get that?*
Sofia:	*Si.*
Luca:	*Mama, posso fare quello? (Luca asks his mother if he can read out the next word on Sofia's list. She nods.)*
Luca:	*Seventy. Eighty.*
Francesca:	*Okay let's look.*
Sofia:	*Okay*
Francesca:	*Okay, this looks like shap. Is this? S-H-A-P? Yeah? No, it's wrong because I said snap and the N is this way. If you do like this, it's a H, so I'm sorry, it's wrong.*
Sofia:	*Okay.*
Francesca:	*Loud, now, sunflower, seventy, eighty. Swam. What's this? Cloud and crown. So again, that's supposed to be an R and looks like a H. So look how many mistakes you did because you don't write properly and lost all your mark. So cloud. O-U, not W. So cloud and loud are O-U O-U and found, okay? Stai ascoltando?*
Sofia:	*Si, Mama.*
Francesca:	*Okay, when you hear now, it's O-W. Crowd O-W. Flower O-W. Okay?*
Sofia:	*Yeah*

Francesca:	*That's the way you have to remember. So if I say loud, cloud and sound, what do you put in for?*
Sofia:	*For cloud C-L- O-W-D?*
Francesca:	*No*
Sofia:	*I can't get it.*
Francesca:	*You can't get it because you're not listening. You're not concentrating. You're thinking about something else. Look here. Loud O-U. Cloud O-U and found all have O-U. Okay, now O-W, si? We do this one. Are you ready? Va bene, let me see. Va bene.*

In the above interaction we see Francesca diligently coaching Sofia through the spelling process and helping her understand the difference between two similar phonetic sounds. Their interaction was interrupted at times by Luca who was playing nearby but was also listening to what was being taught and was eager to join in. On this occasion Sofia was somewhat distracted and was struggling with the difference between 'ou' and 'ow'. Although Francesca did get slightly frustrated, she did exercise patience in explaining the difference between the sounds to the best of her ability.

Once Sofia had completed her English homework, she would usually move on to her Irish. When completing her Irish homework she would interchange between English, the Irish words forming a part of the task at hand, and interpersonal exchanges with Francesca in Italian. In this instance, the balance of linguistic knowledge was more even, as Francesca was exposed to the vocabulary and phonics in Irish at the same time as Sofia. In some instances, Sofia knew more about the task at hand than her mother as she was exposed to Irish language lessons at school. Despite this, Francesca had a positive attitude towards this aspect of language learning and was able to assist Sofia with the knowledge she did have. When it came to an aspect of the work that Francesca was unfamiliar with, she was confident drawing on other strategies to assist Sofia. Below is an extract demonstrating their interaction during an Irish spelling homework task:

Francesca:	*Allora, um, Irish. Allora…*
Sofia:	*Si*
Francesca:	*Allora…Irish, my favourite subject.*
Sofia:	*Do you know what's my favourite subjects?*

Francesca:	*Tell me*
Sofia:	*My favourite subject at school is only art, science and Irish.*
Francesca:	*Irish, yeah? Because you teach me! So what do we have to do? You don't have to do these, do you?*
Sofia:	*Yeah, I do, but not the whole thing, just this.*
Francesca:	*Ma è questo a test?*
Sofia:	*Si, but only the red ones. So that's it.*
Francesca:	*Oh, okay. So you have to do all these and this.*
Sofia:	*Yes. Only the one coloured red. Yeah.*
Francesca:	*Red. Okay. Via. Let's go.*
Sofia:	*Cófra.*
Francesca:	*Okay no, we start from here*
Sofia:	*Okay so, S-T-O-fada-L.*
Francesca:	*Hmmm*
Sofia:	*S-O-R-N. Sorn. Cófra. C-O-fada-F-R-A. Doras. D-O-R-A-S. Bord. B-O-R-D. Fuinneog. F-U-I-N-N-E-O-G.*
Francesca:	*Fuinneog*

(Francesca tries to pronounce Fuinneog but struggles)

Sofia:	*Fuinneog. Okay, you know what I'm going to do? Fuinneog.*

(Sofia repeats the correct pronunciation slowly. This continues for about thirty seconds, with Sofia repeating the correct pronunciation of the word and Francesca attempting to pronounce this correctly)

Francesca:	*Fuinneog. Okay. I got it, right. Vai*
Francesca:	*An*
Sofia:	*An bhfuil*
Francesca:	*An bhfuil*
Sofia:	*An bhfuil tá. A-N-B-H-F-U-I-L*
Francesca:	*See this is easy because an bhfuil, an bhfuil is the same.*
Sofia:	*Yeah*
Francesca:	*Then tá níl níl it's all the same, it's all the same.*
Sofia:	*Yeah*
Francesca:	*Okay, Allora.*
Francesca:	*An bhfuil , the B-H is like V. So like bhfuil. Yeah?*
Sofia:	*Bhuil yeah.*
Francesca:	*B-H-U-I-L (She writes this down phonetically as F-U-I-L). Then the fada, don't forget about the fada. Tá níl níl. Yeah. Okay. Ready? Get a page there. Thank you.*
Francesca:	*Okay. You ready?*
Sofia:	*Okay I'm just gonna grab a pen.*
Francesca:	*It's an exam for me…okay…*

(Francesca refers to the Irish words she now needs to pronounce aloud so that Sofia can practice her spelling)

Sofia:	*An exam? An exam? (Laughing) It's like I'm the teacher! Alright class we're going to write down now.*

(Both of them are laughing)

Francesca: *Okay, you ready?*

Sofia: *Yes. Come on students, you can start!*

Francesca: *Stól. Stól? Yeah? (She changes the way she pronounces the word)*

Sofia: *Stól. Yeah.*

Francesca: *Stól. Sorn. Cófra. Doras.*

Sofia: *Doras?*

Francesca: *Yes. Bord. This is an easy one. Fuinneog*

(She pronounces fuinneog incorrectly)

Sofia: *Fuinneog. This is too easy!*

(They both laugh)

Francesca: *Amore mio…Allora. An bhfuil*

Sofia: *Hmm?*

Francesca: *An bhfuil*

Francesca: *B-H…. tá*

Francesca: *Now, again. Are you ready? Don't copy that one, you know it's wrong.*

Sofia: *Si, yeah I see.*

Francesca: *You know it?*

Francesca: *An bhfuil*

(Sofia spells this correctly)

Francesca: *Brava.*

Francesca: *Níl. An bhfuil. Okay, now show me.*

(Sofia hands over the piece of paper she has been writing on)

Sofia: *I'm not so good at this.*

Francesca: *Allora. Stól. Sorn. Cófra. Doras. Bord. Fuinneog. And…I have to mark you this one wrong, okay?*

Sofia: *Hmm?*

Francesca: *This one, because I told you this one was wrong. Okay? Sorry about that. Correct correct correct. Nine out of ten. Very good. Well, you get ten out of ten tomorrow. I know.*

Sofia: *Yeah, I will.*

Francesca: *Phew! That was an exam for me!*

In the extract above, Francesca's willingness to learn and support her children in their language learning journey is demonstrated. The interaction was light-hearted but underneath the laughter was a genuine interest in helping her children achieve their best. At the beginning of the task, she asked Sofia to pronounce each word, paying close attention. During this interaction she found two words particularly challenging, namely *fuinneog* and *An bhfuil.* Sofia took care to diligently teach her mother these words and demonstrated an

equal amount of patience with her mother as she tried to get the pronunciation correct. Following this pre-practice interaction, the actual spelling task could commence where Francesca said each word aloud and Sofia was required to try to spell the Irish word. Francesca then took the spelling sheet and checked the spelling of each word, marking it correct or incorrect.

In the days following this interaction, Francesca, becoming frustrated by her limited ability to pronounce the words correctly, and realising that she had limited knowledge of the words involved in this spelling task, found a unique solution. As noted previously, although having lived in Ireland for many years, she still had a strong Italian accent, which could be heard when she spoke English and/or Irish. Consequently, the same difficulty with the correct pronunciation which had affected other participants, was also present in this interaction. Francesca found it difficult to say the Irish words correctly and this had been resulting in some confusion and lower spelling scores when practicing with Sofia. Realising the difficulty that was occurring with this specific homework task, Francesca found a resourceful solution. She used the available resources she had and asked a friend of hers, who was more familiar with Irish than she was, to record her voice saying each of Sofia's Irish spelling words. When it was time for Francesca to test Sofia, she was able to play the recording of each word so that Sofia could correctly hear the word and attempt to spell it. This solution worked remarkably well, and Sofia's spelling improved.
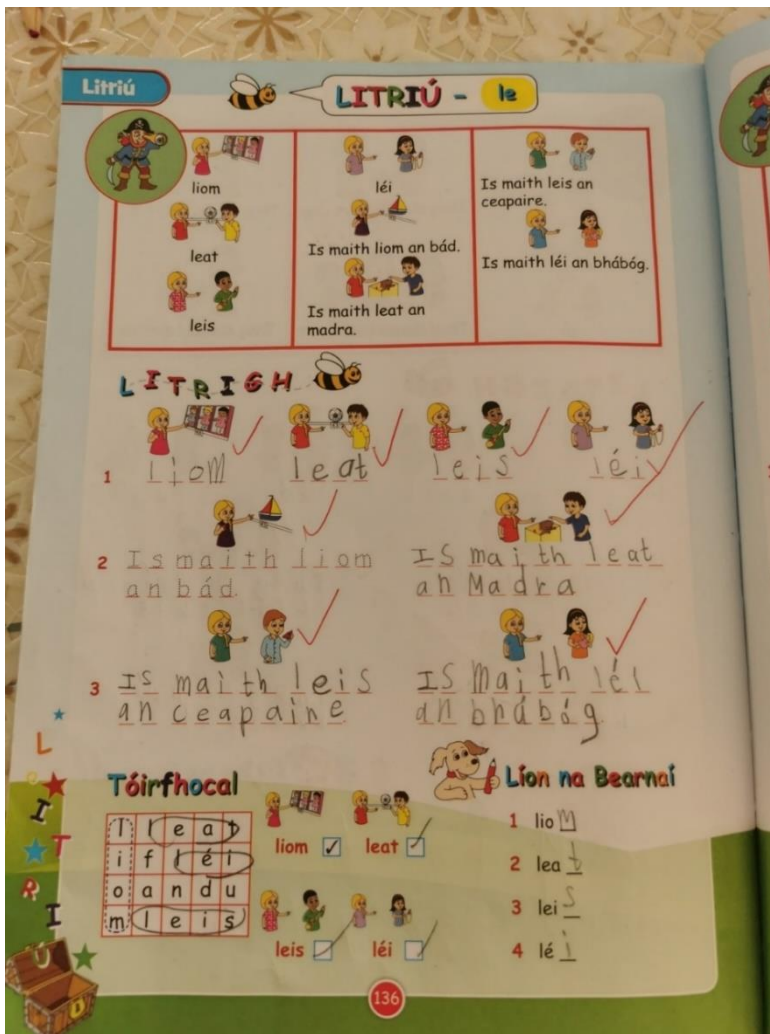
Figure 20: An example of Sofia's Irish homework

As with the De Villiers family, there was always much affectionate laughter during Sofia's homework sessions, with both Francesca and Sofia able to see the humour in the situation, particularly when Francesca was unable to correctly pronounce the Irish words. After completing her Irish homework, Sofia usually concluded her homework routine with mathematics. When doing her mathematics homework, she continued to translanguage with ease. During my observations I observed her counting in Italian, and even completing complex geometric tasks such as identifying right angles, in Italian. In the interaction below,

we see Francesca and Sofia translanguaging between Irish English and Italian. In addition, this interaction also includes mathematical language.

Sofia:	Colour half of the ca-pa...capa-city?
Francesca:	Allora, so syllables, right? Two at a time.
Sofia:	Ca.-a
Francesca:	Ca.
Sofia:	Ca-c-ty
Francesca:	Ca-pa-ci-ty. Capacity.
Sofia:	Capacity
Francesca:	Si. Capacity, okay. What capacity means?
Sofia:	It's um, like something...
Francesca:	So, say another word, right. Colour half of the?
Sofia:	Capacity.
Francesca:	Another word for capacity?
Sofia:	Um, could you call it a number line?
Francesca:	Okay, brava. Like, the amount.
Sofia:	Yeah like the amount.
Francesca:	So colour half of the capacity of the jug. So how many numbers do you have there?
Sofia:	We have three, six, nine and twelve. And that's four numbers.
Francesca:	So what's the half?
Sofia:	So we can put six here for the twelve.
Francesca:	Brava. See that's half. Brava.

In this interaction we see Sofia struggling to understand the concept of capacity. As with many multilingual learners, she was required to understand a complex mathematical concept in her L2. Her difficulty lies not just in understanding the concept but also in pronouncing the word correctly. Consequently, her challenge was twofold; to understand the actual word capacity, and also the mathematical concept which it represents. In this interaction we also see Francesca's positive attitude and encouragement in helping Sofia understand these challenging tasks. In this particular interaction Sofia leans heavily on her mother's guidance to understand and complete the task at hand. Francesca attempts to use what Sofia already knows to help her understand what she does not know; she asks her if she knows another word which would have a similar meaning to capacity, when Sofia replies with number line, Francesca consciously provides positive encouragement whilst also guiding Sofia to the correct answer.

Based on the data provided in this section, evidence indicated that where tensions, or disjunctures between school policies and FLP were present, the homework space was a particular time/routine/interaction in which such tensions may come to the fore, affecting the interaction between learners and caregivers and ultimately how effectively homework tasks may be completed, if at all. Furthermore, the additional requirement of complex translanguaging required of multilingual learners to make sense of the task at hand represents an additional layer of complexity in completing homework tasks which, in the context of assimilationist school spaces which fail to harness learners' full linguistic repertoires as resources, may go largely unnoticed. Additionally, the interactions between Francesca and Sofia above demonstrate how caregivers may struggle to provide adequate homework support during language related tasks. This raises questions about how homework is conceptualised as a pedagogical practice and how schools may better equip migrant families with the skills needed to approach such tasks.

7.7 Conclusion:

In this chapter, key findings from my observations and interactions with members of the Amato family were presented; this included describing the overall family profile in greater detail before examining the family's experiences of migration and schooling in Ireland. Following this, details of each participant's linguistic identity are discussed, followed by a description of the Amato family's language policy. To conclude the chapter, the data generated regarding homework as a transitionary space in which different language policies and likewise, different linguistic identities, interact, was presented. In the next chapter, each of these themes is discussed in greater detail and the implications of the data regarding current research in the areas of multilingualism, migration and diversity, identity development and language education in Ireland, are considered.

8 Dynamic Multilingual Identities in Ireland: Interpretations and Discussion

Piller and Takahashi (2010) draw attention to the connection between inclusion, language and social inequalities by highlighting that language plays a mediating role within key areas of social inclusion, such as education, and that linguistic proficiency may impact on migrants' overall sense of belonging. In this thesis I examined several overlapping and interlinked social dimensions which may contribute to the linguistic identity development of multilingual, heritage language migrants in Irish schools, and ultimately to their overall sense of integration in the Irish context. Based on the findings presented in the previous two chapters, it was evident that the learners involved in this research experienced a 'language gap' between their school and the home, oftentimes faced with an ambivalent attitude or at times a deficit ideology towards their heritage culture and linguistic resources, in which their knowledge of the dominant language, or in this case the language of teaching and learning, was recognised and learners' existing social and linguistic capital were not leveraged. Learners' experiences of language in the school and the home ultimately influenced the development of their linguistic identity in complex ways, the implications of which are analysed in this chapter.

I begin this chapter in section 8.1 by examining the first theme identified through the application of RTA, namely *Language Policy Disjunctures*. In this section I explore the language policies and practices of participating learners and their caregivers in the home, and the language policies and practices informing learners' language experiences in their school environments, with a specific focus on how such policies are mis/aligned to support, or hinder, learners' dynamic multilingual language development. Following this, in section 8.2 I focus on the second theme, *Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities,* in which I consider the complex research context informing this research, a central aim was to investigate how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. In the final section of this chapter, section 8.3, I explore the third theme generated in this research, *Homework as a Transitional Space*,

in which the routine of homework is conceptualised as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with family language policy, through space and time, to influence learners' dynamic multilingual language development.

8.1   Language Policy Disjunctures:

Hornberger (2002, p. 2) reflects that in increasingly diverse contexts there is a need to develop language policies which, "recognize ethnic and linguistic pluralism as resources" and which centre diversity, multilingualism and the empowerment of minorities and heritage language speakers in the formal curriculum but also in daily classroom practice. This is particularly relevant in light of the findings from the research conducted in this thesis. In section 2.3 of this thesis a detailed review of language policy in education was provided and this was followed by an examination of existing research in FLP in section 2.4. In this section, the findings from Chapters Six and Seven which centre around the disjunctures between language policies informing learners linguistic development at school and FLP in the home are analysed regarding the existing research presented in Chapter Two. The focus of this analysis centres on the way school and national language policies may diverge from what occurs in practice, and how differences between school policies and FLP interact to support or hinder the development of dynamic, multilingual identities (RQ1). The section begins by considering the disjunctures between orientations towards language in the home versus at school before analysing how such differences may contribute to either heritage language maintenance or language shift.

8.1.1   *Disjunctures between Official and Unofficial Language-in-Education Policy:*

Within educational institutions, the culture of the school community permeates every aspect of school life (O'Riordan, 2017). Thus, school culture influences both educational policy and practice. Whilst policies may exist in official capacities, the recommendations may or may not be implemented at grassroots level; despite official policies and accompanying

legislation, there can be a disconnection between policy and classroom practice (Dillon, 2016; Hornberger, 2006b; Ricento 2000, 2009). This was evidenced in the context of this research. These disjunctures have implications for the experiences of learners, regardless of what is described in official policy documents.

Beyond academic achievement, for young migrants, one of the most important markers of successful integration is their sense of belonging and for young people, school is the most important social environment in which they desire to belong (OECD, 2015). In Chapters Six and Seven, the findings from intensive and extensive engagement with the participating families indicates that the children in both the Amato and De Villiers families received very little, if any, support in navigating the linguistic transition that accompanied attending either Irish-medium or English-medium schooling. This section focuses on the implications of such disjunctures between official and unofficial school policy and how this may impact upon learners' experiences of language education and their linguistic identity development.

