Factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families
by

Zintle Mkrweqana

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS
(Educational Psychology)

In the Faculty of Education

at the

University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Professor Funke Omidire

Department of Educational Psychology

Faculty of Education

University of Pretoria

April 2022

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree *Magister Educationis* at the University of Pretoria, is my work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER:	**UP18/03/01 OMIDIRE 20-02**
DEGREE AND PROJECT	M.Ed.	
	Factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families	
INVESTIGATOR	Ms Zintle Mkrweqana	
DEPARTMENT	Educational Psychology	
APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY	05 October 2020	
DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	07 April 2022	
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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
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- Data storage requirements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank God who has given me time and the opportunity to pursue my dreams. Jeremiah 29:11 says, '"for I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, plans to prosper you, and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. This scripture has been a testament to my academic journey.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the following individuals without whom this journey might have not been possible:

- Prof Funke Omidire, who is my research supervisor. Thank you for pushing me beyond my limits and instilling a sense of belief in myself. Had you given up on me, I would have not managed to complete this paper. May you extend the same favour and patience to the other students who will follow me. Thank you, Prof.

- To my sister, Portia ka Makwedinana Dyabaza Mkrweqana. Thank you for being there for me from the beginning of this journey. Thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement, for your honest judgement that was sometimes hard to take, but valuable to my growth. I appreciate you from the bottom of my heart.

- To Lesego Msiza, Thank you for your unconditional love. You have supported me beyond my expectations; thank you so much for everything you have done for me throughout this journey. May God bless you and I wish you the greatest of success in your life.

- To my mentor, Ms Nkateko Ndala-Magoro, thank you for your words of encouragement and support. Thank you for allowing me to grow as a professional and for trusting and believing in me. I will always appreciate the sense of confidence you have instilled in me.

- To my friends, Khololwethu Cetyiwe, Lungile Mabuza, Tsegofatsho Tshabalala and Cliff Hlatswayo and Dakalo Nephawe, I would like to send to you the greatest appreciation. Thank you for the prayers, the support, and always filling in the gap

for me when I needed someone to lift me. You hold a special place in my heart, and I love you guys.

- To my friends who have been on this journey with me since the first day of registration, Nthabiseng Mofokeng, Nomfundo Mkhatswa and the late Nomthandazo. I appreciate the support and encouragement you have given me in my studies, and I wish you well as you finish your writing.

- To my research participants, this would have not been successful without your contribution. Thank you for your time and commitment to my work.

- To my colleagues and my boss, Ms Naledi Mqhayi at Mbabazi Consulting, thank you so much for all support you have extended towards the completion of my studies.

- To Sthembiso Mkrweqana, I would like to give you my final and special dedication. I want you to be encouraged to chase every dream you will ever have in your life. I believe in you, and I will always be there to support you. Always. Love, your aunt.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to my parents and my siblings.

To my mother, Thobeka Somnci Dyabaza Mkrweqana, ka Makwedinana no No-amen. Thank you, mama, for being my rock throughout the years. Your journey as a woman and a parent has always been my motivation to do better and work hard. You started your first job at 18 years to help support your parents and siblings and studied to obtain your diploma while you had all five of your children. I saw you in a graduation gown for the first time and that image has always stuck in my mind. You are my greatest inspiration (ndiyabulela). To my father, thank you for being there and doing everything you could to raise us and support me academically. I love you and I appreciate you Malizo Mkrweqana. To my siblings, Thando, Portia, Ntuthuzelo and my late brother Bayanda Mkrweqana. I love you so much and thank you for being my greatest supporters.

To my only remaining grandparent, No-amen Makhoza Dyabaza. Thank you, mama, for every sacrifice that you have made. Today I hope you will be proud of me and know that all your work was not in vain. You are the rock of our family and God blessed us with you in our lives. I love you and I pray that God keeps you so that you may enjoy the fruits of your labour.

"Ndiyabulela Ntombi ka Khoza"

ABSTRACT

South Africa has complex multilingual family structures, mainly linked to its history of colonisation and migration. As a result of the multilingual nature of society, there has been a growth of mixed and interracial marriages in South Africa. The majority of these family structures are confronted by difficult choices about which language(s) to use within their households, especially in consideration of their children who are being raised in these multilingual contexts. To fully understand the factors that influence language decisions in the home, the study employed Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. The study utilised a qualitative research approach, guided by a social constructivist paradigm. The population for the study were two families with a mixed marriage structure. Two parents from different ethnic groups who were married or staying together with a minimum of two children in their family unit were purposively selected for the study. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews. An inductive thematic analysis was employed to identify themes and sub-themes of the research findings. The findings of the study reveal that the value attached to a language plays an important role in the language selected for communication within a multilingual family. Additionally, in a multilingual family, the decision about which language to use is made to facilitate the social inclusion of the family members outside the home. Finally, language is a carrier of culture that families use to transfer their culture from one generation to another. The study has recommended that further research into multilingual families in both mixed and interracial marriages be conducted, especially within the diverse South African context post the apartheid era. Additionally, the role of children in influencing multilingual families' language decisions (directly and indirectly) can be further explored.

Keywords: multilingualism, families, languages, communication.

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

The Reverend David Swanepoel
BA (Rhodes), Hons BA, Hons BTh, HED (SA)
Unit 2
 Haven Village Retirement Centre, 269 Emmie Hartmann Street, Garsfontein, Pretoria, 0081
 South Africa
Telephone +27 (0)72- 2077727
Email: davidswanepoel@wol.co.za

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7 April 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that I have completed the English Editing of the text of a dissertation to be submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS
(Educational Psychology)

in the Faculty of Education
at the
University of Pretoria

The dissertation is entitled

Factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families

by

Zintle Mkrweqana

I am qualified to have done such editing, being in possession of a Bachelor's degree in English from Rhodes University, Grahamstown, an Honours Degree in English and HED with English as prime teaching subject from the University of South Africa, and having taught English to Matriculation, First Year University Level, GCSE and A level in both South Africa and the United Kingdom of Great Britain for over 40 years, as well as having been Senior (English) Associate Editor of a national magazine for two years. I have edited Master's Dissertations and Doctoral Theses for several years for several universities and institutions in South Africa and abroad as well as editing documents/papers for publication for various publishing concerns and a number of international academics. I trust that this declaration is satisfactory.

DAVID JOHN SWANEPOEL

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SCT   Socio-Cultural Theory

FLP   Family Language Policy

OPOL   One Parent One Language

OPOL-ML   One Parent One Language -Majority Language

OPOL-ml   One Parent One Language -minority language

NML   Non-Majority Language

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is characterised by complex family structures which can be attributed to the country's history during the apartheid regime. The "Group Population Act", "Segregation Act" and "Pass Act" were some of the laws that were set in place during the apartheid regime to restrict the movement of certain population groups from one region to another (Bakker *et al.*, 2016). Post-apartheid, these laws were lifted and there was an observed increase in the number of people freely moving to other regions of the country (Mlambo, 2018). The most common direction of movement was from rural areas to urban areas (Mlambo, 2018). Subsequently, the movements from various regions to the country's urban areas led to an increase in cultural interactions which then resulted in population diversity both culturally and linguistically (Muhwava *et al.*, 2013). In addition, statistics also show that "about two-thirds of South Africa's total population lives in urban areas, making it one of the largest urbanised countries in Africa" (Bakker *et al.*, 2016, p. 7). Furthermore, cultural interactions have also resulted in the forming of diverse and multilingual families and the raising of children within these contexts (Muhwava *et al.*, 2013). In this research study of limited scope, I have investigated the factors that determine the decisions made about the language of communication in these multilingual families.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The focus of my study stems from complex multilingual family structures in a South African context. Owing to the multilingual nature of these family structures, the families are continually faced with the challenge of making language decisions within their households, especially in consideration of their children who are being raised within these multilingual contexts. Previous research has focused primarily on language decisions that are made within the political, work and school contexts, thus neglecting language decisions made in the multilingual family contexts (Spolsky, 2007). Furthermore, research on language choices has focused mostly on language decisions within immigrant multilingual families, where the parents have married a

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spouse from one country and moved to another country (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). To that end, this study included the language decisions made within families who are from the same country (South Africa) and have migrated from one province to another, the parents coming from different language backgrounds and having committed to marriage with each other and raising children together in the province to which they have migrated within South Africa.

1.3 RATIONALE

The importance of studying language decisions, specifically within the multilingual context is due to the important role the family structure plays in children's language development and acquisition, so influencing their language outcomes in the broader society (Seo, 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that influence multilingual family decisions to contribute to the knowledge base about language decisions made in multilingual family contexts, especially in a South African context where little research has been conducted relative to this topic.

According to Rabiah (2018), language is a very important aspect of culture. It is a tool that humans use to express their psychological state, shared beliefs, traditions, and practices. Moreover, it is an important tool that is used in educational, political and community contexts (Webb, 2000). Its characteristics exist within a larger system that forces us not only to explore language one-dimensionally but also to study all the aspects within the context in which it exists.

King and Fogle (2013) similarly argued that to help us understand the factors that influence language, we need to study parents' ideologies, the role of extended family members, child carers, the community context of the families and the influence of the spoken language in multilingual families. Consequently, language forms an integral part of who we are; it allows for participation or inclusion in the political, educational, social, and economic life of a country (Ansah, 2014). As a result, it is important to understand language choices in multilingual families holistically to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and explore the decisions made about language within a family context. "Language choice is informed by the kind of participants in a communication situation, the topic, social distance, and location" (Ansah, 2014, p. 37).

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Furthermore, family language policies shape the developmental trajectories of children (Spolsky, 2007). They connect in significant ways with children's formal school success and collectively determine the maintenance and future status of minority languages (Seo, 2021). South Africa is made up of multilingual families. Therefore, more research still needs to be facilitated about the factors that determine language choices at the micro-level family context to understand the different language trajectories and how they might influence an individual's interaction with his/her society.

1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore and review the factors that influence language decisions made within multilingual family contexts. The exploration and review of previous research will help to provide information about the different policies and strategies that individuals in multilingual families have employed in their multilingual family contexts about the utilisation of the desired or specifically chosen language repertoire for the families. Finally, this review will provide an overview of the relevant information related to the topic for researchers, psychologists and any other person who is interested in multilingualism studies.

The study was driven by the following objectives.

1.4.1 Primary Research Objective:

To investigate the factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families.

1.4.2 Secondary Research Objectives:

- to investigate the relationship between language and values within families.
- to establish the role of the family structure (parents, extended family members, child caregivers) in determining the language of choice; and
- to investigate the relationship between culture and the language used for communication in a multilingual family.

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1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Primary Research Question

What are the factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families?

1.5.2 Secondary Research Questions

- What are the values that are ascribed to languages represented within families?
- What role does the family structure (parents, extended family members, child caregivers) play in determining the language of choice?
- What is the influence of culture on the choice of language used for communication in a multilingual family?

1.6 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

To enable an assessment of the nature and purpose of the study, including the literature reviewed and sources provided, the following assumptions were made concerning this research study:

- the decisions made about language in a multilingual family can be influenced by family structures:
- In institutions, such as political, governance and educational institutions, the use of English as a dominant language is influenced by the status quo provided to the English language in South Africa, thus directly influencing the choice of language in family contexts.
- language choices made in multilingual families may be influenced by the interactions with the different structures that the family participates in (workplace, school, and community); and
- language choices may also be influenced by parental ideologies about language and language use.

1.7 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

1.7.1 Family

There are various forms of families shaped by the pre-and post-apartheid era in South Africa. The Eurocentric definition of family includes one's spouse and children, whereas, in an African context, the family includes individuals who are related by blood, surname, or community in which one finds oneself (The Child Gauge, 2018). More recently, the family structure includes immediate family, extended family, colleagues, and friends (Sithole & Falkolf, 2019). However, owing to structural challenges in South Africa, the family structure is deconstructed into many forms, such as families that are headed by children, with no parent or adult (The Child Gauge, 2018). A family was previously described as people who are related to one another, especially parents and children (O'Neil *et al,* 2000). For this study, the term refers to two South African parents who are married and are from the same province or different provinces, who speak different home languages and have migrated to another province in South Africa and are raising their children together.

1.7.2 Language Choices

The selection of a language in political and educational institutions emphasizes the use of one language over the use of the 10 South African languages (Ndimande-Hlongwa & Ndebele, 2017). In this study, language choice is defined as the selection of one language that becomes the one mostly used to communicate with other languages in a multilingual family context.

1.7.3 Language

This is the tool of communication that is utilised in different contexts with people from the same or different ethnic groups to communicate their own beliefs, culture, and experiences (Rabiah, 2018). This term is defined as the tool used in multilingual families that allows for the sharing of information amongst individuals and enables them to engage in conversations with one another.

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1.7.4 Multilingualism

Multilingualism is "the ability of an individual to be able to communicate in more than one language" (Aronin, 2018, p. 5). It is not only indicative of the practice of the use of more than one language, but it is a phenomenon that can be studied bilaterally from the perspective of society and that of an individual (Aronin, 2019). An individual's multilingualism constitutes the personal practice of acquiring and using multiple languages, whereas the societal view of multilingualism includes status, value, and language policies linked to surroundings (Aronin, 2919). In this study, the term refers to individuals from two different linguistic backgrounds who can communicate in more than one language and decide about the language that will be used to communicate within their family unit, in consideration of their different linguistic backgrounds.

1.8 RESEARCH PARADIGMS, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As indicated in the following Table 1.1, the methodological approach used in this study was the qualitative approach to help obtain participants' experiences of the phenomenon. The meta-theoretical paradigm employed social constructivism which explains that participants may derive patterns and interpretations through interactions with their social environment.

The methodological processes that were employed in this study are presented in detail in Chapter 3. In brief, table 1.1 presents an overview of the research methodology.

Table 1.1: Overview of The Research Methodology

RESEACH PARADIGMS	
Methodological Approach	Qualitative approach
Meta-theoretical Paradigm	Social constructivism
Research Design	Explanatory Case Study
SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS	
Purposive Sampling **Two multilingual families**	**Family 1:** **Father –** Venda home language speaker **Mother-** Tsonga home language speaker **Two - children** 1- Boy 2- Boy **Family 2:** **Father –** Sesotho home language speaker **Mother –** Venda home language speaker 1- Boy 2- Girl
DATA COLLECTION METHODS	**DATA DOCUMENTATION**
• **Four semi-structured Interviews** • **Family 1 and Family 2** • **Focus group Interview with Family 1 and Family 2**	• Virtual video recording
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	
1. Inductive thematic analysis of interview transcriptions	
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	

- **Informed Consent and Assent;**
- **Voluntary Participation;**
- **Anonymity and Confidentiality; and**
- **Respect for power balances.**

1.9 METHODOLOGY

The participants selected comprised of two multilingual families. In family 1, the father is a Venda home language speaker, and the mother is a Tsonga home language speaker, and they have two children together; in this family, only one child was eligible to participate in the study owing to age. The younger child is a 9-month-old boy. In family 2, the father is a Sesotho home language speaker and the mother is a Venda home language speaker, and they have two children together both of whom participated in the study. The participants were purposively selected. Data were collected over semi-structured Interviews conducted in January and February 2021 through a virtual video recording platform.

