

The Role of Parental Language Profile and Home Linguistic Environment in Shaping Teenagers' Multilingual Identity

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Abstract

In the multilingual context of Norway, language policy at the macro level supports the development of multilingualism. At the meso level, parental language beliefs and ideologies and language practices in interactions among family members potentially play a critical role in learners' experience of learning different languages and their multilingual identity. Drawing on Sims et al. (2016) and Spolsky (2012), this qualitative case study investigated parental language profiles, parents' language ideologies and reported practices at home, and the potential impact these have on their children's language choices, attitudes toward learning languages and the development of multilingual identity. The data were collected through an adapted version of the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al., 2021) from teenagers and interviews with parents and teenagers in three families with and without immigration backgrounds in Norway. We first analyzed the data using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). Thereafter, the analysis was shared with the families to confirm the researchers' understanding and acknowledge participants' rights and voices. The findings of the study suggest that parental language profiles, their language beliefs, and home linguistic environment likely have a direct impact on teenagers' language learning experience, views on multilingualism, and multilingual identities.

Keywords: Family language policy, parental language ideologies, language practices, multilingual identity

1. Introduction

The increased rate and modes of human mobility (Blommaert et al., 2017) have prompted policymakers to acknowledge the growing diversity in European societies. This recognition is reflected in the active support for various forms of multilingual education in several European countries, including the Scandinavian ones (Duarte et al., 2023; Drachmann et al., 2023; Haukås, 2022). In the specific context of this study conducted in Norway, the emphasis on multilingualism is evident in both the core curriculum and the curricula for main language subjects (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021; Haukås, 2022). This emphasis extends beyond mere acknowledgment, actively promoting language learning and fostering the development and understanding of one's own identity and that of others within a multilingual and multicultural perspective.

Increased diversity in European societies has sparked significant interest among researchers as well, leading to a substantial body of work dedicated to the study of multilingualism in education. Furthermore, increased diversity has led to numerous studies investigating multilingual beliefs and practices within families. However, these two research domains, education and families, appear to have largely conducted their research independently, despite the evident influence of family language policy on students' attitudes toward multilingualism and language learning in schools, and vice versa. The primary objective of this multiple case study is therefore to bridge these two fields by exploring parents' language policies in three families and their respective teenagers' beliefs and approaches to being and becoming multilingual language learners and users in the Norwegian context. In alignment with Cenoz (2013), we embrace a comprehensive and holistic perspective on multilingualism, defining it as the dynamic and integrated knowledge and/or use of more than one language or language variety. In the following sections, we offer a brief introduction to current research on multilingualism in education in Norway, followed by a presentation and discussion of current approaches to studying family language policy, including a review of selected studies on the interaction of home and school for language learning.

2. Multilingual Education in Norway: A Brief Overview of Current Research

In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to teachers' beliefs about multilingualism and multilingual approaches, mainly showing that teachers are interested and positive, but report a lack of knowledge of how to teach multilingually (e.g., Haukås, 2016; Calafato, 2021; Tishakov & Tsagari, 2022; Vikøy & Haukås, 2023). Relatively less attention has been given to students' beliefs about and explorations of their own multilingualism. Yet, existing studies point to students' holding mainly positive attitudes towards multilingualism and a willingness to explore multilingual practices in their language learning process (e.g., Dewilde, 2019; Haukås et al., 2022, Iversen, 2017). Students' multilingual identity, defined as “an ‘umbrella’ identity, where one explicitly identifies as multilingual precisely because of an awareness of the linguistic repertoire one has” (Fisher et al., 2020, p. 448), has also been investigated in selected studies in the Norwegian school context. As suggested by Fisher et al. (2020), the development of a multilingual identity may lead to increased effort in the learning and maintenance of the languages in students' repertoire and even enhance social cohesion in school settings.

The Ungspråk project (2018-2022) developed a questionnaire to investigate students' multilingualism, multilingual practices and beliefs, as well as multilingual identity in the Norwegian school context (Haukås et al., 2021). Among other findings, they found that the majority of Norwegian teenagers in school grade 8 identify as multilingual (Haukås, 2022), and that students identifying as multilingual are significantly more open-minded towards others than those who do not identify as multilingual (Tiurikova et al., 2021). Multilingual identity is shaped by family history, social and personal activities where individuals are exposed and interact with languages in different contexts ranging from home, school, community, on holiday, through books, and any forms of media (Aronin, 2016; Fisher et al., 2020; Forbes et al., 2021). Among these factors, beliefs and activities in the family are potentially among the most important influencing factors. Language policy in Norway at the curricular and macro level supports the development of multilingualism. Yet the understanding and acceptance of these policies at the meso level, i.e., among families (Douglas Fir Group, 2016) remains uncertain.