In the preceding two chapters, findings indicated that learners experienced few opportunities to speak heritage languages in school spaces or leverage their existing linguistic knowledge to support their English or Irish language learning. Furthermore, they experienced limited opportunities to discuss the concept of culture and to share their heritage culture at school. Whilst the linguistic profiles of the respective participants vary, their overarching experiences are similar. In addition to receiving little to no support in maintaining, let alone celebrating their linguistic heritage as a resource, none of the participating children were receiving language support for the Irish English (Hickey, 2012; Kallen, 2013) based curriculum, and Irish language learning, in which they were engaged. These issues were detailed specifically in sections 6.3.2 and 7.3.2. Furthermore, the data indicates that based on the participants experiences and perspectives, a lack of awareness, or at times an ambivalent attitude towards diversity, both linguistic and cultural, within school environments was evidenced. In summation, what was evidenced, after the 4-month period of observations and interviews, was that all learners involved in this research required individualised linguistic support in developing their knowledge and skill in Irish English but

also in supporting the development of their heritage/home languages. None of the children involved in this research came from families with native Irish English speakers. None of the children in this research came from families with any speakers of Irish. Yet, to the knowledge of the learners themselves or their caregivers, none of the children in this research were receiving individualised linguistic support for either Irish English or Irish, the languages of teaching and learning. Additionally, their experiences and feedback indicate a missed opportunity on behalf of schools to positively leverage existing linguistic resources as a tool to further multilingualism, intercultural awareness, social cohesion and school harmony (Faas et al., 2018; McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). A lack of support in speaking heritage or home languages in school spaces is corroborated by research in the Irish context conducted by Martin et al. (2023), in which participating learners indicated they had been discouraged from speaking their native language at school. In previous research conducted by Whittaker (2019), young migrant learners in Irish schools indicated that their first experiences attending school were scary and difficult; with a lack of ability to communicate in English a significant barrier to their ability navigate the transition.

That a teacher may not know the heritage, or even nationality, of a learner in their class would indicate why such learners may have little opportunity to embrace their full linguistic repertoires in the classroom. This is supported by research on intercultural awareness which indicates that migrant learners may have negative educational experiences due to educators' poor knowledge of teaching in diverse contexts and a lack of adequate supports (Martin et al., 2023; Smyth et al., 2004). Furthermore, we know that the extent to which migrant children feel a sense of belonging within school communities is impacted by their relationships with their teachers, their friendships with their peers and their wider interactions within the school community (Martin et al., 2023). Considering this, it is plausible that the De Villiers children's sense of belonging in their school spaces has been impacted by their limited ability to share the full extent of their dynamic, multilingual identities, and lack of opportunities to use their full linguistic repertories as resources in the classroom. Furthermore, the commentary made by Daisy and her older siblings in section 6.3.2 indicates that not only was there a failure to recognise and leverage the De Villiers

children's linguistic and cultural diversity, but also that the children themselves had little awareness of the linguistic and cultural heritage of their peers. This may also impact on their ability make meaningful connections with their classmates. In addition to a potential loss of connection with their teachers and peers within their school environment, this lack of acknowledgement of their rich heritage and their full linguistic repertoires is likely resulting in the De Villiers children experiencing a language shift which has the potential to result in language loss. This particular consequence is discussed further along in this section.

As detailed in section 4.1, migrant learners require targeted language supports, which are needed to ensure that they have similar opportunities and outcomes within the education system as their native peers (Darmody et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). This support, however, requires specialist EAL teachers and resources. Based on the findings presented in the previous two chapters, there are a number of potential reasons why the learners involved in this research did not receive such supports. The De Villiers children, whilst bilingual WSAfE and Afrikaans speakers, did speak a variation of English fluently (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014). Consequently, there may have been the assumption that, as they already spoke a variation of English (although there are significant variations between WSAfE and Irish English (see Bowerman (2008, 2013)), they did not require additional linguistic support. This was detailed in Chapter Six. Secondly, whilst the Amato children had some knowledge of Irish English prior to starting primary school education in Ireland, they potentially might not have been flagged for support as they are Irish born, second generation migrants with some knowledge of the language of teaching and learning already. This was explained in Chapter Seven.

There is evidence in the literature which indicates that the ways in which schools may intentionally, or unintentionally, marginalise ethnic and linguistic minorities may further entrench social inequalities and linguistic hierarchies (Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Dillon, 2016; Toolan, 2003). Based on the findings of this research it should be considered that the wider school, and teachers' ambivalence towards (or lack of awareness) and training regarding issues of diversity, multilingual language development and intercultural awareness

may have been an influencing factor (Batardière et al., 2023; Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Markey, 2022; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Smyth et al., 2009; Taguma et al., 2009). As evidenced by the literature in section 4.1.3.1, there were few supports for migrant learners prior to 1999 (Devine, 2005; Nowlan, 2008) and following this, a model focused on two years of support for EAL learners was implemented which continued through the Celtic Tiger period, although research indicates that it is unlikely that academic proficiency in an additional language may be achieved in this time period (O'Toole & Skinner, 2018; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). At the time of this research, language supports were assigned to schools based on the number of learners identified as requiring support, raising questions regarding which stakeholders make such decisions and how such decisions are made (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023).

The Primary Language Curriculum 2019 recognises that Ireland is linguistically and culturally diverse country, and aims to integrate English and Irish in the classroom whilst simultaneously valuing the linguistic resources that learners bring with them into the classroom, encourage positive attitudes towards language and literacy, and supporting teachers in helping their learners to develop their linguistic abilities (NCCA, 2019). Despite such official aims, the experiences of the learners in this research do not align with the policy initiatives and outcomes outlined in current policy influencing language education in Irish schools, such as the *Intercultural Education Strategy* (Department of Education and Skills & Office of the Minister for Intergration, 2010), *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020* (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017), the *Primary Language Curriculum 2019* (NCCA, 2019) or the *Primary Curriculum Framework 2023* (NCCA, 2023b). Thus, despite international consensus that migrant learners require proficiency in the language of teaching and learning in their host countries (Siarova & Essomba, 2014; Staring et al., 2017), and that learning additional languages may assist with the improvement of literacy and communication skills, and overall metacognitive awareness (Bruen, 2013; Siarova & Essomba, 2014), on the whole, dynamic approaches to language education were not being employed in the schools involved in this research.

These experiences therefore indicate that there may be a disjuncture between policy and practice within some areas of the Irish education system (see section 2.3.2); whilst policy

initiatives may be fundamentally good, the reality of what happens in practice and the de facto policies enacted in Irish schools may not fully align with said policy initiatives. Based on the evidence provided in this thesis, and supported by the existing literature, research indicates that de-facto systems of subtractive bilingualism and assimilation may be occurring in some Irish primary schools, in which ethnolinguistic minorities are assimilated into the languages and social practices of the dominant culture (Baker & Wright, 2017; Devine, 2005; Lambert, 1981; Ó Laoire, 2012; Whittaker, 2019). Such assimilation, "involves the subsuming of language, traditions, values, mores and behaviour normally leading the assimilating party to become less socially distinguishable from other members of the receiving society" (International Organisation for Migration, 2023). In such instances the implication is that learners may inadvertently lose proficiency in their heritage languages and cultural practices whilst gaining proficiency in the language of teaching and learning, thus resulting in language shift and potentially language loss (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Kloss, 1968; Mahon, 2017; McKinney et al., 2015). In school settings, this approach negatively affects language diversity through the replication of educational inequalities and may ultimately lead to assimilation and language loss (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In addition, subtractive approaches contribute to linguistic and cultural identity insecurities, academic failure and struggles with metalinguistic awareness (García & Lin, 2017a; Lambert, 1981; May, 2017).

Consequently, the diverse linguistic backgrounds of learners are not being celebrated, or leveraged, in line with what current research and language-in-education policy in Ireland encourages (Little & Kirwan, 2019, 2021; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012; Ó Laoire, 2005; Staring et al., 2017). The evidence presented in this thesis corroborates existing research indicating that whilst there are active supports for migrant learners upon first arrival (Batardière et al., 2023; Little & Kirwan, 2019; Lodge & Lynch, 2004; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006), the extent and level of language support provided for migrant learners varies according to their age and respective stage in the school system, and their existing linguistic knowledge (Darmody et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; Martin et al., 2023; Siarova & Essomba, 2014; Staring et al., 2017). Furthermore, the findings of this research align with existing research in the Irish context, namely that of Horgan et al.

(2022), Curdt-Christiansen (2020), Devine (2005), Nowlan (2008), Whittaker (2019), Little and Kirwan (2021) and Batardière et al. (2023), which indicates that many migrant learners may experience a 'language gap' or faced with a deficit ideology towards their linguistic resources, in which knowledge of the dominant language, or in this case teaching and learning, is recognised and migrants' existing social and linguistic capital are not recognised. Markey (2022, p. 3) reflects that, "While Irish educational policies have indeed shifted to support multiple language acquisition at school, obstacles remain regarding students' ability to harness experiences with different languages". This is supported by Batardière et al. (2023) who argues that whilst there is a common consensus regarding the nature of language and multilingualism amongst Irish stakeholders, policy and practice in regards to this are still lacking.

This failure to embrace the dynamic multilingual identities of migrant learners in school may unintentionally reinforce negative stereotypes and create an 'othering' of culturally diverse learners (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021). Additionally, evidence indicates that second-generation migrant learners are at risk for being, "overlooked and marginalised regarding legislation, policy and practice across several areas of state responsibility" (Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022, p. 12). This 'straight for English' approach, alongside the deficit model of English language support which prevails in Irish schools fails to acknowledge the advantages of multilingualism, can stigmatise learners in the eyes of their peers and undermines the child's existing capacities as a capable learner (Harmon, 2018). In addition to assimilation and the possibility of language loss, subtractive approaches have been found to contribute to linguistic and cultural identity insecurities, academic failure and struggles with metalinguistic awareness (García & Lin, 2017a; Lambert, 1981; May, 2017). Conversely, Dillon (2016, p. 109) argues that, "If children from minority groups are encouraged to value their L1 within a dominant culture, this may not only enhance self-esteem and cultural identity, but may also lead to positive cognitive consequences" (Dillon, 2016). According to Dillon (2016), whilst children in Ireland are not denied the right to speak their home or heritage languages at school, this is not the same as actively encouraging their use in school spaces. Adopting a language-as-right or

language-as-resource orientation (Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Ruíz, 1984), we can reflect that whilst equal access to education is a right of all children in Ireland, the level of supports provided for minorities within Irish schools vary, which ultimately impacts on their educational outcomes (Darmody et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022; McGinnity et al., 2022; McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023).

Thus, whilst policy initiatives may fundamentally match best practice, the reality of what happens in practice and the de facto policies enacted in Irish schools may not fully align with said policy initiatives. Language-in-education policies play a central role in language learning and can contribute to the maintenance, or otherwise, of minority and heritage languages, whether by directly supporting heritage language development or omitting to do so and by implication suggesting that such language maintenance is irrelevant (Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022). Reflecting on this issue, Nowlan (2008) and Little and Kirwan (2019) highlight the need for effective long-term supports which provide language support beyond initial fluency; this is corroborated by research conducted by Siarova and Essomba (2014) and Staring et al. (2017) who argue that schools should provide adequate linguistic support for learners to *master* the language of instruction, whilst simultaneously assisting with the maintenance of heritage languages through the leveraging of existing linguistic resources in the classroom. As Dillon (2016, p. 98) reflects, "Linguistic diversity in the educational arena can only be maintained and achieved in the context of appropriate educational language policy". Developing appropriate policies which reflect the current sociocultural landscape, adequately address the needs of migrant learners in schools and attending to gaps in existing research and policies is required. Darmody et al. (2022, p. v) state, "How children view themselves and their linguistic proficiency in the language of instruction is likely to influence their experiences in the Irish education system and beyond, and to ultimately shape their integration into Irish society". Certainly, for migrant children in Ireland who are 'forging their own paths' in a system featuring a lack of established pathways, the importance of their experiences, interactions and attitudes are of the utmost importance for their own identity development, and forming the foundation of the future Irish communities of which they are a part (Garrat & Mutwarasibo, 2012).

To conclude, in increasingly diverse contexts such as Ireland, educational settings are essential for facilitating integration, promoting harmony, intercultural awareness, and respect, irrespective of cultural, linguistic, and religious differences (Faas et al., 2018). Moreover, cultivating a sense of belonging for migrant learners in Irish schools is essential in developing positive relationships, increasing academic achievement, minimising early school leaving and fostering the positive development of dynamic identities (Harmon, 2018). While existing policies are fundamentally good, indicating a support for migrant learners and their multilingualism, in reality this was not the experience of learners in this research. Whilst official policy refers to leveraging existing competencies, this is not always reflected into practices on the ground. Despite official policy, such practices provide an indication of the language ideologies informing teaching practices and ultimately, the development of leaners' linguistic identities.

8.1.2 *Differences in FLP, Language Maintenance and Language Shift*

In this thesis a primary research interest included exploring how school (and national) language policies and practices, and FLP, interact regarding the support or otherwise, of dynamic, multilingual identities (RQ1). The findings presented in Chapters Six and Seven indicate that there were differences in orientation towards language socialisation and FLP between the two participating families involved in this research, which, in the context of language-in-education policies which fail to embrace a language-as-resource orientation to language learning by leveraging learners' existing linguistic repertoires as resources (as outlined in the previous section), may have different outcomes for the development of linguistic identities (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & Schissel, 2014). In this section, I examine these differences towards language education and language socialisation in the home and the implications of such differences are discussed regarding the development of dynamic multilingual identities.

Differences in orientations towards language and FLP between the two participating families were central findings of this research. As extensively outlined in Chapter Six, the De

Villiers family appeared to have a greater ambivalence towards language use, with language used primarily as a means to an end and no aligned, clear preference for specific language usage in the family home. There was less active management by caregivers to manage children's language usage or learning within the home environment. Evidence indicated that there was conflict and resistance in the home in the face of an FLP in flux. What seemed to have occurred was an 'opt for English' approach in which English took priority as a *lingua franca* in the context of their migration. Furthermore, the linguistic experiences of the De Villiers children ultimately led to different linguistic ideologies within the family unit and therefore less linguistic cohesion and greater conflict surrounding language choices, investment and what the FLP of the family unit going forward should be.

As was documented in Chapter Seven, the Amato family have a positive outlook on language learning and view linguistic knowledge as a resource which may open up access to opportunities but also to the world around them. Italian served as an ethnocultural identity marker (Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021), thus Francesca and Angelo were committed to keeping Italian as their L1 and the language of the Amato household. This choice reflects a steadfastness in their belief in maintaining strong links to their heritage, despite simultaneously wanting to successfully integrate into their new home. This reflects similar results found by Martin et al. (2023), in which participants held concern for maintaining their heritage languages whilst simultaneously desiring support in learning the languages of their new home. With the Amato household there was a strong sense of linguistic cohesion and an aligned sense of investment between family members considering language usage in the home, with little to no resistance on behalf of any of the family members in maintaining the FLP.

Examining the influences on language socialisation in the home reveals that there are complex, often unseen, dynamics at play with the family home which influence the FLP of a family unit at both an official and unofficial level and which impact on a family's ability and willingness to maintain heritage languages in the home (Ballweg, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; Fishman, 1991; Hollebeke et al., 2022; Lanza & Gomes, 2020; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). This was evident in the approaches to FLP by the participating families,

which experienced different levels of investment, linguistic cohesion and harmony. Considering Spolsky's (2004, 2012, 2019) language policy framework which includes language practices, ideologies and management, we may examine the language practices within a family unit from a language policy perspective and consider the differences, similarities and interaction between the language practices in the home and the language practices of the wider community. In the context of the two participating families that have experienced different levels of success in maintaining heritage languages in the home, namely one family which is experiencing language shift and potential language loss, and one family which appears to be successful in maintaining heritage languages in the home, these small internal differences are worth examining, considering how systems such as schools and wider national level policy may provide support for multilingual families or serve to undermine FLP's.

Existing research indicates that migrant families may often experience disconnects between the languages spoken in the home and the languages spoken within their wider community and in formal settings such as schools (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Schwartz, 2010; Smith-Christmas, 2020b). This was evidenced in the current research, particularly regarding Afrikaans and Italian. In contrast to the monoglossic ideologies informing language learning at school, in which existing linguistic resources were not leveraged (see section 2.2.2), in the homes of participating families heteroglossic ideologies (see section 2.2.3) informing a dynamic approach to multilingualism in which translanguaging (see section 2.2.4) between different linguistic resources was a daily occurrence, was evidenced. Thus, whilst fluid translanguaging was occurring in the home (to differing extents), this was not occurring in the same way at school. For the De Villiers family findings indicate that negative school experiences and monoglossic, assimilationist school language policies were compounded by a less defined FLP featuring lower linguistic cohesion and aligned investment, resulting in largely negative attitudes towards Irish, and potential language shift/loss in heritage languages. In comparison, for the Amato family, negative school experiences and assimilationist policy appear to have been somewhat mitigated by a strong FLP featuring firm linguistic cohesion

and aligned investment in language learning in the home, which has reinforced positive attitudes towards and the development of heritage languages, and the learning of both English and Irish.

Both school language policies and FLP are informed by linguistic ideologies (Blommaert, 2006; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Ricento 2017; Seargeant, 2012; Silverstein, 1979; Spotti & Kroon, 2016; Woolard, 2020). Thus, in the context of this research in which there were disjunctures in language policy and practice evidenced between the school and the home, and between participating families, it is relevant to consider how such disjunctures may contribute to the development of linguistic identities in young migrant learners (Ballweg, 2022).

Within family units, caregivers are traditionally the driving influence behind family language practices, deciding which languages should be used in the home and which languages should be discontinued or reserved for certain contexts (Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). According to Yang and Curdt-Christiansen (2021, p. 423), "Parents' family language decisions are reflective of their language ideologies and identities shaped by social systems, public discourse and language planning at a national level". Thus, FLP's tend to be grounded in a family's perception of social structures and social changes; ultimately the FLP is influenced by what the family believes will strengthen their social standing within their community and what would best support family members' life goals (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). This position is adopted in this research. According to Curdt-Christiansen (2009), it is important to examine the symbolic cultural value that languages may represent to a family, and how various sociocultural factors may influence language socialisation and FLP in the home. For example, migrant families must navigate heritage cultures, mainstream cultures, school cultures and peer cultures, all which have different effects on the family's linguistic ideologies and therefore the FLP. In the context of the current research, the strong influence of school culture as a socialising force on the participating families is noticeable. The presence of de-facto systems of subtractive bilingualism and assimilation which reinforce the dominance of English as a *lingua franca* (Baker & Wright, 2017; Devine, 2005; Lambert, 1981; Little & Kirwan, 2019, 2021; Ó Laoire, 2012; Whittaker, 2019) negatively affects linguistic

diversity through the replication of educational inequalities (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Furthermore, little to no school support for heritage languages for either family indicates the dominance of both English and Irish within the Irish school system, and indirectly contributes to the value placed on certain languages with the family home, thus potentially contributing to language shift (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Fishman, 1991; García, 2009a, 2009b; García & Lin, 2017a; Hélot & Cavalli, 2017; May, 2017; Mwaniki et al., 2017). The influence of wider linguistic ideologies is highlighted by Cantone and Wolf-Farré (2022) who states, "While these may or may be not reflected directly in multilingual families' policies and practices, they surely will be corroborated by the education system, which will in turn affect language maintenance".