1.10 SYNOPSIS OF THE CHAPTERS

This provides an overview of the study and includes a brief description of the information that will be discussed in each chapter. This dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 provides the introduction to the components of the study and gives an outline of the purpose and context of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 situates the study in the context of early and current literature on factors that influence the language of communication used in multilingual families.

Chapter 3 presents a detailed description of all aspects of the design and procedures of the study. These include the methodological approach of the study, a rationale for the approach, a description of the research setting and sample, and a description of the data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter 4 provides a report based on this study's main findings using an organised inductive thematic system of analysis.

Chapter 5 synthesises and discusses the results and addresses the study's research questions, literature review and conceptual framework. Finally, this chapter presents a set of concluding statements and recommendations based on the research findings.

1.11 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the purpose and the rationale of the study, an outline of the research paradigms, research designs, the methodology of the study and the ethical principles that will be discussed. Finally, a synopsis of the chapters for this dissertation was provided in this section.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of the literature regarding prior research on the factors that influence language decisions made in multilingual families. This literature presents information about the factors that influence the decisions of multilingual parents' language within their families, especially in raising their children in these multilingual contexts.

The review is undertaken to provide a wider perspective on the topic and illicit an understanding of language decisions. The first section of this chapter will begin by providing an in-depth definition of the concept of language and its importance within the multilingual family context. Furthermore, the researcher will also look at the perceptions and values of multilingualism within families, and, importantly, she will review the literature describing the concept of family language policy and provide examples of various language strategies or practices applied within multilingual families. The subsequent sections will provide explanations of various language conceptual frameworks that might also play a role in shaping parents' language ideologies and practices. Finally, examples of various language choice experiences by various multilingual families will be given.

2.2 THE VALUE OF LANGUAGE WITHIN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

"The respective language of a particular community shapes the ideology and identity of that particular community's expressions, which is in turn shaped by the world or environment they live in" (Mokuone & Moeketsi, 2018, pg. 18). This means that the community's cultural practices are influenced by the perceptions of the community's individuals of their environment in the past, present and future (Mokuone & Moeketsi, 2018).

Language is viewed as having the ability to serve as a tool that individuals can use to share their social experiences, origins, history, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, and race and allows for expressions of identities (Hammad, 2018). Therefore, we can conclude that language acts as a medium through which individuals can connect with their inner self and others through a shared cultural identity. Language becomes an entry point to various experiences of life and provides a better understanding of others (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). When an individual learns to speak in another person's language, this symbolizes interaction with the culture of the people who speak that language (Mokuone & Moeketsi, 2018).

2.3 FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY (FLP) WITHIN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

The concept of family language policy (FLP) is used mostly within multilingual families (Liu & Lin, 2019). FLP is defined as various language policies or practices that are used amongst multilingual families (King & Fogle, 2013). This concept frames the basis of this research study. The researcher argues that parents employ different rules, strategies and practices within their families and that these influence their family's language decisions, especially in raising their children within these multilingual contexts. She further argues that language decisions made in multilingual families can be either conscious or unconscious decisions made within these multilingual family contexts, especially when they are interacting with their children. However, although language decisions may occur within families, the influence of factors such as culture, social interactions, and political and educational contexts should not be ignored as individuals interact with these structures at varying levels (Christiansen, 2018).

According to King and Fogle (2013) and Liu and Liu (2019), FLP includes both explicit and implicit factors that interact within the multilingual family context, thus influencing the family's language choices. Additionally, FLP is also understood to include language choices both within and outside the family context, parental beliefs, and ideologies that influence language use with their children (King *et al.*, 2008). Parental beliefs and ideologies are defined as being at the centre of influence in children's language and learning outcomes (King *et al.*, 2008).

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Furthermore, FLP is also considered to sometimes be influenced by the importance or value given to one language over another within a multilingual family (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). For example, in immigrant multilingual families, there is a dyad between language decisions whereby, within the same family, some individuals maintain the use of a specific language whilst others lose the use of that language (Spolsky, 2007).

Additionally, Curdt- Christiansen (2009), King & Fogle (2013) and Liu & Lin (2019), all agree that family language decisions include both implicit and explicit factors. Examples of Implicit factors in FLP include parental attitudes, aspirations, expectations for the future of their children, media, societal pressures and the children's peers (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). On the other hand, explicit factors examples include macro structures of influence such as education, market linguistic value and socio-economic importance of language as observed in the study of language practices of immigrants in Montreal (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009).

2.3.1 Types of Parental and Family Discourse Strategies Used in Multilingual Families

"Discourse strategies are defined as conversation patterns that convey parent's wishes and expectations regarding language choice" (Nakamura, 2018, p. 183). Various discourse strategies will be discussed below. These strategies are listed as the following, One-Parent-One-Language Strategy (OPOL), Mixed Strategy, Time and Place Language Strategy, the use of the Majority Language and the Two Parents Two Languages (2P2L), Situational Switching or One Situation One Language, language maintenance and language shift.

2.3.1.1 One Parent One Language (OPOL)

The OPOL strategy is characterized by multilingual parents who use a differentiated method of language communication within their home context, especially with their children (Qiu, 2015). This means that both parents communicate in their home languages respectively. The use of this parental language strategy creates an opportunity for the child to learn both languages.

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2.3.1.2 One Parent One Language-Majority Language (OPOL-ML)

The OPOL strategy is subdivided into OPOL – Majority Language and OPOL – minority language. The OPOL-ML (majority language) variation is characterised by using the majority language as the dominant family language. In this case, one parent becomes the sole source of communication in the majority language. Therefore, if both parents communicate to their child using English for example, the child will also be expected to give their responses strictly in English (Qiu, 2015). Additionally, parents who use the OPOL-Majority Language (ML) occasionally enforce stricter language patterns to ensure that their children follow the OPOL-ML strategy. For example, if the children responded in any language other than the majority language, the parents would ignore them, until they changed their speech to the language desired by their parents (Asnah,2014).

2.3.1.3 The One Parent One Language-Minority (OPOL-ML)

Contrary to the OPOL-ML discussed above, the OPOL-ml (One Person One Language-minority language) is a language strategy whereby the minority language receives support from both parents although they have different languages. This means that multilingual parents will communicate with their children in their home languages respectively (Bouko *et al.*, 2020). However, one parent will exclusively use the minority language when communicating with their children, and, as a result, the children will also be expected to respond specifically in the minority language to this parent (Qiu, 2015).

2.3.1.4 Mixed Strategy

The mixed strategy involves both the parents and children communicating in both the majority and minority language freely (Bouko *et al*, 2020). Therefore, it becomes of vital importance that the parents are fluent in both the majority and minority languages to be able to transfer the language skills to their children. However, this strategy is criticized for creating language confusion and the production of non-fluency in all the languages spoken within the family (Qiu, 2015).

2.3.1.5 Time and Place Language Strategy

The time and place language approach is aimed at establishing linguistic limitations that occur within location and time (Bouko *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, families who use this language strategy use language at specific times or events. For example, a family can decide to use a minority language only during mealtimes or allow their children to participate in physical activities where the teaching instructions are given in the desired minority or majority language (Jackson, 2006).

2.3.1.6 The Use of The Majority Language

The use of the majority language strategy involves the parent's decision to use the Majority Language (ML) exclusively within their family context. The use of this strategy is used to preserve the family's ethnic identity (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020). This strategy can also be used with the Non-Majority Language (NML), whereby the parent uses exclusively the NML in their family context and relies on the school and social setting in which they reside to teach the child concerning the language acquisition of the ML (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020).

2.3.1.7 Situational Switching or One Situation One Language

The situational strategy involves both parents using both the Majority and Minority Language depending on the context they find themselves in. This strategy is deemed to be effective in promoting the family's bilingualism, especially with the children (Kostoulas & Motsiou, 2020).

"Discourse strategies are defined as conversation patterns that convey parent's wishes and expectations regarding language choice" (Nakamura, 2018, p. 183). Various discourse strategies will be discussed below.

2.3.1.8 Minimal Grasp Strategy

Lanza (1997) initially introduced the minimal grasp strategy. In this strategy, the parents act as though they do not comprehend their children's speech given in any language other than the targeted family language (Nakamura, 2018). "As per Lanza's classification, this strategy is considered to be monolingual as it creates a context in which the parent's preferred language is the one to be used and to be understood" (Nakamura, 2018, 125). Several researchers agree that this strategy is the most

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successful in achieving the goal of children's language acquisition and choice within their family domain (Nakamura, 2018: Chevalier, 2015).

2.3.1.9 Instruction to Translate

The 'instruction to translate' strategy is used to persuade children to communicate in their family's preferred language (Nakamura, 2018). This strategy is also viewed as restrictive as the child is expected to respond only in their parent's preferred language and nothing else. If the child's language choice is contrary to that of their parent's language expectations, their language utterances might be challenged (Chevalier, 2015).

The use of both the minimal grasp and the instruction to translate strategies contains an expectation whereby the children are required to be attentive to their language choice, meaning that they might have to adhere to specific language rules within their multilingual families (Nakamura, 2018).

Below the concept of language ideology will be discussed as a tool used by language speakers to communicate or express their beliefs and ideas through language

2.3.1.10 Language Shift in Multilingual Families

A language shift occurs whereby family members change from one language regularly used to communicating in another language within the family context (Schwartz, 2014a). Various reasons lead to a family's language shift. For instance, the sense of importance placed on one language versus the other might influence the family's language shift and affect the process of change within a family whereby elders still retain the use of a language and the children communicate in a new language (Gafarang, 2010). In Anothossen's study, his findings demonstrated the language shift within a family. The older generation held on to their Afrikaans-speaking language values, whereas the younger generation mostly communicated in English more than Afrikaans (Anothossen, 2009). Additionally, the inter-generational pattern of language shift was also observed in a study conducted amongst immigrant multilingual families from Mexico (Schwartz, 2014b). His findings showed a high likelihood for first-

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generation individuals to adopt the English language choice within their families instead of Spanish - their home language (Schwartz, 2014b).

2.3.1.11 Language Maintenance

Language maintenance is a strategy used within multilingual families to retain a family language. Language maintenance is defined as an attempt by a social group or unit to keep the use of its home language of communication (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015). Elders and parents who want to maintain their family or home language do this by transferring their language practices and beliefs to the younger generations (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015). In other instances, some families enforce stringent rules with consequences for those who do not obey the family's language rules (Jackson, 2006).

Below the concept of language ideology will be discussed as a tool used by language speakers to communicate or express their beliefs and ideas through language

2.4 LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

Language ideology is defined as the set of language ideas, views and beliefs based on which people determine their behaviour (Munishi, 2018, p.1). The influence of ideology in language can be observed through language users crafting their own beliefs and practices directed towards language forms (Munishi, 2018).

Curdt-Christiansen (2016) agrees with Spolsky that language ideology forms the most important part of language decisions in multilingual families. Spolsky (2004, p. 78) further highlights the following linguistic and non-linguistic conditions as factors that influence a multilingual family's language decisions: sociolinguistic context; socio-cultural context (the symbolic values associated with language or languages); socio-economic context, instrumental or economic values ascribed to a language; and socio-political context (national educational or language policy, "language choice as a right"). He infers that these conditions provide families with the basic tools for their own language decisions (Spolsky, 2004).

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2.5 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL USE OF LANGUAGE IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

In this section, we discuss language decisions made within multilingual families influenced by socio-economic, political and parent factors.

It is important to recognize that language decisions are not located solely within the family context, but that, rather, they intersect with various external factors such as economic, political, and socio-cultural factors, and parents' education and expectations (Grin 2016).

According to the South African Constitution, 11 languages were made official. These are English, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu (The Constitution of the Republic of South, 1996). However, historically, English and Afrikaans have always held a higher status than the 9 indigenous languages. Although 11 languages have been declared official, not all these languages hold the same status quo, and they are not treated equally. For example in institutions such as the national and provincial governments, laws and policies are written in English and the main language used for communication is English in parliament (Desai, 2001). Additionally, in education institutions, the English language holds the highest practice as all subjects are still taught in English in both primary and higher education institutions, except home language subjects. Because of this, the English language continues to hold a high level of esteem in South African society. This influence of language use is observed in national institutions and places great influence on the home environment, especially in families with younger and older children who are school-going where the language of learning and teaching is English.

Another example of the socio-political use of language was observed in a study conducted amongst Quebec immigrants. The majority language in Quebec is French, and, as a result, the French language serves as a tool of political interest. Because of this, the English language is viewed as a major threat to the French language and is, therefore, not publicly accepted as a language of use. As a result, this limits the use of English within multilingual family contexts, whereby the family would most likely communicate in French within their home context rather than in English (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).

Furthermore, the language policy of immigrant families was found to be influenced by their linguistic optimism. Linguistic optimism refers to an individual's attitudes and beliefs about the host country's language; for example, a language can be viewed negatively as an obstacle that needs to be overcome to access equal opportunities and achieve economic success in a foreign country (Grin, 2003). Additionally, an immigrant in the study upholds beliefs such as that the use of their home language is a human right contrary to the belief of their home language is being seen as an obstacle that may limit their participation and success in socio-political activities (Grin, 2015). Therefore, the researcher argues that family language ideologies can be influenced by both political and economic factors (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).

2.5.1 Perceptions and Values of Multilingualism Among Immigrant Families

Van Mensel (2018) conducted a study to determine the factors that influence the language choices of immigrant multilingual families. His findings showed that the language choices of immigrant multilingual families were influenced by the migration to another country where the dominant language is different from their home language. Therefore, in these multilingual families, the parents placed great emphasis on the development of bilingual skills for their children for them to cope with the language demands of their own family and those of the host country they are in (Van Mensel, 2018).

Anthonsissen (2012) agrees with Van Mensel about the influence of migration on language decisions. However, Anthonsissen's study was conducted in South Africa amongst a non-immigrant family who were Afrikaans speaking. Although the contexts of their studies were different, they both agreed that the language used in economic and educational sectors can directly influence a family's language decisions. Moreover, they also differed on their stance about the influence of the environment on language decisions. Anthonsissen (2012) believed that the environment a family is surrounded by will influence the family's language decisions whereas Van Mensel (2018) argued that each family independently decides on its language practices regardless of the language practices of their environment.

2.5.2 The Role of Language Ideologies Within Multilingual Families And The Impact On The Language Use Of Children

The language ideologies of parents have a direct impact on the language outcomes of children (King & Fogle, 2013). Additionally, King and Fogle (2017), argue that parents' linguistic practices and attitudes play a major role in determining the language of communication used in a multilingual family. They influence which language the child will use and outline the specific purpose of the language choice (Posel & Zeller, 2016). Children are brought up to become members of their cultural groups in part by how their parents interact and use their home language with them, especially in their early childhood (Schwartz, 2014a). As a result, children raised in a multilingual context are more likely to become fluent in two or more languages (Gallo & Hornberger, 2019).

