

Native Speaker Constructions in Multilingual Families

Konstruktionen des Muttersprachlers in mehrsprachigen Familien

By

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the well-established subject area of native speaker research. Previous research into the native speaker has addressed the history of the concept of the native speaker, criticisms of this concept, and alternative terms for native- and non-native speaker. My research investigates how members of multilingual families construct the concept of the native speaker based on their lived experiences. To further guide my research, I investigate how the families establish and enact language beliefs through their constructions of themselves as multilingual subjects.

I have designed small scale, qualitative case studies, which focus on families who share multiple languages as a family. I conducted focus group discussions with three families who share German in their language repertoires, and analyzed the data of two of these families. In the focus group discussions, the family members were encouraged to share their lived experiences as they relate to language use, language ideologies, and sharing multiple languages as a family.

The results of this study show that the family members construct the concept of the native speaker based on their lived experiences and most often confirm the existing literature on the subject. A common theme throughout the family members' constructions of the native speaker is the influence of the monolingual bias. Through the focus on native speaker constructions in the context of a multilingual family, the influence of the family members' native speaker constructions on their family language policies (FLP) is noted and briefly explored.

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1 Introduction

There has never been a better time to be multilingual than the present. Over the past number of years as globalization has made distances that once seemed far much smaller, one result is the increased commonality of multilingual families (Wei & Hua, 2015, p. 22). With the increase of families who share multiple languages comes the need for research to address the experiences of these families, as a way of better understanding current society. This thesis contributes to this need for research, by focusing on two families who share more than one language, and investigating their constructions of the concept of the “native speaker” through their lived experiences.

The family unit is a rich and important site for language use and communication. Those who devote their time to research on multilingual families echo the importance of the family unit, such as Elizabeth Lanza (2007), who describes the family as a “vital social unit for acquiring language” (p. 46), Not only can families provide valuable insights about language acquisition, but also language use, and important to this thesis, constructions of the “native speaker”. The family can also be considered a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), “a social unit that has its norms for speaking, acting and believing...” (Lanza & Gomes, 2020, p.157). Using the family as a community of practice, previous research on multilingual families has focused on Family Language Policy (FLP), which “examines language policy in relation to language use and language choice within the home among family members” (King & Folge, 2013, p. 172).

In this thesis I investigate the family as a multilingual community of practice through their reflections on their family language planning and experience sharing multiple languages as a family. This thesis is a contribution to studies in the broader research area of multilingualism, focusing on constructions of the native speaker within families who share more than one

language. This study contributes to both research about “native speaker” constructions and family language policy (FLP). This thesis sets out to answer the question: How do members of a multilingual family construct the concept of the “native speaker”? Through focus group discussions conducted with the family, I will analyze the families’ reflections of their past and current multilingual language use and how they construct the concept of the “native speaker”. I will particularly focus on how they are telling stories, negotiate with one another, and use language to do so.

This thesis is structured as follows: In Chapter 2, I summarize the theoretical context of my research, including information on the “native speaker”, and FLP. In Chapter 3, I describe the methodology I used in this study. Included in this chapter are information about the multilingual families in my case studies and a description of the theories and types of analysis that I have used. In Chapter 4 I present my analysis of focus group data from two families; Family #1 and Family #2. Chapter 5 contains the discussion of the results from both of the case studies and the implications.

2 Intellectual Context

2.1 Overview

The two main subject areas this thesis is focused on are constructions of the “native speaker” amongst members of multilingual families, and their impact on their family language policy. The subjects included in this literature review include information relevant to my current study, focusing on native speaker constructions within a multilingual family. Though this is the current focus of this thesis, it is important to note that the original study design focused on multilingual families through a family language policy (FLP) lens, and initial research was completed in FLP, multilingualism, and language ideologies. Because these research subjects are still relevant to the direction of this study, I have included these topics and their relevance to FLP in this literature review. As I used a grounded theory approach to determine which key topics emerged from my participants’ discussions, and to establish theory as grounded in my data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994), the following topics are a result of my previous research and subjects that emerged from my data. I begin with a section on the concept of the “native speaker”, as this is the main focus of this thesis. Next, I explain some relevant research in multilingualism, followed by information on language ideologies. Lastly, I provide a brief overview of FLP theory.

2.2 The Native Speaker

The concept of the native speaker is one that is societally pervasive and has roots dating back to the 19th century (Deaele, Bak, & Ortega, 2022). The concept of the native speaker is also closely related to the term “native language”. Jessner, Hofer, & Malzer-Papp (2020), describe what a native language is, writing: knowledge of the “native” language is a (supposed) prerogative acquired by birth. It indicates origin in an environment where a certain community speaks the “native language” as a first language” (p. 50). Those who belong to such a community

can be described as native speakers of that native language. Despite its long history, the definition of who or what a native speaker is, varies depending on the one undertaking the definition. In an article proposing alternative terms for ‘native speaker’ to be used in education, Rampton (1990) first identifies five elements, which often make up the definition of a native speaker:

1. A particular language is inherited, either through genetic endowment or through birth into the social group stereotypically associated with it
2. Inheriting a language means being able to speak it well
3. People either are or are not native-mother-tongue speakers
4. Being a native speaker involves the comprehensive grasp of a language
5. Just as people are usually citizens of one country, people are native speakers of one mother tongue (p. 97)

While the definition of a native speaker is often debated and problematized, the prestige and privilege awarded to native speakers of a language in language teaching contexts has inspired a healthy criticism of the term and its place in our vocabulary. Deaele, Bak, & Ortega (2022) summarize the history and ideological roots of the native speaker, calling attention to its discriminatory and exclusionary hierarchy of ‘native’ vs. ‘non-native’ language teachers. They argue that the biggest problem with the concept of the native speaker is “its static determinism”, which treats languages as something only acquired at the beginning of one’s life, which does not change over time (Deaele, Bak, & Ortega, 2022, p. 29) Also acknowledging the flaws and restrictions involved with the concept of the native speaker, Kramersch (1998) writes that “the ‘native speaker’ of linguists and language teachers is in fact an abstraction based on arbitrarily selected features of pronunciation, grammar and lexicon, as well as on stereotypical features of appearance and demeanor” (pp. 79-80). Kramersch (1998) further identifies the restrictiveness of the native speaker label, clarifying that the native speaker is a “monolingual, mono-cultural abstraction”, restricting the bearer of this title to speaking only their native tongue and living

with one culture (p. 80). Complementing the criticism from Kramsch (1998), Holliday (2015) introduces the term “native-speakerism” to describe a phenomenon often occurring in English-language teaching (ELT) contexts as “a pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘Western culture’ from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology” (p. 385). Further, Holliday (2015) explains that a key theme of native-speakerism is “the ‘othering’ of students and colleagues from outside the English-speaking West according to essentialist regional or religious cultural stereotypes...” (p. 385). Though originally identified in an ELT context, Native-speakerism can be recognized in other professional contexts, as well as among teachers of different languages. Recognizing the faults in the unquestionable acceptance of native speaker discourse, Jessner, Hofer, & Malzer-Papp (2022) describe the limitations of the current concept of the native speaker, framing it as a political, social and linguistic construct which is rooted in the ideology of previous generations. They argue that the previous efforts to reconceptualize and adapt the native speaker concept is important to the discussion of the native speaker, but do not go far enough, instead calling for the broadening of the concept of “nativeness” to “focus on social identities of individuals that are shaped by ‘familiarity’ with a certain environment or certain specialized skills and abilities rather than the innate affiliation with a group” (Jessner, Hofer, & Malzer-Papp, 2022, p.65). Holliday (2005) captures the faults of the terms ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’ by placing them in inverted commas throughout his book, in order to demonstrate that they are “as stated by the discourse, and as such are disputed” (p. 4). Through a second language acquisition lens (SLA), Ortega (2014) explains that in SLA research, the term “native speaker” refers not only to a language user who has exposure to a certain language from birth, but also one who has had a monolingual upbringing (p. 35). In contrast, the

“non-native speaker” refers to a “late bi/multilingual speaker (i.e. a language user who has developed or is developing functional ability in more than one language, not from birth but later in life)” (Ortega, 2014, p. 35). These definitions introduce the concept of the monolingual bias, which positions the monolingual native speaker as the norm, and the bi/multilingual as the exception, thus subordinating the bi/multilingual speaker (Ortega, 2014, p. 35). Criticism of the monolingual bias is not something new. Grosjean (1985) described the “monolingual (or Fractional)” view of bilingualism as one that determines that a “bilingual is (or should be) two monolinguals in one person” (p. 468). Grosjean (1985) identifies multiple consequences of this view, including:

1. Bilinguals have been described and evaluated in terms of the fluency and balance they have in their two languages
 2. Language skills in bilinguals have almost always been appraised in terms of monolingual standards
 3. The effects of bilingualism have been closely scrutinized
 4. The contact of the bilingual’s two languages is seen as accidental and anomalous because bilinguals are (or should be) two monolinguals in one
 5. Research in bilingualism is in large part conducted in terms of the bilingual’s individual and separate languages
 6. Bilinguals rarely evaluate their language competencies as adequate (p. 468-470)
- The consequences are most often to the detriment of the bi/multilingual speaker, and the

monolingual bias is often still present in evaluations of second language learners. As the monolingual bias is present in language teaching and language evaluation contexts, it is unsurprising that it is often found in the commonly accepted definition of a bilingual.

2.3 Multilingualism

As this study focuses on family members who speak more than one language, it is important to have some theoretical background in bilingualism and multilingualism.

An important question that researchers in various fields in linguistics have asked, is the question of who is a bilingual. Wei (2007) discusses the topic of bilingualism in detail in *The*

Bilingualism Reader, first explaining that determining who is and isn't bilingual is a difficult question to answer; He identifies certain variables which often are considered when describing a bilingual person:

1. age and manner of acquisition;
2. proficiency level in specific languages;
3. domains of language use;
4. self-identification and attitude (p. 5).

Though the above-mentioned descriptors can and have been used as a tool to identify someone as a bilingual, Wei (2007) explains that a common belief about bilingualism, is that a bilingual person must have “equal proficiency in both languages” (p. 5), which describes what is called balanced bilingualism. The concept of balanced bilingualism echoes Bloomfield (1923)'s description of bilingualism as “native-like control of two languages” (p. 56). Grosjean (1985) critically expands on these types of definitions, writing: “the ‘real’ bilingual has long been seen as the one who is equally and fully fluent in two languages. He or she is the ‘ideal’ , the ‘true’, the ‘balanced’, the ‘perfect’ bilingual” (p. 468). Though many people believe in this definition of bilingualism, it has been rightly criticized for being too narrow. Eisenclas & Schalley (2020), argue that knowledge of a language means more than “mastery of a linguistic system”, and that “speakers need to develop competence in determining what is appropriate to say to whom in particular contexts, and how to interpret meaning beyond what is actually said” (p. 20). Because there is no single definition of bilingualism which captures the uniqueness of every person, I analyze how the family members in my study construct themselves as bilingual or multilingual, to find out what it means to them.

Though early research in FLP was based on child bilingualism and second language acquisition, as the subject area grew, more studies were published that expanded the genre to include multilingualism. Like bilingualism, multilingualism is something that has been defined and

redefined over many years. Some researchers in FLP keep bilingualism and multilingualism separate, like Lanza (2007) who used bilingualism to refer to the acquisition of two languages, and multilingualism as more than two languages (p. 45). Similarly, Wei & Hua (2015) separate bilingualism and multilingualism, and argue that “bilingualism and multilingualism mean different things to different generations and individuals within the same family” (p. 22). Beyond making a distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism, the definition of multilingualism also varies quite significantly. One definition which I feel captures the essence of multilingualism best is by Blommaert (2010): “Multilingualism, I argued, should not be seen as a collection of ‘languages’ that a speaker controls, but rather as a complex of *specific* semiotic resources, some of which belong to a conventionally defined ‘language’, while others belong to another ‘language’” (102). For the purpose of this thesis, I will not discuss the various definitions of what a language is, but analyze how the family members in my study construct language and multilingualism. One of the texts that has informed second language acquisition (SLA) research, as well as my own research is *The Multilingual Subject* by Claire Kramsch (2009). A central theme of this book and my own research is that “as a symbolic system, language creates and shapes who we are, as subjects” (Kramsch, 2009, p. 17). In my own research, it is through conversation with the family members in my study that I was able to understand how they constructed the concept of the native speaker, and themselves as members of a family who share more than one language. Also in my research, I align myself with Kramsch’s (2009) description of the “‘multilingual’ subject”, as people who “use more than one language in everyday life”, have varying proficiency in the languages in their repertoire, and those who can understand a family language but can’t speak it (p. 17). I feel that this description best represents the family members in my study, and is very inclusive to many aspects of language use.