Families play a pivotal role in heritage language maintenance (Fishman, 1991; Hollebeke et al., 2022), conversely, home language maintenance has been shown to contribute to harmonious and cohesive family relationships (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). However, as Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 180) observes, "When combatting language shift and loss, immigrant families encounter tremendous challenges from mainstream ideologies, children's culture, and peer influence on children's social values, and from public education and macro language policies". Considering this, it is not always easy for migrant families to maintain harmonious and cohesive home environments which foster the promotion or at the least the maintenance of heritage languages (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). Considering the evidence in the previous two chapters, there were numerous factors influencing the participating families' FLP's and therefore their ability to maintain heritage languages in the home. Employing Spolsky's (2004, 2012, 2019) language policy framework, and by extension Curdt-Christiansen (2018)'s FLP model which was developed from Spolsky's model, we can examine such factors which may influence families' language choices (King & Fogle, 2017). As outlined in Chapters Six and Seven, the participating families had access to different levels of cultural capital, material resources, linguistic and cultural resources and differing socioeconomic statuses.

Socioeconomic factors include economic influences, or interconnections between languages and the broader economy (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). From a Bourdieusian

perspective, this can be conceptualised as the amount of linguistic capital attached to certain languages (Bourdieu, 1991; Clark, 2006; Devine, 2009; Revis, 2019; Zschomler, 2019). In this, and the previous two chapters the socioeconomic contrasts between the two participating families have been thoroughly outlined and critiqued in terms of how this may impact the daily lives of migrants and their ability to not only learn new languages, but also maintain heritage languages (Zschomler, 2019). If we compare the relative social capital, or linguistic power associated with either Italian or Afrikaans respectively, this may also provide some insights into the linguistic ideologies informing family FLP's. For instance, in the current research it could be argued that Italian may be considered as holding greater language status than Afrikaans, and thus there may be more incentive to invest in Italian language learning and/or maintenance than Afrikaans. Firstly, Italy is a fellow EU member state, and consequently, Irish citizens and other members of the EU are free to travel to Italy and take up residence and/or work under the EU Freedom of Movement agreement. Furthermore, Italian is one of the languages that one is able to pursue at Leaving Certificate level in Ireland (Department of Education and Skills, 2017; NCCA, 2023a). In addition to taking Italian at Post-primary level, tertiary level studies in Italian are offered at Trinity College Dublin through the Department of Italian (see https://www.tcd.ie/Italian/) and other third level institutions in Ireland. In comparison, there are no official Afrikaans school supports at any level in Ireland, and no third level degrees in Afrikaans or any other African language at the time of writing. Furthermore, in the South African context of which the De Villiers family migrated from, there is evidence demonstrating that the hegemony of English dominates over other South African languages, Afrikaans included (Bowerman, 2013; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; McKinney et al., 2015; van der Westhuizen, 2016). Thus, such factors may also influence the current usage of Afrikaans in the De Villiers household.

In line with theories of investment and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton (Pierce), 1995; Norton, 2016), this evidence suggests that there may be comparatively fewer reasons for families to promote the use of Afrikaans in the Irish context, whereas there potentially more economic value, or language status, placed on Italian in the context of both Ireland the EU. In addition, as is extensively outlined in Chapter 2, the

hegemony of English as a *lingua franca* and a language of opportunity and success, even in the Irish context, continue marginalise minority and heritage languages. This is supported by Smith-Christmas (2020a) and Wang and Curdt-Christiansen (2019) who argues that the relative language status of heritage languages is a crucial factor influencing its survival in societies; languages with 'high' statuses may motivate patents to pursue heritage language maintenance, whereas languages with 'low' statuses could result in less motivation for language maintenance, and even choices to purposefully remove heritage languages from the FLP.

Socio-political factors encompass a person's rights, resources, political choices/alignment and civil activities and access to education, including language-in-education policy (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Smith-Christmas, 2020a). This factor often considers parental expectations and concerns for language learning, particularly their children learning mainstream languages through education, within the broader socio-political context. In Ireland this includes the complex dynamics influencing both English and Irish language learning, which has previously been discussed in sections 4.1 and 3.2.3 respectively. In these sections the key issue emerging is the historical dominance of English during Ireland's period of colonisation, and efforts to revive Irish language and nationalist conceptualisations of Irish culture in a world increasingly dominated by the concept of English as a *lingua franca* (Crowley, 2016; Phillipson, 2018). The tensions between English, Irish and migrant/minority languages at a national level were played out on a smaller scale within the data generated from the two participating families. Even children as young as 5 or 6 years old were able to determine that certain languages hold more social status or power than others and were able to pick up on the ideologies informing their own, their families and their peers attitudes towards certain languages, particularly Irish. For instance, Sofia was aware that whilst she enjoyed learning Irish, many of her Irish peers held negative attitudes towards the language. Additionally, the De Villiers children were able to change their accent and usage of Irish English when with their peers to gain more social tractions and in-group identification. Smith-Christmas (2020a) reflects that education is arguably the most important factor influencing migrant families' choices regarding home language maintenance

for the purpose of intergenerational transmission. In line with Curdt-Christiansen (2009)'s hypothesis that families will make linguistic choices based on what will most likely increase the family's social standing, caregivers may choose to forgo knowledge of heritage languages in favour of dominant languages learnt at school. This factor has important implications for the relationship between FLP and wider language-in-education-policy in Ireland. Awareness of the influence of wider languages regimes and language-in-education policy on migrant language development is needed to ensure that policies which create space for the development of minority/heritage languages alongside the successful acquisition of dominant languages are developed.

Sociolinguistic factors may include a family's beliefs regarding which languages are 'good'/'bad' or which language practices are considered acceptable in certain contexts. For instance, caregivers may develop set beliefs regarding the mixing of the mainstream languages with heritage languages in the home (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). In the context of the current research, there was no active resistance to the use of Irish English or Irish in the homes of either family. Interestingly, within both homes translanguaging (see section 2.2.3) fluently between languages and accents was considered acceptable, and was naturally adopted by all participating members (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Whilst Angelo and Francesca were insistent on Italian language use within the home, this was never enforced consequently. Potentially because that they appear to have an aligned FLP and the investment of their children in learning Italian, tensions between Irish English and Italian appeared minimal in the home space. Within the De Villiers household, Irish English had begun to slowly dominate in the family home, shifting language practices away from Afrikaans or WSAfE use. However, this did not lead to an obvious rise in linguistic tensions, particularly between generations. Perhaps as Kimberley as the primary caregiver was an L1 English speaker, there was no firm insistence in Afrikaans language usage in the home although Danie did wish for this. An additional sociolinguistic factor to consider in school contexts, are teachers' beliefs regarding the nature of language learning and the importance of multilingualism, as this may also impact on learners' language use within the family (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). In the current research, monoglossic ideologies informing teacher beliefs may have impacted on

participating learners' linguistic and identity development (Batardière et al., 2023; Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Markey, 2022; Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Smyth et al., 2009; Taguma et al., 2009). For instance, Chantelle and Zane's early Irish language experiences. Had they had the opportunity to openly use their existing linguistic resources to develop their Irish language skills, this early language experience may have had a different outcome which could have had a large impact on their linguistic ideologies of Irish going forward. This highlights the importance of adopting approaches which favour heteroglossic ideologies of language and a language-as-resource orientation towards language learning (Ruíz, 1984). Furthermore, from this perspective the sociolinguistic influence of school language policies cannot be overlooked (Ballweg, 2022).

Hirsch and Lee (2018) argue that migrant families must consistently navigate linguistic issues, such as deciding which languages to use in which contexts, which languages to maintain and which languages to learn. In this research focus was paid to the way migrant families, who have constructed their lives and identities across cultures and national borders, make decisions regarding the multilingual development of their children. In so doing the aim was to examine how language beliefs, policies, and practices in the home, and beliefs, policies, and practices in the school, may interact and influence learners' language development and overall linguistic identity. In the current research, the difficulties which may face some migrant families becomes evident; with conflict between the FLP and school language policies, migrant parents must face difficult choices regarding which languages to prioritise in the home-do they prioritise heritage languages for socio-emotional and cultural factors, or do they promote the mainstream languages of schooling so that their children are better able to navigate the complex system of school and academic achievement? What is clear from the evidence presented thus far is that there are differences in the way that migrant families are able to harness their economic, social and cultural and linguistic resources to establish themselves in Ireland and develop new identities in their new context whilst simultaneously maintaining cultural and linguistic links to heritage cultures (Devine, 2009).

Ultimately, what the findings from this research indicate is that both schools and the home are important sites where language development is influenced. Whilst schools may or

may not be supporting dynamic multilingual identity development is not the only factor; approaches to FLP and the level of disjunctures between schools and the home are also important to examine. In contexts where weak FLP is evidenced, the weakness of school language policies becomes particularly stark where the other supports are not available (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Fishman, 1991). Research by Fishman (1991), demonstrates that even when there is significant support at home and in the community, it is still hard to maintain a language that is not the main vernacular of most of the community. What is relevant in the context of this thesis is the reciprocal way that school language policies interact with FLP. In contexts were a weaker, or less defined FLP is present, the language policies of the school may serve to reinforce language shift and eventual language loss; likewise, in such cases schools may serve as mitigating influences in which heritage languages may be supported. Conversely, as exemplified by the experience of the Amato children, a strong, linguistically cohesive FLP in which all members are aligned in their approach to language may serve to mitigate the potentially negative influences of a subtractive language in education policy at school. The evidence found in this research supports emerging research examining the relationship between schools and FLP in language socialisation, such as that of Curdt-Christiansen (2020), Curdt-Christiansen and La Morgia (2018) and Ballweg (2022).

Ideally, minimising the disjunctures between FLP and school policies should be a priority (Alexander, 2012; Ballweg, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Devine, 2009; Dillon, 2016; Dixon & Peake, 2008; O'Riordan, 2017; Ó Loinsigh, 2001; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Curdt-Christiansen (2016) suggests that in contexts where education involves English and other languages such as minority/heritage languages, it is imperative to make clear the ideological relationship between English and the heritage language-oftentimes English is associated as having high language status leading to various opportunities whilst the heritage languages are reserved for cultural value (Baker & Wright, 2017; Devine, 2005; Lambert, 1981; Ó Laoire, 2012; Whittaker, 2019). Such polarising ideologies may contribute to language shift and/or loss in the heritage language (Cummins, 2017a, 2017b; Flores & Bale, 2017; García, 2009a, 2009b; García & Lin, 2017a; Lambert, 1981; May, 2017).

8.2 Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities:

In this thesis I take the position that identity is constituted *in* linguistic interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2010), a position now well established within applied linguistics (Blommaert, 2006; Dixon & Peake, 2008; Hua, 2017; Norton, 2010; Seargeant, 2012). Language comprises a central component of both personal and group identity development, and in the context of migrant children's development, research indicates that language plays a central role in linking them to their heritage culture and also as a means to access opportunities in their new homes (Horgan et al., 2022; Hua, 2017). Considering this, language is a fundamental element of migrant children's sense of cultural identity as dynamic multilingual individuals (Horgan et al., 2022; Hua, 2017). Consequently, it is relevant to examine how migrant learners and their families conceptualise their FLP and leverage their linguistic resources to develop their multilingual identities in transnational contexts.

Within this FLP framework, research indicates that children are 'agents' and not merely 'objects', *participating* in language education efforts rather than *passively receiving* input from their caregivers (Smith-Christmas, 2020a, 2021b). Thus, children play an active role in making decisions about language usage. Considering the complex research context informing this thesis, a central aim was to investigate how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts (RQ2). In this section the findings discussed in Chapters Six and Seven are analysed regarding the existing literature in this area, which was discussed in Chapter Two. The section begins by considering learners as dynamic individuals who exert agency to expertly navigate between different social situations, flexing different aspects of their linguistic repertoires to adapt to the context at hand, and the implication of this for language education in the Irish context. The section closes by reflecting upon the development of dynamic multilingual identities in the Irish context, taking into consideration new conceptualisations of Irishness in modern Ireland.

8.2.1 *Learner Agency across Contexts:*

Our linguistic identity represents the way we socially position ourselves through language (Sung-Yul Park, 2012). Considering this, Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 175) states,

> Within a family, there are rules and norms for speaking, acting and believing. Making rules and decisions on what language(s) to practice and encourage, or to discourage and abandon, depends largely on the beliefs and values that family members ascribe to certain languages.

Whilst in the traditional sense parents have been considered the driving force behind a family's language choices, more recent research indicates that FLP should be conceptualised as a multi-actor phenomenon in which children act as active agents in shaping the dynamic and complex language ideologies, practices and management informing FLP in the home and in wider contexts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; King et al., 2008; Knoll & Becker, 2023; Palviainen, 2020; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013; Revis, 2019; Smith-Christmas, 2020a; Wilson, 2020). Thus, children's active participation in determining FLP is considered as a central factor influencing overall family language patterns. When considering children's agency regarding FLP, Smith-Christmas (2020a, 2021b) developed an intersectional, multidimensional, and multi-layered model of child agency in FLP, which considers the interaction between the family within the broader context of the sociocultural, political and linguistic environment around them, and attempts to encapsulate how children may influence family language policy by employing their own agency. The model includes four intersecting dimensions, namely compliance regimes, linguistic norms, linguistic competence and generational positioning. This model is discussed in detail in section 2.4.3, and is adopted as a frame of reference for the discussion which follows.

Just as parental ideologies may influence the language practices of the family unit, it is important to recognise that not all members of a group, or in this instance a family, use and value language in the same manner (Revis, 2019; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). In this thesis evidence demonstrates that, where ideological differences, or differences in language proficiency occurred within family units, young family members employed their own unique

agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies, and in doing so establish unique aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities within the context of their migration and integration in Ireland. Echoing the findings of Mu and Dooley (2015) and Shen and Jiang (2023), who observed that children do not directly reproduce their heritage culture and language but create unique multilingual spaces where the languages and cultures of both the mainstream culture and heritage cultures interact, so too did the learners in this research create unique and dynamic spaces where translanguaging was employed regularly to shift between their linguistic resources as it suited them. Their skilful usage of language and accent in different settings, and their experimentation with different linguistic choices in changing contexts is an example of this. Recognising that identities are a form of 'cultural toolkit' that individuals can draw on to construct certain portraits, and understandings of themselves (Inglis, 2009), drawing on these linguistic resources so artfully hints at a unique agency and skilfulness that these young people possess which is employed in their unique contexts. Thus, based on the evidence presented in Chapters Six and Seven, all children involved in this research, regardless of their individual languages spoken, possessed a metalinguistic awareness that was linked to their identity and sociocultural context. These findings correlate that of Revis (2019) and Shen and Jiang (2023). Children as young as 5 and 6 years old were conscious of different sociolinguistic contexts and expertly able to navigate between different social situations, employing a unique dynamism, or agency, in flexing different aspects of their linguistic repertoires, adapting to suit the context and listeners. This includes dynamic translanguaging between languages, vocabulary and even accent (Knoll & Becker, 2023; Shen & Jiang, 2023; Wilson, 2019). This was done both consciously and at times, unconsciously (depending on age and relative metalinguistic awareness) to leverage their social capital and therefore increase their social inclusion (Bourdieu, 1991; Canagarajah, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Revis, 2019) and to expertly portray different aspects of their dynamic identities.

Child agency has increasingly been identified as an important component of FLP models, as demonstrated in section 2.4.3, and in Smith-Christmas (2016) intersectional and multidimensional model of child agency in FLP. The phenomenon of child agency within FLP

is of importance in contexts of migration, as migrant families are likely to experience generational gaps in cultural knowledge and social norms between country of origin and their new homes (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). Furthermore, according to Smith-Christmas (2020a, p. 178),

> Language socialisation practices between mainstream society (including school and peer culture) and home can be drastically different oftentimes involving competing social and cultural values and political affiliations. Such competing forces can lead to emotional, psychological and ideological consequences that may or may not lead to home language loss.

Within research examining child agency, the issue of compliance, defined as the child's acquiescence to a caregiver's command within a certain timeframe (Kuczynski & Hilderbrandt, 1997), is particularly relevant. In traditional conceptualizations of FLP, directives from caregivers, such as speaking certain languages, would comprise the FLP. Thus, child agency would be conceptualised as the child's defiance of said directive by not speaking the language as the caregiver wishes (Smith-Christmas, 2020b). More recent research focusing on agency in FLP, however, recognises that children can act both against the language planning goals of caregivers, but can also be agentive in adopting the language choice the parents favour (Knoll & Becker, 2023; Shen & Jiang, 2023; Smith-Christmas, 2021b; Wilson, 2019).

In both participating families, there was no *overt* linguistic tension in which learners actively defied parents' wishes regarding language choices in the home. Despite this, there were differences in the level of linguistic cohesion experienced between the families. Within the Amato household there was an alignment between individuals' investment in Italian as a family language, the usage of Irish English as a mainstream language outside of the home and an aligned ideology towards language as a resource for learning. In the De Villiers household, resistance to certain language practices and language usage was more evident. Thus, the De Villiers family experienced a weaker level of linguistic cohesion and seemingly competing linguistic agendas between family members. For example, Zane and Chantelle's firm resistance against speaking any Irish, or engaging with their Irish homework despite formal

requests from their schoolteachers and insistence on homework completion from Kimberley. Furthermore, although Danie tries to speak Afrikaans with his children in an attempt to promote his heritage language, they most often chose to respond to him in English. Rather than doubling down on his position and insisting on Afrikaans usage in the home. This demonstrates a linguistic tension where children may reject compliance of a caregiver's wishes for the FLP (Mu & Dooley, 2015; Smith-Christmas, 2021b). Such examples indicate how learners may either demonstrate differing linguistic ideologies and resist compliance with the FLP in their homes or use their own agency to align with the language planning goals of their caregivers. This supports the findings of Shen and Jiang (2023) who identified that in some families children may employ their agency to resist their caregivers' language planning goals, whilst in other families learners employ their agency in support of their caregivers language planning goals. Additionally, and of interest in light of the findings in this research, Shen and Jiang (2023) observed that the strength of children's agency was directly correlated with the strength of their caregivers' agency. They state, "Where parents strongly initiate the agency of HL maintenance, more agency is observed in their children to continue the use and learning of HL" (Shen & Jiang, 2023, p. 10). This conclusion supports the findings of this research; where the strong, aligned FLP promoted by Angelo and Francesca was reciprocated by investment in heritage language maintenance by their children. Comparatively, in the De Villiers household this same level of alignment was not present. In this way, the strength of learners' influence on heritage language maintenance and the successful implementation of the FLP is evident.