Additionally, the language ideologies of parents can be discussed and planned to ensure that they align with the family's goals (King & Fogle, 2013). In some instances, for parents to maintain their desired family language goals and ensure their children adhere to these roles, they might rely on extended family members to help promote the use of a specific language choice (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).

Additionally, King and Fogle (2017), argue that parents' linguistic practices and attitudes play a major role in determining the language of communication used in a multilingual family. Therefore, children raised in a multilingual context are more likely to become fluent in two or more languages (Gallo & Hornberger, 2019).

2.6 THE MULTILINGUAL FAMILY STRUCTURE

The family structure consists of parents, grandparents, children and, sometimes, inclusion of other extended family members (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). In these family structures, mothers are generally known to play a major role in influencing their children's language outcomes, as they are the primary caregivers (Curdt- Christiansen & Wang, 2018). However, although mothers are known to play a primary role in teaching children language, the role of fathers in influencing children's language choices cannot be completely ignored, especially in multilingual families (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018). Jackson (2006) conducted a study amongst English

home language fathers who were married to Japanese women and had migrated to Japan to be with their families. His findings of the study indicated that these men played an active role in teaching their children their home language, although the children spoke Japanese predominantly and attended Japanese first language schools. To achieve this, they would expose their children to clubs or play activities, television and reading books where the instructions were provided in English. Additionally, they would visit other English-speaking families who lived in Japan for their children to practise conversational English (Jackson, 2006). These fathers expressed the importance for their family, especially the children, to know their home language with the hope that one day they would return to their home countries where English is the dominant language (Jackson, 2006).

2.7 PARENTS AND CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ABOUT FLP

To further elaborate on these strategies, other researchers focused on the parent-child interaction from the perspective of the child (Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Whereas some researchers studied these strategies from a parent-child's perspective.

2.7.1 Children's Perceptions Toward Their Parent's Language Policies in Multilingual Families

Children have also been observed to play an essential role in determining their FLPs (Jackson, 2006). They do this by accepting or rejecting their parent's language discourse strategies (Nakamura, 2018). According to Jackson (2006), children displayed the acceptance or non-acceptance of their parents' language by either communicating in their parents' desired language or by ignoring their parents' language advances by communicating in another language (Smith- Christmas, 2016). An example of a case which demonstrates children rejecting their parents' language strategies was observed in a study conducted in the Gaelic community, where the grandmother insisted on communicating in Gaelic to her English-speaking grandson even after he had requested that his grandmother communicates in English to him (Gafarang, 2010). Because the reason for this request was motivated by the grandson's non-fluency in the Gaelic language. Being fluent in Gaelic, he continued to

respond in English as he was more confident in the English language than he was in Gaelic.

2.7.2 Children's Experiences of Their Parent's Language Decisions

Children also have both negative and positive experiences concerning their parent's discourse strategies (Gafarang, 2010). Their feelings sometimes involve dissatisfaction when they are being ignored by their parents because of their language choices that contradict their parent's language preferences (Curdt- Christiansen, 2013). On the other hand, they also expressed the joy of being multilingual as it allowed them to communicate more universally (Gafarang, 2010, Jackson, 2006; Curdt- Christiansen, 2013).

2.7.3 Parents' Beliefs About Language Practices in Their Multilingual Families

One of the myths that surround bilingualism and multilingualism language strategies is that consistent and rigid implementation of a single language strategy is the only method in which to raise children bilingually (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Evidence shows that some families implement language practices that do not adhere to one strategy only, but rather one that displays a mixture of different strategies in a family home (Curdt- Christiansen, 2013). Furthermore, he states that most of these families have realized that their language systems need to be flexible so that they can accommodate the changing circumstances of the family, such as having children and having them enter the school and work context (Curdt- Christiansen, 2013).

2.8 IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE DECISIONS OF A FAMILY

When parents migrate to another country permanently, they expose themselves to a weakened parental role as 'linguistic authorities of the household, placing them in a linguistically subordinate position' (Luykx, 2005). This means that their language choices become more vulnerable in the face of the language practices of their environment. Implicit and explicit factors will be discussed below.

2.8.1 Implicit Factors

Implicit factors can sometimes include parental expectations, goals, and beliefs they have for their children's multilingual development and educational outcomes (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013). Reflected in home literacy practices, "they are based on the parents' cultural dispositions towards education, their own educational experiences and beliefs, their immigration experiences, and feelings of missed opportunities" (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 356). According to Curdt- Christiansen (2009), the study of multilingual immigrant families in Montreal showed that family language decisions were sometimes influenced by the parents' own culture and experiences.

2.8.2 Explicit Factors

Educational and political institutions play a major role in informing the language practices of families as individuals within a family context regularly interact with these institutions (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009; Gonzalez, 2001). For example, in a study conducted amongst Mexican immigrant mothers in Arizona, the researcher found that the mothers would switch from Spanish to English when helping their children with homework tasks (Gonzalez, 2001). Some of the immigrants also shared their experiences of living in Canada whereby fluency in the English language guaranteed them a variety of school opportunities, more career options to pursue and the ability to compete with everyone else in the economic sphere. Parents adapt to their children's language practices to be able to accommodate their children.

Political factors were related to the parent's historical position and to immigrant experiences, such as the fear of inequality and equality and their attitudes towards xenophobia, which were mitigating factors for their language choices (Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018).

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework used for this enquiry is the socio-cultural theory (SCT). This theory was selected to narrow the gap between the researcher and the research participants for the researcher to obtain a wealth of knowledge during the research interviews that will be used during data analysis.

Moreover, the SCT of Vygotsky (1987) was employed in this study to understand the language strategies and practices used in multilingual families between the parents and their children and other cases, including the study of the influence of extended family members such as grandparents. Vygotsky (1987) posits that in learning a language, social interaction between individuals and others within their environment plays a significant role in language development. In this study, the stance that language development occurs during interactions between the parents and their children, where language practices and strategies are used to choose the selected multilingual language of communication, is investigated. In addition, through these family interactions, individuals learn to obtain fluency by communicating with one another in the desired family language. Therefore, children can learn their family's language from their parents and use these language skills to interpret and make meaning of their experiences (Panda, 2005). Similarly, Vygotsky (1987) posits that a language is a tool that individuals use to develop their high-order mental abilities of thinking and the interpretation of their social world (Panda, 2005). Following Naidoo (2019), this researcher investigated the use of group discussion in improving comprehension skills within multilingual classrooms. Her findings showed the importance of language learning through interactions within the group between the teacher and learners as well as among the learners and their peers.

Furthermore, in this study, parents from multilingual families made language decisions within their families based on their judgements and perceptions about the importance of the chosen language.

The socio-cultural theory also highlights the zone of proximity which is defined as the amount of language learning that occurs when an individual learns from others or from those who are well experienced in that language (Pound, 2005). In this study, the zone of proximity was observed through children practising their chosen family language with their parents or siblings who are fluent in the desired family language and, also, between both parents in their communication with each other. Furthermore, language is viewed as playing an important cultural role (Omidire, 2020). Omidire (2020) further highlights the cultural and psychological dichotomy of language, and the cultural importance of language choice included the family's language decision to maintain

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their cultural identity. Using language, families can share their cultural ideas, beliefs and experiences throughout the different generations. As a result, cultural practices are maintained within each family group thus strengthening their group or cultural identity. Littleton & Mercer (2013) agree with (Omidire, 2020) that language is crucial in understanding socio-cultural theory. This means that, through social interactions, individuals are viewed as using language to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and to share ideas with others (Wilkinson e*t al.*, 2010).

2.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a review of the literature relative to previous research conducted about the factors that influence language decisions made in multilingual families. In the first section, the concept of language was discussed in great length as well as the importance of language within multilingual families. Furthermore, the following concepts were discussed briefly: the family language policy; parents' perceptions and values about multilingualism; and strategies and practices used in multilingual families. Finally, the theoretical framework of SCT was discussed for this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts by presenting a summary of the method and research design of this study. Firstly, the research paradigms and the qualitative methodological approach used will be discussed. Afterwards, a description of the explanatory case study research design, followed by a detailed description of the sampling procedure and the data collection methods employed in this study will be provided. Finally, a conclusion with a discussion of the ethical strategies that are adhered to and outline the role of the researcher in this study.

3.2 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM

3.2.1 Social Constructivism

A meta-theoretical paradigm refers to the process and strategies used by the researcher to obtain knowledge (Kumar, 2014). Every research study is informed by key philosophical assumptions that shape and direct the process. The philosophy will also be depended upon when judging the quality of research findings. The way knowledge or reality is understood and explained is shaped by three philosophical positions, namely positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Kumar, 2014). This study was guided by the social-constructivism paradigm. The researcher can understand a phenomenon only through listening to the experiences of participants. In the case of this study, that means listening to individuals who are exposed to multilingual contexts and seeing the ways they use to adapt to their circumstances. Also, through the interviews and focus groups, the researcher in this study was able to gain the participant's own experiences about the factors that influence language decisions made within their multilingual contexts.

The individual's interaction with his/her environment creates the cognitive structures that enable him/her to interpret their world. The interpretive stance allows individuals to construct their meanings and interpretations of their worlds to gain an understanding of their social context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, an individual's

interpretation of their surroundings is based on accounts of his/her personal experience negotiated with her external world (Willis, 2007).

In addition, this approach creates an opportunity for a holistic understanding of a phenomenon that cannot be limited to one objective meaning of reality, but which offers a wide array that accepts many truths embedded in individual experiences that are merged to create social meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The essential aspect of social constructivism includes culture and context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The participants in this study shared their own experiences of language use and language decisions that are influenced by their daily cultural meanings and experiences, interactions with their children, colleagues, their workplace as well as their communities. Through these social interactions, social meanings were derived and internalised by individuals from their home environment to influence their family language decisions.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

3.3.1 Qualitative Approach

For this enquiry, the qualitative research approach was selected. It is defined as an approach that helps in understanding an individual's experiences of a social phenomenon, through interaction and relationship building between the researcher and the research participants (Sara, 2018). This enquiry is based on the ideology that participants derive meaning through interactions with their social environment. Therefore, meaning is created between the interactions of participants. As a result, it becomes imperative that participants are studied in their natural environment to help gain information about their lived experiences and how they make meaning of the social construct (Barkhuizen, 2019).

The benefit of using a qualitative approach for my study allowed participants the freedom to express their opinions at their discretion. Furthermore, the participants gave examples and descriptions of their own experiences regarding language decisions within their multilingual families, thus allowing for their concerns to be at the forefront. The interviews were conducted with the participants while they were in their

homes, thus taking into consideration contextual factors as well as eliminating the artificiality of the research (Richards, 2009).

3.3.2 Advantages of The Qualitative Approach

One of the advantages of the qualitative approach is that it is localised in the lived experiences of the participants about the research topic; therefore, this created an increased opening for the research participants to share their own experiences with minimal influence from the researcher. Additionally, the use of the qualitative approach awarded the chance to study the social construct about language decisions, not in the isolation of the context in which it occurs, thus providing a holistic approach to the phenomenon (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Finally, the qualitative approach is inductive, so that after the selection of an interpretation strategy, the researcher was able to draw generalisations about the social construct from studying the individual experiences of the participants (Richards, 2009).

3.3.3 Disadvantages of The Qualitative Approach

Various concerns are associated with the use of the qualitative approach. Firstly, the qualitative approach is criticised for investigating participants' meaning and experiences of the social phenomenon being studied with a lack of consideration of the influence of the researcher's social context (Yin, 2014: Silverman, 2013). This study was conducted electronically, through a video recording platform, with the participants in their home environment. As a result, some of the challenges that were encountered included a limitation of participation during the interviews, especially with the children who seemed shy to communicate their opinions on camera with a 'stranger'. Some of the strategies that were employed to address these concerns included building rapport with the participants, especially the children, by speaking in a friendly and child-accommodating manner to avoid their feeling overwhelmed and building a trusting relationship with them. The researcher also shared brief information about herself and her interests. Rapport building with the participants was important to build a trusting relationship with them, as well as making them feel comfortable with sharing personal information with the researcher.

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Furthermore, qualitative enquiry is criticized for being time-consuming (Sallee & Flood, 2012). To mitigate this criticism, the interviews were conducted under strict time conditions where the process of data analysis proceeded immediately after the interviews ended. In addition, owing to the interviews being conducted electronically, the recordings were saved and reviewed later to ensure that the researcher did not misrepresent any data collected. Finally, scholars (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Mouton, 2001) argued that the qualitative approach is subject to the possibility of information manipulation by both the researcher and the research participants. As a result, various data collection methods, strategies and techniques of analysis were used to minimise the possibility of information manipulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

The explanatory case study was selected as the most suitable research design for this study. The explanatory case design was ideal for understanding the adoption of language in multilingual family settings based on the experiences of family members. An exploratory case study is commonly employed in research which attempts to investigate a phenomenon which is still not fully understood (Reiter, 2017). Additionally, it involves the extraction of meanings, drawing relationships between different ideas and so developing a deeper understanding of what constitutes a phenomenon (Subedi, 2016). For this study, the explanatory design created an opportunity for the researcher to conduct this enquiry of limited scope, to investigate this unknown phenomenon, using 2 multilingual families about their influences in deciding the language of communication within their family contexts.

Yin (2014) defines a case study as being a method of enquiry that is useful about a social phenomenon or case. It is important for the phenomenon being studied to occur within boundaries to qualify as a case. Additionally, aspects, such as culture and context, play an important role in the in-depth investigation of a case (Creswell, 2018). Case study research designs are described as being important as they sharpen the process because they provide 'boundaries' for the case so helping to ensure that the information gathered will help in answering the selected phenomenon of interest and nothing else (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher is also able to use multiple sources of information when using a case study design so increasing the

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trustworthiness of the research results and the generalization of research to other similar contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Limitations associated with case studies are said to occur mostly during the process of analysis when the researcher is writing a report about his/her findings (Yin, 2014). Therefore, the researcher needs constantly to be aware of their own biases, opinions, and beliefs to avoid the influence of these when performing interpretations of the research (Yin, 2014). Moreover, during a case study, participants may feel that their sense of privacy is not protected owing to the recording of their interview through an electronic platform. As a result, they may not be very transparent and honest in their responses (Yin, 2014). Finally, case studies are also subject to the concept of generalizability and transferability (Kitto et al., 2008) In considering these limitations, the following precautionary step was followed, viz. the process of data storage was explained to the research participants by telling them that the interview recordings would be stored in a password encrypted folder and that the recordings would be available only to the researcher and their supervisor. Finally, owing to the interviews being conducted online through a video recording platform, it was also important to make the research participants aware of the security limitations relative to storing information on online clouds (Hensel *et al.*, 2021).

3.5. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND RESEARCH SITE

The sampling location was Gauteng. The participants were selected before the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that proximity and easy accessibility to the research participants were considered in the selection of participants. The criteria used to select research participants were valuable in this study in helping to understand how parents, who are from different ethnic backgrounds and who speak different languages, are raising children in one family unit and determining or choosing which language of communication would be used in their home. Owing to Covid-19 restrictions, the interviews were conducted online, through a video recording platform.