2.4 Language Ideologies and Language Beliefs

Within FLP research, language ideologies are considered an area of primary concern, as they can be identified in many aspects of a multilingual family, spanning from parenthood to language use and socialization (King, Folge & Logan-Terry, 2008). Though the exact definition of what a language ideology is has been discussed and debated, Silverstein (1979) provides a popular definition, describing it as “set of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (p. 193). Though this definition has faced criticism, it remains most well-known and cited within sociolinguistics. König, Dailey-O’Cain, & Liebscher (2015) summarize the key pieces of information that this definition contains, stating “language ideologies can be understood as concepts and evaluations of specific aspects of a language or language use” (p. 489). Broadening Silverstein (1979)’s definition further, Lanza (2007) argues that language ideologies are not only about language, “rather they reflect issues of social and personal identity” (p. 51). Baquedano-López & Shlomy (2007) argue the importance of language ideologies in understanding both local and broader communities, “because they [language ideologies] influence the ways in which languages are used by the group” (p. 87). Looking at the family as a community of practice, Curdt-Christiansen & Huang (2020), explain the role that family members’ language ideologies have in family language planning, stating: “these beliefs and goals are driving forces for caregivers to provide language and cultural environments as well as facilities, accessible to family members, for language socialization and maintenance” (p. 175).

While language ideologies play a role in FLP research, this study looks at language beliefs and how they are constructed by multilingual family members. While there are certain themes that language ideologies and language beliefs share, certain characteristics define the two

concepts. Kaveh & Lenz (2022) explain that language beliefs “refer to specific stances, on an individual level, regarding certain aspects of language learning” (p. 2). Though separate from language ideologies, language beliefs “are manifestations of language ideologies rooted in societal power structures at the local, national, state, and global levels” (Kaveh & Lenz, 2022, p. 1). In the analysis of the data for this thesis, the participants’ language beliefs will be identified and discussed. More specifically, the family members’ language beliefs in relation to the larger language ideology of the concept of the native speaker.

2.5 Family Language Policy (FLP)

FLP is a growing field in the larger research area of sociolinguistics and language policy research. In an article that established FLP research as an important field of research, King et al (2008) defined FLP as “explicit and overt family planning in relation to language use within the home among family members” (p. 907). The study of FLP takes into account the various aspects of language in the family such as daily interactions, language ideologies, and imagined and constructed family goals with regard to language use and maintenance. Introducing some of the key arguments to study FLP, King et al (2008) state the importance of taking all of the above mentioned aspects into consideration in order to understand how a FLP is constructed and the impact it has on the family members, stating: “they shape children’s developmental trajectories, connect in significant ways with children’s formal school success, and collectively determine the maintenance and future status of minority languages” (p. 907). While the research of King et al (2008) lays a foundation for FLP research, their proposed definition of FLP has been challenged and improved upon as new research becomes available. King & Folge (2013) document this change, summarizing that “FLP examines language policy in relation to language use and language choice within the home among family members” (172). In their overview of the

development of FLP over the years, Lanza and Gomes (2020) explain that current studies in FLP expand beyond the definition of “explicit and overt planning” to include “implicit and covert language practices” (p. 153), which has made room for the inclusion of research beyond the scope of language policies and early bilingualism. Current studies in FLP research include topics such as language as a defining element for multilingual children and adults, multilingual populations outside of the nuclear family definition and “research methods that attend to meaning-making in interaction as well as the broader context (Lanza & Gomes, 2020, p. 160).

Within the field of FLP, research has been done to understand which factors can influence language policies within the family. Curdt-Christiansen (2016) explores such influences, demonstrating how various language ideologies and individual perceptions of FLP can exist within a family, which shows that the construction of FLP within a family is not always mutually agreed upon and followed by all family members, and can be a site of conflict.

The original goal of the FLP oriented study was meant to contribute to Palviainen (2020)’s call for research providing a “more thorough understanding of FLP formation as a dynamic process, involving the multiple individuals of the family, and as situated in a certain sociocultural context” (p. 239). Though the focus of this thesis now is on constructions of the native speaker, it contributes to both native speaker research, and FLP research. I do so by focusing on families that share multiple languages, who have completed their FLP planning, and have lived with the results for a minimum of 18 years. The case studies include focus group discussions with all members of the family, giving each respective member an opportunity to talk about their lived experiences as language users and their family language policies. As well, by focusing on families with adult-children, the data collected from the families consists of a variety of retellings and reflections by the family members about their experiences sharing multiple

languages as a family, thus providing insight into how the family members construct the concept of the native speaker, and how all family members contributed to the FLP process in different ways.

3 Methodology

3.1 Study Design

In order to capture the data I needed for my study, I designed small-scale, qualitative case studies, which would focus on members of multilingual families in Germany and in Canada. For this study, I defined certain criteria which participating families must meet in order to take part:

(1) the families must consist of at least one caretaker (e.g. parent) and one adult-child (age 18-25). This limit was set to ensure that two generations were involved in the study who could speak about growing up in a multilingual family (adult-children) and raising a multilingual family (caretakers). I chose to set this limit to two generations because I felt this number would provide the information necessary to answer my research questions, to answer the call for inter-generational data (Palviainen, 2020), as well as to avoid further time conflict and/or constraints involved in organizing a time to meet that fit all family members schedules. While there was no age limit set for the caretakers of the participating families, I chose the 18-25 age range for the adult-children for two reasons; firstly, it was a practical decision to ensure that the children in the family were over 18, as they are legally adults, and my project did not allow the time or scope to include the ethical considerations of involving minors in my research. Second, the age cut-off of 25 years old was made to ensure that the adult-children participants were able to remember a fair amount about their childhood, as the distance between to their childhood years was not too great.

(2) The family members must share German and at least one other language as a family language. In order to narrow the scope of my study on multilingual families, I chose to focus on families who all shared German as a family language, setting the context of the families as those who have some relationship to the German-speaking world. This decision reduced the possible number of participants and ensured that all of the participating families had at least one language

in common in their language repertoires. (3) The families must have lived in Germany for at least 10 years. This limit was set to ensure that the families had spent a significant amount of time in Germany, which would have enabled them to experience both the culture in Germany, as well as the country from which they, or a family member may have migrated from. Though it was not a consideration in the selection process for the families, all of the families who participated included one parent who had migrated from one country to another. Because the geographical concept of place is something I intended to examine in my research, it was important to ensure that the families had experienced life in each of these geographical locations. Having determined what type of participants I would like to work with, I chose to use case studies for my research because, as identified by Duff (2014), using case studies for research enables the researcher to “gain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon being studied” (p. 237). In order to ensure that my study was feasible for the scale of a Master’s Thesis, I limited the original number of participating families to four; maximum two families from Canada and two families from Germany. This decision enabled me to spend more time with each family and go deeper in my analysis than if I had a greater number of participants. One of my goals in conducting these case studies was to collect focus group data and individual interviews for qualitative analysis on the multilingual families about their language use and lived experiences. However, only focus group discussions were held, as the participants did not express a desire to participate in an additional individual interview. The focus group discussions were designed to include all participating members of the family, to last approximately one hour, and followed a structure where I, the moderator, would pose questions to the group and then they would have an opportunity to answer and discuss. Stewart & Shamdasani (2015) identify the advantages of using focus groups in research, one of which being that “the open response format of a focus

group provides an opportunity to obtain large and rich amounts of data in the respondents' own words" (p. 45). This quality of focus group research was particularly important for me, as I wanted to allow my participants to address my questions in a way that made the most sense for them. Additionally, Stewart & Shamdasani (2015) state that "focus groups allow respondents to react and build on the responses of other group members" (p. 45), which was also an important aspect for me, because I wanted to foster a conversational environment where the participants could work together to tell stories and share their experiences. In addition to focus groups, I had designed individual interviews, which were optional and thought of as an opportunity for the adult-children participants to expand on certain topics that were discussed during the focus group at a later date, if they had something they would like to add. Due to the ongoing global pandemic and logistical constraints of the participating families and myself, the focus groups and individual interviews were designed to take place online using Zoom. By using Zoom I would be able to meet with the families at a place and time that was convenient for them, eliminating the need to travel to a central location and eliminating any risk involved in travelling during the pandemic. Additionally, by using Zoom I would be able to capture seamless audio and video recordings of the focus groups and interviews. It was important to me to video record these sessions because, as Stewart and Shamdasani (2015) have identified, it is possible to observe the participants non-verbal communication such as gestures, which may provide me with additional information about the participants responses (p. 45).

3.2 Data and Participants

After receiving approval for my study from the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo (ORE # 44092), I began recruiting families. In order to find families who fit the criteria I defined, I reached out to friends and acquaintances in my social network who I either

personally knew or were friends of friends, that matched the criteria. All of the family members were then contacted by me with an email containing a detailed information letter about my study, a consent form, and the invitation to participate in my study. After receiving their consent forms and interest in participating, the families and I arranged for a time to have an online focus group discussion. A total of three families made up my initial database. After collecting the data from all three families, I decided not to include the data from Family #3 in my analysis. I felt that my research questions could be adequately answered using the more comprehensive data from families #1 and #2.

The tables below contain a brief description of families #1 and #2 and the participating family members. All of the participating family members are addressed throughout this thesis using pseudonyms. Additionally, any place names (e.g. cities), or any other type of identifying information used throughout this thesis and mentioned by the participants has been pseudonymized. Only country names (e.g. Germany) are unchanged, as the participants all consented to the inclusion of country names being mentioned throughout this thesis. Lastly, the ages of the participants are also approximated based on the participants actual ages. I will discuss these families in greater detail later in my analysis in Chapter 4.

Family #1

Role	Name	Age	Location	Languages
Mother	Dorina	57	Germany, immigrated from Hungary	Hungarian, German, English, Spanish
Father (non-participant)	-	-	-	-
Daughter	Elisabeth	23	Germany	Hungarian, German, English, Korean
Son	Johannes	21	Germany	Hungarian, German, English

Family #2

Role	Name	Age	Location	Languages
Mother	Allison	57	Germany, immigrated from the U.S.A	English, German, Spanish
Father	Thomas	58	Germany	German, English
Daughter	Anna	24	Germany	German, English, Spanish
Daughter	Emma	22	Germany	German, English, French
Son	Nicolas	20	Germany	German, English, French

Note: During the focus group this family explained that they choose their children's names specifically to be pronounceable in both English and German. These pseudonyms reflect this choice.

3.3 Data Collection

The data that I collected for my case studies was obtained using the above described focus group discussions with the participating family members. The focus group discussions were held online using Zoom and lasted approximately one hour each. I facilitated the focus group discussions, which began with a brief introduction to the goal of the focus group, where I welcomed my participants, introduced myself and my research, and reminded the participants that they were being recorded, could ask me questions at any time, and that they may choose not to answer any questions. After the introduction, I began asking the group questions which I encouraged them to individually answer and discuss with one another. During this time, I asked the participants open-ended questions which were designed to encourage the participants to share their lived experiences as they relate to language use, FLP, language ideologies and place. The entire list of questions that were used can be found in the Appendix, "Interview Questions".

Below is an excerpt of some of these questions:

- What languages do you each speak, and which languages do you share as a family and why? Where do you use these languages?

- How has your use of these languages changed over time? Examples?
- Does your family have any unwritten rules about language use? What do you think they are? What about outside of the family? Did / do you have specific rules on which languages would be used and with whom or when? Why?

The focus groups were conducted over a few weeks between May and June 2022, depending on the availability of the participants. The group discussions were recorded using both video and audio recording. The recordings were then transcribed, some manually (by myself) and some automatically first (using a software) and then manually; all transcripts were completed manually using a simplified version of Jefferson Transcription convention (cf. Jefferson, 2004). This convention was selected because of the scope of my analysis, since I will not be analyzing in detail the ways the speakers say something, but focus on what they are saying, with some reference to how they use language to say something. The second transcript was first transcribed using the online software Amberscript to automatically transcribe the audio recording. Then, the AI-produced transcript was edited within Amberscript and using Microsoft Word. I chose to use Amberscript to automatically transcribe my recordings in order to decrease the amount of time spent transcribing. An Information Risk Assessment of Amberscript was completed by the University of Waterloo's Information Security Services Team and was permitted to be used for this study. All of the recommendations described by the IRA were followed while using the software.