3. Family Language Policy

Studies on multilingualism with a focus on home and family have commonly been placed under the umbrella term ‘family language policy’ and have frequently investigated early bilingual language acquisition, the development of multilingualism in migrant families, and child agency in heritage language maintenance in the domain of the home (e.g., Lanza, 2007; Lomeu Gomes, 2022; Obojska & Purkarthofer, 2018).¹ Family language policy (FLP) including the overt, deliberate and observable, as well as covert or default, language planning in the domain of family (King et al., 2008, Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; Spolsky, 2012) is potentially an important area of research linked to language education (Xu et al., 2023). Combining insights from language socialization, child language acquisition and language policy (Slavkov, 2017), FLP seeks to understand why (and how) language is maintained in some immigrant families while lost in other families; in what ways bilingualism is developed in some children growing up in a mainly monolingual society, while other children in a bilingual environment grow up as monolinguals; and what language planning and decisions made by caretakers can foster or discourage the use and practice of particular languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018).

Family, as an intermediate level between the individual and community, has significant importance due to its crucial role in shaping the linguistic environment of a child (Schwartz & Verschik, 2013). Family language policy also holds significant influence over a child’s formal education (Curdt-Christiansen, 2022). Recently, studies on family language policy highlight the importance of the interaction between families, schools, and the wider society. Ballweg’s (2022) findings, for instance, presented an indirect impact of mainstream language ideologies such as the support for high-prestige languages on the families’ language policy. In the investigation of the relationships between attitudes towards the transmission of the heritage language and expectations towards school educational programs among Spanish-speaking families in Germany, Mella et al. (2023) concluded that families’ positive attitudes towards their heritage languages motivate them to embrace bilingual programs.

Despite constant calls for the inclusion of greater diversity of families (King, 2016; Bose et al., 2023; Yagmur & Bohnacker, 2022), much of the research on family language policy has mainly focused on bilingual childrearing and heritage language maintenance among migrant and transnational families (Seo, 2023), leaving out majority language families, i.e., families without migration backgrounds. However, we argue that all families have beliefs about language learning and language practices inside and outside the home. Thus, by also including such families, a more holistic understanding of family language policy and its links to education may be achieved. Furthermore, beside the studies on the development of bi/multilingualism at early ages (e.g., Antony-Newman, 2022; Hollebeke et al., 2022; Van Mensel, 2018), family language policy also allows the investigation of familial impact for older ages such as teenagers who learn a foreign language. Yet, studies investigating families with older children remain scant. To meet our study’s objectives, we formulated the following two research questions:

1. To what extent are parents’ decisions about language choice and practices related to their language learning trajectories?
2. To what extent are teenagers’ views about languages and their multilingual identity shaped by parents’ language attitudes and practices?

¹ In our field, a variety of terms, including “bilingual”, “multilingual”, “heritage language”, “home language”, are employed to denote different or similar types of language learning. Due to the scope limitations of this article, we do not delve into the meanings of these terms. Therefore, we use them as they are presented in the research we cite. However, it’s important to note that the key terms specific to our study, such as “FLP”, “multilingual identity”, and “multilingualism”, are explicitly defined.

4. Methodology

A case-study approach was employed to investigate parents' language histories, family language policies, and teenagers' beliefs and experiences of language learning and multilingual identity. We opted for an exploratory case study (Priya, 2020) as research approach because it is used to “generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context” (Crowe et al., 2011, p. 1). The case study approach, lending itself well to gaining thorough details on explanatory how, why, and what questions (Crowe et al., 2011) enabled us to explore and understand the multilayered phenomena of each family's multilingual beliefs and practices; it permitted the inspection of parental language history, to understand its potential impact on the parents' language ideologies and language practices in the domain of the family and, ultimately, the influence of these ideologies and practices on both teenagers' experience of language learning and their self-identification as multilingual.

4.1 Participants

Families in this study were recruited through purposeful sampling (Patton, 2015) in which we sent out invitations to families who had teenagers in grade 8 of secondary school in Norway. The recruitment process exemplifies convenience sampling, wherein families residing in the authors' neighborhood with children falling within the necessary age group (lower secondary school) were approached. Additionally, one family was acquainted with the researchers through their professional connections. We included three types of families in our study:

1. A family with both parents being Norwegian
2. A family with one Norwegian and one non-Norwegian parent
3. A family with only non-Norwegian parents

The rationale for choosing these families was to highlight equity and diversity in FLP research, reach a more holistic understanding of FLP, and avoid the selection bias of immigrant families only (Bose et al., 2023).