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3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

The researcher employed the purposive sampling strategy for the selection of participants by identifying two multilingual families, where the parents in each family were from different language backgrounds and had a minimum of two children they are raising together. The first family consisted of a Venda home language man married to a Tsonga home language woman. They are the parents of two children, a 9-year-old boy and a 9-month-old son. The 09-month-old child did not participate in the study owing to his age. The second family consisted of a Southern-Sotho first language man married to a Venda first language speaker woman, who are the parents of two children, a 12-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl. These participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the research study (Etikan, I,. Musa, S A., & Alkassim, 2016, p. 2). Additionally, owing to the interviews being conducted online, internet availability and a good connection were considered important for the study to ensure that the participants were able to take part in the study.

3.5.2 Benefit of The Purposive Sampling Strategy

The benefit of using a purposive sampling strategy is that it minimises the process of searching for relevant data during data analysis (Patton, 2015). As a result, the pool of information available becomes smaller, and it allows the researcher effectively to compare his/her findings with other studies (Suri, 2011).

3.6 DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

The method of data collection used for this study was semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observations to ensure that a rich description and in-depth information about factors that determine the language of communication decisions made in multilingual families were obtained (Vanderstoep & Johnson, 2009). The data collection process is indicated in figure 3.1 below:

Interview with Family 1:

1st session: Interview with Parents (mother and Father)

2nd Session: Focus group with parents and one child.

Interview with family 2 :

1st Session: Interview with Parents (mother and Father)

2nd Session: Focus group with parents and 2 childen.
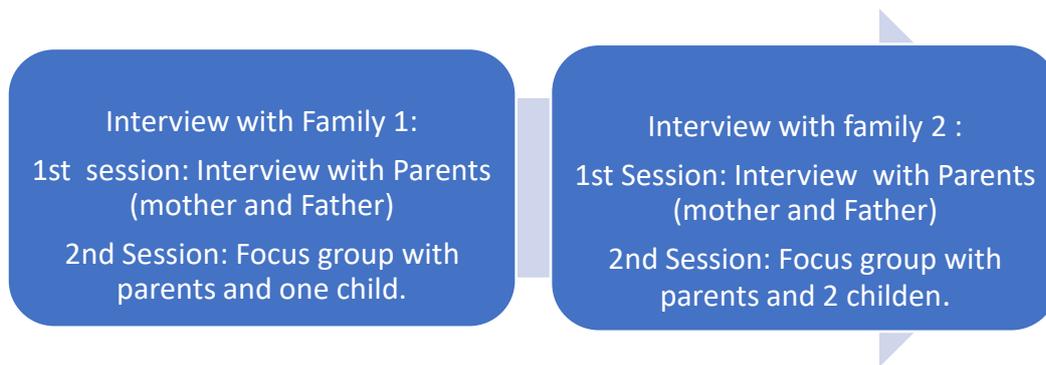
Figure 3.1: Representation of the process followed during data collection.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The nature of semi-structured interviews is that they follow a flexible and organic interview process (Tracy, 2013). The researcher had a list of non-formal questions used as a guide with the two families during the interview (Tracy, 2013).

Important things that were done during the interview (Maree,2020; Maree, 2015; Maree, 2007) were:

- the observation of both verbal and non-verbal responses from the participants to be able to identify new concepts that arose during the discussion and that were deemed to have a positive impact on the study; playing an active role by using a probing mechanism to get further clarification and explanations about the participants' responses. Limitations associated with the use of an online recording platform were considered as they affected the observation of both verbal and non-verbal responses.
- the prepared set of questions was useful to help keep the conversation on track and served as a reminder of important information that the researcher wanted to obtain from the family.
- the recording of the interview allowed the researcher to write notes and assess the participants' interaction after the discussion and assist in analysing participants' responses.

3.6.1.1 Advantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

The data collection process that was selected for this enquiry was the use of semi-structured interviews. By using semi-structured interviews, the researcher explored

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the participants' views and perceptions about the factors that influence their language decisions within their multilingual context. In keeping with the qualitative approach, the participants were provided with an opportunity to give their responses according to their discretion (Leavy, 2017). The participants' perceptions about the factors that influence language decisions in their multilingual contexts were given with minimal influence from the researcher's views (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the use of semi-structured interviews provided a low level of interference as the researcher acted only by providing guidance and asking some key questions during the interview. In conclusion, the information gathered in the form of words through the interviews was used during the data interpretation process in Chapter 4 to derive themes and sub-themes for this study by employing the process of thematic analysis.

3.6.1.2 Disadvantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are subject to research biases. Researchers are present during the process, and they have their own pre-conceived, subjective views which may influence their findings and interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To overcome this limitation, I kept a reflection diary during the research process (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The use of semi-structured interviews is subject to a long labour-intensive task. "The Interviewer needs to be smart, sensitive, poised, and nimble, as well as knowledgeable about the relevant substantive issues" (Adams, 2015. Pg. 493). In addition, conducting semi-structured interviews takes more time and the process is not easy (Adams, 2015).

3.6.2 Focus Groups

The researcher also conducted a focus group interview with the entire family (parents and children) for both families. A focus group is defined as a method of data collection that involves three to four participants and is aimed at discussing the research study (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). When conducting a focus group, "participants will be able to build on each other's ideas and comments to provide an in-depth view not attainable from individual interviews" (Maree, 2020, p. 111). However, information may be biased

because of the family dynamics in each family. For example, during the interviews', in family 2, the children seemed uncomfortable about giving responses in front of their parents and would sometimes look up to one parent to receive validation of responses. To overcome this limitation, the parents offered to leave the interview so the researcher could build rapport with the children first. Owing to this, the researcher used validation and probing strategies such as validating their responses and further probing their responses for clarity. Additionally, the use of communicative attempts such as paying attention and asking questions to show interest in points raised by the children was essential in this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.6.3 Reflective Journal

The researcher also kept a reflective journal during the entire research process. The reflective journal helped to record observations that were noted during the family interviews as well as the recording of personal reflections on some concepts of interest that were raised (Maree, 2020). The reflective journal was important in helping the researcher keep her thoughts, anything important she takes note of, or anything that can help the researcher observe something that might help her understand more about her research participants (Kumar, 2011).

3.6.4. Data Documentation

For this research study, the researcher documented data using hand notes and video recordings from the interview process. The hand notes were used to write important questions that came up during the interview, and observations of the interactions and communication between the family members, to ensure that important information was not missed. Also, the video recording was conducted to document the interview process. The video was recorded electronically using an online video recording platform. Therefore, the process of data documentation included the use of the recorded interviews to 1) transcribe the interview; 2) review to confirm the themes derived; as well as derive new meaning from the data (Flick, 2009). The information gathered was then used for interpretation through the process of thematic analysis to make meaning of the information gathered by deriving themes that helped me to answer my main research question and secondary questions.

Using an online video recording platform was useful in ensuring that information was accurately captured, and valuable information needed for this study was not overlooked. The benefit of conducting online video-recorded interviews is that it helps alleviate the pressure of note-taking during the interviews and allows more focus by interacting with the participants, maintaining eye contact and being present with the participants. Furthermore, the researcher was able to take short notes about key concepts that were shared during the online video-recorded interviews. The benefits of online video-recorded interviews include the ability for "the interviewer to probe, check to understand and follow the direction of conversation" with fewer distractions (Hensen *et al.* 2021).

3.6.4.1 Challenges of Using An Electronic Video Recording Platform

The challenges associated with using an online video recording platform for data collection include the difficulty of building rapport and trust relationships with the participants, especially children. Furthermore, there is the responsibility for privacy placed on the participants (Hansen *et al.*, 2021). Sometimes, participants might have difficulties finding a quiet space to conduct the interviews without any interference in their home environment. Another challenge includes connection and network challenges. For this study, specific strategies were employed to ensure good rapport building with the participants, especially the children. Moreover, the internet connection was tested before the video recording to check for any delays in audio or video.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS: INDUCTIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Data analysis is described as a process that allows the researcher to organise information to derive meaning from evidence gathered by looking for general ideas about relationships and categories of information (De Vos, 2005). For this study, inductive thematic data analysis and interpretation were selected to aid in analysing data and derive themes from the research findings.

3.7.1 Inductive Thematic Analysis

Inductive thematic data analysis is defined as a method used to identify, analyse, and report patterns of data about a phenomenon and the themes that are derived from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process of analysis allows the researcher to reduce the volume of the data collected in the field without compromising the quality or important aspects of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis method helped to answer the research question about the determining factors of language decisions made in multilingual contexts. A part of this analysis was facilitated during the interview through observations, a simple note-taking process, and a repeated process of watching the interview video recording.

The next step included ordering the interview information into themes and patterns. Afterwards, this information was analysed through the process of data generation, classifying, categorising and interpretation process. Finally, this process was completed by transcribing and organising data into themes that helped in answering the research question (De Vos, 2005). Finally, the researcher was able to report on the participants' experiences and meanings they create about language which then influences their decisions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The process of analysing qualitative data uses the steps outlined below. It is important to note that these steps are flexible and do not occur in a linear process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Step 1: Planning and Recording Data
This step is categorised by recording and transcribing information from the research interviews.

Step 2: Collecting Data and Conducting A Preliminary Analysis
This step involved an analysis of the data both during and after the collection process and studying data gathered for an understanding of information before compartmentalising the data into themes and sub-themes.

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Step 3: Organising the Data

This process was important to ensure that all short notes taken during the data collection process were transcribed and labelled with identifying information.

Step 4: Reading and Writing

This step included a thorough reading through transcribes evidence and having a general sense of meaning before separating the data into themes and writing key components and general outcomes from the data.

Step 5: Coding data

This step involved the coding of categories and information themes using colour codes or keywords.

Step 6: Generating Categories and Themes

In this step, the common themes and silent themes to form a general opinion about the data collected were identified.

Step 7: Testing the Emergent Understanding

This process involved the evaluation of the effectiveness of the data to answer the research question.

Step 8: Searching for Alternative Home Language Explanation

In this step, the researcher focused on additional explanations that helped identify possible relations that emerge among the data.

Step 9: Interpretation and Report Writing

Finally, in this step, the process of data interpretation was conducted, using the comparative method of previous research with the research findings to derive meaning from the data.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure that the research study was conducted ethically, the researcher successfully applied for an ethical clearance with the faculty of education to conduct

the research. Also, an application for ethical clearance to use an online video recording platform was submitted and consent to record the interview was requested from the participants. Finally, after the approval of the ethical committee was received, a letter of invitation was sent out to the research participants.

3.8.1 Informed Consent and Assent

This process involved a clear explanation to the research participants about the purpose of the study. The participants consented to participate in the study and were subsequently given an informed consent form to sign. For children younger than 18 years, the parents signed for parental consent (Creswell, 2013). The researcher also requested consent from the research participants to conduct the interviews electronically.

3.8.2 Voluntary Participation

A clear explanation of the purpose of the study was explained to the participants, which is to find out from them the factors that influence their language decisions within their multilingual family context. Moreover, the role of the researcher was clarified as acting as the research facilitator for this study contrary to their role of being research participants where their opinions and perceptions would be used for the study. Importantly, the researcher explained to the research participants that their participation was completely voluntary and explained that they could withdraw from the study at any time during the research with no repercussions for their decision (Creswell, 2013).

3.8.3 Anonymity

The participants' real names were not used in the study. Instead, pseudonyms were used to protect their identity. The non-disclosure of participants' personal information is important to protect their identity and prevent causing any harm to the research participants (Patton, 2015).

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3.8.4 Confidentiality

Owing to the nature of the study being conducted via an online video recording platform, the participants were informed that they needed to find a private space in their home, ensure that their connections were stable and that their devices were charged. Furthermore, the researcher informed them that they could immediately leave the recording should they feel that their privacy was being compromised during the interview recording and that they should immediately inform the researcher (Hensel *et al.*, 2021).

3.8.5 Protection of data

After the data analysis process, the researcher ensured the protection of data to avoid the data being available to anyone who might use the data maliciously (Patton, 2015). It was also important that the recorded video interview be kept safely in a password-protected device where no one could have access to the information except the researcher and the research supervisor (Hensel *et al.,* 2021). The data transmitting process can include encryption or data labels that can only be understood by the researcher (Kraut *et al.*, 2004).

3.9 RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

According to (Maree, 2016), a qualitative researcher must assess the trustworthiness of the result findings when conducting data analysis.

3.9.1 Credibility

The purpose of credibility is to ensure congruence of the research findings with the participant's realities. In this study, the process of triangulation was implemented where various data collection methods were used to identify similar patterns from the data collected (Stahl & King, 2020). Also, the same data collection methods were used for both family 1 and family 2; semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observations (Carlos, 2021).

3.9.2 Member Checking

In this study, member checking occurred via online video-recorded interviews. Using the thematic analysis method, the researcher was able to document, code and analyse the data collected from the participants. After this process, member checking was conducted with both families so that they could confirm or verify whether the collected data represented their views and ideas that they shared during the data collection process, as well as to clarify any misunderstandings in the data collected (Stahl & King, 2020).

3.9.3 Observations

This process was conducted throughout the assessment interviews and focus groups. For this study, the researcher was able to question her findings, providing bracketed comments on any opinions and/ or evaluate comments" (Stahl & King, 2020, pg. 26). This involved paying attention to the participant's behaviour and ways of communicating during the interviews. The recorded electronic videos were also reviewed during the data analysis process to note down any important information and observations that might have been missed.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to present a summary of the research method and design. The first part of the chapter focused on describing the research paradigms and the use of the qualitative methodological approach as well as the case study design used in this study. Additionally, a detailed description of the sampling procedure and the data collection methods and analysis procedures was provided. Finally, a discussion about the ethical considerations that were considered and followed for this study was provided.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings of this study gathered through the methods discussed in this chapter. These findings are explained, and a discussion thereof follows.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a discussion of the research findings gathered during the data collection process. The thematic analysis system was used to interpret and organise the results into themes and sub-themes. Additionally, a discussion about the inclusion and exclusion of data is included that helped guide the interpretation of the research results. That helped in deriving themes and sub-themes of the study.

4.1.2 Results of The Thematic Analysis

The findings of this study are presented using the Thematic System of Analysis.

Table 4.1 below displays themes and sub-themes derived using the thematic analysis process:

Four main themes and 10 subthemes were identified during the thematic analysis process. The themes are related to the perceptions of parents concerning the given aspects. The chapter is structured according to the four main themes that emerged:

- The cultural value of home language;
- The influence of the environment on language choices;
- The value of language in education and society; and
- The influence of children on the family language patterns.