3.4 Final Transcription

As previously mentioned, the transcripts that appear throughout this thesis have been transcribed and formatted to follow a simplified version of Jefferson Transcription convention. In my simplified version, the following aspects are present in my transcripts; (1) Capitalization. Throughout the transcripts in English and German, capitalization is not used to indicate sounds

louder than surrounding talk per Jefferson (2004), but is used following the orthographic norms for each language. In English, the first-person pronoun I is capitalized, as well as proper nouns such as language names (eg. English), and the names of family members or place names. In German, all nouns are capitalized, following the orthographic structure of the language. (2) Underscoring. Underscoring is used throughout my transcripts to demonstrate stress or emphasis, per Jefferson (2004). (3) Punctuation markers. The punctuation markers . , ? are used to indicate the intonation at the end of a Turn Constructional Unit (TCU). A period indicates falling intonation, and a comma and question mark indicate rising intonation, with ? indicating the highest rise in intonation. (4) Marked pauses. Marked pauses are indicated using (.), which indicates a brief pause, lasting approximately a tenth of a second (Jefferson, 2004, p. 5). In my transcripts, I do not transcribe every pause, only marked pauses. Line breaks. Line breaks are also used in my transcripts to indicate where an intonational unit comes to an end. Occasionally, a line break does not indicate the end of a TCU, and is then indicated by the intonation marker.

As the participants in my study had the option to speak in English or in German, some transcripts are exclusively in English or German, or a combination of both. Excerpts which were said and then transcribed into German appear in their original German, with my English translation below. In such excerpts, the English translation is italicized, colored grey, and always appears directly below the German line. For the German-English translations, I used a non-literal translation style. I made this decision because, as I previously mentioned, the focus of this thesis is not on how the participants say things, but rather, on what they are saying. Therefore, I chose to use non-literal translation to best capture what the participants are saying, and make it understandable in English.

3.5 Excerpt Identification

The excerpts used throughout my thesis are labelled numerically, beginning with 1. In certain instances, a longer transcript may be broken up into sub-excerpts to improve readability. There are two ways this is done: (1) “Continued” is used to indicate excerpts that are only separated to improve readability with the analysis. Here, the line numbers also continue numerically, to demonstrate that all of the excerpt pieces belongs together. (2) In cases where the excerpts are part of a longer excerpt, they are divided using numbers (e.g. 20.1, 20.2). This means that the lines all belong to the same long excerpt, but do not follow directly after another. Here, line numbers start anew in each piece of the excerpt, to demonstrate that they do not follow directly after the other.

3.6 Method for Analysis

The analysis of my data was completed using Mediated Discourse Analysis (MDA), which is a theoretical position that focuses on “linkages between discourse and action and how these play out in complex social situations” (Scollon & de Saint-Georges, 2011, p. 66). Aligned with Scollon’s (2001) position that social action and discourse are linked, and require analysis and theorization to uncover these links (p. 1), I implemented MDA to analyze and bring forth the links my participants made between their lived experiences and their construction of multilingualism. Along with MDA, I used a grounded theory approach (eg. Strauss & Corbin, 1994) to code my data and generate theory that is rooted in these data. Completing the analysis happened as follows; I began by reviewing the transcripts of my group discussions with the families to get an overview of what the participants constructed as important, in relation to the questions about their experiences sharing multiple languages as a family. Through this process, I was able to identify certain key topics that appeared throughout the individual family group

discussion, as well as topics that appeared and/or were repeated amongst all participants and group discussions. With the lens of MDA, I focused on the passages where the participants discussed these key topics, and began unpacking how the family members constructed multilingualism through talking about their lived experiences.

4 Analysis

4.1 Family #1

As introduced in section 3, the family members that make up Family #1 include the following: mother (Dorina), father, daughter (Elisabeth), son (Johannes). The following analysis uses the participants' pseudonyms, as outlined above in section 3.2. Only the mother, Dorina, and her children Elisabeth and Johannes participated in the focus group discussion. The following analysis will investigate how Dorina and her children construct the concept of the “native speaker¹” through discussing their lived experiences. These topics will be explored by focusing on how they talk about their language use, and how they construct and enact language beliefs. Throughout the group discussion, the family members discuss the concept of the “native speaker” both explicitly and implicitly. In doing so, they talk about what being a native speaker means to them, how/if they position themselves as native speakers of the languages in their repertoire, and the qualities that a native speaker inhabits. Positioning, as used in the entirety of the analysis in Chapter 4, refers to indexing relationships to social categories (Harré & van Langenhove, 1991). As can be seen throughout this analysis, the family members position themselves in various ways through their stories and retellings. Dorina is the first person to introduce the concept of the native speaker in this group discussion, in answering the question: “which languages do each of you speak / speak as a family and why?” Dorina begins the discussion, shown in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 1

001 DOR our everyday way of communication is actually in German,
002 between my husband and me and when the kids are there.
003 but normally when I talk to my kids I prefer Hungarian.

¹ The term native speaker is used in quotations here to reflect the scholarship on this concept, which is discussed in detail in section 2.2. For ease of reading, however, the term native speaker will be used throughout the rest of the analysis without quotation marks, except when citing from the transcripts.

004 because this is my native language.

Dorina explains that her family's "everyday way of communication is German" (001), but that she prefers speaking Hungarian with her children because it is her "native language". By introducing the native language, Dorina has identified that she believes in the concept of a native speaker and she positions herself as a native speaker of Hungarian. After Dorina positions herself as a native speaker of Hungarian, the way she speaks about herself as a native speaker throughout the focus group provides insight about which qualities Dorina associates with being a native speaker and how this applies to her.

First, Dorina formulates the native language (Hungarian) as easy to use for her, thus constructing a hierarchy among languages based on their ease of use:

Excerpt 2

001 DOR and there are many many topics (.) ah,
002 we just got to know in Hungarian.
003 and it's obviously very easy to use this language.

Also notable here is Dorina's use of the word "obviously", which demonstrates Dorina's certainty that one's native language is the easiest to use, and is something that is taken for granted among the interactants, i.e. assumes it to be common knowledge.

Second, Dorina describes speaking Hungarian with her children as "natural":

Excerpt 3

001 DOR but since Hungarian is my native language,
002 somehow its actually natural that every time when I
003 just talk to the kids I prefer Hungarian.

Here, Dorina provides some information about how she positions herself as a native speaker of Hungarian. In line 001 Dorina states that Hungarian is her native language, reenforcing this information and confirming that she has an existing construction of a native speaker which she believes in, and that she aligns herself with this definition. As this is not the first time Dorina has stated that Hungarian is her native language (excerpt 1), she has made it clear that this is must be

something that is important to mention in this group discussion. Dorina then describes that her preference to speak Hungarian with her children is “somehow its actually natural”. This provides some fascinating insights about how Dorina constructs her language use and preference. First, we can look at how Dorina uses the word “somehow”. In using this word Dorina displays a constructed lack of knowledge or lack of agency in her language use. The “somehow” may express that Dorina is unsure why it is that she prefers speaking Hungarian to her children. It also demonstrates a lack of agency in her language selection, as the “somehow” shows that speaking Hungarian to her children might not be entirely her conscious decision. Also important in this utterance is how Dorina continues to describe her preference to speak Hungarian with her children as “actually natural”. In pairing this with “somehow” Dorina reinforces the idea that her preference to speak Hungarian with her children is out of her control, and “natural” to her as a native speaker. In this context, Dorina uses “natural” in the sense of “having an essential relation with someone or something” (Merriam-Webster). The relation which Dorina is describing as essential is that between herself and the use of Hungarian; one influences the other, thus explaining how “somehow” in this sentence may express her constructed loss of agency or knowledge. In this excerpt, we can also see how Dorina connects the idea of the native language as something natural with the preference to use this language. With this excerpt we can see that Dorina’s preference for speaking Hungarian with her children is influenced by how she describes her native language to be easy to use and a natural choice. It is interesting that Dorina describes a “preference” for speaking to her children in Hungarian, as preference is often interpreted as an active choice, which demonstrates agency in language use. In this excerpt we see how agency, choice, and something being natural are all included in Dorina’s construction of a native speaker.

As the discussion continues, Dorina continues to talk more about being a native speaker, and how this has influenced her language use and parenting style.

At this point in the discussion, Dorina describes the experience of raising her children with German and Hungarian, introduced in this excerpt:

Excerpt 4

001 DOR for me as a mom it has always been very important
002 that my kids are able to speak both languages,
003 German and Hungarian.
004 but since it's my native language
005 of course it is the language I am best at.

Similar to her comments in the previous excerpts, Dorina again states that Hungarian is her native language and it is the language she is best at. Similar to excerpt 2, line 003, where Dorina describes Hungarian as “obviously” easy to use because it is her native language, she uses “of course” in excerpt 4, line 005 to make it clear that her proficiency in Hungarian is because it is her native language. Both “obviously” and “of course” demonstrate the level of certainty Dorina constructs, that proficiency and one’s native language are connected to one another, reflecting one of Rampton’s (1990) criteria for a native speaker. While Dorina re-confirms her beliefs about her native language, in this excerpt she also reveals that it was important to her that her children acquire her native language. When explaining this part of her decision, Dorina highlights her role as a mother to explain her decision to teach her children Hungarian. By connecting her native language, Hungarian, to her role as a mother, Dorina demonstrates that it is important to her that she transmit Hungarian to her children and that they are able to speak it.

Reflecting on the periods in time when Dorina was deciding how to use Hungarian with her children, she describes having read some studies from 30-40 years ago which informed her beliefs about language use:

Excerpt 5

001 DOR and uh I know that studies say that actually,
002 you can have only one real native language.
003 I mean at least 30 or 40 years ago it was actually
004 what you could just read in different studies.
005 and there is always one language which is actually
006 dominating.

The studies that Dorina describes having read had the message that “you can only have one real native language” and that this language would “dominate” the other language. The use of the word “dominating” is important here, as it implies a hierarchy of languages. It is unknown whether this word was actually used in the studies she read or whether she is paraphrasing, but Dorina and her children use “dominating” or “dominate” throughout the discussion to describe their language use. Both Dorina saying “real native language” and describing languages as “dominating” one another are reminiscent of Grosjean’s (1985) description of the consequences of the “monolingual (or Fractional)” view of bilingualism (p. 468). At this point in her life, these studies made an impact on her choices, as they informed some of her knowledge about language use. However, in reflecting on these studies she mentions, Dorina distances herself from this information by explaining that this information came from studies which are 30-40 years old. Having read these studies and retaining this information, Dorina describes having the goal of “proving the opposite” – which meant raising her children to have both Hungarian and German as their native languages:

Excerpt 6

001 DOR and I thought oh maybe I could just prove the opposite
002 the other way around,
003 and it was always very important to me that uh they are,
004 or at least I wanted to give it a try,
005 that they are as good as
006 in Hungarian as well as they are in German.

Not only was it important for Dorina to pass on her native language to her children, it was also important to her that she could disprove the information from these studies and raise her children to have both German and Hungarian as their native languages. By wanting to disprove this information, we see how Dorina constructed this information about native language as something that could be challenged.

This excerpt also reveals that her definition of being a native speaker is informed by proficiency, as she describes wanting her children to be equally competent in German and Hungarian. This is an instance where the monolingual bias is visible in Dorina's construction of a native speaker; the pursuit for her children to have equal proficiency in Hungarian and German reflects the "monolingual (or Fractional)" view of bilingualism that sees a bilingual as two monolingual speakers in one (Grosjean, 1985, p. 468). The way Dorina and her children discuss being native speakers of German and Hungarian also echoes the concept of balanced bilingualism, which describes a speaker "whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent" (Wei, 2007, p. 6). At this point in the discussion and later throughout, Dorina discusses her self-assessments of her German and Hungarian proficiency, in light of her construction of the native speaker:

Excerpt 7

001 DOR okay so Hungarian is my native language.
002 so I think it's pretty high level.
003 German is not my native language,
004 I've been uh practicing it learning
005 and also teaching it for many many years,
006 but obviously there is an accent.
007 I can't do anything against that.
008 because I was over 30 years old
009 when I started to learn it.