Linguistic competence is a second factor requiring consideration within Smith-Christmas (2020b) model of child agency. From this perspective, competency in a language is closely linked to language choice, as children are likely to choose to communicate in a language in which they are most proficient (Gafaranga, 2010; Smith-Christmas, 2020b). For example, language shift may occur when heritage language speakers develop greater proficiency in mainstream/dominant languages, such as English, than in their heritage language and therefore choose to speak English rather than the heritage language in the home. In the current research, Sofia and Luca possessed fluent, native level proficiency in Italian and

thus this issue was not as prevalent in the Amato household. The children possessed more linguistic choice in the languages they use and when, as they have the proficiency to do so. However, for Chantelle, Zane and Daisy who had developed greater proficiency in WSAfE than Afrikaans, their family migration to Ireland and their entrance into Irish English schooling had reinforced their English language proficiency at the expense of their Afrikaans language learning. This may also explain their choice in insisting on English language usage in the home rather than Afrikaans, which only served to reinforce their English language proficiency and further exacerbate the language shift in effect within their family. Ultimately this also indirectly limits their linguistic choices moving forward.

Linguistic norms is the third interrelated component examined by Smith-Christmas (2020a) and can be defined as the, "shared expectations that interlocutors have when interacting with each other" (Smith-Christmas, 2021b, p. 357). According to Smith-Christmas (2020a), both compliances regimes and linguistic competence contribute to the creation of linguistic norms within a family unit. The mutually reinforcing effects of certain compliances regimes, or resistance of such compliance regimes, coupled with choices surrounding linguistic competence create certain norms within the home. As seen with the De Villiers children, a linguistic norm has developed in which Danie speaks Afrikaans to his children and they respond in English. Furthermore, Afrikaans has come to be associated as 'Dad's language' rather than a language of the home. Similar findings were discovered by Wilson (2019), in which the dominance of English in children's responses was evident. Additionally, the resistance of Irish at homework time has become an expected linguistic norm, further shaping attitudes towards Irish for all family members. Similarly, in the Amato household Italian is considered the language of the household, however when Angelo or Francesca use English in the presence of a guest, they indirectly reinforce a certain linguistic norm of acceptable English language usage to Sofia and Luca, who then follow suit.

The final component of Smith-Christmas (2021b) model considers generational positioning. According to Smith-Christmas (2021b), linguistic competence is also closely linked to generational positioning. Originally conceptualised as 'power dynamics' by Smith-Christmas (2020a), this aspect of the model considers how generational orders shape family

language use and FLP, particularly in instances when children may become more proficient in mainstream/dominant languages than their caregivers. Such instances can serve to, "subvert the expected generational roles" (Smith-Christmas, 2021b). Such an example can be found in the upbeat exchange between Sofia and Francesca during Irish homework completion found in section 7.6. In this interaction the generational power dynamics change as the exchange continues. At the start of the interaction Francesca takes the lead, explaining the task at hand and providing Sofia with instruction, which she dutifully follows. As the exchange continues it becomes clear that Sofia has more Irish language knowledge needed for the completion of the task at hand, and slowly she enacts this knowledge and her own agency to shift the power dynamics of the interaction. By the end of the interaction, it is actually Sofia teaching her mother how to read and sound out the Irish words. Sofia is clearly an active agent in developing Irish language proficiency in her home; through her interactions with Francesca, she is promoting the use, and developing the fluency of her parents in the language. This supports Smith-Christmas (2020a) position that children may act as active agents within the FLP framework. Similarly, during Irish language homework tasks in the De Villiers household, Kimberley has no knowledge of the Irish language at all. In attempts to enact their resistance of the language, Chantelle and Zane employ their greater linguistic knowledge to their advantage to 1) resist Kimberley's instruction or 2) rush through tasks to finish them as quickly as possible, oftentimes saying that an Irish word was correct when in fact it may not be. As Kimberley has no knowledge of the language, it was easy for Chantelle and Zane to leverage this to their advantage. In such interactions power shifts in favour of the children and Kimberley's ability to insist on completion of the tasks becomes limited.

Smith-Christmas (2020a) considers that a flexible FLP, as evidenced in the Amato family, may promote active involvement in language learning and may contribute towards positive experiences related to home language development and maintenance, which may then encourage children to develop and assert their agency. It should be noted, however, that the use of child agency within a family may not always result in positive heritage language experiences, as oftentimes such agency can directly contradict parental FLP decisions, particularly regarding the maintenance of heritage languages. This may lead to

intergenerational conflict. This is evidenced in the De Villiers family, particularly regarding the development of Irish. Kimberley understands the value in Irish language development and desires for her children to successfully complete their homework as is required of them by their school. Due to their negative experiences learning the language, Chantelle and Zane in particular have developed distinctly negative ideologies regarding the language and have no desire to engage with their Irish homework or develop their proficiency in the language. They engage their own willpower and agency within the family to resist such homework tasks, causing tension within the home. This includes feigning ignorance or a lower level of proficiency in the language to avoid the language task at hand. This aligns with the some types of child agency found by Fogle (2012) in heritage language development settings, including resistance through a 'nothing' responses and attempting to influence parental language choices.

What the evidence and critical examination in this section demonstrates is that children are not passive recipients in the family FLP, supporting existing research in this field (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; King et al., 2008; Palviainen, 2020; Palviainen & Boyd, 2013; Revis, 2019; Smith-Christmas, 2020a; Wilson, 2020). They are active co-constructors of the linguistic ideologies, language practices and language management informing the FLP (Knoll & Becker, 2023). Children may employ their own agency to resist the FLP through a preference for the majority language or disrupting the power dynamics of the family system by having greater proficiency in majority languages than their caregivers (Smith-Christmas, 2021b). They are also able to employ their own agency in skilfully and creatively using their diverse linguistic repertoires, translanguaging between their heritage languages and mainstream language knowledge, to their own advantage (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Shen & Jiang, 2023; Smith-Christmas, 2020b; Wilson, 2019). They are able to move fluidly and dynamically, demonstrating a skilful communicative competence, from one set of communicative norms to another with ease (Blommaert, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Furthermore, as Darvin and Norton (2015, p. 51) argue,

> Learners have agency and that they have the capacity to invest in learning that allows them not only to acquire material and symbolic resources in a way that reproduces the status quo, but also to dissect, question, and sometimes resist dominant practices and ways of thinking that have become systemic within different fields.

Thus, based on the findings in Chapters Six and Seven, and the discussion which has followed in this section, it is evident that a number of factors may influence how children can leverage their agency to either support the language planning goals of their caregivers and wider contexts such as schools, such as compliance regimes, linguistic norms, linguistic competence and generational positioning (Smith-Christmas, 2020b). In this thesis evidence demonstrates that, where ideological differences, or differences in language proficiency occurred within family units, young family members employed their own unique agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies, and in doing so establish unique aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities within the context of their migration and integration in Ireland.

8.2.2 *Agency, Multilingualism and Irish Identities:*

For many migrants, migration is not a process that involves clear and linear linguistic choices or decisions regarding two different ways of life; it is a process of assuming a flexible and dynamic multilingual identity (Rassool, 2012). The process of migration often results in the movement of languages and changing linguistic profiles, which can result in fragmented identities, multilingual dynamic identities and new formations of identity emerging (Hewings, 2012; Rassool, 2012). Such transitions often include changing home, work and social environments and thus new perceptions of the self and ultimately new understandings of one's relationship between language and identity (Sung-Yul Park, 2012). This process may involve learning or adopting the dominant language of the new country (such as English), whilst simultaneously maintaining the important cultural and linguistic connections of their

lives in previous countries (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Ó Laoire, 2005; Rassool, 2012; Verkuyten et al., 2019; Zajda & Majhanovich, 2021).

In Chapter Three of this thesis a comprehensive review of personal and group identity theory and changing conceptualisations of Irish identity as these concepts relate to the current research, were discussed. In this section, the ways in which participants leveraged their own agency to establish dynamic, multilingual identities which represent new conceptualisations of Irishness, are considered regarding the wider literature. In the context of recent immigration trends and emerging conflict between traditional, nationalist conceptualisations of Irish national identity and a more civic, democratic sense of Irish identity, migrants making Ireland their home must navigate a complex journey of linguistic and identity transformation (Garvin, 2006). Whilst the previous sections of this chapter consider the data and related implications of this linguistic and identity development at school, familial and personal level, this section examines the wider macro socio-political context in which these personal identity developments take place.

In the modern, global context, Considine (2016) reflects that national identities are being increasingly challenged and altered due to mass migration, changes in communication and technology and cultural (re)production in diasporic communities. In today's modern age, therefore, national identity is inherently fluid and dynamic in nature (Considine, 2016; Mays, 2005). In the Irish case, the conceptualisation of Irish national identity as white, settled, Roman Catholic and Irish, has persisted (Devine, 2005; Lodge & Lynch, 2004). This essentialist and non-inclusive conceptualisation of Irish national identity has been directly challenged in the current global context, which raises questions regarding what is now considered to be Irish identity, culture and nationalism (Considine, 2016). Certainly, the research tells us that new conceptualisations of Irishness are emerging with a new, second generation of Irish born migrant children challenging this traditional sense of Irishness (Darmody et al., 2022).

The I-MMDI model makes the assumption that individuals possess multiple social identities (e.g.: gender, race, social class) which are integrally related to, and a reflection of, the wider social context (Jones & Abes, 2013). One's linguistic identity can be understood as,

"the sense of belonging to a community as mediated through the symbolic resource of language, or to the varying ways in which we come to understand the relationship between our language and ourselves" (Sung-Yul Park, 2012). In essence, our linguistic identity speaks to the way we socially position ourselves through language. This aspect of identity was of particular focus in this research. Adolescence in particular represents a stage of identity development consisting of the extension of one's exploration and commitment to a certain identity across a number of different domains (such as religion and gender) (Buckingham, 2008; Erikson, 1994; Marcia, 1966, 1980). As one proceeds through periods of identity crisis, one's existing values are challenges and re-examined, with the result being a commitment to re-evaluated roles or values in that area. The children involved in this research, whilst yet to enter into this adolescent phase, are already facing reformulations to their identity development in the context of their migration and changing linguistic landscape, and making active choices regarding their language use and how they reveal different aspects of their identity in different contexts. In the previous sections it is evident that different linguistic ideologies, policies and practices, alongside the different ways in which children may employ their own agency to either subvert or support language planning goals, have had differing outcomes for the development of dynamic multilingual identities. Whilst the De Villiers family unit may be experiencing potential language shift, in contrast the Amato family represent an example in which agency and investment have positively influenced the maintenance of heritage culture and language in the face of assimilationist practices.

For the migrant families involved in this research, connecting with both the culture of Ireland, from the nationalist sense of what it means to be Irish, coupled with the civic desire to hold Irish citizenship and the same set of legal rights and responsibilities as all Irish citizens, was evidenced as valued. For the De Villiers family who were in the throes of immigration related challenges, obtaining long-term residency and ultimately Irish citizenship via naturalisation was a central focus of their daily lives, so much so that Kimberley took on extra work simply to save for the naturalisation fee. Identifying with aspects of Irish culture was, at the point of the observations, seemingly less urgent that the material security and access to state supports achieved through naturalisation. From this

perspective, both Kimberley and Danie refer to themselves as 'South Africans living in Ireland', with Kimberley stating, 'We're not even Irish'. Both Danie and Kimberley were, at the time of the research, focused on the material requirements of daily life, not on adopting cultural elements of Irish culture. Regarding their children who represent generation 1.5, the evidence hints at identities in transition, where Zane, Chantelle and Daisy were in the process of navigating this complex territory and determining which aspects of 'Irishness' they each would adopt. Their skilful usage of language and accent in different settings, and their experimentation with different linguistic choices in changing contexts is an example of this. Recognising that identities are a form of 'cultural toolkit' that individuals can draw on to construct certain portraits, and understandings of themselves (Inglis, 2009), drawing on these linguistic resources so artfully hints at a unique agency and skilfulness that these young people possess which is employed in their unique contexts.

For the Amato family who were comparably further in their immigration journey and had the security of not only EU membership, but Irish citizenship as well, the freedom to explore their dynamic multilingual identities in Ireland was more overt. Consequently, the Amato children were positively engaging in learning the Irish language, participating in GAA, Irish dancing and horse-riding extramurally. Potentially due to their more settled status and secure socioeconomic position, they were able to move beyond the urgency of immigration requirements to engaging with their identity development at a deeper level. The experience of watching Sofia and Luca eagerly perform Irish dancing for me, was an example of this. It should be noted however, that whilst the Amato family eagerly partake in traditionally Irish aspects of Irish culture and embrace both Hiberno-English and Irish positively in their household, they do not do so at the risk of losing their connection to their Italian heritage culture, which is strongly centred in their household. Rather, they do so in a manner which compliments rather than replaces their Italian heritage. This echoes the findings of Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022) who found that migrants in Ireland were eager to adopt aspects of Irish culture and be considered as 'Irish' but not at the cost of their heritage.

According to Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022, p. 14),

> They are aware of the importance of education and civic engagement for upward mobility, and often employ positive, harmonizing integration strategies in their own lives, as they seek to balance dominant Irish cultures with their family heritage. Not only do they mediate intergenerational relationships, but they also act as socialising agents, often helping to socialize their first-generation migrant parents into new (Irish) cultural norms and values. Discovering their hybridised, multifaceted identities often requires a great deal of agency and requires having the right to self-identification. This should and could be supported along all stages of young people's development through a rights-based approach (Lundy, 2007). This can positively impact a general understanding of their rights and cultivate a culture of human rights within society.

As evidenced in the previous section 8.1.2, an obvious area where both families have experienced shifts in language usage which reflects their desire to integrate and be a part of Irish society is in their usage of Hiberno-English. Whilst used to different extents by different individuals, this was a feature in both households. In particular, the shift to 'Irish sounding' accents was also a notable feature in this regard. Furthermore, the contrasting experiences of engaging with the Irish language, and differences in resistance and positive embrace of Irish language learning amongst the participants are micro-examples of the macro-tensions surrounding the Irish language in debates of Irish culture and national identity. What place does the Irish language have in an increasingly diverse Ireland? According to Groarke et al. (2020, p. 213), "Providing opportunities to learn Irish may promote social and cultural integration and facilitate employment in sectors that require proficiency in Irish language, while contributing to efforts to encourage the use of Irish more broadly". Despite this, evidence from the current research indicates that migrant learners may not be adequately supported in learning Hiberno-English OR Irish, thus indirectly contributing to barriers in the integration process and migrants' opportunities to adopt aspects of traditionally considers aspects of Irish identity (Horgan et al., 2022).

The tensions between English, Irish and migrant/minority languages at a national level were played out on a smaller scale within the data generated from the two participating families. Even children as young as 5 or 6 years old were able to determine that certain languages hold more social status or power than others and were able to perceive the

ideologies informing their own, their families and their peers attitudes towards certain languages, particularly Irish. Thus, based on the evidence presented thus far in this thesis, all children involved in this research, regardless of their individual languages spoken, possessed a metalinguistic awareness that was linked to their identity and sociocultural context. These findings align with existing research, such as that of Levon (2015, p. 295) who argues that experimenting with linguistic choices can be a form of strategic social practice, and that it is, "through engaging in this type of semiotic manoeuvring that speakers materialize relevant presentations of self in interaction" (Levon, 2015, p. 295). This behaviour was also identified by Norton (2016), who identified in her own work that, to access various networks and identify with native speakers, learners may employ their own agency to reframe connections with others so that they may claim more powerful identities from which they can communicate. According to McGillicuddy and Machowska-Kosiack (2021), aligning with the majority group is associated with upward mobility, therefore aligning oneself with this majority group by adopting or consciously adapting behaviour to fall in line with majority social norms is often considered by minority youths as a way to achieve greater social acceptance by their peers. McGillicuddy and Machowska-Kosiack (2021) reason that, "At the heart of crossing this identity boundary is the need to change values to be accepted instead of "othered"". From this perspective, the very nature of dynamic multiple identities may be productively employed as a resource within language learning but also in wider society as a tool to increase acceptance and access to opportunities. This key finding is important in the Irish context as understanding how different groups, such as migrant learners, are navigating the complex process of integration, language learning and identity development may help stakeholders to identify areas where policy interventions are needed (Darmody et al., 2022). Whilst research demonstrates that multilingual learners are capable of employing such agency, this does not necessarily mean that this is easy. Yampolsky et al. (2013, p. 1) reflects that,

> People who belong to more than one cultural group must navigate the diverse norms and values from each of their cultural affiliations. Faced with such diversity, multicultural individuals need to manage and organize their different and possibly clashing cultural identities within their general sense of self.

Considering this statement, it is argued here that the responsibility of maintaining heritage language proficiency, and connections to heritage cultures, should not fall to minority individuals, their families or even their school communities alone. According to Yampolsky et al. (2013), migrants living in a new cultural group must navigate and integrate differing norms, values and expectations across their multiple cultural identities. Considering the significant challenges that some migrant families may face in their integration journey, this support may not aways be a responsibility that caregivers can manage alone (Smith-Christmas, 2020a). The importance of providing access to the mainstream languages of their new homes, whilst simultaneously providing support for heritage languages cannot be underestimated (Blackledge & Creese, 2016; Ó Laoire, 2005; Rassool, 2012). As stated by Karpava and Ringblom (2023, p. 1), "It is crucial for multi-generational families to maintain their HL and transmit the culture of their heritage to help individuals gain a better understanding of their own identity". The respective experiences of the participating families in this research also raises questions regarding the ways in which we support migrant families engaging the process of integration, and echoes the sentiments of Darmody et al. (2022) , McGinnity, Sprong, et al. (2023) and Horgan et al. (2022), which argues that whilst the provision of supports for newly arrived migrants is evident, longer term supports in assisting migrants to successfully navigate the integration experience and have the opportunities to engage with aspects of Irish culture and national identity, are needed.