Table 4.1: Themes related to the value of a home language

Themes	Sub-themes
The cultural value of the home language	- Family cultural identity - Transference of cultural values - Maintenance of family relationships - Cultural dynamics of adopting the spousal language

The influence of the environment on language choices	• School Setting • Work Setting • Home and Community Setting
The value of language in education and society	• Economic and Career opportunities
The influence of children on family language practices	• Language communication between children and parents • Language proficiency

Table 4.2 below provides an outline of the different themes and the data sources where data regarding the said perceptions were extrapolated:

Table 4.2: Visual Presentations of Themes and Data Sources

Themes	Data Sources			
	Family Interview 1	Family Interview 2	Focus group 1	Focus Group 2
The cultural value of the home language	√	√	√	√
The influence of the environment on language choices	√	√	√	√
The value of language in education and society	√	√		√
The role of children in influencing family language patterns	√	√	√	√

Table 4.3 provides codes used to represent the participants who took part in this study.

Table 4.3: Participant's Coding System

Family 1 (F1)	Family 2 (F2)
F1P1 (Family 1, Father)	F2P1 (Family 2, Father)
F1P2 (Family 1, mother)	F2P2 (Family 2, mother)
F1C1 (Family1, child)	F2C1 (Family 2, child 1)
	F2C2 (Family 2, child 2)

4.2 THEME 1: THE CULTURAL VALUE OF HOME LANGUAGE

As Mbakop and Ndada (2021) claimed, a home language is a bearer of one's culture. A home language represents a person's norms and practices that are identified with a unique group. Figure 4.1 provides a visual presentation of the value of a home language.
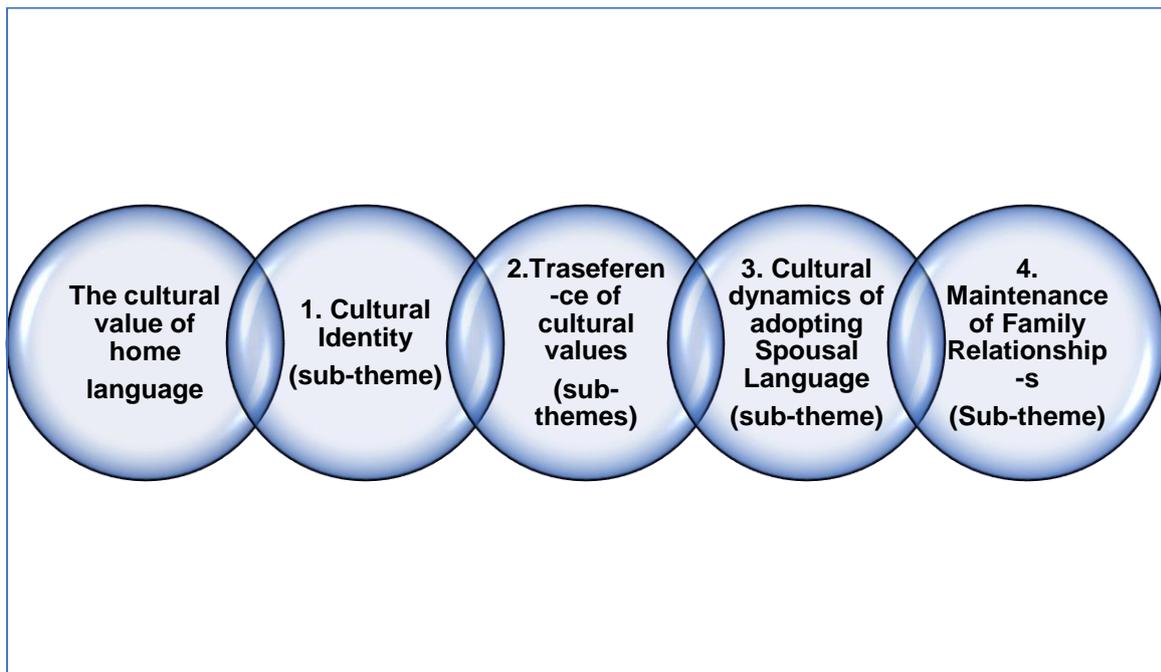
Figure 4.1: Themes Related to The Value of A Home Language

4.2.1 Discussion of Theme 1: The Cultural Value of Home Language

The cultural value of language refers to the principles and ideologies that govern an individual's behaviours, beliefs, and attitudes within cultural groups. Each culture has its norms and practices that are unique to its group (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). In addition, these norms and cultural practices act as social markers that distinguish one cultural group from another, thus forming the group's identity. Historically, language has been known as a tool used by members of cultural groups to share ideas, beliefs, and practices. As a result, it becomes paramount that everyone within the group knows and understands the group's home language (Johnson, 2013).

The theme of the cultural value of language consists of four sub-themes that will be discussed in this section. The sub-themes are family cultural identity, transference of cultural values, maintenance of family relationships, and cultural dynamic of adopting the spousal language (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). Table 1.7 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria that categorised the data in theme 1.

Table 4.4: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for theme 1

Subthemes:	Inclusion	Exclusion
Family cultural Identity	Data relating to important aspects of shared beliefs, personal identity, and group identity.	Any reference to data that does not include the importance of shared beliefs, personal identity, and group identity.
Transference of cultural values	Data that include language values are transferred from the older generation (parents) to the younger generation (children).	Any reference made to language values transferred from other individuals who do not fall under the category of the participant's family structure
Maintenance of Family relationships	Data include the maintenance of relationships with extended family members such as grandparents, aunts, and cousins.	Any reference to data that relates to other individuals who do not fall under the category of the participant's extended family members.
Cultural dynamics of adopting the spousal language	Data that include participants who are married to each other.	Any reference to data that include participants who are not married to each other.

4.2.1.1 Family Cultural Identity

Regarding the role of cultural identity in the home language, the participants expressed the importance of retaining their cultural values as they form part of their cultural identity. Although the participants have migrated from rural to urban areas, they still hold a strong sense of belief in the importance of retaining their cultural and language practices as these are units that play an essential role in their identity formation. Moreover, they view these as essential in providing their self-definition and tools to distinguish themselves from others.

Therefore, as the participants indicated, it becomes paramount for them to incorporate the use of their home language daily in their homes, especially when communicating with the children. Commenting on the value of language, participants 1 and 2 expressed the following views:

F1P2:

The essence of who I am is directly connected to my own language identity. For example, Tsonga people are scattered in both Mpumalanga and Limpopo (Giyani), although it is the same language, there are many variations to it and you can immediately tell where I am from by how I speak and I like identification because that is part of who I am and something I would not like to separate from.

F2P2:

Although we are living in a westernized society, I find it important that we always know our roots and I feel like language provide that opportunity for us to be grounded in who we are and where we come from.

The parents speak about the relationship between their identity and the home language. They acknowledge that the use of their home language is important to maintain and practise their culture in a world that has widely adopted the western culture.

Additionally, the parents expressed the importance of having their children learn their home language as it forms a major part in the development of the children's self-

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identification and creating a sense of belonging through following their family practices. As a result, the parents expressed that they have created a space within their family space where their home language can be practised as much as possible, as there are far fewer opportunities to do so outside their home contexts. F1P1 expressed how they accommodate their home language in the home thus:

> *I agree it is very important for us to retain our languages to not lose our culture, I would not like to speak another language in my house because it is used outside.*

F1P2 added:
> *Language is a big representation of who we are. If we would be able to speak our languages comfortably, we would not forget who we are, our culture and our traditions. We tend to lose ourselves when we do not continue speaking our languages comfortably.*

The participants indicated that their home language still plays a pivotal role as a social memory of their identity and values. F2P1 commented thus:

> *Language is important, for example, our mother tongue tells a lot about who we are. So, when we know our language; we can follow our traditions and cultures.*

F2P2 concurred:
> *Although we are living in a westernized society, I find it important that we always know our roots and I feel like language provide that opportunity for us to be grounded in who we are and where we come from.*

The use of the mother tongue or home language is widely reinforced within these families. Language in these families serves as a tool they use to express their social identity. They **can** express and practise their personhood through the use of their home language.

4.2.1.2 Transference of Cultural Values

From the data, it emerged that the parents found it important and saw it as their responsibility to preserve their cultural practices to ensure that their family's identity is preserved and continued. Therefore, the home language is viewed as an important tool in transferring cultural practices from the older generation to the younger generation. The older generation are described as being the knowledge bearers of the family carrying much cultural wisdom (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). Moreover, they take on the role of being teachers, especially towards the younger generation. In this case, the home language is used as the language of teaching and maintaining contact among the families. Furthermore, these families are made up of parents, who are considered the older generation, whereas parents are the second generation, and the children are the younger generation (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). Furthermore, when looking at a family (parents and children), this hierarchy takes on a different shape where the father takes on the position of being the older generation with the mother as the second generation and the children falling in the third-generation category. The family adopts the father's cultural practices and language. As a result, the father then becomes responsible for teaching and sharing his language and traditions first with the mother in their marriage relationship. Afterwards, both the mother and father then help teach the children their family home language. The mother also plays an essential part in transferring the father's language and cultural practices to the children as they usually play the main role of being a primary caregiver. The role of parents in the transfer of cultural values is described by the participants as follows:

F1P1

> *For me, it is important for my children to first learn how to speak in Venda as it is their father's language, then Tsonga (mother's language) and English, in exactly this order. For the rest, they will decide for themselves which language they want to speak. For me it is very flexible, the only important thing is that they (children) are strongly rooted in Venda.*

FIP2 added:

The ability to communicate in my language and importantly, pass it on to my children is important so that I can preserve my own culture and tradition, and preserve the essence of who I am.

As the parents expressed, there is a higher expectation for the parents to ensure that the family, especially the children, learn their home language (father's language). In the case of F1P1, she is from a different language background than her husband, so the act of teaching her children the language is not always achieved with ease as she has only learned the family's home language through marriage. F1P1 expressed her effort in teaching her children their home language thus:

When I communicate with them, I speak in Sesotho and English. So, I communicate in Sesotho with the children so they can learn Sesotho. Although I am not very traditional, it is still important for me to know my language practices and be able to share them with my children.

The mother in (F1P2) reported that she tries her best to communicate in the father's language when communicating with her children, but sometimes she resorts to her home language as it is most 'natural' to her. For example, she stated that, when she disciplines her children, although her husband prefers her to communicate in the Tshivenda language (Father's language), she would speak to them in Xitsonga, her home language, as she can more easily express herself in her home language than in the Venda language.

Although my husband also encourages me to use Tshivenda sometimes so they can also learn to be fluent in their home language. The dominant language is usually your language because that is the first language that you use to think and when you went to yell at someone you are more inclined to speak in your language which is Tsonga for me in this case. But we do try as much as we can to incorporate all languages as we want them to be multilingual. **(F1P2).**

Both families agreed on the importance of the language practices being passed down to their children. The families also rely on the mothers to help the children learn their home language. In addition, they employ various strategies within their households to

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help their children learn their home language such as using more than one language when communicating with them.

4.2.1.3 Maintenance of Family Relationships

In both families, the fathers **(F1P1)** and **(F2P1)**, reported that they consider the home language to be an important tool in maintaining their family relationships. Individuals use their home language to maintain contact with their family members, especially their extended family members who might have not had the opportunity to be exposed to other languages (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). Therefore, they still use their home language as the main language of communication. The multilingual families investigated in this study have striven to keep the relationships with their extended family members although they have migrated from rural to urban areas. In addition, these family members still play an essential role in their lives by assisting them with child caregiving. In some instances, the parents take their children to the rural areas to stay with their grandparents or aunts permanently or to visit during school holidays, thus relieving the parents. In other cases, the extended family members move in with the parents in the urban areas to assist them with child caregiving tasks. In these instances, the maintenance of relationships with extended family members has language located at the centre, as it is a tool used to communicate amongst the family members including the children. The participants expressed the following views regarding the role of the home language in family relationships:

F1P2 expressed the role of the family in teaching her child their home language:
He grew up with my mom and because my mom speaks Tsonga, he learnt that language first and is still fluent in it more than the other languages. Now that they have come back to stay with us, my sister is helping me with them especially when I am at work, so they stay with her mostly, and she is Tsonga speaking and communicates with them in Tsonga as well.

Although there could be many reasons to learn a home language, the participants indicated that they wanted their children to learn the language so that they fitted into the extended family or cultural group. FIP2 commented:

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And not be isolated from their extended family members because of language. Especially the older generation (grandparents) who do not speak any other language either than their home language.

FIP2 added:

He grew up with my mom and because my mom speaks Tsonga, he learnt that language first and is still fluent in it more than the other languages.

F2P2 echoed similar views as follows:

My kids grew up in Venda with my parents in their early developmental years. So, they learnt to speak Venda and they are fluent in it. I think I can say for me it is difficult' not being able to communicate with the older people in my family who did not understand English.

The mother in family 2 **(F2P2)** expressed the important view that not teaching their children to be fluent in their home language home can involve breaking generational relationships that are viewed as important to the growth of the children and the support of the parents.

so, if we do not allow our children to learn our home languages, we are taking away an opportunity for them to build relationships with their grandparents and other extended family members.

Parents rely on their extended family members to help raise their children. In both Family 1 and Family 2, their children were initially raised by their grandparents and were exposed to the languages used in these respective homes. Therefore, when the parents make their own family language decisions, they do not ignore the importance of maintaining their family language to help to maintain the relationship between the children and the grandparents although they do not stay with them anymore.

4.2.1.4. Cultural Dynamics of Adoption of Spousal Language

Mothers from both families described the adoption of the spousal language as very important for them both to learn and be fluent in their spouse's home language. The importance of learning and becoming fluent in their spouse's language is a cultural

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expectation for married women (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). Describing the significance of learning the spousal language, F2P1 said:

According to our culture, when I marry a woman, they take my surname and are also expected to be able to speak in my language. However, if you are unable to in the beginning it is still fine, but as they will eventually learn.

F2P2 added:

Well, with me it is because I am married to a Sotho-speaking man I had to transition to his language as his family, like my mother-in-law, speaks in Sesotho, so it just became my second language.

From the views expressed by the participants, it can be established that some of the benefits that are associated with adopting their spouse's language included an improvement in communication within their marriage, a deeper understanding of the other person and more fluid conversations within their families (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021).

From the point of view of the mothers in both family 1 and family 2, **(F1P2) (F2P2)**, they seemed both to understand, and not have any objections to these cultural language expectations. However, they shared the view that it is not an easy process of adaptability as they are from a different language background to that of their spouse, but they do their best always to learn and improve these new language skills. On the other hand, the fathers, **(F1P1)** and **(F2P1),** expressed an interest in learning their spouse's languages and shared the view that they enjoy the benefits of learning their spouse's language in their marriage relationships. Additionally, the father in **family 2 (F2P1)** shared that he also identifies himself with his wife's ethnic identity as they are partners.

At the end of the day, I am also Venda because she is Venda, so it is important that I can speak with her family and understand her better. To marry an individual from a different language background has taught me a lot and opened

my eyes to a lot of things. For example, I have learnt how other people perform their cultural practices and how they show respect towards their elders.

In the marriage relationship between the mother and the father, culturally, the mother is expected to learn her spouse's language and adopt it as her language as she has been married to her husband's family, even though the language transition is not always easy because they speak a different language to their husbands. The mothers invest in learning and speaking their spouses' home language.