In this excerpt, Dorina again states that Hungarian is her native language and then explicitly states that German is not her native language. In her description, she evaluates her Hungarian as being at a “pretty high level”, showing that this self-evaluation also belongs to her construction of a native speaker. In contrast, she clearly states that German is not her native language, despite the experience she has with it after using it for many years. One of the factors that Dorina attributes to German not being her native language is that she has an accent when she speaks German. Dorina is not alone in believing her German to be short of native speaker status because she has an accent. Ortega (2014) discusses this aspect of language use, explaining: “the archetypical native speaker is imagined to possess a superior kind of linguistic competence, one whose purity proves itself in the absence of detectable traces of any other languages during (natural or elicited) language use” (p. 35). She frames having an accent as something which she has no agency over, as she is a native Hungarian speaker and only began learning German in her thirties.

First, this utterance adds the dimension of pronunciation to Dorina’s construction of a native speaker. In her experience, because she has an accent when she speaks German, she cannot be labeled as a German native speaker. Soon after, we learn that the inclusion of this aspect of language use factors into her definition of a native speaker not entirely because of her own experiences, but from the input of others:

Excerpt 8

001 DOR other people say yes of course there is a slight accent,
002 so we hear that you are not a native speaker,
003 although your German is really really good.

Similar to how Dorina’s definition of a native speaker was impacted by the aforementioned studies, this excerpt demonstrates how the outside opinion of her accent prohibiting her from German native speaker status came to be a part of her personal construction of a native speaker.

Therefore, she does not meet the definition of a balanced bilingual, or of Bloomfield (1923)'s description of a bilingual having "native-like control of two languages" (p. 56).

Second, her utterance in excerpt 7, lines 008 and 009 provide insight about her beliefs on bilingualism and language learning. This statement demonstrates that Dorina also includes age as a factor for being a native speaker. Dorina is not alone in having this belief. What she is describing is the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which is a view that supports the idea that there is a critical period of language acquisition (Hummel, 2014, p. 170). Eric Lenneberg (1967) published information on the CPH stating:

Automatic acquisition from mere exposure to a given language seems to disappear, and foreign languages have to be taught and learned through a conscious and labored effort.

Foreign accents cannot be overcome easily after puberty. Moreover, a person can learn to communicate in a foreign language at the age of forty. (p. 176)

Additionally, Lenneberg proposed that the critical period spanned from around age two to the start of puberty, or approximately age 13 (Hummel, 2014, p. 171). Dorina's statement in excerpt 7, lines 007 to 009 mirrors the CPH, and demonstrates that CPH theory also belongs to her construction of a native speaker.

While Dorina makes it clear throughout the discussion that Hungarian is her only native language, she explains a scenario where she was considered as a German native speaker by others:

Excerpt 9

001 DOR okay so the time we used to live in Hungary,
002 well it's really interesting.
003 I'm Hungarian and we were in Hungary and I was
004 teaching German so I was actually not a Hungarian
005 teacher I was as a German native speaker there.
006 and I had no difficulties the environment was,

007 well okay with me so.
008 they didn't look at me like somebody
009 who speaks German as a foreign language so they
010 totally accepted it.
011 oh she's a native speaker,

In this excerpt, Dorina is talking about a time when she and her family were living in Hungary, and Dorina was working as a German teacher in a Hungarian school. It is fascinating that Dorina shared this example during the discussion, as this contradicts her previous statement that she is not a German native speaker. Most notably, her statement in line 005, where she explains that she was employed as a German native speaker teacher. Dorina makes an effort to show the contrast of her being a Hungarian national, in Hungary, but being employed as a native German speaker. In comparison to the other people Dorina recalls encountering in Germany who said that she wasn't a native speaker of German, she experienced the opposite while she was in Hungary, communicating with Hungarian colleagues. The way Dorina referred to herself, and how her colleagues referred to her as a native speaker of German provides the possibility that for Dorina, being a native speaker is also context dependant. In Germany amongst other speakers of German, neither Dorina nor the German speakers consider her to be German native speaker. However, in Hungary, she allows her colleagues to construct her as a German native speaker, again using the opinions of others to shape her construction of her native speaker status. In excerpt 8 we saw how the comments from other Germans reenforced Dorina's belief that she is not a native speaker. Since Dorina has lived the majority of her adult life in Germany, it is possible that her exposure to the German-speaking environment influenced her categorization of herself as a native speaker. Germany is influenced by monolingual discourses (Gogolin & Reich, 2001), with Haselhuber (2012) describing Germany as the biggest mother tongue speech community in the European Union (p.245). However, outside of the German-speaking

environment, Dorina is constructed as a native speaker and was specifically hired because of that. This excerpt demonstrates how complex and insufficient the label ‘native speaker’ is when referring to one’s language use. As we have seen with Dorina, the label ‘native speaker’ can be context-dependant and influenced by both internal and external factors.

Dorina is not alone in comparing her language competence to that of the balanced bilingual, which confirms Wei (2007) explaining that this is a commonly held belief about bilingualism (p. 6). Dorina shares that it was her goal to prove the studies wrong (excerpt 6), that her children could have more than one “real” native language, which meant raising her children to be balanced bilinguals, ensuring that they are equally proficient in both languages. In order to achieve this goal, Dorina explained that for the first five to six years of her children’s lives she spoke only Hungarian with them, and her husband spoke German with them. Within the home during this period in time, Dorina and her husband employed the one-person one-language strategy (OPOL), where “each parent consistently speaks a different language to the children” (Horner & Weber, 2018, p. 196). Dorina explained that she considered how the children would speak German with their father, in kindergarten, and with extended family, which lead her to the conclusion that the children would have enough German input in their daily lives, and it was therefore okay for her to speak only Hungarian. Despite her plan to raise her children as balanced bilinguals and prove the aforementioned studies wrong, Dorina describes the point at which she changed her mind:

Excerpt 10

001 DOR it is true you can’t have two native languages,
002 so there is always one language which you are better at.
003 and although at the beginning I started to,
004 when we talked about school uh.
005 I asked them in Hungarian and they

006 gave me the answer in German.
007 or the other way around.

In lines 001- 002, Dorina describes that this was the moment that she decided that her previous method of using German and Hungarian was not having the effect she desired. Even though Dorina set out to prove the studies wrong, she ultimately declares their conclusion as true in line 001, after her children use language differently than she had planned for. This marks the beginning of Dorina's shift in positioning, that it is not possible for one to have two native languages. Furthermore, by comparing her children's language use to her expectations based on her construction of a native speaker, Dorina considers it a failure when her children responded to her in German after being spoken to in Hungarian, or after being unable to repeat their German sentences in Hungarian, as she describes in this excerpt:

Excerpt 11

001 DOR when we talked about school,
002 I asked them in Hungarian and
003 they gave me the answer in German.
004 or the other way around.
005 or whenever they had some difficulties
006 with their homework,
007 I tried to explain it in Hungarian
008 and then in German.
010 but I gave up because,
011 because uh yeah it didn't really work,
012 and so I thought okay alright so,
013 we are in Germany and.
014 and we are in Germany.
015 and I have to accept that there is only one
016 real native language and its German.

In lines 001 to 008, Dorina describes how she tried to maintain the OPOL strategy with her children by speaking to them about topics they usually learn in German, in Hungarian. When the children failed to respond to her questions or prompts for translation into Hungarian, Dorina

considered her attempts a failure and explains that she gave up trying to encourage language use this way. This experience lead Dorina to believe that there can only be one “real” native language, which is German for her children. Her reference to a “real” native language in this excerpt returns to when she introduced this concept in excerpt 5, line 002, referencing the information she read in the studies about bilingualism and native languages.

Throughout the discussion Dorina speaks most consistently about what it means to be a native speaker, and uses that term to describe herself and her children. However her children, Elisabeth and Johannes do not discuss being a native speaker as often or as in detail as their mother does. In fact, only Elisabeth explicitly refers to German as her native language:

Excerpt 12

001 ELI yeah um so for me its German is yeah my native language.
002 then Hungarian um.
003 it's kind of hard to like assess the proficiency
004 level for me.
005 when it comes to speaking um I would say
006 I'm pretty fluent but then again there are
007 differences like when I have to speak casually,

In this excerpt, Elisabeth is responding to a question that asked her to evaluate her proficiency in the languages that she speaks. She begins by stating that German is her native language, which demonstrates that Elisabeth also believes in the concept of a native speaker and native languages. It is also important to note that this excerpt comes after the point in the discussion where Dorina has explained how she failed at raising her children as balanced bilinguals, and that German is Elisabeth and Johannes’ “real” native language (excerpt 11, line 016). Since excerpt 12 from Elisabeth comes after excerpt 11 in the discussion, I ask myself if Elisabeth might have answered this question differently, if her mother hadn’t already declared that Elisabeth’s native language is German. While we don’t know if Elisabeth’s answer might have been different, she admits that it is difficult to evaluate her proficiency in Hungarian in this excerpt. It is not unexpected that

Elisabeth finds it difficult to self-assess her proficiency in each language. A significant reason for this challenge is most likely that bi/multilingual individuals language skills have been tested using monolingual standards, which do not accurately capture the way each language is used (Zubrzycki, 2019, p. 449). In order to best explain her proficiency, she begins by separating her proficiency by skill, describing herself as “pretty fluent” when it comes to speaking Hungarian. With the information from this excerpt, we can see how Elisabeth compares her proficiency in German (“native language”) to that in Hungarian (“pretty fluent”). Because Elisabeth doesn’t expand on what her construction of a native speaker is, I estimate that her label “native language” for German means more fluent than “pretty fluent” for Hungarian, based on Dorina’s previous construction of what a native speaker is, which Elisabeth heard through the discussion.

Not only does Dorina offer her opinion on the native speaker status of her children, she also shares about a time when she asked a Hungarian-speaking friend about her children’s status as speakers of Hungarian:

Excerpt 13

001 DOR I ask my friend and she said,
002 well it is not the pronunciation,
003 its more the intonation,
004 in some cases you can hear that they are not
005 real Hungarian native speakers.
006 although their Hungarian is really really good,

The friend Dorina talks to acts as an external gatekeeper to her children’s native speaker status, by explaining to Dorina that the children’s Hungarian intonation acts to her as a tell that the children are not “real Hungarian native speakers”. By asking her friend about how her children speak Hungarian, Dorina positions her friend as someone who has the authority to make the judgement about the children’s native speaker status. Something else I find interesting in this excerpt is how in line 005, Dorina describes her friend as saying that Elisabeth and Johannes

aren't "real native speakers". It stands out to me, because in excerpt 5, Dorina uses the expression "real native language" when talking about her children's German and Hungarian proficiencies, demonstrating the belief that there are different kinds of native languages, and one can be more "real" than the others. This sentiment is also reflective of Grosjean's (1985) description of the "real" bilingual, as discussed earlier in excerpt 5. Since Elisabeth and Johannes grew up speaking both German and Hungarian with their parents, they experienced bilingual first language acquisition (BFLA). Because of this experience, it is even more unreasonable for their language skills to be compared to the monolingual standard. Zubrzycki (2019) explains the problem with treating bi/multilingual individuals like two monolinguals: writing, "Hence, it could be assumed that the overwhelming majority of speakers with two L1s will not have an equal command of both and their knowledge of at least one of them would be 'imperfect'" (p. 450). Since it is unknown whether the friend Dorina is quoting said the exact words in the excerpt, I believe it is possible that Dorina is paraphrasing her friend's general opinion in a way that matches the description that she herself previously used when talking about her children. Not only do the family members describe how they and others position them as native speakers, they also share about experiences they have had where their native speaker status went beyond language.

4.1.2 Native Speaker Constructed Through Lived Experience

This next excerpt comes from Johannes, who shares about his time living in Hungary. In the story, he explains that he met some classmates who also had both German and Hungarian parents, like he does. However, Johannes describes that these classmates doubted his ability to pass as "half half" (German and Hungarian):

Excerpt 14

001 JOH and they thought because I am from Germany

002 German is the better language.
003 I am more fluent.
004 they thought since the whole childhood and stuff
005 were in Germany,
006 thought I am not really half half,
007 I know the language but I don't really know
008 the culture and stuff I'm just rather good at speaking.