The linguistic education landscape in Norway can be summarized briefly as follows, with a more in-depth discussion available in Haukås (2022). Children begin learning Norwegian Bokmål or Nynorsk from their first year of school, with an option for Sami in the northernmost regions. English is also introduced in the first school year. Starting in the 8th school year, students are required to learn the other written form of Norwegian (Bokmål or Nynorsk). Additionally, students have the option to learn an additional language, with Spanish being the most popular choice. Mother tongue instruction and supportive subject instruction for minority language students are typically provided until teachers and schools determine that students have achieved sufficient proficiency in Norwegian. Further, we wanted to include families with teenagers to explore the impact of families on children's multilingualism in later stages of life.

Families participating in this study are introduced in Table 1. For ethical considerations, all names are replaced with pseudonyms selected by the participants. A brief explanation about each family and the languages they know is provided under the table (Table 1).

Table 1 Families

Family 1	Family 2	Family 3
Mother: Betty Father: Ferdinand Daughter: Elsa	Mother: Marit Father: Stig Daughter: Tina	Mother: Anna Father: Chris Daughter: Annabell

Betty and Ferdinand in the first family have spent their entire lives in Norway. They are fluent in Norwegian and English, having studied English and German as their second and third languages in school. However, due to a lack of practice, they are unable to speak German. Ferdinand has taken up Spanish as a new language, utilizing a language-learning platform. Their daughter, Elsa, speaks Norwegian, started learning English from the first grade, and has chosen Spanish as her third language from grade 8 in school.

In the second family, Marit, a Norwegian, and Stig, from Denmark, are fluent in Norwegian, Danish, and English. Marit chose French as her third language in school, while Stig opted for German. Since their marriage, they have lived in Denmark for nine years and the UK for 10 years. Currently, Stig is actively learning Spanish, while Marit is expanding her linguistic repertoire with Hebrew using the Duolingo application. Additionally, Stig engages in conversations in Swedish with some of his colleagues at work. Their daughter, Tina, is proficient in Norwegian, English, Danish, and she learned some Spanish as a second language when they stayed in the UK. She is currently studying French at school.

The parents in the third family are Anna and Chris, originally from Poland. They have previously lived in both Poland and the United States before settling in Norway in 2015. Anna and Chris are proficient in Polish and English, having studied French during their school years. Chris learned English at school and later on pursued a PhD in English Linguistics. Anna learned English during their stay in the United States. Anna's passion for French led her to pursue a PhD in French literature and become a French teacher. Additionally, she acquired proficiency in Spanish during her university studies while completing her PhD. Chris has been learning various languages such as Latvian, Finnish, Swedish, Romanian, and Greek during their travels to different countries. They have been learning Norwegian since they moved to Norway. Their daughter, Annabell, is fluent in Polish, English and Norwegian, and is currently studying French at school.

4.2 Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The data collection commenced after we received approval for our study from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt). Initially, we contacted the participants by email, in which we enclosed an information letter written in accordance with the guidelines provided by Sikt and subsequently approved by Sikt. This letter contained a comprehensive explanation of our research project, encompassing details regarding the interview process and the estimated time required for participation. Additionally, we explicitly outlined the participants' rights, including aspects pertaining to privacy and the freedom to withdraw from the study at any given point. Furthermore, we provided them with a consent letter, which they were requested to review and sign if they expressed interest in participating in our study. Once we received their responses, we commenced the process of data collection. The data collection process consisted of a series of structured interviews and questionnaires.

1. **Parent Questionnaire.** Parental language capital (Sims et al., 2017) was explored through a questionnaire asking them about their language experiences and exposures to multiple languages from childhood to adulthood. The questionnaire was sent to the parents via email and returned electronically.
2. **Parent Interview.** Parents' responses to the questionnaire were considered before the researchers developed the interview questions. Interview questions were developed based on the answers to the questionnaire and the theoretical frameworks of the study linked to family language policy (Spolsky, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). It consisted of three main parts: parental language learning trajectories, their attitudes toward languages in their repertoire and language learning, home language environment including language practices and language management strategies (for an overview of the interview questions, see Appendix).

To reduce any potential stress associated with the interview process and allow parents to reflect upon the questions, we sent the main interview questions to them in advance. We employed semi-structured interviews which allowed us to delve deep into parents' experiences (Galletta & Cross, 2013), at the same time creating open and flexible spaces for participants to share their experiences and beliefs beyond the scope of the interview questions. Interviews with the parents in each of the selected families were conducted concurrently, allowing for both individual and collective perspectives. Further, this approach facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of the family's dynamics concerning their family language policies and views on multilingualism. The interviews with the parents lasted 60 minutes, on average.