4.3 THEME 2: THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE ON LANGUAGE CHOICES

Language choices are closely related to the environment in which the families live. These include the workplace, school and the community, as indicated in figure 4.2.
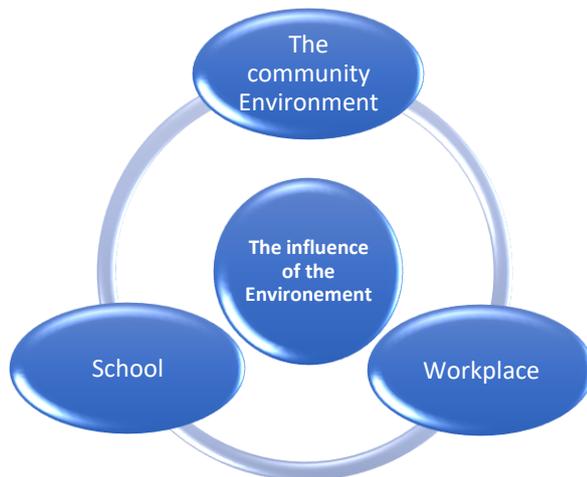
Figure 4.2: The influence of environment on language choices

4.3.1 Discussion of Theme 2: The Environmental Influence on Language Choices

The influence of the environment refers to the various spaces that families interact with daily. It is the environment the families form part of. These environments are the workplace, school, and the community. Individuals from each family interact with these environments at varying levels; the parents interact with their workplace through work, the children through their school, and the community through their being community members. On the one hand, children interact with the workplace through their parents, school through their learning and community through being community members. In

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all these environments, the families reported that they had experienced the use of different language dialects in these spaces.

Table 4.5: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for theme 2

Subthemes:	Inclusion	Exclusion
Workplace	Data that include language use in the workplace of the parents in F1 and F2	Any reference to data that does not include language use in the workplace of the parents in F1 and F2
School	Data that include language use only in the school context	Data that include language use in any other context that is not the school environment.
Home and Community	Data that include language use only in the home and community context	Any reference to information that includes language use in any context either than in the home and community

4.3.1.1 Work Setting

From the data, it emerged that all the participants work in workplace environments in which different languages are used to communicate with their colleagues and their superiors. They shared their experiences of regularly having to switch from one language to another when speaking to their colleagues, as they work with individuals from different backgrounds. The father in Family 2 **(F2P1)** shared that he enjoyed having to switch languages when speaking to his colleagues as this has allowed him to learn different languages.

> *At work, that is where I learned to speak different languages. I interact with different people and use their languages. However, I do sometimes confuse languages between French and Portuguese. (F2P1).*

On the contrary, the mother in **Family 1 (F1P2)** expressed her dissatisfaction with having to switch between languages at work. She described the experience as difficult as she uses code-switching in her speech, thus affecting her language fluency.

> *Sometimes it gets confusing, and I forget what language I was using and mix it with words from a different language. Sometimes I speak to my Tswana friends*

in Tshivenda, but I would quickly correct myself and apologise quickly, telling them that I had forgotten that I am with Setswana-speaking people now. (F1P2).

I am also far from home and my friends and colleagues here speak Sesotho, so I have just become accustomed to speaking the language and because I want to learn their language. (F2P2).

Both fathers concurred about their experiences of learning different languages as being worthwhile.

Regarding these experiences, F1P1 indicated:

English is not the dominating language with my colleagues and we communicate in Sotho, Pedi, and sometimes in IsiXhosa. It depends as I am working with individuals who are from diverse backgrounds. I think I am used to switching languages, even in my previous workplace, I used to switch from one language to another depending on what the person speaks or is fluent in. I was interacting with them so spoke in that.

Although there are different views about the language used in the workplace, we can conclude that owing to the work environment, both of these parents have had to negotiate their language use to accommodate the people they are interacting with.

4.3.1.2 School Setting

From the interviews conducted, it emerged that the school environment plays an essential role in the language choices made in familial contexts. During the interviews, both parents in **Family1** and **Family 2** described the importance of ensuring that their children are fluent in their school language of instruction. They did this by incorporating the language of instructions used in their children's school into their family language practices. Commenting on the role of parents in supporting their children using the language spoken at school, F1P2 said:

My family stays in Pretoria and most of the schools around my area are English medium schools. Meaning our kids are taught in English at school. As a result,

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as a family, we try as much as we can to accommodate them by mostly speaking to them in English, especially the eldest one.

Regarding the use of English, the participants indicated that it was the most used language in most multicultural and multiracial schools. Participant F1P2 added:

I think the environment we were in played a role in our language choices. In many institutions, especially the white-dominated schools, you meet people from different language backgrounds and English is usually the safest choice language-wise and it also accommodates most people.

Furthermore, the mother in **Family 1 (F1P2)** described the influence of her school environment on her language decisions. Below is a direct extract from the interview where she outlines an experience of using language within the school context.

I remember when I was still in school, I had an experience with a friend, we met and we would speak on regular occasions, he also introduced himself to me with his English name. After 6 months of us communicating, we both discovered we were both Tsonga speaking and funny enough, she said from my name he stated that he knew I was a Tsonga speaker, but he did not want to ask as he assumed maybe I am not comfortable with speaking in my own language. I was so surprised, and I asked him shockingly that how could he allow me to speak in the English language while we both have the same home language. Because I could not deduce from his English name which language he spoke (laughing).

The English language is commonly used by individuals, especially in schools and workplaces. We see that they resorted to the use of English in the school environment without asking each other about their language backgrounds.

4.3.1.3 Home and Community Setting

From the data gathered, both the interviewed parents, **(F2:P1P2)** and **(F2:P1P2),** were reportedly from rural areas in South Africa and had moved to Gauteng areas owing to work opportunities. In their respective towns of origin, they were raised in a monolingual context, where one language was the one mostly used for communication

with both the elders and the children. As a result, owing to the diversity in languages in the urban areas to which they have moved, they reported having had to adjust and learn the different languages to be able to converse with others. Commenting on ways to adjust to the differences in languages spoken in both the home and community setting, F1P1 said:

> *I spoke Venda at home, but in grade 08, I had an opportunity to go learn Tsonga at school up until matric.*

Sharing similar perceptions, F1P2 added:

> *I spoke only Tsonga at home and at school the medium of instruction was English. I only started having my home language taught when I was in grade 04.*

The mother in **Family 1 (F1P2)** further elaborated on these complexities as she sometimes had to change from one language to another depending on the area she was in within Gauteng.

> *When I first arrived in Gauteng, I realised most people did not want to learn Tsonga and Venda and I am not sure why. However, that did not bother me instead I took it as an opportunity to learn".*

F2P2 shared similar views thus:

> *My home language is Venda, I grew up in a Tshivenda-speaking household and neighbourhood. I also attended a Tshivenda first language schools. My parents are also Venda speaking. Well, when I moved to Johannesburg, I had to learn many different languages or make that transition since there are many people from diverse language backgrounds even at home.*

F1P2 added:

> *Another example, we stay in Pretoria and when we meet strangers, or anyone in a taxi or anywhere else, the language you will first use to communicate with*

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them is Tswana or Pedi also known as (Sipetori) the dominant language in Pretoria townships (F1P2: 70-73).

F2P1 concurred with the view that language can be learnt to fit into a particular society. He indicated he had had to learn to speak English when he started living in a multicultural environment:

I only started learning English in Gauteng.

The English language seemed to be the more acceptable language of communication in the city. Although these parents met individuals from various backgrounds, the English language provided a tool for easier communication with other individuals.

4.4 THEME 3: THE VALUE ATTACHED TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Based on the themes that emerged from the data, individuals decide to learn or use the English language mainly for social factors, economic factors and career opportunities as indicated in figure 4.3.
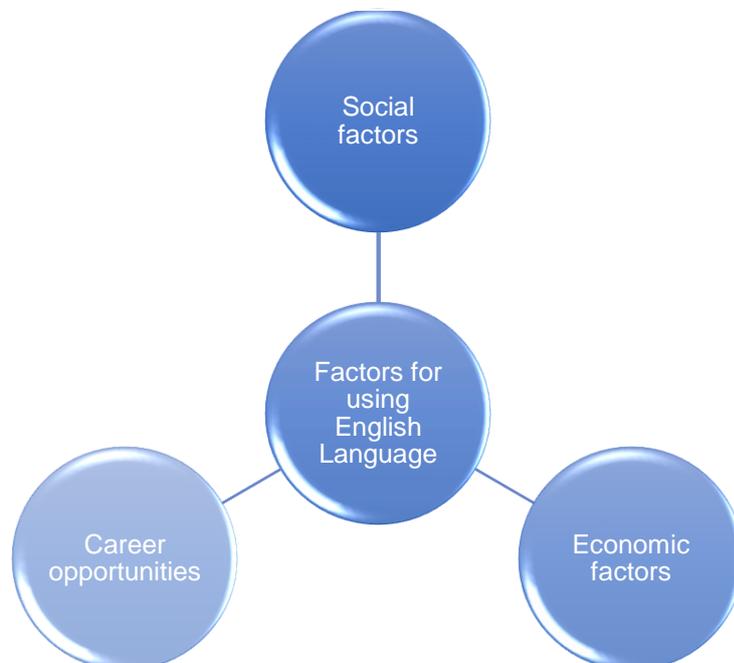

Figure 4.3: Factors for using the English language

Table 4.6: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for theme 3

Sub-themes	Inclusion	Exclusion
Social, Economic and career opportunities	Data that include the benefits of the English language in economic success and career opportunities	Any reference to information that does not include the benefits of the English language in economic success and career opportunities

4.4.1 Discussion of Theme 3: The Value Attached to The English Language

The value attached to the English language refers to the specific use of English in a multilingual family context, where English is not their home language. This theme consists of the three subthemes of social, economic and career opportunities. In the context of this study, the value attached to the English language refers to the perception by parents in both **family 1 and family 2** about the importance of proficiency in the English language for their children to achieve better social, economic and career opportunities.

Owing to the high rural to urban migration in South Africa, the parents in **Family 1 and Family2 (F1F2)** reported that they moved to urban areas where they interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds daily. Therefore, owing to the differences in language, they predominantly use the English language to communicate with others. Individuals find it much easier to communicate with each other in English as it is the most common language used in urban areas. Research also shows that English is the most common language, especially in Africa "where it is predicted that a majority of the African population groups speaks English as their home language" (Casale & Posel, 2011.p. 1). As result, the English language is that used as a safe language, especially in new social interactions within both formal and informal contexts. Additionally, English is mostly used as a medium of communication in most business settings in South Africa (Agirdag, 2016).

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4.4.1.1 Social, Economic and Career Opportunities

An analysis of the interviews reveals that both **Family 1 and Family 2** parents have chosen to incorporate the use of English in their families, to accommodate their children, as they attend schools where the language of learning and teaching is English. English-medium school. Furthermore, they expressed the view that they believe that proficiency in English will help to increase their children's success at school so allowing them to have greater education and career opportunities.

In a social context, language is negotiated between the two speakers who are in communication with each other. As a result, one speaker decides either to speak in the other person's language or chooses to communicate in a language that he thinks they might both understand. I. Below are extracts from the actual interviews with the research participants.

FIP1:

Well, when I meet someone for the first time, I start communicating with them in English, just to be nice then and because English is the most used and understood language, usually after I have been introduced to the person and I know their name, from the name I can usually tell what language they can speak and if I am fluent in that language then I communicate in it with them.

F2P1:

We are accommodating them as much as we can, so they can be masters of the English language as it is the dominant language even for career opportunities. English is an international language, so they might want to study anywhere else in the world or in first-world countries or most countries, English is widely used. Even locally, if they do not know any of the official languages, they can always fall back on English to use in conversations with others. So that is why we try to accommodate them as much as we can.

F2P2:

When we first started having kids, we had a conversation together that we will only communicate in English to each other so that our kids can easily pick this up and learn fluency early for school and future work purposes. I mean my kids go to an English medium school and they must learn the language and we also use it in our home for their case as well.

The institutionalisation of the English language has a great impact on the language decisions of each family. The parents chose to use English to connect with others outside of their homes and to help train their children to be fluent in English so that they could compete successfully in the world.

4.5 THEME 4: THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN ON MULTILINGUAL FAMILY LANGUAGE PRACTICES

Multilingual family language practices are mainly influenced by children's barriers to language as presented in figure 4.4.
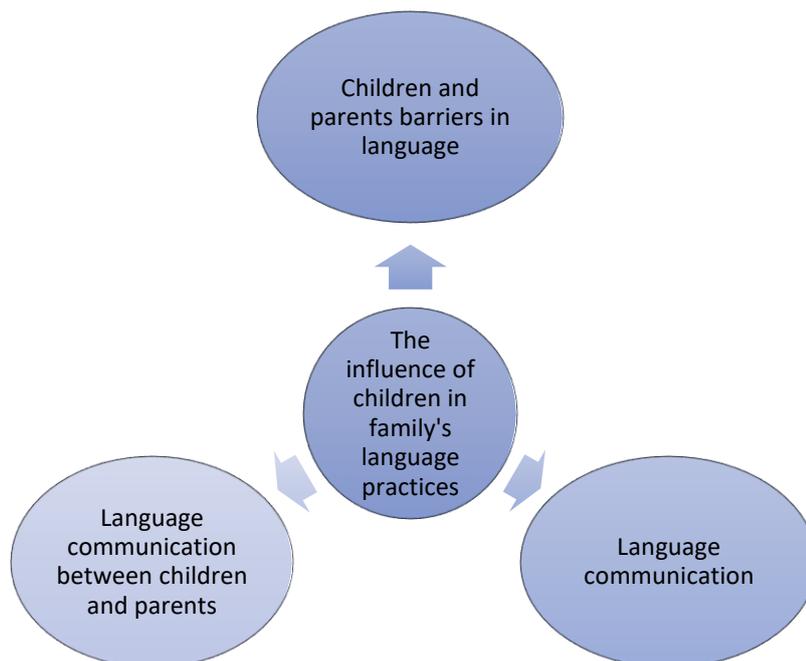
**Figure 4.4: The influence of children on family's language practices**

4.5.1 Discussion of Theme 4: The Influence of Children on Multilingual Family Language Practices

This theme refers to the influence children have on their family's language practices. Although parents are known to be responsible for their children's language development, when the children are in school, they tend to change the family's

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language communication practices to accommodate their own language needs (De Houwer, 1999). For example, in **Family 2** both parents shared that they have shifted their family language communication primarily to accommodate their children's language needs. This theme has two sub-themes, namely language communication between children and parents and language proficiency.

TABLE 4.7: Inclusions and exclusions criteria for theme 4

Sub-themes	Inclusion	Exclusion
<u>Barriers to children and parents in Language</u>	Data obtained about barriers in language communication between the parents and children	Any reference to data about language barriers not between the parents and their children
Language proficiency	Data relating to both the fluency of parents and children in their home language.	Any reference to data that do not include fluency in the family's home language.

In Family1, the mother **(F1P2)** shared about having made a conscious decision about the specific language used by her family. On the other hand, **(F2P1)** the father described his family as having no strict language rules that they adhere to. However, although both **families 1 and 2** have different language practices, they do not deny the role their children play in influencing their entire family's language practices.