In summation, the findings presented in Chapters Six and Seven, and the implications of such findings for the development of dynamic multilingual identities in the Irish context reinforce that language is a fundamental element of migrant children's sense of cultural identity as dynamic multilingual individuals (Horgan et al., 2022; Hua, 2017). Furthermore, the data from this research supports the arguments in the wider literature that children are 'agents' and not merely 'objects', *participating* in language education efforts rather than *passively receiving* input from their caregivers (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2016; Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Fogle, 2012; Fogle & King, 2013; Knoll & Becker, 2023; Luykx, 2005; Revis, 2019; Shen & Jiang, 2023; Smith-Christmas, 2020a, 2021b; Sorbring & Kuczynski, 2018; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021). Additionally, migrant learners may expertly draw

won a wide range of linguistic resources to tease out new, dynamic conceptualisations of Irish identity. In the upcoming section, the ways in which the participating learners leveraged their linguistic resources and agency to navigate the specific act, or routine, of homework completion in multiple languages is further examined.
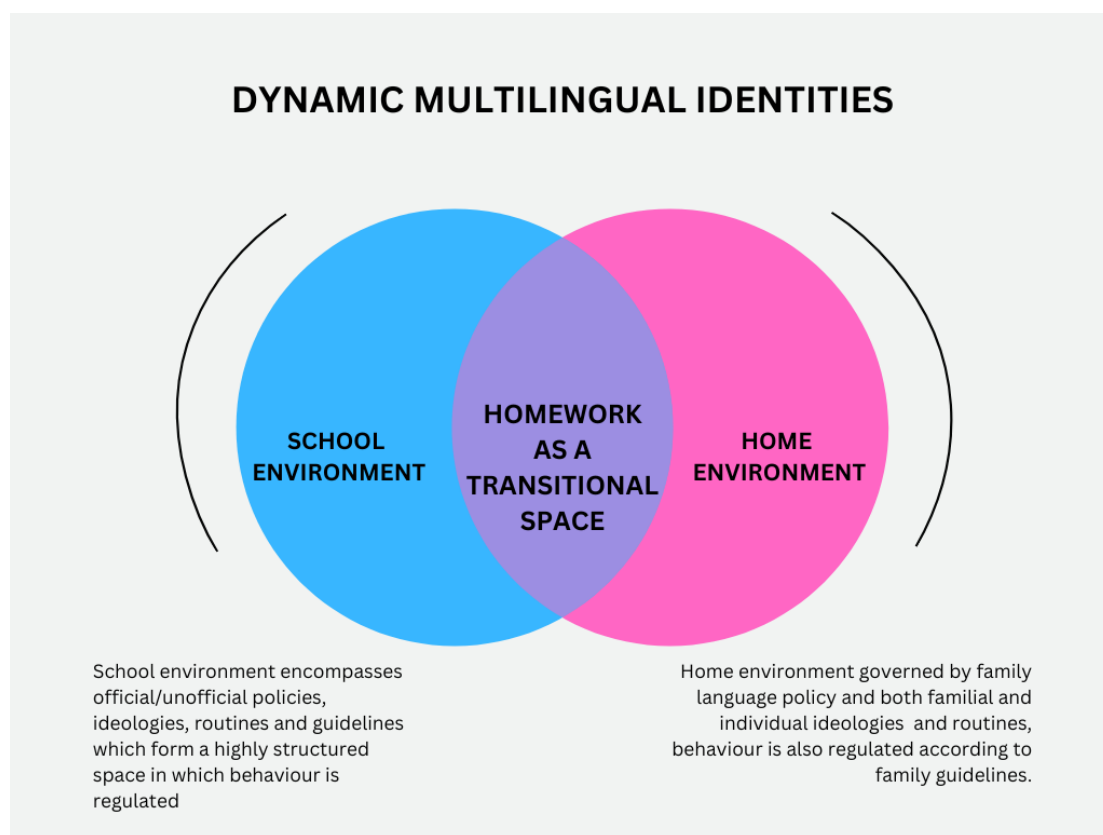
8.3 Homework as a Transitional Space:

Clarke (2022, p. 789) reflects that, "It seems that for as long as there have been schools, there has been homework". The assignment of homework tasks, often considered a daily routine in which the learning which has taken place in the classroom may be extended (H. Cooper, 1989; Cooper, 1994; Fox, 2009; Tam & Chan, 2016), is an area of pedagogical practice not regulated by the national curriculum in Ireland and is inadequately addressed in most teacher training programs (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). This is extensively discussed in section 4.2 of this thesis. In this section, the findings discussed in Chapters Six and Seven regarding homework completion, and the linguistic practices which occur during this period are analysed regarding the existing literature in this area, with a focus on the routine of homework as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with family language policy through space and time in complex ways which may influence learners' dynamic multilingual language development (RQ3). The section begins by discussing the concept of homework as a transitional space and daily routine before considering how a 'home-school gap' as proposed by Spolsky (2007) may impact upon learners' academic achievement and linguistic identity development.

8.3.1 Homework as a Transitional Space:

By examining the daily homework routines of migrant, multilingual learners, it becomes clearer that for migrant families there may be gaps between the policies and expectations in the school environment and in the home (Dillon, 2016; Hornberger, 2006b; Ricento 2000, 2009). Furthermore, as evidenced in section 8.1.1, the language policies
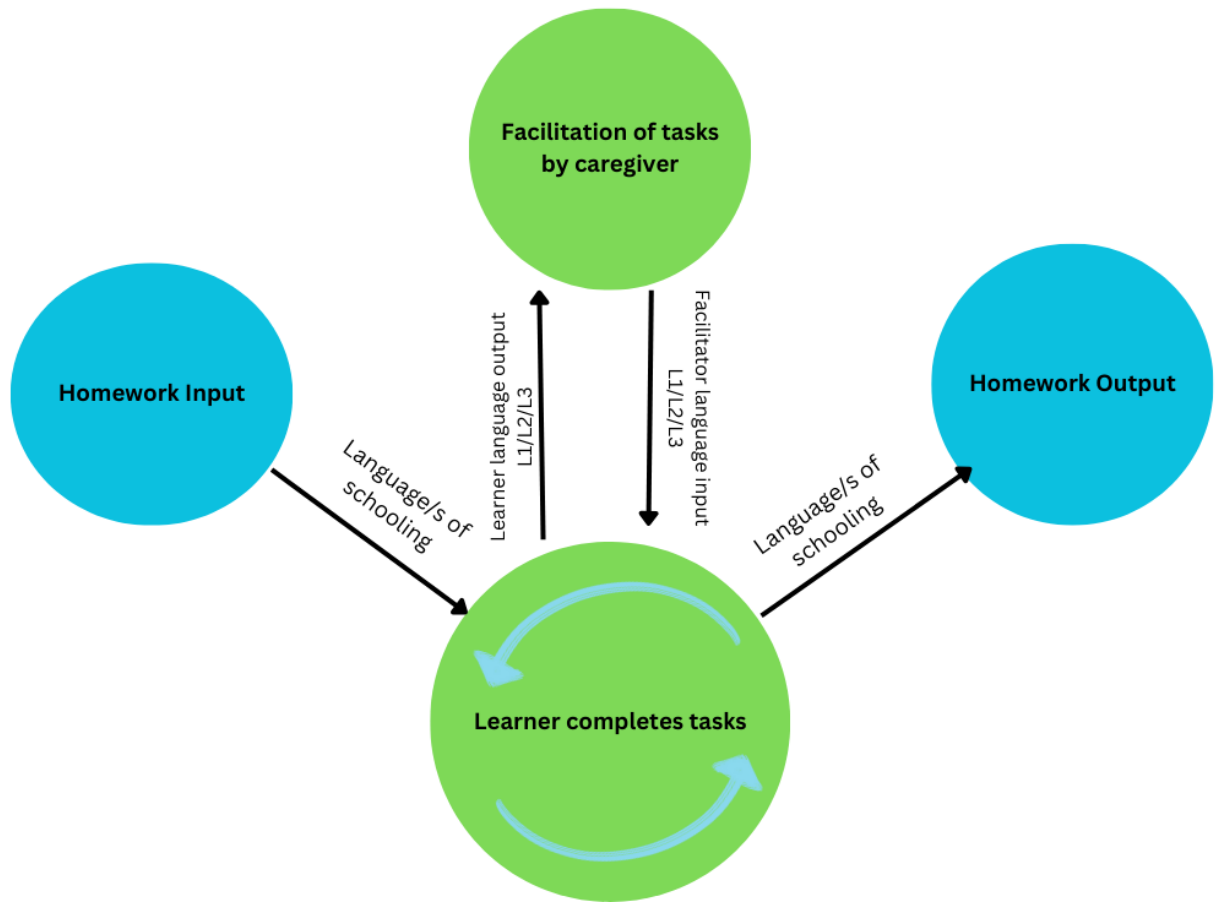
governing school spaces and home spaces may interact in complex ways which have not been thoroughly critiqued in the literature. What emerged from this analysis of the homework routine was a focus on homework as a transitional space in which official and unofficial language policies, and informal language policies informing social/peer environments at school, interact with family language policy through space and time, and the activities involved in the act of completing homework, an activity which itself is governed by a set of actions and routines. Figure 21 represents this complex interaction. In the case of the research participants, the use of language in the school space and the transitions in language use between the school and the home, were of particular interest. Furthermore, this transition also encompasses an identity transition, as learners, who embody a certain identity in their school spaces, return to their homes and embody a different linguistic identity in the home.

DYNAMIC MULTILINGUAL IDENTITIES

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

HOMEWORK AS A TRANSITIONAL SPACE

HOME ENVIRONMENT

School environment encompasses official/unofficial policies, ideologies, routines and guidelines which form a highly structured space in which behaviour is regulated

Home environment governed by family language policy and both familial and individual ideologies and routines, behaviour is also regulated according to family guidelines.

Figure 21: Dynamic Multilingual Identities are formed in transitional spaces

Figure 21 above represents the routine of homework by individuals with dynamic multilingual identities. *Homework*, an everyday act governed by a series of predictable routines (Fox, 2009), is arguably informed by both official and unofficial school policies and involves the teacher, learners and caregivers (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). Although based in external school policy, it is most often completed by learners in the family home (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020), which is governed by the family's own unique policies, including language policy. As evidenced in sections 6.6 and 7.6, between the two families involved in this research there were distinct differences, and some similarities, in the homework environment and the way homework was completed. Given that the FLP of each family is unique, there were also differences in how each child transitioned between their school and home environments. Despite these contextual differences, there were thematic similarities between them and ways in which learners expressed their dynamic multilingual identities through such transitional spaces.

What the evidence provided in this thesis indicates is that homework is a unique transitional space in which linguistic issues facing migrant families may converge (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013). As highlighted by Roberts (2022), migrant families must navigate a number of complex linguistic, cultural and educational issues in their new homes, including understanding school expectations, documentation and teacher-parent communication; consequently homework is a space in which such linguistic issues 'coalesce' (pg. 1). To understand the important linguistic and identity transitions that take place for learners as they move from school and back into the home, I consciously paid attention to the moment each child returned home from school, observing as they entered into their home, settled into the space and began their homework. Rather than conceptualising homework as a one-directional process in which learners complete tasks set out for them by their schools, in this thesis homework completion is considered a multi-directional daily interaction between the school, learners, caregivers and the tasks at hand (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013). This complex relationship is demonstrated in Figure 22.

Facilitation of tasks by caregiver

Homework Input

Learner language output L1/L2/L3

Facilitator language input L1/L2/L3

Homework Output

Language/s of schooling

Language/s of schooling

Learner completes tasks

Figure 22: Model of Homework linguistic interaction

In this proposed model, homework input consists of the homework tasks decided for learners by their teachers, and which is informed by wider school and national policies (such as curriculum documents). These homework tasks are, in the context of the current research, in the language of teaching and learning, namely Irish English or Irish. Learners are expected to complete these tasks outside of school hours, and as evidenced in Chapters Six and Seven for the participating learners this took place in the afternoons in the family home, primarily with the assistance of a caregiver. During the completion of these tasks, learners must draw on a wide range of linguistic resources, drawing on their sense of metalinguistic awareness to skilfully translanguage between the work, communication with their caregiver who is assisting them and their own internal thought processes. As described in Figure 22, this

process includes drawing on their knowledge of mainstream languages in addition to their heritage languages, or languages of the home. It is argued here that despite such complexity, the tasks which are returned to school are completed in the language of teaching and learning; thus, teachers may not be aware of the complex linguistic process the learner has undertaken to complete the task at hand (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Fitzmaurice et al., 2020; Tam & Chan, 2016). In the next section, this complex process of homework as a daily routine is broken down into several proposed stages.

8.3.2 *Homework as a Daily Routine:*

A key aspect of the data generation process was the focus on the period of homework completion as a 'daily ritual' (Fox, 2009), specifically as learners returned home from their school day. Upon examining the data generated from observations with participating families, patterns surrounding the completion of homework began to emerge. Drawing on my previous experience as an educator, relevant literature and these observations, I began conceptualising homework as a daily routine which may follow certain stages. Examining the literature in this area, determining a set structure for homework completion was not overtly present, potentially due to the wide variety of contextual factors which may influence how homework is completed in different situations or school stages, or the focus on academic outcomes rather than the process itself (Wallinger, 2000). Examining homework from a language teacher's perspective, North and Pillay (2002, p. 137) observe that,

> Homework makes up a significant part of the workload of many language teachers, yet seems to be surrounded by silence. It rarely features in books about language teaching, makes only fleeting appearances in journals, and judging from our experience and that of our colleagues, is seldom touched on in teacher training. Despite this, homework clearly does get done, with most teachers employing well established routines for setting, collecting, marking, and giving feedback. So where do such routines come from? Do we just fall back on old habits, transmitted with little change from generation to generation, or do homework practices develop in line with changes in other aspects of teaching and learning?

What this extract seems to capture is the often-overlooked nature of the homework routine. Furthermore, it questions whether homework routines have changed over time in keeping with educational research. Reflecting on this often overlooked daily routine from an ethnographic perspective, and the data presented in sections 6.6 and 7.6, an attempt an outlining a structure, or routine, for homework completion is presented below, and is used to guide the discussion in this section:

Table 4: Stages of Homework Completion

Homework Completion Stages:		
Stage #	Stage Name	Description
Stage 1	Receive homework instructions from teacher	The child receives instruction from educator regarding the tasks that must be completed. This may be recorded in written form via homework diaries, instructional sheets or via email/online portal.
Stage 2	Child leaves school, enters homework space	In the case of the current participants this environment was the family home. It is recognised that this may be context dependant.
Stage 3	Settling in period	This stage encompasses the initial transition from school spaces into the home and the acts involved in this transition, such as a change of clothes, getting refreshments.
Stage 4	Finding a homework space and retrieving required homework materials	This includes any translation assistance, equipment, books and writing materials
Stage 5	Assessing and sorting the tasks to be completed	This stage encompasses the reading of instructional documents and the sorting of tasks according to subject, level of difficulty, estimated completion time, favourite subject.
Stage 6	Completion of tasks	The way tasks are completed is heavily contextual but in the context of the current research included remaining seated at a table and completing tasks with the assistance of a caregiver.

Homework Completion Stages:		
Stage 7	Conclusion of homework	This stage includes reassessing instructional sheets to ensure all tasks are complete, the signing off of any required tasks by the caregiver and packing away physical homework materials

In Stage 1, the child receives instruction from their educator regarding the tasks that must be completed. This may be recorded in written form via homework diaries, instructional sheets or via email/online portal. In the case of written instruction, this is most likely to be in the language of the curriculum, which the child and/or their caregiver must make sense of, before the homework tasks can begin. Such documents are governed by the language policies and underlying ideologies of the teacher and wider school community. For the learners involved in this research, homework instructions were written in homework diaries by learners or sent home on a weekly 'homework sheet'. These documents were written in English. Whilst the caregivers assisting with homework in this research had sufficient linguistic proficiency to understand these documents, in many migrant families this may be a challenge worth considering (Roberts, 2022). This stage of the homework routine is primarily governed by the school and teachers' language policies.

Stage 2 encompasses physical travel from the school premises to the place where homework is conducted, in the case of the participating families, this included car drives or walks to the home. Metaphorically, this physical transition can be conceptualised as representing the learner's linguistic transition from the school, and the policies governing their behaviour in school environments, to the home, which is governed by the family's FLP (and into which school language policies inevitably influence), and in which learners may inhabit different aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities. This stage may also include the first linguistic connection with their caregivers after their school day. In the current research such examples include Kimberley collecting Daisy from school and walking her home. When asked what she observes about Daisy when she collects her from school, Kimberley reflects that Daisy's behaviour and manner of speech is different when she is

surrounded by her peers. As Daisy and Kimberley reach their home, they are conversing in white South African English (WSAfE) (Bowerman, 2008; Coetzee-Van Rooy & Van Rooy, 2005; Wasserman & Van Rooy, 2014). This variation of English is a departure from the Irish English both Kimberley and Daisy would encounter in their respective work and school environments. As they enter the home, this variation of English becomes punctuated by Afrikaans influences, likely as a result of Danie's presence in the home and that Afrikaans is his first language. This same action is reinforced by Daisy's older siblings as they return home. Occasionally, Zane and Chantelle would walk home with friends who live in their street. In a similar fashion to Daisy, both Zane and Chantelle adapt their manner of speech depending on their environment and company. Whilst Daisy's translanguaging between Englishes is more unconscious, Zane in particular, is aware that he changes the way he speaks depending on context. On one occasion I can hear Zane speaking with a friend as they walked up their street. As his friend shows him something on his phone, Zane replies, "that's class", with a distinctly Irish accent. As Zane and Chantelle enter their home, they seamlessly transition to their FLP and begin using WSAfE in conversation with Daisy and Kimberley. This action takes place almost symbolically as they cross the threshold into their family home.

Stage 3 encompasses the initial transition from school spaces and the arrival into the home and the acts involved in this transition, such as a change of clothes or getting refreshments. Once again, these acts are physical representations of the transition from the school space and related policies to the home and the FLP. In the Amato household examples of this include greetings between family members, changing out of school uniforms and getting refreshments. As a part of this period different family members would enquire about each other's day in Italian. In the De Villiers household a similar pattern of changing clothes, eating an afternoon snack and enquiring about each other's day in Afrikaans or WSAfE was a part of this stage in the routine. During this stage, as with stage 2, there is a transition occurring between school language policies to the FLP.