Here, Johannes describes how his connection to Hungary was challenged by his classmates in Hungary, who assumed that he didn't know anything about Hungarian culture because he had grown up in Germany. What Johannes' classmates were doing, was questioning his authority as a legitimate speaker of Hungarian, based on the idea that knowing the language doesn't mean that one also knows the culture. Bourdieu (1977), writing about the relationship between language and power, proposes that the linguistic definition of competence include "the right to speech, i.e. to the legitimate language, the authorized language..." (648). Not only was Johannes' legitimacy as a "half half" German and Hungarian being questioned, but also the symbolic power of birthright privilege that is granted to "native speakers". Ortega (2014) explains this symbolic power, stating: "language exposure from birth and primary language socialization is seen to confer the linguistic right of legitimate ownership of a language and the advantage of possessing the "purest" form of (monolingual) linguistic competence..." (p. 36). Having challenged Johannes' authority to speak Hungarian and belong to the community of students who also had German and Hungarian parents, his classmates began to set up a type of test, that would measure his legitimacy:

Excerpt 14.1

001 and then they started to sing a childhood song
002 that I knew in,
003 DOR in Hungarian.
004 JOH in Hungarian.
005 so I start to sing and they hear it and it was

006 the moment they knew,
007 oh it's not just some German guy,
008 or some Hungarian,
009 but it's more like a German and a Hungarian guy,
010 Who is like on the same level.
011 he's not really an outsider just happy to be good
012 at Hungarian but he does know the culture,
013 he does know some childhood songs.
014 some basic things every Hungarian should know.
015 or if I hadn't really knew it then I guess maybe
016 I don't think they would have accepted me that much.

In lines 005 - 006, Johannes describes the moment when he was accepted by his classmates as someone who is indeed half German and half Hungarian. By singing along to the Hungarian song his classmate began, Johannes established himself as a legitimate speaker of Hungarian, as Johannes explains that this song is something that “every Hungarian should know”. By singing along with his classmates, Johannes used language, as Bourdieu (1977) would describe, to “not only be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished” (648). In explaining that the song is something that “every Hungarian should know” Johannes also positions himself as a Hungarian, further defending himself as being half Hungarian and Half German. In this excerpt, Johannes also mentions the possibility of his classmates labeling him as an “outsider”, if he had not been able to pass their test. In explaining this, Johannes demonstrates that he believes in the concept of the Other, which Kramsch (2009) describes as “an imagined other, an idealized representation, even if this representation is triggered by a flesh-and-blood native speaker” (15). Johannes and his classmates categorize the other as one who is only able to speak Hungarian, but does not know about the culture and cannot participate in activities that are reserved for members of the speech community.

Throughout the discussion, Dorina, Elisabeth, and Johannes have provided valuable insight into their experience sharing multiple languages as a family. The family members construct the

concept of the native speaker by sharing their own lived experiences and through recounting past conversations with others. The excerpts included in this analysis show how complex the concept of the native speaker is, and that despite certain themes or topics reappearing frequently throughout the discussion, each family members' construction differs slightly and demonstrates the influence of their personal experiences.

4.2 Introduction to Family #2

As introduced in section 3.1., the family members that make up Family #2 include the following: mother (Allison), father (Thomas), daughter (Anna), daughter (Emma), son (Nicolas). All of the family members participated in the focus group discussion. The following analysis uses the participants' pseudonyms, as outlined above and in section 3.2. The following analysis will focus on how the members of Family #2 construct the concept of the native speaker by sharing about their experiences as a multilingual family.

4.2.1 The Native speaker and Language Repertoires

Throughout the focus group discussion, the members of Family #2 discuss the concept of the native speaker and how they position themselves as native speakers. As mentioned in Section 2.2., the term 'native speaker' is an ideological concept, that generally refers to a person who has inherited a language through birth can speak it very well (cf. Rampton, 1990). Responding to the question "what languages do you each speak and which languages do you share as a family and why?", Allison begins the discussion with the following answer:

Excerpt 15

001 ALL okay I speak German English and Spanish,
002 English is my native language.
003 and at home we speak German and English.
004 I would say particularly when we're here in Germany
005 in the meantime we often speak
006 perhaps we speak some more German than English,
007 but when we're in the States.
008 when we're back home in my country,
009 then we definitely speak English.
010 my answer.

In her answer to this question, Allison begins by first sharing which languages she speaks and stating that English is her "native language". It is noteworthy that Allison begins the discussion by clarifying that of the languages she speaks, English is her native language. This statement

produces two meanings; First, Allison provides us with the information that she believes in the concept of a native language, and by doing so, positions herself as a native speaker. Explaining what makes English her native language, Allison speaks about her connection to her country of origin, the United States of America (here forth U.S.A). In line 008, Allison explains that when she and her family are “back home in my country” that they speak more English with one another. With this statement, Allison clarifies that her status of an English native speaker is connected to her birth and time spent in the U.S.A. The words Allison use to describe the U.S.A in this are line also significant, as a “home” implies that Allison still considers it as such, compared to Germany. Additionally, “my country” clearly separates her country of origin from that of her husband and children.

Second, as Allison begins the discussion, she sets the tone for how the rest of her family responds to the initial question, each continuing to discuss what their native languages are. Anna responds next:

Excerpt 16

001 ANN okay (.) so I speak German and English as well,
002 and also some Spanish.
003 and I would consider both German and English
004 my native languages.
005 although I think my German is probably better,
006 like in some,
007 yeah (.) but I still feel like both are
008 kind of my native languages.

Like Allison, Anna shares which languages she considers to be her native languages; German and English, positioning herself as a native speaker of these languages. After sharing this, she shows some hesitation in line 005, saying that her Germans is “probably better”. Though Anna wasn’t prompted to consider her language competency in this moment, I’m not surprised that she talked about it while answering this question, because the commonly held definition of a native

speaker refers to a person who has had a monolingual upbringing (cf. Ortega, 2014), leaving a gap in recognition for those who had a multilingual upbringing. In lines 007-008, Anna does repeat that German and English are her native languages, but she mitigates in line 008, by saying “kind of”. The use of “kind of” demonstrates some uncertainty through mitigating, or that there is something missing, or standing in the way of German and English being her native languages. This could be explained by the “monolingual (or Fractional)” view of bilingualism (cf. Grosjean, 1985), which views the ideal bilingual as two monolinguals in one person. In turn, this view results in the belief of the balanced bilingual (cf. Wei, 2007). This definition of a balanced bilingual, though commonly held and recognized, does not reflect the reality of most individuals, including Anna and her siblings Emma and Nicolas. Zubrzycki (2019) explains the pitfalls of the balanced bilingual, writing:

it is widely agreed that balanced bilingualism is uncommon, if not an extremely rare phenomenon. Hence, it could be assumed that the overwhelming majority of speakers with two L1s will not have an equal command of both and their knowledge of at least one of them will be ‘imperfect’ (p. 450).

Though Anna does not mention having knowledge of the concept of balanced bilingualism, it is possible that she may have considered this definition when sharing about which languages were her native languages.

In this excerpt we also see how, unlike Allison, Anna doesn’t frame her language abilities as being connected to a particular place. In answering this question, Anna doesn’t provide any further context as to why German, English, and Spanish are part of her language repertoire. It is possible that Anna doesn’t expand on this further, because her mother provided more detail about her own language repertoire directly before her. Looking at Allison (excerpt 15) and

Anna’s excerpts together, it is possible to connect the two pieces of information, Allison provides the context for Anna’s language repertoire; the family have spent time in Germany and the U.S.A, the family speaks English and German “at home”, and the U.S.A is “my country” (Allison’s country). Looking at these two excerpts together demonstrates the effectiveness of the focus group discussion format of capturing the making of meaning through interaction. The next family member to answer this question and continue to shape how the family constructs their multilingual subjectivities is Nicolas:

Excerpt 17

001 NIC Well (.) I'll just continue (.) Sorry Emma.
002 so I speak German and English.
003 I learned French in school
004 but that hasn't been going on lately.
005 I haven't been speaking French (.) so yea.
006 most of the time I speak German,
007 but at home when I talk to my mom,
008 I speak English a lot of times.
009 and I would also consider English and
010 German my native languages.

Nicolas begins by sharing which languages he speaks. Perhaps due to the information that Allison (excerpt 15) and Anna (excerpt 16) share in the previous excerpts, Nicolas doesn’t explain why he speaks German and English. However, Nicolas does provide more information about French as a possible language in his repertoire. What I find most striking about his description of French, is how Nicolas doesn’t directly say that he speaks French, like he does German and English. In lines 003 – 005, he explains how he learned French and that he hasn’t spoken French lately, and leaves his description there. Since Nicolas is answering the question “what languages do you each speak and which languages do you share as a family and why?”, it could be implied that Nicolas does want to express in lines 003 – 005 that he can speak French.

Also noteworthy in this excerpt is how Nicolas frames German, English, and French through the amount of time he spends speaking them. Using the way he describes talking time in each language, it could be interpreted that he spends the most time speaking German, then English, and the least amount of time speaking French. Other than sharing how often he speaks each language and potentially using these descriptions to minimize the role of French, we don't learn Nicolas' intent for sharing this information. However, by using these descriptions, Nicolas constructs language as something that can be categorized by the time spent speaking it.

Like Anna, Nicolas also says that he considers both German and English to be his native languages, positioning himself as a native speaker and framing it as possible that one can be a native speaker of multiple languages.

The last family member to answer the question is the father, Thomas:

Excerpt 18

001 THO ja meine Muttersprache ist Deutsch,
 yes my native language is German,
002 und ich sprech mit den Kindern und auch
 and I speak with my kids and also
003 mit Allison meine Frau fast immer Deutsch.
 with Allison my wife almost only German.
004 außer wir sind in USA und alle sprechen Englisch,
 other than when we are in the USA and everyone speaks
 English,
005 und versuche ich auch Englisch zu sprechen.
 and I also try to speak English.
006 also English kann ich auch einigermaßen.
 I can speak English to some degree.
007 ja.
 Yeah.
008 aber Deutsch ist meine Muttersprache.
 but German is my native language.

After all of the other family members have shared about being a native speaker, Thomas begins his utterance by stating that his native language is German, also positioning himself as a native speaker of German. Comparing his English skills to his German, Thomas makes the difference in competency clear with his evaluation of his English skills and by repeating that German is his native language in line 008. In this excerpt Thomas also confirms Allison's statement that when they are in the U.S.A., they speak English. It is also notable how he frames the U.S.A. here, saying that everyone speaks English. It is unclear to whom Thomas is actually referring to here. In one scenario, 'everyone' could refer to his immediate family (Allison and the children), and his extended family on Allison's side. Alternatively, Thomas could use 'everyone' to refer to the entire population of the U.S.A., thus positioning the population as being able to speak English.

These excerpts demonstrate how all of the family refer to the concept of a native language, and by doing so position themselves as native speakers. In the next section, the family members share stories and reflect on past experiences to describe what being a native speaker means to them and others that they have encountered.

4.2.2 Native Speaker Constructed Through Lived Experience

Emma begins talking about her experiences growing up in Germany with two native languages, by answering the question "have you encountered any challenges using these languages?":

Excerpt 19

001	EMM	I don't know if it's really a challenge,
002		but I do think that I like.
003		obviously like in school people like,
004		and especially teachers,
005		if they know your native language is also English,
006		they kind of expect you to be better in English.
007		and to know words and stuff like that.

008 and I often have the feeling that (.) like,
009 I understand English very well and I speak it very well.
010 but there are like.
011 when it comes to technical terms or stuff like that.
012 I also have to learn these words because.
013 I never like,
014 I never really like ,
015 I went to school for like a few months.
016 but besides that (.) like,
017 I have like the basic English knowledge,
018 but loads of words are just words I've never
019 come across in English.
020 so yeah.
021 I guess that's a challenge sometimes.

In this excerpt, Emma begins by describing what her school life was like as a child who spoke multiple languages. In lines 005 – 007, Emma explains how during her school years, she had to deal with the expectations that her teachers and others at her school had of her, based off of their knowledge of her language abilities. She describes their expectations of her as being “better” in English (presumably better than her non-English native speaker classmates). Looking first at this expectation, it appears as though the teachers and peers that she is referring to believe in the idea that a native speaker of a language will be at a higher level of overall competency than non-native speakers. Emma then describes that one of the aspects that is included in this expectation is that as an English native speaker, that she would have a broader vocabulary than her peers. Though Emma doesn’t expand on what was included in “stuff like that” in line 011, it is possibly inferred that she is referring to competence in other language skills.