3. **Teenager Questionnaire.** The teenagers within each family were asked to complete an adapted version of the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al., 2021) specifically designed to capture their insights and perceptions regarding their language learning, language practices, attitudes towards multilingualism and their multilingual identity. The completion of the questionnaire lasted 20 minutes, on average. One of the researchers was present to clarify any questions while filling out the questionnaire.
4. **Teenager Follow-Up Interview.** After the completion of the questionnaire, teenagers were engaged in a follow-up interview. During this phase, they were encouraged to provide further elaboration and reflection on their questionnaire responses. This two-step approach aimed to gain deeper insights into the teenagers' perspectives. The interview lasted 40 minutes, on average.

It is important to note that all interviews with both parents and teenagers were conducted in English. This decision was made because the researcher conducting the interviews was in the midst of learning Norwegian, and using English helped minimize the possibility of misunderstandings between the researcher and the participants. Nevertheless, participants were encouraged to switch to Norwegian at any time if they found it difficult to express themselves in English.

4.3 Data Analysis Procedures

The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). To have a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of the data, we selected a hybrid approach of thematic analysis involving a balance between deductive and inductive coding (Fereday, 2006). The hybrid approach of thematic analysis embarked with a deductive approach where both researchers read the transcripts, took their own notes and discussed possible themes in a first meeting. The researchers encoded the data according to the theoretical framework guiding the

study (Spolsky, 2012). The codes were linked to parental language ideologies, practices, and management as well as teenagers' multilingual identity. In investigating parents' language ideologies, the internal (e.g., political and socio-linguistic) and external (e.g., emotional and identity) factors influencing language ideologies were also explored following the dynamic model of family language policy (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020).

Thereafter, a process of inductive coding was undertaken. By not only being confined to pre-existing codes defined by the theoretical framework of the study, the hybrid approach benefited from the additional contextual and unique themes emerging from the raw data. The emerged, overarching themes from the analysis were linked to the three different family's language trajectories and home linguistic environment and were finally labelled as follows: Unreflective home linguistic environment, Dynamic home linguistic environment, and Consistent strategic home linguistic environment. These three overarching themes encapsulated the core concepts of language ideology, practice, and management, weaving them together into a unified whole presenting the home linguistic environment for each family.

5. Findings

In the following, we present the findings of the study under the three overarching themes. Each theme accounts for a participant family, connecting their parental language profile, language ideology and beliefs, and language practices and management, followed by the teenagers' experiences of language learning. However, following recent developments in FLP research (e.g., Lanza & Wei, 2016; Hiratsuka & Pennycook, 2020; Mirvahedi & Hosseini, 2023), rather than drawing on the direct causal connections across ideologies, practices, and management (King, 2016; Hua & Wei, 2016), we see them as interrelated and inseparable. Therefore, in presenting the findings of the study, we consider parental language learning trajectories, their language ideologies, practices, and management as parts of a whole that shape their language decisions and the home language environment.

5.1 Unreflective Home Linguistic Environment

In the first family, parental language beliefs, shaped by their own language learning trajectories, resulted in an unreflective home linguistic environment. In this setting, parents perceived efforts toward language planning and learning encouragement as pressure. Betty and Ferdinand mentioned that they had learned German in school, but they do not recall much of it due to lack of practice over the years. They hold the belief that language learning isn't their strong suit, finding mathematics to be a much simpler subject. While they acknowledge the benefits of being multilingual, they have been finding it challenging and time-demanding to learn languages. Their decision to study German as their third language was primarily driven by the school's requirement rather than their interest. The excerpt below is a part of their conversation discussing their reasons for studying German at school.

Researcher: Why did you choose German?

Betty: I think because when I went to school, I had to choose a language and my parents, they spoke German, or my father, grandmother, and sister had learned German. So, I chose the same because of that. And I thought that was fun to learn, but I don't know why I haven't done anything more since then.

Researcher: What about you Ferdinand?

Ferdinand: About German it's more like, I had to choose a third language. To be completely honest, I didn't have interest in it. And my mother and father didn't speak German at all. So, I learned alone at school, and it wasn't that fun. It was difficult.

Researcher: And could you choose Spanish or French at that time?

Ferdinand: Yeah, I could also choose French, but I thought that was even worse to be honest. At school, language wasn't easy for me. For me, it's much easier to learn things with numbers.

When questioned about the significance of language learning, Betty expressed a strong belief in the value of knowing multiple languages. She recognized the practical benefits and opportunities that arise from being multilingual. On the other hand, Ferdinand held a less strong perspective, considering learning languages other than English as a source of enjoyment and amusement. However, both Betty and Ferdinand shared a common viewpoint regarding the importance of English. They acknowledged its status as a global language and recognized its significance in various aspects of life. About the importance of learning English Betty stated:

We think learning English is very important in the community today. When the kids grow up, they need to be good at it. I'm not very good in English and I really wish that my English was better. So, I could speak better when I meet people from other parts of the world.