Stage 4 includes the physical action of moving to the homework area and retrieving any necessary tools required to complete the homework tasks, including any translation assistance, equipment, books and writing materials. In the example of Daisy, this includes her

homework diary, copybooks and school workbooks. Daisy is required to transition between the Irish English of her school resources (workbooks and worksheets in her copybook) and the WSAfE spoken in her home fluidly whilst completing tasks. Once again, this stage exists in a transitional space between school policy and FLP. As the child engages with their caregiver these interactions are governed by FLP, however in considering the homework tasks ahead and the school materials required in the completion of the tasks, the school language policy enters the home space.

Stage 5 includes the reading of instructional documents and the sorting of tasks according to subject, level of difficulty, estimated completion time or favourite subject. An example of this is recorded in section 6.6 when Daisy sits down to begin her homework. Daisy reads her homework diary, in which she has a copy of her homework instructions written by her schoolteacher. Any forms or notices which need to be read or handed over are given to Kimberley. The writing in these texts is governed by the Irish English, or Irish, of her school environment, and as Daisy engages with these texts there are slight changes in the way that she speaks and pronounces words. There are subtle changes in her accent, which moves from sounding more South African, to more Irish, and back again.

Stage 6 includes the physical acts of homework completion; the way tasks are completed is heavily contextual but in the context of the current research included remaining seated at a table and completing tasks with the assistance of a caregiver. During these tasks the language policies of the school, and the linguistic profiles of learners and their FLP must interact in complex ways. In an example described in section 6.6, Daisy finds a particular pronunciation task difficult as she attempts to navigate these complex transitions. She is left unsure how to pronounce the word, 'my', in the sense that she does not know which set of linguistic rules apply to the task at hand. Daisy's struggle is well described by Spolsky (2007, p. 1) who states,

> At a finer level of analysis, a speaker or writer is regularly faced with a choice of features – sounds or spellings, lexical items, grammatical patterns – which are significant markers of languages, dialects, styles, or other varieties of language and which bundled together define varieties of language.

In the example of Daisy provided above, she is required to make split second decisions regarding her linguistic repertoire and which aspects of her language knowledge she needs to draw on to complete the task at hand. This requires advanced metalinguistic awareness for a 5-year-old child. Such examples reveal the extra layers of complexity faced by migrant learners and their caregivers during homework tasks.

Stage 7 encompasses the reassessing of completed work, looking at instructional sheets to ensure all tasks are complete, the approval and signing off of any required tasks by the caregiver and packing away physical homework materials. It also represents the final linguistic shift of the routine in which the learner is able to, almost physically, set aside the school language policies which have governed this homework period. With this conclusion they are fully re-immersed in their FLP.

By viewing homework through an ethnographic lens and conceptualising this daily routine as comprising a series of set stages, it becomes clearer how ideologies, policies and practices of the school and wider mainstream society, including linguistic norms, enter into the family home and interact with FLP in complex ways (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). Based on this model, it is evident that homework is not 'just done' but requires knowledge developed over time regarding this process of the homework routine, and sufficient linguistic proficiency in the language of the curriculum to complete the wide variety of homework tasks that the learner may be assigned. Such examples are evidenced in Table 2. This issue is particularly relevant in the case of EAL, migrant and heritage language learners who may not have sufficient proficiency in the language of the curriculum and, secondly, may not have a caregiver with the proficiency needed to successfully scaffold and assist with homework tasks (Darmody et al., 2022). The position taken in this thesis is that if schools are to provide adequate and holistic supports for migrant learners attending Irish schools, the process and routine of homework needs to be included in these conversations regarding language support. Unless addressed through specialised supports, such learners are likely to fall further behind, widening academic achievement gaps and further perpetuating cycles of disadvantage (Darmody et al., 2022; North & Pillay, 2002; Whittaker, 2019).

8.3.3   The Home-School Gap:

Through the descriptions of the homework routine provided throughout this thesis, the home-school gap as outlined by Spolsky (2007) is illustrated. According to Spolsky (2007), the school domain is complex, charged primarily with language management according to a set language policy. Within this domain a diverse set of learners, who bring with them linguistic influences from their homes, interact with each other and the linguistic influences of the school in complex ways. Learners' experiences in the home influence their linguistic ideologies and language practices, which they then bring with them into school spaces. Likewise, it is argued that over time the linguistic ideologies and language practices of the school ultimately influence language practices in the home. An example of how this may occur is through the practice of homework, as outlined in the previous section. Spolsky (2007) reflects that in instances where there may be significant differences between the language policies and practices of the school and the home, conflicts may arise. This position is supported by Svensson et al. (2022) who highlight the importance of collaboration between the school and the home, particularly in the context of migrant learners, as oftentimes homework is a site in which migrant parents in particular may face challenges in providing support (e.g.: language barriers). This is further supported by Clarke (2022), who argues that homework practices have significant implications for families, insomuch as there is an expectation for families to complete school work in the home, are required to adjust daily schedules to accommodate the completion of homework tasks and find ways to access the required capital to successfully complete tasks. Clarke (2022, p. 789) states, "In recent years, an increasing amount of the responsibility for children's education seems to have shifted from schools and teachers to the home. Homework, in particular, appears to be placing many demands and expectations on families". According to Bräu et al. (2017) who argues that pressures to achieve placed on learners by school conditions may enter into the family domain, with potentially harmful consequences. Oftentimes, when leaners are faced with homework that is not easily completed, conflict may arise; this is further exacerbated when caregivers do not possess the necessary knowledge to assist their children with the tasks

(Darmody et al., 2022; Roberts, 2022; Svensson et al., 2022). Despite the significant pressures of finding the time and employing adequate resources to complete homework tasks, there is a large body of evidence that indicates that homework at the primary school level does not significantly contribute towards academic achievement (Clarke, 2022; Cooper, 1994; Medwell & Wray, 2019; Smith et al., 2023). In the context of foreign language learning, two additional factors add to the complexity of the homework period; 1) primary school ages learners are still in the process of learning these complex homework routines, and their ability to self-regulate and complete tasks independently, and 2) their parents may lack the required linguistic proficiency in the language of the curriculum to assist their children with the tasks assigned to them (Smith et al., 2023). If these tasks are not carefully structured and considered, tensions between learners and their caregivers may arise, particularly if there is a gap between the ideologies, policies and practices of the school and the ideologies, policies and practices of the home. This was exemplified by the homework interactions in the De Villiers household. Furthermore, it is argued here that homework can be conceptualised as a space in which school language policies enter the home and exert influence over the FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022). This may, long term, contribute towards changes in the family FLP. From this position, the findings of this research and the model of homework presented here have important implications for homework as a practice in multilingual contexts, which requires further examination. Should monoglossic school language policies which favour mainstream languages such as English, become an invasive or disruptive presence in the home, this may inadvertently contribute towards tensions between learners and caregivers and also impact on language usage in the home, thus affecting the FLP.

Research on homework best practice, particularly in the primary years, shows that the assistance of a caregiver is required to some extent (Fox, 2009). What is often not considered, however, is that this level of involvement may mean different things to different families-primarily because families have diverse cultural practices, values and socio-cultural capital (Fox, 2009), which in turn influences how families conceptualise parental involvement. For instance, there is some evidence demonstrating that caregivers from minorities (cultural, ethnic and racial) conceptualise their involvement in their children's schooling in different

ways to those of mainstream caregivers (Fox, 2009; Svensson et al., 2022). This is supported by the findings in this thesis. Whilst in both families parental support was provided, primarily by mothers, the manner of support differed. In the De Villiers household Kimberley was a more passive facilitator of the homework tasks at hand, choosing to stop the task at hand if it became too difficult or if tensions between herself and the child completing tasks became too intense. In comparison, in the Amato household Francesca actively facilitated engagement with the tasks at hand, redirecting attention or drawing on additional resources to effectively support her children. Fox (2009) argues that rather than adopting deficit perspectives regarding the ways in which caregivers try to support their children during homework completion, a more insightful, diverse and accepting approach is required. Research conducted by Roberts (2022) indicates that for caregivers to assist with homework tasks, they require both subject-specific and sociocultural knowledge, and societal language knowledge. In multilingual, migrant families, this level of linguistic knowledge is not always possessed. Certainly, in both families within this research, migrant parents did not possess all of the required knowledge to effectively support their children through the wide variety of homework tasks they received. This is summed up by the thoughts of Kimberly, who states, "I don't even know how to sound out the words, it's so hard! I mean, I literally can't even say the words, so doing Irish homework is hard for everyone, honestly the kids know more than me". This echoes the findings of Bräu et al. (2017) who argues that parental involvement in homework completion involves knowledge of a wide spectrum of activities from providing additional resources and materials, to being able to demonstrating techniques or providing dictations. Roberts (2022) reflects that few studies have examined how such linguistic differences may impact upon parent-child homework practices in multilingual contexts. Thus, this research addresses this gap in the literature by examining the linguistic interactions which govern the homework relationship between learners, the school, caregivers and the wider FLP.

In examining homework completion in language minority families, Fox (2009) identified that the language practices involved in homework tasks differed from what was considered best practice for academic achievement, instead, homework practices in linguistic

minority families emphasised family centred goals and social connection. Furthermore, in the participating migrant families homework practice took a unique turn in which, "the focus changed from individual achievement to a bi-directional reciprocal relationship between the parents, the children, and the homework" (Fox, 2009, p. 7). Whilst not directly conceptualising homework as a transitional space, this research does support the findings of this thesis by moving beyond the caregiver as a homework supervisor to conceptualising the homework routine as a bi-directional exchange in which, "homework was a family focus, with multiple goals and communicative benefits, rather than an individual event (Fox, 2009, p. 7)".

Curdt-Christiansen (2020) indicates that oftentimes when considering homework completion, home-based practices need to align with school-based practices; with caregivers observing the school's pedagogical practices and associated educational concepts. What the evidence in this thesis indicates that, whilst the language policies and daily practices of the schools attended by participants appeared to be governed by monoglossic ideologies in which languages are discreet entities taught in a 'content subject' style, this was in contrast to the dynamic linguistic practices taking place in participants' homes. Based on the observations, data and existing research, it is likely that participating learners would have benefitted from being able to draw on their full linguistic repertoires not only during their time at school, but also in their approach to homework tasks.

8.4 Conclusion:

In this thesis I aimed to examine several overlapping and interlinked social dimensions which may contribute to the linguistic identity development of multilingual, heritage language migrants in Irish schools, and ultimately to their overall sense of integration and belonging in the Irish context. In this chapter I provided a critique of the data in relation to existing research in the areas of migration and diversity, language policy, identity development and language education in Ireland.

The data generated from this research indicated that there was a clear disjuncture between the language-in-education policies governing participating learners' schooling, and

the FLP's governing their lives in the home (see 8.1.1). In this chapter I also considered learners' experiences of their schooling in Ireland. Whilst the OECD (2015) recognises that one of the most important markers of successful integration is a sense of belonging at school, the data from this research demonstrated that, from the perspectives of learners and their caregivers, their cultural and linguistic diversity were not overtly encouraged or celebrated in their school spaces, and if at best, only recognised at a tokenistic level. A third finding from this research indicated that there were differences in language ideologies and language planning efforts between participating families. The data indicated that due to a lack of adequate supports at school and wider assimilationist and subtractive language policies and practices, the De Villiers family were experiencing language shift and potential language loss. In contrast, the Amato family appeared to have resisted subtractive, assimilationist influences and instead added to their linguistic repertoires rather than losing fluency in heritage languages. Ultimately, such differences led to different outcomes for the development of dynamic multilingual identities amongst participating learners (see 8.1.2).

Taking the position that identity is constituted *in* linguistic interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2010), I examined how learners employ their agency to promote their own linguistic agendas. The participants possessed a metalinguistic awareness that was linked to their identity and sociocultural context. Children as young as 5-6 years old were conscious of different sociolinguistic contexts and expertly able to navigate between different social situations, employing a unique dynamism, or agency, in flexing different aspects of their linguistic repertoires, adapting to suit the context and listeners. This included dynamic translanguaging between languages, vocabulary and even accent (see 8.2.1). Considering the Irish context, connecting with both the culture of Ireland, from the nationalist sense of what it means to be Irish, and the civic desire to hold Irish citizenship and the same set of legal rights and responsibilities as all Irish citizens, was evidenced as valued by the participating families. In an Ireland experiencing tension between nationalist and civic conceptualisations of identity, the learners in this research were expertly drawing on their diverse linguistic repertoires, metalinguistic awareness and translanguaging skills to formulate new conceptualisations of

dynamic, multilingual Irish identities within the wider framework of largely assimilationist practices in their school spaces (see 8.2.2).

In the final sections of this chapter, I reconceptualised homework as a unique routine in which family language policy and school/national policy interact. I proposed a model (see Figure 24) which aims to describe the complex ways in which multilingual learners must draw on a wide range of linguistic skills to complete homework tasks. In the context of the learners in this research, this was expertly done. Furthermore, I argued that through routines such as homework, dynamic multilingual identities can be uncovered through the complex ways that multilingual learners navigate these differences (see 8.3.1). I also proposed a reconceptualization of the homework routine to include several complex stages in which it becomes clearer how ideologies, policies and practices of the school and wider mainstream society, including linguistic norms, enter into the family home and interact with FLP in complex ways (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). I closed this section by examining the home-school gap (Spolsky, 2007) in which it is argued that over time the linguistic ideologies and language practices of the school ultimately influence language practices in the home. I concluded that there should be greater attention paid to homework as a pedagogical practice, arguing that multilingual learners may benefit from being able to draw on their full linguistic repertoires not only during their time at school, but also in their approach to homework tasks. In the next chapter, concluding remarks regarding this research are made, alongside recommendations for further research in this area.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction:

In this thesis I employed linguistic ethnography to investigate linguistic identity development amongst multilingual migrant learners living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools. Three research questions were developed to serve as a guide for this ethnographic investigation:

1) How do school and national language policies and practices and FLP interact to support or otherwise, the development of dynamic, multilingual identities amongst migrant learners at primary level?

2) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts?

3) How do migrant, multilingual heritage language speakers navigate homework as a transitional space in which school and national LPP, and family language policy, interact?

Consequently, findings from in-depth engagement with two multilingual migrant families, including five multilingual migrant learners and their respective caregivers was presented. In this thesis I explored the language policies and practices of these learners and their caregivers in the home, and the language policies and practices informing learners' language experiences in their school environments, focusing on how learners' linguistic identities were supported or otherwise. Following this, I investigated how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. Finally, in this thesis I explored the routine of homework as a unique transitional space in which school and national language policies and practices interact with family language policy through space and time in complex ways which may influence learners' dynamic multilingual language development.

Having reported on the results of the research with reference to the research questions and literature in Chapters One through Eight, in this chapter this research is drawn to a close by presenting a summary of the thesis, followed by an overview of key findings. This is followed by a consideration of the strengths and limitations of this research. I conclude the chapter by considering the implications of the findings, suggesting recommendations for policy and practice and potential avenues for further research investigating issues of language policy and the development of dynamic multilingual identities in the Irish context.

9.2 Thesis Summary:

In Chapter One I introduced the broader research context in which this research was situated, namely a modern, swiftly changing Ireland in which both European and global pressures and events are influencing the experiences of migrant families living in Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2023e). Since 2019, a host of factors have impacted Ireland's migration landscape, including the COVID-19 pandemic, BREXIT, the Russian-Ukrainian and Israeli-Palestinian wars, and the cost-of-living crisis (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). Considering this complex research context of unprecedented diversity in Ireland, it is important to examine how the linguistic identity development of migrants living in Ireland is unfolding. There is strong evidence for the impact of such socio-political and economic issues on migrant families (McGinnity, Sprong, et al., 2023). The continuously increasing linguistic diversity of school populations is among one of the greatest challenges facing schools today; in line with this, how best to support multilingual learners at school has been a central concern for policymakers and educational researchers alike (Little & Kirwan, 2019). A lack of adequate linguistic supports may lead to multilingual migrant learners experiencing difficulties succeeding academically without support, due to their limited proficiency of the language through which the curriculum is delivered, thus perpetuating cycles of disadvantage (Nowlan, 2008). Additionally, research indicates that young migrants, including those of the second generation, may struggle to fit in or feel a sense of belonging if they experience negative attitudes or discrimination in their country of residence (McGinnity, Laurence, &

Cunniffe, 2023). Given this, embracing learners' heritage and multilingualism as resources in the classroom not only contributes to a positive sense of belonging but also contributes to their overall dynamic multilingual identity development which, as outlined in Chapter 1, is an important part of successful integration.

In Chapters Two through Four, I presented the theoretical concepts and literature relevant to this research. In Chapter Two I provided an overview of key theory regarding multilingual language development in diverse settings. I began by considering the theoretical underpinnings of multilingualism research, before examining the existing research on language policy in education and in the home. In this section models of language policy were considered, and the works of Spolsky (2004, 2007, 2017, 2018, 2019) and Ruíz (1984) were considered particularly relevant. This was followed by an in-depth description of linguistic ideologies, which demonstrated how linguistic ideologies are closely linked to power dynamics and social capital, which ultimately influences attitudes towards language and language regimes. I concluded this chapter by examining the field of Family Language Policy, which is a central theoretical element of this thesis. The models of FLP conceptualised by Curdt-Christiansen (2018) and Smith-Christmas (2016, 2020a, 2020b, 2021b) were particularly relevant to this research.

In Chapter Three I focused on relevant research regarding migration, integration and their impact on identity development. I began by considering identity research, primarily key concepts and theory before highlighting certain models of identity development, in particular, the models of psychosocial identity development established by Erikson (1968, 1994) and the revised I-MMDI proposed by Jones and Abes (2013). I continued by examining the relationship between language and identity development and theoretical developments across the research in this field. The research of Darvin and Norton (2015, 2021); Norton (Pierce) (1995); Norton (2010, 2016) was particularly relevant to this research. This section continued by considering the concept of dynamic multilingual identities, a central concept informing this thesis.

This was followed in Chapter Four by an examination of both the history and structure of language education in Irish schools, with a particular focus on how multilingualism has

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been supported or otherwise. The statistics presented in this thesis demonstrate that Irish schools are increasingly diverse and simultaneously, Irish schools are under pressure to support these diverse learners, with evidence from the literature indicating that educational institutions have been unable to adapt effectively and address the changes that increasing diversity brings to Irish classrooms (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). I concluded Chapter Four by addressing some of the challenges facing migrant learnings in Irish schools, including reflecting upon homework completion in migrant and multilingual contexts.