4.5.1.1 Language-Communication Between Parents and Children

In **Family 1,** the mother **(F1P2)** shared that her language choices varied in the family context between her spouse and her children. She indicated that, because of the influence of the English language which her children mainly used at school, the family had to include it in their family language practices. Commenting on the language used for communication between parents and children, F1P2 said:

Things are slightly different because now I speak Tshivenda more than I used to before with him, when it comes to the kids, things are slightly different.

FIP2 further said:

As a result, as a family, we try as much as we can to accommodate them by mostly speaking to them in English, especially the eldest one.

F2P2 shared similar views:

It's different between us and the kids. When I communicate with my husband we communicate mostly in Sesotho and with the kids, we communicate in both English and Tshivenda. My kids go to an English medium school and they must learn the language, we also use it in our home for their case as well.

The children (F1C1C2) also expressed that they are better at speaking English than their home language. As a result, the parents reported having resorted to incorporating English in their speech at home. Below you will find extracts from the actual interview with the children.

F1C2:

With my mom, I usually communicate with her in English. I speak English mostly with my mom so that she can correct me when I make mistakes and I can learn.

F2C1 added:

With my dad, I usually communicate with him in English because he initiates our conversations together in English.

The role of the parents in teaching children their home language is important. The children view their parents as language trainers who can help them obtain fluency in the desired language.

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4.5.1.2 Language Proficiency

In both **Family 1 and 2**, the mothers **(F1P2) (F2P2)** shared that their language choices are sometimes influenced by their children's lack of fluency in various languages. As a result, they make language decisions to accommodate their children within the family context. At times, the language they choose is not their first preference, but they strive to accommodate their children. Commenting on the parental role to communicate with their children in a language they understood better, F1P1 echoed:

> *We mostly communicated in Tsonga for this one reason, I more was fluent in Xitsonga, and I could communicate well than she was fluent in my own home language Tshivenda. Also, I was more willing to speak in her language until such a time she can learn my own language then I know we will switch to Tshivenda in our home.*

Sharing a related experience, F2C1 recalled:

> *In December we visited my daddy's home in Lesotho, and we could not speak Sesotho very well. We tried but it was not easy as we are both not very fluent in Sesotho and we had to ask daddy to help us with words.*

Both children in **Family 2 (F2:C1C2)** reported that their language proficiency sometimes acted as a barrier to communicating and maintaining relationships with their friends and family members. Below you will find extracts from the interviews that support this theme. F2C1 commented thus:

> *I would like to ask my dad to start contacting with me more in Sesotho and his home language so I can learn more of the language.*

F2C2 added:

I would like really to like to learn Sesotho because I had so much fun in Lesotho, and I think it would have been so much better if I could speak their language very well.

Regarding the motivation for learning a home language, FIC2 indicated the desire to fit in with and relate to other children through learning to communicate in her home language.

For me, it is not understanding the friends I made there and not being able to communicate with them well in Sesotho as they also did not understand English well.

The learning of the home language here is seen as a value that has been successfully transferred to the children. Their limitations relate to communicating with other family members who are not as fluent in English and this has served as their motivation to learn the home languages of their parents.

4.6 REVISITING LITERATURE

4. 6.1 Knowledge That Correlates with Research Findings

Theme 1 highlights the importance and influence of culture in a multilingual family's decisions. This theme concurs with the literature which states that language plays an instrumental role in culture (Johnston, 2013). Using language, individuals practise their culture and share their beliefs with others (Hammad, 2018). Furthermore, when a person learns to communicate in another person's language, he/she gains access to and experiences the other person's world (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009). Individuals who are from the same cultural group may be different, but they share similarities that are greater than those who are from a different cultural group. Additionally, the literature also agrees that language is passed down from the older generation to the younger generation within multilingual families (Mbakop & Ndada, 2021). The literature review also showed that multilingual families use language as a form of representation for their cultural identity (Omidire, 2020). Through language communication, the social groups can retain their groups' cultural pride and identity. An example of this was discussed in the literature where parents employed various strategies to maintain their

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family language policies. Some of these strategies were: language shift and language maintenance. The language shift strategy involved the shift from using one language to another within the multilingual family. From the research findings, Family 2 depicted placing a sense of importance by communicating in the English language within their multilingual home context, instead of communicating in Tshivenda and Sesotho, especially when communicating with their children. Alternatively, language maintenance was observed in Family 1 whereby the family, specifically the parents, emphasized communication using their home language Tshivenda and sometimes Xitsinga, especially when communicating with each other and their children, instead of using the English language. In this family, this was a deliberate language practice to promote the learning and use of Tshivenda, especially within their home context.

New Information that emerged from the research findings highlighted the cultural dynamics of adopting spousal languages in a marriage relationship. This information was not discovered in the literature review. The mothers in **Family1 and Family2** both described their own experiences of learning to speak their spousal languages as challenging but more beneficial for their marriage relationship. The mother in **Family 1(F1P2)** reported that when they get married to a man, they are expected by their spouse to learn their home language. This is also important so that, as the primary caregivers, they may be involved in teaching their children their father's home language. Finally, the importance of families implementing the learning of their home language so that their children may be able to communicate with their extended family members, especially those who are monolingual or reside outside the urban areas such as grandparents, aunts and cousins, was also observed in the literature (Roberts, 2013).

The second theme highlighted the importance of the environment and how it can influence a multilingual family's language decisions. These data concur with the literature where it was seen that immigrant families who had moved to a different region had adopted the language practices of their host country (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009). The dynamics of this theme in the literature included families who would completely switch from their home language to the language of their host country or those who would incorporate the use of both languages within their family contexts (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009). Additionally, the interaction with macro institutions

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influenced the family's language practices. For example, in their workplaces, both the parents in Family 1 and Family 2 (**F1P2) and (F1P1m)** described having to switch from one language to another, depending on the second speaker's language. As a result, we can conclude that each environment encompasses its language practices.

The value attached to the English language theme concurs with the research information in the literature. In various diverse nations, like South Africa, the English language is institutionalized. This means that, in the macro institutions of education, politics and the economy, English is the dominant language of communication (Anthonissen, 2012). For instance, when an individual can speak the English language in a place where English has been institutionalized, this is believed to optimize their opportunity to participate successfully in the practices of that institution, thus providing them with high success opportunities (Webb, 2000). Furthermore, this is like the information presented by the parents in both **Family1** and **Family 2** who described the importance of incorporating the use of the English language in their family context to increase the fluency and proficiency in the English language of their children to create better education and future career opportunities. In the literature, proficiency in English was described as a guarantee of access to a variety of school opportunities, more career options to pursue and the ability to compete with everyone else in the economic sphere (Curdt- Christiansen, 2009; Cudt- Christiansen, 2013). Also, considering the status quo of the other 9 indigenous South African languages, English has received more recognition and use than the other languages. The institutionalization of the English language is observed in the South African governmental and provincial institutions, as well as in Education as discussed in the literature review. This is also likely to further influence the individual choice of language use, especially within multilingual family contexts.

Theme 4 discussed the role children play in influencing their family's language decisions. The findings of this study showed that language practices in multilingual families do not only include the parents' decisions about language but rather the parents' own decisions can be influenced by both their children's language preferences as well as their language barriers. For example, the father in family 2 **(F2P1)** explained the use of English when communicating with his children as being motivated by his desire for them to obtain fluency in English even though it is not his

home language. This finding concurs with the literature where it was stated that children participated in their family's language decisions by verbally accepting or rejecting their parents' language practices (Gafarang, 2010). The acceptance of parental language choice occurred through the children switching to their parents' desired language, especially when they are 'ignored' by their parents for not using the desired language (Smith- Christmas, 2016). On the other hand, the literature also shows that the children in the study sometimes showed resistance to their parents' language practices by not switching to their parent's desired language, and instead persisted in communicating in their preferred language. In response to this, the parents would either challenge this response or switch to speaking in the language chosen by their child (Gafarang, 2010). Additionally, the literature reviewed showed that the following strategies were also implemented by parents to promote their language choices and specific language use within their multilingual family contexts: Minimal grasp strategy and the instruction to translate strategy. The minimal grasp strategy involved parents completely ignoring their children's speech given in any other language than the preferred family language choice. On the other hand, the instruction to translate strategy involved parents persuading their children to communicate in their family's preferred language.

Although the research findings from this study do not present examples of children rejecting their parents' language decisions, the study showed the barriers to the language where the children struggled to respond to their parents' language, thus resulting in parents incorporating different language use within their family context to accommodate them.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in this study, the four themes and 10 sub-themes that emerged from this study through the process of thematic data analysis were discussed. The definitions for each of these themes and extracts from the actual interviews to substantiate the emergence of these themes were provided. Finally, the findings of this research were situated in the literature review discussed in Chapter 2.

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The next chapter deals with the conclusions in terms of the research questions posed in Chapter 1. Also, the possible contributions of this study and highlighted areas for further research will be indicated.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of multilingualism has been widely researched (Silverstein, 2015; Vaughan, 2018). This study has investigated the factors that influence the language of communication used in multilingual families. This dissertation has attempted to justify the importance of such a review as a search in this specific area of multilingualism has not been widely conducted, specifically within the South African context. The importance of this review was to highlight how language repertoires are negotiated within multilingual families. Moreover, the literature reviewed showed that previous research has focused on studying multilingual families and the factors that influenced their language of communication in the context of immigrant multilingual families. The observed gap in research justifies the enquiry of my study, especially in the South African context characterised by an increase in multilingual families owing to the high diversity of the country and the increase in migration to cities (Tati, 2008).

Chapter 1 provided information highlighting the rationale and purpose of this research study by examining the prominence of past and current situations relative to language and multilingualism, especially in families that are raising children in these multilingual contexts.

The literature in Chapter 2 was used in conjunction with the results presented in Chapter 4. The trends that were identified in the review (both global and local) were then used to identify any similarities and differences between the literature and the findings of this study.

Chapter 3 provided an overview of the procedures that were used to structure the extensive search, the collection of relevant findings, reviewing and analysis. In this chapter, an in-depth description of the protocol used was given to ensure that ethical principles were adhered to in this study as well as to provide an accurate representation of this study. The protocol outlined in this chapter may also be followed by other interested researchers who would like to replicate the study or conduct a further enquiry into the research results in the future. Finally, the specific criteria

provided in this study could be used by interested parties in their search for studies to be selected for their research.

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study through a thematic analysis. The findings of this study were then used to derive the themes and sub-themes presented by the research results. This entailed a detailed analysis of the research interviews to extract 1) themes that were common amongst the results; and, then, 2) a categorization of themes into sub-themes. After that, the research findings were used to answer the following secondary questions: "What are the values that are ascribed to languages represented within families?"; "What role does the family structure (parents, extended family members, child caregiver) play in determining the language of choice?"; "What is the influence of culture on the language used for communication in a multilingual family?"; and the main question " What are the factors that determine the language used for communication in multilingual families?"

5.2 THE VALUE ASCRIBED TO LANGUAGES REPRESENTED WITHIN FAMILIES

From the research findings, it emerged that the value attached to a language plays an important role in the language selected for communication within a multilingual family. Multilingual families select the use of a language based on their perceived importance of language which can be based either on the cultural importance of the language or the benefit attached to the use of a language. From a cultural perspective, language is defined as a carrier that reflects an individual's identity to others and delivers his/her culture" (Alshammari, 2018). Therefore, through language individuals practise and retain their cultural practices. This viewpoint is supported by the social-cultural theory which emphasises the importance of cultural practices, worldviews, and cultural instruments in society as main catalysts for human development and learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Language, according to Vygotsky, was the major cultural tool that aided in the development of higher psychological processes. Children liberate themselves from the immediate limits of their surroundings through language (Gallo & Hornberger, 2019).

Additionally, the value of language can vary from family to family. In Family 1, both parents expressed a desire for their children to be well versed in their cultural language, but in the second family, they viewed the value of language only with its use. For example, the reinforcement of the English language was very important in their family, especially for their children. This finding is consistent with the social-cultural theory, which contends that, as toddlers begin to use words, the social implications begin quickly to grow in importance, and higher psychological processes emerge because of involvement in social acts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013). Therefore, the participants believed that, once they had acquired fluency in English, they could successfully compete in the political, economic and education sectors (Posel & Casale, 2010).

5.3 THE ROLE THE FAMILY STRUCTURE (GRANDPARENTS, EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS AND CHILD CAREGIVERS) PLAYS IN INFLUENCING FAMILY LANGUAGE CHOICES

Typically, a family structure consists of parents, extended family members and child caregivers all of whom are viewed as contributing to influencing multilingual family language decisions. For example, in Family 1, parent 2 **(F1P2)** and Family 2, parent 2 **(F2P2),** the mothers, reported that their extended family members had played a vital role in helping to raise their children early in their lives. As a result, their children are more fluent in their maternal home languages than in their father's home language. Therefore, within their own multilingual families, the mothers reported that they found it easier to communicate in their language to their children as they had obtained fluency. However, within these multilingual families, the maternal language is usually not the preferred language of communication for cultural reasons. Thus, incorporating other languages into the family becomes important to achieve the family's language goals. The idea of mediation in Vygotsky's theory completely describes these language choices. The ability of humans to employ tools and signs to remove the direct effect of external stimuli on our reactions is referred to as mediation. Language, as the most fundamental cultural instrument, enables humans to modify and adapt to their surroundings (Vygotsky, 1978). This means that people make a conscious choice to utilise language for certain goals.

5.4 THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON THE LANGUAGE USED FOR COMMUNICATION IN A MULTILINGUAL FAMILY

Language is viewed as playing an essential role in facilitating the practice of cultural beliefs and the retention of the values and traditions of individuals (Alshammari, 2018). Importantly, each culture is characterised by a specific language, also known as the home language. Each cultural group has a specific language that acts as its identifying tool. Additionally, each cultural group sometimes uses language to transfer their practices from one generation to the next, or from the older to the younger children. This point of view is adequately articulated by Vygotsky's idea of the zone of proximal development. Vygotsky claimed that what children can achieve with the help of others is more predictive of their potential cognitive growth than what they can do alone (Vygotsky, 1978).

In multilingual families formed by the relationship that exists between two individuals who are from different language backgrounds, the mother/ wife role is not limited to learning their spouse's language, but they also need to learn to communicate with their children in their father's language. Finally, we can argue that the family's language choices may be influenced by their need to have children learn their home language to maintain their cultural identity. According to social-cultural theory, cultural instruments such as language shape human behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978). As a result, an individual's language choices may be influenced by the culture outside the house and the language that reflects that culture. Parents may help their children learn and use their home language. As children perform ahead of their competence with the help of helpful and knowledgeable individuals who provide constant support, they eventually become competent without the assistance of others (Vygotsky, 1978).