When asked about his reasons for considering English as more important than Spanish for their daughter (Elsa), Ferdinand explained:

I'm thinking in the future, there will be no borders when you choose what you're going to work with because you have the internet, and you'll probably be working more at home office. So maybe in the future you have your work at home in Norway, but the firm is from England, or Denmark or anything else you never know and if you can speak English, you can do it.

In their household, Norwegian is the primary language of communication. Recognizing the importance of English, Ferdinand had initially devised a plan for an “English-practice-day” on Sundays. Their plan often falls through as their younger daughter lacks interest in speaking English, and Betty is not determined enough. Ferdinand firmly believes that consistent English practice would greatly benefit their daughter Elsa, enabling her to become fluent in English and facilitating her future travels to other countries.

Ferdinand has also started to learn Spanish through Duolingo. He studies Spanish for 10 minutes every day. In explaining his reasons for learning Spanish, Ferdinand stated “I’m trying to learn so that I might help her if she has problems in the next couple of years. But I have to keep up the tempo. So, I have to train much more”. Whereas they believe they can support Elsa in learning English because Ferdinand is good at English vocabulary and Betty is good at grammar structure, it is more difficult supporting her in Spanish since Ferdinand has just started learning and Betty does not know Spanish.

5.1.1 Teenager’s Emerging Multilingual Identity

Elsa regards Norwegian as her primary language, while English holds the position of her secondary language. Within the family setting, she communicates in Norwegian, but during holidays and trips to other countries, she might speak in English. Additionally, Elsa occasionally uses English online and engages with English-language movies and music. However, despite her exposure to English, she lacks enthusiasm for speaking it, feeling uncertain about her proficiency. On the other hand, Elsa displays a keen interest in learning Spanish, aspiring to converse fluently during her summer visits to her grandparents’ residence in Spain. However, she thinks English is more important because “if you know English, you can learn every language, like in Duolingo the whole app is in English”. Another reason why English holds importance for Elsa is her aspiration to become a professional football player in the future. She envisions herself playing in international teams,

where effective communication in English is crucial. She believes that English is the most important language to learn:

Researcher: Do you think it's important to know another language except for English?

Elsa: Not important, but it's like fun when you're at vacation and you know the language.

Researcher: Could you tell me why you think it's not important?

Elsa: Because English is international language. So, everyone speaks it. Norwegian is important because I live in Norway, and everyone speaks Norwegian here. But Spanish isn't important. It's just used when I'm on holiday.

Researcher: So why didn't you choose French or German?

Elsa: It wasn't a choice because I don't use the others. I think I'm just going to use Spanish when I go to my grandparents' house in Spain.

Although she is proud of knowing Norwegian and being able to speak English, she does not identify herself as a multilingual individual, and she has no particular ideas about her future multilingual self:

Researcher: Do you think you are multilingual?

Elsa: No, I'm not sure.

Researcher: Would you tell me why you are not sure about it?

Elsa: Because I don't think I am good enough at English to say I can speak more than one language.

Researcher: What about Spanish?

Elsa: I can't speak it. I can just introduce myself and my family. I know how to say the time and where I live. I can also order at the restaurant, but I don't know more than that.

5.2 Dynamic Home Linguistic Environment

In the second family, the parents' diverse linguistic backgrounds and the high value they set for language learning have created a dynamic linguistic environment that fosters and nurtures language learning. Marit, the mother, believes that learning languages is beneficial as languages provide individuals with superpowers. She emphasizes the importance of learning new languages and maintaining proficiency in Norwegian. She stated:

For me, it's not only speaking more than one language. It's about bringing that culture to them (children). So, they feel like they belong somewhere in the sense, and I felt I gave them some roots. So, it's more than a language. It's also like a culture and reference. So, it feels more important to me than to him.

On the other hand, Stig values English and Latin-based languages such as French and Spanish, particularly when it comes to traveling. Stig's perspective on language slightly differs from Marit's, as he no longer speaks Danish, his first language, since getting married. He only communicates in Norwegian and English at home, considering Danish to be less significant since it is similar to Norwegian. Stig's belief in the importance of English as a language stems from his educational background. He explained that his exposure to English during his studies shaped his perception of its significance. The following excerpt is from his explanations to the researcher:

Stig: I think it's because it was like, all the interaction or plays or games were in English. I think science is in English. Different things have different languages.

Researcher: And you believe the language of science is English?

Stig: For me? Yes, it definitely is!

Researcher: Well, it reminds me of the discussion of imperialism and colonialism and I'm kind of surprised when you say the language of science is English.

Stig: For me, I think it is English. It's probably because of all my education has been English.

Researcher: Yeah, definitely.