In Chapter Five I shifted focus from the literature to consider the research methodology and design informing this research. I began by reviewing the research aims and research questions before diving into an in-depth discussion of the research design informing this thesis. This included an examination of ethnography and linguistic anthropology, before providing a comprehensive overview of linguistic ethnography, the methodology I employed in this research. Following this, I reviewed the data generation tools used in this research; this included ethnographic observations, field recordings, ethnographic interviews and document collection. I also discussed the process of participant recruitment and introduced the participating families. I concluded the chapter by discussing data analysis in qualitative research, in particular RTA as conceptualised by Braun and Clarke (2022), which I adopted as the primary means of analysis in this research. Issues of an ethical nature concluded this chapter. Here I discussed both the practical elements of conducting ethical research but also considered specific ethical issues in ethnographic research.

In Chapters Six and Seven I focused on the data generated from the two participating families, organised according to three central themes developed as a result of the RTA. These themes were 1) *Language Policy Disjunctures*, 2) *Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities*, and 3) *Homework as a Transitional Space*. In Chapter Six I focused on the findings from the De Villiers family. In Chapter Seven I presented the findings from the data generation process regarding the Amato family according to the central themes. In these two chapters, photographs, drawings and interview extracts provide insights into their experiences of migration, language learning and identity development of multilingual, migrant individuals in Ireland.

In Chapter Eight I synthesised the data presented in Chapters Six and Seven regarding relevant themes and discussed the importance of the findings regarding the wider context and implications for policy development in Ireland. I structured the chapter around the three central themes. I began by exploring the linguistic ideologies, practices and language management informing language policy in schools, and the FLP in the homes of each participating family, considering the disjunctures between these two policy contexts which learners must navigate, and how this may influence their linguistic identity development. I continued by considering how multilingual migrant learners' employ their own agency, and leverage their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. I concluded by conceptualising homework as a unique transitional space between school and the home, particularly from a linguistic viewpoint, examining how multilingual learners must expertly navigate this routine drawing on a wide range of resources.

In this, Chapter Nine, I conclude this thesis. Below I provide a summary of the key findings, organised according to the central themes are presented.

9.3   Summary of Key Findings:

Three key themes emerged as a result of the application of RTA to the data generated from a four-month intensive engagement with the participating families. These themes included, 1) *Language Policy Disjunctures*, 2*) Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities* and 3) *Homework as a Transitional Space.* In Table 5, I provide a summary of the key findings which were presented and discussed in depth in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

Table 5: Summary of Key Findings

Theme	Overall	Specific to De Villiers Family	Specific to Amato Family
Language Policy Disjunctures	1) Disjunctures between official and unofficial language policies informing approaches to language education.	Learners' linguistic repertoires not leveraged; few opportunities to speak heritage languages in school spaces. School unaware of children's nationality/heritage. Ambivalent attitude towards diversity, both linguistic and cultural, within school environments.	Learners' linguistic repertoires not leveraged; few opportunities to speak heritage languages in school spaces. Heritage of learners not discussed or embraced in the classroom. Ambivalent attitude towards diversity, both linguistic and cultural, within school environments.
	2) Disjunctures between ideologies, management and practices informing school language policies and approaches to FLP in the homes of	Monoglossic, subtractive approach informing language learning at school (Irish English/Irish); Heteroglossic, fluid translanguaging occurring in family homes (WSAfE, Afrikaans and Irish English)	Monoglossic, subtractive approach informing language learning at school (Irish English/Irish) Heteroglossic, fluid translanguaging occurring in family homes (Italian, Irish English)

Theme	Overall	Specific to De Villiers Family	Specific to Amato Family
	participating families.		
	3) Differences in ideologies informing approaches to language socialisation and FLP between participating families.	Prioritisation of English as a *lingua franca*, transition of Afrikaans to position of heritage language. Different linguistic ideologies within the family unit and therefore less linguistic cohesion and greater conflict surrounding language choices, investment.	Strong linguistic cohesion and aligned sense of investment between family members considering language usage in the home, with little to no resistance in maintaining the FLP.
Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities	Young family members employed their own unique agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies, and in doing so establish unique aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities.	Metalinguistic awareness, dynamic translanguaging between language variations and accent (examples in Chapter Six of Zane and Daisy in particular)	Metalinguistic awareness, advanced knowledge of when to use different linguistic resources (e.g.: Sofia translanguaging between Irish English at school and Italian at home).

Theme	Overall	Specific to De Villiers Family	Specific to Amato Family
Homework as a Transitional Space	Reconceptualising homework as a transitional space in which official and unofficial language policies from school interact with family language policy through space and time.	Dislike of homework completion, tensions between learners and caregivers, difficulty completing language tasks (no completion of Irish tasks).	Positive attitude towards homework, teamwork between learners and caregivers to complete tasks. Difficulty completing Irish language tasks. Use of additional resources (technology) to complete language tasks.

The first theme which focused on language policy disjunctures, reviewed the linguistic ideologies, practices and language management informing language policy in the school, and FLP in the homes of each participating family. This theme explored disjunctures between these two policy contexts which learners navigated, and how this influenced their linguistic identity development. The second theme examined agency in the context of dynamic multilingual identities and focused on the manner in which multilingual migrant learners employed their own agency, and leveraged their linguistic resources, to navigate different linguistic contexts. The final theme, which examined homework completion amongst the participating families, considered homework as a unique transitional space between school and the home, particularly from a linguistic viewpoint. This theme examined how multilingual learners expertly navigated this space, drawing on a wide range of resources to do so. In this section, the key findings from this analysis are summarised according to these themes.

9.3.1   *Language Policy Disjunctures:*

A large proportion of the findings centred around disjunctures between official language policies and what occurred in practice, in line with existing theory described in section 2.3.3. (Ricento 2009; Seargeant, 2012). More specifically, evidence demonstrated a disconnection between official language-in-education policy, classroom practice and the experiences of the participating learners (Dillon, 2016; Hornberger, 2006b; Ricento 2000, 2009). This included the children in both the Amato and De Villiers families receiving very little, if any, support in navigating the linguistic transition that accompanied attending either Irish-medium or English-medium schooling. This was exemplified by the following: 1) learners experienced few opportunities to speak heritage languages in school spaces, 2) a failure in leveraging their existing linguistic knowledge to support their English or Irish language learning, 3) limited opportunities to discuss the concept of culture and to share their heritage culture at school, including awareness of the linguistic and cultural heritage of their peers, 4) a lack of awareness, or at times an ambivalent attitude towards diversity, both linguistic and cultural, within school environments, and 5) teachers' lack of awareness or knowledge, of the heritage and / or nationality, of some participating learners in this research. This evidence indicated a missed opportunity on behalf of schools to positively leverage existing linguistic resources as a tool to further multilingualism, intercultural awareness, social cohesion and school harmony (Faas et al., 2018; McGinnity, Fahey, et al., 2018). Furthermore, the diverse linguistic backgrounds of learners were not celebrated, or leveraged, in line with what current research and language-in-education policy in Ireland encourages (Little & Kirwan, 2019, 2021; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012; Ó Laoire, 2005; Staring et al., 2017).

A second key finding highlights that in contrast to the apparent monoglossic ideologies informing language learning at school, in which existing linguistic resources were not leveraged (see section 2.2.2), in the homes of participating families heteroglossic ideologies (see section 2.2.3) informing a dynamic approach to multilingualism in which translanguaging   between different linguistic resources was a daily occurrence, was

evidenced. Thus, whilst fluid translanguaging was occurring in the home (to differing extents), this was not occurring in the same way at school.

A third key finding from this theme indicated that there were differences in orientation towards language socialisation and FLP between the two participating families involved in this research, which led to different outcomes regarding linguistic identity development. The De Villiers family appeared to have prioritised English as a *lingua franca* in the context of their migration. Furthermore, the linguistic experiences of the De Villiers children ultimately led to different linguistic ideologies within the family unit and therefore less linguistic cohesion and greater conflict surrounding language choices, investment and what the FLP of the family unit going forward should be. In contrast, the Amato family held a strong sense of linguistic cohesion and an aligned sense of investment between family members considering language usage in the home, with little to no resistance on behalf of any of the family members in maintaining the FLP. For the De Villiers family findings indicate that negative school experiences and monoglossic, assimilationist school language policies were compounded by a less defined FLP featuring lower linguistic cohesion and aligned investment, resulting in largely negative attitudes towards Irish, and potential language shift/loss in heritage languages. In comparison, for the Amato family, negative school experiences and assimilationist policy appear to have been somewhat mitigated by a strong FLP featuring firm linguistic cohesion and aligned investment in language learning in the home, which has reinforced positive attitudes towards and the development of heritage languages, and the learning of both English and Irish. In the context of language-in-education policies which fail to embrace a language-as-resource orientation to language learning by leveraging learners' existing linguistic repertoires as resources (as outlined in the previous paragraph), such differences in FLP may have different outcomes for the development of linguistic identities (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & Schissel, 2014).

9.3.2   Agency and Dynamic Multilingual Identities:

In light of the findings regarding disjunctures between official policy and what was occurring in practice, a central element of this research involved examining the role of learner agency within the context of linguistic identity development. Evidence demonstrates that, where ideological differences, or differences in language proficiency occurred within family units, young family members employed their own unique agency to influence FLP and navigate the differences between their FLP and school policies, and in doing so establish unique aspects of their dynamic multilingual identities within the context of their migration and integration in Ireland.

Secondly, all children involved in this research, regardless of their individual languages spoken, possessed a metalinguistic awareness that was linked to their identity and sociocultural context. Children as young as 5 and 6 years old were conscious of different sociolinguistic contexts and expertly able to navigate between different social situations, employing a unique dynamism, or agency, in flexing different aspects of their linguistic repertoires, adapting to suit the context and listeners. This included dynamic translanguaging between languages, vocabulary and even accent (Knoll & Becker, 2023; Shen & Jiang, 2023; Wilson, 2019). This was done both consciously and at times, unconsciously (depending on age and relative metalinguistic awareness) to leverage their social capital and therefore increase their social inclusion (Bourdieu, 1991; Canagarajah, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Revis, 2019) and to expertly portray different aspects of their dynamic identities. Within the Irish context, participants were thus leveraging their own agency to tease out new, dynamic conceptualisations of Irish identity.

9.3.3   Homework as a Transitional Space:

The third theme conceptualised the homework routine as a transitional space in which official and unofficial language policies, and informal language policies informing experiences at school, interact with family language policy through space and time. In the case of the

research participants, the use of language in the school space and the transitions in language use between the school and the home, were of particular interest. Evidence indicated that where tensions, or disjunctures between school policies and FLP were present, the homework space was a particular time/routine/interaction in which such tensions may come to the fore, affecting the interaction between learners and caregivers and ultimately how effectively homework tasks may be completed, if at all.

Considering this, I proposed a model (see Figure 22) which aimed to describe the complex ways in which multilingual learners draw on a wide range of linguistic skills to complete homework tasks. In the context of the learners in this research, this was expertly done. I argued that through routines such as homework, dynamic multilingual identities can be uncovered through the complex ways that multilingual learners navigate these differences (see 8.3.1). I also proposed a reconceptualization of the homework routine as a seven stage homework routine in which it becomes clearer how ideologies, policies and practices of the school and wider mainstream society, including linguistic norms, enter into the family home and interact with FLP in complex ways (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022; Fitzmaurice et al., 2020). I closed this section by examining the home-school gap (Spolsky, 2007) in which it is argued that over time the linguistic ideologies and language practices of the school ultimately influence language practices in the home.

9.4 Research Implications:

In light of the research findings summarised above, it is relevant to consider the implications of these findings and how they may be useful in developing thinking in the fields of language policy and planning, multilingualism in diverse contexts and how best to support the development of dynamic multilingual identities in Irish schools. In this discussion I consider the implication of these findings for researchers, policymakers and school stakeholders alike.

A significant finding from this research centres around the importance of minimising disjunctures between official language policies and what occurs in practice in classrooms,

particularly in relation to supporting the multilingual development of migrant learners. The way in which languages are constructed and implemented in school settings may have a significant impact of the quality of education that some learners may receive (Dixon & Peake, 2008). In Ireland, educational developments regarding language teaching reflect the wider societal discourses surrounding issues related to nationalism and identity, and increased ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity, and in many cases language and education policy development has been reactive rather than proactive (Faas et al., 2015; Maldini & Takahashi, 2017). Consequently, challenges remain in developing best practice models that acknowledge the swiftly changing socio-cultural landscape in Irish schools. Furthermore, despite evidence suggesting that whilst official policy recognises multilingualism as fundamentally good, in reality school conditions aren't likely to facilitate its cultivation among students (Bruen, 2021; Harmon, 2018; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012). This research reinforces this argument. Whilst international research on multilingualism and language-in-education policy has progressed to move away from subtractive approaches, the evidence I have presented in this thesis indicated that this has not translated into practice in some Irish classrooms (Bruen, 2013, 2021; Cummins, 2017a, 2017b; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Flores & Schissel, 2014; Plüddemann, 1997).

These findings also reinforce existing research which highlights the importance of developing English, and/or Irish language skills (depending on the language of teaching and learning) for multilingual migrant learners. Such support cannot be underestimated; there is a clear need to develop a co-ordinated strategy for supporting the linguistic development of migrant groups within the Irish education system. This includes supporting the development of heritage languages in addition to the acquisition of additional languages such as Irish and English for migrant learners. These supports are essential for ensuring that children of migrant origin have the same or similar opportunities and outcomes as their Irish peers. When asking participants what linguistic supports are needed in Irish schools, Martin et al. (2023) noted that students had concerns about the language supports provided in Irish schools and 1) issues surrounding the maintenance of their heritage languages, and 2) adequate supports for the language of teaching and learning. These concerns call for a flexible

and culturally responsive curriculum. According to McGinnity, Sprong, et al. (2023) whilst migrants entering into the Irish educational system are faring well, evidence demonstrates that those who speak a foreign language in the home often experience disadvantage.

The findings of this research indicate a missed opportunity on behalf of schools in celebrating the unique identities of all their learners and to positively leverage this as a tool to further multilingualism, intercultural awareness, social cohesion and school harmony. In particular, a central finding of this research revolves around a lack of awareness or ambivalence amongst teachers to investigate and acknowledge the heritage languages and cultures of participating learners. It is argued that Irish schools are well positioned to mitigate migrant learners' loss of identification with their cultural heritage and to foster the positive development of migrant identities in a modern Ireland. Providing migrants with opportunities to develop a sense of belonging, home and a sense of security, may positively impact on their overall identity development. Certainly, Fahey, Russell, et al. (2019) identify that belonging to a neighbourhood, a community to call home, is central to migrants' social inclusion and identity development in new contexts. Considering the importance of successful integration for positive identity development, particularly the social inclusion and sense of belonging felt by young migrant learners in their school communities, and given the high level of racism, discrimination and microaggressions faced by such learners in Irish schools (Darmody et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022), it is imperative that a whole-school approach to diversity, intercultural awareness and inclusion be implemented so that all learners, of all nationalities and heritages, speaking all languages, feel included and recognised in their classrooms. This was recognised by Siarova and Essomba (2014, p. 1) on behalf of the Migration Policy Institute Europe, who state,

> Schools should provide sufficient support for youth to learn and master the language of instruction. Teachers also should receive training to address the linguistic needs of their students in the best way possible. At the same time, schools could support the continued use and research of students' mother tongue, which can both help students learn the host-country language and enrich the educational environment by introducing cultural and linguistic diversity.

This is also important in light of the disjunctures between the monoglossic, assimilationist ideologies informing school language policy and the heteroglossic ideologies informing the FLP's of the participating families in this research, and for the implications this may have for academic achievement and also for the completion of homework in the homes of multilingual migrant learners. Rather than conceptualising languages as separate, it is argued here that an approach which views language as an integrated, dynamic system should inform language education in Irish schools (Cummins, 2017b; Wei & García, 2017). Translanguaging has developed as a new approach to language teaching that views learners' linguistic repertoires as integrated wholes (Wei & García, 2017). From a pedagogical perspective, translanguaging can be viewed as a language strategy that encourages varied language and literacy development (Cummins, 2017b; García, 2009a; Hornberger & Link, 2012). García (2009a) views translanguaging as embracing the natural communicative practices of such leaners, which enables the development of their cognitive, language and literacy abilities.

Considering the findings of this research in which one family's FLP, which was experiencing greater levels of tension and lower linguistic cohesion amongst members, and a second family whose seemingly strongly aligned FLP appeared to mitigate the subtractive influence of the school language policy, I argue that further research is needed which investigates how different approaches to FLP may interact with school language polices to either support or mitigate heritage language loss or maintenance. This supports the arguments of Cantone and Wolf-Farré (2022, p. 187) who argue that, "Heritage language studies have increasingly been focused on either FLP or the role of educational institutions, but rarely combined both perspectives. This leaves out other elements, such as language ideology, which can be decisive in the maintenance or loss of languages". Thus, in this research I have provided unique insights into how language-in-education policy and FLP may interact.

This research highlights the importance of homework as a pedagogical practice, particularly in multilingual contexts. This is relevant to policymakers, researchers and schools stakeholders. It reinforces the importance of providing both English language and Irish language support for both learners and their caregivers, as well as the development of

technological supports which could be utilised by multilingual families to support the successful completion of homework tasks. Arguing that multilingual learners may benefit from being able to draw on their full linguistic repertoires not only during their time at school, but also in their approach to homework tasks, this research highlights the need for renewed research on translanguaging practices not only at school but also in the design and completion of homework tasks. Additionally, Darmody et al. (2022) highlight the importance of English language proficiency for migrant parents in the Irish context, indicating that the level of parent's English proficiency is likely to impact on their employment chances and therefore their household resources and also the English proficiency and academic achievement of their children. In the context of the current study, it is also evident that there is a need to provide additional materials, resources and Irish language support for migrant families. In both families involved in this study, caregivers experienced limitations in their ability to support Irish language learning during homework tasks.

Overall, this interdisciplinary research provides unique insights into issues of diversity, language policy, language education and dynamic identity development. Considering this, these findings are important to a wide range of researchers across the social sciences. In the next section, specific recommendations are made in light of the findings of this thesis and the implications I have discussed here.