5.5 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE OF COMMUNICATION USED IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

The language of communication used in multilingual contexts is influenced by the cultural value individuals ascribe to their home languages. In multilingual families, the prime language chosen is usually the father's home language owing to cultural inferences whereby language is viewed as being important to maintain and retain the family's cultural practices and beliefs. Children strategically employ the languages

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accessible to them to connect themselves with various members of the family, reinterpret rules, and question parental authority. The parents, on the other hand, fulfil both implicit and explicit 'medium requests' (Gafaranga, 2010), and may even begin explicit language instruction to guarantee that the children learn both languages.

Secondly, the environment plays a major role in influencing the language decision of multilingual families. In the South African context, which is characterised by diversity in language and culture, different areas and spaces in institutions are characterised by various language repertoires. For instance, in the capital of Gauteng, Pretoria, the language that is mostly spoken in the major townships is "Sepetori" although this is an informal or slang language. As a result, when individuals migrate to Pretoria from neighbouring provinces such as Limpopo for various purposes such as work or school, they adapt to the language practices used in Pretoria. Parents' expectations about their children's language and literacy development often inspire language management in households (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013). As a language management resource, parents can enrol their children in educational institutions that encourage certain languages if such institutions are accessible in their area. Moreover, in institutions, such as universities, colleges and high schools, the language of learning and instruction is English, which results in the learners communicating with one another in English inside and outside the classroom environment. As a result, some individuals maintain this language use in other verbal interactions, either at school, or with their families, friends, and partners.

5.6 CHILDREN INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE CHOICES OF MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

According to Piaget (1967), children are characterised by being in their early, mental, and cognitive developmental stages and they acquire these functions after completing one stage to the next. This is also believed to be true for their language development (Piaget, 1967). In the findings of this study, it become evident that children played a significant role in influencing their parents' language choices. In various accounts, the parents reported selecting a language of communication for their family based on their children's language needs or fluency. For instance, in family 2, because their children attend a school which employs the English language as the means of instruction and

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communication, the parents placed great emphasis on communicating in the English language within their families although it is not their home language. This was done to improve their children's fluency in English by creating practice opportunities within the home environment.

Additionally, the language fluency of children determines the language chosen within a family.

In family 2, the children **(C1C2)** were more fluent in their mother's home language - Tshivenda - and in English than the 'desired' family home language. Therefore, the language decision of this family included the use of Tshivenda and English where these two languages were used interchangeably within their multilingual family environment.

5.7 LIMITATIONS

The general aim of this dissertation has been to investigate the available research relative to factors that influence language used for communication in multilingual families. However, the methods used to explore the aims have several limitations. This study was conducted online through video recordings with the participants. Some of the challenges that the researcher had to consider where the limitations of participation associated with using online platforms rather than personal interactions. For example, the participants could be uncomfortable with sharing personal information with an individual (researcher) whom they had just met. To account for this limitation, the researcher ensured that she built rapport with the research participants to create a safe environment for them to share their thoughts and build a trusting relationship with them so that the participants were able to share their thoughts and ideas about the topic.

The study employed the use of a small sample to collect data from the research participants. The researcher and the supervisor ensured that the online recorded video interview recordings were kept as references, to enable the researcher to revert to the data collected to check for any concerns or issues that needed clarification.

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5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that follow are in accord with the limitations of the dissertation and the implications for similar future studies. The researcher recommends that other relevant parties in multilingual families be used in future, such as interracial parents to gather more information about the family's language decisions. In addition, a replication of this study including observation of participants in their home, work and school environments would be recommended. Furthermore, other researchers could also review relevant studies and go through several search hints, using the inclusion criteria provided in this study to guide their search. Finally, researchers who are interested in replicating this study could use language portraits for children to express their ideas and representations of languages.

5.9 CONCLUSION

This dissertation of limited scope has been able to identify that the following factors influence the language of communication within multilingual families which will be summarized below.

Theme 1

Multilingual families decide to use their home language, instead of other spoken languages within their multilingual families. The use of the home language is due to the cultural value placed on the home language, as it is defined as a tool in which they can share ideas and beliefs with their family members. In family 1, they chose Tshivenda as their main language of communication, instead of Xitsonga and English. Whereas In family 2 the parents emphasized the importance of their children learning their home languages (Tshivenda and Sesotho) although they chose English as their main language of communication within their multilingual family context. In both family 1 and family 2, they agreed that their home languages played a significant role in their cultural identity although they differed in the choice to use the home languages within their families.

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Theme 2

In both family 1 and family 2, the parents agreed that their work and community environments influence their language choices, as they have to regularly switch from one language to the next, depending on the language spoken by the person they are communicating with. For example, in family 1, the mother described having to communicate mostly in English when she is at work, in comparison to her home environment where she mostly speaks in Tshivenda as it is their family language. In family 2, the parents described their children's school environment which is characterised by learning and communication in English, which has influenced their family language practices, as a result, they incorporate the use of the English language, especially when communicating with their children.

Theme 3

The emphasis was placed on the use and perceptions of the English language in both families. In family 1, they described the importance of communicating with their children in English, to help them achieve English fluency, which is important for their learning at school. However, because of their language choice-(home languages) within their multilingual context, the use of the English language is not always plausible for this family. On the other hand, In family 2, the parents expressed the importance of incorporating and using the English language, more than the other two family languages (Tshivenda and Sesotho) In their multilingual family context, to ensure that their children gain English fluency for better career prospects. As a result, for this family, the English language was spoken more than their home language.

Theme 4

This theme focused on the role children play in influencing their family's language practices. This theme is related to theme 3. In family 1, the parents only used the English language when helping their children with homework tasks and would rarely incorporate the use of the English language when communicating within their family context. As a result, their children were less fluent in the English language. Whereas In family 2 the children reported that they were more fluent in English communication than in the other 2 family languages (Tshivenda and Sesotho), consequently, their parents accommodated them within their family context by communicating to them in

English and sometimes switching amongst each other to mostly Sesotho and sometimes speaking in Tshivenda. On the other hand,

This dissertation has reviewed research conducted in previous studies regarding factors that influence the language of communication used in multilingual families. The literature reviewed revealed that most studies have focused on multilingual families who are immigrants to another country. This study explored the factors that influence language decisions made within multilingual families. Consequently, the trends that were identified in this study can be used for future research, especially in a South African context characterised by 11 official languages. Additionally, the limitations of these studies were discussed as well as the specific measures that were set in place to ensure that the interested researchers could implement them to improve their future research. Despite the limitations that were discussed above, this dissertation still contributes to the current literature and understanding of the factors that influence the language decisions of multilingual families. It also makes an important contribution to future research.

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APPENDIX A: PARENT CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

Department of Educational Psychology

FACTORS THAT DETERMINE LANGUAGE OF COMMUNICATION IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

Consent Form

• I……………………………………… voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

• I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

• I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

• I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

• I understand that participation involves an investigation of the **factors that determine the language of communication in multilingual families**

• I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

• I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

• I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

• I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of the people I speak about.

• I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in a student's dissertation.

• I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

• I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in the researcher's care and can only be accessed by her and the undersigned supervisor for the research study until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

• I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for 5 years by the university

• I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

• I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

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Signature of research participant   Date

Signature of researcher
I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Signature of researcher   Signature of Supervisor

Zintle Mkrweqana   Prof Funke Omidire
Research Participant   Research Supervisor
Department of Educational Psychology   Department of Educational Psychology
University of Pretoria   University of Pretoria
zintlemkr@gmail.com   funke.omidire@up.ac.za

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FACTORS THAT DETERMINE LANGUAGE OF COMMUNICATION IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

- This is a research study conducted by Zintle Mkrweqana.
- Your child's participation in this study is entirely voluntary.
- I agree to the interview being audio-recorded.
- The data collected in this research project will be kept confidential. Your child's name will not be stored with the data, and this consent form will be stored separately from your child's data.
- Reports of this study will not include individual data in a form by which your child could be identified.
- Data from this study will be stored using Note-taking and audio recordings. Any identifiable information will be destroyed after 3 years
- Your child may refuse to answer individual questions or engage in individual activities. Your child may also discontinue all participation in this study at any time
- I will be glad to answer any questions about the procedures of this study. Answers to questions on topics that might influence the outcome of the study may be deferred until the end of the session
- I voluntarily consent for my child to participate in this study. I will be given a copy of this consent form.

_____   _____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian   Date

_____
Name of Child

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

------------------------------   ---------------------
Signature of researcher   Signature of Supervisor

Zintle Mkrweqana   Prof Funke Omidire
Research Participant   Research Supervisor
Department of Educational Psychology   Department of Educational Psychology
University of Pretoria   University of Pretoria
zintlemkr@gmail.com   funke.omidire@up.ac.za

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Please tell me about yourself:

1.1 Where are you originally from?

1.2 Which language was mainly spoken in the home environment you grew up in?

1.3 Which language was mainly spoken in the home environment you grew up in?

1.4 How many languages are you able to speak?

1.5 How many languages are you fluent in?

1.6 What are those languages?

1.7 Tell me about your parents' ethnic identity? What are your parents' ethnic groups, respectively?

1.8 How many languages were they able to speak?

1.9 What are those languages?

1.10. Which ethnic group do you identify with? Your mother's or father's ethnic group?

1.11. Did you speak the same language with both your parents and your siblings? Were there any dynamics in terms of the language you used to communicate with each other at home and school?

1.12 When you were at school did you communicate in a different language with your peers and your teachers? And was it the same as the language of learning that you used at school?

1.13 Which language was mainly spoken in your neighbourhood? Did you communicate in the same language, or did you use a different one to communicate? Why?

1.14 How many children do you have?

1.15 What are their ages?

1.16 Which language do you use to communicate with your children? What is the reason for your language preference in your home, with your children? How was the

decision taken in the family? Did you have a discussion or due to circumstances everyone knew which language they had to communicate in?

1.17 Why do you have different language preferences when communicating with your children? and with your spouse?

1.18 Which language is mainly used to communicate in your household? Why is this the language chosen as the main feature of communication with each other?

1.19 Which language do your parents (children's grandchildren speak with your children when they are at home?

1.20 How many people reside in your household?

1.21 Do you have any other caregivers in your home?

1.22 Does she spend most of the time with your children? How much time does she spend with your children?

1.23 How many languages is she fluent in (Caregiver)?

1.24 What are those languages?

1.25 Which language does she use to communicate with your children? Is it the same or a different language she uses to communicate with you? What is the reason for communicating with her in a different language?

1.26 Do you think language has an impact on how we view ourselves and interact with others?

1.27 What impact does the ability to communicate in your own (home) language have on your social interactions?

1.28 Is it important for you and your family to adhere to certain language rules and why? Are these rules discussed or negotiated in the family?

2. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT:

2.1 What type of work do you do?

2.2 Do you interact with different people daily at work? is there a specific language that you are expected to use when communicating with your clients or colleagues and superiors? What is the reason/motivation for the different language preferences?

2.3 When you are with your peers or colleagues who have the same native language as you do, do you communicate in your home language, or do you use another language to communicate with each other? Why?

3. SOCIAL INTERACTIONS:

3.1 During family gatherings, which language is mainly used to communicate with each other? What is the reason for the language use preference?

3.2 Have you ever been in an environment where you had to speak more than one language in a social setting or at home, work, or any other social environment? Why?

3.3 Do you experience any language preferences when you are in social situations, at home, at work, or in any social environment? Why do you have those language preferences in those social situations?

3.4 When you meet people for the first time, in social settings such as at work. or any social environment, which language do you initially use to communicate? Do you have any language preference in these settings that mostly works or is easier to communicate in? Why is that specific language the main one you use to communicate in those settings?

4. FOCUS GROUP WITH CHILDREN:

4.1. How many languages are you able to speak?

4.2 How many languages are you fluent in?

4.3. Which language do you find easier or most preferable to communicate in with your parents? Why do you use that specific language to communicate with them?

4.4 Which language do you mostly use between your parents' home languages? Why Is that language chosen for you?

4.5 When you are with your peers who have the same native language as you do, do you communicate in your home language, or do you use another language to communicate with each other in social environments? Why?

4.6 Which language are you most comfortable using in social settings and at home? why do you find it easier to communicate in that specific language?

5. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

5.1 Which language do you use to communicate with your friends at school? Why do you choose to communicate in that specific language? Do your friends have the same language origins as you do?

5.2 Which language do you use to communicate in class?

5.3 What is the medium language of learning and teaching in your school? Do you use the same or a different language to communicate in class and outside the school environment with your peers?

5.4. Which language do you use to communicate with your teachers? What is the reason for communicating in that specific language?

5.5 What impact does being able to communicate in more than one language have on you? Are you more comfortable with your multilingual skills across all settings or are there settings you are not comfortable communicating in your preferred language? Why is that so?

5.6 Which language do you find easier to use when you want to express yourself? Why? Was it a conscious decision or did other factors influence your decision?

5.7 Have you ever experienced any language comfortabilities in any setting, school, at home family gatherings or any other social setting.

Zee: 27. I can see you work in a diverse working environment; how do you navigate   28. communicating in all these languages?
Mr.M: 29. well, I switch every time, it depends on what the person I am talking to is speaking at 30. that moment, than I will automatically switch to their language even when I am not as 31. fluent, but I make sure to speak in their language to accommodate them
Zee: 32.   What happens In Instances when you meet someone new for the first time at work 33. or anywhere outside the working environment, which language do you usually negate to?
Mr. M: 34.   Well, when I meet someone for the first time, I start communicating with them in   35. English, just   to be nice then and because English is the most used and understood language.
Zee: 36.   When does that transition happen? do you ask them what language they are fluent   37. or what language can they speak? During the conversation? How does this switch come about?
Mr.M: 38. Uhm, usually after I have been introduced to the person and I know their name, from 39. their name I can usually tell what language they can speak and if I am fluent in that   40. language then I communicate in it with them.

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INTERVIEW EXTACTS FROM TRANSCRIPTS FAMILY-2

Zee: and Mr. S: how is it for you?
Mr.S: when I communicate with them, I speak in Sesotho and English. So, I communicate in Sesotho with the children so they can learn Sesotho, but I also allow them to respond in either Venda or English since they are more fluent in speaking those languages than Sesotho.
Mr.S :   I am also fluent in Venda, but it's not that good, so If I occasionally use Venda with my wife, and this is just for practice. At the end of the day, I am also Venda because she is Venda, so it is important that I can speak with her family and understand her better. So, our household does not have strict language rules, I mean my kids go to an English medium school and they must learn the language and we also use it in our home for their case as well. The thing is that English is our borrowed language, so although we must accommodate our kids, I cannot always use English in my house and it's not easy expressing myself in English all the time it's not my language of thinking.
Zee: So what are the languages that they use at school?
Mrs. S: My children are taught in English at school, then they also have Afrikaans and isiZulu.
Mr.S: you know I grew up in a Sesotho speaking environment. At school although we were taught English, it was from a perspective of Sesotho home language

speakers who were not fluent in English themselves. I only started learning English In Gauteng and it was difficult and I do not want that for my own children. So that is why we are accommodating them as much as we can so they can be masters of the English language as it is the dominant language even for career opportunities.
Mr. S: To marry an individual from a different language background has really taught me a lot and opened my eyes to a lot of things. For example, I have learnt how other people perform their cultural practices and how they show respect towards their elders.