Stig: I think in the first year we had some Danish lectures, but then it shifted to English.

Their views on language importance were reflected in their family practices and language management. During their time in the UK, Marit exclusively spoke Norwegian to Tina, unsure if they would stay there or move to Denmark. Upon returning to Norway, Marit made an effort to speak English with Tina to ensure she maintained her acquired knowledge of the language. Simultaneously, Marit also prioritized Tina's connection to the Norwegian language. When we asked her about the importance of languages, she mentioned "I would say any language is useful. But yeah, it's important that they keep English because they have such good foundation, so, it would be a pity to lose that". She also knows French and helps Tina with her homework and learning the language. Stig valued languages in a hierarchical manner. In the hierarchical order of languages, he prioritized English, Latin-based languages, and Norwegian. Therefore, he has always read books in English to children, and they watch movies in English.

5.2.1 Teenager's Emerging Multilingual Identity

Tina recognized English, Norwegian, and Danish as her first languages. She considered all three languages to be her first because English was the language she used for literacy during her time in the UK (from the age of 3 months to 11 years old), Norwegian has always been spoken at home, and Danish is the language she uses to communicate with Stig's family in Denmark.

Tina explained that she uses different languages depending on the context. She speaks Norwegian with her parents but switches to English when interacting with her siblings and friends in the UK. She is exposed to English through media such as movies and music, and also uses English on social media platforms. However, she expressed pride in her knowledge of Norwegian. When asked about the reasons for her pride, she responded:

Because it has a lot to do with my family. I've got a really big family who will speak Norwegian. So, I'm proud to be a part of them. Everything about Norway is important to me because it's part of my culture. It feels like the language is a part of me.

About her knowledge of English, she also stated that "I think it's practical and it has some advantages. It's a lot easier for me to communicate with people from other countries because I know English". She is interested in communicating with people from other countries particularly when they are on holiday in other countries. About Danish, she explained:

I think it's nice knowing Danish too. Because it gives me even more understanding for the variation in Scandinavian languages than I would have if I didn't know it. It is important because it makes me communicate with my family, my grandparents, my aunts, uncles, and my cousins, and people from Denmark a lot easier.

At school, she has selected French as the third language to learn. She explained that although her interest in the language lies in the fact that the language sounds nice to her, she has selected to study French because her mother and her older sister know French and are able to help her learn. Another reason for her choice of French was the usefulness and applicability of the language as she stated "I think a lot of countries in the world are French speaking. So, then it's nice to learn French. If no one

speaks English, then it's often a way to communicate with them in French". One of her enthusiasms about learning French is that she can share what she learns with her mother and sister at home, and they can have conversations together: "If I learn something new in French I try to talk to my mom and sister to make them proud that I've learned something new".

She seemed to be aware of the advantages of knowing languages including how learning different languages helps individuals improve their understanding of previously learned languages:

I think, for example for me, you know, in French, I've learned that there are a lot of like connections between English. Or like French and Spanish. I've also learned they're very similar. So, that's also helped me a lot in learning French. For me, that's like understanding that language is a lot more connected than I thought before. For example, numbers and months and days in Spanish and French are nearly identical. I didn't realize that before I started learning them. I started seeing in a different way than I did before.

5.3 Consistent Strategic Home Linguistic Environment

In the third family, Anna and Chris's positives view about language learning and the acquisition of multiple languages led them to the implementation of consistent language learning strategies. Chris, in particular, had delved into studying books about the bilingual brain and was well-informed about the advantages of multilingualism. When discussing the benefits of being able to speak several languages, Chris elaborated:

Chris: They say there are advantages, you know, I mean, they're not so significant, supposedly, but there are advantages in how the brain develops.

Researcher: What are the other advantages?

Anna: When we travel.

Chris: A child who speaks English would fit in school and education right away. I think especially with Annabell, we wanted to make her very sociable. So, she didn't have any barrier wherever we went. There are some social aspects too. I think it could make her more open to the world, ready to socialize quickly. This was, yeah.

Anna: And it's very powerful. People treat you differently when you speak good English with no accent.

Chris and Anna approached the task of raising multilingual children with firm determination and confidence. Seeking guidance from a friend who had successfully implemented the One-Parent-One-Language (OPOL) approach, they decided to adopt this strategy in their own home. Chris committed to speaking English, while Anna used Polish as the primary language of communication.

They found that the OPOL approach proved to be a successful policy for fostering bilingualism within their family. Their positive perspectives on language learning, coupled with Chris' practical implementation of language management strategies, set the stage for their successful multilingual childrearing journey. Their efforts to learn languages and foster a desire for language learning in their children went beyond just using OPOL for English and Polish. They described how they learned Norwegian when they moved to Norway and how they try to learn useful words and phrases when they travel to different countries, so they can, for example, order food in the local language.