9.5 Recommendations for Further Research:

Based on the key findings which I summarised in section 9.3, and the significance of these findings which I discussed in section 9.4, in this section I make recommendations for further research, considering both contextual and methodological avenues for research endeavours, and suggestions for the improvement of policy and practice in the Irish educational context.

9.5.1 *Language Policy and Language Education:*

Currently, a notable challenge in the Irish context is the absence of a comprehensive strategy or contemporary policy to support multilingual school practices (McGillicuddy & Machowska-Kosiack, 2021). In light of the findings and implications discussed in the previous sections regarding a disjuncture between official policy and the experiences of the participating learners, it is suggested that there is a clear need to develop migration, integration and language-in-education policies which address migrant, EAL and other linguistic minorities' complex linguistic and cultural needs to ensure fair access to the language of teaching and learning through EAL or Irish language proficiency (Fahey, McGinnity, & Quinn, 2019) and to consider the support of heritage languages with the aim of mitigating potential language shift and language loss. In support of this, I make the following recommendations:

1) It is a recommendation of this research that language-in-education policy research in Ireland continue to strive for a heteroglossic ideology informing approaches to language policy development and implementation in Irish classrooms (Bruen & Kelly, 2016; Cummins, 2017b; Wei & García, 2017).

2) In Ireland there are no national guidelines or recommendations which address the school placement and initial support of migrant learners in Irish schools (European Commission, 2019). Thus, a clear policy recommendation in light of the findings presented in this thesis would be the development of national guidelines which address issues of school placement and initial support for migrant and other EAL learners in Irish primary schools.

3) Based on the evidence provided in this thesis, and line with existing research in this area, I conclude that to meet the needs of diverse learners in Irish primary schools, support for students of migrant origin should include consistent, adequate English language support that includes long-term ongoing assessment of both learner progress and the effectiveness of this language support in addressing learners' needs (Darmody et al., 2022).

4) Considering the evidence that DEIS schools are likely to have higher concentrations of multilingual migrant learners (Darmody et al., 2022), enhanced supports, resources and funding for DEIS schools should be considered.

5) Whilst official policies may promote the maintenance of heritage languages and EAL support for migrant learners, oftentimes monitoring of these outcomes is inconsistent or absent, with some suggesting that the responsibility for achieving such outcomes is left largely to schools and educators (Martin et al., 2023). Thus, a recommendation from this research is the implementation of dedicated systems to monitor the implementation of policy initiatives and closer monitoring of language and integration supports for migrant learners across Ireland.

6) Given the importance of fostering a whole-school approach to diversity and inclusion as argued in the previous section, I recommend the development of a specific inclusion and diversity programme spanning from the ECCE years, through primary school and to the 6th year of secondary school in all Irish schools. The aims of such a programme would include fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion, as well as highlighting diversity as a strength of Irish society. The programme should include the promotion of the active development of learners' full linguistic repertoires in classroom spaces, and wider support for the development of dynamic, multilingual identities in Irish schools. The existing Languages Connect programme facilitated by Post Primary Languages Ireland (https://languagesconnect.ie/) and the Mother Tongues programme run by Dr Francesca La Morgia in Dublin (https://mothertongues.ie/) go a long way in addressing these issues. Increased funding for these existing programmes and nationwide expansion across all schools in Ireland would be a positive first step.

7) Based on the evidence presented in this thesis, it is imperative that initial teacher education, alongside the mandatory continuous professional developmnet of teachers in Ireland include training on diversity, inclusion, intercultural awareness and anti-bias education.

9.5.2 FLP, Dynamic Linguistic Identities and Learner Agency:

Considering the findings of this research regarding family language policy, learner agency and participating learners' metalinguistic awareness and ability to translanguage fluidly according to context, the following recommendations are made:

1) Further research is needed which investigates issues related to FLP in Ireland, which is currently limited.

2) FLP research with a specific focus on aligning school language policies with the ideologies, management and practices informing the FLP of multilingual migrant learners in Ireland would be beneficial.

3) Particularly in relation to the fluid language practices of multilingual migrant learners, research which explores ways in which such fluidity can be translated into practical language teaching in schools is required.

4) Further academic exploration of the concept of dynamic multilingual identities amongst a wide variety of multilingual migrant groups in Ireland would contribute to our understanding of the diverse composition of learners attending Irish schools and thus create a stronger evidence base from which evidence-informed policies and practices aimed at supporting migrant learners can be developed.

5) Evidence demonstrates that adopting a dynamic approach to bi/multilingual education enables teachers and learners to generate power and linguistic capital through instruction which recognises individual linguistic repertoires; from this perspective, learners' bi/multilingualism are viewed as resources rather than deficits which require intervention (Cummins, 2019). Considering this evidence, I recommend that translanguaging theory should inform policy decisions and translanguaging in practice could be employed as a useful language education strategy in the classroom.

6) Furthermore, teachers who teach language should be supported by receiving access to courses which develop their knowledge of bi/multilingualism, language pedagogy and provide training on methods to include heritage languages in the

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classroom, potentially through approaches such as translanguaging (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Supports for schools and teachers should also include adequate funding and allocation of material resources to support schools' efforts in fostering the development of learners' dynamic multilingual identities.

9.5.3 Reconceptualising Homework:

Considering the implications of the findings for the conceptualisation of homework as a unique space in which school language policies and FLP interact in complex ways, I make the following recommendations:

1) Renewed focus on the pedagogical practice of homework beyond the traditional arguments of homework being beneficial or not, and the role of parental support for academic achievement. Rather, an examination of homework as a unique linguistic space in which interesting linguistic practices may take place. Research which further investigates the 7-step homework routine which is proposed in this thesis, which will contribute to our limited understanding of the linguistic exchanges which take place during this daily practice.

2) Based on the findings of this thesis, I recommend that homework as a pedagogical practice should include greater collaboration between teachers and caregivers. Svensson et al. (2022, p. 1) reflect that in multilingual contexts, it is imperative that, "reciprocal sensitive listening to each other, from both the teachers' and the parents' side, is important, and teachers need to be aware of the students' family situation regarding their language choices and language use". Adopting translanguaging in homework practice has emerged as a useful strategy to mitigate disjunctures between the school and the home, whist simultaneously allowing learners to draw on their full linguistic repertoires to complete the task at hand (Alvarez, 2014; Creese & Blackledge, 2011; Svensson et al., 2022).

3) I recommend further research which examines how multilingual learners, and their caregivers, draw on their linguistic resources to complete (or not) the homework assigned to them.

4) Providing enhanced supports develop the language skills of parents would benefit their children's learning and overall development and improve communication between the school and the home. This relates to the findings of the current study in which Angelo's limited English language ability restricted his ability to assist his children with their homework tasks. Research in the Irish context tells us that English language supports for adult migrants have developed in large part without a national strategy; consequently, adult migrants who require language supports may not be accessing the full range of supports available to them (Arnold et al., 2019). Considering this, an additional recommendation is the promotion of existing English supports available to caregivers, perhaps through the home-school liaison coordinator of each school.

9.5.4   *Additional Suggestions for Further Research:*

A natural progression of this research would be to extend the investigations presented in this thesis. This could include further investigation into issues of language policy, family language policy, identity development, issues of language shift and or loss, learner agency and homework completion in migrant and multilingual families, specifically in the Irish context. Extending the ethnographic approach adopted in this research, one could potentially design research which incorporates longer term observations with a greater number of families, which addresses any of these key areas of investigation.

As demonstrated in this thesis, migrants in Ireland are a heterogenous group (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019). Thus, the observation and data generation from a wider range of migrant families may further contribute to research in this area. In addition, combatting a limitation of this research, namely limited access to classroom spaces, further research could include classroom perspectives and the involvement of school stakeholders

such as teachers to generated multifaceted research which considers issues of language policy, multilingualism and identity development from a wider range of perspectives. For example, the findings of this research indicate that learners employ their own agency to leverage their linguistic resources for their benefit within the framework of their FLP, and potentially at school. A further avenue for research includes observing children in school spaces with the aim of exploring how they leverage their agency to navigate school language policy to navigate the curriculum to their advantage. To corroborate the findings of this research, approaching this topic from different methodological perspectives is also a consideration. For example, the development of a nationally distributed survey targeting teachers, multilingual learners and their families respectively which investigates issues of language policy, multilingual development and identity in the Irish context. This would complement the evidence presented in this thesis and allow for greater generalisability of results.

9.6 Strengths and Limitations of the Current Research:

Within the social sciences, the research of human traits is complex. This complexity is described by Mentz and Botha (2012, p. 74), who state, "…a social researcher cannot pour emotions into a cylinder or use a ruler to measure how big someone's attitude is". Considering this, researchers within the social sciences are faced with the challenge of selecting the most effective way of measuring the construct or area of interest which they wish to research, each of which has its own strengths and limitations (Mentz & Botha, 2012). Thus, when conducting research, it is considered good practice to examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of a research approach, but also the research process and the findings which emerge from such processes. In this section, I consider the limitations and strengths of this research.

In acknowledging the limitations of one's research, the aim is to critically examine the methodology informing the research and avoid, where possible, the potential for misinterpretation (Choy, 2014). From a contextual standpoint, I initially commenced this research in September 2019, just prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. As a result, I experienced significant delays in progressing the research due to the impact of

the pandemic on daily life, access to college resources and the accessibility of participants. Initially conceptualised as a school-based research endeavour, it became clear as the pandemic progressed that access to classroom spaces, teachers and learners was not feasible. Thus, after considerable delays, I was required to rapidly pivot at the midway point of my PhD. This included adjusting research questions, data generation sites and a focus from the school to the family home, effectively reconceptualising the research. Whilst the research was successfully conducted after this point, it is important to acknowledge that opportunities to observe learners in school spaces and considered the teachers' voices and perspective would have strengthened the findings of this thesis. Additional contextual factors which influenced this research include the bounded timeframe of the PhD, including periods of time off-books, and access to resources and funding to extend the timeframe and complexity of the data generation period.

From a methodological standpoint, whilst linguistic ethnography is described as a flexible and robust approach to the study of linguistic issues, it is not without its limitations (Copland & Creese, 2015). Considering the ethnographic method, an often-significant drawback is the time and funds needed for prolonged engagement in the field, specifically if one desires to generate rich data (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). Consequently, a more focused approach to ethnographic research, featuring topic-focused approaches and shorter periods of fieldwork have become more common (Coffey, 2018). As described in the previous paragraph, this was the reality of this research. Furthermore, ethnographic research, in line with many other qualitative research approaches, tend to favour small, purposively selected research samples. Consequently, ethnographic approaches are often criticised for their lack of generalisability (Blommaert & Dong, 2010). This was the experience in this research; due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and limitations in accessing participants, only two families were included in this research. Whilst this did allow for in-depth engagement with said families and the generation of rich data, this did limit the generalisability of the results. Whilst ethnographers may not be able to strive for the generalizability of their results, LeCompte and Goetz (1982) highlight that ethnographers may strive for the comparability and translatability of findings. This is supported by O'Connor (2011) who argues that an

explicit approach to conducting ethnography is essential for ensuring methodological robustness. Thus, the findings of this research may not be generalisable to all migrant families living in Ireland and establishing dynamic multilingual identities, but by following a systematic approach to the research and being clear about the processes followed, it does allow for the personal experiences of migrant voices to be heard.

In many ethnographic fieldwork contexts, ethical issues regarding the researcher's involvement in the field and their interaction with participants must be considered (Reeves et al., 2008). Thus, from a personal perspective, it is imperative to consider my own involvement in the research and how this may have impacted upon the data generation process and the findings of the research. I identify as a migrant, South African researcher living in Ireland. As a migrant living in Ireland myself, it was necessary to engage in the process of reflexivity throughout the research process and acknowledge how my own migrant status might influence the research and my relationships with participants (Romocea, 2014). Reflexivity is a central element of ethnographic research; ethnographic researchers must have adequate understanding of reflexivity and reciprocity when conducting research, and a commitment to reflexivity is an essential tool in ensuring the credibility of ethnographic research (Madden, 2019; Reeves et al., 2008). Throughout this research process I made a commitment to the practice of reflexivity; nevertheless, it was inevitable that my own experiences as a migrant living in Ireland influenced my interpretation of the data. Consequently, this was a limitation of the research.

In considering the strengths of this research, from a contextual standpoint this research addresses a key area of migrant research in the Irish context, namely examining the experiences of migrant learners in increasingly diverse school spaces within a system which has historically struggled to adapt to such swiftly changing demographics (Central Statistics Office, 2016; Darmody et al., 2022; Devine, 2005; Lin & Martin, 2005; O'Connor et al., 2017). In line with observations made by Machowska-Kosiack and Barry (2022, p. 12) who state, "Despite these growing numbers, evidential data and insights into their experiences as members of Irish society are dispersed and under-researched", this research provides a unique perspective on language-in-education policy in the Irish context from the viewpoint

of learners and their caregivers, with a particular focus on the experiences of either 1.5 or 2nd generation migrant learners in Ireland (Darmody et al., 2022; Machowska-Kosiack & Barry, 2022).

This thesis contributes to the literature concerning multigenerational, multilingual families in transnational contexts, providing examples of how learners may employ their own agency to develop their dynamic multilingual identities across different contexts. This research also contributes to literature on FLP in both the Irish context, which is currently limited. It complements the contributions of researchers in the Irish context, for example Ó hIfearnáin (2013) and Smith-Christmas (2020a, 2021a). Additionally, this thesis makes valuable recommendations for the development of language policy in the Irish context, but also for the consideration of homework as a unique pedagogical practice which requires further research to uncover how multilingual families navigate this meeting point between school languages policies and FLP. Overall, this research contributes to both broader social and migration policy research in Ireland considering recent unrest, but also multilingualism and language policy research by providing a sociolinguistic perspective on how migrant, heritage language speakers' linguistic identities are developing in 21st century Ireland.

From a methodological perspective, I employed linguistic ethnography to investigate issues related to multilingualism and identity development, with the central aim of highlighting the experiences of multilingual migrant learners within contexts of the Irish school system and the larger language-in-education policy frameworks in Ireland and the European Union, and the wider migration crisis in Europe (Maldini & Takahashi, 2017; United Nations, 2017; Zanfrini, 2023). Thus, this thesis makes a valuable contribution to the growing field of linguistic ethnography research in Europe, and in particular, in Ireland. Furthermore, it reinforced linguistic ethnography as a valid research approach within applied linguistics and educational research in Ireland. Linguistic ethnography is a flexible, interdisciplinary approach which draws on the diverse toolbox of linguistics whilst simultaneously drawing on the in-depth, detailed nature of ethnography to produce research which is methodologically robust, providing insight into emic perspectives whilst also connecting individual experiences to wider context (Copland & Creese, 2015; Tusting, 2019). Considering this, the

rich data generated in this research, and the in-depth application of RTA results in research which provides relevant, detailed examples of migrants' experiences of language education in the Irish context. In line with a linguistic ethnography approach, a wide range of data generation tools were employed in this research. The application of linguistic methods of data generation to complement the traditional observational methods of ethnographic research, may also contribute to epistemologically strengthened data (Pérez-Milans, 2015b). Thirdly, this thesis provides a full account of the research context and processes followed, which according to O'Connor (2011) contributes to strong and credible research. Providing such transparency regarding the process of data generation and methods of analysis, as was provided in this thesis, allows others to corroborate findings, or undertake further analysis of the research area (Pool, 2017).

9.7 Conclusion:

In this thesis I employed linguistic ethnography to examine the fluid nature of language learning and identity development amongst young multilingual migrant learners, and their families, living in Ireland and attending English-medium primary schools, with the central aim of highlighting their experiences within contexts of the Irish school system and the larger language-in-education policy frameworks in Ireland and the European Union, and the wider migration crisis in Europe (Maldini & Takahashi, 2017; United Nations, 2017; Zanfrini, 2023). Consequently, findings from my in-depth engagement with two multilingual migrant families, including five multilingual migrant learners and their respective caregivers was presented. Examining the intersection between the experiences of learners in the home and at school, I presented examples of how learners' experiences of integration and language learning impacted on the development of their dynamic multilingual identities.

In this research the importance of successful identity development has been highlighted. Considering the importance of successful identify formation for young people and their overall sense of belonging and wellbeing, this thesis contributes to research on integration, multilingualism, language education and identity development amongst

multilingual migrant learners. It also provides unique insights into how such learners experiences in the home and at school may impact on their linguistic identity development. The connection between inclusion, language and social inequalities was emphasised through recognising the mediating role which language plays within key areas of social inclusion, such as education, and that linguistic proficiency may impact on migrants' overall sense of belonging (Piller & Takahashi, 2010). We know that children need to develop a positive sense of self, group identity and a positive feeling of belonging within their communities (Kerrins & La Morgia, 2023). Given that linguistic identities connect migrant learners to their new communities but also to their families and heritage cultures (Kerrins & La Morgia, 2023), supporting the positive development of linguistic identities of migrant students is an essential part of fostering their overall sense of belonging and integration in contexts of migration. According to Kerrins and La Morgia (2023), "Having a positive identity and experiencing belonging contributes to children's developing sense of agency, and their development, socialisation and wellbeing". Consequently, providing inclusive experiences for all learners in Irish schools is imperative for fostering feelings of belonging and inclusivity, and contributing to Irish communities of the future.

Recognising that both schools and the family are important sites for language socialisation (Ballweg, 2022; Cantone & Wolf-Farré, 2022; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Schwartz, 2010; Yang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2021), I focused on the interactions of language-in-education policies and Family Language Policy (FLP), and considered the implications of this for the development of dynamic multilingual identities. Horgan et al. (2022) argue that, "Language use and children's understandings and perspectives of their linguistic diversity and bilingualism are often not a focus of scholarship". This is supported by Cantone and Wolf-Farré (2022, p. 187) who argues that, "The interaction of language practices, policies, and both explicit and implicit ideologies in multilingual families, schools and society are yet to be studied in more detail". Considering this, this thesis provides relevant examples of how learners' experiences of integration and language learning may impact on their identity development as dynamic, multilingual young people in Ireland.

In this thesis I have also provided a unique reconceptualization of homework practices in multilingual contexts and proposed a 7-step homework routine. Thus, this thesis makes a unique contribution to knowledge in this field which warrants further investigation.

This research also contributes to both broader social and migration policy research in Ireland considering recent unrest, and multilingualism and language policy research, by providing a sociolinguistic perspective on how migrant, heritage language speakers' linguistic identities are developing in 21st century Ireland.

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