Also interesting in this excerpt is how Emma begins to evaluate her English after sharing about this experience in school. Beginning in line 009, Emma begins by sharing her own feelings about her English competency, describing herself as being able to speak and understand English “very well”. Emma then compares her self-evaluation to the expectations set by her teachers by

sharing about her vocabulary. In line 011, she explains that there are certain words such as “technical terms” which she doesn’t have readily in her vocabulary and would have to learn. She then begins to account for this lack of vocabulary by explaining in 015, that she only attended school in the U.S.A. for a short period of time, which impacted her English vocabulary. In sharing this information, Emma demonstrates the belief that she might have learned the missing words in her vocabulary at an English language school. This shows how Emma considers the impact of the language in which one is educated as an influential factor on language use, and specifically, vocabulary.

Emma’s comments at the end of this excerpt are also notable, as she then attempts to clarify the status of her English proficiency. In line 017, Emma states that she has “basic English knowledge”, but does not expand on this definition. After this statement, Emma separates her evaluation from her perceived lack of vocabulary, by minimizing its role in this definition by explain that these words are “just words I’ve never come across in English” (lines 008 - 009).

After sharing about this experience, Emma’s father Thomas offers his opinion on the experiences that his children had in school:

Excerpt 20

001	THO	Ich hatte den Eindruck dass die Lehrer <i>I had the impression that the teachers</i>
002		vor allem in Unterklassen. <i>at least in grade school.</i>
003		Ich weiß nicht warum aber irgendwie <i>I don't know why but somehow</i>
004		erwartet haben dass man auch English schreiben kann <i>expected that one can also write in English</i>
005		wenn man auch das als Muttersprache lernt. <i>when one learns it as a mother tongue.</i>
006		weil sie haben das von ihrer Mutter gelernt. <i>because they learned it from their mother.</i>

007 also von Schreiben hatten sie keine Ahnung
 they didn't have a clue about writing
008 als sie in die Schule kamen.
 when they entered school.
009 wie mein English auch so.
 just like my English.

Thomas expands on the expectations that the teachers had for his children by explaining that they also expected the children to be able to write in English, since they learned it at home from their mother. Something I find interesting about this excerpt is how Thomas questions the reason his children's teachers held this belief about being a native speaker. By expressing his confusion at this expectation, it can be assumed that Thomas doesn't or didn't consider writing skills to be a part of what makes someone a native speaker. Thomas also puts the children's lack of writing skills into context by explaining that they weren't writing before they entered school, which is not uncommon, as children often enter school at age four. This reveals an interesting aspect of the teachers expectations of the children as native speakers, which is that because they are native speakers and have exposure to the language at home, the children would have advanced skills in that language.

Also in this excerpt, Thomas puts the emphasis on his wife Allison as the main source from whom the children learned English. He does this in lines 005 and 006, using the German word for native language (Muttersprache) and then explaining that they learned English from their mother. I find that this play on words reveals the connection between the concept of the native speaker and the way in which one is traditionally believed to become a native speaker; learning the language from a parent, having a "birthright" to the language (Ortega, 2014). The connection between motherhood and language is something that Allison also talks about in this discussion and that will appear later in the analysis.

Allison then provides further information to what Thomas shared about this experience with her children's teachers, and her own thoughts on their language learning:

Excerpt 21

001 ALL I didn't sit down and practice writing
002 with them all the time.
003 I thought.
004 that's something that they will do in school,
005 that's not so (.) I don't have to.
006 I don't want to drill my kids.
007 they have to be well,
008 because you have your mom was from America,
009 they have to be perfect in English,
010 I said they should learn it.
011 just like the others are going to learn it,
012 and perhaps it'll stick with them better too.
013 and yeah that was that definitely was an issue.
014 sometimes that they said,
015 Well (.) no,
016 he has you,
017 you speak English all the time,
018 they should be able to do that,

This excerpt from Allison provides further insight into some of the opinions and expectations that the children encountered at school. First, Allison begins by explaining her reasoning for not spending a lot of time practising writing with her children. She shares that one of the reasons that she decided not to focus too deeply on that is that she knew that the children would learn how to write in English during their school career. In line 011, she provides an additional reason, being that learning how to write in school would enable her children to learn in the same way as their classmates. The way Allison chooses to leave the majority of this part of her children's education to school demonstrates that she had confidence in the schools ability to teach English writing. Not only did Allison have confidence in the school, she also proposed the idea in line 012 that

through this way of learning, her children might remember these skills more than they would had she taught them how to write.

Also in this excerpt, Allison shares some of the expectations or opinions that she heard from others in regards to her children's language abilities. In lines 008 – 0009, Allison imitates some of the comments she heard from others. These comments demonstrate that the commentators may have believed in the concept of balanced bilingualism, and applied this to Allison's children, by insisting that their English should be "perfect" because their mom is from the U.S.A. This comment also reflects the idea that native speakers of a language are the most authentic speakers of the language (Kramsch, 1998). Since the concept of balanced bilingualism is widely known and believed in (Wei, 2007), it is not unusual that Anna, Emma and Nicolas would experience others trying to explain their status as multilingual individuals in this way.

Emma shares another memory about her time in school later in the discussion:

Excerpt 22

001 EMM and I just remembered one thing.
002 I don't know if it's (.) I don't know(.) important.
003 but I did like a (.) like a grammar,
004 like a German grammar class in primary school.
005 I don't know mom if you remember that,
006 but I had to do that because they said my,
007 my native Engli.
008 my native language is not only German,
009 and that's why I need to do like,
010 like an extra grammar class.

Here, Emma explains that at some point during her time in primary school she had to take part in a German grammar class because German wasn't the only language that she spoke at home. This decision by Emma's teachers reflects the belief that for a multilingual individual, one language suffers due to the presence of another. Though the teachers seemed to acknowledge that it was possible for Emma to have two native languages, they did not appear to believe that it

was possible for her to have comparable competency in both languages, thus conflicting with the commonly held idea of balanced bilingualism. This excerpt is interesting, as it provides somewhat conflicting information about Emma's teachers' beliefs about being a native speaker. As Emma and other family members mentioned earlier, she and the other children often encountered situations where their teachers expected them to excel in certain language skills due to their status as a native speaker. Knowing both pieces of information, it appears as though the teachers set a hierarchy for the children's language skills, judging Emma's English competency to be a threat to her German competency. This decision also reflects the monolingual culture in Germany as the teachers were concerned about Emma's German grammar skills being negatively impacted by speaking an additional language at home.

Like Emma, Anna also dealt with teachers and peers having their own expectations of her language abilities:

Excerpt 23

001 ANN Actually (.) I remember now that I well,
002 at least when I came into,
003 I think ninth grade or so.
004 I was like (.) I tried to hide that I,
005 that English was my second native language,
006 just so that like the English teacher wouldn't
007 judge me on my (.) like my already fluent English
008 and would like,
009 just treat me like everyone else.
010 maybe also to give me some unfair advantage,
011 but also just not to have any expectations.
012 yeah.
013 because yeah.
014 like I said before (.) I was already made
015 like to come in front of the class and read out
016 and stuff like that.
017 and I didn't want these kind of things to happen again

Here, Anna tells of a time where she attempted to conceal her English native speaker status from her teacher. One of the first interesting aspects of this excerpt is in line 005, where Anna refers to English as her “second native language”. Earlier in excerpt 16, Anna claims that she considers both German and English to be her native languages, though she thinks that her “German is probably better” (line 005). These two pieces of information come together here, and help demonstrate how Anna places a hierarchy on her languages. I find it interesting that Anna demonstrates that it is possible to consider oneself capable of having two native languages while also ascribing the languages a hierarchy based on one’s competence in the language. This also demonstrates that Anna doesn’t consider the restrictive concept of the balanced bilingual to be a part of her definition of what a native speaker can be.

In this excerpt Anna also talks about dealing with the expectations of her teachers when it came to her English skills. In line 004, she explains that she had attempted to hide her English skills in order to avoid judgement, and the perceived misconceptions from her teachers, based on their expectations. However, Anna doesn’t explain further how exactly she imagined that the teachers would judge her “already fluent English”. However, the stories that Anna and her family members told in previous excerpts about their teachers fill in this gap in information. Anna also mentions a story that she told earlier in the discussion to give more context about what kind of expectations her teachers had for her:

Excerpt 24

001 ANN and they once even remember my English teacher,
002 she gave me a book to read in front of class,
003 even though I didn't like.
004 I wasn't hardly even able to read German.

By referring to this story in excerpt 23, Anna provides an example for some of the expectations that her teachers had about her English. Like Emma and Nicolas had previously talked about,

Anna's teacher expected her English skills to be far beyond her development level due to her status as a native speaker. As has been proven true many times throughout her school life, we see that Anna believes that her teachers had certain expectations about her as a native speaker, which she did not agree with. In excerpt 23 Anna goes even further to call the expectations false. By explaining that these expectations were false, we can conclude from Anna's excerpt, that for her, being an English native speaker does not mean that she is at a further developmental stage than her peers, because she learned two languages at home.

In another excerpt, Emma talks about her experiences being multilingual in Germany and talking about her language skills with her peers:

Excerpt 25

001 EMM yeah.
002 same.
003 I think sometimes like I often,
004 like when I talk to people then they sometimes,
005 I don't know (.) make fun of me.
006 like when I say sorry.
007 like the ((r sound)),
008 they make fun of that.
009 and then sometimes I kind of feel like
010 I have to say that I'm like,
011 that I grew up like bilingual,

In lines 004 to 008, Emma explains a scenario that she sometimes experiences when talking to other German speakers in Germany. What she is describing here is a situation where she would be speaking in German to other German speakers, and says the words “sorry” but with an American accent or pronunciation. Though ‘sorry’ is an English word, it is not uncommon for a German speaker to say it in an applicable scenario. There is also a noticeable difference between the American and German pronunciation of ‘sorry’; in English pronounced with a hard R sound, and in German with a soft, R sound. Emma describes that sometimes other interlocutors will

make fun of the way she pronounces ‘sorry’, because she uses the American pronunciation rather than the German one. Though Emma doesn’t explain the reason that others have made fun of her for pronouncing ‘sorry’ the American way, there are some possible explanations. One explanation that likely fits this scenario is that by using the American pronunciation of ‘sorry’ marks Emma as a potential non-native speaker of German. Aware of this, Emma explains in lines 010 to 011 that she sometimes feels like she has to explain that she is bilingual, in order to defend her language use. It is not surprising that Emma might have felt the need to defend her language use, as the commonly accepted definition of a native speaker includes “one whose purity proves itself in the absence of detectable traces of any other languages during (natural or elicited) language use” (Ortega, 2014, p. 35). By doing so, Emma demonstrates that she may feel uncomfortable or unsatisfied with her interlocutors assuming that they understand her language repertoire based on her pronunciation.

After talking about her reaction to this scenario, she continues to explain how non-German accents are valued in Germany.

Excerpt 25 continued

012 because sometimes or at least like in Germany,
013 it's kind of a thing that like,
014 people that went to Australia or to the U.S.
015 that they come back and have like an accent and they
016 feel like fancy about it.
017 and blah blah blah.
018 and so I don't know.
019 like sometimes I feel like I have to. explain why
020 I talk like that.

In lines 012 - 015 Emma explains that it is a common occurrence in Germany, that people who have spent time in English-speaking countries return to Germany with an accent (in English) matching their destination, and consider it as something positive. Emma also demonstrates that

she may view the latter negatively, as she emphasizes the word ‘fancy’ and proposes dialogue as “blah blah blah”. Emma compares this circumstance with hers, as she contributes her accent to her bilingual upbringing, versus others’ stays abroad. By ending the excerpt by repeating that she sometimes feels the need to explain her accent, it appears as though Emma not only tries to defend her language use, but also to describe it as a better reason for having an accent.

Through the retelling of these experiences, the family members of Family #2 have provided insight about how their native speaker status has been treated in Germany. Through these stories, we come to understand some of the language beliefs that the family members have, as well as those of the people around them.