Chris: We started learning Norwegian when we came here in 2015. But I, I have learned every language. Actually. I learned some Latvian when I went to Latvia last week.

Researcher: Really? How do you learn? Duolingo?

Chris: I never use Duolingo. Ideally, I have some manuals, some textbook. And that's how I have been learning languages. I've learned Finnish and Swedish many years, actually, before I came here. And I went through some course of Swedish at the university where I worked. Then I started learning Norwegian and Romanian. We went to Greece in May, and I could read in Greek. Children also could read the alphabet.

Annabell has selected to study French at school as her third language and Anna mentioned that she had a direct impact on Annabell's choice of French at school.

Anna: I want her to learn the language, not to have a good grade. I want her to really learn some French and she could use me. It is an opportunity for her to have some French at home as well.

Researcher: Why do you think it's important for her to learn French?

Anna: Because language is the only gift we can give them (children).

Researcher: Wonderful. Um, why French? Why not German?

Anna: Because I can speak French and not German. I think for her, it's way more practical to learn French because of me, because I can help her. And she decided that she wanted to start French.

Researcher: Is this only her decision?

Anna: She knew that I would complain, but I didn't force her. She said because I have you at home, it would be easier for me to take French.

Regarding the facilitation of their children's language acquisition, they explained how they encourage them to read books in English, tried to create an atmosphere where they can be involved in learning French, have conversations in Norwegian, and maintain Polish. The parents firmly asserted that the multilingual aptitude exhibited by their children is solely attributable to their concerted efforts, as they believe that educational institutions alone are insufficient in this regard.

Anna: We try French, yes. I encouraged Annabell to learn French. And now she promised me to do some French with me over the summer.

Chris: And we had this rule on vacation. For example, in Norway, we had this rule that on public transportation, we only speak Norwegian.

Chris: When grandma comes here, they switch to Polish very naturally. I mean they have no problem whatsoever, communicating with grandma in Polish. They make mistakes, it's nothing really that would hinder communication. I forget to mention once I paid Annabell to read English books.

Anna: If they are good in English, it's thanks to him. And I take care of French.

Researcher: Okay. So, means you don't really count on school for any of these languages?

Anna: No. Only for Norwegian.

5.3.1 Teenager's Emerging Multilingual Identity

Annabell believes her proficiency in English surpasses that of Norwegian and Polish, and she predominantly uses English in her daily interactions. She regards English, Polish, and Norwegian as her primary languages. English serves as the lingua franca among her siblings, and she immerses herself in English media, including movies, books, and music. Annabell takes pride in her English fluency, as she believes it affords her greater opportunities and enables her to effortlessly articulate her thoughts, unlike her peers who may struggle with verbal expression. Additionally, she converses in Polish with her mother and utilizes the language during their visits to Poland. When asked about her reasons to be proud of her proficiency in Polish, she explained:

...it's definitely an advantage because now I'm learning French at school and there are some words, but no one is able to understand except for me because I'm able to compare it to Polish words. I communicate with family back in Poland. It's how I'm still able to speak to my friends.

As part of her academic curriculum, Annabell is currently engaged in the study of French. Her decision to pursue this language was primarily influenced by her mother's support and guidance during homework assignments. Furthermore, Annabell explained the importance of language acquisition, highlighting its capacity to foster open-mindedness, enhance earning potential, facilitate the acquisition of additional languages, refine communication skills, and enable individuals to perceive the world from diverse perspectives. She proudly identifies herself as a multilingual individual, boasting proficiency in three languages and actively pursuing the acquisition of a fourth. When contemplating her future as a multilingual individual, she expressed:

Annabell: In the future, I would like to be someone who speaks English very well.

Researcher: But you already speak it very well.

Annabell: Yes. But I mean, there's always an opportunity to get better. I like using complicated words because it makes me feel smart. So, I would like to know more complicated words.

6. Discussion

In this study, we drew upon the frameworks of family language policy (Spolsky, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020) to investigate to what extent and how parents' language capital, language ideologies, language practices and management impact and shape teenagers' experience of learning languages and their multilingual identity.

In all three families, parents' language profile, i.e., their experiences of languages and linguistic identity (Ellis & Sims, 2022; Sims et al., 2016) showed to have a direct impact on their attitudes towards multilingualism as well as their language planning and practices at home. Parental attitudes are shaped by both internal and external factors. While internal factors refer to emotion, sense of identity, and cultural practices, external factors are related to socio-economic, socio-political, and sociolinguistic factors (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020).

The highly positive attitudes towards multilingualism and the teenagers' multilingual identity in the second and third families compared to the somewhat less reflected and less positive attitudes in the first family seem clearly linked to parents' language learning trajectories. Whereas the parents of the first family have mainly language learning experiences from school and sporadic holidays, the two other families have rich experiences with using and learning multiple languages both inside and outside of the home and from living in various countries.

The parental language attitudes in the second family were influenced by external factors during their residence in Denmark and education in the United Kingdom, leading to the emergence of English as a significant language for both parents. Since FLP is often shaped by parents' concerns about children's education in the mainstream language (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020), they fostered learning English while they stayed in the UK through activities such as reading books or watching films in English. Yet, the mother's strong pro-heritage language ideologies (Gharibi & Mirvahedi, 2021) and internal factors including emotions and a sense of identity and belonging were the basis of her decision to maintain Norwegian despite their stay in the UK and children's education in the mainstream societal language. In the third family also, parents' tendency to learn different languages shaped the dynamics of language planning and practices at home and their choice of One-Person-One-Language strategy to ensure multilingual child-rearing. Similar to OPOL families who make a conscious choice to raise children multilingually (Koelewijn, 2023), the third

family in this study made a deliberate choice to nurture their daughter with multiple languages, even when they resided in their home country and both parents, not being from a mixed marriage, shared the same language. The employment of a strict OPOL strategy facilitated multilingual child rearing despite the reported emotional troubles at early ages when the child felt being different from children in other families in Poland.

In both the second and third families, parental language capital and their life trajectories made them open to language learning and to invest in their children's language acquisition, development of multilingualism, and maintenance of heritage language through fostering a dynamic language learning environment at home and adopting a consistent family language policy. In the first family, however, the parents' experience of language learning restricted to school and being alone in the language learning process when learning German, made them feel that they are not good at learning languages. Despite the father's attempt to learn a language through the app Duolingo and planning for English speaking days, the dynamics of language learning seem to fail due to the mother's reluctance to contribute and the absence of a firm, active, and consistent planning and practice. Moreover, their perceived value of learning other languages than English as something to do mainly for fun, reveals the widespread belief in Scandinavia that English is enough (Cabau-Lampa, 2007).

In line with De Houwer (1999), who discussed that parents' attitudes towards languages and language learning in general help determine their linguistic choices and child bilingualism in early childhood, our study further shows how parental language profiles and attitudes have significant roles in children's language learning experience and the development of multilingualism also in later stages of their lives. In all three families, it was noticeable that the teenager's choice of the third language at school was influenced by their family dynamics. In the second and third families, the teenagers selected to study French because they counted on their mothers' help in learning French and doing their homework. Similarly, in the first family, the teenager chose Spanish due to their strong connection to Spain and their regular summer visits to their grandparents' house there. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Nguyen et al. (2023), which also emphasizes the influential role of families at the meso level of language learning and the subsequent development of multilingualism and a multilingual identity. Furthermore, Elsa's limited confidence in language learning and communication in English mirrors her parents' lack of confidence in language learning, whereas Tina and Annabell point out numerous advantages of being multilingual including how knowing multiple languages enhances their understanding of others and the world. For Tina and Annabell, the importance of multilingualism is not determined by the number of languages they know or their proficiency in each language. Instead, it is based on how these languages help them understand others, communicate with a wider range of people, and express themselves more effectively. They view the languages in their repertoire as interconnected, making it easier for them to learn new languages. These teenagers have personally experienced the benefits of being multilingual in their everyday lives. This mirrors the findings of the Ungspråk project, showing a direct link between students' positive attitudes towards multilingualism and a) their experiences of using multiple languages beyond school, and b) their increased open-mindedness (Tiurikova et al., 2021; Haukås et al., 2022).

7. Conclusion

This study has shown that parental language profiles, parents' language beliefs, and home linguistic environment likely have a direct impact on teenagers' language learning experience and multilingual identities. Thus, families' active efforts at the meso level synergize with educational policies at the macro level to foster multilingualism. However, the potential synergy effects of

combined efforts remain mainly unexplored. To enhance students' multilingualism further, several steps can be taken. Firstly, teachers need to be aware of and acknowledge that families play a crucial role in language education. When teachers recognize the significant role of families in promoting multilingualism, it becomes easier to convey this awareness to families during teacher-parent meetings, for example.

Secondly, families would benefit from information from teachers or schools about the important impact of their active involvement in their children's language learning journey. This aligns with the findings of Szczepaniak-Kozak et al. (2023), which emphasize the importance of a rich linguistic environment at home and strong partnerships between families and schools in fostering students' linguistic development in all languages and the acquisition of multilingualism. While the findings of this small-scale qualitative study involving only three families may not be widely generalizable, it underscores the importance of conducting further research with families of both majority and minority language backgrounds to explore their impact on the development of multilingualism and multilingual identity in teenagers.

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