4.2.3 Family Language Policy

In the following section, I analyse a set of excerpts where the family discusses their family language policy (FLP) explicitly, including what their policy was, how they decided on it, and how the family members influenced it. Best described by Lanza & Gomes (2020), using FLP as a sociolinguistic lens can:

provide an important key to understanding the role language plays for family members, not only in regards to children’s language development by the time they enter into the educational system of a society, but also in the construction of a family’s identity, including both children and adults. (p. 154)

Through these excerpts and their discussion about their FLP, we also uncover how the family constructs the native speaker and the role of the native language in the context of their multilingual family and the ways they use language.

The parents, Thomas and Allison explain that the family had a One Person - One Language (OPOL) language policy in place when the children were young. This policy aligns with the

language competencies that Thomas and Allison described earlier, with Allison being the primary speaker of English and Thomas of German. It not surprising that Allison and Thomas decided on using OPOL during this period of time, as OPOL “is the best-known one among bilingual families as well as among educators and has become axiomatic in recommendations from both professional and lay sources” (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013, p. 226). Although the parents decided to begin with the OPOL strategy, Thomas explained that their strict adherence to the OPOL strategy was something they did at the beginning of their children’s lives.

In this excerpt, Allison expands on the description of the structure of their FLP:

Excerpt 26

001 ALL but I would say over time,
002 particularly when the kids the kids were little.
003 when they were preschool schoolers I spoke more
004 English continuously.
005 I only spoke English to them
006 because it was what they wanted them to,
007 to learn it as an as another native tongue.
008 and it was easy to do that.

In lines 001 - 005, Allison describes the period of time when her children were in Pre-school as a time where she maintained the OPOL strategy by only speaking English with the children, matching what Thomas shared earlier. In line 005, Allison clarifies her comment by emphasizing the word “only”, constructing herself as the single source of English for her children. She then explains part of this decisions in lines 006-007, which I find interesting. Here, she states that Allison speaking English to her children was “what they wanted them to do”. From Thomas’ explanation, we learned that both Thomas and Allison were in agreement about introducing the OPOL to their family. Here however, Allison mentions a “they” who had some degree of influence on the FLP. Allison doesn’t explain who the “they” is from this statement, but with the context of the children being in pre-school during this time, Allison could be referring to her

children's pre-school teachers. I also find it fascinating how in line 007, Allison describes English as "another native tongue" for her children. This statement brings us back to talking about being a native speaker, and now, how Allison frames English and German as part of their language repertoires. By referring to English as "another" native tongue, it can be implied that Allison believes in the possibility of a person having multiple native languages. By framing English as one of the children's native languages, Allison allows English and German to be of equal importance in the children's lives. This demonstrates that Allison not only accepts the possibility of a person having multiple native languages, but also allows the possibility that both languages may be valued equally. Ending off this part of the reflection on the children's time in pre-school, Allison frames speaking English with her children as something that was "easy to do" (line 008), constructing speaking in English as easy. As Allison has previously identified English as being her native language (excerpt 15), a possible reason that this is easy for her is because it is her native language.

In this next excerpt, Allison talks about why she and Thomas decided to include English in their family language planning, despite raising their family in Germany:

Excerpt 27

001 ALL Well (.) I would just for me,
002 it was definitely that's just,
003 that's my language And they should be
004 also learning that language that they
005 could speak then with my sister and my parents.
006 my mom could speak some German (.) of course.
007 but that was definitely the goal (.) was that,
008 Yeah (.) they should definitely learn the language
009 that I can natively provide them with.

In this excerpt, Allison is responding to a question that asked: was the decision to raise the children with German and English based on their language abilities, or on the economic standing

of English? Allison answers in lines 002 - 003, explaining that an important factor for her was that English is “my language”. What I find most striking about her calling English “my language” is how this demonstrates a strong connection between Allison and English, her self-described native language. Since this is the answer Allison provides first in response to the question, I believe this also signifies the importance that Allison placed on having her children learn her language, which is further explored later in this excerpt. This designation of English as her language also constructs language as something that can be possessed by, or belong to an individual, making the connection to the language very personal.

Next, Allison explains in lines 003 - 005, another reason for teaching her children English being that they “should” learn it in order to be able to communicate with their maternal aunt and grandparents. This statement demonstrates how Allison had identified a community of practice with whom her children would be able to speak English. Here, we can see how Allison positions her children as future members of an English-speaking speech community and took steps to complete this goal, one of which being the formation of the FLP. In her study on future parents’ imaginations and expectations for their families and their respective FLP’s, Purkarthofer (2017) found that parents reflect on their own experiences of mobility and language use to form their expectations for their FLP (p. 737). At an earlier point in the discussion, Allison explains that her mother’s family moved to the USA from Germany, and that her mother learned and spoke some German at home with her parents. Though Allison didn’t use German at home with her own mother, she valued the experience that her mother had learning another language as a child and let this inspire her goals and FLP for her children.

In lines 008 - 009, Allison describes another reason for her decision to speak English with her children, saying that they should learn the language that she can “natively provide them with”.

While it is unknown how what exactly the word “natively” means for Allison, Jessner, Hofer, & Malzer-Papp (2022) describe “native” as “ a sociocultural attribute and implies properties related to birth and birthplace” (p. 50). Due to Allison’s statement that English is her native language in in excerpt 25, I believe it is possible that in using “natively”, to mean that she can provide her children with English, because it is her native language. She uses “native” as an adverb to describe how she can “provide” her children with English, possibly meaning that through the same symbolic power that makes her a native speaker of English, she is also qualified to “provide” English to her children. This statement also demonstrates Allison making a connection between her role as a parent and her role as an English native speaker, which is something she speaks about later in this excerpt.

As Allison was asked specifically if one of her reasons for teaching her children was for its economic advantage, Allison reflects on this question:

Excerpt 27 continued

010 and I didn't think of it as,
011 oh, this would be an advantage to,
012 at the time when we decided that it wasn't.
013 of course (.) later on you thought,
014 Well (.) this is a good thing (.) you know,
015 like learning English.
016 so definitely a beneficial language,
017 maybe more so than some minute language.
018 although I often had discussions with people
019 from smaller countries like in eastern Europe.
020 they told me,
021 Oh (.) no (.) I didn't teach my kids (.) I didn't.
022 why should they learn that language?
023 nobody in the world speaks that language.
024 of course (.) somebody,
025 I said,
026 why didn't you do that?

027 your kids could speak your language,
028 that's your native language.
029 and ne (.) not so important.
030 you (.) you have English,
031 that's a really important language,
032 so it wasn't.
033 it was it was later on.
034 and I thought well it's an important language
035 but if I'd had any other language I also
036 would have done it because it's important.

In lines 010 - 012, Allison explains that at the time that she and Thomas decided on their FLP, that the global status of English was not something that they had taken into consideration. Where this part of the transcript becomes very interesting, is in lines 016 - 017, where Allison begins talking about the economic status of English in comparison to other languages, describing English as a “beneficial language”, especially when compared to a “minute language”. From this statement, I don’t think Allison is using the word “minute” as a negative descriptor, but rather to clarify the difference in global positioning and reach of English compared to other languages that aren’t spoken at the same frequency as English is. In turn, describing English as a “beneficial language” positioning it as a “source of symbolic added value” (Heller & Duchêne, 2012, p. 10). She then talks about this topic further in lines 018 - 031, describing some interactions she has had with other parents with different linguistic backgrounds in Germany. In her recollection of these types of conversations, Allison describes asking these parents from “smaller countries like in eastern Europe” why they chose not to teach their children the language(s) from that country. In lines 020 - 030, she demonstrates how such an interaction between her and another parent might have sounded. What I find most interesting about Allison’s re-enacting of these interactions is what she says in line 027 and 028; “your kids could speak your language” and “that’s your native language”. Allison’s theoretical reply in line 028, brings us back to something

that Allison spoke about earlier, which was the connection between her role as a parent, her native language, and her goal to teach it to her children. By positioning the imagined parent's language as "your language", Allison constructs the language(s) that one speaks as being a part of oneself. This is something that must be important to Allison, because she emphasized the words "your language" when saying this in the discussion. She then goes on to repeat this sentiment, saying "that's your native language". Here, Allison further clarifies that "your language" means "native language", thus highlighting the importance of the native language to her. Finishing this recollection, Allison reflects on these interactions in lines 032 - 036, settling on the decision that regardless of what her native language was, she would have wanted to teach it to her children, because it is "important". Ending her story with this statement gives the impression that Allison values the passing of language from parent to child above the economic status of a language.

Throughout the focus group discussion, the members of Family #2 share many stories, and talk in-depth about their lived experiences, as a family who shares multiple languages. These stories, retellings, and reflections provide insight into how the family members construct themselves as native speakers, and the concept of the native speaker.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I conclude the study by summarizing my research findings on how multilingual family members construct the concept of the native speaker, and what this contributes to the current research. Next, I review the limitations of my study and what I might have done differently. Last, I present the implications of my study and propose avenues for future research into multilingual families.

5.1 Discussion

The data in this study show that members of multilingual families construct the concept of the native speaker differently based on their lived experiences, while also including the commonly held beliefs about the concept of the native speaker in their constructions. These constructions are made visible through the family members positioning themselves as multilingual subjects through their language use, most frequently by negotiating, code-switching, and telling stories to reflect on their lived experience. We can conclude from the data that it is worthwhile to explore how the members of a multilingual family construct the concept of the native speaker, as this provides us with insight into multigenerational constructions of the native speaker and how this concept is presented in the context of a multilingual family.

To answer the research question how do members of multilingual families construct the concept of the native speaker, I considered how the family members constructed themselves as multilingual subjects through their language use and how they talk about their lived experiences. One of the ways the family members construct meaning is by code-switching, thus making full use of the languages in their repertoires. Most often, the family members constructed themselves by telling stories about their lived experience. The stories act as an effective way to reflect on a certain time in the family members' lives, with the family members sharing many stories about

their language use at in- and outside of the home, to provide examples or context to what they are talking about. The way the family members present themselves as multilingual subjects aligns with Kramsch's (2009) concept of a 'multilingual' subject. The family members are 'multilingual', as they talk about using more than two languages in their everyday lives, and they reflect the symbolic entity of the subject, constructing this through language (p. 17).

Through this lens, I was able to identify how the family members constructed the concept of the native speaker during their focus group discussions. In analyzing the data there are two conclusions that can be drawn from the data; (1) the family members use their lived experiences as language users to construct what a native speaker is, and (2) the family members constructions most often align with the information found in the academic literature on the native speaker.

In the initial analysis of the data collected for this study it became very clear that the subject of the native speaker was frequently discussed by the family members in the study. Despite the original design and focus of the study being on family language policy (FLP) and multilingualism, discussion around aspects of the native speaker was very prominent amongst all of the participating family members. This result was not entirely expected or planned for, as the original purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between place and FLP. In analyzing the native speaker constructions, it was noticeable that most of the participating family members constructed themselves as native speakers of at least one language, therefore positioning themselves as native speakers. What I find interesting about this result, is that the participants in both family introduced this topic, as I did not use the words native speaker or native language during the group discussion with the families. In both of the group discussions, the mother participant was the first family member to introduce the topic, with Dorina (Family #1) describing Hungarian as her native language and Allison (Family #2) describing English as

her native language. Looking at the mothers' constructions of themselves as native speakers and through the stories they shared, it is possible to see what lead to these declarations. In Dorina's case, she explains that her country of origin is Hungary, and that she moved to Germany as a young adult, at which point she started learning German. Her designation as a native speaker due to these circumstances reflects Rampton's (1990) overview of criteria for a native speaker, specifically that Dorina inherited her native language of Hungarian through birth in Hungary. Though Dorina has been speaking German for over 30 years, she does not consider herself to be a native speaker of German. Through the stories that Dorina shared, we can see that this consideration was informed through her experiences in Germany. The most significant being German-speaking friends telling her that she speaks German very well but still has a noticeable accent (prohibiting her from native speaker status), and the studies she read that claimed that one can have only one "real" native language. Looking at this first event, this aligns with the literature finding that claims to native speakerness are often made around speaking language without a detectable accent (Ortega, 2014). Though we do not know which studies Dorina is referring to in her reflection, her belief in them confirms Grosjean's (1985) description of the "real bilingual" often discussed in native speaker literature. Also through Dorina's stories we learn that the designation of a native speaker can also be context dependent, as when Dorina went back to Hungary to teach German at a Hungarian school, her colleagues and employers considered her to be a native speaker of German.

The parents in Family #2, Allison and Thomas also construct the native speaker through their lived experiences. In the group discussion, Thomas doesn't talk about the native speaker as much as the rest of his family members. However, we do learn from Thomas that he considers himself to be a native speaker of German. Thomas' description is unsurprising, as he was born and grew

up in Germany, thus being born into the language (Rampton, 1990). Also confirming this literature, Allison identifies English as her native language, as she was born and raised in the U.S.A. Throughout the discussion both Allison and Thomas share about how they used these languages with their children, each speaking with them their respective native language, in order to raise them bilingually.

As this study aimed to capture inter-generational data by including both parents and adult-children as participants, the life experiences of the adult-children who participated in the studies were also taken into consideration.

First, looking at the children in Family #1, Elisabeth and Johannes, we see how one of the sources of information on the native speaker came from their mother, Dorina. Throughout the discussion Dorina not only talks about herself as a native speaker of Hungarian, but discusses her children's native speaker status. One of the most significant reflections from Dorina in the discussion, is when she shares about the period of time where she tried to raise her children to have equal proficiency in both German and Hungarian, to enable them to be native speakers of both languages. What is so interesting about this goal is how one of the reasons she set this goal was to be able to prove the studies she read wrong, and enable her children to have two "real" native languages (excerpt 6). This story demonstrates that Dorina may have been aiming for her children to meet Bloomfield's (1923) definition of bilingualism, the "native-like control of two languages" (p. 56). At the same time, she was also trying to disprove the idea that one can have only one "real" native language, mirroring the same critique from Grosjean (1985). Despite her goals, Dorina shares that she was unable to achieve them, and says that her children's native language is German, and not Hungarian. As mentioned in the analysis, Dorina shares all of this information and her assessment of her children's native speaker status before they have the

opportunity to describe themselves as native speakers or not. Elisabeth then shares that German is her native language, then struggles to evaluate her proficiency in each language. This struggle confirms Zubrzycki's (2019) critique of monolingual standards for bilingual individuals as being unrealistic and not representative of actual language use. Whereas Elisabeth and Dorina discuss Elisabeth's native speaker status in relation to proficiency, Johannes shares about an instance where his legitimacy as a speaker of Hungarian was questioned. In this story where Johannes felt he needed to prove his legitimacy as a "half-half" (German and Hungarian), he calls upon his knowledge of Hungarian culture to prove his birthright (cf. Ortega, 2014) to the Hungarian language. As well, by taking these steps to prove that he is "half-half", he is reflecting the monolingual (or Fractional) view of bilingualism, which views a bi/multilingual person as two monolinguals in one (cf. Grosjean, 1985). Through the stories and reflections that Elisabeth and Johannes share, we can see how their lived experiences inform their constructions of the native speaker.

Like the adult-children in Family #1, the adult-children in Family #2, Anna, Emma, and Nicolas, each have their own set of experiences which contributed to how they construct the native speaker. One of the biggest differences between the adult-children in Family #1 and Family #2, are that Anna, Emma, and Nicolas from Family #2 all describe themselves as native speakers of both German and English. However, we begin to see Anna struggle with this description when she tries to evaluate her proficiency in each language, as she questions whether she is equally proficient in both languages. Anna's moment of hesitancy reflects Zubrzycki's (2019) evaluation that maintaining the same level of proficiency in each language is quite difficult and does not take into consideration the life circumstances that influence proficiency (p. 450). Not only do Anna, Emma, and Nicolas share their own evaluations of their language use

and descriptions of a native speaker, they also share about what they experienced during their time attending school in Germany. Through these stories we learn about how the children were treated based on their teachers' and peers' evaluations of their language abilities. A shared experience amongst the three siblings was that their teachers expected them to have superior English proficiency compared to their classmates. In one example, this extended beyond development-level appropriate proficiency to expecting Anna to be able to read a book in English, despite not being able to read in any language. On the opposite side, Emma shared about her experience of being required to participate in a supplementary German grammar course, because her teachers knew that she didn't only speak German at home. Despite these experiences, all of the siblings maintained that both German and English were their native languages, thus going against the monolingual bias.

The data demonstrate that the way the children and the parents in the families position themselves as native speakers have different influences on the family language policy (FLP). For the parents, their own constructed "native speaker" status often determined what language they would speak with their children. Throughout the discussion with Family #1, Dorina made it very clear that her status as a native speaker and passing on Hungarian to her children was very important to her. This informed her decision to establish a FLP where she would speak Hungarian with her children, and her husband would speak German. Not only did Dorina establish the FLP to pass Hungarian onto her children, she also made an effort to ensure that her children could be "real" native speakers of German and Hungarian, after having read some studies which argued that it was impossible. Similar to Dorina, Allison and Thomas from Family #2 established a FLP based on their self-declared native languages; for Allison it is English, and for Thomas it is German. While the parents' constructions of themselves as native speakers

played a role in the development of the FLP, the children's constructions of themselves positioned them as native speakers because of the FLP, among other factors. All of the adult-children who participated in the study described how they used language with the family members, with their choice in language usually following the FLP that their parents outlined in the discussion. The adult-children also discussed the role of geographical place to describe the role of the languages in their repertoires: sharing about how their choice in language differed depending on where they were. In both families, the mothers emigrated to Germany as adults, but continued to visit their birth countries with their families, enabling the children to experience life outside of the German-speaking world. Because this study focuses on families who have already completed the planning of multiple languages in the home and have minimum 18 years' experience sharing these languages, it provides insight into both the time before the FLP was implemented (parents discussing planning for multiple languages in the home before their children were born), and the results of the FLP. These results demonstrate that the concept of the native speaker is a prevailing ideology playing a significant role in both the production of a FLP and the outcome of the FLP.

The results of this study also confirm the effectiveness of the focus group discussion as a data collection method. One of the most important results of the focus group method, was how the family members would react to the responses of the others and use them to formulate their own responses (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015 p. 45) As well, I found it very important that the focus group format allowed me to collect information from the family members in their own words (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015 p. 45). For future studies with a similar goal, I would recommend using focus group discussions to obtain data, as it has proven to be most reliable and effective.

5.2 Limitations

This study is a small contribution to research in multilingualism focusing on the constructions of the concept of the native speaker, from multilingual families with parents and adult-children. Because this study was originally designed to as a FLP study, it was intended to contribute to FLP research. Since families with young children have been the main focus in FLP research for many years, my goal was to contribute a study which focused on families with adult-children to explore new topics in FLP research. While I have accomplished this goal, seeing the native speaker concept as a prevailing and influential concept emerge in my data I feel that a longitudinal study of these families, spanning more years of their lives would have provided further insights, to have a fuller picture of how the family members construct themselves as multilingual subjects over time.

Additionally, since this study was designed for FLP research and to fil the above criteria, the focus group questions were not designed to elicit information about the concept of the native speaker. Having designed the questions with a focus on the native speaker I could have asked more targeted questions and looked into different aspects of the native speaker discourse. As well, because this topic only emerged after looking through the data, I wasn't able to ask the participants follow up questions to their answers in the focus group discussion to elicit aspects of their constructions in more detail. Had I been aware of the native speaker as the prevailing concept, I may have designed the discussion questions differently, and with more follow-up questions.

As for the “native speaker” concept, I believe it would also be useful to look at how the native speaker is constructed in such long-term study contexts, to be able to better understand how the construction changes or is lived out over an extended period of time. It would also be interesting

to conduct similar studies with families about 10 years into the future to determine whether the concept of the native speaker is still as prevalent as it is in 2022.

For the focus group method requires the interviewer to react quickly what the participants said what happened after they said it. While analyzing my data, I found many instances where I wish I would have asked the participant a follow-up question, after they said something. As much as I would have liked to make this happen, I understand that it was outside of my scope of ability for this thesis, as this would have been very demanding, and most likely best accomplished by including another person in the focus group discussion to take notes while the participants are talking.

5.3 Implications and Future Research

The results of this study demonstrate that even though the ways that the native speaker is constructed is slightly different for each family member based on their lived experiences, the constructions often reflect the current literature on the native speaker. These results also demonstrate how prevalent the monolingual bias still is in the native speaker discourse, despite criticism and calls for change in academic and non-academic circumstances. This thesis is a contribution to research on the native speaker and how this concept is used and constructed by members of multilingual families. As previously mentioned, the family is a vital source of information for language acquisition (Lanza, 2007). Through looking at language practices in families, and especially multilingual families, we are able to see how future generations are informed about language use and practices and what they will do with this information. Looking specifically at the native speaker, we are able to see how parents' constructions of the concept of the native speaker inform their choices about their FLP, and also whether their adult-children are influenced by their parents beliefs about the native speaker.

This thesis also contributes to the subject area of FLP, responding to Palviainen's (2020) call for more research for a "more thorough understanding of FLP formation as a dynamic process, involving the multiple individuals of the family, and as situated in a certain sociocultural context" (p. 239). I have done so through my two small-scale case studies, which focus on families with adult-children, who have already planned for the use of multiple languages in the family and have lived out their planning for a minimum of 18 years. In designing my study, I tried to meet Palviainen's criteria by conducting focus group discussions with all family members, and asking them to reflect on the creation of their FLP and how it has changed over the years. Beyond my contribution, I hope to see more studies in the FLP research area that focus on families with adult-children and aim to understand the complexities involved in family language planning.

Beyond my contribution to research in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, I would hope that my results could show families who would like to plan for multiple languages in the home, what this can look like over an extended period of time. My results also demonstrate how parents and children can work together to form the FLP, see it as a dynamic process, and how respecting children's agency in language use positively impacts the family unit.

One area where I see certain findings in my thesis to be particularly relevant for life outside of the family, are the classroom experiences of multilingual children. This became clear to me through the analysis of the data from Family #2. In the focus group discussion, both the adult-children and the parents shared about the challenges the children experienced when they attended school. As Anna, Emma, and Nicolas discuss, their teachers constructed their English native speaker status, and the children often had negative experiences because of it. The most common experience between them, were how their teachers would expect them to be 'better' than the

other students in English, and in turn ask them to perform beyond their development level in front of the class. Kerschhofer-Puhalo & Slavkov (2022) propose ways of improving pedagogical and research practices involving children's language repertoires in the classroom, suggesting the following: (1) formulating questions about children's language identities in a way that encourages them to share from their point of view. And (2) encouraging the teacher to ask themselves how they can "foster inclusion and representation of multiple languages in the classroom, even if one does not speak these languages" (p. 341). I agree with Kerschhofer-Puhalo & Slavkov's (2022) suggestions, and hope that the results of this thesis could inspire such changes.

As mentioned previously, I believe it would be productive for future research in FLP to include longitudinal studies that follow a multilingual family throughout different phases of their lives. I feel that this would enable one to capture the dynamic nature of family planning, and gain a deeper understanding of the life course of a FLP as it is practiced. Through reflection on my study, I also feel it would be beneficial to conduct studies with similar families (caretakers and adult-children), collecting both interview and interactional data. This would allow one to gain a stronger understanding of how language is used by the family members in their daily lives.

Though there are many avenues for potential further research, this thesis contributes to the large body of "native speaker" research with a focus on multilingual families. Through the family members language beliefs as constructed in the focus group discussions, the results find that the family members use their lived experiences to construct the native speaker and that their constructions often align with the current literature.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

Questions for group discussions (several family members):

- What languages do you each speak, and which languages do you share as a family and why? Where do you use these languages?
- How has your use of these languages changed over time? Examples?
- Do any of these changes have anything to do with a change in location?
- How would you describe how well you speak these languages? Examples?
- Have you encountered any challenges in using these languages?
- Does your family have any unwritten rules about language use? What do you think they are? What about outside of the family? Did / do you have specific rules on which languages would be used and with whom or when? Why?
- Has your family planned for the use of multiple languages in the home? If so, how? (if confused talk about styles, eg. OPOL)
- Were there any reasons that may have discouraged you from using multiple languages as a family?
- Are any of these ideas connected to certain sites and / or situations of language use?
- How did the society in which you live / lived impact your decision to use these languages?
- Do you think your language use would have been different if you had lived in a different country? (or one of the other countries that you mentioned earlier?)
- How do you think the languages you speak are perceived where you live / lived? Why?
- How do you think your multilingual family is different from other families? How has this shaped you as a family? How has this shaped you as individuals?